

Men Society and Crime: An Exploration of Maleness and Offending Behaviour

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Preface

This thesis is the culmination of years of wondering why we ask people to 'be' certain things. One of the first things you notice about people is their keenness to be able to categorise things, so quickly human beings become men and women, criminal or non-criminal, healthy or sick. To deal with the world around us we reduce the infinite to a schema and then judge the infinite within that schema. We often forget that that 'the way things are' are not necessarily normal or natural. We come to expect men and women to act, behave and feel in certain ways rarely questioning the necessity of these expectations or the possible damage such expectations may create for the individuals required to 'fit' them. Studies of 'female' criminality and imprisonment highlighted the effects that socialisation into appropriate female gender roles has on the lives of women. If one starts from the premise that there are no major inherent differences between men and women, that is you view them as people first, this finding raises the question what impact does the socialisation of men into appropriate male gender roles have on men ? This thesis attempts to explore the impact of socialisation of men into appropriate gender roles and what role, if any, their involvement in crime might play in men's attempts to 'be men'.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the people who talked to me, both formally and informally, during the course of this research: the prisoners and the men on probation, the prison officers and the probation staff. I would also like to thank the prison and probation staff who took time to organise access for me to the prison and various probation offices.

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Chapter One

Why Study Men as 'Men' ?

Everything has been thought of before
The difficulty is to think it again

(Goethe)

Introduction

Until the 1970s very little attention had been devoted to trying to explain the link between gender and crime, though most theories of crime are based on assumptions of gender. The 1970s saw the emergence of gender issues within criminology with writers highlighting the absence of women and/or the distorted view of women within theories of crime and criminal behaviour (e.g. Smart, 1977; Leonard, 1982; Heidensohn, 1985). As Gregory (1987) has noted socially constructed categories of masculinity and femininity are so deeply embedded in the criminal justice system, and society in general, that they tend not to be recognised. Men comprise the vast body of research in criminology (both in terms of the researched and the researchers) on crime and social life in prison, yet the studies seldom treat the gender of their male subjects as problematic and in doing so it is likely they are missing out on a key variable (Morgan, 1986). The early writings on gender and crime necessarily focused on women in an attempt to address the previous invisibility of women in terms of their involvement in crime (Heidensohn, 1985; Naffine, 1987). The impact of gender on men, however, continued to be unacknowledged and unexamined. Studies carried out with female offenders have highlighted the impact of a marginalisation experienced from the imposition of 'female' roles on women in society and in particular female offenders (Carlen, 1983; Eaton, 1986). No such study has looked at the impact of the imposition of 'male' roles on men and male offenders.

The last five years, or more, have witnessed a reassessment of criminological thinking about gender with a number of criminologists beginning to explore the possible links between criminal and delinquent behaviour and masculine affirmation. The question 'can 'masculine identity' be seen to be achieved through the crimes men commit, through the criminal behaviour of men' has begun to be asked (Messerschmidt, 1993; Newburn & Stanko, 1994). As a result of this 'rediscovery' of men in criminology a number of issues need to be raised and explored. This research attempts to examine some of the questions that have been emerging in the criminological literature during recent years. It would appear that a general consensus of opinion has emerged amongst these writers that a man's masculine identity does indeed play some role in his involvement in criminal and/or delinquent behaviour. (Newburn & Stanko, 1994; Jefferson, 1992; Jackson, 1992). However, just what sort of role 'masculinity' occupies in relation to crime remains unanswered, and perhaps as yet unasked. Criminology, it would appear, has gone from being virtually unaware of men's gendered nature to one of focusing extensively upon it.

Men's gendered nature, and 'masculinity' in particular, is in many ways a highly complex and

intangible concept. Within criminology, and academic work in general, over the last 20 years or so there has been developed a wealth of research on the impact of concepts of femininity on women and women's position in society which has helped to highlight and examine the difficulties women face within society (Oakley, 1972; McRobbie & Niva, 1984; Lees, 1986). Such an exploration, however, has not been carried out on the effects of concepts of masculinity on men and men's position in society. Part of this reason, as feminist writers have observed is that masculine concepts have a higher status in society; we live in a society where, ultimately, a masculine ethos or outlook prevails. Accordingly because these ideals and concepts *are* so pervasive, any exploration of the impact of these notions on any one individual or group of individuals becomes more complicated. 'Masculinity' cannot be seen as the driving force behind criminality but as one, albeit important, factor that bears some relation to criminal behaviour. There is also the more encompassing question of what impact the masculine ethos of Western societies might have upon men's experience of the criminal justice system, and imprisonment in particular. Prisons are amongst the most male-dominated of institutions, both in terms of prisoners and staff. Those imprisoned bring with them a diverse and complex cultural history which is central to adaptation to prison life. The 'masculine' identities of those imprisoned, it could be argued, are amongst the most important of these influences and may be one of the main reasons for similarities of cultures across male prisons. It is possible that the 'prison culture' observed in many prison studies is simply a variant of the theme of male bonding found in almost any male-dominated institution or group (Newton, 1994). The criminal justice system has consistently been highlighted as being a predominantly 'masculine' domain (Allen, 1987; Carlen, 1983; Eaton, 1986, Edwards, 1984) and therefore an attempt at deconstructing 'masculinity', albeit with the focus being upon the recipients of these services, might shed further light upon their workings.

It is not only the question of whether 'masculinity' is a causal factor in the committing of crime that is a focus of this research but also what effect, if any, contemporary, taken for granted assumptions of what it means to 'be a man' might have upon how individuals interpret, experience and react to their treatment from the criminal justice system, and in particular the prison system. It is not simply the case of whether certain traditional definitions of 'masculinity' result in some men trying to 'live out' these definitions through criminal behaviour, it is an issue of exploring how these definitions of 'masculinity' impinge on these individuals, generally those who are predominantly disadvantaged in terms of choice in a variety of areas, including an expression of their 'masculine' identity. Society demands of male individuals an expression of their 'manliness' and it would appear some of the consequences of these demands are to be found in our prisons.

Women, Gender Roles and the Implications for the Study of Men

The notion that traditional, socialised gender roles may result in some negative consequences received a great deal of attention in the 1970s, with the emergence of the women's movement (Forisha, 1978; Guttentag & Bray, 1976). Through the women's movement awareness was raised concerning the (alleged) unreasonable restrictions placed on women through the traditional female role. From research into female offenders the concept has emerged that the category of 'femininity' and its ensuing features are 'conformity' oriented (Carlen, 1983; Eaton, 1986; Smart, 1984). Through

the work of the women's movement more research and work has been carried out with women and girls, addressing the issue of gender and the impact it has on their role and position in society (e.g. Lees, 1986; McRobbie & Niva, 1984). Research has looked at the changing role of women in society and explored issues such as their empowerment. As noted by Sharpe and Heppner (1991) it was not until the late 1970s and early 1980s that the male gender role also received attention and although a body of theoretical literature has accumulated describing the negative impact of the traditional, socialised male gender role (e.g. Goldberg, 1977; O'Neil, 1981a; Pleck & Sawyer, 1974), little empirical research has been undertaken to substantiate the claims that rigid adherence to the male role is problematic for individual men and leads to less psychological well-being. No detailed research has been carried out to explore the issues of men's gendered nature and the impact it has on their role and position in society.

Within criminology, issues of 'gender' have focused upon women and why it is so few apparently commit crime (Smart, 1977; Heidensohn, 1985; Morris, 1987). These investigations in recent years, have extended to examine women's experiences as victims of crime such as rape and domestic violence and exploring the impact of 'patriarchal' or 'masculinist' systems upon their experiences (Dobash et al, 1986; Box, 1983). Recently the questions have turned to why is it that the majority of crime is committed by men, a trend that is found across all countries and across time (Harvey et al, 1992). Is there something about how men define themselves as men that leads to a propensity to commit crime? There are a wide variety of individuals subsumed within the offending population (both those apprehended and those who are not). Amid such diversity it seems impossible to identify common factors that contribute to their offending behaviour. Perhaps the commonality exists not within their committal of crime but rather is found within their attempts to achieve or live up to the 'hegemonic masculinity' (Connell, 1987) that is predominant throughout Western societies. As Lupton et al state:

Hegemonic masculinity refers to a cultural ideal of heterosexual masculinity which need not correspond at all closely to the actual personalities of the majority of men, but influences all forms of masculinity and femininity (Lupton et al, 1992, p 156).

Attempting to achieve this 'hegemonic' masculine ideal will have slightly different meanings for different individuals; the ideal will be affected by age, race, class, family background, peer groups, schooling, employment prospects and so on. Thus the variety of crimes or offending behaviour found in society could be a reflection of the varying attempts of different men to establish personal identities, in which issues of masculinity, or maleness, will play a dominant role. Although there is a standard masculine ideal (Broverman et al, 1970; Connell, 1987) - which in descriptive terms encompasses notions of breadwinner, independence, competitiveness and succeeding - that all men will aspire to, many, if not most, will fall short of this ideal. In their attempts to attain this ideal different men may draw on the different emotional and material resources available to them within their social situations. Therefore, men's attempts to establish their [male] identities may result in both commonalities and differences. Expressions of their maleness may be similar but also

different as different men may draw on different resources, with offending behaviour possibly being a resource some men draw on in establishing their identity.

The Present Study

The main aim of this thesis was to critically explore and examine the life experiences and pressures experienced by men as *men* and how these might relate to offending behaviour. The main objective of this research was to attempt to deconstruct some of the taken for granted assumptions, concepts and notions surrounding men and masculinity, and to explore which, if any, of these concepts may contribute to the commission of crime amongst men. This research aimed therefore in some ways to complement and develop previous research, by exploring the backgrounds of individuals who end up in prison or on a probation order, including their employment records, educational histories and so on. In this case, however, the concept of fulfilling one's masculine identity was used as a tool to explore whether these men find themselves restricted by society's definition of what it means to be a man, as has been found to be the case with female criminals and women in prison and concepts of femininity. This research also focused upon the male ideology or masculinism (Brittan, 1989) that dominates the criminal justice system, particularly the penal systems, and society in general. This has been examined in terms of the impact on female offenders but very little work has been done to examine what consequences such ideology has on male offenders themselves. When one is surrounded and intertwined in a dominant ethos it is often difficult to sufficiently separate out its constituent parts and hence explore and deconstruct such concepts. One problem to be surmounted is the difficulty of critically analysing what is considered to be the 'norm' of society. It is often the case that the category of 'men' is used when in reality the human condition is what is being investigated and as a result of this the gendered nature of men's experiences fail to be explored. Man as a gendered, cultural creature has received precious little attention (Newton, 1994). For example there is often reference to how imprisonment is probably 'harsher' for women, citing the higher incidents of self-mutilation amongst female prisoners and their loss of access to children and so on. There is, however, very little empirical evidence to sustain the view that imprisonment is 'harsher' for women; prison is probably just as harsh for men as it is for women (see Liebling & Krarup, 1993). Men, however, are not expected to express or admit to feelings of fear, anxiety, insecurity and often these feelings may find expression as anger, aggression or violence (see Thurston, 1993). One particular area of focus of this thesis was issues of fear and vulnerability, the experience of anxiety amongst men and what impact, if any, this has on subsequent behaviour. By attempting to examine and challenge taken for granted assumptions about masculinity and men and by examining how we define masculinity in society, this may allow us to understand more the constraints these assumptions place upon men and their behaviour. By attempting to identify, what role, if any, these definitions play in offending behaviour, gender theory may be applied to the way we address male offending behaviour both in preventive and retrospective terms. Gender theory may also be seen as relevant to the ways in which prisons are organised and managed, and the ways in which prisoners are controlled; as Newton (1994) has argued perhaps if prisons were controlled in a less rigidly 'masculine' manner there might be less masculine organisation amongst prisoners, and staff, together with all the problems that brings.

As Hearn & Collinson (1994) note, the acquisition of what they term 'hegemonic masculinities' is a process through which men come to suppress a range of emotions, needs and possibilities which are experienced as being inconsistent with manhood, such as nurturing, receptivity, empathy and compassion. Men, however it can be argued, continue to experience these feelings and needs and their inability to express or experience them can often become a source of enormous fear. Autobiographies of individual male offenders (as do those of female offenders, see Carlen, 1985) often emphasise the emotional turmoil, a sense of frustration at having being labelled, and of having their options and futures restricted as a result of their offending behaviour. Often there is an awareness of the damage the individual does to themselves through their persistent involvement in crime coupled with a sensation that they cannot break free from it (e.g. Boyle, 1977). Such autobiographies also often emphasis the 'thrill' of offending behaviour, something which the individual does not find in any other area of their lives. Although fear may be the initial feeling experienced at the time of committing the offence, it would appear after the event the feeling of excitement and the opportunity to 'brag' to one's associates or peer group overcomes, or at least subordinates, the original feelings of fear and apprehension (Boyle, 1977; Conlan, 1990). There is a sense that once one becomes involved in criminal activity it is not always easy to untangle oneself from it and often the individual gains a prestige, and a degree of self-esteem, that they have not experienced before and it is often difficult to relinquish the personal status derived. For example Boyle (1977), when describing how he finally found a way of channelling his 'anti-social' behaviour into a socially acceptable activity, talked of how the emotions he had always experienced remained he had just discovered a way of expressing them which society approved of, in his case through art and writing. This is a theme, allowing young men to channel 'energy' into more socially acceptable activities, that can be seen in recent attempts to tackle the problems of joy-riding amongst juveniles, encouraging these individuals to channel their energy into the more legitimate activity of go-kart racing (e.g. Jackson, 1992).

Becoming Gender Conscious

A vast amount of research has shown that despite gender specific differences, roles and expectations predominating in Western societies (and indeed most societies), there is very little empirical evidence to support the existence of such differences (see Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974 for an overview). Despite the lack of such evidence, within societies there exist the traditional concepts that women are caring, nurturing and passive while men are independent, providers and assertive (Mishkind et al, 1987). The concepts of masculinity and femininity create boundaries for what is considered by society to be acceptable or appropriate behaviour for men and women. These boundaries appear to offer men a broader range of behaviour that can be engaged in but limit the range of emotional expression that is acceptable for them to indulge in. The boundaries for women appear to limit the range of behaviours which they can become involved in but appear to offer a wider range of emotional expression (albeit with certain restrictions). Humans can, and do, experience a wide spectrum of needs and emotions but are socially constrained from expressing them all (O'Neil, 1981a). Through the construction of gender roles in society men and women become constricted in the range of behaviours and emotions which are acceptable for them to express and 'experience'. The boundaries of femininity, it could be argued, are less 'achievement' orientated

than the boundaries for men. The boundaries of femininity are in many ways 'reactive', a woman can be seen to be a success by giving birth, by being a good mother, a good wife (Carlen, 1983; Eaton, 1986; Edwards, 1984). Men have boundaries which, it could be argued, are more 'proactive'; men are obliged to go out and achieve whereas women have to be 'submissive' to achieve, both of which practices result in difficulties, anxieties and often dissonance for the individuals involved.

Much of the research on women and crime, particularly that by feminist writers, highlights that many of the difficulties encountered by female offenders are centred around the traditional concepts of femininity and what is expected of women by society, traditional concepts which are also embedded in the judicial and penal systems. Female offenders are judged on 'female criteria' as daughter, wife, mother (Carlen, 1983; Eaton, 1986). The judicial and penal systems, it is argued, are dedicated to 're-feminising' women, retraining and reasserting them into their 'proper' gender roles. Different criteria are looked at when decision on prosecuting and sentencing decisions are being made for the different sexes (Farrington & Morris, 1983; Eaton, 1986; Morris, 1987) ie marital status and motherhood for women, age and employment for men.

Within criminology issues of gender have focused on women and their general lack of involvement in offending behaviour. Recently the questions have turned to why is it that the majority of crimes are committed by men. As Carlen (1983) notes, the predominance of men committing crime is such that women who commit crime and end up in prison are seen as maladjusted, *masculine*, mentally abnormal and *rejecting their social role*. A recent debate has emerged surrounding the issue of men and how men define themselves and whether or not this may play a role in men's propensity to commit crime. As noted earlier there are a wide variety of individuals subsumed within the offending population and amid such diversity it seems impossible to identify common motivating factors that contribute to their offending behaviour. Perhaps the variety of crimes and offending behaviour found in society could be a reflection of the varying attempts of different men seeking to establish their 'masculine identities', or rather men attempting to establishing their personal identities of which issues of masculinity will play a predominant role ?

Masculinity or Masculinities ?

One of the predominant notions emerging from the burgeoning literature on masculinity is that we should not talk of masculinity but rather refer to the existence of 'masculinities' (Connell, 1987, 1995; Collier, 1995; Hearn & Collinson, 1994). The differentiation has been made in an attempt to acknowledge the fact that no two men have an identical masculine identity and also to highlight the fact that different men encounter different hindrances to achieving expression of their masculine identity, on the grounds of race, class, education background and so on (Messerchmidt, 1993; Newburn & Stanko, 1994). Although this research acknowledges that there do exist numerous masculine *identities* within any society, the emphasis here is placed on the idea of differing male identities rather than differing *masculinities* per se. This research argues from the standpoint that there exists within Western societies a predominant, often implicit, concept of what all men should be like, what Connell (1987) and others refer to as 'hegemonic masculinity', and that men attempt to establish their own personal identities in terms that do not stray far from this ideal.

As Brittan (1989) observes, one cannot deny that there are an infinite number of styles and behaviours associated with gender relations; the theoretical concept of the existence of qualitative different 'masculinities' has, however, yet to be queried or tested. We are largely unfamiliar with how age, generation, sexual orientation, class, race and ethnicity differentially structure the form and content of men's lives (see Thompson et al, 1992), and much more research is needed to understand men and their struggle with gender roles over the life-span (see Stillson et al, 1991). This research places an emphasis on the *maleness* of men's behaviour rather than conceptualising men's behaviour in terms of expressions of their 'masculinity' or 'masculinities'. This is to highlight the still unsubstantiated theoretical concepts of 'masculinity' and 'masculinities' and to encourage more critical analysis of these concepts. The emphasis is placed on the maleness of men's behaviour also to highlight the danger of allowing a focus on the specificities of different masculinities potentially to draw attention away from the critical analysis of structures of power and oppression in relation to gender (see also Hearn & Collinson, 1994). The tentative nature of the theoretical concepts of masculinity and masculinities will often be highlighted in this thesis by the use of inverted commas around the words.

Ultimately what this research examines are the stereotypes and expectations that exist within society, and its institutions, that 'vindicate' certain behaviours as acceptable for men, how dominant they are and to question whether they are more 'prevalent' for certain categories of men in society, whether they result in more 'destructive' or 'damaging' behaviour amongst certain groups of men. It explores what role society's institutions of socialisation (ie family, school, employment) contribute to the propagation of such expectations, and whether the structures and systems that are developed to deal with these categories of men merely reassert all of these values and as such do not attempt to deal with the underlying factors that may contribute to such behaviour being an option for these men. Finally this research reflects on the question of can these values and attitudes be addressed and challenged, do alternative masculine identity formations exist for men? As Heidensohn (1985) notes socialisation into the 'feminine gender' appears inevitably to involve a much higher degree of social conformity than does socialisation into the 'masculine gender', and asks the question do solutions to crime and delinquency lie in socialising boys and men and controlling them in ways which appear acceptable and prove effective for girls and women?

Theoretical Orientation Within The Present Study

Socialisation is the process of growing up during which children learn the norms of their society and acquire their own distinctive values, beliefs and personality characteristics (Giddens, 1993). Socialisation involves personal growth, regulation of behaviour and the perception of social order. We are not always aware that we are being socialised. We experience the processes of socialisation throughout the lifespan; throughout different stages of the life span we will be affected by different agents of the socialisation process with different factors affecting different ages. Women and men experience differential socialisation; from an early age children are socialised into accepting particular stereotypes of how a 'girl/woman' should behave and how a 'boy/man' should

behave. Studies of female criminality and female imprisonment (Carlen, 1983; Eaton, 1986; Edwards, 1984) have exposed the effects that socialisation into appropriate female gender roles has on the lives of women, and in particular disempowered women, and have highlighted the need to look at the issue of masculine gender roles and the more general 'masculinism' of society. There has been no such examination of the impact of notions of masculinity on men, and in particular the more disempowered men of society. This thesis attempts to carry out such an examination. Using the concept of life course (Sugarman, 1986) and adopting Bronfenbrenner's (1977) concept of a nested model of individual and society, this thesis aims to examine the impact concepts of masculinity have upon men in society and in particular what role if any they play in men's offending behaviour. The life course is proposed as a theoretical orientation concerned with the problems of describing, understanding, generalising about, predicting, and intentionally changing the courses of lives (Runyan, 1978). The life course may be defined as:

the sequence of events and experiences in a life from birth until death, and the chain of personal states and encountered situations which influence and are influenced by this sequence of events (Runyan, 1978, p 570).

This life course theoretical orientation highlights the concept that a person is faced with a wide variety of ways of living, of possible life courses, but is also faced with a limited number of ways of developing, which fits theoretically with recent writings on gender, both masculinity and femininity, which perceive notions of masculinity as restricting men in terms of behaviour and emotions that are deemed acceptable to them, and femininity as restricting women in similar terms.

In 1977 Bronfenbrenner suggested a broader approach to research in human development be adopted. He suggested a scientific approach he termed the ecology of human development which is:

the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, throughout the lifespan, between a growing human organism and the changing immediate environments in which it lives, as this process is affected by relations obtaining within and between these immediate settings, as well as the larger social contexts, both formal and informal, in which the settings are embedded (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p 514).

Bronfenbrenner argues that understanding human development requires the examination of multiperson systems of interaction that are not limited to a single setting but rather take into consideration aspects of the environment beyond the immediate situation containing the subjects concerned. He conceived what he called the ecological environment topologically, as a nested arrangement of structures, each contained within the next. Drawing on the work of Lewin (1935), Bronfenbrenner (1977) divided this nested arrangement into four components; a microsystem; a mesosystem; an exosystem; and a macrosystem.

A microsystem is the complex of relations between the developing person and

environment in an immediate setting containing that person. A setting is defined as a place with particular physical features in which the participants engage in particular activities in particular roles for particular periods of time.

A mesosystem comprises the interrelations among major settings containing the developing person at a particular point in his or her life ... a mesosystem is a system of microsystems.

An exosystem is an extension of the mesosystem embracing other specific social structures, both formal and informal, that do not contain the developing person but impinge or encompass the immediate settings in which that person is found, and thereby influence, delimit or even determine what goes on thereincludes the major institutions of the society, both deliberately structured and spontaneously evolving, as they operate at a concrete local level.

A macrosystem refers to the overarching institutional patterns of the culture or subculture, such as the economic, social, educational, legal and political systems, of which micro-, meso- and exosystems are the concrete manifestations. Macrosystems are conceived and examined not only in structural forms but also as carriers of information and ideology, that both explicitly and implicitly, endows meaning and motivation to particular agencies, social networks, roles activities, and their interrelations.

(Taken from Bronfenbrenner (1977, pp 514-515)

Bronfenbrenner's (1977) approach attempts to capture the way in which the individual and his/her environment impinge upon and effect and interact, continually, over the individual's lifespan, and how structures although not in an individual's immediate sphere of contact can help shape their experiences. This approach also helps to highlight the successive shifts in role and setting that every person undergoes throughout the lifespan. Both Bronfenbrenner's (1977) concept of the ecology of human development and Runyan's (1978) life course theoretical orientation facilitate an analysis of 'masculinity' and how it has been portrayed in the literature, as a state of being, or at the very least a state of mind, that requires continually negotiation throughout the lifetimes of men (Messerschmidt, 1993; Newburn & Stanko, 1994). This theoretical orientation is implicitly rather than explicitly adhered to throughout this thesis.

Zohar (1995) maintains that our familiar approach to debate is adversarial in nature; it is about proving points and winning and losing. Bohn (1995) identified dialogue as a technique for breaking down the rigid patterns of thought that lock us into fixed social and behavioural patterns. Zohar (1995) observes that dialogue's use of incessant questions and discussions can break down assumptions and stereotypes and lead us into new insight. Since the areas of gender and masculinity are shrouded in assumptions and stereotypes, it is in the spirit of dialogue that this thesis is written. Therefore drawing upon the concept of the life course where there is continual development

of the individual throughout their life time and using Bronfenbrenner's (1977) conception of the environment, and individuals place and interaction within this environment, this research examines the socialisation of a group of male offenders through in-depth semi-structured interviews and attempts to ascertain whether men's passage from children to men, and the processes and expectations this involves, has any role to play in their criminal activities.

This thesis begins by examining the main theoretical concepts emerging from the recent literature on masculinity and masculinity and crime. Chapter Three describes how the research was conducted and the reasoning behind the methods chosen. Chapters Four and Five summarise the main findings to emerge from the research, while Chapter Six outlines the main conclusions of the thesis, drawing on both the theoretical concerns and the research findings contained within.

Chapter Two

Men, masculinity and masculinism: what does it all mean ?

Since the main aim of this thesis is to investigate critically the life experiences and pressures experienced by men as *men* and explore how (if at all) this might relate to offending behaviour, this chapter reviews the main themes and concepts that inform past and present theorising and writing on 'maleness' or 'masculinity'. It will examine how theorising on gender, men and maleness has moved from the biological through sex role theories onto concepts of gender relations and 'doing gender'. It also locates the role of gender theorising, and in particular gender theorising on men, within criminological theories over the years. Throughout, this chapter attempts to highlight the more contentious elements within the theorising of men and maleness, and maleness and crime.

The Sex and Gender Debate

Lupton, Short and Whip (1992) contend that sex refers to biologically determined features which make people male or female. There is a small set of sex features that are found among members of the species *homo sapiens* no matter what their culture or society. Gender refers to how these biological differences are interpreted and translated into social expectations in everyday life. Sex categories refer to features of human biology, to characteristics of our living material bodies, while gender categories refer to matters of human culture and society. As Lupton et al (1992) observe, across the range of human cultures and societies there is a customary relationship between sex and gender, the two kinds of phenomena are not completely unrelated and arbitrary. However, as they argue, as a result of the process whereby biological differences are interpreted and translated into the social expectations that constitute gender the links, if any, between biology and male and female characteristics are likely to be lost.

Alexander (1993) observes that our whole society is based on the uncompromising belief that there are only two sexes. It has been argued that as a result of these sex differences a gender system has emerged in society that encompasses and facilitates these natural sex differences. Over the years, however, the notion of substantial sex differences between men and women has been found wanting and the explanation of social structures developing as an expression of these natural sex differences has been found lacking. Geneticist Fausto-Sterling (1993) has argued that:

biologically speaking, there are many graduations running from female to male; depending on how one calls the shots, one can argue that along the spectrum lie at least five sexes - perhaps more

(quoted in Alexander, 1993, p 14).

Money (1993), a specialist in congenital sexual-organ defects, stipulates that as many as 4 per cent of people are born neither strictly male nor female but a mixture of both, while Maccoby and Jacklin's (1974) influential review of all the literature available on sex differences concluded that

very few sex differences have been substantiated. Only four clear differences have been substantiated by evidence, three in the area of cognitive and intellectual skills and one in the area of social behaviour. Male superiority in mathematical and visual-spatial abilities and female superiority in verbal abilities were substantiated and males were shown to be more aggressive than females. However, as Deux (1984) notes, many assessed sex differences are not durable main effects anyway but rather are influenced by the task characteristics of the research in question. The main finding, from about 80 years of research, is a massive psychological similarity between men and women (Connell, 1987), and Deux (1984) concludes that sex differences are less pervasive than many thought.

Rubin (1975) argues that from the standpoint of the natural world, men and women are closer to each other than either is to anything else. Far from being an expression of natural differences gender identity in humans is the *suppression* of natural *similarities*. Brittan (1989), amongst others, has maintained the 'true facts' of biology are never pristine or uninterpreted, they are always mediated. Our conception of what is natural and what natural differences consist of, is itself a cultural construct, part of our specific way of thinking about gender, and Matthew (1982) contends we accept gender as a part of the universe rather than part of the *perceived* universe. Even so-called biological facts are socially constructed. As Lewinton observes:

the primary self-identification of a person as a man or a woman with the multitude of attitudes, ideas, and desires that accompany that identification, depends on what label was attached to him or her as a child. In the normal course of events, these labels correspond to a consistent biological difference in chromosomes, hormones, and morphology. Thus biological differences become a signal for, rather than a cause of differentiation in social roles

(Lewinton, 1982, p 142).

Thus, although agreement exists over the existence of a small set of absolute differences between all females and all males (Kaufman, 1994), debate still continues regarding biology's resultant role in the existence and maintenance of gender concepts and the gender system found in western societies. Brittan (1989) argues that because women were often incapacitated by the time and energy devoted to the gestation and nurturing of children they were perceived by men as not being able to contribute to political and economic life. Brittan (1989) maintains that such a perception is the essential element in the establishment of male domination. This male perception of a biological fact - the woman's role in child bearing - is translated into the basic principle of social organisation. After a while this construction comes to be regarded as natural and inevitable. Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1988) argue that representing gender as a continuum of difference serves to simplify and purify the concept of gender; it obscures the complexity of human action and shields both men and women from the discomforting recognition of equality. Focusing on gender differences marginalises and obscures the interrelatedness of women and men as well as the restricted opportunities of both. Carrigan, Connell and Lee (1985) argue that although biological facts of maleness and femaleness are central and that human reproduction is a major part of the 'sex/gender system', all kinds of questions can be

raised about the nature of the relations between biology and the social. Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) suggest that societies have the option of minimising rather than maximising sex differences through their socialisation practices. As Katz and Chambliss contend:

violence, sexism and racism are biological only in the sense that they are within the range of possible human attitudes and behaviours. But non-violence, equality and justice are also biologically possible

(Katz & Chambliss, 1991, p270).

Connell (1987) asserts that the connection between natural and social structures is one of practical relevance and not of causation, and it is to this issue that we now turn our attention.

From the Biological to the Social

Solomon (1982) maintains that when we talk about many different behaviours in many different social contexts there are so many commonalities in the behaviours, expectations and norms associated with the roles, they can be subsumed as dimensions of the masculine or feminine gender role. 'Sex roles' or 'gender roles', also sometimes termed 'sex stereotypes', are seen to be promoted through 'agents of socialisation' such as families, schools, institutions and mass media (Connell, 1987). Most sex/gender role allocation may be explained by how we rear children, by the sexual division of labour, by the cultural definition of what is appropriate for the sexes, and by the social pressures we put on the two sexes (Goode, 1982). As Chodorow (1989) observes, by the time a person is old enough to make choices about anything, let alone something as fundamental as gender roles, he or she is already engendered.

Kuhn, Nash and Brucken (1978) argue that research clearly demonstrates that children as young as two years of age possess substantial knowledge of the sex/gender role stereotypes prevailing in their culture, while Lambert and Klineberg's (1967) research contends that the development of stereotypical thinking in children is nearing completion at the age of around seven years. Spence (1993) and Green (1974) argue that although there is considerable variability within each sex as to the particular constellation of gender-congruent qualities people display, most members of both sexes develop a clear sense of gender identity, a basic psychological sense of belongingness to their own sex, quite early on in childhood and continue to maintain that identity throughout the lifespan. Kuhn et al (1978) argue that as children come to regard their gender as a permanent, irreversible aspect of self, they begin to positively value this aspect and devalue what is perceived as not-self, that is, the opposite sex. Spence (1993) maintains that gender serves as an organising principle for sex-typed individuals that they use in processing information about themselves and the external world.

As Connell (1987), amongst others, has observed 'sex roles' or 'gender roles' have remained the central category of academic thought about gender. Archer and Lloyd (1982) maintain that most social scientists would agree that there do exist striking regularities in standard male and female roles across cultural boundaries regardless of other social arrangements, and Lovell (1990) argues that the differential allocation of social roles according to gender is well-documented. O'Neil

defines a gender role as:

behaviours, expectations and role sets defined by society as masculine or feminine which are embodied in the behaviour of the individual man or woman and culturally regarded as appropriate to males or females

(O'Neil, 1981b, p203).

However, as Deux (1984) observes, although the recognition that there are gender stereotypes, or roles, is long-standing, surprisingly little work has been done to define those stereotypes, or roles, very precisely. Foucault (1982) contends the demand that everybody should have a clearcut and fixed identity as a member of one sex is historically recent, while Connell (1987) argues that social scientific theories of gender are both a western invention and a modern one. Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1995) maintain that the assignment of a person to a category (man/woman) ensures that conventional knowledge about the behaviour of people so categorised can be invoked or cited to account for or to explain specific actions of that person. They also argue that encouraging category aspirations are a form of social control, a means through which a person's identity and behaviour can be glossed, interpreted and characterised in terms of cultural knowledge about the category. Kersten (1989) also contends that gender-role conformity and patriarchal concepts of gender identity seem to be necessary for the implementation of power, and of relevant control policies. However, as Segal (1990) observes, our commitment to individualism is so pervasive that it can be difficult for us to grasp the institutional dimension of 'male' and 'female', 'masculinity' and 'femininity', while Lee (1986) argues since we all experience life as individuals this makes it hard to appreciate the way in which many of our experiences are caught up with ideas and definitions of femininity and masculinity and are constrained by these social definitions. In later chapters this thesis outlines some of the main stereotypes or concepts of maleness that the men interviewed endorsed. Later chapters also identify and examine the social and institutionalised nature of these concepts and the impact they have upon the lives of individual men and certain groups of men.

The individual and the social

Gilmore (1990) regards the individual as having to balance two sets of demands as a member of society. The first stem from his/her own psychic conflicts, the second derive from without as a result of his/her need for cultural conformity and acceptance. Individual behaviour is seen as a compromise solution to those separate and sometimes opposing pressures. Harding (1983) notes that, like racism and classism, the sex/gender system appears to limit and create opportunities within which are constructed the social practices of daily life, the characteristics of social institutions, and all our patterns of thought. Messerschmidt (1993) argues that gender is not just an aspect of personality, a feature of the individual, it is an aspect of group life and collective processes; while Morgan (1992) asserts that the complex socio-historical constructions called 'man' and 'woman' refer to collectivities rather than to individuals, to social institutions rather than simple aggregations of persons.

Wiley and Alexander (1987) maintain that one's sense of self develops and is maintained within a

particular social context and is always grounded in social reality. Although our individual subject positions may be constantly shifting none of us can escape the 'Here' of our cultural, 'racial', sexual, classed and gendered specificity (Berg, 1994). In 1979 Cloward and Piven noted an increasing awareness that many of the gender differences in behaviour are linked to the structural positions that have been traditionally assigned to men and women in society. This became known as what Matthews (1984) called a 'gender order', a historically constructed pattern of power relations between men and women and definitions of masculinity and femininity. Giddens (1976, 1981) argues that individuals exist within the basic structures of society, structures that circumscribe present experience and set limits on future action. Lee (1986) maintains that what we need to understand is the way such social practices and systems of representations operate and appear to work without direct coercion, since the kinds of human beings that children and adults become depend upon their daily experiences and social experiences that are programmed by institutionalised practices (see also Harris, 1995).

There are clearly many ways of thinking about gender. Gender can be seen as biologically determined; as the social constructions of biological differences; as social roles; as rooted in power and power analysis; as a form of categorisation and categorical thinking; as discourse; as practice (see Oakley, 1972, 1974; Connell, 1985, 1987). Theories of gender, like other scientific theories, are representations of reality organised by particular assumptive frameworks and reflecting certain interests (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988). Despite shifts in theoretical emphasis assumptions about gender and sexuality remain taken for granted. Klein (1995) argues that it is no longer sufficient, and should be unnecessary, by and large, to challenge exhaustively every pseudo-scientific gender stereotype, rather we must instead question the construction of the fundamental dichotomies: feminine vs masculine, black vs white, criminal vs law-abiding, abnormal vs normal. Benhabib (1986, p47) talks of engaging in an analysis 'whereby the given is shown to be not a natural but socially and historically constituted and thus changing reality'.

One Element of the Gender Equation: 'Masculinity'

Hewstone et al (1988) argue that gender is one of the most fundamental social categories in virtually all societies, and one with profound implications for individuals' opportunities throughout the lifespan. It was mainly through the development of the Women's Movement that awareness was raised regarding the significance of gender in society and the inequalities between the sexes in terms of distribution of life-chances, opportunities and power (Thompson, 1995). The emergence of the Women's Movement also opened up a debate regarding the advantages and disadvantages of gender roles more generally, and from the late 1980s a growing interest emerged in the negative consequences of traditional male gender roles. For Mead (1949), the recurrent problem of civilisation is to define the male role satisfactorily enough, both for societies and for individuals who must live up to these undefined roles. According to Thompson and Pleck (1987) the male role refers to the social norms that prescribe and proscribe what men should feel and do. The male role is seen as a sensitising concept that summarises the general social expectations that men face. Gilmore (1990) argues that manhood ideals make an indispensable contribution both to the continuity of social systems and to the psychological integration of men into their community,

while Stoltenberg (1980) maintains that messages to conform to what society feels is appropriate for males surround boys and men from birth. Men subsequently develop a fear of not doing right as defined by commonly understood notions of how men ought to behave. Murphy (1996) sees the development of a male identity as a complex process of socialised learning, and argues that it is so much of an established norming process that few men reflect upon or are even aware of it.

In 1976 the psychologist Robert Brannon outlined a definition of manhood¹. He argued that masculinity is the relentless repudiation of the feminine; it is measured by power, success, wealth and status; it depends on remaining calm and reliable in a crisis, holding emotions in check; and it involves exuding an aura of manly daring and aggression, taking risks. O'Neil (1982) argues that society has expectations and standards of masculinity that include such characteristics of masculinity as strength, invulnerability, successfulness, toughness, self-reliance, aggressiveness and daring. Other authors argue that men learn that measures of manhood and masculinity are determined through career success, achievement and failures (Fasteau, 1974; Goldberg, 1977; Tolson, 1977). For some, work was identified as the primary way for men to define personal and self-worth (see Pleck & Sawyer, 1974; Skovoholt, 1978; Morgan et al, 1979), while Segal (1990) argued that masculinity involves a certain level of personal autonomy and control over other people. Eisler and Blalock (1991) argue that the socialisation of males produces masculine attitudes that contain ambivalence about the legitimacy of coercion and aggression to obtain power and control; the message is that aggressive force is often a legitimate and even desirable masculine way to cope with life's problems. Hagan, Simpson and Gillis (1979) maintain that aggressiveness, independence and self-assertiveness connote *freeness*, or at the very least an absence of control.

It is these concepts and expectations regarding 'masculinity' or 'maleness' that this thesis explores. Do men really measure their maleness in terms of career success, power and status? What impact might failure in these areas have on men? Does failure in this area render men susceptible to involvement in criminal activities? Do men really endorse notions of 'masculinity' such as invulnerability, self-reliance, and aggressiveness? If they do, why do they and what do they feel they gain from such stances? Although quantitative studies have been carried out to assess what masculine concepts men, and women, endorse (eg Bem, 1974; Constantinople, 1973; Pleck et al, in press), and numerous scales have been designed to evaluate 'masculinity' ideology and 'masculinity-related constructs (eg Thompson et al, 1992), few studies have attempted to ascertain the effects embracing such concepts (if indeed men do) may have on individual men's lives.

The emergence of masculinity

As Holland et al (1993) observe, men are born into male bodies but not into the successful accomplishment of culturally appropriate versions of masculinity. Eisler and Blalock (1991) argue that because results of masculine indoctrination are so pervasive among men despite individual variations in education, race, ethnicity and political beliefs, many men find it difficult to comprehend that their masculine beliefs have primarily cultural as opposed to biological origins.

¹ For manhood also read male role, male sex role, masculine gender role, male stereotype and masculinity.

O'Neil (1982) and Tolson (1977) believe that the family, the school and the peer group together make up the primary context of masculine 'socialisation', in which a boy's emerging sense of himself is directed into socially acceptable behaviour, while Easthope (1986), Metcalf and Humphries (1985) and Willis (1977) all identify the educational system, the family and popular culture as profoundly influential forces in ensuring that young men absorb and assimilate society's messages about how 'real men' behave. As Urdy (1974) contends:

By age 3, the boy will begin to perceive that some new requirements go with being male. Males are not supposed to be passive, compliant and dependent, but on the contrary, are expected to be aggressive, independent and self-assertive

(Urdy, 1974, p 53).

Becoming a man is a complex process of learning and doing within shifting sets of social constraints.

In 1970 Broverman et al observed that male stereotypes accord more closely with clinicians' descriptions of a 'healthy, mature, socially competent adult' than do female stereotypes. The 1970s saw the questioning of traditional female gender roles and the restrictions these placed on women (Forisha, 1978; Guttentag & Bray, 1970). It was not until the early 1980s that the male gender role received similar attention (Sharpe & Heppner, 1991). Although male stereotypes have maintained their superiority to those of the female, that is society values independence and strength over nurturance and passivity, the late 1980s saw considerable academic attention, in addition to mass media attention, on what became known as the 'crisis of masculinity' or the 'problematizing of men'. In recent years there has been an extensive growth in the literature exploring issues of men and 'masculinity' (eg Chapman & Rutherford, 1988; Kimmel, 1987; Morgan, 1986, 1990). Much of the emphasis of such writings has been about correlating 'masculinity' with negativity and dominance. Masculine ideology and masculine identities are seen to be damaging to society in general as well as damaging to individual men. Eagly (1995) has noted that in contemporary research carried out in the United States and Canada, attitudes towards women appear to be more positive than attitudes towards men. Eagly postulates that the generally positive evaluation of women may derive from the ascription to women of nice, nurturant, communal characteristics.

- Jenkins (1994) argues that the increasing focus on men and the problematizing of masculinity can be seen as the reaction to the economic and structural changes in society and the changing role of women. Kimmel (1987) and Cockburn (1988) also argue that definitions of masculinity are historically reactive to changing definitions of femininity, while Brittan (1989) maintains that masculinity will always be an expression of the current image that men have of themselves in relation to women, and believes that talk about the 'crisis of masculinity' would be meaningless if women had not challenged the power of men in familial, economic and political contexts. Fauldi (1992) maintains our definition of masculinity is stuck on a see-saw - men are only as strong as women are weak, and women's rise is seen as men's decline, while Reason (1992) stipulates that at present we have the re-emergence of a strong feminine image within our culture in the face of an inadequate image of the masculine. Kersten (1996) argues that the loss of masculine identity,

through the loss of traditional functions that provide legitimacy for male cultural domination, produces dire needs - especially on the part of marginalised men - including self-hate and a need to compensate for the loss of legitimate avenues to a male status, which can take the form of anti-social reactions.

Box and Hale (1986) argue that unemployed males are more likely to be perceived as problematic because in western culture work is not only believed to be the typical way in which males are disciplined, it is also their major source of identity and thus the process by which men build up a stake in conformity. The mass media of the late 1980s and early 1990s are littered with articles exposing the detrimental impact of the loss of status amongst men, particularly in regards to the increasing levels of unemployment amongst men (e.g. 'Whipping Boys', *The Guardian Weekend*, 3.9.1994; 'So what is the point of young men', *Independent on Sunday*, 12.3.1995; 'The Failing Sex', *The Guardian*, 12.3.1996). Picardie (1995) quoting a report by Demos, the independent think tank, stated:

for men work was the main source of identity and the means by which they defined their manhood ... the costs of men's declining status are already clear: a dramatic increase in male suicide, a rise in male depression and signs that many young men are trapped in a form of 'permanent adolescence

(*Independent on Sunday*, 1.10.1995, p 3).

Coward (1994) observes that in less than a generation many men have watched an entire edifice of everyday life, built on steady work and a regular wage, crumble, the result being that men, women and families suffer; while Coote (1995) argues that 'the old routes by which boys learnt to be men have been severed and new trails have yet to be blazed'. Coote (1995) suggests there seems to be nothing between the image of the 'hard man' and the 'wimp' where men might forge a new identity. It needs to be noted that the majority of these articles began focusing on a certain section of males in society, that of the traditional working class male. It was this section that had been predominantly hit by rising unemployment as the UK, amongst other countries, witnessed a decline of traditional manual work and skills, in such occupations as mining, ship-building, steel and engineering (Midgley & Clement, 1995). They maintain that this 'underclass man' or 'yob' is portrayed as unemployable, drug-taking, semi-criminal, sexually promiscuous and amoral. Coote (1995) argues that these men:

have not got anything to give them a sense of identity except being in a peer group, being tough, going out and doing things, and eventually often getting into trouble with the law or challenging authority

(quoted in Midgley & Clement, 1995, p 8).

Coward (1994, p 32) meanwhile asserts this 'yob' or 'underclass man' was:

carrying the weight of masculinity which, for a variety of reasons, middle

class society finds increasingly unacceptable, and rhetorically dumps on to the men of the lower class. He is the classic scapegoat: lugging around the sins of our culture while the rest of us look sanctimoniously on.

Cohen (1996) argues that the changes in society, being reflected in these articles, tended to indicate that the traditional male way of doing things, for so long oppressive to women, no longer appeared to be working for men either. As Samuels, a Jungian analyst, observed:

the male deal we signed up for, both consciously and unconsciously, was that if we turned away from softness, play, emotional connection - everything so-called feminine - and became the men we all know, the 'trad man', then society would reward us with the domination of women and children, material wealth, political prominence and a chance to define the culture. We all did that but the reward didn't come

(quoted in Cohen, 1996, p 28).

It is from this quagmire of perceived inadequate or restrictive male gender roles and expectations, from this notion of a 'crisis of masculinity' that the recent academic literature on masculinity emerged, and it is to this we now turn.

Theories on Gender and Masculinity: From Sex Role Theory to Doing Gender

Collier (1995) notes that defining masculinity is a complex and contested enterprise. Liddle (1996) maintains that masculinity itself is a multifaceted notion which can be described at an individual level (as individual character or bodily repertoire), in terms of middle range regimes or institutions (as in the patriarchal family) or at the level of entire societies or systems of nation states (such as Enloe's (1988, 1989) descriptions of the 'masculinity' of big business or the military on the international stage). As noted earlier there are many different ways of theorising gender and masculinity. Thompson, Pleck and Ferrera (1992) identify two broad theoretical approaches to masculinity, Brittan (1989) identifies three, while Morgan (1992) identifies two key concepts through which gender relations can be understood. These different perspectives will be briefly examined in turn.

According to Thompson et al (1992) trait perspectives are those which theorise the sources and consequences of males acquiring the personality traits and behaviours culturally defined as masculine. That is, in trait terms, a 'traditional male' actually has culturally defined masculine characteristics. The normative perspectives, however, view masculinity as an ideology rather than a psychologically, or biologically, based characteristic. Thus, in normative conception, the 'traditional male' is one who endorses the ideology that men should have the culturally identified male characteristics. As Thompson et al (1992) observe both theoretical approaches outlined above assume socially desirable 'male roles' exist which are distinct from 'female roles'.

Brittan (1989) identifies three main emphases to the debate on gender and masculinity:

socialisation; masculine crisis theory; and a reality construction model. He (1989) argues that socialisation sees gender identity as the subjective sense that a man or woman has about his or her masculinity or femininity. Socialisation can be conceived as a person's interpretation and acting out of the generally accepted social definition of what it is to be a man or woman. This socialisation thesis asserts that human beings acquire gender as a result of the social definition and construction of male and female bodies. Brittan further stipulates that the masculine crisis theory suggests that gender identity is tentative and fragile, especially in the case of men, and is founded on the observation that both men and women deviate from the master [sic] gender stereotypes of their society. Masculine crisis theory explains male gender problems in terms of psychological processes which have their origin in early or primary socialisation. According to the reality construction model gender has no fixed form and gender identity is what a person claims it to be at a particular moment in time (Brittan, 1989). Gender is seen as being always a construction which has to be renegotiated from situation to situation, and one becomes a man not by emulating a role model but by being exposed to a whole gamut of political, economic and social pressures.

Morgan (1992) believes there are two key concepts through which gender relations can be differently defined and understood: power and difference. He maintains that analytically these concepts can be related to each other in any one of four ways; (i) the relationship between power and difference can be denied and gender deemed not to be a significant variable within the operations of society; (ii) the importance of the power relationship can be stressed at the expense of understanding difference; (iii) difference can be emphasised and power can be minimised; (v) power and difference can be defined as interdependent (see also Walklate, 1998). The main theoretical viewpoints on gender and masculinity, therefore, can basically be subsumed under two main headings of 'sex-roles and socialisation' and 'gender relations'.

Brittan (1989), Connell (1987) and Liddle (1993), amongst others, argue that socialisation and sex-role (or gender role) theory with its focus on 'social norms' blanches out the existence of real conflict over definitions of 'appropriateness'. Connell (1987) notes 'agents of socialisation' invite the child to participate in social practice on given terms, including given gender terms and observes this invitation may be, and often is, coercive; accompanied by heavy pressure to accept and with no mention of an alternative. Research informs us that few males fully comply with or endorse the standards presumed to define the male role (e.g. Baca-Zinn, 1984; Cazenove & George, 1987; Thompson & Pleck, 1987), and as Brittan (1989) observes the real difficulty facing the socialisation thesis of gender identity is that it finds it almost impossible to explain exceptions to the rule; it cannot account for change at the individual and social level. Liddle (1993) also argues that the socialisation thesis obscures the formation of interests which become embedded in institutions such as the state, as well as in particular groups locked in competition for resources, status and power.

Since the masculine crisis theory relies to a degree on the notion of socialisation, this theory also faces the criticisms outlined above. In addition to this, Brittan (1989) argues that, with the masculine crisis theory, it would appear that the entire spectrum of social and political problems facing western civilisation is to be explained by reference to traumas of the male psyche. Jefferson

(1994) argues that early explanations of masculinity tended to be reductive. He argued that masculinity was seen as the outcome of a simple biological or social determinism: that of biological destiny, with the male gender role seen as being the simple product of the biological differences associated with being male; or that of sociological fate, with the male gender role being the end product of a process of socialisation by means of which the social differences of masculinity and femininity are internalised and learnt. He further asserts that such deterministic conceptions of masculinity preclude the raising of questions of agency, choice, desire and responsibility.

In recent years the notion that gender has no fixed form and should be perceived as being always under construction and negotiated from situation to situation - what Brittan (1989) termed the reality construction model - has captured the imagination of academics theorising masculinity. Jenkins (1994) maintains, as do a number of other authors, that the route to becoming a man is a complex process reinforced at various levels and requiring constant proof of attainment. (see also Connell, 1987; Messerschmidt, 1993; Kaufman, 1994). Hall argues that:

identity is not one thing for any one individual; rather each individual is both located in, and opts for a number of differing, and at times conflictual, identities, depending on the social, political, economic and ideological aspects of their situation

(Hall, 1991, p 10).

Harris (1995) stipulates that the experience of being male is not uniform. Although any culture contains common norms for masculinity, individual men interpret dominant cultural expectations, adopting unique gender identities. Each man constructs his own identity in relation to specific gender notions deeply embedded in his culture, and Harris (1995) argues that boys from different subcultures view the dominant ideology of masculinity with different lenses. From these perspectives they construct complex gender identities full of idiosyncratic interpretations of masculinity, that contain common threads derived from dominant cultural norms and subcultural influences. Kaufman (1994) also points out that there is no one experience of being a man, and argues that the experience of different men, their actual power and privilege in the world, is in part a product of other factors, such as age, class and race (see also Jenkins, 1994). Messerschmidt (1993) argues that men and boys actively negotiate specific types of masculinity out of social settings in which they find themselves, and with the subsequent resources at their disposal, contending that masculinity must be viewed as structured action. Through interaction, masculinity becomes institutionalised, and men draw on such existing, but previously created, masculine ways of thinking and acting to construct a masculine identity on any particular situation. Messerschmidt (1993) encapsulates much of the theorising on masculinity and gender identity when he asserts, that although femininity/masculinity is always individual and personal, specific forms of femininity/masculinity are available, encouraged and permitted, depending upon one's social situation, class, race and sexual orientation.

In addition to the notion of a constantly negotiated gender identity, the writings on masculinity are

also interspersed with the view of masculinity, or masculine identity, as being defined more by what one is not rather than who one is (Kimmel, 1994) and as such a masculine identity is not easily attainable and if attained is inherently fragile and will require constant reattainment. Many writers on masculinity (e.g. Connell, 1987, and all those who draw on Connell's ideas; Jefferson, 1994; Kimmel, 1992) draw on the psychoanalytical concepts of Chodorow and argue that in some sense feminine identity is more easily and surely attainable than masculine identity. As Horney stipulates:

She performs her part by merely being, without any doing .. the man on the other hand has to do something in order to fulfil himself

(Horney, 1932, p 359).

Chodorow (1989) proposed a theory of object relations, which in its original conception was a set of accounts about the constitution of self in the context of primary emotional relationships. According to her a boy's identification, with the person to whom he is closest to and upon whom he is most dependent (which in most western cultures would be the mother or another female carer) is, according to cultural values, unnatural and works against his attainment of a stable masculine identity. The process of developing a gender identity yields insecurity and ambivalence in males. Chodorow argues that until masculinity or masculine identity ceases to depend on men's proving themselves, their doing will be a reaction to insecurity rather than a creative exercise of humanity. Jefferson (1994) argues that by emphasising masculine identity as something that needs to be accomplished, this provides a tool with which to begin the task of unpicking why it is that certain boys and/or men become involved with one sort of activity rather than another and how, if it is considered important to do so, they might be persuaded to stop.

Before continuing with this exposition of the main recurring themes and concepts of the recent masculinity literature, I wish now to examine in more detail one apparently influential writer's theorising on gender identity and masculinity, the work of Robert Connell. Much of the recent writings on masculinity would appear to draw directly from Connell's work or extrapolate from it to different degrees and with different focus. Since Connell's work appears quoted in so many other's work on masculinity it would seem prudent to evaluate Connell's work in more detail. To appreciate Connell's theorising on masculinity we must first explore his conceptualisation of the field of gender relations.

Connell's theory of gender relations

Connell (1985) identifies two main types of accounts of gender relations. One emphasises the social construction of the categories of gender, the ways they are learned, inhabited and transmitted. He subsumes 'sex-roles', 'stereotypes' and 'socialisation' concepts under this category. The second type of account takes men and women for most purposes as already-constituted categories, and focuses on the relations of power and exploitation between them. Under this type of gender relation account Connell subsumes notions of 'sexual politics', 'oppression' and 'patriarchy'. However, he argues that the social theory of gender is not a tightly knit logical system but rather a network of insights

and arguments about connections. He believes that a central dynamic of gender relations is to be found in the interplay between the sexual division of labour, the unequal distribution of power between men and women, and patterns of emotional life. He identifies these three structures as being empirically the major structures of the field of gender relations.

(i) the division of labour:

Connell (1987) argues that the particular designs and practices of the division of labour current at a given time represent a social choice of some kind. He maintains that the division of labour can no longer be seen as a structure in its own right, rather it must be seen as part of a larger pattern, a gender-structured system of production, consumption and distribution.

(ii) the structure of power:

Connell maintains that the ability to impose a definition of the situation, to set the terms in which events are understood and issues discussed, to formulate ideas and to define morality, basically to assert hegemony, is an essential part of social power. He argues that if authority is defined as legitimate power then one can argue that the main axis of the power structure of gender is the general connection of authority with masculinity. Connell further contends that there is a construction of hierarchies of authority and centrality within main gender categories.

(iii) the structure of cathexis (Connell's term for patterns of emotional life):

Connell describes 'cathexis' as, the construction of emotionally charged social relations with other people in the world. He asserts that the social patterning of desire, or 'cathexis', is a joint system of prohibition and incitement of people into the 'right' relationships. Connell perceives these three structures as a unity of historical composition, which is always imperfect and under construction.

For Connell (1987), therefore, femininity and masculinity are not essences, rather they are ways of living certain relationships. He argues that the patterns of gender and sex that appear are not just an important feature of human life, they are specifically social, they involve inequalities of income, the working of institutions, the distribution of power, the division of labour and other distinctively social facts. Connell asserts that the dynamic of gender and sexual ideology is a struggle for hegemony, for him what is at issue is the power to set the terms on which questions of gender are understood and conflicts fought out. For Connell (1987) hegemony means:

a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond contexts of brute power into the organisation of private life and cultural processes

(Connell, 1987, p 184).

Connell (1995) argues that part of the struggle for hegemony in the gender order is the use of culture for such disciplinary purposes as setting standards, claiming popular assent and discrediting those who fall short. He argues that normalisation involves the acceptance of norms by which sexualities are constructed and ranked hierarchically, and in this process a hegemonic masculinity is prioritised, preferred forms of femininity are subordinated, and alternative femininities and masculinities are marginalised. Connell (1987) maintains that the public face of hegemonic

masculinity is not necessarily what the powerful are but rather what sustains their power, and what large numbers of men are motivated to support since most men benefit from the subordination of women, and hegemonic masculinity is the cultural expression of this ascendancy. For Connell (1990, p 94) to say a particular form of masculinity is hegemonic means 'that its exaltation stabilises a structure of dominance and oppression in the gender order as a whole'.

Carrigan, Connell and Lee (1985) stipulate that the question of hegemonic masculinity is a question of how particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance. Connell (1987), however, goes on to argue that the image of a single standard of masculinity is apolitical and ignores the pervasive imbalance of power among different men or within gender relations. He stipulates that a hierarchy is created with at least three elements; hegemonic masculinity, conservative masculinities and subordinated masculinities. Connell (1991) further argues that central to the production of the different masculinities is the active process of grappling with a situation and constructing ways of living in it, and this process of gender construction will be affected by men's different economic and cultural positions in society.

Emerging from Connell's extensive published work (1985, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1995) on gender relations and masculinity are three main themes that other writers have appeared to have assimilated: the notion of one's gender identity being a continual construction through interactions with people and within situations; the notion of a 'hegemonic masculinity' which legitimates and reproduces the social relationships that generate its dominance and power; and the notion of rather than a single standard of masculinity existing various masculinities exist which reflect men's differential access to cultural and economic power and dominance.

From Men and Masculinity to Men, Masculinity and Crime

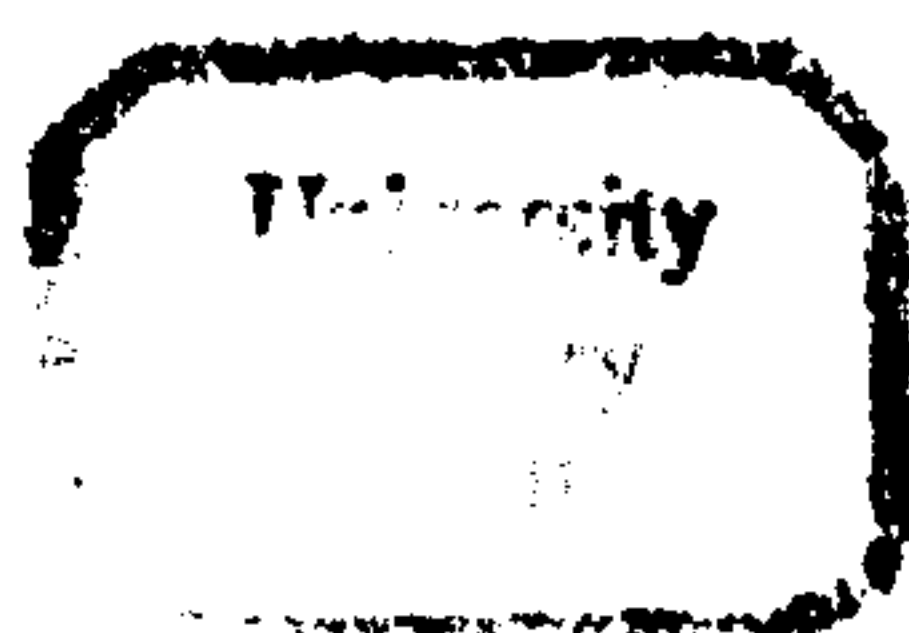
Chapter one noted how feminists initial foray into criminology was concerned with raising awareness regarding 'women and crime', and to highlight the ways in which women had been (mis)represented within the subject. Over time, however, feminist writers also became concerned with understanding crime as a male dominated activity which resulted not from sex differences but was a product of gender differences propagated by society (Heidensohn, 1985; Morris, 1987). Coward (1996) observes that any historian can tell us that boy gangs and their acts of macho delinquency are not new, being particularly noticeable in times of unsettled social conditions, such as when traditional patterns of employment change. However, although men comprise the vast body of research in criminology, a focus on men as gendered individuals is a relatively recent phenomenon.

Walklate (1998) notes that as a discipline criminology has historically been characterised by the search for a universal explanation of crime. It can also be added that criminology has been characterised by the assumption that descriptions and theories of men's behaviour is akin to descriptions and theories of all human behaviour, and identified as the desired or 'normal', expected behaviour of all human beings. In the past criminological theories made no systematic attempt to differentiate between male behaviour and human behaviour. Such thinking can be

identified in the 'school' of classical criminology's references to 'rational man' and the early positivists' identification of female biology as 'regressive'. The general positivistic approach adopted by criminology, that is its focus on facts and observable phenomena, can also be seen to be based on the notion of 'man' as representative of all humanity and the belief in the power of reason, and in particular the reasoning capacities of 'men' (see Seidler, 1989; Walklate, 1998).

Despite this early gender blindness, some theorists did still refer to the 'maleness' of offenders behaviour. For example, theorists who studied the structural cultural context of crime (eg Miller, 1958) stressed the importance of 'toughness', 'excitement', and an emphasis on male sexual prowess as core values to those engaged in criminal activities (see also Newburn & Stanko, 1994). Others, such as subcultural theorists, also highlighted similar instances of 'toughness' and 'excitement'. Cohen (1955), for example argued that the 'delinquent subculture' was created largely by young men who had difficulties adjusting to the male role. He maintained that men and women had different problems and preoccupations because they were judged by themselves and by others according to different [gendered] standards. Cohen, however, ultimately downgraded issues of gender in favour of a class-based explanation of criminality. Sutherland (1947) also drew attention to the 'maleness' inherent in delinquency and criminal behaviour. He argued that boys were more likely to be involved in crime for two key reasons: firstly boys are less strictly controlled by the socialisation process in general; and secondly during that socialisation process boys are taught to be tough, aggressive, active risk seekers, all of which Sutherland believed to be prerequisite for involvement in criminal behaviour. Oakley (1972) also maintained that criminality and 'maleness' were linked. She argues that the sorts of acts associated with each have much in common: the demonstration of physical strength, a certain level of aggressiveness, visible and external proof of achievement. Both males and criminals are valued by their peers for these qualities and thus, Oakley (1972) argues, the dividing line between what is masculine and what is criminal may be at times a thin one.

Awareness of the 'maleness' of offending behaviour, therefore, has not gone completely unnoted within criminology. It has to be argued, however, that as a rule criminology has dealt with men and male offenders without acknowledging their gendered nature. This in turn has led to the creation of criminological theories which have failed to conceptualise gender (Scruton, 1990). As Messerschmidt (1993) observes, rather than questioning the social construction of 'masculinity' or 'maleness' and how it may connect to criminal behaviour, criminology has preferred to ask why it is women do not offend. It was feminist writers who first argued that relations between men and women, and the way masculine and feminine identities developed was vital to an understanding of deviant and criminal behaviour (Coote, 1996). Work by Carlen (1983), Edwards (1984), Eaton (1986), amongst others, highlighted that many of the problems encountered by female offenders were centred around the traditional concepts of femininity and what is expected of women by society, traditional concepts which are also embedded in the judicial and penal system. Arising from such work, and from emerging concerns regarding the behaviour and position of men in society during the late 1980s, a shift in the focus in criminology was witnessed and some writers began to question why it is that the majority of crimes are committed by men. As Stanko (1995) observes



criminology began to become cognizant of how crime reflects, resists, reinforces and reproduces wider gendered structures in society.

Liddle (1993) observes that criminology has witnessed calls, from some, for a problematising of masculinity within its theorising. He argues that the challenge of masculinity to criminology is one of demonstrating how individual subjects 'do' particular gender constructs from within the historical and material constraints which their social action draws upon, as well as demonstrating some of the complex links between gendered 'ways of being' and particular sets of criminal behaviour and other behaviour. Messerschmidt (1993) argues that conventional thinking conceives of criminal behaviour as an expression of masculinity, the thinking being that the person's gender is logically already settled prior to the behaviour and therefore can be understood as the behaviour's cause. He argues that masculinity is constructed differently by class, race, age and particular social situations and stipulates that the variations in the construction of masculinity among men and boys are crucial to understanding the different types and amounts of crime amongst men. Messerschmidt contends that just as there are gender-appropriate and class-appropriate forms of conforming behaviour there are also gender- and class-appropriate forms of non-conforming behaviour, and identifies crime as a resource that may be summoned when men lack other resources to accomplish gender.

Oyserman and Markus (1990a, 1990b) argue that many youths initially view a delinquent lifestyle as a means to create selves that they could become. Delinquency may be a means to attain such possible selves as 'independent', 'daring', 'competent' or 'fun-loving and adventurous' and the negative self-definitional consequences of delinquency may not be taken into account initially. They further argue that many youths view delinquent activities as the only means of attaining a positive self because their attempts to do so normatively in the past have failed. Jenkins (1994) argues that offending can be seen as a logical corollary to male socialisation, fulfilling as it does a range of masculine imperatives - it can provide income, status, opportunities to prove oneself, approbation from peers, an outlet for frustration and thwarted needs, and excitement, amongst other things. Hudson (1988) argues, as do many others authors, that what society expects of its young men and views as 'normal' behaviour is different more in degree than in kind from behaviour condemned as delinquent and criminal. She stipulates that delinquency and crime provides one means for developing an identity as a man. When males commit criminal offences they are not usually seen as intrinsically challenging normative expectations about behaviour for young and adult men.

It is not only the criminals, however, that can be seen to be fulfilling the masculine imperatives of society. Roberts (1994) observes that although the law generally compels and legitimates prevailing relationships of power, the criminal law most directly mandates socially acceptable behaviour, and in this process serves to shape the way we perceive women's and men's proper role. Bankowski and Mungham (1976), Carlen (1976) and Box (1983) argue that in the field of criminal justice there exists an enormous social distance between those who are passing judgment and those who are, in the vast majority, on the receiving end of this justice. Collier (1995) argues that this can be seen in terms of a hierarchy of masculinities within the criminal court, and contends that the

assessment by judges of the propriety of the actions of 'lower' class males involves judgments about masculinity. It is argued that whilst the middle-class, rational entrepreneur articulates an image of the ideal typical male with which the law operates, its impact is felt by both men and women whose presentation of themselves does not match with this image (Walklate, 1995). Eaton (1993) argues that formal control is used on those who have escaped the informal control of ideology; that is those who have failed to, or chosen not to, accept the dominant models of normality. Payne (1996) maintains that the dangers of experiencing ongoing legal control appear to be linked with prevailing ideas about the danger men and women may or may not represent, the ideas about how men and women should be treated, and their location within the family.

Despite the upsurge in writing and theorising on masculinity and crime there are still a number of important concerns and issues to be raised, a variety of questions that still require asking and answering. As Messerschmidt (1993) observes, crime operates subtly through a complex series of class, race and gender practices and, as such, is always more than a single activity. Some view masculinity in itself as not being a particularly useful concept in analysing and explaining crime (e.g. Cornwall & Lindisfarne, 1994; Messerschmidt, 1993; Newburn & Stanko, 1994) but rather that it is a sensitising concept that highlights how other theories of problem causation may have validity and may interact. These authors argue that masculinity should be informing the understanding of a range of problems rather than demanding a complete rethink. Hudson (1988) suggests there is a 'paradox' at work: on the one hand, the meaning of male offending is congruent with society's agenda for masculinity; but on the other, the state punishes this form of male expression, especially that by black and working-class men, by even more doses of 'macho' sanctions. Jefferson (1994) argues that unless we understand both the reduced opportunities and the pleasures of crime to a certain, socially-located masculine sensibility then we will not get far in advancing our understanding of the links between masculinities and crimes. He perceives the crucial question to be why is it that only particular men from a given class or race, and even then it is usually a minority, come to identify with the crime option, while others identify with other resources to accomplish masculinity.

Some Points of Clarification

Payne (1996), amongst other authors, has observed that there has been a shift in the vision of masculinity, with it being seen as an increasing threat and in greater need of surveillance and control. Kaufman (1994) argues that masculinity, which once was a secure relationship between power over others, control over oneself, and suppression of a range of needs and emotions, is under attack. 'Masculinity' which had felt stable, natural and right is being revealed as both a source of oppression for others and the prime source of pain, anguish and disquietude for men themselves. The damage done to men as a result of the parameters used in Western societies to define appropriate behaviours, and hence emotions, men should demonstrate and 'experience' can be located at two levels. The first level exists for all men, the limitation that, one can argue, is placed upon their *human* potential whereby through the acquisition of male norms (through the process of socialisation) certain aspects of human experience are denied expression due to the fact that they do not fulfil the criteria of what it means to 'be a man' (O'Neil, 1982; Kaufman, 1994). Most of these

restrictions on male behaviour are commonly identified as the 'expressive' side of human nature, therefore it is considered unmanly, to differing degrees depending on which section of society one has the good (or mis) fortune to be born into, for men to express openly fear, sorrow, and so on. The second level is an intensification of the first. This level impinges on those male individuals of society who find themselves within the disempowered sections of society, black men, working class men, homosexual men, who may find that, due to their status in society, their attempts to express their identities as men are severely curtailed (Kimmel, 1992) and often find that it is only through the expression of some of the extremes of the masculine ideal that an expression of masculine identity becomes possible for themselves, such as a complete restriction of all expressive elements of their personality, or conversely the expression of certain 'revered' elements such as the ability to fight and stand alone.

Chapman and Rutherford (1988) argue that the social and economic changes in the past two decades have exposed 'masculinity' for what it is - a subjectivity that is organised within structures of control and authority. O'Neil (1982) observes how the sexes are asking questions about their gender role definitions and how they have been emotionally affected or restricted by their socialisation and sexism in their lives. Payne (1996) argues that, once again, more and more young men are being seen as a threat, most particularly when they are detached from the world of paid employment and the family. It is from these increased observations of 'difficulties' over masculinity that much of the work on men and masculinity, and masculinity and crime have emerged.

O'Neil (1982) maintains that there appears to be a white, middle-class bias in the reporting of the state of men's lives, while Gelsthorpe (1989) argues that theories applied to men are riddled with stereotypical images of what constitutes manhood, the inherent nature of men, what their needs and desires are and so on. Shover and Norland (1978) also argue that criminologists bring to their work on gender differences a set of gendered stereotypes and then proceed to discern empirical patterns and construct theoretical explanations consistent with those beliefs. Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1988) assert that certain meanings are privileged because they conform to the exploratory systems of the dominant culture, while Morgan (1992) notes there are always competing claims to knowledge some of which assume a greater prominence or dominance than others. The study of men and masculinity is no different in that respect. Certain concepts and notions regarding men and masculinity appear to be considered more pertinent to explanations and the understanding of issues of masculinity than others. In addition, perhaps due to the relative 'newness' of the area of study, there often appears to be a lack of agreement or consistency in the terms used. Hence, for example, terms such as masculinity, manhood, masculine identity, male gender role, masculinities and so on are found throughout the literature, the difficulty then being to ascertain whether or not they refer to the same concepts and notions or not. Three areas of such potential contention will be briefly explored here: (a) the notion of a fragile masculinity; (b) the concept of hegemonic masculinity; and (c) the concept of masculinities.

(a) The existence of a fragile masculinity

Much of the literature on masculinity appears to hold to the idea that, unlike the female, the male or masculine identity that men strive to attain in their lives is an inherently fragile enterprise. Kaufman (1994) talks of uncontested assumptions about what it means to be a man combining with deep-set insecurities about 'making the masculine grade'. Numerous authors (Collier, 1995; Connell, 1987, 1995; Jefferson, 1993; Messerschmidt, 1993; Newburn & Stanko, 1994) perceive gender identity, and particularly masculinity, as something that must be continually accomplished and continually strived for, with men being motivated by fears and insecurities about their attaining an adequate or appropriate gender identity. Cowan and Kinder observe:

To be a loser is to suffer a terrible fate. In the course of therapy with men, we find that no matter how great their success, they are haunted by the spectre of failure. Indeed it is our impression that men are driven much more by the fear of failure than by a desire to succeed

(Cowan & Kinder, 1988, p 169).

However, a fear of failing to live up to societal gender expectations, amongst other societal expectations, is not the exclusive domain of men. Authors such as Carlen (1988) show that women too experience anxiety and frustration over the demands and limitations they feel societal gender expectations place on them, and their inability to live up to them.

It would appear that the source of much of the theorising upon the fragile male identity is located in psychoanalytical theory. A number of authors writing on masculinity (e.g. Connell, 1987, 1995 and hence all authors who draw on Connell; Jefferson, 1993, 1994) draw on psychoanalytical theorising, such as that of Chodorow, to appreciate how men come to attain their fragile sense of masculine identity which requires continual accomplishment. Psychoanalytic theorising, such as Eardley (1985) and Chodorow (1989) stipulates, for boys, acquiring a masculine identity involves learning how to differentiate themselves from their mothers, and this will entail a suppression of their nurturing qualities. Men come to identify with their fathers, for a variety of reasons depending on which psychoanalytical theory one subscribes to, generally through a sense of fear. Thus, it is argued, since men's identity formation revolves around fear and what they should *not* become, men's gender identity is fragile, insecure and in constant need of reaffirmation (Kimmel, 1994). However, as Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1989) acknowledge these theories take masculinity and male autonomy as the human standard and femininity and female anatomy are seen as deviations from that standard. Just as with other theories of gender, these theories all overlook similarities between males and females and emphasise difference, basing their theories upon these uncontested assumptions.

These psychoanalytical theories also automatically assume that for a boy to obtain masculine identity formation he must differentiate himself from his mother and this will always be a traumatic experience. In addition these theories fail to acknowledge the existence of psychoanalytical models of identification with the father as loving and not defensive manoeuvres; they fail to acknowledge the possibility that boys may internalise good images of other men and

from that form the substance of a good sense of self within themselves (Richards, 1989). Other authors, such as Coleman (1990), maintain that rather than men's masculine identity constantly needing reaffirming, that for men the matter of their maleness is an occasioned matter. In other words it is only on occasions that a man's proper membership of the category of 'man' figures as relevant to a setting or occasion. More often than not men are not required to reflect on their 'masculinity' or maleness. Thomas (1990) argues that rather than experiencing a resistance to conventional standards of masculinity, many men experience a preoccupation with them. Therefore it would appear that the predominant concept of the existence of a fragile masculinity, and therefore its applicability to theorising criminal behaviour, may be held open for greater scrutiny.

(b) The concept of hegemonic masculinity

Since Connell's (1987) influential work the concept of hegemonic masculinity has become a mainstay of the masculinity literature. Donaldson (1993) argues that hegemonic masculinity, particularly in the work of Carrigan, Connell and Lee, Chapman, Connell, Lichterman, Messner, and Rutherford concerns the dread of and flight from women. It is a lived experience, and an economic and cultural force, and dependent on social arrangements, and it is constructed through difficult negotiation over a lifetime. Walklate (1995) describes hegemonic masculinity as a version of masculinity which pervades all aspects of public and private life providing a normative model against which all behaviours are judged. Collier (1995) argues that while there may be a masculine style which retains a discursive dominance in the public domain, we cannot say, however, that all males are afforded equal access to this discourse or that all masculinities are equally privileged. Messerschmidt (1993) meanwhile argues that in contemporary western industrialised societies, hegemonic masculinity is defined through work in the paid labour market, the subordination of women, heterosexism, and the driven and uncontrollable sexuality of men. Although they differ in interpretation and focus these descriptions of hegemonic masculinity all emphasis practices toward authority, control, competitiveness, individualism, independence, aggressiveness, and the capacity for violence (Connell, 1990, 1992; Segal, 1990).

Although there appears to be a consensus amongst authors that hegemonic masculinity is the dominant conception of masculinity in a given society at a given time, very little else is clarified in relation to this notion (see above). In the literature hegemonic masculinity is identified as an ideal, an ideal that wields power over all individuals and groups in society, and is perceived to be linked to the social arrangements of a society. However, there appears to be little attempt to analyse what this dominant form, hegemonic masculinity, might assume in society at different times. Rather the focus appears to be upon individual men and groups of men's attempts to accommodate, or resist, the hegemonic ideal of masculinity. It would appear to be the case that since the majority of authors maintain no man can attain the ideal of hegemonic masculinity the focus should therefore be upon men's attempts to live their gendered existence in the shadow of this ideal. In fact one could argue little attempt has even been made to ascertain if a 'hegemonic masculinity' does in fact exist and if it does indeed wield power over men as intimated in the literature. As Walklate (1998) observes decisions made by the 'theoretical fiat' does not necessarily render them empirically accurate. This research, using the concept of fulfilling one's

masculine identity as a tool, examined whether there are in fact any dominant, and therefore potentially 'hegemonic' expectations of men existing in society and whether or not men feel restricted by them in any way.

Donaldson (1993) argues that hegemony refers to the ability to impose a definition on the situation, to set the terms in which events are understood and issues discussed. One could argue that such a 'hegemony' exists within the 'masculinity' literature, one which appears to accept uncontested the assumption of a hegemonic masculinity which is vague and ill-defined but all powerful, both to men and the literature. With this apparently uncritical acceptance of a 'hegemonic masculinity', questions relating to what forms of masculinity become hegemonic, why they become hegemonic, and how they sustain their position of power fail to be addressed. The important question which Donaldson identified fails to be asked:

why, in specific social formations, do certain ways of being male predominate, and particular sorts of men rule ?

(Donaldson, 1993, p 644)

(c) The concept of masculinities

Kluckhohn and Murray (1949, p35) observe that:

Every man is in certain respects (a) like all other men; (b) like some other men; (c) like no other man.

Although in the early days of the literature, masculinity was both the dominant terminology and concept, it is now argued that one cannot perceive of a singular and reductive masculinity but rather of a range of possible masculinities (Jefferson, 1994). Jefferson (1989) argues that whilst stereotypes of masculinity, which tend to emphasise qualities like 'aggression', 'independent', 'powerful', 'strong', 'dominant', 'self-confident', 'unemotional', 'competitive', 'active' and 'feelings of superiority' (see Mishkind et al, 1987), undoubtedly tell us something about fairly persistent cultural ideas of masculinity, they fail to address the notion of masculinities in competition with each other, the myriad ways men of different ages and different backgrounds relate to such ideals, and how the force of meanings change as a result of such contest. Morgan (1992) argues that the use of the term 'masculinities' is a theoretical and political strategy designed to deconstruct conventional stereotypes which may obstruct an understanding of the workings of patriarchy.

This focus upon 'masculinities' rather than 'masculinity' appears to be closely linked to the theorising of a hegemonic masculinity. According to the literature, our definitions of masculinity are not equally valued in society. One definition of manhood continues to remain the standard against which other forms of manhood are measured and evaluated, and hence we must speak of competing masculinities (Kimmel, 1994). As Brittan (1989) observes, one cannot deny that there are an infinite number of styles and behaviours associated with gender relations, one has to ask, however, does this justify elevating varying styles of male behaviour to the status of *masculinities*.

Thompson, Pleck and Ferrera (1992) argue that we are largely unfamiliar with how age, generation, sexual orientation, class, race and ethnicity differentially structure the form and content of men's lives and the standards of masculinity to which they adhere. Stillson, O'Neil and Owen (1991) also argue that little is known about men's struggles with gender roles over the life-span and much more research is needed to understand men and their gender socialisation. One could argue it is perhaps premature to allocate variations of masculine behaviour as representations of 'masculinities' in their own right.

Gilmore (1990) maintains that the *social forces* affecting men's experiences will be differentially salient for men of different ages, cohorts, class, race, sexual preference, and region, and assumes that some expectations and social forces will be a common denominator in men's lives. Although Alder and Pollak (1996) argue that recognition of male diversity need not necessarily undermine acknowledgement of the importance of broader cultural definitions of masculinity and structured gender differences, Hearn and Collinson (1996) maintain that an emphasis on specificities can degenerate to diversified pluralism with insufficient attention to structures of power and oppression. As Hanmer (1990) contends, concern for how particular social institutions respond to gender - where policy and practice can be challenged - cannot be addressed if the study of men is conceptualised solely as the study of the personal identity of masculinities.

Tolson (1977) postulated that one of the key questions in the debate on 'masculinity' is whether there is one overarching form of 'masculinity' or many diverse 'masculinities'. Although theoretically it appears the consensus supports the concept of 'masculinities', empirically this concept has yet to be critically examined or supported. Some authors argue that a single standard of masculinity is apolitical and ignores the pervasive imbalance of power among different men (Morgan, 1992). This imbalance of power is not located within the single standard of masculinity, however, that is rooted in the social structures and forces in operation in a given society. The potential differences observed in the behaviour of men from different sections of society are expressions of the social or power inequalities rather than different forms of masculinities. Morgan (1992) maintains we should explore the range of usage of the term 'masculinity', and Tong (1989) observes we have yet to even evaluate the human desirability of masculine and feminine traits nor question whether masculinity and femininity as ideas are worth preserving. An acceptance of these concepts remains unqueried and has been expanded with the emergence of a new concept of masculinities.

It could be argued that one of the reasons for the emergence of 'masculinities' within the 'masculinity' literature is related to the difficulty of creating an analysis of masculine identity which adequately combines individual and social processes. Liddle (1993) contends that one of the difficulties facing masculinities studies is studying men and masculinity without losing sight of either the very real constraints placed on individual action by economic relations and wider structures, or of the richness and complexity of gender-as-lived. Jefferson (1994) also argues that without a sensitivity to the difficulties of uniting social and psychic processes, which often will be pulling in different directions, it is not possible to theorise masculinity. Harris (1995) asserts that

without understanding both the social norms that influence male behaviour and the processes by which men form their gender identities, modern societies are in danger of perpetuating a social order that is hurtling towards an impending doom of desperate poverty, escalating crime, environmental destruction, and ethnic warfare. For Harris (1995) masculinity is an ideology that exists at two distinct but interrelated levels: at the social level there are commonly held assumptions about how men ought to behave, cultural notions of masculinity; at the individual level, each man has specific experiences from which he constructs a gender identity that has some common elements with the dominant male paradigm but also contains unique features. As Jefferson (1994) observes, the 'pressure' of the masculine ideal becomes internalised, a part of one's sense of self, and the next section will attempt to examine the source of that 'pressure' of the masculine ideal.

Masculinism

Brittan (1989) differentiates between 'masculinity' and masculinism. 'Masculinity' refers to those aspects of men's behaviour that fluctuate over time, while masculinism is the ideology that justifies and naturalises male domination, that is the ideology of patriarchy. He maintains that masculinism takes it for granted that there is a fundamental difference between men and women, it assumes heterosexuality is normal, it accepts without question the sexual division of labour, and it sanctions the political and dominant role of the men in the public and private sphere. It also has a tendency to be resistant to change. 'Masculinity' is seen to be institutionalised and that our social, political, religious and economic systems operate exclusively on masculine norms; social definitions are seen to be embedded in the dynamics of institutions, the working of the state, of corporations, of families, just as much as in the personality of individuals (Tolson, 1977; Carrigan et al, 1985). There are, therefore, similarities among and between men and the institutions of patriarchal society, namely masculine ideals² (Millet, 1970; Griffin, 1971). Segal (1990) maintains that 'masculinity' is not some type of internal essence which men have or lack, but rather involves the assumption and possession of an array of privileges, while Kaufman (1994) argues that the equation of 'masculinity' with power is one that developed over centuries. Individual men internalise this into their developing personalities learning to experience power as a capacity to exercise control. Kaufman asserts that the source of this power is the society around men but individual men learn to exercise it as if it were their own.

As Miles (1989) observes, it is the total system of gender relations (patriarchal) rather than the expression of this system in the shaping of one or other '-inity' that is the heart of the problem. He maintains that one of the important questions to ask is what does the socialisation of men - so that they display predominantly a narrow range of human abilities - mean for the male experience and the system of gender relations within society. Thompson (1995) echoes this, arguing that we need to grasp the significance of traditional notions of masculinity in the development and maintenance of gender oppression, and that we need to appreciate the potential for alternative conceptions of 'masculinity' to contribute to challenging and undermining such oppression. The difficulty with this, however, is that one of the characteristics of the concept of masculinity is its resistance to

² For outline of these masculine ideals see earlier sections.

self-analysis and the heightened level of self-awareness necessary to deconstruct patriarchal social relations. Segal (1990) believes men's resistance to change is not reducible to their psychic obstinacy or incapacity; resistance to change is bound up with persisting gender relations which characterise most of the wider economic, social, and political structures of contemporary society. The politics of 'masculinity' cannot concern only questions of personal life and identity, it must also concern questions of social justice (Connell, 1995). As Scales observes:

injustice does not flow directly from recognising differences; injustice results
when those differences are transformed into social and economic deprivation

(Scales, 1986, p 1396).

This research examined the male ideology (or masculinism) that informs the operations of the criminal justice system, and in particular the prison system, and explored what impact this ideology had on the men's expectations, experience, and assessments of the criminal justice system. These findings will be discussed in chapters four and five.

The Present Study

Messerschmidt (1993) notes that social structures organise the way individuals think about their circumstances and generate methods of dealing with them. Faced with the complexity and diversity of human behaviour across the lifespan it is normal to seek form and order, and one of the social structures that provides form and order in our society is the gender order (Loevinger, 1976). Deux (1984) notes that choices are not made in a vacuum, and such pervasive norms and dispositions cannot be ignored. Edley and Wetherall (1995) observe that although men may choose their masculinity they do so from within the confines of the menu. It is this 'menu' of masculine ideals that is the focus of this thesis. By critically examining masculine ideology and the taken for granted assumptions and concepts surrounding men and masculinity this research attempted to explore the life experiences and pressures experienced by men as *men*, and to examine whether any of these concepts contributed to the commission of crime amongst men. By focusing on the masculinism of society and the masculine ideals that dominate in all social settings, this thesis attempts to examine the impact this system has, if any, upon some of the men who come into contact with the criminal justice system. As Rebecca, Hefner and Oleshansky (1976) observe, there are few rewards for transcending traditional gender roles, this thesis explores the consequences of fulfilling traditional gender roles for a selected section of the male population. By presenting the oppressive disadvantages men experience as a result of gender stereotyping is not to undermine feminism by 'competing' with women in terms of the negative effects of gender oppression, rather it can help reinforce and support the feminist argument by developing a broader perspective on the negative impact of patriarchy (see Thompson, 1995).

One Final Point: Assuming the Importance of Gender

Grimshaw (1986) observes that although gender is a major basis for identification it is never the only one, a person is never just a male or female. Matthew (1982) maintains that simply because persons have gender identities and define behaviour as masculine and feminine, it does not necessarily follow that gender is *the*, or even *a*, critical variable in understanding. As she observes

none of these variables, gender, age, race, social class, have meaning outside of social relationships and since social life is changing constantly what these variables index is changing constantly also. She contends that, whether implicit or explicit, reference to gender can deflect attention from structural features that operate on persons regardless of gender and may make gender appear a more significant contribution to the explanation of behaviour than is justifiable. With this cautionary note in mind we move on to the analysis of the research and its findings.

Chapter Three

Methodology: Studying Men and Maleness

This chapter outlines the processes involved in conducting the research on which this thesis is based. Included in this account are some of the theoretical considerations which informed the choice of methods, samples and data analysis. The chapter also includes a detailed summation of the methods and samples used.

Theoretical Considerations

As Dilulio (1987) notes, exploratory research is appropriate at the earliest stages of our knowledge, when we do not know what variables are important, how they relate one to the other, or how (if at all) they can be measured. Exploratory research studies do not provide settled answers, they are a beginning where none has been made and tend to be characterised as qualitative research. Although over the last decade or so greater attention has been focused upon the area of masculinity, with an intense interest in masculinity and offending in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in many ways little systematic empirical research has been conducted into this area by criminologists. A number of studies have emerged (e.g. Morran, 1996; Daniels, 1996) which explore masculinity in respect to violence and offending behaviour, with conceptions of masculinity being used to inform these studies and so to a degree an exploration of masculinity and masculine identity has begun. However, very few studies have been carried out which have actually attempted to explore what exactly are the predominant notions of the 'myths of masculinity' and how different sets of men relate to and accommodate (or fail to accommodate) these notions of masculinity. Research has yet to ask what it is about these concepts that appeals to these men and whether they fit in with these concepts, or what is it that encourages men to continue to strive to live up to these concepts in spite of experiences that have shown these concepts to have a negative impact upon their lives. In many ways we have asserted the importance of masculine identity without actually confirming in any way that this is a factor that operates within men's lives. In many respects this thesis attempts to explore some of these aspects. What is it we mean exactly when we talk of masculine identity and what does it mean to the men who took part in the research? Is it a fundamental building block of their identity or is it something that lurks in the periphery of their identity? Relatively little research has been conducted in this area and few precise tools exist which can be utilised for this research. Since many of the questions posed in this thesis are necessarily exploratory in nature and since a number of the issues being raised are, in a myriad of ways, speculative, subjective interpretations of 'objective' structures of power within society, it was decided that an essentially qualitative approach was the most suitable procedure to use.

Which type of qualitative approach?

As Strauss and Corbin (1990) observe, some areas of study lend themselves more naturally to qualitative types of research, for instance, research that attempts to uncover the nature of person's

experiences with a phenomenon, like addiction. They maintain that qualitative methods can be used to uncover and appreciate what lies behind any phenomenon of which little is yet known. Sharpe (1995) also argues that qualitative data can be used to illuminate theory, to examine the compatibility between theory and empirical data and can lead, ultimately, to the systematic formulation of theory.

One particular form of qualitative research which has an established, though somewhat contentious, history in criminological research is the life history method. Denzin (1970) stipulates that the life history presents the experiences and definitions held by one person, one group, or one organisation as this person, group or organisation interprets those experiences. As Sharpe (1995) observes, through the collection of detailed and insightful data, life histories provide a first-hand account of the social experience from the participants point of view. Connell (1995) argues that life histories give rich documentation of personal experience, ideology and subjectivity, but they also document social structures, social movements and institutions. Sharpe (1995) maintains that with its rich content of insights, the life history is unique in providing a basis for investigating areas normally not reported, and with its wealth of detail the life history can provide new variables, raise new questions and reveal new processes. Denzin (1970) argues that the life history method represents a major approach to the 'sensitising concept' strategy of theory development and verification, while at the same time it can also function as a negative case against which existing theories may be assessed. Sharpe (1995) argues that a collection of life histories can reveal regularities, types and patterns of behaviour, while Denzin (1970) maintains that it is possible to discover propositions that pertain to a total population by the use of a single or small set of life histories. Connell (1995) argues that with life histories, procedures should put the emphasis on the common ground and the practical routines of social life. However, as Lee (1986) maintains, it is not enough to take the experiences at face value rather we need to examine the implicit assumptions that underlie the constraints on people's lives. The aim is always to make explicit the hidden and unexpressed assumptions behind the explanations given, to make manifest what the accounts have in common in terms of explanations, contradictions, oppositions, gaps and taken-for-granted assumptions. Denzin (1970) argues that the life history method may be the best available technique for studying such important social psychological processes as adult socialisation, the emergence of group and organisational structure, the rise and decline of social relationships, and the situational response of the self to daily interactional contingencies. As noted in the previous chapter, one of the difficulties facing the study of masculinity is uniting social and psychic processes in our attempts to understand how masculine identities are formed and how they influence men's behaviours and lives (e.g. Liddle, 1993; Jefferson, 1994). The life history method would, therefore, appear to offer the greatest potential in providing a research method that adequately captures the individual and psychic processes involved in the development and maintenance of a masculine identity, while at the same time capturing the concomitant social processes involved. It was decided, therefore, that the life history method, or a variation of this method, would be the most appropriate research procedure to adopt for the topic under study.

The use of semi-structured, biographical interviews

Harding (1987: p 2) argues that:

a research method is a technique for (or a way of proceeding in) gathering evidence. One could reasonably argue that all evidence-gathering techniques fall into one of the following categories: listening to (or interrogating) informants, observing behaviour, or examining historical traces or records. In this sense there are only three methods of social inquiry.

Three main complementary methods of data collection were chosen for this research: semi-structured interviews; observation and participation; and descriptive data from organisations, with the interviews comprising the core of the research. A life history approach is perhaps too extravagant a term to use for the methods adopted (but it is the term that will be used throughout this chapter) but both the theoretical and methodological design draw on ethnomethodology in an attempt to obtain some balance between the 'objectivity' required of research and what Denzin (1978) terms the subjective internal and reflective elements of social behaviour and experience.

Sharpe (1995), amongst others, maintains that the best method for the life history is the prolonged biographical interview. Lofland (1971) argues the object of less structured interviews is to discover what kinds of things are happening rather than determine the frequency of predetermined kinds of things that the researcher already believes can happen. As Bottomley (1979: p 76) argues 'prediction requires a degree of certainty without necessarily any explanatory force, whereas explanation requires a degree of plausibility and adequacy at the level of meaning without necessarily any predictive power at all'. The main premise of this research was that by examining how men perceive themselves in life one might ascertain some of the key issues or concepts men use when constructing their self-perceptions as men. In depth semi-structured interviews with men were used to determine to what degree, if any, masculine concepts, themes and identities affected men's feelings and behaviours, whether or not these played a role in how men make decisions and whether they affected the choices men made, particularly decisions and choices to become involved in crime. Using in-depth semi-structured interviews, composed of specific topics, the life histories of a group of male prisoners and a group of male offenders on probation orders were collected. The interviews comprised several sections:

1. Previous involvement in crime
2. Family life and upbringing
3. Schooling and education
4. Employment
5. Use of leisure time
6. Men and society
7. Life in prison, or life on a probation order.

These topics were dealt with in a chronological manner to allow the individual men to discuss their life experiences in a developmental, cumulative and logical manner. There were two main reasons for both the semi-structuring of the interviews under topics and for the selection of those particular

topics. Firstly, the family, schooling and education, employment and so on have been identified time and again, both in the masculinity literature (e.g. Brittan, 1989; Connell, 1985, 1991; Messerschmidt, 1993; Tolson, 1977) and the criminology literature (e.g. Farrington & West, 1973; Farrington, 1979; Eaton, 1986; Gottfried & Hirschi, 1990; Box, 1983) as being of important relevance to the development of masculine identities and criminal careers respectively, and hence it was deemed imperative to examine and analyse these specific areas in detail. Secondly, the semi-structuring of interviews, in addition to producing a free flowing discursive element to the interviews which aided in eliciting responses, it was felt increased the likelihood of social factors or organisations which play an important role in men's identities, decisions and choices being identified. Semi-structured interviews also allowed for any similarities or differences between men to be more easily identifiable. The use of such semi-structured interviews allowed both the individual experience and the social components of that experience to be captured and analysed. The interviews with prisoners and offenders on probation comprised of 120 and 112 questions respectively. The slightly longer prisoner interview was due to the fact prisoners were asked about their experiences of being a man in a male prison. Copies of the offenders interview schedule can be found in Appendix Two.

As Denzin(1970) observes a key feature of the life history method is the continual interspersing of comments, explanations and questions by someone other than the focal subject, typically those of the researcher. For this research it was decided to collect and analyse the comments and explanations, on some of the key issues, of people who had worked with prisoners and offenders on probation orders. Therefore semi-structured interviews were carried out with a group of prison officers and a group of probation officers. In many ways these staff interviews were collected to act as a foil to the offenders. The staff interviews explored how staff perceived the men they worked with and what ethos, if any, they worked with. The interviews with staff attempted to determine whether any aspects of 'masculinism' or masculine ideology and stereotyping informed any of their perceptions of the men they worked with and whether it had any impact upon the services available to the offenders and the treatment the offenders received from staff. The main topics dealt with within the staff interviews included the main job details and responsibilities, job satisfaction, staff-offender relations and staff-staff relations, the type of men who commit crime, who return to probation, or prison, regularly, the experiences of being on probation and the experience of imprisonment for men. The interviews with prison staff and probation officers consisted of 60 questions and 38 questions respectively. The slightly longer length of the prison staff interviews was related to the fact that a number of questions dealt specifically with the predominantly all-male environment of a male prison and what impacts, positive or negative, this may have on officers and offenders. Copies of the staff interview schedule can be found in Appendix Two.

The Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out in 1996, in which four prisoners and one member of staff from a Category B prison were interviewed. The pilot study was used to test out the validity and the applicability of the interview schedules in terms of tapping the issues of masculine identity and its

relationship, if any, to offending behaviour. The sample size of the pilot study was kept to a minimum due to the need not to disrupt the running of the prison and the limited number of days where a research presence was feasible for the prison. From the small number of interviews conducted it appeared that the interviews did tap into the areas of interest, and they were found to be successful in eliciting informative responses regarding how men view themselves as men and the effects they think this has had on their lives, and in particular their involvement in crime.

The Main Study

Due to the nature of the topic being explored in this research - essentially an exploratory study of a number of complicated, diverse and potentially intertwined concepts, viz. masculinity, masculine identity and offending behaviour - and the use of lengthy, intensive interviews, it was decided that a relatively small number of individuals would be interviewed in some depth. As Lofland (1971) observes, studies based on intensive interviewing have typically used from about twenty to fifty interviews. He argues that given the problem of material management and use, numbers within this range can be accepted as reasonable. Lofland (1971) maintains one can legitimately sacrifice breadth for depth. Connell (1995) also maintains that a life history study of masculinity cannot gain any depth of understanding of particular situations while sampling a broad population of men. Since the main aim of this research was to explore some of the essentially hypothetical notions surrounding masculinity and its operation within a group of men's lives, it was decided that a methodology and sample size that allowed for the exploration and development of themes would be of more benefit to the area being studied than a more quantitative approach. Where is the benefit of saying X number of men said this or complied with these notions if we have as yet not clarified or begun to fully appreciate what these notions really mean to these men? As Sharpe (1995) observes, to depersonalise into statistics the unique histories of such a diverse group of individuals would not do justice to them, or to the complex social phenomenon of the research. It was therefore decided that relatively small sample sizes would be selected for each of the groups of offending men and for each of the groups of staff working with these men.

The Samples

In total forty individuals were interviewed for this research. Of this forty, fourteen were prisoners, nine were probation clients, ten were prison staff and seven were probation officers. Although interviewed as four separate groups, as prisoners, offenders on probation, prison staff and probation staff, throughout this thesis the information and findings gleaned from the interviews are dealt with within two main groupings. The prisoners and probation clients make up the grouping of 'offending men' while the prison staff and probation officers make up the grouping of 'staff' who work with these offending men. Briefly outlined below is the process of selection used for each of the four groups. In each case the selection procedures were affected by the situations in which the selecting took place and the scope and nature of the research.

The Prison Interviews

Background information

In the light of the limited financial resources and research time available, it was decided that the fieldwork for this research would be conducted in one of the prisons in the local area. There are a number of prisons located in the area of East Riding of Yorkshire, of differing prisoner category, all of which would have been able to provide a suitable sample of prisoners and prison staff. The first two prisons approached in relation to conducting the fieldwork were, however, unable to accommodate the research. Both prisons, one was a relatively large local Category B prison, the other a smaller Category B prison, were unable to grant research access on the grounds that they had already committed themselves to in-house research projects. Since both prisons had either research being conducted or research about to commence they felt unable to justify further research access as it would potentially cause too much disruption to prisoners, staff and the running of the prison. The smaller Category B prison did, however, allow a small pilot study to be carried out in the prison in the early months of 1996 (see above). Originally there had been a possibility that the main fieldwork could have been conducted there but prior research commitments by the prison ruled that possibility out. The third prison approached granted research access, once an outline of the research project had been cleared by the area manager. This was a Category C prison for adult sentenced men with a certified normal accommodation (CNA) of 438. Since the prison was not particularly keen for an extensive research presence it was agreed that the fieldwork would be conducted over a six week period, with access seven days a week, during the months of July and August 1996. On the basis of the pilot study carried out, six weeks was considered adequate time for conducting the number of interviews required in addition to providing time to observe the people and activities of the prison. During the six weeks it was intended to interview fifteen prisoners and ten members of staff.

At the time of the fieldwork the prisoner accommodation was divided into six wings and a hostel. A, B and C wings were standard wings where the majority of prisoners were allocated, providing they maintained the accepted level of behaviour at all times. D wing was the 'enhanced wing' where the prisoners would receive certain benefits, or extras, such as longer association periods, providing they adhered to the rules of the enhanced regime, such as agreeing to be drug-free and submitting to drug testing on a regular basis. The hostel was a 'super-enhanced' level which was available only to those prisoners who had achieved their Category D status. The hostel held accommodation for thirteen prisoners and was generally used for preparing them for their impending release back into the community. E wing was the newest part of the prison which had been recently completed to increase the capacity of the prison. This wing differed slightly from the other wings both in design and use. E wing was divided into two sections, one contained the austere level regime which was where prisoners were allocated if their behaviour on the other wings was deemed inappropriate. Generally a prisoner had to receive three written warnings before being removed to the austere section of E wing. The second section provided a basic level regime and it was here that the majority of prisoners were placed on their arrival to the prison. The prisoners usually spent a minimum of two weeks in this part of the prison and it was during this time that the

prisoners would receive information about the regime in the prison and what would be expected of them during their time in the prison and what they would receive from the prison.

After obtaining permission to conduct research in this prison, the researcher was allocated to C wing, one of the standard wings, and D wing which provided the 'enhanced regime' within the prison, and it was on these wings the researcher was to conduct the fieldwork. There was no choice on my part in this allocation. Prisoners and staff alike identified these two wings as being the 'better wings' within the prison. A and B wing were considered to be occasionally troublesome and E wing was considered to be the area of the prison that caused the most difficulties, in that it generally contained the more difficult prisoners as the austere regime was located there. Although the majority of the fieldwork took place on C and D wings, some time was also spent on E wing and the hostel as a prisoner from each of these areas was interviewed. Since prisoners and staff tended to talk about the prison as a whole, in addition to the wings they were located on, I gained an overall picture of the working of the prison. However, due to the focus and nature of the research, the majority of the information about the prison contained within this thesis concerns C and D wings, their prisoners and staff.

The Prison Population

The majority of prisoners held in this prison were in the final stages of their sentences and had been transferred there from other prisons, although a considerable number of the prisoners served a complete, short sentence at the prison. During the period of the fieldwork the prison held approximately 457 adult sentenced men, of which 431 were Category C prisoners and twenty six were Category D. In addition to these men there were two categorised as young offenders and three non-categorised sentenced males. In total there was approximately 462 men held in custody in the prison. Since the majority of the prisoners were coming to the end of their sentences, prisoners with a complete range of offences could be found within the prison, ranging from murder, armed robbery, assault to drug offences, and various types of theft. Generally, however, the prison tended not to receive prisoners who had committed offences of a sexual nature.

Table 3.1: Breakdown of Prison Population by Racial Origin

| | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| White | 417 | 90 |
| Black | 26 | 6 |
| Asian | 17 | 4 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 2 | 0.4 |

Table 3.2: Breakdown of Prison Population by Age

| | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Over 21 under 25 | 116 | 26 |
| 25-29 years | 179 | 40 |
| 30-34 years | 86 | 19 |
| 35-39 years | 36 | 8 |
| 40-44 years | 19 | 4 |
| 45-49 years | 6 | 1 |
| 50-54 years | 3 | 0.7 |
| 55-59 years | 2 | 0.4 |
| 60 plus | 0 | 0 |

Table 3.3: Breakdown of Prison Population by Length of Sentence

| | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Less than 6 mths | 4 | 0.9 |
| 6 mths > 12 mths | 29 | 6 |
| Over 12 mths < 2 yrs | 88 | 19 |
| Over 2 yrs < 3 yrs | 105 | 23 |
| Over 3 yrs < 4 yrs | 92 | 20 |
| Over 4 yrs < 10 yrs | 134 | 29 |
| 10 yrs < life | 10 | 2 |

As the preceding tables show, within this Category C prison the majority of prisoners were white, aged between 20 and 40 years of age, with 40% being aged between 25 and 29 years, and serving sentences of between two and ten years. For this research a sample of men was selected from the overall prison population. At the time of the research a breakdown of the prisoner's offences was unobtainable from the Local Inmate Data System or elsewhere within the prison.

The Prisoner Sample:

Of the fourteen prisoners interviewed, twelve of the men were white and two of them were black. The oldest prisoner interviewed was 53 years of age and the youngest was 24. Nine of the men were aged between 24 and 30 years of age, three of them were aged between 31 and 36 years of age and two of the men were in their early fifties. For six of the men this was the first time serving a prison sentence. Of these six men, one had served a probation order for carrying an offensive weapon, one had received community service for burglary, one had been remanded in custody but never sentenced to prison prior to his present sentence and one had been fined and banned from driving after being convicted of drink driving. The most sentences served by any one of the prisoners was twelve, these

were a mixture of detention centre, young offender institutions and adult prison sentences. Of the remaining seven men, two had served one sentence and one had served two sentences in a young offenders institution. Three of the men had served between three and five sentences, these being a combination of detention centres, young offender and adult prison sentences. One of the men had served two adult prison sentences only. Of the fourteen men only two of them could be considered to have had no major contact with the criminal justice system.

Table 3.4: Breakdown of Prisoner Sample by Offence and Length of Sentence

| Prisoner | Offence | Length of Sentence |
|-----------------|--|---------------------------|
| Aidan | Armed robbery | 14 yrs |
| Andrew | Assault | 3 yrs |
| Bryan | Stabbing | 5 yrs |
| Connor | Kidnap and robbery | 10 yrs |
| Dermot | Robbery | 3 yrs 9 mths |
| Emmet | Possession: intent to supply | 2 yrs |
| Fergus | Drugs offence: supplying | 6 yrs |
| Frank | Drugs offence: supplying | 4 yrs |
| Greg | Burglary | 18 mths |
| Harvey | Wounding with intent | 3 yrs 6 mths |
| Ian | Theft and handling | 2 yrs |
| James | Robbery | 6 yrs |
| Keith | Armed robbery, attempted murder | 24 yrs, 10 yrs |
| Lewis | Burglary | 18 mths |

Although selecting a representative sample was not essential to this research, overall the sample of prisoners selected would appear to be representative of the prison population as a whole. 86% of the sample were white compared with 90% of the prison population, and 14% were black compared with 6 per cent. 64% (9) of the prisoner sample were aged between 24 and 30 years of age compared with 66% of the prison population, 21% (3) were aged between 30 and 40 years compared with 27%, 14% (2) were aged between 40 and 55 years compared with 6 per cent. In terms of sentence lengths, 43% (6) of the prisoner sample were serving between two and four years compared with 43% of the prison population, 29% (4) of the sample were serving sentences of over four years and up to ten years compared with 29%, 14% (2) of the prisoner sample were serving over twelve months but less than two years compared with 19%, and 14% (2) were serving over ten years but less than life compared with 2% of the prison population. In terms of age, ethnicity and sentence length, overall the prisoner sample reflects the prison population as a whole.

Selecting the prisoner sample:

The general view regarding sample selection is that one aims to select a sample which is representative of the general population being studied, so generalisation of findings will be

possible, and that the random sampling method is the most effective way of eliciting such a representative sample (Moser & Kalton, 1971). However, not all research settings are conducive to a random sampling method and for some research representativeness may not necessarily be the most desired outcome of the sample selection. Arber and Evandrow (1993) maintains that where the researcher's aim is to generate theory and wider understanding of social processes or social actions, the representativeness of the sample may be of less importance. As noted earlier, where the fieldwork was conducted within the prison was determined, to a large degree, by the prison official acting as the research's liaison officer. Hence from the beginning of this research the possibility of obtaining a random sample in the traditional social science sense was limited, due to the restrictions imposed upon the fieldwork by the needs and requirements of ensuring that disruption to the running of the prison was kept to a minimum, and by a desire to have the prison reflected positively in the research. In addition to being restricted to particular wings within the prison, the selection procedure was also affected by elements of the prison regime. However, in terms of broader methodological concerns obtaining a representative sample was not essential to the overall aims of the research.

Standard Wing Routine

| | Mon-Fri, excluding Wed. |
|------------------------|--|
| 8.00am | Unlock for breakfast |
| 8.30am | Prisoners to work, education |
| 11.45am | Prisoners return to wing, lock up |
| 12.00am | Staff lunch, prisoners locked up |
| 12.45pm | Staff return to wings |
| 14.00pm | Prisoners to work, education |
| 14.15 -16.15 pm | Visits |
| 16.30pm | Prisoners return to wing (15.45pm Friday) |
| 16.45pm | Tea meal |
| 17.15pm | Roll check |
| 17.25pm | Staff to tea, prisoners locked up |
| 18.00pm | Unlock for evening classes, P.E. |
| 18.10pm | Unlock for association |
| 20.15pm | Lock up for night |
| 20.30pm | Roll check |

| | Weekends |
|----------------|---|
| 8.00am | Unlock for breakfast |
| 8.25am | Lock up |
| 8.30am | Unlock cleaners for cleaning duties |
| 9.30am | Unlock for association |
| 11.45am | Cease association, lock up |
| 12.00am | Lunch served |
| 12.45pm | Staff to lunch, prisoners locked up |
| 14.00pm | Unlock for association, visits start |
| 16.00pm | Visits cease |
| 16.30pm | Associations ceases |
| 16.50pm | Tea meal served |
| 17.15pm | Roll check, patrolling state |

Although some minor variations existed between wings in the prison, for the two wings on which the fieldwork was conducted the routines outlined above tended to be the daily routine. Wednesdays saw an extra hour's lock up before lunch to allow staff to avail themselves of gym facilities as part of the Prison Service's staff 'activity hour' initiative. The prison operated a strict policy of ensuring that as many prisoners as possible were either attending work or education, and any prisoners not employed or in education spent those hours locked in their cells. Therefore, during the day, apart from a number of prisoners who worked as cleaners on the wing, all prisoners were off the wing either at work or education, or locked in their cells. This regime created a number of difficulties in carrying out the fieldwork in terms of the proposed intentions of observing and participating with the prisoners on the wings, in selecting prisoners for interviewing and in actually conducting the interviews themselves.

The Prisoner Interviews

The length of the prisoner interviews ranged from forty minutes to two hours and thirty minutes, the average interviewing time was one hour and twenty minutes. Due to the chronological sequence of the interview questions and sections, and the potentially sensitive contents of the interviews, it was decided that whenever possible it would be best to complete each interview in one sitting. Only one of the prisoner interviews was not completed in one session. As a result of the regime of the prison, this meant that realistically it was generally possible to interview one prisoner in the morning and one in the afternoon. On average, when taking into account the notes to be added to interviews regarding the atmosphere of the interview and any non-verbal responses of the interviewees, the majority of interviews took up to two hours to complete. On more than one occasion the length and depth of the interviews and the energy required to maintain the momentum of the interview left the interviewer drained, and this combined with the routine of the prison meant on some days only one interview could be completed in a day. This meant the initial

assessment of six weeks to complete all observations and interviews was tight and interviewing was still being conducted on the final day of the fieldwork. Once a prisoner had agreed to be interviewed and a time and day agreed staff had to be informed to ensure that the prisoner would be kept back from work or education or would be unlocked from his cell. There were generally no difficulties in prisoners being excused from work or education to take part in the research. However, if for any reason, such as an unexpected visit or a forgotten exam, the prisoner could not turn up on the agreed day there was little flexibility in arranging to interview another prisoner at that time. Thus for example, on the final day of the fieldwork with one more prisoner interview to be completed, the prisoner scheduled to be interviewed and the 'back-up' prisoner both received unexpected visits, one domestic and one official. Despite having tried to allow for such unexpected hitches, there was no back-up to the 'back-up' prisoner available and therefore the final prisoner interview never took place, leaving a sample of fourteen prisoners rather than the intended fifteen.

All prisoner interviews, bar one, were on a one-to-one basis and were tape-recorded, with the prisoners' consent. All prisoner interviews, bar one, were conducted in an office on the wing which was normally used for interviewing by probation officers and other official prison visitors. One of the fourteen prisoner interviews was conducted on the austere section of E wing, in the sight of a prison officer. Although this prisoner had been selected from C wing, between the time he was selected and interviewed the prisoner received a third written warning for his behaviour and was removed to the austere section of E wing. The interview was allowed to take place on E wing after consultation with E wing staff. Due to comments made by the prisoner to staff, of the nature 'I'm going to tell her how it really is here' according to the prisoner, the staff stipulated that a prison officer would have to be present in the room for the interview. This potentially made the interview difficult, due to the personal, sensitive nature of the interview and the by now antagonistic attitude of the prisoner towards staff, the presence of an officer threatened to hinder the prisoner's ability to answer freely. On the day, however, a compromise was struck between officer, prisoner and researcher whereby it was agreed that the officer would remain outside the room but the door would remain open, allowing some privacy for the prisoner while meeting the officer's requirements to 'oversee' the interview. Shortly into the interview both officer and prisoner lost interest in each other's presence and after a slightly tense start the prisoner relaxed and answered freely and openly. This was the only prisoner interview where staff expressed any interest in monitoring; all other interviews were carried out without any difficulty.

The sample of prisoners chosen was random in the sense that no conscious decision was made by the researcher to interview particular 'types' of prisoners. Since much of the masculinity literature postulates that age and offence type may play an important role in men's involvement in crime (Newburn & Stanko, 1994), sampling methods that would ensure a good cross section variation of age and offence type were used. Race was also postulated as an important variable (Gibbs & Merighi, 1994), however, due to the location of the research prison with its low ethnic minority population it was considered unwise to attempt to include a deliberate ethnic representation within the sample. Race, therefore, was not a variable deliberately included within the research samples. Although race is recognised as a potentially important variable within the masculinity

and criminality debates it is not an issue that will be discussed in any great detail in this thesis, due to the impracticability of obtaining a large enough ethnic sample. A number of different methods were used during the selection process, these included self-selection, snowballing, and random sampling. The majority of prisoners interviewed were randomly selected by the researcher approaching individuals on the wings, after an initial week spent observing the wings and talking to prisoners during the limited free time they had on the wing. Of the prisoners approached in this manner only one declined to be interviewed; this prisoner, however, put the researcher in contact with two other prisoners who were willing to be interviewed. One or two of the prisoners, on hearing about the presence of a researcher, put their names forward to staff to be interviewed. Although staff occasionally recommended the names of prisoners who might be amenable to being interviewed, only one prisoner was directly selected by a member of staff. Since the interviewing of this prisoner seemed to become a bit of an 'issue' for some of the staff and since the inclusion of this prisoner in the sample skewed its representativeness somewhat, this prisoner selection will be briefly discussed here.

How this prisoner came to be selected

On the first day of fieldwork within the prison one of the Senior Officers (SO) on hearing about the research, walked off immediately saying 'I have just the man, you have to interview him' The prisoner who was coming to the end of a twenty three year sentence and had spent time in many different types of prisons throughout the UK and, therefore in opinion of the SO, 'would know what he was talking about'. Since it was the first day of the research in the prison and the staff were showing an interest it was considered unwise to raise issues of the prisoner's potential unrepresentativeness of the prison population, the wealth of the prisoner's prison experience would potentially outweigh his unrepresentativeness. Although this interview was arranged on the first day, for a variety of reasons the actual interview itself did not take place until towards the end of the fieldwork period. During the intervening period it came to the attention of the staff that I was intending to interview this particular prisoner and this fact became a talking point amongst a number of the staff. The prisoner in question was well known throughout the prison and had a reputation within the prison system as being a potentially volatile and violent prisoner, and different staff started to ask whether I really intended to interview this prisoner. A number of staff seemed keen to test the resolve of the researcher and over the weeks prior to the interview more and more stories regarding this prisoner and his more 'colourful' exploits were repeated either directly to the researcher or within her hearing, and comments along the line of 'let's hope he's not in hostage-taking mood' became more commonplace. In many ways the decision to interview this prisoner, although thrust upon me, provided an entry point with the staff, since to a number of staff a willingness to interview a prisoner who was considered 'less than easy' displayed a commitment to the research being carried out. Staff, generally, would comment on the prisoners being interviewed, on whether they thought they were 'good' or a 'waste of space', which often provided an entry for more general discussions with staff. On the part of many staff there appeared to be a concern that I didn't just interview the 'good' prisoners, they wanted to make sure I got an accurate picture of who they had to deal with, and therefore my willingness to interview a notoriously difficult prisoner was viewed positively amongst most staff. It was also viewed positively by some

staff because it allowed them an opportunity to 'wind up' the researcher about the prisoner and all the potentially terrible things that might happen. Such displays of staff 'humour' will be discussed in more detail later in the thesis.

As noted earlier in this chapter, in addition to the interviews data was to be collected through observation and participation. However, in relation to the prisoners this aspect of the data collection was slightly restricted due to the prison regime in operation and due to the fact that the fieldwork was restricted to two wings only. As outlined earlier, prisoners spent most of the day off the wing at work or education. To compensate for this additional time was spent in the prison during the late evening since the prisoners were unlocked for association during this time. Even during this free time, prisoners' time was somewhat structured in the sense that access to phones, pool tables and other facilities operated on a rota basis and some prisoners were reluctant to engage with the researcher in case they lost their position in the rota. Despite these restrictions an adequate degree of observation was achieved though actual participation amongst prisoners was harder to attain. As a result of the limited prisoner presence on the wings during the day more time could be given to observation and participation with members of staff and it is to the prison staff sample that we now turn our attention.

The Prison Staff Sample

A total of 240 staff worked at the prison, of which discipline staff and governor grades made up 142. Of this 142, seven were governor grades, six were principal officers, twenty seven were senior officers, and one hundred and two were basic grade prison officers. Of these prison staff, the senior officers and the basic grade officers were the staff who worked on the prison wings and therefore had the most contact with prisoners. As noted earlier the staff interviews were attempting to discover whether any aspects of masculine ideology or stereotyping informed staff perceptions of the men they worked with and the treatment offenders received from staff. For this reason only staff who had regular contact with prisoners on the wing were included in the sample. In total ten members of staff were interviewed for this research. Of this ten, seven of the officers were basic grade officers and three were senior officers (wing managers). Two of the ten officers interviewed were female. All the officers interviewed worked on the wings of the prison and had regular contact with prisoners. The length of time in service for officers ranged from twenty seven years to nine months. Two of the officers had served over fifteen years, four of the officers had five years service, and four officers had under five years service. For five of the officers interviewed this was the only prison they had ever worked in. Across the sample, officers had experience of working in this prison, local prisons, dispersals and young offender institutions. Three of the officers interviewed had been working in the prison for well under a year, one officer had been working in the prison for a year, three had been there for approximately two years and the remaining three officers had been working in the prison for between four and seventeen years.

Availability and willingness determined the sample of staff to some degree. As Liebling (1992) observes, shift patterns and work commitments in prison render any intentions of selecting prison officers for prearranged interviews wholly notional. The staff were interviewed in the nearest

convenient room, usually the SO's office on the wing to which prisoners had no access. Successfully interviewing members of staff often required spending complete days on the wing waiting for officers to find themselves available to talk freely for a reasonable amount of time. More often than not the interviews were interrupted by knocks at the door and phone calls. In addition to these formal interviews, staff were also spoken to at length informally. Such informal contact allowed for opinions and attitudes expressed in formal interviews to be compared with informally expressed comments, thus allowing for some cross-check to be performed on the representativeness of the formal interviews. The length of the staff interviews ranged from forty minutes to one hour thirty minutes, with the average for staff interviews being one hour. The sample of prison officers interviewed displays a varied range of years in service and types of prison served in and prisoners worked with and would appear to be representative of both officers working in the prison the research took place in and the prison service more generally.

Although no officer refused to be interviewed for this research, the fact that a prison officer had agreed to be or had been interviewed appeared to provide a degree of entertainment amongst some of the staff. Similar to the comments made by staff regarding the prisoner interviewed there were numerous remarks of 'you're not interviewing him are you' regarding prison officer interviews. A number of the staff interviewed made constant jokes about taking part in the research both before and after being interviewed but took the interview itself very seriously, often actually commenting along the lines of 'I'm being very serious now aren't I'. This behaviour appeared to reflect a number of issues surrounding working in the prison, particularly the kind of humour expressed in prisons and the desire of staff to be perceived in an 'acceptable' manner by other members of staff. These issues will be discussed more fully in later chapters.

The Probation Interviews

Background Information

It was altogether far more time consuming and difficult obtaining access to probation clients and probation officers than gaining access to the prison. It had been decided to interview ten probation clients and six probation officers in total. In an attempt to evaluate some of the theorising of masculinity, a decision was made to interview two subsets of offenders and officers within the group, a subset of 'city' offenders and officers and a 'rural' subset. It has been proposed that geography, the location of where one grows up and/or lives can impact upon the masculine identity of individuals (e.g. Berg, 1994). In other words, it has been argued that different geographical locations may display different forms of 'masculinity'. By including the city and rural subsets within the overall probation sample data would therefore be available to analyse such propositions. It was decided that the sample would be divided equally between city and rural subsets, five offenders and three officers in each subset.

Gaining Access

Following recommended protocol, permission to conduct research in a number of probation offices was sought in writing from the Chief Probation Officer (CPO) for the Humberside Area. However,

as a result of the pending retirement of the then CPO and the expected arrival of his replacement, this correspondence was misplaced and not dealt with. After what was considered an acceptable time period had elapsed, for the CPO to have received and replied to the letter, the researcher contacted the office by phone. On this occasion it was requested that a copy of the original correspondence be sent to the CPO's secretary to be dealt with. Although this resulted in some time slippage, the second letter was dealt with more promptly, permission was granted and two Assistant Chief Probation Officers (ACPOs) were identified as contact points, a city contact and a rural contact, to assist in determining which offices the research would be given access to. Arrangements then had to be made to meet with these two contacts. In the case of the city ACPO a meeting was arranged within two weeks of receiving confirmation of permission to carry out the research. In the case of the rural contact, however, it took over a month to contact her, despite leaving messages and phone numbers, on both sides. On contacting her it transpired that she would be unable to arrange a meeting to discuss access to offices for another two months, due to her work commitment. Fortunately during these months it was possible to commence the fieldwork in the city offices.

Access to City Offices

From the meeting with the ACPO, who was acting as the researcher's entry point into city offices, two local city offices were identified which could be approached to seek assistance in conducting the research. The ACPO sent out letters to the two offices explaining the research and requesting officers to contact the ACPO or the researcher if any of their clients were interested in taking part in the research. Access to one of the two offices was gained relatively quickly, after a meeting with their senior probation officer (SPO) and then attending a general team meeting to explain the research to all the officers in the office. Despite a fairly low-key response at the actual meeting itself, the staff at the office were generally very helpful in obtaining clients and officers to interview and in supplying any additional information and data requested, when they could. Access to the second office was never gained. Requests were received from this office for a letter to be sent to officers explaining the research requirements and this letter was duly sent. After a period of no response, further inquiries were made by the researcher as to the progress of access. At this point in time a message was received stating only one officer was willing to be interviewed. On receiving this message inquiries were made to the SPO of this office to the likelihood of obtaining clients willing to take part in the research. The reply was that, having raised this issue again at a team meeting it had been the general opinion of staff that no client would be willing to take part in an interview that could last between 45 minutes and two hours (the two hours was an absolute maximum and was included in the letter of information to allow for all possibilities be considered by staff). Despite further discussions on the phone and an offer to meet officers to discuss any of the issues more fully, the final decision of the SPO was that no interviews would be conducted at this office. This denied access meant that all interviews were to be drawn from only one office, which raised some difficulties for the research, which will be discussed below.

Access to the rural offices

After a delay of two months, a meeting took place with the ACPO who was acting as the

researcher's entry point into rural offices. From this meeting it was decided a letter should be prepared by the researcher to be given out to probation clients attending the main rural offices in the local area. This letter described the research and asked that probation clients contact their officers if they were willing to be interviewed. In relation to selecting probation officers the ACPO decided to discuss this with officers at a team meeting to find out which officers might be interested in taking part in the research and choosing from them. The letter for clients was duly prepared and sent out and the researcher was informed that the ACPO would be in touch within a fortnight to report on progress. However, after this period of time had elapsed there had been no responses from clients, with both ACPO and researcher being aware of time restrictions existing, on both sides, a change of tack was adopted in the attempts to canvass clients for interviewing. It was decided that one officer from one of the bigger rural offices would inquire of all their clients whether they would be willing to be interviewed for the research. Through this process of having one officer approach their clients with a request to participate in the research five probation clients were interviewed, though not without difficulty.

Limits and Constraints on Conducting the Probation Research

As outlined above gaining access to probation offices required a considerable degree of time-consuming negotiations with a number of different offices. This ultimately resulted in more time than had been originally intended being taken up by arrangements to facilitate fieldwork and also provoked a degree of anxiety that access would not be granted and the consequences this might have for the overall research. It should be acknowledged that at the time access was being sought and the time during which fieldwork was being conducted (autumn 1996 through to early 1997) the Probation Service in the UK was undergoing a considerable period of pressure and uncertainty. The probation services in the local area were facing cuts of up to 20%, which would have the effect of (even) fewer officers and greater workloads. The newly introduced national standards, such as statutory requirements that a client *must* be breached for failure to turn up for any appointments, were still being bedded in and there was the ongoing uncertainty of the future of the probation officers and probation officer's training within universities. There was much media speculation about whether probation training would be removed from universities and the Home Secretary was expressing a desire to introduce staff with more of a military background to the service. Amid such an atmosphere it is perhaps unsurprising that requests for academic research to be conducted in their offices received, in some cases, low priority, however frustrating and demoralising this may be to the individual carrying out the research. Such circumstances also make one extremely grateful for the assistance eventually received.

In many ways the difficulties experienced in obtaining access to probation offices, clients and officers determined the methods used to select the interview samples and also had repercussions for any observation carried out with the probation group. Due to the nature of the offices where the research was eventually carried out, observation of 'the Probation Service at work' was difficult to conduct. By and large, in these offices the work compromised one-to-one meetings with officer and client and could often involve exchanges of a highly personal and sensitive nature. It would have been difficult to have observed such work without the presence of the researcher being highly

intrusive and potentially obstructive to the work being carried out. The layout of the offices also meant there was little to observe in the day-to-day work of officers, with officers all working in their own rooms. The arrangements for conducting interviews with clients and officers were also not really conducive to allowing observation. No real observation of a probation office was possible in relation to the rural office, although officers could and were asked how the office operated. However, the city office was more amenable to observation and interaction.

The City Probation Samples

As a result of the ways in which access negotiations were conducted with the city office, more opportunities arose for observation and interaction at this office. Initially the researcher was able to attend a team meeting, at which the research proposal was presented as part of the 'any other business', which allowed contact with all the officers working in the office to be established. After some persuasion from their senior officer, a number of the officers present 'volunteered' to be interviewed and a further few agreed to canvass their clients for willing interview candidates. This meeting meant that whenever the researcher returned to the office staff knew who I was and why I was there, and this contact appeared to increase the willingness of staff to assist the research. Other opportunities to mix with staff occurred through adjourning to the staff common room for coffee after a staff interview. The member of staff interviewed would often continue discussing issues raised in the interview and other staff in the room would sometimes join in with their own comments and observations. There was little opportunity to observe clients since they merely turned up at the office at the time of their appointment, went straight to their probation officers room and then left straight after the meeting was completed.

Three officers were involved in assisting in the selection of probation clients for interviews. Of the four city probation clients finally interviewed, two of the clients were put forward by their probation officer as being interested in taking part in the research. The other two clients interviewed were chosen randomly from the group of clients of a third officer. The third officer's approach was to allow the researcher to sit in on the officer's meetings with their clients (with the clients permission). The purpose of the researcher's presence was explained. the meeting was conducted and at the end the client was asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. Although no client refused to take part in the research, when using this method of selection, on a number of occasions clients failed to turn up for interview appointments. To reduce the likelihood of a non-appearance for interview the research interviews were, generally, scheduled to coincide with the client's regular probation appointment, the research interview being conducted after that appointment. Nevertheless a number of clients failed to turn up for their appointments and for their interviews. This non-appearance had been a concern expressed by some of the probation officers from the beginning, but was considered a factor that could not be compensated for. Since clients frequently failed to turn up for their appointments with probation officers, for which they could be sanctioned, little could be done in relation to a research interview. A combination of time slippage due to protracted negotiations for access and a number of clients failures to attend for interviews meant that by the end of the allocated fieldwork period only four of the five city client interviews had been completed.

The selection of the city probation officers for interviewing took place during the initial team meeting attended by the researcher, where the aims and requirements of the research were outlined. All of the officers, bar one, were in attendance at the meeting. At the request of their senior officer, three officers agreed to be interviewed, two male and one female. Their names were taken at this time and arrangements were made for interviews to take place at times convenient to the officers.

The Rural Probation Samples

Unlike the city sample where all the officer interviews and the majority of the client interviews were drawn from one office, different offices were used for obtaining the rural officers and rural client samples. The rural client sample was drawn from one relatively large rural office, in terms of region covered, while the rural officer sample was drawn from two small town and seaside offices. Due to the circumstances of gaining access, outlined above, the researcher had minimal options in choosing the methods used and the samples selected. As discussed earlier the general nature of most probation offices is not conducive to observation and therefore virtually no observation was possible at the rural offices visited. Since most of the interview arrangements were made over the telephone and the only contact made with individuals was at the times of the interviews little opportunity arose for any observation.

All the rural clients were selected from the caseload of one officer from an office serving a large rural area within the Humberside region. The decision to solicit the sample from one officer was suggested by the rural ACPO contact after clients failed to respond to a written request for interview subjects. Since it seemed to be the only way to elicit client participation in the research, and hence allow for the completion of the research, this approach was adopted. However, as with the city clients, there was a considerable number of instances where clients failed to turn up for interview appointments. In the case of two clients, they failed to turn up on three occasions for interviews, though eventually these interviews were completed. With other cases clients failed to turn up completely, though on one or two of these occasions a client who was attending their probation appointment agreed to be a substitute for a client who failed to arrive. These failures to turn up had a number of repercussions on the research, the main one being that instead of the rural fieldwork being completed by the end of December 1996, interviews were still being conducted in late January and early February 1997. These delays had knock on effects for other elements of the research which will be discussed in more detail below. The failure of clients to turn up also caused a degree of embarrassment on the part of the officer assisting in the interview arrangements. Obviously it was beyond the officer's control to ensure a client attended the research interview and the fact that the officer persevered in their attempts to ensure that the sample quota was reached is something the researcher is extremely grateful for. One other factor that was affected by the decision to select clients from only one officer's caseload was the age range of the clients interviewed. At the time of the fieldwork the officer's caseload contained a high proportion of young men, aged between twenty one and twenty five years, and as a result of this achieving as wide an age range as possible was no longer an option.

The names of two rural officers were given to the researcher by the rural ACPO contact. These names emerged from a general team meeting which was attended by representatives of all the rural offices in the region. Staff were informed of the research and these two officers registered an interest in being interviewed (or at the very least raised no major objections to being interviewed). These two officers worked in different small rural offices and a convenient time was arranged with each to interview them at their office. After an interview with one of these officers a colleague in the same office, reminded of the research by the researcher's presence, volunteered to be interviewed. All three of the rural officers interviewed worked in either a small town office or a seaside office.

The Probation Client Population

Due to the methods of data collection and collation used by the probation service it was not possible to obtain statistics for the individual offices where the fieldwork was conducted. Rather than each individual officer collating statistics for their caseloads and clients this data was centrally collated and therefore the statistics obtained for probation refer to all the cases being dealt with throughout the region the service provides for, with no differentiation being made between offices or areas. According to the information obtained from the city office, at the time of the fieldwork the Probation Service in question had 461 cases, or clients, on their books.

Table 3.5: Breakdown of Probation Population by Racial Origin

| | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| White | 305 | 66 |
| Black | 2 | 0.4 |
| Refused | 3 | 0.6 |
| Unknown | 151 | 33 |

Table 3.6: Breakdown of Probation Population by Age

| | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 17 & under | 2 | 0.4 |
| 18-20 yrs | 78 | 17 |
| 21-24 yrs | 111 | 24 |
| 25-35 yrs | 199 | 43 |
| 36-45 yrs | 45 | 10 |
| 46 yrs > | 26 | 6 |

Table 3.7: Breakdown of Probation Population by Offence Type

| | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Burglary | 48 | 10 |
| Criminal damage | 19 | 4 |
| Drug offences | 32 | 7 |
| Deception/fraud | 20 | 4 |
| Driving offences | 51 | 11 |
| Theft | 132 | 29 |
| Taking motor vehicles | 15 | 3 |
| Robbery | 3 | 0.7 |
| Violence: affray/disorder | 24 | 5 |
| Violence: assault/wounding | 54 | 12 |
| Sexual offences | 17 | 4 |
| Schedule 1 offences | 5 | 1 |
| Breach of orders | 27 | 6 |

At the time of the fieldwork 76% of the clients were on probation orders and 13% were on community service orders. 3% were each serving ACR or life supervision orders. The remaining 5% of clients were split across a number of different orders. This 5% also included a number of offenders under the age of eighteen. Due to the nature of this research none of data relating to clients aged under twenty one were included in any of the analyses. The offences committed by clients on probation covered a wide range, from perjury and conspiracy, absconding and breach of orders to theft, robbery, and assault, including murder. (see table above). Overall, the probation client population for this region was predominantly white, aged between twenty one and thirty five years of age and serving probation orders for a variety of offences.

The Probation Client Sample

In total, nine probation clients were interviewed for this research, four city clients and five rural clients. None of the clients were under the age of twenty one, the oldest interviewed was forty three years of age and the youngest was twenty two. 44% (4) of the population were aged between twenty one and twenty four years, 33% (3) were aged between twenty five and thirty five years and 22% (2) were aged between thirty six and forty five years of age. All the probation clients interviewed were white. Eight of the clients were on probation orders and one was on a community service order. The community service order was for one year, six of the eight probation orders were of a year's duration, one was for two years and one was for six months. Two of the clients received probation for drugs offences, and two received it for assault/affray and criminal damage. The other offences committed by these clients were arson, burglary, threatening a prosecution witness, DSS fraud and theft of a car and possession of a firearm without a licence. Overall, the sample was relatively representative of the probation client population with 78% (7) of the sample being aged between twenty one and thirty five years compared to 67%, and 22% (2) of the sample aged between thirty

twenty one and thirty five years compared to 67%, and 22% (2) of the sample aged between thirty six and forty five years compared to 10 %. All the clients interviewed were white compared to 66% of the probation population, where 0.4% of the population is identified as black and 33.6% are classified as racial origin 'unknown'. 89% (8) of the sample were on probation orders compared to 76% of the population and 11% of the sample were on a community service order compared to 13% of the population. The sample displayed a good spread of offences committed by the clients and reflected the diverse nature of offences committed by the probation client population as a whole.

Table 3.8: Breakdown of Probation Sample by Offence and Length of Sentence

| Client | Offence | Length of Sentence |
|----------------|--|--|
| Mark | Theft of car/ Illegal possession of firearm | 1 yr probation |
| Nick | Affray and criminal damage | 1 yr probation |
| Owen | Burglary | 2 yr probation |
| Patrick | Arson | 1 yr probation |
| Ray | Cultivating cannabis | 1 year probation |
| Roger | Fiddling the dole | 1 yr probation |
| Stephen | Threatening court witness | 1 yr probation plus community service |
| Tim | Assault, criminal damage | 6 mths probation |
| Vincent | Possession of heroin | 1 yr probation |

The Probation Officer Sample

In total, seven probation officers were interviewed. Four of the officers worked in city offices and three of the officers were located in small town offices which served the rural community of the region. Four of the officers interviewed were male and three were female. Two of the officers had over fifteen years experience of working with the Probation Service, two of the officers had fourteen years experience and two had nine and ten years experience. The seventh officer had eighteen months experience. All the officers interviewed were main grade probation officers and all had regular contact with clients on supervisory orders. One of the officers was a member of a specialist unit that worked solely with sex offenders and one officer, in addition to her supervisory role, had specific responsibility for the courts. All the officers interviewed had experience of working with clients who were or had been in prison and two of the officers had worked for three years as probation officers in dispersal prisons. Two of the officers had worked for five years in their rural office, one had been working in her office for five months and the remaining four officers had been in their regional office for between twelve and eighteen months.

Changes to the original research proposal

When this research was originally conceived and designed it had been intended to include a third 'control' group, a group of 'non-offenders' and staff who had contact with these non-offenders. It had been intended that the prison samples would be the main reference group with the other two

adopting three comparison groups was to allow for some of the theorising of surrounding issues of masculinity and crime to be addressed and tested. It has been argued that different 'types' of men will commit different types of crime. That is, a man with, what would be considered, a strong traditional masculine identity would be more likely to be found committing crimes of violence than a man with a less traditional masculine identity (e.g. Jenkins, 1994). It was decided, therefore, that including a spectrum of men ranging from those who had committed (virtually) no offences through a variety of offences would allow for these ideas to be critically analysed. The inclusion of a 'non-offender' group would also allow for notions of 'difference' between criminal men and non-criminal men to be explored and, more important, allow for any similarities between such men to be highlighted.

However, due to a number of factors, the inclusion of a 'non-offender' group had to be dropped from research. The main reason for having to omit the 'non-offender' group was the extreme difficulties experienced in gaining access to such a group combined with the difficulties experienced in obtaining access to probation offices (outlined above) and the time lost as a result of these problems. Most doctoral research is limited both in terms of time and financial resources and this thesis was no exception. Having received funding for three years, this was the time scale within which the research had to be completed and the fieldwork was designed and organised with that fact in mind. It had been anticipated that the group of 'non-offenders' would be selected from local youth, social and sports clubs. Inquiries regarding access to 'non-offender' groups commenced at the same time as access was being sought for the other two groups (early 1996), to ensure ample time was available to make the necessary arrangements and complete the fieldwork.

Three different points of access were tried in relation to the non-offender group. Initial discussion took place with a personal contact working for a charitable organisation who had knowledge of a number of the local social and youth clubs. However, it became apparent that the age range within these particular groups would be inappropriate as the top range was twenty five years and both the prison and probation samples would be providing a wider and older age range than this. Therefore a second point of entry to a non-offender group was sought. This entry point was opportunistic in nature. Whilst conducting the prison fieldwork a prison officer, on hearing of my wish to obtain access to social and/or sports clubs, offered to act as a liaison for the research with a local rugby club that their son attended. Having gleaned, from the ongoing probation access negotiations, that assistance and access is more forthcoming where one has a contact point within the organisation involved, it was decided to accept this introduction to the rugby club. The rugby club itself served a wide area and was likely to attract a diverse range of individuals in terms of age and background. It was agreed that introductions would take place on completion of the prison fieldwork since the prison officer's shift patterns didn't allow for a meeting to take place prior to that time. Unfortunately, when this time came the prison officer in question had been taken ill and hospitalised and would be remaining there for a period of time. In view of the time constraints on completing the fieldwork it was decided prudent to search for another way of gaining access to a non-offender group. In terms of obtaining a sufficiently comparative group of non-offenders it was decided to approach a local drop-in centre, which was used by men and women of the local

community. This centre was contacted on-spec and a meeting was arranged with one of its main coordinators. Although the feedback from this meeting appeared positive, there were no objections to the research being carried out there and a considerable degree of interest was expressed, the individual did not contact the research after a few days as had been agreed. Despite a number of attempts to reestablish contact with the individual no return calls were forthcoming.

By this stage it was the end of 1996, the time when it had been anticipated that the fieldwork would be close to completion. In addition to the problems being faced in obtaining access to the non-offender group, many of the probation interviews had yet to be completed due to the protracted negotiations required to gain access and to the failure of clients to turn up for interview appointments. Consequently it was decided, rather than risk non-completion of both probation and non-offender samples, to concentrate all efforts on ensuring that the collection of probation sample was completed successfully and abandon attempts to include a non-offender sample.

Although this loss of the non-offender group was a disappointment, overall it has not been significantly detrimental to the thesis. The richness of content to be found within the prison and probation samples meant there was more than enough data to work with. The main aim of the research, to examine some of the taken for granted assumptions, conceptions and notions surrounding men and masculine identity, and to explore which, if any, of these concepts may contribute to the committal of crime amongst men, remained unaffected by the absence of a non-offender group. As a probation officer observed in their interview there has been a fairly substantial attempt to distinguish offenders from the rest of the population and none of it has succeeded in properly distinguishing offender from non-offender. It could perhaps be argued that one of the secondary explorations of the thesis, namely to analyse theorising regarding links between traditional notions of masculine identity and the types of crime men commit, may have been restricted by the absence of a non-offender group. Nevertheless, when one takes into consideration the range and variety of individuals interviewed in the prison and probation samples one can conclude that enough information exists to examine these notions without the presence of a third group. Admittedly a degree of breadth was lost from the research but the qualitative depth of the research remains intact. As Liebling (1992) observes sophistication and discipline in exploring a field are required but the complexities lies, and should be allowed to lie, with the subjects rather less than with the research methods. The complexity of the research subjects and how their multifariousness was analysed will be explored in the following two chapters.

Chapter Four

Offended and Offending: Men in Prison and on Probation

'Anguish is known to everyone since childhood, and everyone knows it is often blank, undifferentiated. It rarely carries a clearly written label that also contains its motivations; when it does have one, it is often mendacious. One can believe or declare oneself to be anguished for one reason and to be so due to something totally different: one can think that one is suffering at facing the future and instead be suffering because of one's past; one can think one is suffering for others out of pity, out of compassion, and instead be suffering for one's own reasons, more or less profound, more or less avowable or avowed' (Levi, 1989, pp 52-53).

This chapter examines the main findings to emerge from this research in relation to men who offend. The findings are drawn from the sample of prisoners and offenders on probation previously described in chapter three. Although up to this point these two groups have been discussed separately, these groups were treated as one offender group in terms of analysis and information gleaned from this research. Attention is drawn to any of the important differences that may have emerged between prisoners and offenders on probation. To recap briefly, this offender sample consisted of twenty three men. Twenty one of the men were white and two were black. The oldest man interviewed was 53 years of age and the youngest was 22. Thirteen of the men were aged over 21 but under 30 years, seven were aged 30 or over but under 40 while three of them were aged over 40. Thirteen of the men were from the local surrounding areas while ten of the men were from areas further afield, including Liverpool, Newcastle and Sheffield (See Appendix One for life histories of offenders interviewed).

Analysing the Data

The information collected on the 'offending men' was mainly obtained from twenty three tape-recorded interviews which were transcribed and analysed. The interviews comprised the core of the research and aimed to obtain the men's accounts of their lives, their experiences and feelings. The biographical narratives of this group of offenders were used to explore some of the problems and potentialities of being men in society today (see also Collinson, 1996). As Tesch (1990) observes, qualitative methodology is a generic term which describes a number of different approaches to data collection and analysis. The data gathered may take a number of forms such as fieldnotes, documents or transcripts of interviews or focus groups. The output of such data, therefore, is largely 'textual' and analysis involves sifting, coding, understanding and interpreting this data. Managing and analysing text data traditionally involved a substantial amount of cutting and pasting and sorting of segments of data into analytically useful and meaningful piles of cards and sheets of paper. As Henwood and Pidgeon (1992) observe, the researcher works systematically through the

basic data transcripts generating labels to describe both low-level concepts and the more abstract features deemed relevant. It was this process of systematically sorting segments of data that was followed for this research.

One important point to be made in relation to this process of transcription of interviews and detailed analysis is the significance of emotion and non-verbal communication to the data. Brannen (1988) argues that respondents' accounts of sensitive topics are frequently full of ambiguities and contradiction and are shrouded in emotionality. He argues that these form an integral part of the data set and need to be confronted and taken account of in the interpretation of the data. Kelly (1988, preface) observes 'meaning in the spoken word is often conveyed through gesture, tone of voice and emotional expression'. However, as Liebling (1992) notes, as an interview is transcribed the atmosphere in which the interview took place is often lost, as are the silences or struggles by the interviewee to find the right word to express themselves. Since the topic being explored in this research was inherently of a sensitive nature, both the interviews and non-responses were recorded as was their general demeanour throughout the interview. Wherever relevant this issue of non-response or reactions of a non-verbal nature will be discussed and explored.

As Richards and Richards (1992) observe, qualitative research always involves the development of ideas about the data and exploration of these ideas. The project often begins with descriptive categories or themes whilst categories or themes can also be created from the data during the project. A number of categories or themes had been identified as relevant prior to conducting this research, for example the family, schooling, employment, and these themes were used in structuring the analysis of the data. In addition to this further themes and categories which were not apparent at the outset emerged at various stages of the research. This chapter presents the major themes and findings of this research, organised under the following main headings: (a) Family Values; (b) Schooling; (c) The world of work; (d) Leisure and Crime: Drink, Drugs and Boredom; (e) Masculinity; (f) The Prison Experience; and (g) The Probation Experience.

Family Values

As Muncie et al (1995) observe, for many of us the image of the nuclear family still governs our behaviour, expectations and feelings. This image sets the agenda of our thinking, feeling and choices. Muncie et al (1995) also postulate that an ideological attempt is made to maintain the nuclear model as the image to be strived for. Walklate (1998) notes how the importance of the intact nuclear family has been given unprecedented political weight during the 1980s and 1990s, with calls for a return to 'family values' and 'back to basics'. She maintains that there lies an acceptance that it is within the nuclear family that the key to individual and family harmony lies, and that this is a very powerful myth, both in popular and political consciousness. Connell (1993) cites the family as one of three institutions of importance in the contemporary organisation of gender (the state and the workplace/labour market being the other two), while Tolson (1977) names the family, along with the school and peer group as making up the primary context of masculine 'socialisation' in which a boy's emerging sense of himself is directed into socially acceptable behaviour. As French (1997) remarks, the majority of parents train children to function

as social beings in the highly complex and competitive environments in which they will find themselves. Martens (1990) argues that the social situation of the family provides the foundations of children's upbringing and goes quite a long way towards explaining their intellectual and social accomplishments.

The influence of the family on deviant behaviour among children and young people has been the object of research since the thirties (Martens, 1990). As Walklate (1998) comments, the role given to the nature and impact of family life as a contributory factor in law breaking behaviour has varied throughout the course of criminological history. Early studies of crime, sociologically influenced, focused upon issues such as 'broken homes', patterns of discipline in the family, neglect, and criminality within the family, examining them as possible explanations for, or indicators of, criminal behaviour, in particular juvenile delinquency. Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber (1986) stipulate that longitudinal data show that socialisation variables such as parental supervision, parental rejection and parent-child involvement are among the most powerful predictors of juvenile conduct problems and delinquency. Walklate (1998) asserts that it is the presence and/or absence of family discord which has been found consistently to be associated with delinquency, with the changing material conditions of the child and the quality of the parenting also being other relevant factors. Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) maintain that a growing body of evidence documents the disruptive developmental effect of unstable environments, characterised by inconsistent and unpredictable patterns of activities and relationships in the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, particularly within the family. For example, many stepparent families appear to be characterised by a lack of parental consistency and clarity of roles (Hetherington & Clingempeel, 1992; Palsey & Tallman, 1987; Zimiles & Lee, 1991).

Martens (1990) contends that children need a clearly structured existence, so as to be able to relate themselves to the world at large and develop an identity of their own. Wilkinson (1996) identifies a vicious circle of 'alienation' and close links between criminal behaviour, and truanting, bad childhood experiences, poverty and homelessness. Wilkinson believes that the seeds of despair and alienation were sown at home, or primary school, where the child does not receive encouragement. Grant (1996) argues that, to a child, the family is still total security and the natural parents are still the real and closest members of the family. When Grant interviewed children attending a local school about the thing that scared them most, they answered 'something happening to mum and dad', 'my parents splitting up'. When asked what what was the most important thing in their lives, they replied my parents, family, 'being wanted'. The family is the first point of contact with the world and it is an arena in which we begin to form ideas and beliefs about who we are and about the world around us and one's childhood experiences are mooted as a prime cause of later psychological and emotional difficulties in life. With these thoughts in mind we turn to the family lives and experiences of the men from this research.

The family structure of the men

Of the twenty three men interviewed, six (27%) came from two parent intact families where no difficulties were identified as existing between the parents. One of these men, however, did not

actually live with his parents, as at the age of five he was sent to live with his grandparents in an attempt to keep him out of trouble. Five (22%) of the men's parents were together but had experienced difficulties such as temporary, but repeated, separations or spouses with drinking problems or violent tendencies. Eight (35%) of the men's parents had separated or divorced and in seven of the eight cases it was the father who left the family home. In two of these cases the men had ended up being placed in care and being fostered, because as a result of the separation the remaining spouse had been unable to cope. One of the men lived with his father and never knew his mother, while another lived with his mother and never knew his father. One of the men lived with his natural mother and his stepfather and one of the men was adopted following the death of his mother when he was a baby. Twenty one of the men had brothers and sisters, with the majority of them (13) having a number of siblings each.

Six (26%) of the interviewees witnessed violence between their parents on a regular basis, while two (9%) mentioned only seeing violence between their parents once but cited it as having made an impression upon them. Six reported receiving beatings from their parents. Of this six, four identified their own troublesome or criminal behaviour as the reason for receiving the beatings. In these cases the beatings were carried out equally by both parents. The other two men could give no reason for the beatings they received. Another of the men used to receive beatings for bullying his siblings, while an eighth man reported regular scuffles between him and his father but no punches being exchanged. In total 35% of the sample interviewed reported a degree of violence occurring within their family. Six of the men had spent time in care, both in children's homes and with foster parents. Four of this six had been placed in care as a result of their troublesome behaviour and their parents' inability to cope with it. Two had been placed in care after their parents had separated or divorced and the remaining spouse had been unable to cope, in both cases the children suffered considerable physical and emotional neglect prior to being placed in care. Overall, only slightly over a quarter of the men (26%) had experienced a 'traditional nuclear family' arrangement, although the images and ideals of the traditional nuclear family permeated many of the men's accounts of their family upbringing and underpinned many of their disappointments and regrets surrounding their family upbringing. As Bourgois (1996) observed of male Puerto Rican drug dealers in the US, in contrast to their often bravado behaviour and explicitly misogynist diatribes, most of them admitted to aspiring to an ideal type middle-class nuclear family.

The family accounts of the men

As noted earlier in this chapter, some of the information gathered for this thesis was to be found within the non-verbal behaviour and reactions of the men interviewed. Such emotional non-verbal communication was repeatedly displayed by the men on issues relating to the family. A considerable number of the men, particularly those who admitted to difficult relationships with their parents (especially their fathers), displayed a degree of nervousness and apprehension in answering questions about their family. Answers connected to their family relations were often accompanied by nervous laughter and frequently, when describing how they felt about their family, their verbal accounts would display variations in tone of voice, lowering their voices when discussing particularly sensitive issues. Their verbal accounts were also accompanied by other non-

verbal behaviour such as banging their feet against a wall, or nearby chair or table. These displays of non-verbal behaviour in addition to the actual descriptive accounts served to highlight the complicated, and frequently ambivalent, and complicated emotions and feelings that family life evoked amongst the men.

One of the most salient points to emerge from the data on the family was the fact, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the majority of the men interviewed did not reflect much upon their family organisation. Each of the men appeared to accept their family as 'the norm' or the way 'all families are', this would be regardless of whether they were good or bad relations in the family. As Bryan³ (aged 27) described his father's regular violent behaviour: 'It's your dad innit, you just don't think. I think it was every time Everton got beat'. When asked to describe their relationship with their parents, whether they got on with them or not and why, more often than not the reply would be 'she's me man', or 'he's me dad isn't he'. As Harvey (aged 50) explained:

'you don't actually consider what your mum is like against someone else's mother at that age, well I didn't. I didn't sort of think is she strong or was she, you just accept her. I just accepted them for what they were'.

The 'norm' of family life which the men appeared to be accepting was that of the 'nuclear family', where there was a mother, father and children and where the parents loved the children and vice versa. The notion of a loving, accepting nuclear family and its predominance amongst men's views and interpretations of family life appear to have resulted in a large number of the men internalising the family problems and difficulties they did experience, which frequently resulted in confusion and anger or resentment and guilt amongst the men when the love and affection they expected to receive from and give to their family was not forthcoming.

The father or father figure

Both the presence and absence of their father in the men's lives as children, and as adults, appeared to produce the greatest amount of emotionality, ambivalence and contradiction on the part of the interviewees. Boyle and Curtis (1995) found that whenever they explored the topic of men's fathers they met with resistance or disinterest, real or affected. They postulate that this reaction is perhaps an indication of how deeply the feelings run. This research also discovered a similar reluctance by these men to engage in discussions about their fathers. If asked directly about their father many of the men would be very quick to respond, sharply, 'I don't get on with my father' or 'my father never lived with us' and refuse to expand on this. However, they would come to discuss their fathers and how they felt about them when answering more generally questions about their family life, questions which did not ask directly about their father and their feelings towards him.

Only four (17%) of the men spoke about their father in positive terms, while fifteen (65%) of them reported difficulties existing between them and their fathers. The main reason put forward for

³ All the names of the prisoners used in this thesis are pseudonyms

these difficulties was loss of contact between father and son, which was either complete or for a considerable period, after the parents had separated or divorced. A number of the men felt that their fathers favoured other siblings over them and never really took an interest in them. The men expressed a mixture of feelings about their absent fathers. On the one hand the men missed their fathers and were upset that their fathers were gone from their lives. These feelings were, however, accompanied by an attitude of they are not going to waste time feeling something for someone who has never been around for them, and so it was often the case that the men would dismiss their feelings of loss regarding their fathers. Fourteen (61%) of the men interviewed never actually saw much of their fathers when growing up. Either they never knew him, he left the family after a separation or divorce or he was always out working. Another four (17%) men stated that they never got on with their fathers and these expressed feelings ranging from indifference to hatred for their fathers as a result of this conflict. Four of the men stated that they got on well with their fathers and found them supportive. Ambivalence and contradiction reigned among the men and their feelings towards their fathers, as some of their comments demonstrate:

Ray (aged 26), talking about how he felt about his parents divorce:

'Gutted. Well me mam had split up with me dad and he'd gone, and he hadn't bothered to send me Christmas presents, you know basic things like that. As if he just sort of forgot all about me, as if I weren't part of his family. He was with another woman and he had another life so...'

Lewis (aged 26), talking about his father who was working all the time:

'Yeah I did miss him but I got to defend myself after that. After that I just looked after myself really, they didn't have no ruling with me then. I was uncontrollable in a way for them. I did my thing and they did their things'

Patrick (aged 37) speaking about missing his father who was away with the navy for long periods:

'Yeah I did, because he wasn't there to help me with things, I suppose, when I was upset and angry'.

Tim (aged 24), who never got on with his father after his mother walked out when Tim was only 6 weeks old:

'It hurt at first but then I thought it's his prerogative innit. If he can't love me for what I am, if I aren't good enough for him then I won't be around for him'.

Mark (aged 35), talking about occasionally meeting his natural father on the local streets:

'He knew who I was but he just wasn't bothered and that hurt a lot. I tried to get in touch with him, he said me wife's jealous of you please don't come around you know, and I couldn't understand that'.

However, despite the difficulties these men expressed regarding their feelings and relationships with their fathers, the majority of the men identified their father's opinion as being more

important to them than their mothers. When the men talked about how they might have looked for direction at some stage in their lives, it was to their fathers they looked for that direction. More often than not that direction or advice would not be forthcoming from their fathers. For many of the men the opinion of their fathers, which was of such importance to them, was never offered because for a variety of reasons, such as working long hours or due to separation and divorce, their fathers were never there for the men, or in a number of cases never inclined to voice their opinions to their sons or to offer them advice.

'That's the only thing about me father, I mean he always said stuff, yeah you can do this you can do that, but he never applied it to how. This is how you do it, are you with me? And that's why I say he never pushed us hard enough. He says no he was laid back he didn't want to push, but I still think he should have given us more encouragement' Fergus (aged 27).

'I used to remember that when he were away it was good because I could get away with most things' Stephen (aged 22).

'He was never home. No, this is where you want to go son and this is what you're going to do for your career. No, sit down with me and say what do you want to do, do you want to do this, do you want to do that, or anything like that. He just didn't seem to have time for me, just for my sister' Tim (aged 24).

Mark (aged 35), talking about meeting his stepfather at 13:

'Every lad wants a dad really, and we had high expectations of him and he didn't live up to them. We weren't bothered that he was skint and not at work, all we wanted was love and attention, you know like any lad does. And go fishing and play football and do whatever, but he wasn't there'.

The absence of advice and guidance from their father was often referred to by the men, in relation to the positions they found themselves in today, either in prison or on probation, and most often with a history of self-defeating or criminal behaviour and constant contact with the criminal justice system behind them. A number of the interviewees were of the opinion that if they had received guidance from their fathers at an earlier age, or even now as adults, then they would not have ended up in this position:

'I don't think I'd have come in [to prison] if me dad was still here, I wouldn't have gone so far into drugs. Me parents knew about me drug taking, I never kept it a secret from them. I think me old man would have sort of nagged me a lot more than me old woman and had more of an effect' Frank (aged 30).

'I mean I don't think, even when I was in bother, ever said to me mam me dad isn't here or anything like that. You know I just didn't, but then again if he'd

have been there for many of the years maybe it might have made a difference, but no, no' Nick (aged 27).

'He used to try and talk to me [about his criminal behaviour] and asked what the problem was and why I did it and, you know, if I needed help all I had to do was ask. I was a bit embarrassed about it really. I don't know, I'd rather he didn't mention it rather than come and talk to me about it' Vincent (aged 43).

The absence of a father or hostility towards a father, found to be the case for the majority (83%) appears to have created a vacuum of need within the men's lives, and it appears to have left them with a feeling of rejection and/or unworthiness which has coloured much of their lives, a sentiment that they have carried with them into other areas of their lives. It would appear that from an early age these men found a discrepancy between their expectations and the ideals of family life and their actual life experiences, and their attempts at understanding, making sense of and compensating for this discrepancy have been difficult to negotiate and have left them wanting.

These findings relating to the father correspond to other research conducted with men and male offenders. Boyle and Curtis (1995) found that the father's absence - whether through work, separation or other reasons - or his presence but emotional distance from his son, was an issue for most of the boys they worked with. They argue that such experiences leave the boys without a positive or secure attachment to an adult male and looking to other male figures for a male identity, knowledge and protection. Boyle and Curtis (1995) also postulate that it often appears that some boys who have poor relations with their father seek out and enter into conflict with teachers and/or policeman as one means of expressing their anger at feeling abandoned. Bronfenbrenner (1979) observes that the general finding from studies of children from father-absent homes is that such children tend to be more susceptible to peer group pressure and to exhibit a pattern of behaviour characterised by low motivation for achievement and low self-esteem, leading eventually, under the influence of the peer group, to greater impulsiveness and aggression (see also Bronfenbrenner, 1961; Hetherington et al, 1977). Chase-Lansdale and Hetherington (1990) comment that during preadolescence, existing evidence indicates not only that boys exhibit more conduct problems, including delinquency, in response to marital discord than girls, but also that divorce itself has a more negative effect on males than females. Richards, of Cambridge University's Centre for Family Studies, observes:

most children don't want their parents to split up. They like to think that their parents would have their greatest interests at heart and then they do something very damaging to you. The sense of betrayal is very hard to cope with. So the child is very angry but anger is hard to express because they're afraid that anger will drive the parent away

(Richards, quoted in Grant, 1996, p 13).

In research conducted by Boswell (1997), interviews with thirty two people convicted of serious offences as children, found that 91% had experienced either physical, sexual or emotional abuse or traumatic loss. Loss was deemed traumatic when the reasons for the death or the disappearance of a parent are never properly explained, leaving the child feeling abandoned or rejected. The common element found by Boswell in these offenders' experience was that there had been no 'mediating factor', no opportunity to put their experience into some kind of context. Kiernan's (1997) study found that children of parental divorce carried a legacy of doubt and vulnerability about forming and maintaining long-term relationships. Zill observed that:

the minority of children who exhibit aggressive and antisocial behaviour at home, in school and at play, is larger among children of divorce than children of intact families. Children of divorce are also more likely to feel neglected and rejected by their families (Zill, 1978, p 53) .

Pulkkinen (1982; 1983) and Pulkkinen and Saastamoinen (1986) argue that experience of instability over time (e.g. changes in family structure, day care and school arrangements, or parental employment and the frequency of parental absence) was associated with greater insecurity in later life, as well as higher incidences of problem behaviours such as submissiveness, aggression, early sexual activity, excessive smoking, drinking and delinquency, with the effects being found within as well as between social classes. Madge, of the National Children's Bureau, argues:

early damaging experience impacts differently on different people. What we need to know is what are the protective influences which enable some people to cope with life after a traumatic childhood (quoted in Rickford, 1997, p 3)

The majority of the men interviewed for this research found their family life wanting, in the sense that many of them felt 'unimportant' to their family, and most particularly to their fathers, and as Jefferson (1994) notes one feature of growing up unwanted or unneeded is to feel one's life lacks worth, dignity and meaning. This sense of 'unimportance' or unworthiness experienced by the men, and its impact upon their adult lives will be returned to later in the chapter.

Discipline within the family

Thirteen (57%) of the interviewees reported receiving some form of corporal punishment from their parents. This ranged from severe beatings to the occasional 'clip around the ear', with at least five of the men being regularly beaten. Seven of these thirteen men stated that the punishment they received was the result of getting into trouble, bringing the police to the house. Only three of the twenty three men felt that they could approach and talk to their parents about anything that might be concerning them. The remaining men (7) felt that their parents could, and should have been stricter with them. The kind of discipline, or its absence, that the men received from their parents was identified by some of the men as having an impact not only on their life in general but in particular on their criminal behaviour. Again, contradictory views emerged from amongst the men. Those who had received harsh corporal discipline believed it was highly likely that they

would not have ended up in trouble if they had been treated less harshly, as some of these men explain:

'Me mam and dad used to be heavy drinkers. [I] used to get beatings not off me mam off me dad. I just rebelled. If anything went wrong in the house I was to blame. There was just no, there was no love or affection off me dad whatsoever. I think if there had been a little bit of that I might have turned out a different person' Connor (aged 31).

Those men who, however, had identified themselves as being treated 'softly' by their parents felt a firmer hand would have steered them away from trouble:

'She smothered me, do you know what I mean. Well I was youngest, I'm the little boy sort of thing. In a way I think that's what maybe made me, you know like the attitude that I was like. She was always trying to stop me doing things, like I went to karate and she didn't like me doing that. I started boxing and she didn't like me doing that. .. I think that's maybe why I rebelled a bit. [And] he was hardly ever there because he worked away a lot so that have something to do with it. I didn't have a firm hand when I was younger see' Emmet (aged 43).

How the men expected their parents to treat them and how their parents actually did behave towards them appears to have had long-lasting consequences on the men's self-esteem and how they view themselves and their lives. Although many of the incidents and experiences the interviewees talked about in relation to their family occurred during their early childhood and adolescence, in a number of ways the emotional effects were still relevant to the men. For a lot of the men these incidents could be clearly recalled many years later and often evoked strong emotions. There was a sense amongst many of the men that they still carried the perceptions of themselves that were first evoked in the family setting, and more often than not these were perceptions of inadequacy, self-doubt and failure:

'Me dad used to be violent towards us cos I used to beat up me brothers and sisters. I used to want to beat him up, I couldn't beat him up. I used to feel weak and I used to feel daft really as well' Bryan (aged 27)

'I got some beatings and stuff but at the time I can't say I didn't deserve it. At the time you don't think you deserve it but looking back at some of the pressure you can see on your old lady, your old man. They never went to town and beat us for hours like with some kids that you hear about. Afterwards you're saying and it's oh my god how can she do that to me, and that would do your head in more' Fergus (aged 27)

'I couldn't understand why I was getting knocked about, I couldn't. And I couldn't understand even more why my mum did nothing about it. You know she says she didn't know but you can't live in those sort of circumstances and not sense something' Mark (aged 35).

'I think everybody should have a mother in their life for affection and loving. The mother always seems to love the son and the father always seems to love the daughter don't they. So I think I missed that bit, which maybe affected it [his involvement in crime], I don't know. Not total blame on it but I think it [his absent mother] would have a little bit to do with it psychologically' Tim (aged 22).

'I always remember one thing about when I was real young. I can remember getting took to a kids home once and as far as I can remember it I was suppose to go into this kids home. I must have been about 4 years old and I remember for some reason we went and had a look around this home and then I got took home again and nothing came of it. I always looked at it as if it were a bit of a threat, you know what I mean. If you don't pull your socks up you're going in there. It's the scariest thing I ever remember' Vincent (aged 43).

Again, the men's accounts of their family life appeared to reflect the often negative repercussions of the men's expectations of what family life should be like and the actual family lives they experienced. It would appear that when the men were not treated as anticipated the men interpreted this as a failure on *their* part, i.e. there was something that they did or did not do which meant they did get treated in the way they expected. The men gave the impression that the treatment they received from their parents (which also included a parent being absent from their lives) had a significant impact on how the individuals perceived themselves and their acceptability to others. As Mark (aged 35) commented on his experience of being in care:

'I went from pillar to post all over the place. I thought it was because I had done something wrong but it turned out it was just the policy at the time. But that played a big part on me. ..They're not like animals who can go and fend for themselves, people need that link, to family being there, and to your parents. And if that breaks down that's when the problems start arising, and it's a big back-pedal to try and get it back again, you definitely need help'.

'Not for my children'

This dissatisfaction the men felt with their own childhood was also illustrated in their attitudes towards their own children. Sixteen (70%) of the interviewees had children of their own. Five (31%) had one child, nine (56%) had between two and three children, and two (13%) had between four and five children. Three of the men had children with more than one partner. Three (19%) of the men had no contact with their children. Of the thirteen men who had contact with their

children, four identified their relationship as being similar to the positive or reasonable relationship they had with their own parents. For the other nine men the relationship they had with their children was completely different to their own relationship with their parents. This was very much a conscious decision on the part of these men and an important issue to them. These men did not want their own children to experience the childhood they themselves had endured. They wanted to ensure their own children had everything they themselves had missed out on.

'I give my children love, I give them something I missed out on when I was younger. I give them time and when they are wrong I try to sit down and explain' Connor (aged 31).

'They're always with me, even when me and me missus split up I was always around there. I'm more loving to my kids like, I let them sit on me knee and cuddle and that' Emmet (aged 33).

'That's all I ever wanted, for their lives to be full of love, and to have you know nice clothes, and not for kids to take the mickey out of them and to have nice friends and do well at school and give them a good base, give them a good base to start off with' Mark (aged 35).

For a number of men their desire for their children not to experience a disrupted childhood was not always enough to prevent it happening. For Aidan and Greg their prison sentences had disrupted their relationships with their children while Fergus found his need to travel to obtain work meant that for a number of years he was not around his children as much as he would have liked. Frank lost contact with two of his children from a previous relationship though he was involved in the life of his child from his present relationship. He commented 'my parents did it properly, they got a house from day one, my parents were always in work'. The presence of children in these men's lives also appeared to have a tendency to make some of the men more reflective about their lives, past, present and future, as Bryan (aged 27) explains:

'Me daughter was only a couple of weeks old when I got pulled. I love her lots and lots. It's only her that's going to make me go different in life. I mean [my girlfriend] has stuck by me now. She said she won't do it again so I think she means it. It's her loss anyway. I want to make a go of it this time anyway because of me daughter. I want her to get on in life don't I, I don't want her to go without nothin'.

Not wanting their children to experience their own unsatisfactory childhoods and wanting to give their children 'everything' was a major motivating force for the majority of men with children. The men took immense pride in their families and caring for their welfare. Mordon (1996, p 124), who works with young male prisoners on a parenthood course, has also observed that 'nearly all the fathers I have worked with over the years do not wish their children to be brought up as they

were'. Utting (1993) identified poor parental supervision, harsh or erratic discipline and parental discord as some of the family factors that may be associated with persistent offending behaviour. Utting goes on to argue that there is no evidence that family structure per se contributes to persistent offending behaviour but perhaps more attention should be paid to intact families and the style of fathering that children are subjected to. The evidence from the accounts of these men indicated that difficult family relations, particularly in relation to the fathers, produced insecurities and anxieties in the individuals, which they themselves believe to have influenced their criminal and non-criminal behaviour, and which appear to follow them into other areas of their later lives, with often self-defeating and self-destructive consequences.

'I do my own thing'

'Not being told what to do' and 'I do what I like' were key attitudes that resonated throughout the life accounts of all these men. This presumption or attitude of 'I will do as I like' was first expressed in relation to the family situation. This way of thinking, however, is carried with them into areas of their later life, particularly the school setting but also in relation to work. One could argue that this belief or assumption of 'I will do as I like' is a major cornerstone of these men's existence, these men gave the impression that it was their right to do anything they pleased and strengthened with that belief they made their life choices. As noted, this belief emerged first in their childhoods. Of the twenty three men interviewed nearly half (11) acknowledged that although they received advice from their parents warning them about their troublesome and/or criminal behaviour, none of them paid any heed to that advice. These men spoke of how they never listened to the warnings given to them, about the seriousness of what they were doing and how it would affect their lives, they all knew better. None of the warnings or parental concern sunk in. These men didn't want to hear any of it, they were all just interested in 'doing their own thing':

'She tells us 'you're a fool'. I'm me own man aren't I. I didn't do what I was told when I was younger so' Connor (aged 31).

Well you call it black sheep. I just did things my own way. I won't have anyone telling me anything. Maybe that's been my problem' Dermot (aged 26).

'When I look back on it, at the time like me mum and me family were saying oh drugs are this and that, very bad for you. I'm one of these people who thinks I'm right and they're wrong, and I'll do what I like anyway' Emmet (aged 33).

'I didn't pay any attention to it, cos he was unemployed and I was 16, 17 thinking I know better than anybody else. I needed the money, me first boy was born at 17, money was tight so I had no other way to get money' Fergus (aged 27).

'It's down to meself isn't it. Me old lady use to say stop out of trouble, mind this

mind that. But I didn't need that, I just look after myself' Lewis (aged 26).

This belief amongst the men about knowing what was best for themselves coupled with a dislike of being told what to do was a recurrent theme throughout their lives, it surfaced in their attitudes to school and employment, and it is to these areas we now turn.

Schooling

'We must challenge the laddish anti-learning culture which has been allowed to develop over recent years and should not simply accept, with a shrug of our shoulders, that boys will be boys' (Education Minister Byers, Guardian Editorial, 6.1.1998, p 12)

Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that the trio of interconnected settings involving home, school and peer group are the most important to investigate in terms of an individual's development. He identifies school as the setting carrying primary responsibility for preparing young people for effective participation in adult life. Kohn (1977, p 186) maintains that 'education provides intellectual flexibility and breadth of perspective that are essential for self-directed values and orientation; lack of education must seriously interfere with men's ability to be self-directed'. Martens (1990) argues that one of the important functions of school is to bring up children and adolescents to be responsible members of society. Braithwaite (1989) asserts that young people who are strongly attached to school and/or have high educational and occupational aspirations are less likely to engage in crime, the corollary of this being young people who do poorly at school are more likely to engage in crime. Rutter (1991) suggests that poor schooling leads to poor school attendance which leads to early school leaving which leads to unskilled work and a poor employment record, while Moffit (1993) contends that people who do poorly in school are more likely to terminate their education earlier and are more likely to accumulate socioeconomic disadvantages. Lacking opportunities to succeed in conventional ways Moffit argues that these individuals will be more likely to rely on rewards associated with involvement in anti-social activities. Messerschmidt (1979) notes that research has consistently shown that students who fail academically (for whatever reason) and/or occupy the lowest status positions in school, exhibit the highest rates of youth crime.

The men's education

Seventeen (74%) of the men interviewed left school with no qualifications. Twelve (52%) left school at the age of 16, nine (39%) left at the age of 15. James left school at the age of 13, Aidan was expelled from school around the age of 12/13, while Lewis attended an approved school from the age of 11/12 after being placed in care following his disruptive behaviour at home. Ten (43%) of the men rated themselves as being in the bottom half of their class, eight (35%) rated themselves as being 'average' and three (13%) rated themselves as being in the top half of their class. Ten (43%) of the men went on to gain some form of qualification after leaving school. Six of these ten

obtained trade qualifications such as city and guilds in welding or plastering. Of these six, two of the men obtained their qualifications while serving prison sentences. During their time at school, seven (30%) of the interviewees were suspended from school for fighting, truanting and disruptive behaviour, with two of these seven going on to being eventually expelled. In total six (26%) of the men were expelled from school as a result of their disruptive behaviour. Six of the men physically abused their teachers in some way, either by spitting at, hitting or throwing things (usually chairs) at them. 15 (65%) of the men played truant from school, with ten of those admitting to playing truant all or most of the time. The remaining five truanted occasionally or only for specific periods, such as Dermot who truanted from school after finding out the man he thought was his natural father wasn't. Dermot stopped going to school at this time while 'he got his head together'. Andrew and Emmet didn't truant but stayed off school regularly, with their mother's knowledge. Andrew's mother preferred to keep him home if she felt he was going to truant anyway and Emmet pretended to be ill because his mother spoilt him and he therefore had an easier time at home. Of the ten men who truanted regularly, seven cited their dislike of school as their reason for not attending. School bored them, they didn't like the classes or the way the teachers treated them and therefore didn't go. Of the others, Aidan and James had no particular reason for not going while Roger skipped school to go play on the bandit (slot) machines. When truanting three of the men would go into town (and occasionally 'get up to no good'), two would head to their local woods and two of the men would spend the time in their empty houses. One went to his local snooker club while one spent the time shoplifting, stealing and sniffing glue.

School as an experience

Twenty one (91%) of the twenty three men interviewed found their schooling a less than rewarding experience. All of these men expressed two main objections to school: the rules and regulations and the attitudes of the teachers. All of the men objected to 'being told what to do':

'It's not that I didn't like school it was just a case [of] I didn't like getting told what to do. If they said to me wear black shoes, come in without an earring, you know what I mean, I didn't like the rule and regulations. I used to go to school in denims, against the regulations. It was anything just to wind someone up. I rebelled against the system. I can't say why, it was just to be different. I'm not doing what they're telling me, and I'm going to let everyone know it, show everyone I'm not going to take no shit off people' Andrew (aged 30).

'I didn't like school and I didn't like being there. I didn't like being told what to do and I still don't really, I'm trying to take on other people's point of view' Emmet (aged 33).

'I think to me it was like a concentration camp. It was get your head stuck in that book or you get a clip to the back of your ear. They had what were sad teachers, it was a tough area, tough teacher and I just rebelled against them. Honestly I just rebelled against everything. That's to say I wouldn't do what

they tell me to do, that was me. I'm still like that, I'll not let people tell me what to do, if they come and *ask* me that's a different thing, I'll talk and tell them whether I'll do it or not' Keith (aged 53).

'I mean I used to hate everything about school when I was at school. But looking back at this stage of your life I can't really think what I didn't like about it, I just didn't like being told what to do' Frank (aged 30).

'Getting told what to do, because I didn't like to take orders from people apart from if it suited me. If it suited me I'd do it, if it didn't suit me I didn't do it' Lewis (aged 26).

'When you look back now it seems alright, but at the time I didn't like it, I didn't like being told what to do really. And just everything bored me' Stephen (aged 22).

This sentiment of refusing to be told what to do was compounded by what the men considered to be the negative or condescending attitude of teachers towards pupils:

'The teachers authority mad aren't they. They've got a class of thirty people and they think they're prime minister' Bryan (aged 27).

'I remember when I was in middle school, throwing snowballs at the buses and [the] governor gave us 6 lashes of his belt. The next morning in assembly he made this speech about me saying I was begging for mercy and I was crying me eyes out. And I was really, really annoyed at it because I wasn't, I just walked out of his office and walked home. And from then onwards I'd say me attitude towards school changed, because I knew what he said was lies, to everyone in the assembly, it just made me feel dead small' Connor (aged 31).

'I think the teachers were patronising, I think they had no brains, I mean I thought they were dunces to tell you the truth, no common sense' Fergus (aged 27).

'I didn't like the way they used to treat, sort of undermining you, I don't know. You know I went to college for a while and I sort of enjoyed college cos they treat you more as an adult. When you're sort of 13, 14, you want to be tret sort of like an adult, and they sort of tret you like you're kids, and you're not happy, you don't want to be doing with that. You get no respect at school I think' Ray (aged 26).

On the basis of these men's accounts of school, their own mindset of refusing to be told what to do

combined with their contempt of the teachers' attitudes towards them resulted in school being a very antagonistic and adversarial setting. Their accounts of school come over as narratives of them pitting their will against the will of their, often male, teachers. There was also a considerable sense of pride, arrogance almost, in these men's accounts of not letting anyone telling them what to do, especially their teachers. As Nadler et al (1984) note men are traditionally socialised to seek power and control, to be autonomous and self-reliant, while Messerschmidt (1993) contends that 'hegemonic masculinity' involves practices characterising dominance, control and independence. Messerschmidt (1993), however, maintains that such masculine ideals are the very qualities that schooling discourages. Research on secondary schooling reveals that adaptation to the social order of the school requires that all students, regardless of their class and race, submit to unyielding authority, relations in which students are actually penalised for creativity, autonomy and independence (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Greenburg, 1977; Messerschmidt, 1979). Connell (1989) argues that some of the strongest effects of schooling on the construction of masculinity are to be seen from the indirect effects of streaming and failure, authority patterns and definitions of knowledge. Connell (1987) also maintains that for most young men, schooling is far from an empowering experience, they encounter school authority as an alien power and start to define their masculinity against it. David Dickson, head teacher of Henry Beaufort school Winchester, observed:

I was very aware in 1990 that some of the boys were creating an anti-school subculture as a way of establishing their identity. To counter that I asked the staff to adopt a non-confrontational approach in discipline. .. I thought that teachers were alienating boys by bawling them out in public. So our motto now is to praise in public and reprimand in private (Redwood, 1997, p 23).

It would appear that some of the behaviour by, and witnessed by, these men when at school may be linked to wider macrosocial issues of developing a masculine identity. As Coward (1996) observes for girls becoming a working woman is not 'uncool', for boys the self-esteem that comes from masculine ideals by-pass school achievements and career paths.

Playing to the audience

Permeating the sentiment of not allowing one's will to be usurped was the importance of having an audience. For these men, other people needed to be aware that their will would not be broken. The presence of peers at school meant that often the school was not perceived as a place of education per se but rather it was much more a social arena:

'I used to enjoy all the classes but I would never get into them, there was an enjoyment element but I was too interested in what was going on with girls and the posse [his group of friends] and everything I was involved in. I was too engrossed in that kind of thing, we always talked about, the education came second really all the time' Fergus (aged 27).

'When you're kids nobody likes school. When we got to the older school, it's

not the school you take notice of it's the girls you take notice of, I think it's a dating place' Greg (aged 28)

'We used to go to have a laugh. I never used to take it seriously, not seriously enough. There was a big crowd of us, used to mess about, none of us took it seriously' Ian (aged 25).

'The education part was terrific but the peer pressure and things from the kids and people I was mixing with at the time, you know, that was terrible' Mark (aged 35).

The implicit message of the majority of these men's accounts of their schooling was that much of their energy and attention was spent in 'proving' themselves, both to themselves and, most importantly, to their audience of peers and teachers. Nearly all their accounts relating to school express a sentiment of not yielding to authority, of doing their own thing and being seen to do so. The vast majority of the men seemed to intimate that it was unacceptable for them to be told what to do, and for them to be asked to pay attention or make an effort to work was at the very least the epitome of boredom and at the worst level an affront to their autonomy. The men's perceived boredom of school and their need to avoid boredom, at all costs it would appear, seemed to coincide with the perceived need to 'prove' themselves. In this process of avoiding boredom and proving themselves the men managed to 'create' the excitement they yearned for, and it would appear existed for. In their attempts to avoid perceived boredom and to attain acceptance, or at least grudging respect or acknowledgement from their peers, a large number of the men adopted tactics which included disruptive behaviour, fighting and bullying.

Disruptive behaviour

As with most of the behaviour adopted by most of the men when they were at school, disruptive behaviour provided an answer to a number of the men's perceived needs: to avoid boredom, to create and experience excitement, to undermine the teachers' authority, and to gain the acceptance or respect of their peers. As some of the men observed:

'I used to always argue with them and that, used to be disruptive. If the class was boring and that I was disruptive, I could learn if I enjoyed it' Bryan (aged 27).

'There were some teachers I got on with but I couldn't sit, if I did have to sit in a class I'd disrupt it somehow. In some way I'd ensure either I got kicked out or the rest of the class wasn't concentrating' Aidan (aged 36).

'I weren't thick, I wasn't thick but I never made use of it, it was sort of the in thing to mess about. I could have made more' Frank (aged 30).

'Like all me ordinary reports were intelligent person but wants to disrupt others in class' Tim (aged 24): .

'I used to do anything, just for attention, to get attention. Show off, we all used to compete, who do the funniest thing' Stephen (aged 22).

Bullying at school

Six (26%) of the men interviewed were bullied while at school. In four cases, after taking a number of beatings, the men eventually started hitting back. Generally once they had defended themselves the bullying stopped. Two (9%) of the interviewees admitted to bullying people at school, one of whom had originally been bullied himself. For the men who were bullied, it was because they had been identified as being 'different', in either physical appearance or in their social and family set up. There was also a suggestion that these differences were perhaps perceived as weaknesses and, therefore, made them acceptable targets. As the men themselves comment:

'I used to get bullied a little like, up until about 13, that's when I started hitting back. I used to have big teeth, I've still got big lips like, but if you're a little lad with big teeth and big lips, they used to call me Mick Jagger. I used to grind me teeth when I was a youngster as well and they used to call me grindy, basic things' Bryan (aged 27).

'The reason I started doing karate was that I got bullied a lot. With me size, loads of people thought they'd get away with it. I was only 3ft 9. I'm not being funny but that bullying had a serious effect on me. I would have done a hell of a lot better in school if it weren't for that. I use to dread going to school. I didn't even tell my parents, I was frightened if I said something they'd do something and it come back on me' Greg (aged 28).

'If you were brought up in care you was always going to be bullied for it. You know you were different from them and I don't know it [was] made sort of plain you hadn't got a dad, you know my dad kicks your dad. There was a big stigma attached. A lot of the time [it was about] your appearance. I don't know maybe because I didn't have the confidence. I mean they seemed to have loads of confidence, they were happy, this that and the other and I wasn't. And maybe it showed and maybe they played on them weaknesses' Mark (aged 35).

None of the men who were bullied asked for or received any assistance in dealing with the bullying they received. It would appear the bullying was accepted as part of life and that it would continue until you stood up and defended yourself. For the two men who had actually bullied, the attraction for them lay in being accepted as part of a group, of belonging. As they describe it:

'I did [get bullied] in the first year actually. But we ended up being more like bullies, which is pretty sad really. I see people up town and I think you must hate me. There was just a crowd of us and I don't know, we just seem to, not really nasty, we just used to pick on people and make their life a misery'
Stephen (aged 22).

'I did bully, I don't know why, just to be respected or whatever, you know the peer group or whatever' Tim (aged 24).

Both the men who had been bullied and those who had bullied still expressed a degree of embarrassment over the issue, admitting to weakness on their part. This weakness that bullying exposed, could also be detected in the manner and/or tone the other men displayed when indicating they themselves had never been bullied, usually expressing an empathetic sense of 'no one would mess with me'.

Fighting

Fighting at school was another activity that appeared to fulfil a number of the men's perceived needs. It showed them to be tough and able to stand up for themselves and also offered the opportunity to impress 'the girls' as well as their male peers. Eighteen (78%) of the men admitted to fighting at school with fifteen of them saying it was a regular occurrence. Two of the men started fighting after tolerating bullying for a considerable period of time, while one of the men identified his behaviour as being more of a bullying than a fighting nature. Fighting at school, to these men, was the normal, both the 'expected' and 'accepted' thing to do. It was expected that you would be able to defend yourself and it was seen to be just a normal part of growing up. A number of men identified girls as the reason for fights taking place but the majority of men said that they fought at school because it was just something you did:

'It's just part of growing up isn't it, they still do it today. Girls really, you do at that age, there's nothing much else to fight about at that age is there, just girls. One minute they're with you the next minute they're chucking you and with somebody else and you're fighting aren't you' Aidan (aged 36).

'We went to other schools looking for girls and stuff like that. [A] dominance thing. Your school wants to be the hardest in the area, so [you] have school fighting. And if you fight it looks good. And the older boys around and the girls look at you. That's what it's all about, the women, showing off, showing your peacock feathers' Fergus (aged 27):.

'Over anything. Case of you're better than me so I wanted to beat him, case of if he wanted to fight me I'd fight him' Andrew (aged 30):.

'I wanted to be hardest, I've always wanted to be king of the castle. I just think

it's the alpha dog in me. Leadership, respect and your dignity' Bryan (aged 27).

'Just the usual playground brawls, every kid had them, everyone has them' Keith (aged 53).

'I've been tall my life and people seem to sort of pick on taller people you know, to prove a point. I'll do him and everyone else will be frightened of us or whatever. I still get it now, I got slashed a while back' Ray (aged 26).

It would appear from these men's accounts, fighting was an accepted method of asserting one's self and of establishing or ensuring one's self-esteem was maintained. It was important that an individual could hold his own not just in the physical sense but more importantly in the broader self-respecting sense.

For these men then, school was not a place of education per se, it was first and foremost a place where they could make a mark for themselves and establish their identity, with their maleness being a large component of that identity. The behaviours and attitudes adopted at school were aimed at gaining respect from their peers, male and female, and also from their teachers. In relation to the teachers, however, it would appear such attempts mainly resulted in creating antagonism and hostility between teacher and pupil. The school setting, for these men, appeared to be a testing ground for establishing who they were. Erickson (1968) and Cantor and Kihlstrom (1987) argue that a consuming life task of adolescence is the construction of a self that one can become, that is at once believable, personally satisfying, and coincides with the responsibilities that confront adults in one's own community. As Murphy (1995) observes, as men move from young person to man the messages and expectations they have received about how they should be as *men* have inevitably constrained the range of options and choices they have had available for themselves. Oyserman and Saltz (1993) argue that a youth may engage in a particular deviant behaviour as a means of attaining identity, either because it smooths entry into a particular social group (Castro et al, 1991) or because it is self-symbolising in other ways (Gollwitzer & Wicklund, 1985).

Gross (1996) argues that being a individual is scary for adolescents and so their peers become an alternative family, providing a middle space where the individual has a new source of approval. Gross maintains that the peer group provides apparent stability and freedom for this individual, however, this is also accompanied by the social pressure and worry about not being in the right group. Gerrard (1996, p 2) asserts that people 'jostle despairingly for positions in groups held together by the desire to belong and the fear of rejection', while Waddell (1996, p 2) maintains that as people 'we have a massive intolerance of difference, a huge need to belong and we cruelly bolster our own identification with the group at the expense of others'.

Rutter et al (1979) argue that one of the reasons that may lead to the emergence of anti-school peer

groups is the effect of scholastic failure on the feelings of personal worth of the individuals concerned. A report from Birmingham City Council on school exclusions suggest that some pupils considered exclusion 'macho' and 'an honour' while other pupils spoke of peer pressure and the need they felt to adopt a leadership role among an anti-school group when at school (Working With Men, 1994/95). Hagan et al (1979) argue that male peer groups may stand not so much as an alien subculture but rather as an exaggerated reflection, or even a caricature, of the male sex role and its emphasis. Cowie (1997) argues that bullies often find bullying is a way to be popular or gain admiration from their peers, while Hartup (1974) asserts that boys come to equate aggression with self-esteem in a way that girls simply do not (see also Campbell, 1993). It would appear that school will be sacrificed by boys in an attempt to establish their identity, as men, with part of this process involving acceptance within a peer group or at least grudging acknowledgement from their peers. Much of the information regarding these men's educational experience implicitly involves the individual's sense of self-worth, at school it would appear to come under attack if one is not inclined, in either attitude or capabilities, towards schoolwork and hence other avenues of bolstering self-worth are invoked. Oyserman and Saltz (1993) contend that with some forms of deviant behaviour a picture emerges of youths who cannot extricate themselves from problematic situations involving their peers and who go along with whatever opportunities arise rather than actively seeking opportunities for attaining self-relevant goals.

Regrets

The majority of the men admitted that when they were at school learning was not high on their agenda, if at all. Quite a few of the men now, however, spoke of their regret at not having made more of their time at school. Fourteen (61%) of the men felt that had they paid more attention at school and obtained proper qualifications their lives would be better. These men regretted not having taken school seriously and felt that they had lost out in life as a result of this:

'I wish I was back there now, I'd love to go back there tomorrow, I'd just love to go back to my first year and do my schooling again. I think I'd concentrate a lot more' Dermot (aged 26).

'I would like to have some qualifications. I would like to have some qualifications behind me and gone straight to college from leaving school. Basically done the things that I'm doing now so many years later, just skipped all the crap in between' Ian (aged 25).

'I wish I'd gone and sort of done me exams and sort of got on and gone somewhere. To sort of get, well I wouldn't be where I am now' Ray (aged 26).

These fourteen men were of the opinion that if they had completed their education successfully their lives would be different - better - than they were today. None of them could actually explain why they thought an education would make their lives better but they were all adamant that it would.

Poor school performance amongst boys, particularly working class boys, is not a new phenomenon. It has, however, recently become a major concern of the education department. The problem was highlighted by the chief inspector of schools last year (Kingston, 1997), while more teachers have been voicing their concerns over poor performance and attitudes amongst boys this year. Alan Leech, head teacher of Bohunt Community school Liphook, recommends avoiding the mindset that permits lower expectations of boys in school which he believes can be so easily adopted (Kingston, 1997). The school setting appears to be a site that highlights both the ideals many young men are aspiring to, that of independence and control, and the often self-defeating consequences the relentless pursuit of such ideals can lead to. Education and schooling appear to be a major point of transition for men and will be returned to in later chapters, as Mac an Ghiail (1994) has observed schooling may be a potentially significant public site that enables individual young people to achieve a degree of social mobility in the labour market and allow for the development of non-traditional gender identities. The fact that a large number of men appear to ignore this potential is an important issue worth further serious consideration.

The World of Work

As Allen and Waton (1986) note, earning one's living is more than an economic matter, for it pervades a whole range of cultural and political relationships. Jahoda (1979, 1982) and Jahoda and Rush (1980) argue that five experiences which are crucial to psychological well-being are typically provided in our society by formal employment - social contact, status, time structure, activity, and being part of some collective purpose. Both Erickson (1980) and Levinson et al (1978), amongst others, have noted that both theoretically and empirically the job role is treated as central to men's psychological well-being. According to the view of 'man-as-worker', the workplace is the arena in which men struggle to establish their identity and in which they measure their success and failure (Erickson, 1980; Levinson et al, 1978; Valliant, 1977). Tolson (1977) maintains that in western industrialised, capitalist societies, definitions of masculinity are bound up with definitions of work. Men are brought up to value work, as an end in itself, and to fix their personal identities around particular occupations. Tolson (1979) argues that the roots of male gender identity are interfused with expectations of achievement, 'being someone' through working, 'making something of yourself', to be the breadwinner for the family. Ingham (1984) asserts that for most men in capitalist societies, their careers, their professions, their trades, their skilled and unskilled jobs are the prime focus of identity, and that without work men are rootless and disjointed. Messerschmidt (1993) argues that with the economic development of the postwar period, the family-wage system and the breadwinner power of men has significantly diminished, but the notion that paid work equates with masculinity persists.

The work history of the men

Fifteen (65%) of the twenty three men interviewed were unemployed prior to receiving their prison sentences or probation orders. Of the fourteen prisoners interviewed, nine (64%) were officially unemployed prior to their sentence, another two were officially unemployed but also 'working on the side'. Of the offenders on probation six (67%) were officially unemployed while one was

officially unemployed but also working. Only three (13%) of the twenty three interviewees had been able to stay employed in the same job for longer than five years. Andrew, Harvey and Patrick had held jobs for 9, 14 and 15 years respectively. All, however, were now unemployed, Andrew through his offence and prison sentence, Harvey was made redundant three months prior to his offence, while Patrick was unable to find employment through illness. The longest continuous periods of employment for the remaining men ranged from three to five years (7), one to two years (8), while two of the men had managed to stay in continuous employment for less than one year. Fourteen (61%) of the men had been employed almost exclusively in labouring or construction work, although Keith had actually run a building company with his brother. Five (22%) of the men had worked in factories and two (9%) of the men's only experience of employment had been in youth training schemes. One of the men had worked for a local company and one had never been employed. Five of the men openly admitted that none of their jobs had ever been legal. It is also possible, due to the nature of the construction industry, that a number of the men's labouring jobs were not wholly legitimate. The majority of the men had experienced considerable periods of continuous unemployment. Three (13%) of them had been continuously unemployed for between one and two years, nine (39%) for between three and five years and six (26%) of the men had been unemployed for five years or more. The longest period of continuous unemployment was twelve years.

The majority of the men had a chequered history of work. Most of the men admitted to never really sticking with a job; they all had a tendency to move from job to job on a regular basis. This propensity to move from job to job arose partly because of the short-term contracted work that the men engaged in, and was partly due to the nature of the work. The majority of the men described their work as being of a dead-end nature which held very little attraction for them. For these men work consisted of nothing more than a pay packet, none of the work these men engaged in offered the prospects of either a career or a challenge or goals that any of them might aspire to:

'I've had lots of jobs, that was me problem I never stayed in one job, I'd get fed up with it and do something else. I just got fed up with the work, Like the first job I had, I was standing with a piece of metal putting holes in pork pies. Now doing that for 12 hours every day, it's not very exciting' Aidan (aged 36).

'I started work straight from school, I never stuck at anything really from the day I left school. I just try to work, I've always tried to make money' Frank (aged 30).

'What I'd like to do is go back to Ford again, it's easy money, you're paid to be bored, you're just sitting on a forklift truck all day' Andrew (aged 30).

Some of the men had reached a stage where they wanted work that was more fulfilling, they were beginning to tire of endlessly drifting from one dead-end job to another. These men spoke of finding

employment that would interest them.

'I want to get trained up, get working, and I've got a few ambitions. I want to buy some land and maybe stay in a caravan for a few weeks and build me own house eventually' Ray (aged 26).

'I started thinking about what it is I actually enjoy, you know. I'll get a job earning money for that rather than drifting from job to job. Something I'll actually enjoy going and doing every day' Ian (aged 25).

'I mean obviously you get a better standard of living if you've got money coming in don't you. Cos of the jobs I get, because I don't have any qualifications, I sort of don't get up and think oh great work, you know what I mean. It's just a job, it's nothing I enjoy at all. That's why I'd like to go back to college and sort of try and get into something I enjoy' Vincent (aged 43).

The majority of interviewees wanted to obtain work, however, a large number wanted work on their terms. They expressed a view of wanting a job but it had to be under the right circumstances, which usually meant for the right amount of money. The men's attitude of not wanting to be told what to do, mentioned earlier in relation to the family and particularly the school, was also manifest in the men's opinions of work. Quite a few of the men expressed a desire to be their own bosses since this meant they would not have to answer to anybody but themselves:

'I'd like to be the chairman of the water company, I'd go in twice a week and earn thirty grand. I'd like to be one of those fat cats. Me perfect job, self-employed making furniture. I like doing that, I'm quite good with me hands, I can make things and they turn out nice, and because I wouldn't have anyone on me back. You see I don't like authority, in fact I hate authority, they can tell you what to do' Bryan (aged 27).

'I mean I've been offered jobs selling cars and various other things and I will do it if I've got an interest in doing them, but if it's with the right people and the right money' Fergus (aged 27).

'I'd still like to go into sales or something like that, or become self-employed, have me own business. I'd be happy doing that, I'd be happy' Frank (aged 30).

'Up until maybe 2 years ago I weren't bothered about working. I've got me own business now so it's different. I don't have anybody telling you what to do, you see. So there's no bosses and generally I dislike militancy, so I don't have to be, I can do what I want when I want' Roger (aged 22).

For a very small number of men employment held no real appeal, it did not fit in with their view of the world:

'I'm not bothered. I want work, the wages they pay, they won't pay me what I want so I'm not taking. I'm not taking something that pays about £100 a week'
Lewis (aged 26).

'Weren't bothered, didn't want a job. Cos at the time I didn't need one, I didn't need the money. But there was no point in me getting one anyway because of how it works with the system. I was getting me flat paid, getting dole, getting dole for me lass as well. If I got a job it'd only be £130 a week see, I wouldn't be any better off for working 40 hours a week so I thought I aren't doing it' Roger (aged 22).

Although a number of the interviewees spoke of the frustration they experienced being in often poorly paid, boring, dead-end jobs, few of the men saw genuine alternatives available to them. Their lack of educational qualifications was identified as the main reason why these men chose mainly labouring work as their occupation. The consequences of their anti-school attitudes and actions resulted in them have severely reduced opportunities within the labour market, which consequently had repercussions in other areas of their lives. As Allen and Waton (1986) observe, the loss of income, or inability to earn an income, is accompanied by loss of status, identity and rights through the multiplicity of rules and regulations to which the unemployed, and their families, are subjected. Their lack of qualifications was also compounded by the fact that most of the men had a criminal record, thus reducing the work opportunities available to them even further. Often any attempts on the men to improve themselves would be thwarted. As Nick (aged 27) observes:

'People say like what do you want to do, and they say go for this and try this and then I think yeah but when I do all this, and I've done say 3 years of college or maybe even gone on to university, but then at the end of the day, 3 or 4 years on and I get a job and I've got a criminal record. Then what do I say to them, do I lie. Obviously I want to better meself, so I'm seeking out a better career, better employment, then I'm going to be scrutinised a lot more, you know, if I want to be in a place that's nice with a, not a higher class of people, but a better class of people. Like the jobs I'm in now they don't care so long as you're there, they haven't got time for you. So you either lie or just be honest and get rejected I think'.

As Vaughan-Jones (1997) has pointed out, in recent years modern capitalist countries have witnessed a massive change in employment, the result being a number of changes occurring in the job market. At one end of this market there has been a shortening of the working week and a large

increase in financial rewards whilst at the other end there has been a deskilling of some areas of work, a reduction of financial rewards and a change in the structure of the working day which in many cases has resulted in either long hours for little pay or part-time employment with job security and few fringe benefits. Wall (1977) maintains that if one is fortunate to fall into the former category then s/he might perceive work as rewarding, satisfying and self-enhancing through the prestige it confers and the demands it makes. However, if one has the misfortune to fall into the latter category there could be a temptation to feel work is an evil to be endured, something which dehumanises and is a form of exploitation. As Gilder (1973, 1986) observes, the worker is totally 'replaceable' and his/her value is not set by his/her humanity but by the market. Allen and Waton (1986) contend that the wage relationship, previously a main source of integration into wider structures of society, is being severed for more and more individuals and families. Jenkins (1994) argues that the workplace has provided an important form of discipline for men and acted as a means of socialisation and as a source of male role models. She argues that work is important in terms of providing structure to the day and a livelihood and postulates that if a man's identity rests on his job, there is no role for him and no sense of citizenship without it.

What work means to the men

For the majority of these men, the importance of having a job was directly linked to the money it provided for them. There appeared to be very little personal, or self-investment in the work per se; the investment came from the money obtained by working and the things that this money could provide, such as material items, and the self-esteem, or enhancement, that accompanied being able to provide for oneself and/ or one's family:

'I'd like a job very much you know, at the end of the week you've got something there. When you've got no job you feel like a vagrant, and when you've got a job you know you've got something in at the end of the week, and you don't have to go and steal anything to supplement what you're doing' Connor (aged 31).

'I feel like I'm letting my family down and that. I do try and look for jobs but about all I can get is bar work and you can't get a lot of money on that work' Greg (aged 28).

'I lost my job and I feel bitter towards the court you know, because I had a good job there and like for the first time I was getting praise. .. So I feel quite bitter, I'm still left picking up the pieces and expected to be on my best behaviour and sometimes it's hard, not thieving like, being motivated like for your probation' Nick (aged 27).

In their study of unemployed men, Willot and Griffin (1997) observed that men not only talk about providing the basics of food, clothes and shelter, but also economic extras such as gifts, holidays and treats. Many of the men in their study argued that they were no longer expected to provide

essentials but luxuries as well. From their study, Willot and Griffin (1997) comment that most of the men constructed masculine identities with reference to breadwinning and public consumption. These issues of public consumption and breadwinning were of particular relevance to this group of men in relation to their criminal behaviour, with almost half (43%) of them citing money as the reason why they become involved in crime. Zillman (1979) argues that money is intimately bound up with men's self-esteem, wealth brings them prestige, while Campbell (1993) maintains that job loss or chronic unemployment are especially powerful in reinforcing a man's lack of value in wider society. The issue of employment, or the lack of employment, therefore, is not linked to finances alone. As Allen and Waton (1986) note, the relations between dependence promoted by high unemployment negate the personal and social development of young people and their parents, and between men and women, while Jefferson (1994) maintains that the absence of work and the effect of low income on leisure and other choices have massively reduced the opportunities and possibilities available to many young people, which might enable them to live meaningful lives.

Leisure and Crime: Drink, Drugs and Boredom

The notion that deviant and/or criminal behaviour is a normal part of life that most men pass through and 'grow out of', to move on to 'respectable' lives has been proposed on a number of occasions (see Rutherford 1992; Graham & Bowling, 1995). Travis (1996), reporting on Home Office research that explored the main factors that encouraged individuals to 'grow out of crime', observed that for young women the main factors are leaving home, entering into stable relationships with the opposite sex, forming new families, and eventually becoming economically independent, socially responsible and self-reliant individuals. For young women giving up crime tended to happen abruptly and consciously. This, however, was not the case for young men. For them the key precondition for giving up crime was the avoidance of, or extraction from, a delinquent lifestyle, including drinking heavily and using drugs. Getting out of crime, for men, was found to be more gradual and intermittent than it was for women, with their attempts being thwarted by events or changes in circumstances. The positive effects of personal and social developments tended to be outweighed by the more powerful influences of friends and associates. Although factors such as finding a sense of direction and meaning in their life, realising the impact of one's actions upon others and learning that crime doesn't pay were found to contribute to a man's decision to give up crime, where young male criminals indulge in heavy alcohol and drug misuse they are likely to become embedded in a criminal lifestyle from which it becomes difficult to disengage.

Free time

Drinking was the activity that the majority of the men (76%, 16) interviewed spent engaged in during any 'recreational time' available to them. This was very much a social occasion for them and something they did in the company of 'the lads'. Sports activities or going to the gym was cited as the other main way in which the men spent their free time. For the majority of the men, however, going to the pub with a couple of mates was the standard convention for socialising and relaxing. As they themselves explain:

'My life consisted, out there, of going to work, going to the gym and having a few bebies, that's it basically, and getting away once or twice a year on holiday' Andrew (aged 30).

'During the day I'd buy and sell a few cars, things like that. Everyday things during the day, the day is filled with things like that and of an evening go to the gym and then a drink' Ian (aged 25).

'Smoking pot and drinking, sometimes on me own and sometimes with me friends. I just like getting, I don't know it relaxes me when I'm not working' Bryan (aged 27).

'Before I was taking drugs and after, I was trying to keep fit going to the gym and then just going out to pubs and clubs. Well there's nothing else to do is there' Frank (aged 30).

'Just getting intoxicated, time just passes doesn't it, you're enjoying yourself, you're meeting not just your friends you're meeting other people' Connor (aged 31).

If going for a drink was not an option for these men they tended to find it hard to fill in their time and found themselves bored and isolated. A number of men had decided to give up drinking as a result of the difficulties it had caused them in the past. This decision was, however, proving to be a difficult one since it left them with little else to do and generally meant avoiding all their old friends:

'At the moment I don't really go out much. I don't drink a lot cos I don't want to go back to court but I don't know what I do. My life is sort of real boring, there's not a lot I really do. I really am on the computer most of the time. I do go out, we play in a pool team and I play football' Stephen (aged 22).

'I don't even go round the town now, cos like all the people who know me are all like enemies to me. They know that I've got no chances now. The last 2 assaults, the last one was at crown court where I should have gone away and this one where I should have gone away. They can come up to me and start knocking me about thinking, knowing if I start back at them I'm going to get arrested and ending up going to jail. So I haven't been in [the] town centre drinking since September now' Tim (aged 24).

'I don't do a lot of socialising at the moment, cos that's when, you know a lot of me friends, when they go socialising that'll be to raves and what have you. So I'm keeping away from there, keeping out of trouble, resist temptation' Ray

(aged 26).

'It's been right from the main age of 17, I've never known anything different. Consequently I've had 21 months inside here, in prison, reflecting on, knowing basically that's the problem I have. So I say to myself you'd better calm down, if you're going out for a few pints yeah, but make it a few, don't put yourself under pressure where you lose control, which is what happened on the night'

Harvey (aged 50).

Drinking

Only two of the men never drank, two were occasional drinkers while the remaining nineteen (83%) identified themselves as being regular to heavy drinkers. Twelve of these nineteen ascribe drink as having played a role in their criminal behaviour, past and present. In nine of these cases the criminal behaviour was of a violent nature, that is the men either got involved in fights or assaulted an individual(s) without provocation. The other three men felt that their drinking left them in a position where they were easily led and they were, therefore, more likely to agree to committing a crime like burglary or robbery. The majority of the men identified the socialising aspect as their reason for drinking. Drinking was something they did with a group of friends, generally male, and occasionally with a girlfriend or partner:

'I just like the socialising part, I just like being out with the lads, well not the lads, it's hard to explain' Aidan (aged 36).

'It's a good time innit, a good time, a few laughs with your friends' Ian (aged 25).

There was a distinction made by the men between drinking that occurred during the week and drinking during the weekend. For many of the men the weekend was when they would drink to excess, and at the weekends they would most likely be in the company of their, almost exclusively, male friends:

'It's just the social, it's just the socialising. At the weekend maybe you go for it but during the week it's just the socialising' Frank (aged 30).

'At one time I use to drink quite a lot, but I'm not much bothered anymore. At the weekend, drinking, I like to spend me weekend, enjoy meself' Ian (aged 25).

'I don't drink much on a week, but it's generally 10 on a Friday and 10 on a Saturday, it depends on whether we go clubbing or not' Roger (aged 22).

Drinking was, for these men, very much part of their social lives and drinking to excess,

particularly at weekends, was seen as a perfectly normal aspect of their social lives. Despite the problems that drink had caused in the lives of many of these men, they described it as something that was beyond their control. It was described as something that happened *to* them rather than something they took an active part in. Being 'easily led' or 'losing control' continually cropped up in these men's accounts of their drinking habits and the effects this had on their lives:

'It's a nice feeling until you get past your limit and once you get past your limit you can do anything. It gives you confidence, even though you may act like an arsehole you don't look at it at the time. You just don't look at it at the time'
Connor (aged 31).

'When I'm sober I'm just like this. When I've had too much to drink I get dead narky real easy and want to fight anybody. That's why I'm giving up the ale'
Bryan (aged 27).

'It's easy to pick a fight when you're drunk innit, and it's not easy to back down from one as it is when you're sober. You know like they say the hard man is the one who walks away but when you're drunk that don't really come into it does it'
Tim (aged 24).

'When I was younger and that I think I was easily sort of influenced and that, and you know I'd try and get a bit more drunk than everybody else. And it got me into a bit of trouble, violence wise, and it was stupidity wise all round'
Vincent (aged 43).

'When I wasn't drinking I was the perfect husband and perfect father. When I didn't have a drop of drink in me I was sound. I could drink at home, just have a couple of cans you know, me and the wife, have a sociable night. But once I got out I just couldn't drink to get drunk, I'd drink and drink and drink, until the pubs were shut or I was skint. I don't know what it was, I don't know if I was an alcoholic or what, that was me downfall. And once I had booze inside me if someone said look this is on, I was easily led, it was like I'd go along with that'
Aidan (aged 36).

Nearly all the men identified a difference between the way they drank and behaved with their girlfriend/partner and the way they drank and behaved with their predominantly, if not totally, male friends. When the men were with their girlfriend/partner they were content to have a few drinks and spend this time relatively quietly, often staying in to watch television. Time with their male friends, however, was a chance to have a laugh, be a bit rowdy and boisterous. And it was when they were with 'the lads' that these men felt they were more likely to get 'carried away' and do something 'stupid':

'Me girlfriend doesn't drink and she doesn't smoke pot so she doesn't really like me smoking pot around her because of the smell. Sometimes I drink when I'm there, but I do spend it differently, watching telly, playing bingo' Bryan (aged 27).

'When you're with your friends you're with the lads aren't you. When you're with a girl you try to be on your best behaviour. When you're out with the lads you're loud, boisterous, you're just being rowdy really' Connor (aged 31).

'I'd be up to a lot more with me mates whereas with me partner we just stop in' Frank (aged 30).

'Well if you're with your girlfriend it's more intimate and everything, when you're with your mates you're just there for a laugh, know what I mean, just joking, joke about and that' Tim (aged 24).

'I wouldn't get drunk, I didn't do the stupid things that put me in here. You know when you're with your wife and kids you've got to be different' Aidan (aged 36).

This ability to 'change' their behaviour when spending time with their girlfriend/partner raises some important questions. As noted earlier a number of the men talk about how they 'lose control' when they're out drinking. One could argue, however, from what these men themselves have been saying, it is the case that often violent, aggressive behaviour and, at a minimum, boisterous, loud behaviour is acceptable and expected of men when they out in a group drinking. From these men's accounts, what is ultimately self-defeating, self-destructive behaviour resulting from drinking is not seen as being out of the ordinary and is very rarely questioned by the men. It is occasionally seen as disruptive to their lives but it is always seen as a norm and more often than not the men relinquish responsibility for their behaviour when they've been drinking. It never seems to occur to these men that they have a choice in how much they drink or whether or not they get involved in fights and other similar troublesome activities. It would appear whereas in the presence of a woman, girlfriend/partner, these men will contain and modify their behaviour, but in the presence of other men this 'control' is not encouraged, rather engaging in outlandish behaviour is instead encouraged.

Five (22%) of the interviewees were presently serving either prison sentences or probation orders as a result of drunken behaviour. In four of these cases it was assault, two of which were serious, arising from drunken brawls or attacks. Two of the men identified their drinking as the main cause for the breakup of their marriages. Keith turned to drink and sleeping tablets when a relationship with a woman broke down, Greg use to get into unspecified 'trouble' when he drank in the past and now only drinks in the company of his wife while Frank had a number of drink drive offences to his name. A number of the men did not perceive their drunken fights or assaults as 'real' crimes per se.

They might have been responsible for disrupting their lives but they saw nothing fundamentally wrong with it. Bryan for example said he'd never been caught for his 'real' crimes, which were a number of robberies in his late teens. he received all his prison sentences for drunken fights and assaults. Drink very much permeated the lives of these men and for a number of them played a role in the criminal behaviour. The men, however, did not really take responsibility for this behaviour nor fully acknowledge the problems it had caused them:

'I never really went near it, I've never been a drinker. It's just like the last court appearance, and the one before that, it seems a lot of, kicking out and things. I had a probation officer do a report for me and he said my problem was drink based. But I've never, I've never been like' Nick (aged 27).

'With me being on the dole and that at the moment it's just regular like on a Sunday night, I go out and play pool you see, so I have 4 or 5 pints. But before, it was like going out and getting drunk, that bad that I couldn't remember what I'd done the next morning, so it started to frighten me, do you know what I mean. Me mates would say to me can you remember what you did last night, no, oh coppers might come round for you. You know it was like weird what you'd done, so I don't drink to that level no more. It wasn't a dangerous level like, it was like I couldn't take it, you know what I mean' Tim (aged 24).

'When I used to get drunk and that I used to be sort of easily led, you know what I mean, I used to try and impress people and all you know' Vincent (aged 43).

'As I say I just never took the advice about drinking, it was probably one of the major mistakes in my. He [his dad] was not one to beat about the bush and he said well I don't know but I think you're drinking far too much and I want you to seriously think about it. I think you have a problem. But he never came back to me on the subject, he left it with me, he never said you never took my advice' Harvey (aged 50).

'I'm not a big drinker, you see that was another problem. Well, I drank a lot but I couldn't take it. I usually drink maybe 8 or 9 pints but I should drink maybe 4 or 5' Stephen (aged 22).

Seven (37%) of the nineteen regular to heavy drinkers had come into contact with some form of counselling service or individual adviser during their contact with the criminal justice system. Aidan, Connor, Bryan and Harvey had attended AA counselling while serving prison sentences while Stephen, Tim and Nick had received advice regarding their drinking from their probation officers. The seriousness with which these men took the advice differed but the general consensus of them all was the difficulty of avoiding drink. By and large if the men were to abstain from alcohol

it meant a substantial part, if not all, of their social life was removed. For some of them there was nothing else for them to do apart from go for a drink. For some, like Stephen and Tim, it meant having to avoid all their old friends lest they fall back into their old habits. Although the intentions of all the men to improve their drinking habits appeared genuine, their overall attitude to drinking and the importance it played in their social lives did not bode well for their future successful abstinence and avoidance of the destructive behaviour that tended to accompany their drinking, as Harvey and Tim in their different ways show. Harvey violently assaulted his wife, their marriage had been in difficulties for a number of months and they had come to a head after they had been out celebrating the 21st birthday of Harvey's daughter. Reflecting on what happened that night Harvey (aged 50) had this to say:

'To be perfectly honest with you if I was ever in the position to do it all again I don't actually see myself changing. What I realise, what's in the back of my mind is that I'll be careful to make sure I never play under the torment I was in prior to the assault and if I ever felt like that I would make sure I'd keep away from that sort of situation'.

Tim (aged 24) had this comment to make:

'If I start getting bored again then I'm going to end up going to town again, drinking, some dickhead's going to come and start playing on me mind and start fighting with me thinking I'm not going to fight. I'm going to flip and start smacking him and end up in the nick. That's why I want out to Tenerife, I want to get away.'

In Parker's (1996) study of young adult offenders, drinking was similarly found to be a key element of their social lives. The main reasons given by Parker's respondents were also seen to revolve around socialising and having fun. Sumner and Parker (1995) have observed that due to the compartmentalisation of research by discipline, setting and method, and eventually by highly specialist dissemination the linkages between alcohol and crime have yet to be researched effectively. Considering the self-defeating and often destructive behaviour that often appears to result from men's drinking it would seem alcohol-crime relations deserve greater attention. Violent and/or aggressive behaviour in a confrontational situation with other men would appear to be the most common consequence of drinking. Toch (1969) stipulated that for some men the reward of behaving aggressively is a boost to their shaky sense of self-worth, since it is a public demonstration of their manliness, while Polk (1994) maintains that it is important to see confrontation as 'contests of honour' in which the maintenance of 'face' or reputation is a central manner. Polk (1994) also observes that violence in defence of honour is definitively masculine, and it would seem that it is this 'masculine' acceptance of violent behaviour and drinking that needs to be examined and questioned.

Altering the scenery

Five (22%) of the interviewees had never used drugs. Of the eighteen men who identified themselves as regular drug users only two (11%) of them spoke of their drug use in wholly negative terms. Two of the men identified their drug use as being mainly related to their lengthy prison sentences, as they started using drugs to escape from, and relax within, their prison surroundings. Six (33%) of the men stated they used drugs because it relaxed them, while 5 (28%) of them enjoyed the 'buzz' drugs gave them. Another three identified their drug use as just being part of the clubbing scene they were involved with. One of the men stated he used drugs for the sense of security and well being it initially provided, while another stated drugs brought him 'nothing but trouble'. Thirteen (72%) of the eighteen men were poly-drug users, with the drugs used ranging from cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines to cocaine, methadone and heroin. Of the remaining five, four of them used cannabis only and one used heroin only. Half of the drug users felt that they would never have ended up in prison or on probation if it had not been for their use of drugs. Five of the men interviewed had been convicted of drug offences, two for possession and three for intent to supply, while four of the men identified their involvement in crime, particularly property crime, as resulting from their need to supply their own drug use. Hardly any of the men identified smoking cannabis as drug taking, it was considered an everyday thing and was viewed as a relaxant. Tim (aged 24) spoke for the majority of the men in relation to cannabis use:

'Well I smoke cannabis every day anyway but I don't class that as a drug, it's just a relaxant. It's not a heavy thing, it's just one thing that we do, it's pleasant'.

Two of the men identified using cannabis as having had quite a big impact on them, claiming that cannabis had calmed them down and made them feel more settled in their lives. As one of them, Ray (aged 26) explains:

'I don't know it's sort of totally changed me attitude in life and fighting and so I'm more into peace, not like a hippy like but I can see their point. As I said I just think it's calmed down, I'm a lot more settled in my life more than anything else'.

Drug taking more generally was also viewed as a normal thing to do. Again as Tim observes:

'It's like alcohol 9 out of 10 people are going to have a dabble in them at some time in their lives'.

The general view amongst these men was that they took drugs for the 'buzz' or excitement they provided. Taking drugs allowed one to obtain a different view of the world or one's life, it provided an escape be it from boredom and/or a humdrum existence or in the case of the prisoners an escape from the prison surroundings:

'It's a bit of a buzz isn't it. I don't do anything cos me mates do. I do it because I want to do it, it's a bit of a buzz, a bit of a high' Andrew (aged 30).

'I started smoking weed when I was about 21, I smoked it for about 2 years and I got a really big buzz off it, but after a while it got a bit dry. All I could do was laugh but after 2 years I stopped laughing so I stopped taking it. I go to a few raves and drop a few Es which give me a really nice mellow buzz' Fergus (aged 27).

'All the time I was taking it, just for the buzz, just for the buzz at the time. Something different, changing, it altered the scenery' Frank (aged 30).

'Relaxed isn't it, it's mellow, I just get on me own fluffy little cloud' Bryan (aged 27).

'You have a good time, enjoy yourself, I go to a lot of clubs you see, I like dancing and it goes with that type of scene' Dermot (aged 26).

Although very few of the men identified drug use per se as being a problem it became apparent that for a considerable number of men their drug taking had caused difficulties in their lives and in some cases directly resulted in their involvement with crime and the criminal justice system. As some of them explain:

'It changed my whole way of thinking, I've not taken anything for ages now. I just feel a lot clearer and looking backwards on things now, I think how could I do it all. But it just changed the way I thought. I didn't realise there was anything wrong at the time. It was just something I drifted into and you don't know you're in it until you come out of it sort of thing. I was getting into trouble all the time, things like that, and eventually you just sit back and think where are you going, nowhere. So I started college, this that and the other. This sentence, like I said, is basically for the time I was on drugs, messing about' Ian (aged 25).

'I don't think I'd be in here except for drugs, I'd be doing more things. I'd probably be in a business, I'd be doing something legit. That's why I'm here because of drugs' Frank (aged 30).

'If I'd never touched heroin I would never have ended up with the disease I've got so it's ruined my life by just taking it. [Played] a big part in my crime because I needed money, so you've got to do the crime' Lewis (aged 26).

'I think I were committing a lot of crime because of drugs. To get like, going out, getting money, getting out such and such or whatever for the kids and that, and then blowing it on drugs' Greg (aged 28).

Despite the fact that the majority of the men who used drugs spoke of their use in positive terms, in terms of providing a high or relaxing them, one could argue that their drug use does potentially raise the question of why it is they want the high or what it is they are trying to relax, or perhaps even 'escape' from. It would appear a large number of the men used drugs as a way of avoiding the boredom of a 'humdrum' existence but many people experience a humdrum existence and therefore one might be entitled to ask why are these men so keen to avoid theirs. From their own accounts it would appear that the men's 'escape' or 'buzz' are often short-lived and the long-term consequences of such escape were more damaging than the boredom they sought to avoid:

'At first you feel a sense of security and well being and that you know, [but] nothing now' Vincent (aged 43).

'Escape, from the present surroundings, it doesn't take away your problems, your problems are always going to be there' Connor (aged 31).

One could argue that within these men's drug taking behaviour there is a lack of consideration of any consequences and a lack of ownership of their behaviour in many cases. This lack of ownership and failure to consider the consequences of their actions appear to be a key motif of the men's lives and will be returned to later in the thesis.

Committing crime

It would appear that not only do these men find themselves getting into trouble as a result of their social activities, but lacking adequate activities to keep them occupied can also lead them into difficulties. Boredom was another reason cited by these men for them getting into trouble, 'dabbling in drugs', stealing, to alleviate the boredom. As some of the men comment:

'I was bored for years. I think that was the reason why I got into what I did [drugs]. It was just boring, boring, boring. I need to travel or something like that' Frank (aged 30).

'You have good days and bad days, some days nothing happens like and you end up kicking yourself through the worst of it' Nick (aged 27).

'Usually I just sit at me mate's house, that it's really, there's nothing else to do. If they're *really* bored we'll go out and try and nick a car' Owen (aged 23).

The crimes committed by the men were predominantly burglary, robbery, supplying drugs, and assault, with the men's main methods of committing crime being a mixture of planning and opportunity. Few, if any, of the men talked about themselves as 'career criminals' or 'criminals' per se, most of the men talked of themselves as 'trying to get by' or having 'fallen off the rails for a while'. The few men who spoke about themselves as career criminals were some who had been serving long sentences such as Aidan and Connor. For the majority of men, however, crime was just one component of their lives and by and large the men's main concern was how were they going to sustain themselves and, more often than not, their families in life.

The intermeshing of crime with other aspects of their lives became more apparent when the men described why it was they thought that they had become involved in crime. The main reasons to emerge from the men's explanations were money, family issues, the excitement of crime and its ability to impress people, and drugs. Ten (43%) of the men cited money, six (26%) the excitement of crime, five (22%) named a variety of family issues and three (13%) cited drugs, with some of the men putting forward more than one reason. The men were also asked if they felt crime played a role in how they thought about or valued themselves. Five of the men felt crime played no role in how they thought about themselves, they did it solely for the money, while three didn't know. Five of them felt it made them feel good about themselves, through either the excitement or money it provided, while two of the men felt crime allowed you to fit in either with other people or with the demands of society to provide. Six of the men said their involvement in crime made them feel bad about themselves or had had a negative impact on their lives. One of the men felt that his involvement with the criminal justice system had made him a better person, and another felt that he had gotten into drugs because he wasn't happy with himself and this automatically made him criminal since drug use is illegal.

'It was just the area I was from. I'm from a small area in Liverpool and it's renowned, every second house has either a burglar or an armed robber or god knows what else. And in the 70s and 60s when I was brought up, there was nothing else to do apart from play kick the can on the street or hide and seek or something. I wanted more excitement than that so I use to go out and burglar shops and schools and who knows what else' Aidan (aged 36).

'Money and excitement. Well what's exciting about going to work everyday you know what I mean. It's something not many people do. Doing something like that best known drug in the world I'd say. Doing something like a robbery is best known drug in the world' Bryan (aged 27).

'I wouldn't say I got involved in crime, I ended up in prison because I was taking drugs and doing a lot more serious things. Cos I [was] sort of throwing caution to the wind sort of thing. I knew selling Class A drugs I could end up coming to prison at the end of the day when you start taking them, I didn't really bother, I didn't really care' Frank (aged 30).

'To pay for things I couldn't get otherwise' Greg (aged 28).

All the men were asked if there was anything or anyone that might have prevented them from becoming involved in crime. Despite the fact that a number of men talked about people who cared about them or who they respected possibly steering them clear of crime, eight (35%) of the interviewees identified immediate family members or spouses who tried to talk to them and convince them they were ruining their lives by committing crime, but none of the eight paid any attention. Another two (9%) of them felt that if they had had someone to talk to and to offer them a bit of guidance that would have helped them, while one felt doing better at school would have helped. Six (26%) of the men were of the opinion that no one could have kept them out of crime, they actively choose to become involved, it was their decision and they weren't hurting anybody. Four of the men felt that their crimes were one-offs and therefore didn't consider themselves to be involved in crime as such, while two of the men didn't know if anything or anyone could have assisted them.

Parker (1996), in a study of young adult offenders, concluded that for his sample of offenders crime was about obtaining money to pursue a preferred lifestyle or at minimum the best they could develop within their socioeconomic situation. He found some of the offenders to be angry and some to be fatalistic about their socioeconomic status, but nearly all of them were clear that it was central to any understanding of their criminal lifestyle. Economics, or money, played a pivotal role in the criminal behaviour of the majority of the men interviewed for this research. To identify money, however, one must also take into account the consumer, capitalist society we live in today. As Morgan (1992) observes, western society nowadays is more clearly identified with consumption rather than production as a basis of identity, while Gibbs and Merighi (1994) note that we live in a society that values wealth, power and achievement and measures adult males by these yardsticks. Therefore, not only does money provide material goods it also performs a role in the maintenance of self-esteem and status. For some of these men crime seemed to provide a bolster to insecure self-esteem and status which had their origins in insecure family settings. As Jefferson (1993) and Hagan et al (1979) have observed it is also useful to regard criminal and delinquent behaviour as pleasurable if not liberating. Crime seems to offer these men an opportunity to escape the boredom which appeared to instil in them such anxiety, some of the men gave the impression that it was better to be in prison or on probation rather than be bored or boring. With men being encouraged, and expected, to be outgoing, excitement orientated, achievers in a capitalist consumer society, it would appear that crime provides an outpouring of male requirements, many of them intrinsically intertwined. It is to some of these 'male requirements that we turn to next.

Masculinity

A section of the interview schedules was devoted to questions that addressed directly the issue of 'masculinity' as it has been conceived within the theoretical and research literature. The questions were a mix of open-ended, complete the sentence and agree/disagree statements. What these questions aimed to explore was these men's views on the state of men's lives in society today and

what their reflections, if any, on being a man were. These questions explored such broad issues as the role of men in society today, the advantages and disadvantages men might face in society, as well as examining more intimate views such as the men's emotional lives. These questions attempted to explore the relevance of some of the writings on men and masculinity, such as men being more reluctant to express their feelings or the diminishing role of the breadwinner, in these men's lives. These questions attempted to elicit what was important to these men as men and what this meant, if anything, to their lives.

The state of the sexes

Ten (43%) of the men interviewed felt nowadays men and women were equal, and that there was no longer any differences between the sexes. As some of the men explain:

'There isn't any is there, not nowadays, it's not like Victorian times is it, it's equal opportunities now' Emmet (aged 33).

'The way society has changed towards women I don't think men have the advantages that they used to have' Roger (aged 22).

'It's virtually the same with women, we're all equal now, I don't see it as either or. [You] don't have to support a woman now cos they go out and earn a decent living like us' Tim (aged 24).

Five (22%) of the men felt that men still held the advantages over women in society and received more attention than them:

'Well you seem to get looked after, there's more things for the boys than there is for the girls, know what I mean. I know it's changing like but it's still like that' Vincent (aged 43).

'I think in my experience we're looked upon as more important' Frank (aged 30).

'You do get attention, you know if me mum's arguing in a shop with somebody, if she's trying to change something I'll walk in and they'll change it like that. And people tend to listen to you, you've got a chance to get on more you know what I mean' Fergus (aged 27).

Six (26%) of the men felt that men operated at a disadvantage in society today and that the opportunities had swung in favour of women. These men felt that this was particularly true in relation to how the criminal justice system treated men and women:

'Only [in terms of] the CSA, the Child Support Agency, and jail cos you get

bigger sentences. If a woman gets life she gets 10 years, if a man gets life he gets 15' Andrew (aged 30).

'I think we're looked at harder in crime, if a female says I've done nowt they'd like get a fine or something, they tend to get a lot more warnings and things' Greg (aged 28).

Two of the men had no opinions on the relative state of men and women in society.

Six (26%) of the interviewees also felt that society had higher expectations of men; they were of the opinion that society demanded more of men than it did of women. As they describe:

'I'd need a man to confirm it [but] there seems to be a lot more put on you innit. I mean it seems hard enough to get a job, [more] than girls. A girl can wear anything she wants really in some circles and not be laughed at, lads can't. If I hadn't bought a pair of Niks, Niks Trainers, and walked down to me local for a pint they'd all be laughing at me all night. [Girls] clothes are cheaper, [you] can dress how you want. If you're not tough men will walk all over you, you see all men want to play the alpha dog, honestly they do. No one likes to be told what to do' Bryan (aged 27).

'I think it's harder, it would be harder wouldn't it, it's a lot harder than you expect because of the expectations. There's a lot expected, the machoism and all that' Frank (aged 30).

'If you're working or if you've got some income, whether you're self-employed or for somebody else, and you're doing something with your life everybody loves you. And when you're down you're down and there's nothing you can do about it, things seem hopeless, everybody loves a winner, nobody loves a loser. That's the sort of expectation, that I see you know. Plus there's the, I don't know, the macho sort of thing, being strong and if any problems come you can stand and fight and do whatever' Mark (aged 35).

'Like being expected to go out and pull your weight like, like with other mates, so you're going out and committing crime or if you're not one of them you're a wanker or failure' Nick (aged 27).

'Well you get tret differently. I do think women get tret different, you give them more respect than you would a man, a man has to earn it. And men are, when you talk about kicks, when you're younger women don't get into pressure to fight, men do, you're under pressure if you go to a new school. Maybe it is the same for a woman I don't know, but not that I see. You've not got to stick up for

yourselves' Stephen (aged 22).

These comments give some indicator of the pressures these men feel they face and the contradictory expectations that exist within these demands. They also highlight some of the pressures that exist for (some) men in relation to engaging in criminal activities, so as to belong or at the very least not be left out, and the possible clashes that may occur between what one may want as an individual and what one may feel obliged to deliver as part of the male group or collective.

The state of men

In an attempt to establish some of the basic ideas or notions the interviewees might hold regarding men they were all asked to complete three sentences; what people expect of men, what men can do and what they can't do (see also Jenkins, 1994). These statements were used to investigate what type of stereotypes the interviewees might hold and how these compared to the stereotypes featured in the literature. Eleven (48%) felt that people expected men to work and be the providers for the family, seven (30%) of the men felt people expected men to be strong, to be dominant, to lead. Five (22%) of the men felt unable to answer the question, a number of them saying that it wasn't something they had considered before. When asked what is it men can do eleven (48%) of the men responded that men can do and say anything that they wanted, while nine (39%) of the men were unable to answer the question. Three of the men gave individual answers: viz. men can earn more money, be hurtful and men can be caring. When asked what it was men cannot do again nine of the men felt unable to answer while seven (30%) of them said men cannot give birth. Four (17%) of the interviewees said men cannot show feelings or anything that can be depicted as weakness, two felt men cannot do things such as typing and cleaning as well as woman while one of them felt that men cannot achieve anything without a woman. When asked what they thought was the main role of men, if any, in society today over half (61%, 14) identified being the breadwinner or the provider, even if it that wasn't the case in their own lives:

'I could say he's supposed to go out and be the breadwinner, but I can't say that because my missus is the breadwinner now. I mean they are meant to look after the family, the kids and family, that's priority, that's in my opinion' Andrew (aged 30).

'I'm a bit of a male chauvinist me, I'd say provider, I was going to say leader' Dermot (aged 26).

'To be the breadwinner, I know women want to be the breadwinner but it is always expected of the male' Frank (aged 30).

'I'm a bit old-fashioned.' Initially as a father and a figurehead for the family, and to bring money in to the family. To bring the children up right I think is first and foremost. But they're outnumbered aren't they, a lot of women like to think that they can earn the money, be the breadwinner and I can't see that

like. I tried to live with it but it didn't work' Harvey (aged 50).

'Provider, to get a job, pay the bills, take the kids out every now and then, you know. Feed and clothe the family that's how I see it. Although it ain't how things turned out but that's how I feel' Mark (aged 35).

'The provider, I think in many criminal ways it's always the bloke will go out and he'll crack into someone's house or he'll go and sell somebody some dope or some smack. Or the other end of the scale he'll go to work, yeah, somehow you're always the provider' Nick (aged 27).

'Well they're the sort of breadwinners aren't they. It's difficult for me, being single and that, like at my age most people are married aren't they' Vincent (aged 43).

Four (17%) of the men felt that no main role existed for men anymore, since men and women were now equal and four of the men felt unable to give an opinion. One of the interviewees felt men were there to build the future but this also involved women. Of the twenty two men asked whether they felt limited by the expectations society has of them as men twenty (87%) of them replied no. All these men felt that they could achieve anything they wanted to if they put their minds to it. As a few of them explain:

'Just because I'm a man it doesn't mean to say I'm held back by anything. To most challenges in life if you want something badly enough you'll get it. It's all mind over matter, the mind is the strongest thing in the world' Andrew (aged 30).

'There's nothing limiting me is there, if you set out to do something you're going to give your best try aren't you' Connor (aged 31).

'I don't think it does, I think a lot of men don't know they're supposed to be the most dominant sex' Frank (aged 30).

'I feel like what I've done academically that limits me more than me sex' Nick (aged 27).

Only two of the men felt that the demands on them as men restricted them, as Mark (aged 35) explains:

'That's how I've been brought up to feel, if you don't come into a certain criteria, you know people stereotype, like it goes back to the woman bringing up the kids and whatever, and men go out to work and do this. And if you don't fill that sort

of criteria you don't fit in with society really'.

This brief exploration of the interviewees' views on men in society allows us to identify some of the key elements of 'manhood' or 'maleness' as these individuals see them. Reflecting much of the literature on 'masculinity' (e.g. O'Neil, 1981; Mishkind et al, 1986), their accounts conjure up the image of someone who is dominant, provides for his family and can generally do as he pleases. The only real limitation upon man is that he can not give birth. If he puts his mind to it he can achieve what he wants. These are the main concepts expressed by these men. Their accounts, and in particular their experiences, however, are not without ambiguity, contradiction and concern as a more indepth investigation will now show.

From the societal to the individual

To capture the lived experiences of men within society and to examine the dynamic of individual accommodation (or not) of society's expectations of them as men, the interviewees were asked a number of questions relating to their emotional lives. Jenkins (1994) has observed the ways in which choice and behaviours may be determined by unreal stereotypes of how 'real men' should be and has highlighted that although men's personal views may not accord with the accepted norms, she argues that the degree to which they are allowed to express this difference is constrained by the dictates of 'masculinity'. Kimmel (1990) maintains that those whose masculine identity is least secure are precisely those men most likely to enact hypermasculine behaviour codes and to hold fast to traditional definitions of masculinity. Numerous writings have discussed the reluctance with which men express their emotions (e.g. O'Neil, 1981, Pleck, 1976) and as Agnew (1996) expounds, the theory is that men are reluctant to show they need help because the accepted wisdom regarding male behaviour, which requires them to be autonomous and in control, makes it difficult for them to admit to any vulnerability. By asking these interviewees questions relating to issues such as their fears, their worries, what angers them and what aspirations they have for their lives it allows us to scrutinise more closely the potential links between the individual and the society he lives within, as well as the tensions that might exist between the individual's own wishes and desires and the demands of society. Therefore, drawing on some of the well-worn stereotypes surrounding men, such as not expressing emotion the key areas of men's fears and aspirations were explored in addition to their attitudes towards aggression and violence [All these questions were answered by 22 of the men]

Violence and the expression of feelings

In relation to violence the interviewees were asked two key questions, whether they thought it was acceptable for men to solve their differences or problems through fighting and whether they thought men who could not express themselves in words were more likely to resort to violence. Seventeen (77%) of the men were of the opinion that fighting was not a productive way of solving problems (4 did and one was uncertain). The general consensus of the men was that fighting proved nothing, only caused problems and solved nothing, as they explain:

'What's a fight at the end of the day, a fight can't solve owt, one's going to end

up in hospital and one's going to end up in a box. Either way you've not sorted anything out. The only way you're going to solve anything is by talking to someone, when you're talking to the man face-to-face. It's a coward's way fighting, everyone can fight' Lewis (aged 26).

'The only place fighting ever got me was in trouble. The fighting didn't solve the problem, it was still there after' Stephen (aged 22).

'Not grown men no, you get things like that when you're 18, 19, like when you don't think about things' Vincent (aged 43).

Nineteen (86%) of the interviewees held that men who could not articulate themselves properly were much more likely to end up resorting to violence (Two were uncertain and one felt this was untrue).

'It's just well, built up feelings, they can't talk about [it] and can only express it violently' Connor (aged 31).

'People who can't express their feelings are limited, they're limited aren't they, it's verbally linked frustration' Frank (aged 30).

'If you're clever with words you can escape out of a delicate situation, if you're not so clever with words you may find yourself using your fists more than your words, even though you may not want to' Harvey (aged 50).

'You lash out, you did it as kids. That's what I'm saying, the progressions still not much is it cos you're still doing it as a big man, there's nothing learned' Fergus (aged 27).

Although the men advocate talking instead of fighting and stress the importance of expressing feelings, when it comes to talking about their own feelings or problems over half (59%, 13) of the interviewees admitted that they could not talk about these issues, or that they did not know someone suitable to open up to:

'I'd like to say I discuss it with the person who the problem concerns thoroughly, but one of the reasons I'm in here is because I didn't do that. I let things get me down a bit' Harvey (aged 50).

'I never really thought anybody would really want to listen, I think it's the only way I can sum it up' Mark (aged 35).

'I think other people have their own problems without someone else's' Patrick

(aged 37).

'I've always kept meself to meself'

Roger (aged 22).

This reluctance to talk about their feelings and problems was especially true of the men in prison. Virtually all the prisoners expressed a reluctance to open up and talk to someone in prison, be it to other prisoners or members of staff (prison or probation). The reason they cited was that this would be showing weakness which would leave them vulnerable:

'I have feelings yeah but you don't show your feelings in prison because people take advantage of it' Connor (aged 31).

'I sort of bite my tongue, it's old school isn't it, men don't cry, although they should. Why shouldn't men cry. I use to cry on the out but in here it's different, you don't cry in here, it's showing weakness' Emmet (aged 33).

'Very rare that I show emotions. I have done like when I first come in. I don't want them to feel weak, our lass like grabbed hold me and she would not let go. So if I'm strong she feels strong' Greg (aged 28).

Nine (41%) of the interviewees said that if they wanted to talk about their feelings or problems they would turn to either their girlfriend/partners or a female member of their family, such as mother, sister or grandmother. If, however, these men were not with a partner or could not contact a female member of the family then they would keep their own counsel. Again, for the prisoners this ability to talk to family members was compounded by the communication difficulties that are concomitant with imprisonment:

'Outside I'll sit with me missus and have a chat cos we can talk about anything, anything at all to the missus. Have a chat and see if we can work it out. In here it's a bit harder you've got to sort of handle it yourself, cope with it yourself. There's only so many phone cards you can put through the phone and letters aren't quick enough, and then going back to what I was saying about mates, there's only one or two lads in here that I trust and they're the ones I might speak to, but basically you deal with it yourself' Andrew (aged 30).

'If I'm on the out I usually talk to me mum, she's the sage on that I'd say. But in here no, It's showing weakness again' Emmet (aged 33).

'If there is someone to share it with I share it, like a partner, or if not I'd keep it to myself and try to work it out' Dermot (aged 26).

Only one of the interviewees admitted to being happy about talking about his feeling and

problems:

'I don't hold things in me, people say that, I just don't. I think it's because I use to maybe hold a lot of things in and [now] I think it's better to talk, I do too much sometimes' Frank (aged 30)

And only one interviewee admitted to being willing to confide his feelings or difficulties with a male friend:

'Like Stephen, we're in the same rented accommodation, we're like brothers really so like we talk to each other about what things are pissing each other off, or we take our anger out on each other. If we have an argument we make it bigger or deeper and screaming about it between ourselves and that let's steam off' Tim (aged 24).

The interviewees were also asked if they thought it was necessary for men to be aggressive to make it in society. Of the twenty two interviewees asked, eleven (50%) thought aggression was necessary, 10 (45%) disagreed and one was undecided. Some of the reasons given for and against the use of aggression were as follows:

'They probably find it a lot easier to, you know, to get through being violent, and jumping and bawling at people. I did it, I use to be like that, jumping around and that, but I find it a lot easier not doing things. It's less stressful, I don't know, I'm just a different person to what I use to be five years ago, I've just changed a lot' Aidan (aged 36).

'I would say it would depend on what type of business and work and that, the place you were living and what you were doing' Dermot (aged 26).

'If you're aggressive you're not going to get very far, people aren't going to like you at all, sort of do things for you, help you along' Emmet (aged 33).

'You've got to get what you want haven't you, and if you want something you're going to get no matter what' Connor (aged 31).

'Not physically aggressive but there's another form of aggression which certainly is provoked in a lot of men of business, but not necessarily physical aggression. By being bombastic, forceful in business, and devious' Harvey (aged 50).

'That's all you got, you're either a doer or a gopher, you know, and nobody wants a gopher everyone wants a doer, you know, and to achieve' Mark (aged 35).

'To an extent you have to be a little aggressive definitely cos other people would just walk all over you' Stephen (aged 22).

'You wouldn't call a bank manager or owt like that aggressive, you wouldn't call [my probation officer] aggressive and he survives doesn't he, just' Tim (aged 24).

As these accounts given by the men show, issues of men's emotions are riddled with contradiction and tension. Although most of the men verbally condemn violence and fighting and assert discussion as being the best solution to difficulties, their own lives show a different pattern. A large number of the interviewees are either in contact with the criminal justice system for violent behaviour or have a history of fighting behind them. From these men's accounts one can see a variety of contradicting demands being expressed by the men. They say it is better to talk but have no one they're willing to trust. They say fighting is wrong but that aggression is necessary and it is easy to see how situations may easily arise where one set of expectations and demands predominate more than another.

Fear and anxiety

When asked if there was anything that frightened or scared them, over half (59%, 13) of the men responded that there was nothing to fear in their lives, although some did admit to feeling concerned or scared for other people in their life.

'That's one thing I've never felt, scared' Bryan (aged 27).

'For meself no, for others yes' Harvey (aged 50).

'I started out being a lot scared when I was younger but there's nothing I'm frightened of now. I spent a lot of time by myself anyway so I know there's nothing much I have to fear anyway' Frank (aged 30).

Eight (35%) of the men expressed fear over where their futures were going and concern over the fact that life might be passing them by.

'That I'm not getting anywhere, that basically I'm going to look back in years to come and be in the same situation I am now. I think if I ever get scared it's that, that I'm going to become an old man and still not own my own house and things like that' Ian (aged 25).

Lewis had fears about his terminal illness and how long he might have left to live, while Ray still harboured fears about a serious attack upon him that took place earlier in the year.

The main concerns and worries of the interviewees revolved around where their lives were going or about their partners and/or families:

'I get this feeling of thinking where is it all going, where is it leading to. And I get this feeling that I can't do enough, that I'm not doing enough. I'm just floating along and I don't want to be, I want to be up there doing something, if it means taking responsibility for I don't mind' Fergus (aged 30).

'I guess I worry about getting banged up again, getting into a situation again where nothing's working out, I can't afford to do this and that. It's not a case of I can't afford to do it, it's I want to be able to save up and do that, and like on £140 a fortnight you can't, and there's so many people looking for jobs out there' Greg (aged 28).

'Money, being 22, getting older. I remember when I was 16 and now I'm 22 and I haven't got anywhere or any further, that worries me' Stephen (aged 22).

Five of the men, all prisoners, worried about how their family or partners were getting on:

'My only real concern is me mother, I just hope she's there when I get out. Me two daughters, me ex-wife, just the normal things you worry about' Aidan (aged 36).

'I just worry for me girlfriend really, I hope she's alright. You've got no worries in jail, everything's going alright for me, I don't have to think do I' Bryan (aged 27).

Three (13%) of the men expressed concerns for both their future and their families, two of the men felt that they had no worries in their life and two of them worried about everything from their own lives to the state of the world, while another two were concerned about health issues.

There appeared to be contradiction expressed and experienced throughout the emotional elements of their lives, and a picture emerges of what appeared to be an ongoing struggle for the men to express themselves while at the same time maintaining an acceptable level of 'control'. For example, when talking about crying, while some of the men expressed the opinion that crying was a good release it was also perceived and acknowledged as not being an accepted thing for men to do. Also how men experienced crying as an emotional release differed:

'I've cried many a time on this sentence. Just things like mistakes I've made, the

people I've hurt, and feeling sorry for myself mainly I think. It's good to cry you know, to get it out. That sounds bad coming from a man. A man's not suppose to cry, a man's suppose to be, how do you put it, the provider. He's just the same as anybody else, we're all human beings, no different' Aidan (aged 36).

'I consider myself as quite an emotional person really. I think it's good if you can let yourself go, cry. It's not embarrassing, it definitely sorts you out' Tim (aged 24).

'I have a lot in the last two years, more so than I have done in my life. I cried on Sunday when my son had put on all this spread with the family. I started to cry, I can feel it again now, he said shut up you daft old bugger, you know, in front of the whole family, they were all sat round in chairs, and I felt such a pratt' Harvey (aged 50).

'I've never been good at it. That's a man thing innit, men can't cry, can't show emotion. Me dad's the same and I've got it off me dad. He hates it, he's really worked on me to try and show more emotion and I do try, but it's hard' Stephen (aged 22).

When asked about feeling anger most of the interviewees replied that they most often felt angry about the situations they found themselves in, particularly where it's an unfavourable situation or they felt they have no control. The prisoners found being in prison created anger in itself and that the environment created difficulties in finding appropriate ways of letting off steam. Being in prison often meant that situations normally dealt with relatively simply became a source of frustration and irritation:

'You get angry in here, the stupid things get you angry in here. You can ring up your missus and she can say something and you take it totally out of context and make it into something, and that's down to being in here' Andrew (aged 30).

'I feel angry all the time. Things that aren't going my way, I'm trying to do something and someone like starts interfering or slowing things down I get angry, and generally, generally it's just the situation I'm in. Lack of employment, nothing I can do, the situation just gets me really angry. I don't hold it in, I'm having to start to because I'm in jail and there are a lot of people around me who are just as angry, so situated in jail I have to hold it in more' Frank (aged 30).

'Usually stupid things, like yesterday I was angry because somebody had got on me nerves in education, I though what the hell and I come back to my pad and I

thought I'll show them, that sort of thing. I usually wait until it builds up and then I sort of explode, instead of sorting out the situation when it happens'
Ian (aged 25).

'If I'm annoyed with someone I admit I aren't against raising a fight with someone but I wouldn't consider myself a violent person' Tim (aged 24).

The information gleaned regarding the men's emotional lives often reveals a contradiction between the men's expressed beliefs and the actual lives they lead. O'Neil (1981, 1982) and O'Neil et al (1986) who write about gender role conflict, define it as a psychological state arising from the inherently contradictory and unrealistic messages within and across the standards of masculinity, and argue that gender role conflict exists when masculinity standards result in personal restriction and devaluation. O'Neil (1981) argues that Goldberg (1979) enumerated the typical masculine characteristics for success: basic distrust, need to control, manipulation and repression of human needs. O'Neil maintains that although these characteristics may seem exaggerated they can twist men's lives into combative, competitive struggles that leave little time or energy for relaxation, pleasure and a healthy non-work life. As Kaplan (1975) notes, development pertains to a rarely, if ever, attained ideal and not to the actual. Boyle and Curtis (1995) argue that for the most part when boys are being 'difficult' they are acting out emotions that they cannot express in other ways because their conditioning as males forbids them. They maintain that whilst this is creating problems for those around them, the boys' true emotional needs remain unmet. Shooter (1996), a child psychiatrist, argues that depressed adolescent girls are referred for treatment much quicker than depressed boys. He believes that girls express their unhappiness in obvious 'feeling ways' which get them to help quicker. Girls tend to cry and look miserable and withdraw, boys on the other hand act out their unhappiness by behaving badly.

As Thompson (1995) observes, emotional restriction is not simply a reluctance to express emotion but, rather, a tendency to give vent to a restricted range of emotions. From their own accounts it would appear that for these men anger and frustration through aggression are the emotions most often expressed by them, and expressed without any sense of leaving one's self vulnerable, a sentiment that accompanies the expression of anxiety or frustration through other methods such as tears. Eisler and Blalock (1991) stipulate that although aggression and the use of force are regarded as repugnant in the commission of criminal acts, it is applauded in the contexts of sports contests, military operations and business competition. They argue that part of the social program of masculinity includes repertoires of aggression and competitiveness as socially sanctioned male coping styles. Cohen et al (1975) observe that violence is a resource that is available to almost any human being however weak, impoverished, friendless or unconnected s/he might be, and argue that violence may often be used to call attention in a dramatic way to one's helplessness and desperation, to grievances and injustices. As Brammer and Abrego (1981) note, when we talk of controlling our life we mean in large part controlling our response to life events rather than necessarily controlling the events themselves. For the majority of these men their responses to their life events have been of an aggressive and often violent nature. Eardley (1985) maintains that the

wider the gulf between a man's notion of proper masculine character and behaviour and his own perceptions of himself, the more likely he is to be violent, while Giallombardo (1966) points out that traits such as 'courage', 'nerve', and 'toughness', which often act as barometers for men's appropriate behaviour, are not meaningful concepts to the female and hence aroused no anxiety on her part. From these men's responses, it would appear society's demands on them to 'be men' restricted their emotional expressiveness (such expressiveness being restricted even further more within the confines of the prison), the result being that their emotional and behavioural responses often took the form of aggressive and hostile acts with negative repercussions within the men's lives. This is an issue that will be returned to in later chapters.

Life aspirations

All of the men's life aspirations revolved around being financially secure and being able to provide for their family. This is what they all desire most for their lives, financial and family security. Twelve (52%) stated that they would like to be in a good job that would keep them and their family financially secure and happy:

'To be rich, be healthy, have the family healthy. No one's asked us, you know what I mean, every jail, no one's asked' Bryan (aged 27).

'To get a job, to still see me kids and me family, to settle down I suppose with a good woman' Emmet (aged 33).

'To have a suitable job, similar job to the one I had before, which would enable me to start life again, perhaps with a decent flat with furniture, with the ability to have the children staying over' Harvey (aged 50).

Lewis (aged 26): 'Keep off drugs, have a nice wife, a nice job. I'd work if they paid well but I'm not blooming doing some skivvy job or going back to college'.

'Happily married, might have kids, good home, good job, good future'
Stephen (aged 22).

Nine (39%) of the men cited financial security and desiring a well paid job:

'Successful, financially, career wise' Dermot (aged 26).

Frank (aged 30): 'Rich and successful, prosperous. That's all I've wanted really. I'm exaggerating really. I just want to be financially alright and have me problems solved'

'Basically I want to get a good job, get some money behind me and as I say just fulfil some of my ambitions and have a nice holiday' Ray (aged 26).

'To get a steady way of life, a steady job and that would like be a platform to sort of work off' Vincent (aged 43).

These life aspirations and some of the men's involvement in crime can be seen to be interlinked. Nine (39%) of the men identified their involvement in crime as being money-related, either to provide for themselves and/or their families or to support a particular lifestyle, such as one including drugs. All of the men intimated that there existed a standard of living which everyone should be allowed to attain and that crime for them was the alternative route to achieving this standard when, in their opinions, all other options were closed off to them:

'I tend to take things when I need it and there's no other way of getting it. If I'm short I've gone to the DSS for a loan, I've gone through every opportunity and it's been knocked back and it's [crime] the only thing I can do' Greg (aged 28).

'It get's money don't it, that's the use of it' Owen (aged 23).

'Because of the way I was brought up as a person, or the way a lot of men are made to feel, to provide one way or another. If you can't get it one way then go and kick somebody's door in and get it another. Maybe they don't get told that but that's what they feel they have to do, you know, to make their family life and social thingy better and to make them feel as though they're worth what, something' Mark (aged 35).

For others crime provided excitement and feelings of self-worth and belonging;

'It's a tester isn't it, to see if you've still got it, balls. It is [important] to me, I don't know if it is to anybody else. Cos I like to think I've got a bit of bottle. It's like at the start, to begin with, you see I like a bit of excitement in my life, I'm not stopping to be a boring 9 to 5 person, I'm a little adventurer deep down you know' Bryan (aged 27).

'When you're putting yourself down all the time, you feel worthless, you go out and do your crime, you get whatever you get out of the job and you enjoy it and it makes you feel better' Connor (aged 31).

'I mean I hate myself for what I've done, you're clever when you're under alcohol, you feel you're the hard one don't you, and if there's a crowd and that you'll fight to the crowd. Next morning you just feel like a wanker cos you're locked up in the cells until your first court appearance' Tim (aged 24).

Some of the men simply felt that being involved in crime was simply a part of growing up, as Steven

(aged 22) explains:

'I think you go through your life and I think at some time you get into trouble, but I think I was lucky because I got into trouble when I was younger and I've learnt and I know if you do this you're going to go to jail'.

Piaget (1948) and Kohlberg (1968) have argued that the development of antisocial and criminal behaviour is an integral part of the development of human behaviour in general. Martens (1990) argues that antisocial and criminal behaviour in the future needs to be put in the general context of the development of human behaviour, such as emotional and intellectual development. From these men's accounts it would appear that deviant and criminal behaviour fulfil a number of the criteria of being a man in society today, particularly if you are a socially disadvantaged male. More will be said about this in later chapters.

The Prison Experience

As Rafter (1985) notes, prisons do not exist in a vacuum but rather reflect gender differences in the broader society, while prison studies such as Ward and Kassenbaum's (1965) and Giallombardo's (1966) stress the interrelationship between inmate behaviour and outside sex/gender role expectations. Zender (1991) argues that the revisionists of prison history have failed to acknowledge how notions of appropriate male and female roles have figured in the development of penal theory. Rafter (1985) maintains it is possible to conclude that the discipline of male convicts was shaped by notions of masculinity, concepts of manhood and beliefs about what could endure, while Liebling and Krarup (1993) note that imprisonment for men may actually demand the worst excesses of 'masculinity' in their least legitimate form, if one is to cope successfully with imprisonment.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of the men spoke about their experiences of imprisonment in negative terms. In addition to the fourteen prisoners interviewed four of the offenders on probation orders had also served a custodial sentence; the majority of the information referred to in this section, however, pertains to the fourteen interviewed prisoners. For half of the prisoners being cut off from their family was the worst aspect of imprisonment; 'It blocks your family off and it breaks people up, it breaks families up' (Lewis, aged 26). The other men cited loss of freedom, boredom and isolation, loss of identity and being around people you don't like as the the worst aspects for them. When discussing their experiences of imprisonment two key themes emerged consistently from all the men's accounts: in prison one could not display any degree of weakness or vulnerability (which translated into showing no feelings) and, concomitant with this lack of vulnerability, the need to 'put on a front'.

Show no emotion

Eleven (79%) of the prisoners intimated that it was unwise to reveal how one was feeling or coping in prison. The general consensus of these men was that any show of weakness would be exploited by the other prisoners, they would use it to victimise the prisoner and to entertain themselves. The

opinion of these men was that any sign of weakness is exploited by others, both out in society but even more so in a prison environment. In prison it can be used to manipulate other prisoners and it can be used as a way of passing the time in prison. Therefore, to avoid such exploitation most of these prisoners felt that they become very enclosed upon themselves when in prison, they did not display how they were feeling and all problems they were experiencing were kept to themselves, lest they be turned against them:

'You get very shelly in jail, you get real shelly in jail. You'd get laughed at, and called a mummy's boy, because everyone tries to be macho don't they'
Bryan (aged 27).

'It's all down to image again isn't it. Some cons, if they see a weak spot in somebody they take liberties. He'd get bullied, he'd get the piss taken out of them, it's just the way people do their time' Connor (aged 31).

'If a man's feeling vulnerable inside, feelings, he's going to build some defences. Or he's going to do something about it. I'd say he shouldn't really show it in places like this, and on the out as well. It's an advantage innit, if you find out a vulnerable point in someone you can use it in lots of way' Dermot (aged 26).

'You have to put a curtain up, sort of I don't give a shit. I try not to. You're showing feelings aren't you, you can't do it in here. In here they spot a weakness they chip at it, because they're brainless arseholes aren't they, and they haven't grown up' Emmet (aged 33).

'You've got to protect yourself, you've got to protect yourself, I think you can get people who would take advantage of it. People would take advantage of it'
Frank (aged 30).

This attitude appeared to be acted upon, half of the men said they had no close friends or associates in prison. Four (29%) of the prisoners said that they had one or two close friends but these were men they had known prior to coming to prison. Only three of the prisoners stated they had made one or two friends since coming into prison. When these men spoke of weakness and vulnerability they invariably meant their feelings or those things that they cared about or were important to them. As a way of ensuring no one found out what they cared about, and as part of surviving in prison more generally, the prisoners resorted to creating a facade behind which they sought sanctuary, what these men termed 'putting on a front'.

Putting on a front

It would appear that creating a front in prison served a dual purpose. Firstly it protected the individual from being exploited since it made it difficult for other prisoners to find out how the

individual was feeling and coping. It also, however, offered an opportunity for the individual to impress the other prisoners, to come across as being 'hard' and as someone who can cope and takes no nonsense from anybody. In 'putting on a front' the men aim to create an image that was considered acceptable and in prison this image was unremittingly of a tough, hard man who no one wants to mess with. As Andrew (aged 30) explains:

'Ego, I'm a big hard lad don't come near me. But he's the same lad who goes to his pad at night and cries his eyes out cos he's scared shitless, do you know what I mean. It's all front, you've got to put a front on in jail, I don't know why, it's suppose to be about being male and the strongest and all that crap, cos it is a load of crap. Can't afford to cry in front of the lads, can't get upset in front of the lads, you know what I mean. It all goes back to being a big strong lad'.

This was a sentiment echoed by the all the prisoners, you couldn't be yourself, you had to act differently to the way you were, you had to act 'big'.

'It's a totally different environment, a lot of people show off in here, put on a front' Dermot (aged 26).

'They try and show violence and macho, and all that crap. ...You can't show your feelings can you so you just build a wall. If you show a weak spot they'll take the piss out of them. They're a bit small minded, they've got nothing else to do, it passes the time. And they think it's clever but it isn't. They think everyone thinks oh look at him bullying that guy or whatever, to taking the piss' Emmet (aged 33).

'I suppose sometimes you build a shell because you can't let people know what sort of things you are. I'm as soft as shit inside as far as I'm concerned but I'm a rock on the out. ..People would just walk all over you. I think they would, they'd take advantage of you. Power, I don't want to call it power, if a man can use something on you he will' Fergus (aged 27).

'I think maybe a lot of them change in prison, they come into prison and they're not as, I think everyone tries to put on a front or whatever. Nobody's themselves. Nobody's truly themselves when they're in prison, they're always trying to be better than the next person. That's not quite it, it's hard to explain, you know, all walking about sticking their chest out or telling people what they 've done, boasting, that sort of thing' Ian (aged 25).

Ensuring one maintains respect seemed to be a key element in succeeding in prison, an attitude which most of the men felt existed out in society as well. Even for the two men who felt that men were more open and honest about their feelings in prison, they spoke about this in terms of how the men

were respected for their honesty. As Lewis (aged 26) explains, describing how he is willing to open up in prison:

'It gets respect, it gets quite a bit of respect in jail, because it means he's not a coward, he's told people what he feels'.

This aura of respect pervaded many aspects of surviving prison, for example a prisoner who protects other weaker prisoners can earn status and respect from this act, the fact that no one messes with him or those he protects means he is feared, and hence respected. This was an issue highlighted by Andrew (aged 30), when talking about what happens to prisoners who do not cover their weaknesses:

'Finished, he's going to get bullied, he's going to get picked on, he's going to get taxed, he's going to slash up, basically he's going to end up on the numbers. Unless someone like meself looked out for him, and there is always someone like meself somewhere. There's always someone who calls someone into line, do you know what I mean. You know, leave him alone, have a go at me sort of attitude, there's always someone somewhere'.

This 'protecting' of weaker prisoners was observed during the fieldwork. A prisoner identified by both prisoners and staff as being a 'non-coper' was taken care of by Andrew. This basically meant that Andrew and a number of his associates were at liberty to torment this prisoner, verbally more often than not, (no physical abuse was observed) but in return for this no other prisoners interfered with the prisoner as this would have meant having Andrew to deal with. The protection provided was in no way magnanimous, it provided Andrew with entertainment and status while the prisoner himself experienced the lesser of two evils.

This issue of respect, or pride, was also reflected in some of the men's attitude to their time in prison, and how other people viewed them for this. There was a view expressed amongst a number of the men that to have 'done time' meant that you were looked up to and respected in your own area. There was an element of men 'talking up' their time in prison to ensure that they gained such respect, that there was, to a degree, an implicit collusion amongst the men who had been to prison to not actually acknowledge how boring and monotonous prison actually was but rather to emphasis the aspects of 'being hard' to survive a prison sentence:

'People on the outside, when I get out there are going to be some who think oh Bryan's been in jail, wow, and all shit like that. And other people will think he's been in jail because he's done something wrong. For some people going to jails is a status symbol' Bryan (aged 27).

'I was worried about it when I first came, I think that a lot of associates, I call them associates because they're not friends, they're all been to prison. You hear

all the stories about it and they're all built up by the time you hear them. Again it's that front thing, not many of them would come out and say oh yeah it's shit, it's boring. So instead it's oh I've done me bird, I've done 3 or 4, they're proud of it' Ian (aged 25).

All twenty three of the men interviewed were asked if there were things in their lives that they were proud of, and it appeared to be an area that cause difficulties for them. Very few of them felt proud in and of themselves. Seven (30%) of the men felt that there was nothing in their past to be proud of, although they were proud of the fact that they were now beginning to sort their lives out, while five (22%) of them felt they could express no pride in their lives at all. For the men who felt pride in their lives, for six (26%) of them this pride revolved their family and their children, while for 3 of the men it was holding down a good job. Another man felt proud when he was able to help people and one of the men although he did not feel proud of his criminal activities he did feel a sense of achievement:

'I'm not proud of what I've done but I feel my own life of crime, which is pretty, it is shocking, well not shocking, it's just the scale of it. I thought you might have laughed, I wouldn't have minded. I'm not proud of it but I'm pleased. I feel sorry for the people I've affected but I'm pleased that I can look back and I've seen, I've lived and I've seen both sides of the coin and if somebody's talking about it I can talk to them about it' Nick (aged 27).

This issue of respect and pride would appear to be an important one. All people deserve respect and being respected means we are accepted as part of the group or society of which we belong, or hope to be part of. It would appear, however, that presently the type of respect demanded of certain sections of men, or perhaps more appropriately the level of respect that is attainable for them, is not necessarily of a productive, self-enhancing nature. It would appear that for some men, if they can find ways of gaining the respect of others that are non-criminal they will engage in it, if it caters for their sense of pride:

'I'm proud about the fact that I'm eventually sorting myself out, I like telling people I'm starting college, things like that. I feel proud about that, yeah. I like telling them that I'm starting college, I get a buzz out of that' Ian (aged 25).

The conception of acceptable respect and pride that we, as a society, instil in men, however, could arguably be counterproductive, and this is a concern that will be returned to later.

Prison Staff

This concern with respect and pride could also be observed in the prisoners' attitudes to staff and within staff-prisoner relations. 43% (6) of the men displayed a degree of disaffection towards prison staff, feeling that staff did not treat them with the respect they deserved. Other views

expressed were that staff did not see them as real people, made snap judgments about them and then never changed these views even if there was evidence to the contrary, or staff treated prisoners in a patronising way. The ethos of the prisoners', as men, deserve respect would appear to filter into the staff-prisoner relations to a greater extent:

'You've got a lot of lads who would stand and talk to them all day long but I don't bother. They don't class me like somebody from outside, I'm dirt as far as they're concerned. Until the cons realise that they'll be out there all day with them laughing and joking, but as soon as the screws are with their own they're saying scumbag that, scumbag this, and I don't give them that leeway to pull on' Aidan (aged 36).

'[I] don't see them as a uniform, I see them as a person and so when they start giving me all that authority bullshit I just ignore them' Bryan (aged 27).

'There's a lot of tension, obviously people have got problems. I suppose it doesn't help when you've got a lot of officers that, I think they need to be sensitive but obviously they've got their ideas and ideologies, but some of them are downright patronising. We're all big in here, some have children, some have grandchildren. You have to play along with it, I have an opinion but you keep that opinion to yourself when your talking to them' Fergus (aged 27).

'It's not very nice to have someone tell you what to do and sometimes they're younger than you, it does your nut in' Greg (aged 28).

Giallombardo (1966) argues that it would appear the general features of society in connection with the cultural definition ascribed to male and female roles are imported into the prison and are reflected in the structure of social relationships formed by inmates. Sykes and Messinger (1960) observe that dignity, composure, the ability to 'take it' and 'hand it out' when necessary are the traits affirmed to by the inmate code and that they are also the traits that are commonly defined as masculine by the inmate population. Cloward (1960) maintains that the acute sense of status degradation prisoners experience from imprisonment generate powerful pressures to evolve means of restoring status and that if eminence is to be enjoyed by some, then deference and homage must be secured from the lesser ranks. Kersten (1990) comments that Australian and West German field data suggest that the establishment of inmate hierarchies in institutions for young males has an obvious sexual connotation as it exposes the weak and vulnerable inmates not only to denigration, ridicule and contempt, but also to socioeconomic exploitation, physical and psychological torture, and to rape. These findings have also been observed in North America men's prisons (e.g. Toch, 1975; Bowker, 1980; Lockwood, 1980). Kersten (1990) argues that 'the discourse of masculinity' in boys' units rest upon a consensus in the basic assumptions of what constitutes masculine behaviour, within

the norms of patriarchy. Kersten maintains that even in the case of competing masculinities the most desirable features of stereotypical masculinity remain in force; men should dominate and be in control of the weak, weakness has to be suppressed, and women are weak.

Morran (1996) argues that in prison to be seen as weak, unassertive, unable to respond to slights, or not to recognise or comply with the codified world of masculinity, was to invite a lot of problems. Sim (1994) argues that the daily experience of prisoners can be seen to be consistently and continuously mediated, not simply by their status as prisoners, but more fundamentally by their relationship with, and expectations of, the other prisoners and their guards as men. Sim (1994) stipulates that the maintenance of prison order both reflects and reinforces the pervasive and deeply entrenched discourses around particular forms of masculinity. Hayner and Ash (1940) observe how, perhaps in no other social world do men watch each other and study every gesture and action as they do in prison and as Carter (1997*) notes it is within this environment that both prisoners and staff are looking for respect and honour from each other. Gordon (1996) argues that those who live or work in a prison for any length of time, whether they be staff or prisoner, become accustomed to being constantly defensive, macho and pro-active, and often fail to notice that their discernment becomes blunted and their knowledge and acceptance of human frailty diminished. It would appear that the male prison environment, with its reinforcement of, and often homage to, the more extreme range of male stereotypes at one and the same time offers men status and deprives them of it. As Carlen (1985) has observed in relation to female prisons, the institution, oppressive as it is, can provide the only psychological and physical shelter where the prisoners are known, where they have any positive identity and credit whatsoever. Awareness of this concomitant commitment to and rejection of the institution, however, can embitter prisoners, making it even more difficult for prisoners to make sense of themselves, their imprisonment, and their past and their future. This contradictory essence of the prison environment will be returned to in later chapters.

All men are the same

All the prisoners were asked if they thought their criminal activity made them any different to other men. The majority of prisoners (13) felt no differences existed between them and other men. For them what made the difference was the circumstances or situation they found themselves in. Most of the men identified financial situations as being the main reason why they, and other men, committed crime and ended up in prison:

'It's about your position in life whether you turn to crime or not, whether you will commit crime or not. As far as I'm concerned, if a man is on £300 a week, I mean I can relate to this cos I was in that position. When I was in Ford I would never think about going out and doing armed robbery cos I didn't need to cos I had plenty of money, and comfy and cosy and happy. But you have the same fellow who's on £60 a week unemployment benefits and sees an opportunity, well good luck lad go for it, do you know what I mean. It's down to the position in the ladder of life. The run of the mill working man doesn't need to commit crime. You got money, a home to go to and your missus, you're not likely to go

hijacking lorries on the M6 cos it's full of scotch' Andrew (aged 30).

'I would have thought so before I come to jail but coming to jail I'd say no. I just think we're all the same, all of them in here just tried something and failed, or maybe they're lazy, but they're just normal people, normal people in jail'
Frank (aged 30).

'With hindsight of being in prison I can understand why some people get involved in crime. Basically because of the job situation, with the economic situation, everything, there's not enough work to go round. People set themselves with a high standard of living and it's understandable that they don't want to go back down on that standard of living' Harvey (aged 50).

The Benefits of Imprisonment

Although most of the men discussed prison in relatively negative terms, all of them identified prison as being a potentially constructive experience. The majority of prisoners (11, 79%) identified the education services available in prison as being the thing that proved most beneficial for them. They spoke of how men could come into prison unable to read and without qualifications and finish their sentences reading and writing or with qualifications. Some of the men talked about how they discovered things that they were good at, things they would never have thought they were capable and the feelings of self-worth that gave them. Some of the men also identified a prison sentence as allowing them some time to think about things and reflect on what they've done and put their lives in perspective. It would appear a prison sentence, particularly a relatively long sentence, provided some of the men the opportunity to reflect on where their lives were going:

'I'm happy in one respect. I will be when I get out. I've realised a lot of things, a lot of the mistakes I've made in life and I feel better for it now. I realise what I've done, in the past I've never thought about it, now I have and I'm a better person for it and I will be when I get out. It's something like this [a long sentence] that makes you sit back and think, I've got all the time in the world to think, there's nothing else to do but think' Aidan (aged 36).

'I didn't think much at all before I came into prison. It's a big awakening prison I find, and it's sort of opened my eyes, see where I was going wrong' Emmet (aged 33).

'It's a good chance to get to know yourself I'd say, get yourself fit and healthy, and get your ideas and ideals sorted. You've got time to think about what you've done. Even if you spend time by yourself you're never really relaxed enough to think about what you do, but jail bores you to it. It's a good starter but getting out it's just the stigma of being in jail will always follow you' Frank (aged 30).

This issue of reflecting and thinking about what one is doing relates to one aspect of the men's maturity, an element which runs through all the men's accounts. The impression from many of the men's accounts is that they have been unable or unwilling to take responsibility for their actions, both criminal and non-criminal, and have lacked maturity in their decisions. A number of the prisoners reflected on their own immaturity or the immaturity of their fellow prisoners:

'I've changed, I've seen myself change. I've seen myself progress from being a little arsehole to someone who's a bit more mature' Aidan (aged 36).

'I've done it all. I know the mistakes I've made. I came in when I was 26, I was still immature at that age, and when you come into prison you grow up quick, very quick' Connor (aged 31).

'Male prisoners are like kids, I've kids come up to me and say I'm not talking to him and then running off' Greg (aged 28).

This changing maturity is reflected in the prisoners answers to whether their feelings have changed about imprisonment. Of the eight prisoners who had experienced prison more than once, five of them felt that they had reached a stage where they had had enough, and were keen and motivated to avoid imprisonment again. It no longer held any appeal to them or now they had families and they felt the stain of separation much more strongly than before and were, therefore, pushed into rethinking their lives and their pattern of coming in and out of jail:

'I've matured a hell of a lot, I was 28 when I got this, I know at 28 years of age you should be mature anyway, if you've got a wife and 2 daughters. But it took a 14 year sentence to let me sit back and realise all the hurt and harm I've done, I'll never be back' Aidan (aged 36).

'Fun, when I was younger, yeah it never seemed like anything really. Never use to think about it to tell the truth. [Now] it's a waste of time, you're just wasting all your life aren't you inside. You could be doing other things like, watching the kid grow up and working' Bryan (aged 27).

'They've changed more since I've had my own family and that. When I was single and loaded [high] it didn't bother me at all. But since I've had children and that I don't like being in jail, it does my head in' Frank (aged 30).

For the other men prison just became a routine:

'It gets easier. You know the score from day one, you know where you stand. You can cope with it because you've coped with it in the past and it's just a hurdle

you have to get over isn't it' Connor (aged 31).

'The first time I sort of enjoyed it, it was like a new experience. The second time it was old and this time it's not bad actually because I've found out there are some things I can do that I didn't know I could do, like sculpture, and painting and engineering' Emmet (aged 33).

'It just gets easier and easier cos you get use to the same routine don't you, in and out, in and out, all your life' Lewis (aged 26).

Looking to release

When it came to their prospects when released, five (36%) of the prisoners viewed their post-release future in positive terms. These were generally men who were going out to something, be it a family or a job prospect, or in some cases just the prospect of a 'fresh start':

'I've got a lot going for me this time compared to others. Like I'd nothing to go for. Like I've got a child now, me own house, I've some job opportunities, just those sort of things. Like when I got out last time I was only 20, when I get out I'm going to be 27. I'm 27, I'm getting on a bit now, I've got to start to calm down a bit now, I'm older now' Bryan (aged 27).

'I've worked it out myself, I'm not coming back. It's nothing to do with anything else, sentence planning or anything. I have to do it myself, I can if I have the support of me family' Greg (aged 28).

Six (43%) of the men expressed mixed emotions regarding their future release, they held a desire to remain out of prison but also harboured fears that they might return. The intention to avoid prison was evident but concern over whether the resources to support their intentions was expressed. Three of the men generally felt negative about their future prospects after their release; they did not envisage much likelihood of their situations changing and therefore there was little to be hopeful about. As Harvey (aged 50) explains:

'I don't know I have this nagging doubt, the fact that prior to me arrest I was unemployed for 6 months. Getting a job after being made redundant I didn't do a very good job then. Now with what I've learned now it's even more difficult to get a job after being in prison'.

The prison environment it would appear is perceived by these men as ultimately being a negative experience. Although the prison offers the men some explicitly positive elements, such as the education opportunities they failed to take advantage of first time round, and some implicitly positive elements such as the status one can attain within the prison hierarchy, overall the prison experience has more long-term negative effects on their lives than anything else.

The Probation Experience

Compared to the prisoners, the offenders on probation exhibited more mixed views about their experiences of probation, and generally displayed a more diverse set of opinions. Whereas the prisoners' responses showed a high degree of consistency in the replies to some of the questions, for example showing no emotions in prison and developing a facade (outlined above), there was much less uniformity amongst the probation interviewees. The prisoners were, of course, restricted to the prison environment where the standards of behaviour permitted would be far more limited compared to the probation interviewees, the majority of whom only had to attend a weekly meeting. The probation interviewees were, therefore, maintaining a much more diverse lifestyle and were coming into contact with far more diverse situations and as a result would be at liberty to exhibit a far greater range of coping strategies, and would not find their behaviour to be under the intense scrutiny that can occur in the confines of a prison. The worst thing about probation for these men was the time that it took up in their lives, actually having to physically attend a meeting once a week. Over half of the men identified this factor as being a restriction on their lives. One of the men felt being on probation meant one couldn't live like an ordinary person; if you wanted to move you had to inform your officer and so on. The remaining three felt there was no worst aspect about attending probation; their main concern was that they would never be able to change their lives in any way.

All men are the same

Like the prisoners, the majority (78%, 7) of the probation clients considered men who commit crime were no different from any other men. These men believed anyone can end up in trouble; it had more to do with situations than with the person. These probation interviewees also assumed that getting into a degree of trouble was all merely part of growing up:

'It depends what crime you're committing. I don't like obviously ought to do with kids, raping women, murders, people who sell hard drugs like heroin, crack, coke, ecstasy. But people apart from that, you know sell a bit of cannabis, have a scrap or burglar someone's shop, fair enough' Ray (aged 26).

'I think all men, through their teenage years, I think most of them do end up in court at some time, some dabble in drugs, drink' Tim (aged 22).

'I just think they like to get what they can and [a case of] how quickly. I think a lot are impatient. I think all men are the same really, it's just that some have got either the balls to do something or they lack common sense. I think half of them just want to get something with as little effort' Nick (aged 27).

Again, as with the prisoners, these men saw their criminal behaviour as resulting from the situations men find themselves in, rather than being an active choice on their part. The choice of committing crime or not is forced upon them rather than something they elect to do. Although an

element of excitement, or status gaining can be seen in some of the probation clients' accounts of their offending behaviour, such as the men involved in drinking and fighting, there was no explicit recognition by these men that they engage in crime because of the buzz it gives them. For a number of the prisoners that was the main attraction for them, but this did not appear to be an acknowledged factor for any of these men.

Show no emotion

As with the prisoners, the majority of probation interviewees voiced the opinion that men are better off not showing how they are feeling. The absoluteness of showing no emotion was not as powerfully expressed by these men as it was by the prisoners, but the sentiments were still strongly present. Again as with the prisoners, the presence of a partner allowed the men more leeway in feeling vulnerable or offered them an opportunity to express their feelings in what they deemed to be a 'safe' situation:

'A lot of people don't like letting their true feelings out do they, they'd rather put a front on. A lot of people would rather be like people want them to be than what they are' Vincent (aged 43).

'Men do that, if you are vulnerable you hide that. They'd get crushed, people would exploit it, that's how it works. [This] is a bad place to live, it really is. It's so small everyone knows you and they know your weaknesses. And my weakness is, basically when I go out I'm a sitting duck to anyone who wants to make a name for themselves because I can't fight back and people know I'm not going to. I mean I have 17 year olds coming up to [going] come on then [I'm going] alright mate see ya, that kind of thing. I don't mind it's my own fault for getting that reputation' Stephen (aged 22).

'It's just lack of confidence but I kinda put a face on. I just feel if I didn't then.. Thankfully I've got a relationship, I'm stable, but I feel if I was on me own. You see I've got this friend, he's a tramp now, he's the same age as me but his head went one morning from being shunned so I just feel if I didn't have anybody, like women, then I could easily go the same way' Nick (aged 27).

The probation clients shared the same sense of feared exploitation, as expressed by the prisoners, if one were to expose one's feelings or needs to others. There was less intensity to the probation clients expression of such fear compared to that of the prisoners; this is most likely linked to the increased hostility to vulnerability and its expression within the prison environment (see above).

Probation as a constructive influence

The majority of the men interviewed (67%, 6) identified probation as having a positive impact in their lives. These men saw probation and their probation officers as providing them with an extra back-up, someone to turn to if they needed help or advice, and somewhere they could try and change

their outlook on life:

'Probably [people] late 20s, early 30s, like myself, I would feel they would appreciate to get the chance to talk like I do, to change the outlook, make them like a person instead of a number' Mark (aged 35).

'I've benefited from my last one. you just feel like .. whatever problem you get you're not fighting it on your own, you know you've got back-up, and it does work wonders. I think it puts [you] one step ahead because [you've] always got someone to help, someone to fall back on. I mean that's how I look at it and that's why I didn't mind when I got 2 years probation' Nick (aged 27).

'Just to get you back on the right tracks, just to keep an eye on you and get you back on the right tracks. If you need help to help you' Ray (aged 26).

'You remember don't you. Usually when you, you go to court, you get fined you pay your fines, you forget about it. You forget you was in trouble and you end up in trouble again. But when you're on probation you're always reminded - which is good' Stephen (aged 22).

One of the men felt that probation did little to address his offending but it had helped sort out some basic problems in his life, like his housing problems, while two of the men felt probation was a waste to time:

'I was glad when I first got [probation] cos I thought the guy can maybe give me a bit of guidance here. It were a joke, all he wanted to know was how much I drank, had I got into any bother and please can you fill this in and bring it back next week and that's it' Tim (aged 24).

Although the majority of men saw probation as a constructive punishment, some of the men did, however, express concern over how the younger age group viewed probation. A number of the men were of the opinion that people in their late teens to early 20s see probation as an easy option and as a result do not take it very seriously, either as a punishment or as a way of improving their lives or helping them with their lives:

'What I've found is that people who have been given probation, when they've been sentenced, see it as a soft option, oh it's better than going to prison, especially in the younger age groups of males probably between 16 and 25. I've often thought about that myself, between 16 and 25 it is a soft option and you'd rather not go to prison, but sort of over that and my age group sort of see it in a totally different way' Mark (aged 35).

'It is beneficial and like the people don't use it, I mean like I always use it. I mean the first time I got it I was a teenager and I didn't give a toss about it. But [now] probation I don't really mind it at all, it makes me feel I'm not on my own'
Nick (aged 27).

'Kids get probation and it's just, they're happy aren't they. It's I got probation for 6 months, I ain't got jail have I, lets go out and get on the piss, I got probation'
Tim (aged 24).

The men's accounts of probation highlighted the difficulties they experienced when it came to making decisions about their lives. Virtually all the men commented on either the fact that their probation officer provided them with guidance, or complained about the fact that the probation officer had failed to offer them guidance in their lives. Like the prisoners, the offenders on probation appeared to exhibit a reluctance to take responsibility for their past acts and their future behaviour.

Six (67%) of the probation interviewees concluded that probation could be a constructive way of dealing with people's offending behaviour and other problems, but only if the person involved was inclined towards changing their behaviour and taking part in the process:

'You've got to want to change and I think you've got to change your environment and the way you think. But I would think probation was 70-80% of helping you to swing over that way. When you've been in bother with the police and prison and if you've had a bad family background it's easy to stay down'
Mark (aged 35).

'I think they'll find it helpful, it's just a matter of whether they want to listen, whether they just think it's an easy way out, you know of being in prison'
Nick (aged 27).

'To get you back to work, to get people off the wrong drugs, whatever, just sort of keep an eye on you, keep you on the right tracks, give you advice when you need it, if you need it'
Ray (aged 26).

The remaining three men were not so sure of the merits of probation, seeing it instead as a bit of a joke and serving no real purpose.

'I don't even really know what probation is about. I mean basically what happens is I come to see him most every 2 weeks, I suppose he asks me a lot of questions like what I've been doing. I've got to fill out a little sheet about how many drinks I have. I mean I usually out the truth down anyway, I don't sometimes. I don't know what they're trying to achieve by putting me on it. I

mean the community service I could better understand it cos it took my time up,
but I mean you only get here for 10 minutes' Stephen (aged 22).

The accounts of the men's experience of probation were much more diverse than the accounts of the prisoners' experience of prison. It would appear that probation, since it does not involve placing the individual in an excessively restricted environment, allows for a more varied response by the clients. The prison environment would appear to restrict the men's options for responding to any attempts at addressing their behaviour because of the dominant ethos of prison, that of being seen to be 'hard'. It would also appear that probation potentially offers a much more individualised approach to dealing with people's offending behaviour and the problems that often accompany that behaviour. Both prisons and the probation service strive towards the same goals of reducing offending behaviour, but it would appear that they elicit significantly different responses from the men in their charge. The next chapter examines the working ethos of prison and probation officers and the attitudes these officers have to their clients - focusing in particular on the officers' attitudes to their clients as *men* - and what impact, if any, these have on their clients and their experiences of prison or probation.

Chapter Five

Dispossession and the desire for acceptance: the staff findings

'To punish a man you must injure him: to reform a man you must improve him: men are never improved by injuries'.

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

As noted in Chapter three, interviews were conducted with prison and probation staff in an attempt to explore whether they had any preconceptions about their male clients and what they might be. The staff interviews examined how staff perceived the offenders they worked with and attempted to determine whether any aspects of 'masculinism' or masculine ideology and stereotyping informed any of the staff perceptions and/or the services available to, and the treatment received, by the men. In total seventeen members of staff were interviewed, ten prison officers and seven probation staff. 12 of the staff interviewed were male and five were female. Their length of experience of working with offenders ranged from nine months to 27 years. Six had 14 years or more experience, six had over five years, and five had under five years experience. Although the staff were interviewed as two separate groups and although differences existed between the attitudes and opinions of prison and probation staff, due to the differing environments the two groups worked in, nevertheless, a number of similar key themes emerged from both sets of staff interviews. This chapter will first explore the themes and concerns that were common to both sets of staff and then will go on to highlight a number of differences, or differing emphases, which also emerged between the two groups.

Nothing to Lose

Both the prison and probation staff identified the men they worked with as people who had 'nothing to lose': they came from poor social backgrounds, lacking education and were usually unemployed. 82% (14) of the staff characterised them as people who had lacked opportunities all their lives. As a result of this lack of prospects in their past, their present and their foreseeable future, the majority of the staff concluded that, generally, there were very few options available to these men from which to build their lives aside from offending and its rewards:

'A few clients pretty recently said to me I've got no money so I can't afford to go out, I can barely feed myself, I was in a shitty flat, it was cold, I can't afford any new clothes, what would you do? .. The clients that I have, the sort of repeat offenders are those that have, I'll be as bold to say, have made a conscious decision that they'll go out and get what they can, and they're really not too fussed about the consequences' (Probation Officer 1, male).

'No qualifications, no prospects, no job, slips into crime, does time inside, goes out. He had little hope of employment before he came in, with a prison record

he's got even less chance and so he returns to crime again whether it be, unfortunate as it is, to feed his family or to pay for his drug habit. That's the scale of it one end to the other, they just slip into it and it becomes a way of life and prison is just a drawback, it's just one of the drawbacks to their employment, if you can call it employment' (Prison Officer 3, male).

'Partly with young lads, I think part of the trouble is the apprenticeship system is gone to all intents and purpose. I mean 15, 20 years ago, perhaps a bit longer, a lad could leave school at 15 and get a job, an apprenticeship and he was in work until he was 21. Whereas now there's a lot of young lads spent, once you've spent 2 or 3 years on the dole from leaving school it's difficult to get work, even if they even want work because employers just see them as bone idle basically. And the other problem is that once they get into that sort of gang culture type thing and done a few offences they start to get unrealistic expectations about wages. So they're looking to earn a couple hundred quid a week when they've actually got no skills to offer. So the whole thing becomes a vicious circle if you like and they can't get out of it and it's difficult to persuade them that it's often in their best interests to go back to college, to take a low paid job just to get them into the job market, cos as you know once you're in work it's easier to get other work, it's not easy to convince them of that' (Probation Officer 2, male).

'They lead such dull lives, absolutely dull lives, nothing to do, nowhere to go, no money to do it with, and no hopes, no prospects, no prospects of work. You know if they can do something and there's the risk involved, you know they might get caught which is an extra buzz, or they might get away with it' (Probation Officer 5, male).

In addition to this material and social impoverishment, but also linked to it, 11 (65%) of the staff interviewed maintained that the majority of the men they come into contact with lacked maturity and failed to, or were unwilling to, take responsibility for their behaviour:

'You'll find prison life is a lot like school life, they all, a lot of these are still children. You see it when they go to work and come back and go into association. They do things now as 30+ year olds that the majority of people were doing when they were 15 at school, and they just haven't had that, I don't know what the word is for it, but they seem to be maturing late in life' (Prison Officer 3, male).

'About 17 to 27/28 year olds, we always have a clutch of those, male predominantly male, who are unemployed and the milestones of responsibility if you like, you know jobs, getting married or relationship, they've been absent

for them and they tend to congregate together and there's sort of a postponement of responsibility and so they're like in a perpetual childhood if you like. And those offenders during those years come back time and time again. Delayed development, for social reasons really, I suppose years ago there were loads and loads of unskilled jobs they'd go into and they'd be with older people and everything else, more pro-social modelling there, but that's absent for a lot of them now' (Probation Officer 5, male).

This lack of opportunities experienced by the offenders, frequently resulting from the low economic and social positions these men find themselves in, not only appeared to hinder their personal and social development into what could be considered fully functioning social beings, it also appeared to hinder attempts on the part of the prison and probation staff to help the men move away from offending or to improve their lot in life. Over half (59%, 10) of the staff interviewed talked of the difficulties in trying to motivate offenders to change their offending behaviour when the social and material reality of these men were, more often than not, bleak ones. For example 86% (6) of the probation officers identified probation as involving a large amount of 'crisis management', helping their clients deal with their day-to-day social and or economic problems. Until these problems were tackled and dealt with it was highly unlikely their clients were going to be in any position to address their offending behaviour, since the more immediate difficulties of having no money, housing problems or relationship difficulties took prominence in their lives:

'I think you must have a time, other than working on their offending behaviour, you must have a time to deal with the burning crisis or social problems that they've got, because they're not going to be relaxed to look at their offending if they're being evicted from their house tomorrow. I do think you have to do that more general welfare work as well, with there being a fall back by most agencies, cut backs on housing benefits for young people, less opportunities in housing sectors to satisfy needs. I do think that they need that help, I think you do need to be an advocate to a degree. It helps the work on the offending behaviour, you make it as deals, if I help you with your housing problem you're going to agree to come and look at your anger management for the next 3 weeks. I don't think there's anything wrong with making deals and trade offs, so that they feel they're getting something out of it as well' (Probation Officer 5, male).

'[T]hat's what we're aiming at really, that's what we're here for, help people stay out trouble. At one level you've got the day-to-day problems you know not much money, family problem, accommodation, a lot of crisis stuff. Whereas long-term what are you going to do with your life, you know and quite often you have to cut through the day-to-day crises to sit down and make some sort of long-term plans (Probation Officer 7, male).

'The way I see my job is to try and get more people involved in their own lives, you know. But that's why, there's a lot of young males, it is very difficult to do any work focusing on their offending because they come in with all these other sort of life issues, and other situations that need addressing, that are a priority, not just you're me probation office you sort it out' (Probation Officer 1, male).

The staff also stipulated that in addition to these difficulties created by the social and economic problems faced by their clients in tackling offenders' behaviour, was the fact that in the majority of cases their work with offenders was unlikely to be successful unless the offenders themselves had decided that they wanted to change their way of living:

'Here the average [age] is 27, we're getting to the age where their offending pattern changes and a lot of them will stop offending, a lot of them we'll see back. My personal experience is that no matter what we do here, at the age of 27 they either meet the girl, the girl, or something else happens in their maturity, they stop offending or they become the old time lag. In terms of rehabilitation nothing that we do is going to effect them, or relieve the victim. They will change when they want to change, when they reach that point in their development' (Prison Officer 6, male).

'They've got to come to that decision themselves. You cannot set up an organisation to say right when this prisoner comes in, we've never met him before but, this time will be spent usefully. Because this guy has to come to a stage where he says I've had enough help me. Then you put it all into gear' (Prison Officer 8, male).

'The big problem is motivation, is motivating people, that's a generalisation but a lot of people, especially drug users, is motivating them out of it. Cos they come and see us for half an hour, an hour, a week and the other 6 days and 23 hours they're out on the streets with their friends, you've only got them for a small time' (Probation Officer 7, male).

'If we can persuade them that they do have a kind of stake in society, that they're not totally alienated from it, that they're not in a sort of irreversible cycle of offending you know. There are advantages to be held, if they can look at different ways of thinking about their problems, and different ways of organising themselves, that they can get great value from that and that they can achieve something' (Probation Officer 7, male).

For some of the staff, their clients had never been given any direction in their lives, they had never really been encouraged at any stage or shown how to channel their energies in constructive

productive ways. In some ways no one had taken a real interest in them and where their lives were going.

'They've never been pushed while they've been at school, they fall into the wrong group. With friends they all started playing truant, and you find that doing things that buck the system was, when they were young, exciting and you just go and do it. If they'd been given the challenge of something at school who knows where they'd have ended up' (Prison Officer 3, male).

'A lot of them have been in trouble throughout sort of their adolescence and young adult life, had spells on remand, spells in youth custody, whatever. I don't think anyone's sat down with these people and said listen if you need something you've got to, you know, the most profitable way of going about it is sitting down and thinking what you need, looking at different ways of getting it' (Probation Officer 1, male).

From the accounts of the staff interviewed, the men they end up dealing with come from the dispossessed sections of society. There is little in their lives that links them to and integrates them into society, and therefore these men appear to lack a sense of belonging. Chapter four identified the importance of employment for the integration of men into society, providing not only finance but also social contact, status, time structure, activity, and being part of some collective purpose, all of which are identified as being crucial to psychological well-being (see Jahoda, 1979, 1982; & Jahoda and Rush, 1980). Offending, for many of the men, is accordingly one means of acquiring the money or the possessions that will allow them some level of entry into society. There was little sense of these men wanting anything spectacular or qualitatively different from life, the vast majority of the men merely wished to enjoy the basic standards of living typical of a western capitalist, consumer society:

'Some of my clients would find it [crime] attractive because that's the *only* way that they can see of getting what they want. As I say this thing, this lack of opportunity, it's [crime] the only way that they can see of getting to a situation where they can go out round town on Friday night and have plenty of money to spend, they can wear nice jeans and the nice expensive coats. And there's the stuff that goes with that, if you've got nice clothes and plenty of money I'll get a nice girl, I'll be popular' (Probation Officer 1, male).

'If you ask most people, most offenders, what they want in my experience, exclusively I think, and I must have asked hundreds of them in the years, is that they want what most other people want. So they want a job, a reasonable job which provides them enough money to live on, somewhere reasonable to live, probably these days a car, and a relationship of some description, So their aspirations are fairly normal, perhaps more than normal' (Probation Officer 4,

female).

By and large the staff identified the majority of their clients as being reasonable people who found themselves in difficult circumstances with few material, social and personal resources with which to tackle their circumstances.

Drug Use and Offending Behaviour

Eleven (65%) of the staff interviewed identified drugs as playing some role in the offending behaviour of the men they worked with, both inside and outside prison. Drug use was a particular concern of the probation officers, with 70% of them identifying the majority of the offenders they see on probation as being drug users. More often than not it was through the men's criminal activities to support their drug use rather than their drug use per se that prison and probation officers had contact with their clients, as they explain:

'More and more burglaries because they have to pay for the habit, therefore to some extent they can't help themselves, they've got into the drug scene and they can't get out of it. And while they're in it they'll forever be in debt, and they'll be wanting money, quick money, easy money, and the only way around that is to turn to crime, burglary, robberies and all that sort of thing' (Prison Officer 5, male).

'A lot of our clients are involved in thefts, either burglary, shoplifting, whatever, and some of them squander the money very quickly on drugs. Heroin addicts tend to have a downer on themselves, and the ones I've dealt with feel incredibly bad that they have to go out and do something that, before they became heroin addicts, would never occur to them, which is either stealing or prostitution' (Probation Officer 1, male).

'Most of the kids we deal with are using drugs, the vast majority use drugs. But your older men would tend to be alcoholics rather than drug users. It's something I've noticed since I've joined the Service in 1979, that in those days when we were writing reports for the court almost in all those one of the reasons given for why I committed this offence was I drunk. And now it's very rare for people to say it was through drunkenness, it's almost always now drug abuse' (Probation Officer 6, female).

'With drug using people it's [crime] a means towards an end. We get people coming in who had a bad drug habit for a long time but had been working, they lose the job for whatever reason not necessarily to do with the drugs, so they start offending to buy the drugs. Until they lost that job they'd been happily using drugs and going to work, it was an illegal act to have the drugs but they weren't committing offences unless they got caught with the drugs in their

pockets. What brought them to the attention of the criminal justice system, there'd just be precipitating factor that tips someone over into offending that would be more likely to lead to detection and involvement in a court case or whatever' (Probation Officer 7, male).

A number of the probation officers identified the drug use as taking place within a particular social circle or group:

'Certainly if I was to say over the last few years, that they will be drug users with low motivation to change, and that tends to be the vast majority that you see. I think they've got the common denominator that they all operate in similar social circles, that they've got use to being able to make quite a lot of money and so it's very hard to actually motivate them to consider, when I say money I mean illegal money, and the motivation is how do they get the next hit' (Probation Officer, 3 female).

'[They] tend to be drug users, 17-25, dishonesty offences, burglary, shoplifting, theft from cars, that sort of thing, part of a very established group within the town linked by the drug use' (Probation Officer 7, male).

This group involvement in relation to drug use, particular in the smaller towns, meant that it could be very difficult for any single individual to disengage him/herself from the group and its drug scene even if they really wanted to. The small town settings meant that the individual would come into contact with their drug using friends on a daily basis and there often would be little else on offer for them to occupy themselves with. The men themselves, in chapter four, had voiced this difficulty of giving up either drugs or alcohol since it usually meant sacrificing a large component of their social lives, with nothing else on offer to fill the resulting void.

For the prison staff their concerns regarding drug use revolved more around the difficulties it created within the prison environment, though they also cited it as playing a role in a number of the prisoners offending behaviour. Drugs, however, and the debts that accompanied drug use in prison, were put forward as the issue that caused most trouble for staff and between the prisoners:

'Mainly it's the drug scene, you know, people being asked to bring things in off home leave, visits, that sort of thing' (Prison Officer 3, male).

'Drugs oriented, people getting debt cos they can't afford it, people wanting it and not being able to afford it. And I think generally if there's going to be a problem that's where the problem is' (Prison Officer 5, male).

Just as the men themselves had identified their drug use as being a major factor in their offending behaviour so too did the staff consider drug use to be an element that created considerable trouble

within the lives of their clients.

Self-esteem and the Lure of Crime

One of the issues where prison staff and probation staff opinions differed was on the issue of the excitement of crime and how men might be attracted to crime for that reason. Only one of the prison officers mentioned excitement directly as a possible reason for men committing crime, although other officers mentioned the challenge that crime presented to some men and its attraction in that sense. The majority of prison staff appeared to view the men in their care as being, ultimately 'social inadequates'. Prison staff did not necessarily hold the men themselves responsible for their 'inadequacies' but the general view of the prison staff was that the accumulation of social disadvantages, some self-inflicted such as not attending school, often left the men with little options but to commit crime. In comparison, however, all seven of the probation officers interviewed identified crime as being both exciting and attractive to men, that crime permitted ego enhancement on the part of men, particularly young men, but also that using crime to enhance one's ego could be a double-edged sword:

'I think some males if they feel inferior or insignificant to others they will suddenly find themselves, that it gives them a degree of status. Certainly I know males serving very serious sentences for rape, for murder and manslaughter, and very, very serious drug offences to have done it as a male enhancement thing' (Probation Officer 3, female).

'I suppose in terms of competitiveness amongst other males, I suppose that element is present. There's often this you know, asserting, power thing, in pub fights that's very common. You know this you have to assert yourself or you're soft sort of thing. I think that's probably a feature in a lot, in male behaviour, it's not represented solely in offending, in business, whatever, it's cut-throat. I think this competitiveness is in the male culture generally, sport and business' (Probation Officer 5, male).

'Particularly if they're youngsters and you know they're peer group is into pinching cars and stuff like that, it's kind of a male bonding thing you know and would have very close associations with constructing their identity. For others it may have associations with constructing their identity but more kind of indirect ones, so it might be to do with providing for your family or children, you haven't got a job so you do it through stealing, it's not as crass as a young man showing off to his peer group' (Probation Officer 4, female).

'Those who commit the violent offences, the ones who get arrested for punching somebody or whatever. Very often when you're discussing that with them you know it, in some ways they're almost surprised they've been arrested for it, because to them it's well what you do if someone upsets you, you smack them,

how else could you possibly deal with it. That's just what you do, if somebody offends you, if somebody says something about your wife or girlfriend or looks at you wrong in a pub well you hit them, you sort them out because they're not going to get away with that. And it's very much to do with how they see themselves as men, because I'm a man and that's how I deal with, this aggressive thing'. (Probation Officer 6, female).

'There's a fine line between accepted behaviour, it might be considered anti-social but isn't criminal, and crime. Fights, people get drunk and have a fight, just one thump, one kick and it could be into a serious, someone's seriously injured, somebody's dead. 9 times out of 10 people just pick themselves up and off they go' (Probation Officer 7, male).

Although offending was characterised by the probation officers as one way for men to enhance their ego and self-esteem, it was also seen to be a potentially self-defeating method for men to pursue esteem bolstering, and a number of officers indicated that where other avenues of ensuring one's self-esteem was intact were available these men would avail themselves of them:

'I would imagine it would be about bolstering status and so on but it does actually work the other way you know, their friends laugh at them, you know, you idiot getting caught, such and such' (Probation Officer 1, male).

'It can be exciting, it can be interesting, sometimes the rewards can be okay, but I think if you work with somebody in the right and you ask the right questions, kind of get below their sort of surface responses then generally you can find some dissonance if you like. That actually you can ask other questions about it and it's not quite as it's presented. There can be superficial or short-term appeals but not for long. I mean the vast majority of ordinary kind of offenders that I've ever interviewed have said that if they, given the choice, if they could get what they want through legitimate means, and as I say they have very sort of conservative aspirations' (Probation Officer 4, female).

There was also the difficulty of moving on in one's life. It would appear that in a number of cases where men early in their lives had been involved in offending or acts of violence but now wished to put it behind them they find this difficult to achieve. If their names had become linked with crime or violence, often leading to them being viewed positively and highly regarded amongst other men in their area, it was often the case that people would approach them with that context in mind. Some of the probation officers were aware of clients who had difficulty in leaving behind a reputation as a fighting man or a hard man, even when they no longer wanted anything to do with that part of their past life:

'There are a lot of local individuals who are often known as hard men, people

try not to upset them. Talking to them they often find that quite annoying, it's like being the fastest gun in Dodge city. People will come and knock on the door and say I want to fight, you know, they get really pissed off. About 5 years ago they might have had this reputation and it dogs them forever. It's quite amusing when people say that, the hard men become fed up about it, it's there on one level and quite often people who have had that reputation find it irritating, they don't go out and look for it, it's given to them. [...] 2 or 3 years ago they probably would have had a fight but it stays with them, that's partly because it's a parochial town, you've got your reputation. They're getting older, they're just fed up with it, having lots of fights, getting into trouble, ending up in court. I think with a lot of offenders they get fed up' (Probation Officer 5, male).

From the staff interviews it appeared to be the case that for many men, particular young men, part of the appeal of crime could be related to the excitement it provided in their life and from the status they could obtain amongst their peers from their offending and/or violent behaviour. However, once this reputation has been gained it can often be hard to leave behind and some men can become trapped by the activities they engaged in when they were younger. As with the accounts of the offenders in chapter four, the accounts of these probation officers again highlights the interaction between individuals and their peers. Frequently it seems that the behaviour of these men can be related to the search for approval from their male peers and for the desire to be accepted in a group of their peers. It would appear that for many men it is not merely an issue of maintaining one's own self-esteem it is maintaining one's self-esteem in the company of other men that is paramount. And as this group influence can draw men into offending behaviour it can also act as a catalyst to remove them from offending behaviour as one male probation officer observes:

'One guy he's been on probation for 2 years and I've kept him, he's been inside a few times within that time, he's been a right pain he really has. One of his mates got a job and he said they need more people and he got them in. So it's got to the stage where all his mates are working, so during the day he's like by himself, and he sees his mates coming and going at work and having a good time, and in his mind they are acting like adults. At the weekend they're going round town, they've got money to spend on alcohol and drugs, or whatever. And that's where he wants to be at' (Probation Officer 1).

This recognition of the impact of the group on men, or the influence of peers in relation to men's offending and/or violent behaviour, was reflected in the fact that over half of the probation officers (57%) recommended that group sessions be used to address men's offending behaviour. These officers felt that since many men, particularly younger men, appear to offend in groups it would be beneficial to address their behaviour in group sessions:

'Quite often I think crime is committed in the company of others, and so there's

that sort of extra dimension isn't there. Particularly young offenders, often when they're offending in a group it's in order to show that they're one of the crowd, they don't want to be different, to prove themselves' (Probation Officer 6, female).

'Again a great deal comes down to social circle, there's no doubt about that. The numbers who you've got in here when they sit on their own, or you see them with their families and are very different. But when you see them with their friends, they either did it to be one of the crowd or because it seemed a good idea at the time' (Probation Officer 3, female).

'I'd like to see more of an emphasis on group work because there's a lot of evidence to say there's effective programmes dealing with groups, they're more of an effective way, the fact that they can actually talk about and confront each other, I think that's probably a good development' (Probation Officer 5, male).

'For a lot of their life it has been excitement you know, it's cars or it's burglary, cos often it's in groups, well most of it's in groups. That's another reason why I think groups is a good thing cos they're offending in groups, so we should work with them in groups' (Probation Officer 2, male).

One difficulty with the group approach for addressing male offending, however, is that it may merely reinforce the masculine ethos that appears to inform the behaviour of male groups in the first place, that is the importance of ensuring one's own enhanced self-esteem often to the detriment of others. As one of the female probation officers observed:

'If they're in a group they really do put on a show, individually. And they really would never dream of letting anyone know their inner most secrets. But on a one-to-one basis it's surprising just what information, people are allowed to show their feelings and they do get upset, which they would never admit to in group sessions' (Probation Officer 3).

Partly linked to this issue was the fact that over half (57%) of the probation officers identified their male clients as having set ideas about what constituted appropriate gender roles:

'I think a lot of the males we supervise have got very set gender role ideas and they resent, I think a lot of them will resent being supervised by a female officer. I've had one or 2 recently who have asked not to be supervised by female officers and I think it's probably they've got their own images of females, role models they've had, mothers, absent mothers or teachers in school, or whatever. Immediate images of women and a lot of them have very,

very poor images of women, very set images of women, so I think that's an umbrella feature of most of the offenders we deal with' (Probation Officer 5, male).

'I'm sure the gender issue is very important, I think because you, I think we all come in with very fixed ideas. How they behave in groups, I've done a lot of groups over the years, and on an individual basis and to how they appear in groups is very different again. But then to actually put it down, it's not just whether you're male or female, it's the position you have as well. Some men find it very difficult to be spoken to by a female they will regard as in a position of authority, but then some females do as well' (Probation Officer 3, female).

The accounts of these probation officers appeared to identify the offending and/or violent behaviour of their male clients as being linked to the excitement and status enhancement it provided for them as *men*. This was associated with the gender socialisation experienced by the men; of what behaviour was appropriate for and around women and what behaviour was appropriate for and around men. The gendered socialisation of these men appeared to be of a conservative nature with the notion of a strong, hard man who didn't talk about or reveal things about himself; a dominant man. It would appear that the enactment of such conservative gender notions can give rise to offending and self-destructive behaviour and damaging behaviour towards others. As one female probation officer observed:

'I think if you're a man and your perception of yourself is that you are entitled to, deserve a whole range of things, that your needs are priority, that you are superior in some way to women and children, and a whole range of other social groups, then that will allow you to be all kinds of things, to think all kinds of thoughts, it will predispose to a range of emotions and all that can combine to produce a much stronger likelihood, I think, of abusive behaviour rather than respectful behaviour' (Probation Officer 4).

The Calming Influence of Women

Both prison and probation officers identified female officers as having a 'calming influence' on male prisoners and clients. 88% (15) of the staff commented on this occurrence. This phenomenon of females being a 'calming influence' would appear to be rooted to a large extent, particularly within the prison setting, in what were considered to be the appropriate gender expectations of men's actions towards women:

'I think female staff are very good in some situations where they can calm the prisoner down a lot better than a male member of staff often. I think going back to what I said about prisoners, you know, they've got that ounce of decency left in them and they've got a certain amount of respect for female officers and they

wouldn't be as aggressive to them as they would a male officer' (Prison Officer 7, male).

'We certainly benefit from having female staff. There's a lot of occasions where females can take the sting out of a situation, mainly because a lot of people, particularly for the more mature person, wouldn't fight a female, and I think their presence can be a calming effect' (Prison Officer 8, male).

In addition to this gendered notion that men treat women differently to the way they treat men, it was implicitly accepted that men were less threatened by women in a confrontational situation, not only in the sense of not feeling physically threatened but on the more salient issue of not threatening his status as a man. It would appear to be considered more acceptable for a man to back down from a confrontation with a woman, or there is nothing to be gained from such a confrontation, than one with a man. If a man, particularly in the closed environment of a prison, backs down from an argument with a male officer it appears that this is seen by the man himself and the other men around him as a loss of 'face' or status as a man:

'The majority of clients that we work with are men and who I feel would see perhaps male officers as more as a threat, it would seem to me that male officers are more likely to be attacked, not that that's a common feature' (Probation Officer 6, female).

'They can be a calming influence, if there was a fight going on a woman officer would be able to calm things down, perhaps more than a male officer might. I think some male officers would just handle things that would have made a situation, a violent situation, purely anecdotal' Probation Officer 7, male).

'[Y]ou can get away with a lot that the lads can't. I mean I could say something to an inmate and they'll laugh at me and if a man said it there'd be fisty cuffs' (Prison Officer 9, female).

It appeared, therefore, that part of the reason for females' 'calming influence' (in prison especially) was related to the gender socialisation of men not to perceive women as a threat physically or in terms of their self-esteem, and also the gendered notion that it is unacceptable for men to be violent towards women. This 'calming influence' of female officers, however, can also be traced to the behaviour the female officers themselves adopt in situations when dealing with men, particularly in the prison setting. It would appear as a result of their own perceived vulnerability, and being perceived as weaker by the men, in terms of confronting male offenders rather than adopting a aggressive, hostile or physical approach, that female officers are more likely to look for and adopt different methods for dealing with the men:

'I think you are more readily able to talk your way out of a situation, if a situation were to arise where you felt threatened or vulnerable. I think female officers are more able to talk their way out of that because we pose less of a threat' (Probation Officer 6, female).

'...we've all got our adaptations to the job. Like A, 6ft 4, lovely bloke, but if he said to an inmate come on lad let's get you in your cell they're not going to argue with him because of his size. Whereas 5ft 3 little me I've got to learn to get him to do things for me without. From day one I thought that being aggressive was the last stance for me, I could torment them or wind them up. If I go through all that and they still won't do what I want then I've got 'Go to your cell' and that's it. But if I start with that and they say no then I've got to do something, which to me is the last option. So if I haven't got size on my side, do you know what I mean, I've got to work it my own way. Whereas someone like A, who is a big bloke, perhaps hasn't got to go through all the stages, but at the end of the day as long as both of us get them behind the door or get them to do what we want it doesn't matter to me' (Prison Officer 9, female).

Thus female officers generally and female prison officers in particular are perceived as having a 'calming influence' on male offenders and are often seen to be able to divert a situation from becoming verbally and physically confrontational. As a result of their acceptance of their physical weakness, female officers appeared to be willing to adopt more conciliatory or conflict resolving approaches whereas male officers unhindered by a perception of their physical weakness in comparison to male offenders are less likely to adopt such approaches. One could argue that the 'calming influence' of women is commented on more because the often antagonistic behaviour between male offenders and male officers, particularly within the prison, is perceived as being a normal interaction between men and the male officers are not necessarily required to reflect on the approaches they adopt with prisoners or clients in the same way that female officers may have to. Within the predominantly male environment of the [male] prison it is even more likely that this type of behaviour will be considered the 'norm' rather than an expression of male behaviour. It is possible to speculate that some of the incidents between prisoners and between prisoners and male staff result from the attempted expression of masculine norms such as independence and self-regulation which within the restrictions of the prison may be difficult to uphold:

'When all is said and done, believe it or not, I like being under pressure. I like coping with it and at the end of the day when you do have a good bust up it's, the relief and the tension that's gone off. But then you don't want too many' (Prison Officer 6, male).

'If you've got a lot of nose to nose, where you're always arguing with inmates and it's quite literally nose, shouting and screaming with each other, you do this, no I'm not, you're nicked, I'm going to hit you sort of thing, I enjoy all that.

..I enjoy it locked [very close face to face arguing] to an inmate, quite a lot of officers don't do it but I enjoy it. 9 times out of 10 if you have a locked fight with an inmate he backs down because he's afraid of being shown up in front of his friends' (Prison Officer 1, male).

It is to this enclave of masculinism that is the prison that we now turn our attention.

Prison: The Man's World ?

A selection of questions in the prison staff interviews were devoted to exploring staff views on working in a predominantly male environment. These questions explored what staff thought were the positive and negative aspects of working in a predominantly male environment, if any, and whether they thought there were any long-term effects on the staff and prisoners working and living in such a setting. For the majority of the staff, they had either given little consideration to the fact that they worked in a predominantly male environment and therefore had given no thought to its effects on them and the prisoners. On the other hand, a number of the staff were ex-forces or had previously only ever worked in all male settings and thus considered it to be a normal environment or had no experiences to draw comparisons with. The most commonly cited concern or view regarding the predominantly male environment was that in reality it was a false one. Society is a mixed sex environment and having prisoners locked up in all male environments for considerable periods was seen to be unlikely to assist them when they are released back into society. In this respect the all male environment was seen as a harsher, less tolerant place due to the lack of females, or the low number of females, and therefore influence of females. As some of the officers explain:

'It may affect people's attitudes towards women I suppose. I found it difficult working with women when I came out of the army basically because I've never done it before. It took a bit of getting use to, and I suppose it would be the same with inmates, they spend a long time in here they go back out. Contact with women for the first time for them I suppose would be difficult for them' (Prison Officer 7, male).

'If you're not careful you can end up being a Neanderthal, burping, farting, swearing, so if you're not careful you can lose all your etiquette, and if you take that home to your missus. If you're not careful you can, every conversation you have can be very base, but then again if that's what you want you can have it' (Prison Officer 1, male).

'Say you 've got an inmate doing a 7 year sentence, behind locked door, can't see the outside world for 7 years, it's false. We're going to release that person into a community of females and what's the reaction going to be. Like letting a kid loose in a sweet shop. women are out there, same as men in female jails, and I think we've got a position. It's like when they're all saying to me women

shouldn't be here, I'm here to nag you so that when you get home and your lass gives you her verbal you're going to think oh this is normal. I mean if you've got 7 years, a male dominated, aggressive confrontational thing, I don't know it's a false environment' (Prison Officer 9, female).

'My opinion is that life is about mixing with different genders. I like to have women around me and I would think women enjoy men. To take that away there's lots of things you lose, a steady influence to an extent .. No mothers around, no sisters around, no children to look pretty. It's nice to see somebody look pretty. I mean there's hostility all the time, it's all too macho, nobody'll cry you know what I mean, nobody will show feelings, nobody will allow themselves to be caring or whatever, it's just straightforward dog-eat-dog thing. There's nobody to be nice to is there, there's no need to be nice to anybody is there ?' (Prison Officer 4, male).

'There's not a lot of individualism, I think everybody tends to think the same and do the same things. I think a lot of it is they think other people will see them. They think well I've got to act like a male, you're stereotyped in a way, you know, look after yourself. I think if you let your guard down, you think your colleagues or other people you're with are you know, 'what's going on here' and I think you've probably got to be possibly something that you're not. I think that's especially true for inmates' (Prison Officer 10, female).

Putting on a front'

This sense of being something one is not, of being on one's guard and 'putting on a front' to protect oneself was an issue raised by the prisoners in relation to their experiences of imprisonment in chapter four. This 'putting on a front' was one of a number of similarities found to exist between prisoners and prison staff. Nine of the ten prison officers interviewed talked about how both staff and prisoners needed to 'put on a front' or protect their true selves if they were to survive working and living in a prison environment. All the prison staff interviewed felt that they had to act or behave differently while they were working; six of them identified this difference as relating to acting 'tough' or hard'. For both staff and prisoners putting on a front was seen as the main way of getting through the days in prison. Staff identified prisoners needs to fit in and not to be seen as vulnerable as the main reasons why they 'put on a front':

'They have to put on an outer exterior, they have to sort of start swearing a lot, they have to be louder, not to be noticed just to be, to fit in with the rest' (Prison Officer 1, male).

'You've got the inmate who wants to be seen to be tough so that no one will pick on him. You've got the inmate who just wants to do his bird, keep out of the way, not get involved. You've got these inmates who, the kids, who want to get

into a little gang and have a laugh. They hide a lot of their personal lives, a lot of them do, a lot of them have to put on this act that they don't care what they do' (Prison Officer 2, male).

'They've got to stand up, they've got to look after themselves. If they show any weaknesses it looks, I don't know, how can I say it, they've got to put a front on to everybody else' (Prison Officer 10, female).

'It's amazing what they tell you just in sort of ad lib conversations, and especially from a female point of view, they tend to tell you things because they don't think you're a threat. They don't have to prove anything to us do they ? They lose the macho image, you can get away with confrontational meetings because you can sort of play down situations or torment them into doing things rather than having to sort of, get behind your door' (Prison Officer 9, female).

It would appear, therefore, that this 'putting on a front' by prisoners was for the benefit of those around them. It would protect them from being exploited by others, if they showed no weakness and if they put across an image of someone who could take care of themselves and stand their own ground. This promoting of themselves as 'hard' men allowed the men to fit into their surroundings and to fit in with the other men on their wing or in the prison. It would appear that this desire to fit in and not to lose 'face' was also the motivation behind staff 'putting on a front'. They too did not wish to lose status in front of their fellow officers or in front of the prisoners, with this being particularly true of the male officers:

'I would say the majority of things that go for staff go for prisoners as well, a lot of staff put on a macho pose to get through the day, to be able to stand in front of the prisoners. You get two or three prisoners together and they're all macho, because they don't want to lose face in front of their friends. You go on a one-to-one basis and he would lose the macho because he's got nobody to show off to, you lose that and you find there's somebody in there rather than just a hard macho image' (Prison Officer 3, male).

'I think prison officers go through a macho thing for a while when you come in. Certainly years ago we seemed to do a lot more fighting than we do now, but we didn't have control and restraint so we just had a free for all. And I remember as a young officer I was ready to fight the world but you grow out of that, you just get older' (Prison Officer 8, male).

As noted in the previous chapter, Gordon (1996) argues that individuals who live or work in a prison become accustomed to being constantly defensive, macho and pro-active, and often are unaware of how their discernment can become blunted and how their acceptance of ordinary human

frailty becomes diminished. Toch (1969) observes, in a study of violence, that nearly half his sample fell into two categories: 'self-image promoters' or 'self-image defenders' with both categories sharing a notion of self-image which boils down to an ideal of masculinity or 'manliness'. Kersten (1990), in a study of juvenile institutions, observes that some of the boys' fighting appeared to be related to issues of collective masculine norms, such as shame of losing face, pecking order. Violence in girls' units, however, indicated that young females fight over things rather than norms, there seemed to be little reason for the girls to engage in fights over issues of 'femininity'. As Giallombardo (1996) observes traits such as 'courage', 'nerve' and 'toughness' are not meaningful concepts to the female and therefore arouse no anxiety on her part.

This maintaining of status, or merely coping with working in the prison environment, exhibited by prisoners and staff also appeared to contribute to another similarity between prisoners and staff, the often negative effect of imprisonment on their family lives. Eight of the ten staff interviewed expressed concern about them bringing the stresses of work home with them and taking it out on their families:

'This is a pretty easy jail but there can be stress in this job and sometimes you can take it home. Sometimes you can talk to your family like you talk in here. I think there are a lot of staff with problems at home. You have to have the ability to say it's time to stop thinking about work, that's one reason why I don't socialise with a lot of prison staff' (Prison Officer 3, male).

'You're not aware of it, you think you're coping with it very well until your wife turns round and says what have I done, why' (Prison Officer 6, male).

'I think it's probably made me a bit more, probably, irritable when I'm when at home. Because while you're at work trying to look after them and you're trying to solve problems, you've got to, no matter how you feel I think, try and maintain a steady sort of attitude. If you feel a bit shit you can't let that rub off onto them, because if they have a genuine need and you don't feel like doing it you do it anyway. So you're a bit like an actor really seeing a part through during the day, and depending on how exhausting the day is and how troublesome they are and how much they require and how much they've been rabbiting on, you go home completely depleted. And then you just want to relax and unwind, but then you've got your family problems, not necessarily big problems, but you know just sometimes you don't feel like getting into anything' (Prison Officer 5, male).

This attitude of 'putting on a front' and being able to front a prisoner or group of prisoners is not only seen as a method of dealing with prisoners and with prison work it is also interpreted as a measure of an officers ability to do the job. If a prison officer was found to be reluctant to confront a prisoner or was to express concern over the stress of their job it would appear that this is interpreted as a

weakness and an inability to do the job. A number of staff voiced the opinion that there was little leeway within the Prison Service for staff to openly discuss any concerns they may have about the way their job is done for this would automatically be interpreted as an inability to the job:

'Anyone who would disclose to their line manager, who is their first point of contact, that they were feeling stressed and concerned about their job, unfortunately the Prison Service, well not the Prison Service but quite a lot of the members of the Prison Service, tend to see it as 'his bottle's gone, her bottle's gone, she's lost her bottle is the term thrown out' (Prison Officer 4, male).

'I know staff who spend most of their time trying to avoid coming into contact with prisoners, I know staff who are very depressed and I know staff who are frightened to come into work, I think that must be awful. [...] You can be in a situation where you just feel vulnerable, you feel frightened and you just lose your bottle. .. The trouble is in this service it's known as a weakness so perhaps officers disguise it. But it's got a reputation of being a very tough job and if your bottle goes you're looked at as being weak' (Prison Officer 2, male).

This attitude can, therefore, create a situation where staff find it very difficult to discuss any concerns about their job for fear that it might be interpreted as a sign that they have lost their 'bottle'. This, compounded by the fact that many prison officers feel that unless someone has worked in the job they cannot really appreciate the pressures and difficulties surrounding it, can leave officers feeling very isolated in terms of any difficulties they face. Although within the service there exists what is known as a 'care team' which staff can go to confidentially and talk about problems they experience, particularly if they have been involved in any 'incidents', there is again a reluctance expressed by staff to avail of this facility due to the concern that they might be seen to be weak and vulnerable in the job:

'The only time they will use it is when they're in dire straits. When I say dire straits I mean it will be either bereavement or divorce, financial difficulty, they might have developed some sort of booze problem, they might have been disciplined for something at work. When they're in dire straits, not for normal everyday, where I would sit down and say oh they're getting me down today because there's no sort of, that sort of thing built into our job. If you do that, the very nature of our rank structure is that the first line manager decides by what he or she writes about me about how you progress in your career' (Prison Officer 4, male).

This factor can leave the prison officers in a position where they have very few outlets for discussing the difficulties of their work, as one male officer observes:

'I'm quite lucky in that my wife is in the Service, she's admin at X, so when I talk to her and when she talks to me we know what we're talking about. If I was talking to somebody who has never set foot inside a prison, I can see that I wouldn't bother to tell him about it because he wouldn't know what I was talking about' (Prison Officer 8).

The pecking order

Another factor linked to this notion of maintaining a 'front' in prison was the emergence of a pecking order. Half of the prison staff interviewed characterised the emergence of a pecking order anywhere where there are groups of men as being a common phenomenon. This pecking order was seen to lead almost invariably to difficulties between men as each man attempted to ensure his higher ranking within that order. No one wanted to be low down this pecking order since these were the ones who were exploited and ridiculed by men higher up; the exploitation and ridicule acting as proof of these men's superiority or greater status. The existence of such pecking orders between prisoners and between staff was recognised by the staff interviewed:

'We have to be macho, we can't seem to be crying, it's not the man thing to do. We're supposedly the stronger of the race so it's not the thing to be seen to be done. I would think that in private a lot of people do, but I should think in a prison environment you show vulnerability and you'll be picked on, you'll be bullied. You'll lose all your social status or whatever you want to call it, you'll drop down the pecking order, you'll be classed as a nothing' (Prison Officer 3, male).

'I think when you get a gang of guys together you're always going to have some form of pecking order, to that end you will have a few problems' (Prison Officer 5, male).

'In a male environment, you're always subject to bullying or whatever, so they've got to stick up for themselves, they all have to make their mark on the ladder' (Prison Officer 7, male).

'You get a group of men on the wing, a group of staff or prisoners, you tend to form your own standards and boundaries. .. Standards are set by the senior staff on the wing and that's how junior staff pick it up. If you're in a group where there's a norm and you don't do that then you're ostracised aren't you. By the same token if you go on to another wing or prison and their norm is to look hard in front of the prisoners then either you do that or you will be ostracised' (Prison Officer 4, male).

Gordon (1996) argues that prison is crowded with oppressed and defensive people amongst whom any weakness, or any reaction, may be used to one's advantage, while Morgan (1992) maintains that

'respectability' is a complex set of attitudes and orientations that links and gives meaning to a variety of important everyday situations and serves as an important basis for social status. The accounts of these officers, and the accounts of the offenders in the previous chapter, appeared to indicate that the existence of a pecking order or hierarchy among men is expected or anticipated by men and that concordant with this fact is that any weak individuals will become victims of this hierarchy and be exploited. None of the men interviewed appeared to question the 'naturalness' of this hierarchy or pecking order or consider any reasons for preventing its occurrence.

Humour in prisons

Intermeshed with these issues of 'putting on a front' and pecking orders amongst men, particularly in prison, was the presence and use of banter and humour. As one male prison officer observed 'I think staff in the Prison Service build up a very strange sense of humour, and part of the job is to understand that sense of humour. It's to release stress, the staff take up the humour to release the stress'. Half of the prison staff interviewed cited humour as being an important element of the relationship between prisoners and staff as well as within staff relationships. Carter (1997) stipulates that the arguments, strong language and the 'games' played between the groups of staff and prisoners help to reinforce their strategy for self-esteem. These staff felt that there was little difference between the kind of interaction that took place between prisoners and staff and that which occurs between staff. However, in relation to the prisoners it was noted that staff had to be careful to ensure they did not lose their sense of authority over prisoners:

'There's quite a bit of the same banter goes on, so long as it doesn't go too far, you've got to keep an eye on it cos you lose your authority and respect' (Prison Officer 2, male).

'I think you need to get sort of a happy medium where you are approachable, yeah they can come up and talk to you and you can have a laugh and a joke but if something goes wrong they know you've got a job to do and you've got to do it' (Prison Officer 10, female).

The humour of prisoners and particularly staff was characterised as being of a very black nature and consisted generally in scoring points off those people around them. This type of humour often displayed a very base sexual orientation. Very little difference was cited as existing between staff and prisoners in this respect:

'The staff-prisoner relationship, a lot of that is built on talk and harping back yet again to the humour. And the same goes for the staff on staff relationships, just talking and the humour. So there's not a lot of difference between the staff relationships with each other and the staff relationship with the inmates. There isn't a lot of difference at all' (Prison Officer 3, male).

'I think prison officers find sick things funny ... and when I first came I use to

think god that's sick. And now two and a half years later I find myself laughing at the things I use to say were sick. And I don't know why, how, I changed in that way, I don't know whether deep down I'm fitting in with them. I don't know what I've done, but I laugh at things I would never laughed at all' (Prison Officer 9, female).

From these staff accounts it can be seen that, to a large degree, the core ethos of masculinism - authority, independence and power - and ways for compensating for their absence can be seen to being played out in the prison setting. Due to the restricted resources for enacting key aspects of the masculine creed it could be argued that the more extreme forms of its ethos, such as aggression and not losing face in front of male peers can be seen to be exaggerated within the prison settings. The importance of not losing face in front of male peers and the aggressive stances that one often adopted in its defence can also be witnessed in the staff accounts of the presence of females in prison, and it is this issue that we now reflect upon.

Females in Prison

As noted earlier in this chapter, both prison and probation staff spoke of female staff's ability to provide a 'calming influence' with male clients. This perceived, and practical, influence appeared to be enveloped in a number of factors. It seemed to arise partly out of stereotyped gender notions about how men should treat women and also from the female staff, aware of their physical vulnerability, cultivating alternative ways of dealing with male clients rather than adopting the often favoured confrontational approach of many of the male staff. Half of the staff interviewed felt that prisoners did actually treat female staff differently to the way they treated male staff. Prisoners on the whole were seen to be more respectful and protective of female staff and less likely to be aggressive towards them, with this being particularly true of older prisoners:

'I talk to females and ladies differently to how I talk to men, that's something that's indoctrined in me, I'm conditioned to do it. And I think to a great extent inmates are conditioned to do it, cos they've got mums and they've got sisters. A lot of them are protective towards them, they won't swear in front of them, they won't go confrontational to them, generally. Some do because some go the other way, women shouldn't be in fucking prison you know' (Prison Officer 4, male).

'I think they have a little more respect for the female officers, some of them are in for some pretty brutal crimes but they still have that respect. They just have got that little decency left inside them, they're not all bad' (Prison Officer 7, male).

'I don't suppose there's one female staff officer in this jail who isn't called by their names by prisoners. I think it's that thing where they break the ice easier, because they are a minority, and we got some, not so much the younger

ones, but some of the older ones they take to them' (Prison Officer 8, male).

Only four of the staff felt that female staff treated prisoners differently to the way male staff did. These staff, generally, viewed the female staff as acting in a more 'motherly' or maternal way to the prisoners:

'The maternal nature of as female officer can smother them, and yeah it does. And that's not a criticism, when you've got a young 21 year old, who's immature crying for his mum, a female officer can do that sort of thing lots better' (Prison Officer 6, male).

'Interaction is 2 ways. it goes the way it starts. For example if a female staff was to go up to an inmate and says get behind your fucking door now then the inmate's likely to say fuck off, as is a man goes up there. If she says go get behind your door, that'll get right oh miss. To operate, in my opinion, if a female member of staff is to operate effectively then she's got to be female, not try to become a man, and do it well, and there's a place for it, there's a niche for that' (Prison Officer 4, male).

Nine of the ten prison officers interviewed were of the opinion that male staff treated female staff differently. This manifested itself in a number of ways, sharing some similarities with the ways in which some prisoners treated female staff. There was the same expression of protectiveness by some male staff towards female staff and in some cases reservations about female officers accompanying male officers into potentially physical confrontations. Since there were so few female officers in the prison they were not the norm and the system they were working in was not geared towards them, as a number of officers highlighted:

'The system is geared for men working with men. Doors open for me whereas they would find it difficult, they would come up against resentment from inmates on certain aspects and from more senior members of staff, all be it for their nicey, nicey, nicey' (Prison Officer 4, male).

'In a male environment a male is obviously normal course [expected] officer, and in a female environment he's something of a novelty, like a female is a novelty in a male. Overall I think they [male] get more professional distinction, but that should lessen, but not until we get it expected that all officers do the same job, for the same money, regardless of what sex they are' (Prison Officer 6, male).

The issue of what a female officer could and could not do in terms of Prison Service policy, such as strip searching, was further compounded by the more informal policies, or reluctance, of some senior

officers not to allow female officers to be involved in certain duties. For example a number of officers in conversation intimated that they preferred not to use female officers when removing prisoners from cells to the segregation unit and a general preference to be backed up by male officers in most confrontations with prisoners. This was not perceived, in most cases, as a negative reflection on the female staff but rather a recognition of the physical presence that female officers lacked in comparison to male officers. This combination of formal and informal policies meant that it could be very difficult for a female officer to gain acceptance amongst their male peers. Much of the female officers initial anxiety and concern regarding their work when they first started revolved around not whether they could handle prisoners, which they felt confident of, but rather whether they could gain acceptance and respect for their work from their male colleagues:

‘Well from a female point of view, being accepted is really hard. I found it very difficult for the first 12 months, went home crying every night, I hated them all, I just wasn’t part of the team. And then we had a riot and I was sort of golden girl overnight, and I was sort of included in things, it was really weird. I think cos what I went through and I still came back the next day, and I think it was a proving period if you like. Which is very difficult cos not every female that comes into prison is going to get riots to show that they can do the job’
(Prison Officer 9, female).

‘If you do something and you get a bollocking, you think oh my god I know what they’re saying, because she’s a woman you know, she shouldn’t be in the job. So you’re always got that on your mind all the time, and so you’ve got to work twice as hard. A lot of my woman colleagues in here we’ve had our problems, you know sexual harassment, but if you complain they don’t do anything about it. The only answer you’ll get is well you shouldn’t be in the job because it’s a predominantly male career. It is hard but it’s getting better, I think as more and more woman officers come in it’s getting better, people are going to accept us, but it’s still hard being relatively new’ (Prison Officer 10, female).

The existence of a somewhat hostile, or adversarial, attitude towards female officers was recognised by some of the male officers. Again their accounts highlight how the presence of peers can influence the behaviour of men:

‘A lot of conversation with certain male members of staff to the female members of staff is sexually oriented, but not in a serious way but more in a jokey way, let’s take the mickey type. And they say things to female staff that they wouldn’t dare say at home to their wives basically. They try to put on a Jack-the-lad, you know look at me talking to the female members of staff. But that’s only certain members of staff, let me say that the male members of staff get it back off the females as well...’ (Prison Officer 3, male).

'Some staff are pigs, they talk down to them like pigs, they talk about women, and they talk sexually to women. That happens in every, that because there are so many men they think there is safety in numbers. On the same hand the women play on that. I'm not 100% sure that I agree with female staff in male prisons because I think there are too many limitations put on them' (Prison Officer 2, male).

On the whole, there were many similarities between the prisoners and the male staff in terms of how they negotiated their relationships with each other. The cornerstone of these relationships appeared to be 'respect' and, although in some cases this would involve a notion of treating individuals with consideration, for the majority 'respect' revolved much more around a notion of ensuring deference from the individuals around you. For these men, both prisoners and male officers, obtaining respect was about having one's will fulfilled and of not losing 'face' in front of anyone. This type of respect desired between and amongst men could be highlighted by and contrasted with the attitude of the female officers regarding their relationship with and behaviour towards prisoners and staff. Female officers expressed far less concern about losing 'face' in front of prisoners and adopted far less confrontational stances when approaching prisoners:

'I think from what we were trained about at college and everything else, it's a more aggressive type of environment. I think like when it's male dominated we have a calming effect, we see things differently maybe than a man would and handle things with more tact. I'm not saying it's staff's fault or anything but it would probably tend to be better, have a calmer effect. I think a lot of problems can be solved by just talking to somebody. I mean sometimes in a male dominated, it's not always easy, prisoners aren't always, they 're reluctant to tell anybody, and then maybe it gets out of hand you know' (Prison Officer 10, female).

'A lot of the prisoners that I speak to say it's nice having females about, cos they can ask us things that they'd feel embarrassed asking a male member of staff about. I know one situation where I were on and we had an inmate who's sister was dying in hospital and one of the lads [officers] said to me if she's died you've got to tell him and if there's any fighting to do I'll do it, you know what I mean. they were quite happy for me to go up and talk to them as if they, you know, couldn't handle the emotions as well, as if we [male officers] are for alarm bells not tears' (Prison Officer 9, female).

Masculinism in prisons

It would appear, therefore, that masculine ethos plays a considerable role within the prison setting, shaping to degrees the relationships between prisoners, between prisoners and staff, and between staff. One could also argue that within the prison setting it is a more exaggerated form of masculine ethos that is on display, with the dominance of an aggressive nature taking prominence.

This magnification of the masculine ethos of society within prisons was also an issue raised by the probation officers:

'I think prison probably magnifies the worst elements in male dominated society, you know the pecking order. It reinforces sort of misogynist views being in the prison environment. I mean things have improved since I first started working in prisons but they are just breeding grounds for all the worse prejudices, and unhelpful beliefs and directly teaching people how to commit more crimes' (Probation Officer 5, male).

As noted by the prisoners (see chapter four) and by the prison staff in this chapter, spending time in prison requires the developing of a facade, the 'putting on a front'. This was a view reiterated by the probation officers. Men in prison can show no weakness and have to take an aggressive stance and, most importantly, this aggressive attitude is expected, accepted and rarely questioned:

'They're different when they're in prison, that's to do with putting on a front if you like. I've certainly come across it, they can be very aggressive in prison. But then again quite often, on their own, if you talk to them on their own quite often they're quite reasonable. The same man who could be quite reasonable to you on his own you can see the same bloke another day confronting a prison officer and hurling and screaming abuse which you just wouldn't relate, totally different, and then half an hour later again you can be sitting talking to him' (Probation Officer 2, male).

'.. I've worked with people, say started them off on their sentence in 1980, and they're coming up now to transfer, and they have to build up a huge defence, females as well, a huge defence. And it's interesting, it's more acceptable for a male to be aggressive, to have that possibility of a defence mechanism than it is for a female, to try and keep a sense of identity, and to try and have a defence barrier by keeping her authority and her dignity, to be assertive in prison. You find if you put those two together you find that the man will get through a system quite easily and the woman will be knocked back constantly. It is accepted that is the way a man will behave whereas for a woman to behave in a domineering, well not domineering but to be dominant or try to keep a sense of identity then I think often they're penalised for it' (Probation Officer 3, female).

The accounts of these probation officers continued the theme of how aspects of masculine ethos, and male behaviour, such as aggression and dominance, are taken for granted in prison, and in society more generally. The probation officers also returned to the role of the group of friends or peers, or even just the presence of other men, can play in the enactment of elements of masculine ethos:

'The prison's organised in terms of the hierarchy, if it be based on violence or financial resources or offence type, the person's personality, previous experience, where they are. Someone on probation went down to London summer of 1995, got locked up, hated it because it was full of Londoners and he was the Yorkshire pudding, and he didn't like it at all. But he had been to [the local prison] 5 or 6 times no problem, no worries cos all his friends were there, he knew the prison officers, it was great, but in London he was miserable'
(Probation Officer 7, male).

The probation officers' comments on prison also reintroduced the earlier theme of their male clients having little stake in society and therefore nothing to lose by receiving a prison sentence. Five of the seven probation officers observed how for a lot of their clients prison often provided them with a security of sorts, security they could not always find in society and, hence, for these men prison was as good an option as any other:

'For some of the more persistent clients, it's a horrible, horrible thing to hear them say, especially when you know they mean it, they say well if I get caught I'll do 6 months inside it's not worse than 6 outside'. (Probation Officer 1, male).

'Within them boundaries [of prison] there's actually a great deal of freedom, because you can stay within them and you can do what you like, got your 3 main meals, you've got no responsibilities, and if you're one of the main lads, say in the Manchester gang, and everybody looking up to you, there's a sort of status and there's nay problems for you, so long as they can handle themselves. They think they've got the life of Riley and I think actually in a curious sort of way they get status out of it and kudos out of it and enjoy it in a roundabout way'
(Probation Officer 2, male).

'There are certain types of men who say that they find prison easier than others, what the reality is I don't know. Again it's this sort of macho thing isn't it. You know, prison's nothing to me, I can do me time without any problem at all. And again, the other extreme, there are those men that we talked about before who are in and out of prison constantly cos they can't cope with life outside and who actively try to get into prison, because that's the only place where they feel secure because they have regular meals and a roof over their head, and they are warm and they are cared for' (Probation Officer 6, female).

'Certainly I've known people where there was so little on offer for them outside of prison that prison actually represents a reasonable quality of life by comparison, which is kind of an indictment of society rather than a testament

to prison' (Probation Officer 4, female).

Due to the nature of the prison environment with its often aggressive, negative atmosphere and the strict demands it appears to impose on men not only to be men but to be particularly hard men, the majority of probation officers (5) considered prison to be an unproductive and unsuitable environment in which to tackle men's offending behaviour. A number of the officers did, however, identify prison's potential for providing the men with opportunities to obtain education and qualifications:

'You either buckle down and make the best of it or you just switch off. Some of the clients I've worked with have done college courses and weight lifting and stuff that if they were outside they would never have dreamt of doing. I think the smart ones can actually make it productive, not that they actually enjoy it. And other people say they just turn off, they just go through the routine and you know are very ambivalent towards it' (Probation Officer 1, male).

'Where there are prospects of getting a decent education, qualifications, where they can do work and vocational qualifications, where there are loads of groups running, either run by the probation service or the prison service, looking at anger management, alcohol and drug abuse, looking at relationship problems and that sort of thing, and there are prisons where all these things go on and prisoners get a great deal from it' (Probation Officer 5, male).

These officers were of the opinion that probation offers men more flexibility in tackling their offending behaviour than prison did. The predominant view of prison as an aggressive environment, with people having to put on fronts to survive, meant for many of these probation officers that prison was not a conducive environment for tackling the issues that often surrounded their offending behaviour:

'In relation to putting people in prison I think it [probation] gives people the chance to sort of develop in a non-criminal manner that putting them in prison doesn't for one. And it gives them the chance to, it sounds corny, but to maintain sort of important family links and stuff, it stops that isolation. It gives a chance to actually address issues that might be there that be very strongly linked to offending you know, whereas prison doesn't always give that option' (Probation Officer 1, male).

'I think the sort of ritual of institutional life, you know sort of stripped of individuality. I think a lot of offenders maybe don't appreciate the long-term effects of that for them, and they suffer in silence and they become bitter about the time they've spent inside, and I don't think they understand why really' (Probation Officer 5, male).

Kersten (1990) argues that fossilised gender images influence institutional policies and that the maintenance of stereotyped images of femininity and masculinity may have counterproductive and damaging repercussions for many educational, vocational or treatment efforts that are developed and carried out in institutions. Grosser (1960) identified the inmate social organisation as a formidable obstacle to any basic change of character amongst inmates, for this organisation produces, in response to their psychological needs, precisely the conditions that make identification with non-criminal values highly improbable.

Summary

In many ways the staff findings echo those of the offenders, both groups identify the importance, to men, of gaining and maintaining status in the eyes of other men and the methods used to achieve this, such as promoting a tough, hard image and exploiting weaker individuals, male and female, to ensure a higher place in the 'pecking order'. Buckley (1996) argues that the men the probation service call its clients are essentially casualties of a system which prizes bravado and lack of emotion, and which judges men on the quality of his possessions and permits all those who are weak to be objectified and used. Like the offenders, the staff interviewed did not identify any differences between the men in their care and men more generally. They identified certain social and economic differences, such as a lack of opportunity available to their clients but identified no fundamental differences. As one female probation officer observed:

'most of the research, well there's been a fairly sustained attempt to sort of distinguish offenders from the rest of the population, and I'm not aware that any of those actually tell you anything useful or do properly distinguish. You can talk about how they tend to be like this, that or the other, but they're not qualitatively different from the rest of the population'.

Hudson (1988) mentions the extent to which work with young male offenders is imbued with masculinist values and assumptions and perpetuates values which contribute both to delinquency and to the legitimation of male power. This is clearly seen to be the case in the prison environment, although less clearly with the probation offices included in this research, perhaps, one could argue because probation is not conducted in the gaze of a male group as is the case of much of prison life.

Chapter Six

Maleness, Marginalisation and Offending

'What we commonly mean by 'understand' coincides with 'simplify': without profound simplifications the world around us would be an infinite, unidentified tangle that would defy our ability to orient ourselves and decide upon our actions. In short we are compelled to reduce the knowable to a schema. [...] This *desire* for simplification is justified, but the same does not always apply to simplification itself. It is a working hypothesis, useful as long as it is recognised as such and is not mistaken for reality; the greater part of historical and natural phenomena is not simple, or not simple with the simplicity we would like'.

(Levi, 1989, pp 22-23)

The recent theorising on 'masculinity' in criminological writing has attempted to 'understand' what role men's gendered nature has in men's involvement in crime. Crime has come to be identified as one way for men to 'do gender'; that is, crime is seen to offer an opportunity for (some) men to 'do masculinity' or 'be men'. Crime is seen to satisfy the requirements of 'being a man' in society today for certain groups of men. However, the conceptualisation of 'doing gender, doing crime' simplifies what is, more often than not, a complex and contradictory interaction between gender and crime. Sutherland (1942, p 19) argued that 'nothing is so frequently associated with criminal behaviour as being a male' but added that 'it is obvious that maleness does not explain criminal behaviour'. The men interviewed for this research, and the vast majority of men who come into contact with the criminal justice system, were all constructing their gender from a position of poverty, both financial and emotional, and with little access to cultural and economic resources (see also Connell, 1991) and as Coltrane (1994) observes, where one stand shapes what one can see and how one can understand it.

Walklate (1998) maintains that crime is ultimately constructed within a particular set of social relationships - patriarchy- and that the modern view of social reality presumes (as in the past) that human experiences and male experiences are one and the same. Lupton, Short and Whip (1992) observe that in almost every existing society males are dominant over females, in politics, in the economy, in organisations and in social relations and that although the relationships of individual men and women may vary enormously they are played out against a background of patriarchal structures and values. Walby argues that:

the state is patriarchal as well as being capitalist and racist. While being a site of struggle, and not a monolithic entity, the state has a systematic bias towards patriarchal interests in policies and actions (Walby, 1990, p 20).

Harris (1995) argues that men have created patriarchal societies that grant privileges to those males who follow the dictates of 'masculinity' and notes that although popular and unpopular notions of 'masculinity' are subject to social change 'masculinity' does contain core concepts. Patriarchy, and 'masculinity', for men involves a certain level of autonomy and control over people and objects (Segal, 1990). Accordingly, the majority of men are lead to anticipate that the male domination which patriarchy guarantees for 'men' will be provided for all men, regardless of their position or resources in society, as can be observed in the persistence of men's psychological sense of mastery almost regardless of their social location and personal plight (Hearn, 1994). This sense of men's entitlement to do whatever they want was evident in the accounts of the men interviewed for this research, in spite of the fact that the majority of the men had neither the social nor personal resources to support such ambitions of power and control. The discovery that 'not all men are equal' by certain sections of male society can result in a dissonance between the men's implicit expectations of society as *men* and their lived reality.

This thesis aimed to critically explore and examine the life experiences and pressures experienced by men as men and how these might relate to offending behaviour. Its main objective was to attempt to deconstruct some of the taken for granted assumptions, concepts and notions surrounding men and masculinity and scrutinise which, if any, of these concepts might contribute to the commission of crime amongst men. The concept of fulfilling one's masculine identity was used as a strategy to investigate whether the men interviewed found themselves restricted by society's definition of what it means to be a man, as has been found to be the case with female offenders and prisoners and concepts of femininity (see Carlen, 1983; Eaton, 1986).

The previous two chapters having outlined the main findings from this research, this final chapter will consolidate and assess the implications of these findings. A number of pressures or expectations were identified as impacting on the men's emotional and actual lives. The expectation of providing financially for themselves and their families still held great sway with the men. The majority of the men interviewed identified 'being the breadwinner' as the main role of men in society, despite the fact that most of the men were not actually the breadwinner themselves. This expectation or belief that they should be supporting themselves or their families impacted on some of the decisions they made in their lives and on the opinions they had of themselves. Expressing emotions, apart from anger and aggression, was found to be unacceptable to the men, it was not something encouraged by society. Although a number of the men indicated they would like to be able to express emotions more freely they felt they would be judged negatively by people if they did so. All the men interviewed were concerned, explicitly and implicitly, with ensuring they displayed no signs of weakness or vulnerability, and expressing emotions was deemed such a sign. Any signs of weakness or vulnerability would leave them open to exploitation by others, particularly other men, which was to be avoided at all costs. This was identified as being particularly true within a prison environment. The men, therefore, expended considerable energy into projecting an acceptable 'image' of the kind of men they were; invariably as men who were self-sufficient, dominant and without concerns.

Being 'autonomous' was another demand the men made of themselves. All of the men resented 'being told what to do' by other people. This had a number of repercussions. This 'need' to be 'autonomous' meant that the men were highly unlikely to consider the needs of other people or to reflect upon the impact their actions (for example their involvement in crime and the potential punishments they could receive) might have on their own lives and the lives of other people, such as their partners, families or children. It also meant that the men were extremely reluctant to heed any advice from others or to look for or accept any help offered to them, until perhaps late in their lives and after considerable contact with the criminal justice system.

Despite identifying these expectations and demands upon them as men, few of the interviewees (13%) felt that society's expectations of men, or its definitions of 'maleness' restricted them in any way. Few of the men felt limited by their gender. The men identified a poor education or limited employment prospects as the main factors restricting them from living a more fulfilling (particularly a financially fulfilling) life. Contrary to feeling restricted by their gender (in comparison to many women), on the whole the men considered male attributes such as independence and strength as being highly valued in society. Since all the men subscribed to the notion of being 'autonomous' they implicitly felt that they could not be restricted. Their answers often implied that since they should not have to answer to anyone their behaviour was beyond reproach. It became clear that it was not their maleness per se that resulted in their involvement in crime and the criminal justice system but rather it was how they expressed their maleness and how these expressions were interpreted and reacted to by the powerful institutions of society. Therefore, for example, the men's 'failure' at school was not merely the result of their stance against authority, it was also linked to the teachers' and the schools' reaction to the men's behaviour. The teachers and schools, one can argue, reacted in a way that left little room for accommodation or compromise, and therefore the likelihood of the men (as boys) being encouraged to participate virtually non-existent. It would appear that this is the pattern repeated throughout the men's lives; as they expressed their maleness in the only ways available to them due to their social positions, these expressions were disapproved of and/or prohibited by institutions of society, be that education, work or the more obvious institutions of the police, the courts and welfare services.

What this research has shown is that a multitude of factors interact in these men's lives which lead to the decisions or non-decisions that the men make in relation to their lives, some of which will result in the men either consciously choosing to become involved in crime or engaging in behaviour that they did not identify as criminal, such as violent acts, but which resulted in the men being drawn into the criminal justice system. These factors were found to be at both the individual and social level, and more often than not the individual and social factors would interact to ultimately influence the life choices the men made. One of the key factors in the men's lives was the men's feelings of self-worth. Their perceptions of their 'worthiness' as people informed the life choices they made. These choices, however, were made within the confines of the social structures the men themselves were inhabiting; invariably making them among the least powerful in society. Many aspects of both their 'male' behaviour and their criminal behaviour can be interpreted as part of the men's attempts to 'belong'; to be part of a group and/or a member of

society. From restricted positions in society these men were attempting to achieve a sense of belonging in society which would allow them to feel worthwhile individuals. Although when the men talked of this sense of belonging there was no gendered nature to it - the men just wished to be accepted as worthwhile individuals - the existence of a strongly gendered society invariably meant that many of their attempts to achieve this 'belonging' were pursued through gendered channels. These attempts, however, were frequently frustrated due to individual problems, such as difficult family relations and poor school results, as well as societal factors such as unemployment and poverty. These factors often resulted in the men experiencing anxiety and anger at the situations they found themselves in, and considerable dissonance between their desires and their lived realities. It is some of these factors that this chapter explores in more detail.

The Dispossessed of Society

In societies based on hierarchy and inequalities, the distribution of power means that all people cannot use and develop their capacities to an equal extent. Only some men are systematically oppressed by the dominant conceptions of 'masculinity', affirmed as they are in social institutions and practices, as well as ideologies, which routinely privilege men (Segal, 1990). Kaufman (1994) argues that different groups of men define manhood in ways that conform to the economic and social possibilities of that group, and each dominant masculine image bears a relationship to the real-life possibilities of these men and the tools at their disposal for the exercise of some form of power. O'Neil (1982) argues that we need to identify the way in which the state asserts different modes of 'masculinity' in different contexts, how those modes of expression differently affect different groups of men, as well as how they affect women. As the life course theoretical orientation observes (Sugarman, 1986), a person is faced with a limited number of ways of developing, and the social structures of their society play a major role in limiting their potential for developing. O'Neil (1982) asserts that it is important not to lose sight of the role of the state in contributing to the options facing young people.

As Parker (1996) remarks, the political discourse of the 1990s is dominated by a crude and simplistic approach to crime control in which under-socialised young men are, once again, official scapegoats for rising crime, while Coward (1994) argues that a critique of 'masculinity' which was originally intended to undermine traditional claims to male power, has become a way of attacking the least powerful men in our society. Collinson (1996, p 428) maintains that the important question to ask regarding 'masculinity' and crime is 'what form of masculine identity is open to men of certain sections of society'. If we are arguing that crime is a resource that may be invoked by some men when they lack other resources to accomplish identity or participation in society (Jefferson, 1992; Messerschmidt, 1993; Newburn & Stanko, 1994) then we need to be examining *why* crime (and/or violence) is the only resource available to some men to accomplish anything. The theorising on 'masculinity' and crime neglects whole areas of criminal activity and focuses extensively, once more, on the lower class 'troublesome' males. Although there is justification for this focus, lower-class men are often involved in crime, and they do after all experience reduced life expectations and often suffer greatly as a result of their position in the social structure, but focusing excessively on these individuals often renders the factors that contribute to their suffering

indiscernible. Kimmel (1990) notes that marginality is visible and painfully visceral while privilege is invisible and painlessly pleasant, while Stanko (1994) argues that criminology rarely considers elite deviance and that the criminal justice system is geared to the policing and prosecution of public street crimes and the maintenance of order (see also Reiner, 1985; Sanders, 1987). Despite criminological evidence suggesting that 'crimes of the powerful' (Pearce, 1976) are much more physically, economically and environmentally threatening than what criminologists consider to be conventional crime, the focus remains on lower class, conventional crime and criminals (Box, 1983). As one of the prison officers observed:

'The whole criminal justice system seems to be down on, or aimed at the poorer man, and it's not a fair system across the board. And if it does start bringing, if you like, the more fortunate people, you could see our culture, our whole thing change in prisons because the upper echelons of society would be seeing what's going on because they'd be victims of it as well'.

Staples (1982) contends that crime, economic deprivation and masculinity are all intertwined and that the masculine ethos of success leads males to become involved in illegal ways of attaining socially approved goals. Collinson (1996) also argues that instrumentally, low wages, or no wages at all, become an effective situational explanation for doing crime, while Campbell (1986) maintains that with the usual economic and social signs of successful 'masculinity' denied to them, lower-class males must find other ways to 'be somebody'. By building a reputation for toughness they can win back the pride and identity society has denied them. As MacLeod observes:

They are not out to wreck society. They want ordinary things you and I want in our daily lives but they feel they are not for them and are beyond their control (MacLeod, 1996, p 5).

These echo the sentiments expressed by the offenders themselves and the observations made by the staff who work with them; these men just want to get on in life. They desire a decent job and living conditions, money to spend on themselves and their families but in the vast majority of cases these simple desires have been unattainable by conventional methods.

The vast majority of men interviewed for this research were in poor economic situations, if not in poverty itself. Banfield (1968) maintains that poverty represents a cycle in which lackadaisical attitudes and present-time orientations produce low educational aspirations and achievements, which result in low occupational attainment, which is in turn equated with low social class attainment and, often, poverty. In addition to their restricted economic and social situations, these men also found the expression of their gendered nature limited as well. Fannin and Clinard (1967) believe lower-class juvenile males have stronger images of masculinity and are more aggressive than middle-class youth, while Manosevitz (1971) asserts that, on average, working class people are more sex-typed than middle-class individuals and that few studies have documented differential experience of gender across class level (especially in relation to men). Cohen (1955)

argues that social membership is associated with social values and lifestyles and maintains that working class children are likely to be taught that behaviour should be spontaneous and aggressive, with values being focused on the present with little emphasis placed on long-range planning. Thus one can argue that, due to the social structures within which people must live, the life possibilities of these men were highly limited by their position in the lower class levels of society, and the limited expression of their gendered nature or maleness is only *one* aspect of the restrictions they experience. The majority of the interviewees displayed lackadaisical attitudes and present-time orientations when it came to their behaviour, both deviant and non-deviant, and many of them expressed a resignation to their inevitable continuing involvement in crime and returning to prison or probation. As one prison officer observed:

'I think for a lot of them it's their life, it's all they know. It's like a trap and they can't get out. Like this lad I was talking to on the yard yesterday, he said it was his seventh sentence, and when he gets out you know, he's got no job to go to, he'll stay in the same circle of people. They go back, oh so-and-so is going to look after me, so you know that eventually they're going to fall into the same trap and come back. It's like they don't know anything else'.

Thus through their social position these men are limited in their options to make their way in life and crime offers to them an opportunity where they can escape from this dilemma, gaining status, both symbolic and material, but at the same time rendering them vulnerable to state discipline and punishment. As Cohen describes it:

forced to make a living in the secondary labour market at the same time they achieve both pariah and celebrity status in the mass media for their ability to go on living spectacularly at the margins (Cohen, 1997, p 9).

Through the inequalities endemic in our society a large segment of society, both male and female, are rendered marginalised and deemed 'unproductive' members of society. Cohen (1997) suggests that these individuals become dependent upon the kinds of symbolic potency, for example violence and crime, that society offers them as a consolation prize for their marginalisation. Since there are no other options available to these individuals should we be surprised then when they exploit them ?

Wanting to belong

We are bombarded with images of consumer goods, told that attractiveness, success and good fortune are dependent on the acquisition of them. And if you are young and poorly educated in low-paid work or with no job at all, then you will experience a barrier between you and full participation in the consumer society, one which must be overcome by any means, even criminal

(Grant, 1997, p 8).

Muncie (1997) argues that if we are seriously interested in producing policies which are likely to impact on anti-social behaviour we need to move beyond an exclusionary discourse of crime, law and order and towards an inclusionary discourse of social justice and the enhancement of personal and social development. Those who have been involved in crime tend to become less involved as they find themselves gaining fulfilment in other areas of their lives and take on responsibilities in a work or domestic sphere (Furlong & Cartrel, 1997). As Elder remarks:

Being needed gives rise to a sense of belonging and place, of being committed to something larger than the self. However onerous the task may be, there is gratification and even personal growth can be gained in being challenged by a real undertaking if it is not excessive or exploitative (Elder, 1974, pp 291-293).

The life accounts of the men interviewed in this research represent the attempts by the men, from their restricted positions in society, to carve a niche for themselves, where they can create a meaningful life for themselves and their families. For a considerable number of the men interviewed (see chapter four), crime was identified as one of the few options available for the men to obtain an acceptable standard of living for them and their families. Crime, for these men, offered, or appeared to offer, them the power and autonomy that, as men, were expected to be available to them. Through property crime or often drug offences these men could obtain the money required to live a lifestyle akin to one most people anticipate living in a consumerist, Western society, while the assaults the men were convicted of were often attempts to assert their dominance over other men, and/or women, or their refusal to 'lose face' in the presence of others. These descriptions of, or justifications for their criminal behaviour - 'it's the only way I can make a living or achieve anything in life' - are consistent with concepts such as anomie (Durkheim, 1957) and relative deprivation (Merton, 1957).

Merton (1957), amongst others, observed that the system of legitimate opportunities for achieving success, such as the availability of educational and occupational pursuits, is not evenly distributed within society. This unequal distribution, it is argued, results in large numbers of people finding themselves at a disadvantage relative to legitimate activities and are, therefore, motivated to engage in illegitimate activities. The men interviewed reported limited opportunities to participate as fully integrated members of society, often finding their desire to improve themselves or their lives, with for example more rewarding employment and activities, blocked. Their social circumstances and the decisions they made in relation to those circumstances having blocked their way to more meaningful and rewarding participation in wider society. As one female probation officer observed:

'There would in all likelihood be a sense of imbalance in their life, in other words, there would be a gap between what they'd like and what their life is actually like at the moment. So you try and find things that can work towards reducing that gap. I mean some people may have entirely unrealistic expectations, like they won't take any job unless it pays £600 a week or

something. So then the thing would be to get them to think about realistic goals, because I mean if that's your goal the chances of success are pretty limited so one of the consequences of that is that you carry on doing what you're doing'.

Few, if any of the men expressed a sense of personal or self investment in the work they were involved in and, when asked, few of the men could identify areas of their life or achievements which they felt proud of. Their immediate family were the main source of pride and connection to wider society that these men experienced.

Men Coping with Loss, Rejection and Anger

Campbell (1993) maintains that one important aspect we should explore is what people do with their troubles and their anger. Jefferson (1994) asks the question what motivates people to choose to invest in or identify with one discursive position rather than another? As noted in previous chapters, numerous authors (Collier, 1995; Messerschmidt, 1993; Newburn & Stanko, 1994) perceive 'masculinity' as something that must be continually accomplished and continually striven for; 'masculinity' is something that needs to be achieved or gained. Similarly, conventional criminological orientation in answering questions about what motivates people to commit crime has been to focus on the prospect of what individuals gain. Levi (1994), however, maintains it is just as enlightening to concentrate on individuals' *fear of loss*, both symbolic and material, and it would appear for the men interviewed in this research loss, or the fear of loss, in their lives was a dominant factor and it was often this inherent fear that informed these men's life decisions or their failure to make decisions.

Reckless (1967), in his containment theory of delinquency, argued that a boy's positive view of himself insulated him against the pull toward delinquency, regardless of social class and other environmental conditions. He based this assumption on a multifaceted image of behaviour, whereby people are conceptualised as being composed of several layers of drives, pressures, pulls and insulators or buffers; all of these forces affect the individual simultaneously, and they come from both within and outside the person. Reckless (1967) identified poor self-concept as resulting in delinquency, defining self-concept as an image of one's place in society or of one's value to others or to society in general. At the Prison Chaplains' Conference of 1989 it was argued that 'our prisons are full of the psychologically wounded, people who lack self-esteem, who are hungry for recognition and who see the world as hostile' (Smithson & Harris, 1997, p 34), while Shoemaker (1990) observes that the connection between self-concept and delinquency has been fairly uniformly established through empirical research.

Chapter Four described how, for the men interviewed in this research, a sense of lacking worth was developed at an early age. Starting within the family, how they were treated, and particularly their relationships with their fathers, had a significant impact upon these men's self-perceptions and their perceived acceptability to others. As Peck observes:

Whenever there is a major deficit in parental love, the child will, in all likelihood, respond to that deficit by assuming itself to be the cause of the deficit, thereby developing an unrealistically negative self-image (Peck, 1983, p 60).

From a young age these men seemed to develop insecure and anxious self-concepts or feelings of self-worth. Wells (1978) maintains that it cannot be denied that self-concept has an effect on behaviour, delinquent or non-delinquent, deviant or non deviant, and that changes in self-concept can lead, directly or indirectly, to changes in behaviour, while Figueira-McDonough et al (1981) note that the most proximate cause of behaviour are aspects of self-conception which act as an organising filter for one's perception of the social environment.

From early childhood these men were attempting to grow up and mature into fully functioning members of society from a position of emotional and/or financial deprivation or loss. Elder and Rockwell (1978), in a study of children growing up during the American Depression, observe that:

it is the youth who grew up in deprived households who are characterised more by a lack of self-esteem and personal meaning in life, by a tendency to withdraw from adversity, avoid commitments, and employ self-defeating tactics; and by a sense of victimisation and vulnerability to the judgment of others (Elder & Rockwell, pp 298-299).

Bronfenbrenner (1980) maintains that criminal behaviour reflects a breakdown of the interconnections between various segments of an individual's life - family, school, peer group, neighbourhood - and believes that criminal behaviour is a reaction to alienation in the community, while Galaway (1977) argues that crime results from the estrangement of the individual from meaningful participation. Many of the men's personal accounts can be found reflected in social control theories of crime, through notions of anomie and relative deprivation (Hirschi, 1969; Matza, 1964; Merton, 1938, 1957). Social control theories of crime assume that delinquency and crime result, in part, from a lack of significant attachment to social institutions such as the family or school. The majority of interviewees described a degree of, if not complete, estrangement from their original families and the vast majority of interviewees voiced their disengagement with school. It appears that when alienation or estrangement has been experienced at the level of the family and/or school this sets up a pattern of estrangement that continues into the world of work and into their later personal and social relationships. The doubt in their self-worth and worthiness to be loved that appears to arise from difficult family relationships results in a continuing anxiety throughout their life about their self-worth, and many of the men's actions in their lives appear to be attempts to bolster their shaky self-concepts, to make up for the loss they feel they have experienced, to ensure that such losses do not occur again or even to verify that they *are* unworthy individuals.

Of course, their attempts to increase or maintain their feelings of self-worth, or bolster their self-

concepts, do not occur in a vacuum, they take place in social settings in the presence of other people. As men, therefore, society and other people expect them to behave and act in certain ways, and their personal self-concepts will have to incorporate concepts of what it is to be a man. Many of the concepts or notions of what it is to be a man revolve around the notion of success, demands to be a achiever, competitive, a breadwinner and so on. All expect the man not to lose out to other men and/or women. Chapter Four described how all the men, especially prisoners, were concerned with not 'losing face' to the other men around them. Much of men's lives would appear, implicitly, to revolve around the concern of not losing control of the power and autonomy deemed to be the right of all men, though in many cases this notion of power and autonomy is more of an illusion than a reality, or they achieve power and autonomy in ways that fit their situation; which in the case of these men would appear to include committing crime.

It was outlined above how men in the lower classes often experienced restrictions or barriers to opportunities to achieve in society. These men, however, not only experienced blocked opportunities in obtaining a decent quality of life, many of these men from an early age found themselves trapped in unhappy, restrictive and destructive family situations. These restricted and unhappy experiences were often experienced again at school and the perceptions of these experiences informed the men's later personal and social relationships. Many of the men still expressed anger, hostility and confusion regarding their early childhood experiences, particularly in relation to their fathers, despite the length of time that had elapsed since they had occurred. Agnew (1985) conceptualises a connection between delinquency and blocked opportunities to *leave* aversive situations. He argued that a youth's inability to escape unpleasant home or social experiences leads to anger and frustration which can lead to delinquency. In his study, Agnew reported significant positive associations between unhappy home and school environments and feelings of anger, and found anger to be significantly and positively related to delinquency. The men interviewed in this research still retained feelings of anger over their childhood experiences, despite the passage of time. Anger and frustration, though not necessarily acknowledged as such, remained the main emotions most commonly experienced and acted upon by the men. Cordery and Whitehead (1992) identify fear and anger as the main symptoms of patriarchy. They argue that men act out these feelings in aggression and these feelings are seen to distort personal and social relations, overwhelming other human feelings such as warmth and caring. Feelings such as warmth and caring are not deemed 'masculine' by patriarchy. Cordery and Whitehead maintain that being out of touch with these feelings allows men to behave in certain ways: men are disinhibited, they collude with each other and reassure each other that this is how men are made and therefore men never look self-critically at themselves and their behaviour. This was commonly reflected in the interviewees' accounts of assaults or acts of aggression; rarely did any of the men acknowledge any improbity regarding their violent and aggressive behaviour, nor did they take personal responsibility for their actions.

As observed in earlier chapters, aggression and other expressions of anger are deemed wholly appropriate responses on the part of men, particularly if any aspect of their 'reputation' or self-concept is called into question. In these situations, these men were often seen to become aggressive

and/or violent to ensure no loss of status was experienced on their part. This was especially true where alcohol had been consumed. It has been stipulated that aggression is regarded as a socially sanctioned coping style for men (Eisler & Blalock, 1991) and from these men's accounts aggression and violence are methods they commonly turn to when attempting to deal with perceived or symbolic threats to their self-concepts. This accepted and unquestioned, both by the men interviewed and by society at large, use of aggression and/or violence (and in many cases using the consumption of alcohol as an excuse for absolving the men of responsibility for their behaviour) when dealing with difficulties in their lives, particularly those involving emotional situations, needs further investigation and critical evaluation. The triumvirate of emotions of fear, anger and aggression, their expression and their relationship to men's self-esteem and self-concept, appear to play a fundamental role in these men's lives and in many aspects of their offending behaviour and warrant further investigation and examination.

The Group Effect: Maleness in the Presence of Others

We behave monstrously to each other, but it's a fundamental dynamic that needs to be properly understood. We feel more confident, safe, tidy if we can put the bits of ourselves that we don't like - our vulnerability, our fear - on to someone else. We put another individual into the place we dread occupying
(Wilson, quoted in Gerrard, 1996, p 2).

The family has been identified as an important source of the individual's perception of him/herself and their acceptability or worthiness to other people. It is the family setting that provides the foundations of children's upbringing and goes a long way in explaining their intellectual and social accomplishments (Martens, 1990). When the family fails to provide the adequate emotional and/or material care, and when society's institutions and organisations fail to compensate for this absence, it appears that the peer groups of the individual come to play an important role in filling the void. Elder (1974, p 97) argues that in the sphere of social relations 'the attractiveness of age-mates stands as the most significant effect of economic hardship' and that 'orientation towards friends is strongest amongst boys from deprived homes'. Subcultural theories of delinquency (e.g. Cohen, 1955; Hirschi, 1969) argue that delinquents typically act together, or when they act alone their behaviour is strongly influenced by groups, gangs and peers and the general ambience of their lives and associates (Shoemaker, 1990), and that such delinquency is generally considered an overwhelmingly lower-class, male phenomenon.

In most cases the 'gang' subculture is interpreted as an attempt on the part of the members to subvert the norms of society or as an obvious rejection of society's norms. Cohen (1955) argues, for example, that lower-class delinquency is largely committed in a gang context, partly as a means of developing more positive self-concepts (after invariably performing poorly at school) and nurturing antisocial values. Cohen maintained that, having been denied the status of respectability of mainstream society because they do not have the means to achieve such respectability, the creation

of a delinquent subculture provides an alternative, and sometimes oppositional, means of achieving such status (Walklate, 1998). Although Cohen did draw attention to the maleness of the members of this subculture, he ultimately downgraded this aspect in favour of an emphasis on class and class conflict.

The role of the group or peers can be seen to be relevant in terms of the development of the individual, and specifically in terms of developing a *male* identity. Human beings are by nature gregarious, social animals and it is in the presence of other people, especially other males, that men appear most aware of, and in need of defending, their 'masculinity' or maleness. As one home husband observed:

'Look it's only when I see myself through other people's eyes, like when a travelling salesman rings the doorbell and I answer it in my apron and duster that I feel embarrassed that he'll think I'm not a proper man'

(quoted in Cohen, 1996, p 26).

Chapters four and five described how the presence of peers or other men frequently had an impact on the behaviour of individuals. The influence of peers or others could induce an individual into making a point about who he was. Recalling their time at school, the men interviewed described how they would often 'act out' to impress their peers, male and female, or how they felt that they had to engage in a fight at school to ensure they did not lose the acceptance or begrudging respect of their peers. This form of relationship or interaction with the other people around them continued into their adult life and could be seen to be one of the predominant factors that motivated prisoners' behaviour. The majority of prisoners expressed a concern about being seen to be 'vulnerable' or 'weak' in the eyes of the other prisoners and prison staff, particularly male prison staff. To back down from an argument or potential fight was seen to be detrimental to one's self-esteem and would impact upon how the other men perceived them, thereby losing status in the eyes of the other men. Therefore, the presence of a group or peers could increase the risk of a man 'losing status' in the eyes of others if he failed to live up to his and their expectations of how he should behave.

Equally, however, belonging to a peer group or gang would often allow a man to enhance his status in a way that may not be available to him through more conventional methods. If a man did not back down from an argument or fight but forced the other to back down or defeated him, or 'put him in his place' (either verbally or physically), then in his own eyes and in the eyes of others his status would increase. Kaplan (1978) and Rosenberg et al (1989) maintain that delinquent action, or perhaps participating in groups which commit delinquent behaviour can actually increase self-esteem.

Rosenberg (1979), and others, have noted that behaviour is guided by motives of both self-consistency and self-enhancement. If boys and men perceive that, as men, certain behaviours are expected of them such as dominance and control of others then more often than not their behaviour and actions will reflect such expectations. Shoemaker (1990) maintains that peer-group situations

are characterised by the concept of 'situation of company' in which the delinquent or individual is depicted as constantly exposed to tests or 'soundings' designed to challenge his 'masculinity' and group loyalty. Although in the past (see Cohen, 1955) gang or group membership was seen as an expression of non-conformity or rejecting societal norms, according to others (see Miller, 1958) such members can be seen as behaving in a stable, conforming and 'normal' fashion, acting according to the norms and values of their 'most significant cultural milieu', which is dominated by the ethos of patriarchy. That is, peer group affiliations conform closely to the deep values of the whole society (Coward, 1996). As such, in relation to delinquent or criminal activities, it may well be the *group activity* that is more important to the offender than is the act of committing a delinquent or criminal offence (see Sarnecki, 1986). Matza (1964) maintains that most delinquents are not alienated from adult conventional values but, instead, that they are susceptible to both the conforming influences of adults and the delinquent influences of peer pressure. Farrington argues that:

... the onset of offending depends partly on an increase in antisocial tendency (e.g. caused by a change in social influence from parents to peers) and partly on changes in situational factors, opportunities, benefits and costs. Similarly desistance occurs when there is a decrease in antisocial tendency (e.g. caused by a change in social influence from peers to spouses or girlfriends) and changes in situational factors (Farrington, 1992, p 279).

As illustrated in chapters four and five, the peer group has the potential to both encourage participation in delinquent and criminal activities and to persuade individuals to disengage from criminal activities. The incentive in both cases would appear to be the desire to belong, to be part of the group, to be able to engage in the norms of the group. As Gerrard (1996, p 2) observes 'what we call our morality often turns out to be a set of shifting, flimsy precepts which we swiftly abandon when our place in the group is threatened'. From this research, and from previous work, it would appear that the conceptualisation of friendship patterns amongst boys and men in terms of a dynamic process, and one that, at one and the same time, can both bolster and threaten the individual's self-worth as an individual and in particular as a man, warrants further investigation to aid in the understanding of the connection between peer relationships, maleness, and delinquency and crime (see also Shoemaker, 1990; Meier et al, 1984).

Fear and anxiety

Bronfenbrenner (1979) asserts that the domains of dominance, submission and response to authority are dimensions that pervade relationships in the family, with friends, in work, in every aspect of life, while Holloway (1989) maintains that continual attempts to manage anxiety and to defend oneself provides a continuous motive for the negotiation of power in relations. Managing anxiety and maintaining control or autonomy have been highlighted as key aspects in the lives of all the men interviewed (see chapters four and five). As *men*, these individuals implicitly express concerns over not obtaining the standards of what they consider appropriate male behaviour and responses. 61 per cent of the offenders identified the role of breadwinner or provider as being the main

expectation society holds for men, while 30 per cent believed that people and society expect men to be strong, dominant and to lead. For these men not being told what to do and being able to do whatever they choose to do, regardless of the consequences for themselves or others, were the cornerstones of their perception of their lives.

Accompanying these perceptions, however, is the anxiety and worry that they will fail to live up to the expectations of them as men. Anxiety was experienced by many of the interviewees in relation to the 'acceptable' expression of emotions by men. Although a number of the men indicated a desire to be able to express certain feelings more openly, such as sorrow or identifying what they cared about or was important to them, they worried about how people would react to this. The general opinion was that, although men could benefit from experiencing and expressing their feelings more openly, this would leave them exposed and vulnerable to the people around them, especially other men. Campbell (1993), amongst others, argues that from a very early age rather than actively encouraging boys to engage in masculine behaviours instead heavy emphasis is placed on the avoidance of feminine behaviours. She contends that avoidance learning of this kind hinges on the evocation of anxiety and even fear about engaging in a taboo activity. This approach successfully deters the individual from ever attempting to breach the taboo, and it ensures that the individual will never discover it is safe to engage in the prohibited behaviour. Thus the anxiety and fear generated by such avoidance learning of 'feminine' behaviours limits the range of responses available to men in dealing with the situations they encounter, often leaving them with only the responses of anger, fear and aggression and a sense of anxiety if they search for other non-masculine behaviour as there is no support for such behaviour in men in wider society.

Although 59 per cent of the men questioned stated there was nothing that they had to fear in their lives further probing exposed issues that caused the men anxiety in their lives. The men expressed concerns about their families and about their future prospects. Many of the men worried about their lives never changing; that they would never break the pattern of spending short periods of time outside of prison before returning. Few of the men, however, acknowledged that they themselves might have to change their ways if they were to avoid this pattern. As mentioned earlier, many of the men were reluctant to reflect upon or take responsibility for their behaviour and actions. Such explicit denial of fear in their lives raises considerable concerns, fear is often a motivating force in encouraging individuals into evaluating the situations in which they find themselves and can be a constructive tool in decision making. These men, however, chose to ignore or deny many of the areas of their lives that caused them concern and anxiety and instead chose to expend their energy on covering their fear and vulnerability, and as Tolson (1977) observes covering up for weaknesses, 'making the best of a bad job' is always to accept the status quo.

The 'Maleness' of Prison

'Being female in this prison is bloody difficult, you become hard, you go towards their (men's) way of doing it. You find yourself using language you'd never thought of using before. Working here you end up acting hard in here but

then you've got to go home and be mummy' (Female Prison Officer).

'In here the staff, or prisoner, who is respected is the one who can 'lord' it over the others, the one who takes control. He may not be a nice person or liked but he'll be the one that's respected. There's not a lot of difference between prisoners and staff in that respect'. (Male Prison Officer).

The 'masculinism' or masculine ideology that informed the working of the criminal justice system, and in particular the prison system, was also explored in this thesis. Although examining prison managers and management was not an exclusive focus, information gleaned from this research would indicate that an exploration of gender and prison management could be of significant benefit to greater understanding of the general running of prisons (see also Carrabine & Longhurst, 1998). Kersten (1989) argues that when dealing with troublesome girls and boys, services, such as the youth service, in attempting to encourage 'normality' amongst these individuals fall back on the policing of sexual morality and gender role conformity. She maintains that whereas girls have been subject to this from the early beginnings of social work, with much having been written regarding this occurrence, the fact that this policy also effects boys, and men, as inmates of institutions has been hitherto ignored. She contends that within such institutions boys and men are coached into prevalent concepts of maleness, and more often than not these will be fossilised notions of maleness that for example demand toughness and courage. More recently authors, such as Sim (1994), have called for a more gendered reading of male prisons, arguing that such a theoretical shift can provide a more analytical starting point for understanding the behaviour of prisoners as men, which, perhaps, can also generate strategies for changing their behaviour both inside and outside the prison environment.

It is perhaps within the predominantly male environment of a prison that the ways in which men cover up their weaknesses and vulnerability become most apparent. It is also within the prison walls that the ethos of 'masculinity' or maleness can be seen to be enacted in its most base form. Whereas in wider society there may be more leeway for individual men to operate outside the bounds of masculine ethos within the prison little if no leeway exists. Prisoners are constantly under the scrutiny of other men and, due to the nature of the workings of the criminal justice system, the majority of these men will be drawn from the lower class levels of society (both prisoners and staff) and therefore more likely to adhere to stronger images of 'masculinity' and will be more sex-typed than individuals from higher class levels (see above).

It would appear, from the interviews conducted with prisoners and prison staff, that the 'maleness' of the prison environment plays an important and significant role in the way in which communication occurs within prison and the way in which incidents and disagreements are dealt with. It was found that interaction between two males, whether that was two prisoners or a member of staff and a prisoner, was more likely to escalate into confrontation of a hostile or aggressive nature. This appeared to be linked to the notions mentioned earlier that men do not want to lose face in front of others, particularly other men, and to the fact that the majority of men

appeared to believe that they are always entitled to do as they want when they want, that they do not have to abdicate to anyone else's authority. Female officers, as a minority in male prisons and conscious of what they considered their physical disadvantage against men, appeared to be more reflective of the way they approached and dealt with prisoners. They were more likely to have assessed a variety of ways of dealing with potentially difficult situations. Male officers on the other hand, perceiving no restrictions on their capabilities, appeared less likely to reflect on how they might approach prisoners. With men being in the majority in the prison, their [male] behaviour was accepted, as being the norm and the acceptable, and more often than not the correct, way of dealing with issues. Aggression and violence are invariably expected within a prison environment; due to the nature of imprisonment with people being held against their will, frustration will on occasions spill over into violence. It could be argued, however, that a degree of this violence results because as an institution the prison (as wider society also does) accepts the idea that men are aggressive and that it is a natural, and to a degree, acceptable way for men to express themselves and their frustration.

Whereas probation officers, and probation more generally, incorporate gender awareness as part of practice and training, prison officers and prison management have, as yet, failed to acknowledge the role that gender (and in particular masculine ethos) plays in the management of prisons; both in terms of managing prisoners and staff. For example, during the fieldwork some of the staff discussed a female officer working in a dispersal prison; she did not like working on one of the wings and asked to be moved and this request was granted. The staff argued that if that request had been made by a male member of staff he would have been told to return to the wing or to 'collect his cards'. The male officers argued that they just had to tolerate any of the difficulties that they experienced. If a male officer was considered unable to deal with any situation he encountered it was interpreted by management and staff that his 'bottle was gone', thus making him an ineffectual officer. This conceptualisation of prison officers as needing 'bottle' has important repercussions for both male and female officers. Male officers can be offered little support in their day-to-day work since any requests for assistance may be interpreted as a loss of 'bottle'. Female officers on the other hand can almost immediately be categorised as lacking effectiveness since they inherently lack the 'male' characteristics of emotional and physical 'toughness' required of prison officers.

The men interviewed accepted unquestioningly aggression and violence as an acceptable way of dealing with difficulties or confrontations, particularly within prison. Both prisoners and prison officers, particularly male officers, identified prison as a 'hard' place where one had to be 'tough' to survive, and one could argue that a degree of status was obtained by prisoners and staff from the knowledge that they could 'hack it' in such an environment. This unquestioning acceptance of violence and aggression by men, and the majority of society, both within prison and outside in the community needs to be examined further and challenged. How male attitudes effect the interaction between prisoners and staff, what impact they have on how prisons are 'managed', and how their more negative effects and consequences can be addressed also requires further investigation.

Personal Lives and Public Policy: Addressing the Men's Behaviour

I think we are incredibly mean with our time, our trust and our support, but we are very free with our punishment

(Graef, quoted in Hewitt, 1997, p 31).

In this thesis much attention has been drawn to the family situations of the interviewees, the difficult and often destructive emotional aspects of their upbringing and the economic deprivation or hardship that was experienced. In particular, the absence of a father or appropriate father-figure and/or the presence of an aggressive or merely emotionally distant father was identified as having long-lasting negative consequences on the men and their subsequent life choices (see chapter four). Although the problems and difficulties may be experienced within the family context this does not necessarily locate the difficulties within the pathology of their parents or the family structure per se. Bronfenbrenner and Ceri (1994) argue that it is environmental conditions and events originating outside the family that are likely to be the most powerful and pervasive disrupters of family processes affecting human development throughout the life course. For example, the quality of the marital relationship itself has been shown to be powerfully affected by extra-familial factors such as conditions at work (Bolger et al, 1989; Eckenrade & Gore, 1990; Moorhouse, 1991). In their study of child neglect, Giovanoni and Billingsley (1970, p 204) found that 'among low-income people, neglect would seem to be a social problem that is as much a manifestation of social and community conditions as it is of any individual parent's pathology'.

The ultimate sources of instability in some families, Bronfenbrenner and Ceri (1994) maintain, are often stressful conditions originating in domains outside the family, such as the world of work, the neighbourhood or the society at large. Martens (1990) maintains that children with bad home conditions can obtain help and support from people outside the family and that a very good relationship with an outside person can neutralise a bad home environment. However, very few, if any, of these men came into contact with such a person or any organisation or group that could mediate or compensate for the difficulties they experienced in the family setting and the insecurities and anxieties that arose from these difficulties. Their immediate experiences outside the family often compounded their original feelings of inadequacy and low self-worth. The further these men progressed in their lives the fewer options for addressing any of these difficulties. As Kersten (1989) observes, in relation to the institutional control of boys and girls, although the environment and staff may offer a lot of scope for employment, work and sport it is rather limited in scope in relation to the emotional care. She argues that the social and emotional experience of an closed institution will tend to consolidate rather than compensate for a basic emotional deficit whose roots go back to the experience of childhood.

Durkheim (1951) recognised that individual adjustments to societal conditions should be considered as part of a full development of theories of behaviour. As Denzin (1970) observes, no two lives are alike in their motivational processes and often attempts to understand human behaviour are attempts to find the balance between the impact of social structure and the choice of individual

action (Walklate, 1998). Grosser (1960) argues that the problems that can lead to criminal offences are peculiar to each individual and require individual solutions, while Gordon (1996) asserts that it seems inconceivable that patterns of offending behaviour could be changed for non-offending behaviour without some sort of healing for the very personal and private disturbances in which they originated. While there are many common factors apparent amongst the lives of the men interviewed in this research the pain and suffering many of them endured was of a purely individual, personal nature, and it was often this suffering, or its interpretation, that motivated their decisions and choices in life, and hence their decision to commit crime.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that human abilities and their realisation depend in significant degree on the larger social and institutional context of individual activity, and that public policy has the power to affect the well-being and development of human beings by determining the conditions of their lives. Lindsay (1995, p 493-498) asserts that in attempting to understand human behaviour 'we must have awareness of the social situation and in particular the values which are predominant in society at any one time'. In the contemporary socio-political context, the dominant philosophy of recent years has been based on the individual rights or responsibility model (McAllister, 1998), while competitive individualism has been much encouraged politically over recent years (Potts, 1997). Competitive individualism, consumer society and the free market can offer great freedom and opportunity to members of society *provided* one is located in a social position where one can take advantage of such opportunities. All members of society, male and female, are entitled to respect and equality but the reality of the social structures ensures that large numbers of people are more and more excluded from participation as fully accepted members of society and it was into this group of disenfranchised people that the offenders interviewed fell.

Scott (1994) and Hutton (1995) assert that one of the most striking features of the period 1979 to 1995 was the overwhelming increase in the gap between the rich and the poor. Eaton (1993) argued that current social policies created division and difference and then blamed the poor for the place they occupy in the social structure. Walklate (1998) asks the question how much responsibility should we assume, collectively, for the most vulnerable in our society, and how and who decides the nature of that vulnerability. The dominant philosophy of individual responsibility or competitiveness would appear not to recognise many forms of vulnerability as legitimate. If one is unemployed it is because the individual is not seeking employment as actively as s/he should or could be. The individual is deemed capable of overcoming whatever obstacles they encounter in their lives, alone, and should be occupying a productive role in society for which they will be rewarded. This notion of individual responsibility has many parallels with the masculine notions the men described and adhered to in this research, and which are to be found within gender literature, that a male is independent and provides for himself and his family and does not ask for help, since this would reveal his inabilities or vulnerability.

Cole (1978) notes that the infinite tangle of past experience and present circumstances that make us what we are smother us in particulars, defying explanation or generalisation, and faced with such complexity any plausible simplifying procedure can appear to be a lifeline. 'Masculinity' theory

has appeared as a plausible simplifying process which offers an opportunity to provide generalised explanations for the behaviour of groups of men but its focus has remained upon one particular social group of males, the least powerful men in society. Little research has been carried out on the 'men in power' or of men in the higher classes of society, one of the reasons being that these men give us no reason to examine them. These men are not out committing crime or carrying out acts of violence in the overt way in which men from the lower classes are, and they are not expected to live their lives out within the public, often negative, gaze of the police and/or the media. Their position within the higher classes of society offers them protection from such a gaze and also ensures that they will have more life options, including most likely greater leeway in which to express their gendered nature.

Carlen (1990a) argues that when the historically and socially specific contexts of male and female offending behaviours are examined, the issues which emerge rapidly become issues of racism, classism and imperialism rather than gender per se. In her study of female prisoners, she identified four factors as constituting turning points in the women's criminal careers: being in residential care, having a drug or alcohol addiction, the desire for excitement, and being in poverty (Carlen, 1983). These findings bear a striking similarity with the findings of this research: drug and alcohol consumption and addiction, the desire for excitement and being in poverty all rank high amongst the men as factors which played a role in their involvement in crime. Only a small number of the men interviewed had experience of residential care but the vast majority had experienced difficult family relationships or settings and this factor also played a contributing role in their offending behaviour. Matthews (1982) argues that focusing on gender can blind researchers and theorists to 'non-sexual' explanations of behaviour.

As Clatterbaugh (1990) observes, every social order has costs that must be calculated and within our patriarchal, capitalist and racist state (see Walby, 1990) it is those in the lower levels of society, both male and female, that pay the highest price. Peck observes:

We humans are so constituted that we need a sense of our own social significance. Nothing can give us more pleasure than the sense that we are wanted and useful. Conversely, nothing is more productive of despair than a sense that we are useless and unwanted

(Peck, 1983, p 233).

while Elder asks the important question:

This society of abundance can and even must support 'a large quota of non-productive members' as it is presently organised, but should it tolerate the costs, especially among the young, the costs of not feeling needed, of being denied the challenge and rewards which come from meaningful contribution to a common endeavour.

(Elder, 1974, p 291-293)

Messner (1987) argues that if many of the problems faced by men today are to be dealt with, class, ethnic and sexual preference divisions must be confronted and that this would necessarily involve the development of a more cooperative and nurturant ethic amongst men, as well as a more egalitarian and democratically organised economic system. Segal (1990) also maintains that the dismantling of gender hierarchies necessitate the pursuit of social change in the economy, the labour market, social policy and the state, but as Herek (1987) points out until men become aware of the costs of masculine ideals change is unlikely. As noted earlier, few if any of the men interviewed felt themselves limited or restricted by society's demands on them as *men*. Since these men were located at the lower levels of society with few resources it seems unlikely men in elevated sections of society are either restricted by or critical of society's masculine ideals. Until enough men, in a position to make changes, feel restricted by masculine ideals (and patriarchal ideals) little change will occur. For many men, especially those not in the lower classes, the benefits from the system of patriarchy, imbued with masculine ideals, are great and therefore the need or desire for changes will not be self-evident. It is very rare that power is given up voluntarily. Change is also unlikely while alternative ways for living do not exist for men. Connell (1995) warns of the confusions and reactions produced by attempts to alter an oppressive 'masculinity' without tackling the social structures which give rise to it. Even if one were to identify masculine ideology as restrictive and destructive for groups of men, large sections of the male population are in no position to change their behaviour, as there are few alternative ways of acting available to them; as Morran (1996) notes, we are operating in a culture where there is little tangible support for men to challenge or change their lifestyles, as behaviour that goes against the prominent gender system is rarely rewarded Rebecca et al (1976).

As Bronfenbrenner (1979) points out, public policy is part of the macrosystem determining the specific properties of exo-, meso-, and microsystems (see chapter one) that occur at the levels of everyday life and steer the course of behaviour and development. Coote (199?) argues that we should consider how public policies can assist the quest for new masculine identities. She argues that through education, benefit and employment policies men could be encouraged to be caring and attentive and provide men with new ways of 'proving themselves'. Gibbs and Merighi (1994) also argue for a more preventative approach, stipulating that future research should focus on identifying the protective factors as well as the risk factors which may render young men vulnerable to involvement in crime. As Bronfenbrenner and Ceri (1994) point out, human beings differ in their innate capacity for realising individual talents and buffering against dysfunction and it is important to understand under what circumstances constructive potential finds expression.

Social psychological research indicates that it is much easier to bring about attitudinal changes by changing behaviour than it is to cause behavioural change by changing attitudes (Balswick, 1982). For men to move away from the more self-defeating and negative aspects of masculine ideology, and the patriarchal ideology that sustains and supports it, we as a society must begin to challenge more overtly the behaviour of men which is presently tolerated, such as violence being an acceptable and legitimate way of solving disputes and problems. Men must be made aware of their responsibilities

as members of society and not allowed merely to focus on themselves, while men's implicit devaluing of the opinions and concerns of women also needs to be addressed. From these men's accounts such devaluing or ignoring of women's opinion could be witnessed in relation to the men's reactions to their mother's advice to avoid crime. The vast majority of the men interviewed indicated that had it been their father who had advised them against crime or their lifestyle more generally then in their opinion they would have heeded this advice and would, most likely, not have ended up in the predicament they found themselves in. This is despite the fact that it was invariably their mothers who provided for them both emotionally and financially when they were growing up.

Campbell (1993) argues that boys and men from deprived neighbourhoods adhere to a cult of honour and loyalty which exempts them from everything that demands responsibility. From these men's accounts there was a sense that their own sense of self, and particularly their sense of themselves as men, took precedence over other aspects of their lives, and if opportunities arose to assert their maleness, be that in committing criminal offences or getting involved in pub fights, these men would partake in them regardless of the outcomes for their own lives and the lives of their loved ones. Scully (1992) maintains that we must challenge the myths which allow men *not* to take responsibility for their actions. The interviewees in this research rarely, if ever, felt they needed to justify or explain any aspects of their behaviour, they felt that their actions were completely acceptable since they were enabling the men to obtain what they wanted or what they needed and therefore they were totally entitled to do what had to be done to achieve this. It is, however, not just lower-class males who have to take responsibility for their actions, it is also those men with higher positions in the social structure who, by their support of the skewed patriarchal system, implicitly tolerate and/or endorse the more negative and destructive elements of masculine and patriarchal ideology.

Both Carlen (1990a) and Messerschmidt (1993) draw on conceptual formulations which take them outside of mainstream criminological debate in order to understand criminality. Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that seldom is attention paid to the person's behaviour in more than one setting or to the way in which relations between settings can affect what happens within them, and rarest of all is the recognition that environmental events and conditions outside any immediate setting containing the person can have a profound influence on behaviour and developments within that setting. Basically 'it all depends' whether or not an individual becomes involved in crime. In technical terms 'it all depends' translates into the idea that the explanations for what we do (assuming we achieve serviceable descriptions) are to be found in interactions between characteristics of people and their environments, past and present (see Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It was shown that the effects of the men's early family upbringing were capable of influencing the men's behaviour and decisions in later years, and if we are to continue to develop our understanding and appreciation of why people offend then we need an approach that can allow for such complexity. Conceptualisations such as Bronfenbrenner's (1979) nested model, or the network approach (see Tonry et al, 1991), allow us to be cognizant that human behaviour and criminal behaviour does not necessarily develop in a linear fashion and that we need to be open to the idea of drawing on many

different facets of an individual's life if we are to appreciate why it is a particular individual becomes involved in crime. Although maleness can be seen to be an influencing factor in men's criminal behaviour it interacts with a multitude of other factors which cannot be overlooked or downgraded in importance relative to the men's 'masculinity'. Network approaches also opens up the possibility of drawing upon different elements of various theoretical explanations of offending behaviour and to encourages an awareness of how different elements may in fact interact.

Conclusion

It cannot be denied that using the theoretical concept of 'masculinity', or maleness, opens up avenues of investigation and the potential for enhanced appreciation of criminal behaviour. However, it is a strategy that needs to be implemented with care, as Wilson (1980) observes ideology and theoretical concepts can operate to exclude whole areas of debate from the consciousness of readers and authors alike, and the lack of research on the 'masculinity' or maleness of men outside lower class offenders raises concern about the nature of 'masculinity' research. Although due to financial and time limitations on this research (see Chapter 3) a study of non-offending men outside the lower classes was precluded, conducting a study of both 'non-offending' men and men in varying positions of power in society seems necessary if we are to develop a fuller understanding of the dynamics of 'masculinity' and how it can both encourage and insulate different groups of men from becoming involved in criminal activities.

Two suppositions failed to offer any important information for this research. It had been postulated that an individual's geographical location may influence the kind of masculine identity developed by an individual (Berg, 1994). No substantial differences were identified between the group of rural probation clients and the city probation clients in terms of the masculine ideals that they aspired to. Some of the rural clients talked of how limited they felt by the smallness of the towns they came from; this meant that once they had been in trouble with the police and/or the courts they were known as a 'troublemaker', and it was felt that it was virtually impossible for them to rid themselves of this label. This 'labelling' made these men feel that there was very little chance of making anything of themselves in the face of such prejudice. The city probation clients did not report such concerns of being 'labelled' by the police and/or courts. It had also been suggested in the literature that men who committed different criminal offences may hold to different masculine ideals; men committing more violent offences celebrating the more 'base' masculine ideals of strength and toughness (Newburn & Stanko, 1994). Again, however, no substantial difference was found to exist between the different offence types committed and the masculine ideals that the men related to. The men's attitude to violence and aggression (outlined above) were very similar regardless of the offences committed.

Using the concept of 'fulfilling one's masculine identity' as a research tool in this research highlighted a number of important areas that warrant further in-depth study and analysis and identified areas of public policy which might benefit from a more informed awareness of the nature of men and maleness. Schooling would appear to be a major area in which men are both failing and society is failing men. Schooling not only provides individuals with the formal qualifications

usually required for obtaining decent employment prospects, it also provides the setting which carries primary responsibility for preparing young people for effective participation in adult life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), it educates them to be responsible members of society. The majority of men missed out on this education and it would seem that their adherence to masculine values partly informed their reluctance to participate in school, and the schools' failure to appeal to masculine values further alienated the men. A better understanding of the interaction of masculine values and men's poor performance and disengagement from schooling is necessary if we are to prevent a large part of the male population from finding themselves excluding themselves or being excluded from school and one of the major integrating institutions of society.

The peer group, at all stages of their lives, was another important factor highlighted in this research. This was particularly true in relation to the men's relationship to schooling. The influence of the peer group could be seen as both a threat to and an enhancer of the men's self-esteem, or self-concepts, and particular in the men's opinions, to their status as males. Further investigation of peer groups and the male nature of such groups might offer insight into how the more positive aspects of peer group interaction might be developed over the more negative aspects. In relation to the issue of peer groups, exploring the question of why men appear to fear being 'run of the mill' could be informative, a large proportion of the men in this research implied they would rather be in trouble or in prison than consider themselves 'boring'. Attempting to appreciate this sentiment amongst the men while at the same time challenging it could provide further understanding of the attraction of crime to some men.

The findings of this research also indicate that we need a better understanding of the processes within the family, particularly the affective aspects of family, especially in relation to families in difficulty or families that have broken down. It would appear that when children fail to have explained to them what is happening within the family they place guilt and blame on themselves and where one of the parents leave the family situation, for whatever reason, the children interpret this as a rejection of themselves or a vindication of their unworthiness. As Cockett observes:

We have an end of the 20th century dilemma about personal happiness and commitment, but if you have children, can you be as free as you want, adult freedoms don't always make the world better for children (Cockett, 1996, p 14).

Difficult family situations were, more often than not, not explained to the men when they were children (or as adults) and the children were never offered an opportunity to voice their opinions or concerns which appeared to leave them with a sense of fear, helplessness, anger and frustration. These feelings were then later compounded by the life situations the men went on to experience, all of which took place within a patriarchal social structure which extols the virtues of courage and toughness and refuses to acknowledge vulnerability on the part of men. The only way men had the opportunity to express their feelings, if they so wished, was through the emotions of anger and aggression. Both the failure on the part of society to properly acknowledge the detrimental

affective effect of family situations, and to offer support systems for families with difficulties, and acceptance of male anger and aggression needs to be challenged and examined in greater and more critical detail.

Linking in with the issues of poor self-concept or low self-esteem, and the anger and frustration many of the men experienced was the prevalence of drug use and drinking amongst the men. The men interviewed turned to drugs and alcohol both to bolster shaky self-esteem and to endorse 'male' self-concepts. The role that alcohol and the nature of male drinking plays in criminal activity would appear to require further analysis and debate (see also Sumner & Parker, 1995). Not only had the men often been drinking when they committed crimes, but many of the violent incidents that the men were involved in, some of which they were convicted for, had occurred when they had been drinking with their 'mates'. Drinking, like drug use but in a different manner, was often used as a reason for the men not to take responsibility for their actions. Their behaviour was deemed beyond their control once they had been drinking. Men's attitude to drinking and particularly the denial of responsibility when drinking needs to be questioned and challenged. The presence of peers or 'mates' also had a similar 'removal of responsibility' effect and also needs to be examined.

Theoretical concepts of 'masculinity' or maleness can, therefore, be productive in assisting the further understanding of why certain individuals become involved in crime and why others do not. It offers most explanatory power, however, when it is incorporated within a nested model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) or network approach (Tonry, Ohlin & Farrington, 1991) since this allows for the integration of several theoretical perspectives and explores all aspects of behaviour, deviant and non-deviant. Behaviour is rarely, if ever, only a masculine act or only a criminal act, it is behaviour that is influenced by particular personal dispositions, particular circumstances within particular social relationships and structures. Johnson (1995) talks of finding a process of achieving authenticity in which our humanity is not stifled, devalued, or dismissed as a result of attitudes, structures, policies and practices which enable oppression to flourish. She argues that the common humanity of men and women should be the platform from which we reject patriarchy and its dehumanising tendency to make us men and women first and people second. Viewing men and masculinity from the point of view of the limitations it places on *human beings* appears to be the most productive way forward. As Cohen et al. observe:

every social group and setting must contend with the dilemma: how to provide the freedom and discretionary choice necessary for individual fulfilment and for the efficient use of resources for the common good and at the same time to ensure that they will be used as intended

(Cohen, Cole & Bailey, 1975, p19)

Appendix One

Offender Profiles

Prisoner One - Aidan

Aidan was 31 years of age and serving a 14 year sentence for armed robbery. He was living with his wife and two daughters prior to his present sentence. Both his daughters were young when he started his present sentence and Aidan now only has written contact with his eldest daughter. His wife divorced him during this sentence although he does hold out some hope that he can win her back when he gets out. Aidan was about 11 years old when he was first taken to a police station for burgling a school. He was placed in a cell and his parents were contacted, he received a good telling off and a 'slap on the wrist' from the police inspector and a good telling off from his parents. Aidan remarked 'the areas I'm from and the way most of the lads are brought up in my area it's just an everyday occurrence'. He was formally cautioned at the age of 13/14 and received a number of formal cautions prior to his first court appearance. He was convicted of theft of cars at the age of 19 and sentenced to a detention centre. In total Aidan has about 6 to 8 convictions and has served about 4 or 5 custodial sentences, these have included remands, detention centres, borstals and adult prisons.

Aidan remarked that if he went out drinking he would drink to excess and it was often when he was in this condition that he would agree to do something with someone, if there was any money involved he would dive in. Quite often when he was out drinking he would take cocaine with the alcohol and everything else (ie his wife and children) would be forgotten. If Aidan stayed at home and drank with his wife he would never drink to excess and never did anything 'stupid' like when he did when out drinking in pubs.

When his wife divorced him four or five years ago Aidan started taking drugs in prison to help him cope, whatever was available, he also took an overdose. On the day his wife informed him that she had found somebody else, Aidan escaped from prison and found the guy putting him in intensive care for three months. He also threatened his wife and children who were placed in protective custody. He also committed a number of robberies and ending up receiving an extra four years to his original sentence.

Aidan came from a large family, there were 11 children (5 girls, 6 boys), none of whom have been in trouble or prison, they all had jobs. His mother was the boss and he got some beatings from her in an attempt to stop him from what he was doing, but it never sunk in, he never listened. After years of trying his mother gave up on him and told him to get on with it, she could not take any more. His dad's attitude had always been go ahead and 'get on with it'. The 11 children and parents lived in a two bed-roomed house and Aidan described it as 'living in a zoo'. Both his parents worked, his mother had two or three cleaning jobs, working in factories, but the children were always fed and looked after. His father worked in the navy and later as a porter. Aidan rarely saw his dad when

he was growing up. All his brothers and sisters were 'pure grafters'; when they got out of school they got work, working, buying new clothes and getting new boy/girlfriends, but that wasn't him.

Aidan left school at the age of 12/13 with no qualifications. He rarely attended school and if he did attend he would spend the majority of his time outside the headmaster's office, and getting caned. He used to spend a lot of his time messing around in the wood behind the school rather than going to school. Aidan rated himself at the bottom half of his class and said when at school he could never sit down and concentrate so he used to disrupt the class instead. Aidan used to get into fights at school on a regular basis, it was usually with other boys over girls although he would often fight with boys rather than back down if someone tried to bully him. He was expelled from school at the age 12/13 for hitting a teacher with a chair.

Aidan got a job in a baker's on leaving school and has worked in a number of jobs since then. He is a qualified welder and did a lot of construction site work. He felt his problem was that he never stayed in one job, he'd get fed up and do something else. None of the jobs he was qualified for were very exciting so he never felt inclined to stay in one job for long. Most of his jobs have been 'on the side'. He has been promised work in the asbestos business when he gets out of prison.

Aidan was coming up for parole in February 1998 and his main concerns were about his wife and children. At the time of interview he was keen to try and get back with his ex-wife although he wasn't sure if he would change his mind once he got out prison and just attempt a completely fresh start. Aidan felt that serving this long sentence had made him think a lot about what he had done in his life. about the mistakes he had made in his life, things he had never thought about before and he felt that he was a better person now, more mature, and he felt that would remain the case on his release.

Prisoner Two - Andrew

Andrew was 30 years of age and serving a 3 year sentence for assault, criminal damage and threats to kill. He was living with his common law wife and his three children prior to his sentence.

Andrew was 12 years old when he was first arrested for suspected burglary of a shop. He and his cousin were stopped and searched by the police when they were looking in the window of a 'nice' shop. After being taken to a police station they were charged with attempted burglary but it was quashed in court. He was convicted of carrying an offensive weapon at the age of 16 and received a fine and probation. This was his first custodial sentence which he received at the age of 29. Andrew was serving a 3 year sentence for assaulting a young man who had been convicted of sexually assaulting his young daughter. The young man received probation and a fine and was under order to receive psychiatric treatment but Andrew felt that this was inappropriate punishment and stated that if the man had been given a jail sentence he wouldn't have assaulted him. Andrew had been angry about the sentence and wanted revenge. Although Andrew has had 6 court appearances, 3 for burglary, he has not been convicted, in some cases because he knew that the witnesses against him would not be turning up.

Andrew had one sister and described the family as being very much a unit; he and his sister were brought up to talk to their parents if they had any problems. He came from a catholic family and therefore there was a lot of respect and discipline. His whole family had expected him to go to prison for what he did but they have supported him throughout.

Andrew was expelled from school at 15 for getting his ear pierced. He was given a choice of taking the ear ring out or going home and not coming back, so he went home. Although he didn't play truant a lot he did stay at home. His parents' attitude was rather than send him to school when they felt he had no intention of going they kept him at home as they felt this was more likely to keep him away from trouble. It wasn't that Andrew didn't like school he just didn't like being told what to do. He used to get into trouble with the teachers for not doing his work or for just not paying attention to what was going on. He regularly got into fights at school; his attitude was if someone wanted to fight him he'd fight them.

Andrew left school with no qualifications. He started a YT scheme when he was 17 and was then on the dole for 3 years. At the age of 22 he got a job working in a Ford factory doing a variety of different jobs on the shop floor.

Andrew had 6 weeks left to serve when interviewed and on release would be on probation for the best part of a year. His main priority was to stay out of trouble since he would still be on licence. He was hoping to get a job and get back to normal. He was keen to get back to the way he was before he came into prison, with a nice family, home and car and a holiday or two every year. He did, however, have mixed feelings about his release because like everyone leaving prison he had practical problems to deal with.

Prisoner Three - Bryan

Bryan was 26 years of age and was serving a 5 year sentence for stabbing someone. He was living with his girlfriend prior to his sentence and his daughter was only a few weeks old when he was arrested.

Bryan was first arrested when he was 14 years of age for biting a policewoman and was sentenced to 4 months in a detention centre. Bryan has had about 20 court appearances and has served 3 custodial sentences. He has also been on remand a number of times and received several not guilty findings. The custodial sentences were a mix of detention centre and adult prison. All his convictions have been for assaults, fighting and violence. Although Bryan's convictions were for violence he had been involved in a number of armed robberies in his late teens but had never been convicted for any of these offences. Bryan identified alcohol as the reason why he ended up in prison. He gets violent when he drinks and when he's had too much to drink he get's 'dead narky real easy' and wants to fight anybody. He has decided to give up drinking and has been seeing a counsellor during this sentence to help with this.

Bryan had two brothers and one sister. His parents divorced when he was 8 years old. He ended up travelling between his parents, staying first with his dad and then with his mum. He was the oldest son and therefore his father wanted contact with him. He and his siblings found their parents splitting up a 'big thing' but he was the only one who moved between the parents, his mother used to pay him to tell her what his dad was up to. Bryan had witnessed quite a lot of violence between his parents when he was younger and his father was also violent towards the children. Bryan himself use to bully his brothers and sisters and his father would beat him for doing this. The fact that Bryan couldn't defend himself against his dad made him feel 'weak and daft'.

Bryan was expelled from school at the age of 15, a female teacher had grabbed his ear and he had then thrown a chair at her. As a result of his expulsion Bryan had to sit his O levels exams at home which meant his was unable to take his science and drama exams. He has an O level in English and art. In addition to being expelled Bryan had been suspended 3 times and excluded twice. He was excluded for fighting and suspended for setting curtains on fire, for throwing a dart at a boy and for shooting at teachers' cars with an air rifle. Bryan found he could learn if he enjoyed something but if he got bored he would just start disrupting the class. Bryan also used to get into fights on a regular basis because as he put it, he 'always wanted to be hardest'. Up until the age of 13 he used to get bullied, at which point he started hitting back. Although he didn't truant for whole days Bryan would skip classes and go and hang out in a wood near the school.

At the age of 15 Bryan started an apprenticeship as a plasterer. This lasted for 3 years but Bryan found that when he had completed it he was too young and no one would take him on. Bryan has worked in factories and on a farm and on many many building sites. He'd really like to be self-employed making furniture because he's good with his hands and he doesn't really like having a boss telling him what to do.

Bryan felt realistic about his release; he felt he had a lot going for him this time compared to the other times he was released from prison. Then he had nothing to go out to but now he's got a child, his own home and some job opportunities.

Prisoner Four - Connor

Connor was 31 years old and serving a 10 year sentence for kidnap and robbery. He was living with his girlfriend and their three children prior to this sentence.

Connor was first arrested when he was 14 years old for burglary, for which he received a fine. He was convicted, again, of burglary at the age of 15 and was sentenced to a detention centre. He received his first adult prison sentence at the age of 26 and has served five custodial sentences, including his present sentence. These have been a mix of detention centre, borstal training and adult prison. Connor feels most of his custodial sentences have been drink related, 'drink gives you confidence and you don't think at the time'. Since being in prison Connor has used drugs, such as cannabis, heroin and acid, to 'escape his surroundings'. He used a very limited amount of drugs prior

to this sentence and had never used heroin.

Connor had two brothers and two sisters. Both his parents were heavy drinkers and Connor used to get regular beatings from his dad. Connor felt that if anything went wrong at home he was blamed for it; he felt himself to be the black sheep of the family, if his brothers or sisters asked for anything from their parents they got it whereas he got nothing. His father used to beat his mother and Connor would stick up for his mother and then get hidings for doing this. There was no love or affection whatsoever from his dad and Connor believed that had there been a little bit he might have turned out a different person. He rebelled against his treatment. Connor hated his father, although he believed that his father tried his best for his family Connor felt he went the wrong way about it. His parents separated for a time when he was 8 and the children and their mother went to stay with their grandmother. Connor expressed a lot of affection and respect for his grandmother and identified her as the one person who might have persuaded him to stay out of crime. Connor also spent time in a children's home which he didn't like, he found the staff 'not to be very nice people'. He was in the same children's home four times over a period of five to six months.

Connor was expelled from school at the age of 15 for spitting in the headmaster's face. He left school with no qualifications. He didn't like school, he didn't like the teachers, the discipline or having to do the work. Connor used to play truant all the time, spent this time shoplifting, stealing, breaking into houses and sniffing glue.

Connor started working at the age of 24 and has had two jobs since then, one was drilling and the other was working in a laundry. He has been unemployed for about 8 years; he feels useless and inadequate when he's unemployed. He feels if you've got a family you should have a steady income and that was why he went out robbing to make up for the lack of income.

Connor still had a number of years left to serve of his sentence but once released he hoped to lead a straight life, get a job and take care of his family.

Prisoner Five - Dermot

Dermot was 26 years of age and was serving a sentence of 3 years and 9 months for robbery and driving while disqualified. He was living with his girlfriend prior to conviction.

Dermot was first arrested around the age of 16 for being drunk and was fined for breach of the peace. This is his first custodial sentence and he was convicted at the age of 24. Dermot has had a number of court appearances which have been mainly drink-related; he's been out drinking and 'done something stupid'. Dermot also used drugs, he likes to go clubbing and drugs go with that type of scene.

Dermot had a brother and sister and considered himself the black sheep of his family. He had a changeable relationship with his mother, she suffered from mood swings and this would affect their relationship. Dermot grew up thinking that his step-father was actually his father until he

found out the truth around the age of 14/15. This information changed his relationship with his step-father, it went cold. Dermot felt it had never been a particularly warm relationship, he felt that his step-father was just doing things for him to keep Dermot's mother happy. Dermot's natural father left his mother when he was 3 or 4 years old and Dermot had no memories of him. Dermot left home at the age of 16/17 to go to school and has never really been home since.

Dermot left school at 16 after passing his GCSEs. Although Dermot enjoyed school he felt he could have made more out of it; he hadn't put a 100% effort into school at the time. He played truant from school for a short period around the time he found out about his step-father, as he had wanted to get away and 'get his head together'. Since leaving school Dermot had attended school and qualified as a graphic designer and illustrator. Dermot worked part-time in bars and hotels when attending college but did not succeed in the career for which he trained. When he failed to make a go of his design skills he went into labouring work. Dermot would like to get back into the design business because he feels he is good at it if he puts his mind to it.

Dermot was due to be released in five weeks time and had a few plans in mind for his release feeling that he was a bit wiser now. These plans, however, were at risk of falling apart since the original agreement he had with his mother to return home for a period of time while he got himself together was looking uncertain now after his mother had appeared to have changed her mind.

Prisoner Six - Emmet

Emmet was 33 years old and serving a 2 year sentence for possession with intent to supply. He was separated and had two children; he had been living in lodgings prior to his sentence.

Emmet was first arrested when he was 7 years old for stealing from a shop with a friend. They were taken to a police station and told off by the inspector. At the age of 18 Emmet was fined for burglary, he had broken into what was his old home. He served a custodial sentence at the age of 19 for failure to pay fines. Emmet has had three or four court appearances for burglary and his present sentence was his first adult sentence.

Emmet was addicted to heroin and methadone prior to his sentence and had been selling drugs to support his own habit and as a way of accumulating some money. Emmet also had a heavy drinking habit before he came into prison, this played no role in any of his offending but it had contributed to the break up of his marriage, as his sitting at home every night drinking heavily had become too much for his wife.

Emmet had two sisters and a brother. His parents had separated when he was 15. Emmet found the separation very difficult at first because it was his mother who left home and their dad was left looking after them, he blamed his mother for the separation. There had been a lot of arguing between the parents which often took place in front of the children but no violence. At night, however, Emmet would often hear more arguing and things being smashed. His father had always

worked away on the steel works a lot, and Emmet felt he had suffered from never having had a firm hand when he was younger. His mother had also doted on him a lot; he was the youngest, and he felt that he rebelled against such protectiveness.

Emmet was 15 when he left school without any qualifications to start work. He didn't like school particularly, the teachers were strict and he was lazy about doing his work. He was suspended from school for hitting a teacher who had wanted to cane him for being late. He also got into trouble for fighting with pupils and teachers. Although he didn't play truant he would often pretend to be sick so that his mother would keep him off school. Emmet could barely read and write on leaving school but has since taught himself to. Since being in prison Emmet had obtained a GCSE in art and had started a GCSE in maths.

Since starting work at 16, Emmet had mainly been involved in labouring work. He had been unemployed for at least 10 years. When working down in London he had started taking drugs, and over the years he has given up only to start taking drugs again; it was during this time that his drinking also got worse. Emmet hoped to get a job when he got out and to start afresh, avoiding all the old trappings.

Prisoner Seven - Fergus

Fergus was 27 years of age and was serving a 6 year sentence for drug offences. Fergus was single and had two sons, although he was no longer with their mother Fergus would often stay with his two sons and their mother.

Fergus received a verbal caution at the age of 16 for the theft of a pair of trousers. In total Fergus had received 5 formal cautions, the others were for burglary, assault, a driving offence and serving alcohol without a licence. When he was 18 he was convicted of burglary and received 240 hours community service. This was his first custodial sentence which he received at the age of 26.

Fergus had two sisters and one brother. His father was from Jamaica and his mother was English. He also had one step-sister. A number of separations had been instigated over the years usually lasting only a few months; at the time Fergus found these separations difficult because he didn't understand what was happening, now he just views them as parents' 'chilling out time'. Fergus went a bit 'wayward' during these periods but believed he would have gone a bit wayward anyway. His father had a tendency to gamble and there were a number of years when money was very tight for the family. Fergus's first son was born when he was 17, and he expressed a concern about providing a good example of a black man to his sons, noting his prison sentence really did not balance with that desire.

Fergus left school at 15 without any qualifications. Education always came second to him; he was more interested in girls and the group of boys he hung around with. He enjoyed school sometimes, the pressures of home life often meant it was a relief to go to school, but he found the teachers patronising. Fergus got suspended from school for fighting, he saw the fights as being about showing

off in front of other boys and wanting to impress the girls.

Although Fergus had been working since he was 18 he had never been legally employed. The majority of his work was in the construction business. Fergus had completed an access course and had started a university course but dropped out at the end of the first year. For the last five years Fergus and his family had been running, illegally, a blues club. Fergus wanted to go back and complete a university degree; he was interested in becoming involved in the media as he would like to be involved in something that can affect people's opinions.

Prisoner Eight - Frank

Frank was 30 years of age and serving a 4 year sentence for intent to supply Class A drugs. Frank was living with his girlfriend, by whom he had a daughter, before his sentence. He had two other children by a different girlfriend.

Frank was first arrested when he was 13, when he and his two friends got caught shoplifting jewellery in town. They had not intended to steal anything and had just been 'messing around'. He was cautioned by the police and was given a very severe beating when he got home. Frank received one other caution after he had left school and had a number of court appearances for possession, driving offences and criminal damage. Frank had received community service in the past. His present drug offence was his first conviction leading to imprisonment, which he received at the age of 29. Frank had been using numerous drugs for a considerable time, these ranged from cannabis, speed ecstasy, to crack and heroin. He was taking no drugs at the time of his interview but it was his opinion that if he had not been taking drugs he would never have ended up in prison.

Frank had one brother and one sister. His brother now lived in Tenerife and his father lived in America, his sister and mother still lived in England. His father went to America a few years ago and Frank believed that if his father had still been in England he may not have ended up in prison. Frank had never hidden his drug use from his parents and believed that if his father had still been around he wouldn't have become so deeply involved in drugs. His father would have nagged him more than his mother and this would have had more of an effect on him. Frank had only got back in touch with his father in the last two or three years, his parents had separated when the children had grown up. Frank had witnessed a considerable amount of violence between his parents when he was growing up but he had 'got use to it'.

Frank left school when he was 16 with no qualifications. He didn't like the rules and regulations of school and didn't really apply himself; all his reports stated he could do better. He got into trouble fairly regularly at school, it was the 'in' thing to do, get into trouble, messing around, fighting and truanting. He was supposed to get suspended during the last couple of weeks of school but in the end didn't.

Frank started working straight from school but had never really stuck at anything. He had tried a variety of jobs, sales work, factory work, building work and had set up his own sales business. For

the last 7 years he had been unemployed but he was always looking for ways to get money and so he had never really thought of himself as unemployed.

Prisoner Nine - Greg

Greg was 28 years of age and was serving a 18 month sentence for burglary and fraud. Before coming into prison he was living with his common law wife and their four children.

Greg received his first caution when he was 15; he and some of his friends were caught stealing from school. He was convicted of burglary when he was 18/19 and received a 4 month detention centre sentence. In addition to that sentence, Greg had served two adult prison sentences. Greg felt he had been committing a lot of crime because of his drug habit. He had been going out and committing crime and then buying some stuff for his family and blowing the rest on drugs.

Greg had a younger brother and sister. His parents split up when he was about 3/4. His mother wasn't able to cope and suffered a nervous breakdown. The children ended up in a family group home while foster parents were found. Greg experienced a number of difficulties during this time mainly due to the fact that the children wanted to remain together but they kept being allocated to separate families. On a number of occasions the children 'acted up' with foster parents to ensure they were sent back to the same children's home to be together. When Greg was 8 the 3 children were eventually fostered to the same family. Greg experienced a settled period until around the age of 17 at which point he had become addicted to slot machines. Although Greg felt he could have sorted out the problems this addiction had caused with his foster family, he chose to leave home instead.

Greg left school at 16 with 5 CSEs and an O level in English. Greg was very small for his age and found he was constantly bullied at school, by one boy in particular. Greg was nearly expelled from school when he stuck a small carving knife into this boy's hand after the boy destroyed an item Greg had been working on. Although staff knew this boy was bullying him nothing was done, Greg felt this was partly due to the fact that the boy's father was a councilor. As a result of this bullying Greg ended up dreading going to school and he felt that he would have done a lot better at school if it wasn't for the bullying he endured.

Greg started working when he was 16 and has worked as a painter and decorator, a food processor, a brick layer and in bars. Nowadays the only work he could get is bar work but this work doesn't pay much and he feels he lets his family down if he hasn't got a job. Greg is worried about getting banged up again and is worried he is going to find himself in a situation where nothing is working out. If he has the support of his family then he will stay out of prison.

Prisoner Ten - Harvey

Harvey was 50 years of age and serving three and a half years for assaulting his wife (section 18 wounding with intent). His second wife, whom he was living with prior to sentence, divorced him during his sentence. Harvey has four children, two from his first marriage who are in their earlier

twenties and two young children from his second marriage.

Apart from this sentence, Harvey had been arrested once before for being drunk in charge of a motorcycle, at the age of 29. He received a fine and a driving ban.

Harvey's marriage had been faltering for about 12 months prior to the assault, they were no longer sharing the same bedroom. In addition to this, Harvey had been made unemployed from a well-paying job 6 months prior to the assault. They were also experiencing difficulties with Harvey's mother who was living in a home, but due to her drinking was being threatened with expulsion. Over the previous twelve months Harvey had started drinking more heavily. The assault itself took place on the evening of the 21st birthday party of Harvey's daughter. After having an enjoyable evening together at the party on returning to the house Harvey approached his wife about sharing the bedroom for the night. When his wife told him she never wanted to share a bed with him again he attacked her. Harvey himself had very little recollection of what occurred after that point. He felt that even if he had been stone cold sober (he informed police he had had about 8/9 pints to drink) he would have throttled her for what she said. He was initially arrested for attempted murder as a neighbour overheard him telling his wife he was going to kill her, but the charges were reduced to wounding with intent.

Harvey was the eldest of 5 children. His father had died in 1991 and his mother has suffered a stroke since he was sentenced. The family has been and still is a close knit unit. When he was alive, Harvey's father had spoken to him about his drinking suggesting that he might have a problem, but because Harvey had never woken up desperate for a drink and he never needed to take time off work he felt that he didn't have a problem. Since being sentenced Harvey had been attending AA counselling and admitted that he would need to watch the situations he lets himself get into in relation to drink.

Harvey left school at 15 and went on to do 12 months at a college of further education. He wanted to be a draughtsman but failed the relevant GCSE subjects. His main memories of school were of having a lot of religious education (he was Catholic) thrust down his throat. He was bullied on a few occasions but considered himself hopeless at reacting or standing up for himself. He enjoyed most of his schooling although he wasn't good at all subjects.

At 16 Harvey found a job as an apprentice plumber. He finished his apprenticeship when he was 21. Over 8 years he had a number of jobs and then he went into the caravan trade and stayed with the same company for 14 years. He moved to another company around 1989 with the prospect of ensuring a promotion and stayed there 5 and a half years. He was then made redundant from that company in 1994 and has been unemployed since then. Harvey found it very difficult to cope with unemployment, the biggest problem was that he realised that their lifestyle would need to be changed to accommodate the loss of earnings but he didn't want this to happen. He found it very hard to cut back and also found it difficult to have his wife as the main breadwinner.

Finding a job was Harvey's main concern regarding his release, as he felt getting a job would allow him to set his life up again and to afford a place where his children could come and stay weekends with him. However, having been unemployed for 6 months prior to his arrest Harvey did not hold out much hope for himself finding employment now, especially since he now had a criminal record as well.

Prisoner Eleven - Ian

Ian was 25 years of age and serving a 2 year sentence for theft and handling stolen goods. The offences themselves took place over two years ago and in that time Ian had started to sort his life; he had been about to start college, so to be charged and convicted came as a shock to Ian. Apart from this offence Ian has no other major arrests or convictions. He had received a number of cautions for, what he described as, 'stupid little things'.

Ian had been a heroin user and he attributes this as the reason he got into trouble. He started taking heroin for something to do, to 'escape'. He drifted into his drug use and then he started getting into trouble, the crowd he hung round with were all into drugs and theft. He committed crimes for the money but felt it was because of his drug taking and his associates that resulted in this happening, he 'just got over-involved'.

Ian was an only child and his parents split up when he was a toddler and he's never seen his dad since. His mother's work involved a lot of travelling around the world and therefore she didn't know what was going on, since he's told her she's been very understanding.

Ian left school at 16 with no qualifications but had actually stopped attending a long time before that. He never really took school seriously, he could never get interested in school. He use to truant more than he went and he and his friends would go back to his empty house and just waste the day messing about. Ian was suspended a number of times for his truanting. He is now keen to have some qualifications and was due to start college in December when he's completed his sentence.

After leaving school Ian started working on building sites. He had also worked as an insurance salesman and a company rep. He had been unemployed for the last 4 years which he put down to his involvement with drugs. After splitting up with a girlfriend of 3 years Ian found himself with a lot of time on his hands, he got in with a group of people and started taking drugs and stealing. He went off the rails for 3 or 4 years. Now he's fed up of drifting from job to job and not enjoying the work he does. He had applied for college and wanted to become a PE teacher or something similar. Ian felt he had sorted himself out and was looking forward to getting out of prison and getting a fresh start.

Prisoner Twelve - James

James was 24 years of age and serving a 6 year sentence for robbery. He had been living with his girlfriend before coming to prison and had a son.

James was first arrested aged 15/16 for shoplifting, he was convicted and sent to a young offenders' IT centre. He has also received three formal cautions from the police. His present sentence was his first adult sentence. James had been using cocaine and he believed that helped him get into trouble, if he wanted more cocaine he would either sell some or he would commit robberies.

James had two brothers, neither of whom he got on with and he would on occasions batter them. James spent eight months in a children's home because he was getting into trouble all the time and not going to school. James used to play truant regularly and he and a group of friends were always messing about at school and getting into fights. He was suspended once for failing to bring letters with him for when he had missed school. At the age of 13 James was sent to a reform school. He left school with no qualifications.

James started working at the age of 17, first learning joinery as part of a scheme and then he worked in a restaurant. He's been unemployed for years but it doesn't really bother him because he doesn't know what he wants to do yet. He didn't hold out much hope for his future.

Prisoner Thirteen - Keith

Keith was 53 and serving a 24 year sentence for armed robbery. He received a further 10 year sentence for attempted murder whilst in prison. Before coming into prison he was living with his wife, who has since died. He has three children.

Keith was first cautioned when he 14 and first arrested when he was 16. He was arrested for seriously injuring a guy in a gang fight. In court he was given the choice of borstal training or joining the armed forces. On his grandmother's advice he joined the marines when he was just 17 and spent twelve years in the marines. He was first convicted of armed robbery in 1972/3 serving a 3 year sentence. His career in armed robbery began after his and his brother's building business was hit by a cement strike in the early 1970s. On being refused a bank loan to tide the business over Keith went to another bank and 'took' the loan instead. It carried on from there and he started committing offences for other parties until he was caught and sentenced to 24 years.

Keith had three brothers and he's the only one of the family who's ever been in trouble. He was very close to his parents who have been very supportive over the years and when he was younger tried everything with him to keep out of trouble. Between the ages of 5 and 16 Keith was sent to live with his grandmother, this was to get him away from the area where the family lived where there was a lot of gangs and trouble. His grandmother was responsible for disciplining him and she would often guide in his choices. He was very close to his grandmother and was very resentful of his grandfather who use to hit her and who eventually left his grandmother, something Keith never forgave his grandfather for.

Keith left school at 16 with no qualifications. He didn't like school, he didn't like being told what to do. He played truant a lot of the time and as a result of his truancy he and his friends fell so far behind they were sent to a special school. They use to get teased about this regularly and fights

often broke out between different groups of boys. Despite attempts by his parents and by the school to encourage him to attend school, Keith continued to truant. As a result of this lack of attendance Keith had very basic literacy skills and was receiving special education in prison.

Keith was concerned about his impending release from prison. The Prison Service in the recent months had been acclimatising him back into society slowly with occasional trips out with staff. Keith, however, remained concerned that he had spent so much time in prison and had had contact only with people within the system for so long that he was going to struggle greatly on his release.

Prisoner Fourteen - Lewis

Lewis was 26 years of age and serving an 18 month sentence for burglary. He was living in lodgings prior to his sentence.

Lewis received his first caution from the police when he was 10 years old. He was arrested for burglary when he was 11 and was taken into care. At 14 he was sent to an approved school due to his persistent involvement in trouble. In total Lewis had served twelve sentences, ranging from detention centres, to young offenders' institutions to adult prisons. Lewis identified drugs as a major part of his problem, he had used a wide range of drugs from cannabis, speed, LSD through to cocaine, heroin and chemist gear. As a result of his heroin use he had contacted a terminal illness. His drug use also played a big part in his criminal activity, he needed the money for the drugs so he committed crime.

Lewis had two brothers and a sister whom his mother looked after; he had been looking after himself since he was 11/12 and had never asked his family for anything. Lewis was sent to boarding school at the age of 9 and hadn't been home since then and after he went into care at the age of 11 he hadn't really seen much of his family. It was only in the last three or four years that he had started communicating with his dad again, at one point he did not get on with his dad but now they were becoming close. His dad used to give Lewis a bit of a thrashing whenever he got into trouble and that put Lewis off his dad. He was, however, able to control his dad to a certain extent because for example his mother would threaten to leave if his father didn't allow Lewis to come home. By and large Lewis considered his parents unable to control him from a very early age, with his dad not being around much he learnt to look after himself at a young age. Lewis spent time in children's homes all over the country so he found it very hard to get settled but generally thought that the homes were alright because it was one big family or community and you got treated as such. The approved school was a shock with being told what to do, when, and how to do it but he got used to the routine after a while.

Lewis left school at 16 with GCSEs in English, Science, Maths and Biology. From the age of 14 he had attended an approved school. He didn't enjoy it, being told what to do, they were always getting in trouble, like Lewis setting fire to a boy's head in class.

Lewis had never had a job. He wanted to work but refused to work for the wages being offered, he

wouldn't work for something that only paid £100 a week. Lewis was not particularly optimistic about his release but recognised that it was up to him whether he would return to prison or not.

Probation Client One - Mark

Mark was 35 and serving a one year probation order for theft of a car and possession of a shotgun without a firearms license. He had been divorced once and now lived with his partner and their three children.

Mark had been in prison twice, once for driving while disqualified and again for driving while disqualified plus theft. These sentences were served when he was in his early twenties. In total Mark had, between the age of 22 and now, forty court appearances, these included driving offences and burglary mainly.

Mark had two younger brothers. When he was 5 the children were taken into care by social services. His parents had divorced and his mother had been unable to cope with the children, she spent much of her time drinking and had become involved in prostitution. The children were found in a considerably neglected state. Mark was passed around a number of foster and children's homes until he was placed with one particular woman, whom he called his aunt and who he grew attached to and provided him with, in his opinion, love for the first time. At the age of 13, however, he was returned home to live with his mother and his stepfather. They were always struggling for money, his stepfather couldn't hold a job down and turned his frustration to betting, drinking and beating the children. It was down to his mother to earn a living for the family working in factories. In her absence his stepfather was physically abusing Mark and sexually abusing his younger brother. His stepfather also beat his mother. Although he beat her and his mother was aware that Mark was being beaten, she chose to stay with his stepfather, a fact which Mark could not understand and hurt him greatly. Mark occasionally bumped into his natural father on the street but he wanted nothing to do with Mark which Mark also found very difficult to understand and come to terms with. One of Mark's younger brothers had also got involved in crime and had served some time in borstals. Mark felt that the only time his parents were happy was when he and his younger brother were getting stuff for them by committing crime. A number of the burglaries Mark committed as an adult were also committed with his brother.

Mark left school at 16 with five O levels and three CSEs. He enjoyed school very much and particularly enjoyed music, his music teacher encouraged him greatly and gave him some confidence. He was, however, bullied a lot by the other children and found himself very isolated at school. He was in care and the other children use to make fun of and bully any of the children who were in care. Mark felt there was a big stigma attached to being in care. It took years of being beaten up but eventually Mark hit back one day and after that the other children left him alone.

After leaving school Mark started work as a warehouse assistant. He's had a number of jobs since then mainly driving work. He's been unemployed for the last 4 years. Mark was optimistic about his future although he was prone to depression and has found it very hard to rise above a difficult

upbringing. He felt, however, that probation had offered him a way of leaving his past behind him more and had found probation to be very supportive and productive for him.

Probation Client Two - Nick

Nick was 27 years of age and serving a one year probation order for affray and criminal damage. He was living with his common law and their child with a second child due later in the year.

Nick was cautioned by the police when he was 14 for damaging people's gates. He was convicted by the juvenile court of football violence at the age of 15/16 and sent to a detention centre for 28 days. In total Nick has had fourteen court appearances and served four custodial sentences, which had been a mix of detention centre, youth custody and adult prison, for theft and burglary. His most recent offence stemmed from Nick and friend spending the day drinking and then getting into a fight with someone.

There was only Nick and his mother and they had a somewhat difficult relationship with each other. She had never been able to control him properly and he resented her boyfriends; he would never do as they told him because 'they weren't his dad'. He had no contact with his mother between the ages of 20 and 24. His parents had never been married and he had never met his dad because he had left his mother after finding out she was pregnant. Although he would like to trace his father and meet him Nick knew that his mother didn't want this and he didn't want to upset her. Nick felt that maybe if he had had a father figure and someone who could have disciplined him properly he may not have got into so much trouble. Nick spent a considerable amount of time in and out of care during his childhood, his mother being unable to cope with him. Overall he viewed his time in care as being alright although he had received severe beatings on occasions where he had absconded or caused trouble.

Nick was expelled from two schools, the second time was when he was 15 and a half just prior to his exams. As a result of his expulsion Nick has no qualifications from school. Teachers considered him to be bright but that he was throwing it away. He didn't like people telling him what to do and Nick also felt that children who were in care were discriminated against by the teachers. He felt that children who weren't in care would get a second chance whereas he never did, for example the first time he got expelled, he and his friend threw the teacher's plants out the window, he got expelled and his friend who wasn't in care was suspended. Nick felt that he had a tendency to mix with the hoodlums at school.

Nick lost his last job as a result of going up and down to court for his recent offence. This had made him quite angry since it was a good paying job with the potential for being a fairly consistent job for him. Most of his jobs only lasted between 3 and 6 months, he has no qualifications for work so he has to go for what is available. He felt in this respect the children's homes let him down, they gave him no advice about his future they just took care of his meals and made sure he came back from school every day.

Generally Nick was positive about his future although he did harbour doubts about his maturity and ability to juggle the demands of his family, his probation requirements and eventually finding a job or going to college.

Probation Client Three - Owen

Owen was 23 years of age and serving a 2 year probation order for burglary, and was living in lodgings.

Owen was first arrested aged 18/19 for owning a stolen motorbike, he was unaware it was stolen and he wasn't charged. At 19 he was convicted of driving while disqualified, for going equipped and for theft for which he received a custodial sentence. Owen has had seven court appearances for fines, attempted theft and driving while disqualified. He had served five custodial sentences and had also received a previous one year probation order.

Owen had a sister and a brother, only his brother still lived at home with his mother. Owen had no memory of his father who had left his mother when Owen was about 2 years old and hasn't been heard from since.

Owen left school when he was 15 with no qualifications. He didn't like school and didn't attend regularly. He also had a paper round so the two days he had a paper round he didn't bother going in. He was placed in a special class because he had trouble with his reading, he resented this, he felt he didn't need to be in a special class.

Owen has had two jobs since leaving school, both YT schemes in engineering. He would like to get a job that involved doing up motorbikes but has been unsuccessful. He's been unemployed for about four or five years now. Owen worried about going back to prison, he really wanted to find a job because that would fill in his time but he felt that his life would remain just the same as it was.

Probation Client Four - Patrick

Patrick was 37 years of age and serving a one year probation order for arson. Patrick was just about to be divorced and had a three year old son. He was presently living in lodgings.

This was the first time that Patrick had come into contact with the criminal justice system. He had set fire to his soon to be ex-wife's house after she had accused him of rape, a charge Patrick strongly denied.

Patrick had two brothers and a sister, his father was dead and his mother had remarried. Patrick had not had much contact with his father, who had worked in the navy for 22 years and therefore was often absent from home. Patrick missed not having his father around to advise him when he was upset or angry. Patrick had taken an overdose a few years ago shortly after his father's death and the death of his best friend. Subsequently he had spent a period of time in a MIND hostel.

Patrick left school at 16 with CSEs in most subjects. He kept himself to himself at school, it made the day go quicker. Since leaving school Patrick had worked in a butcher's shop for fifteen years and then in a factory. He had been unemployed for the last six years, he missed the social side of employment and would like to obtain factory work again. Patrick was suffering from a motor neuron disease and his prognosis was poor, it was highly unlikely he would ever work again and he was expecting the symptoms to increase considerably over the coming months.

Probation Client Five - Ray

Ray was 26 and serving a 12 month probation order for cultivating cannabis.

Ray had received a word of advice from the police to 'slow down' when he was younger, for what Ray called 'petty things, nothing sort of mention'. He was arrested at 18 for being in possession of stolen goods although he was unaware the goods were stolen. He received community service. His most recent arrest for cultivating cannabis (for personal use) came about after Ray had been involved in a bad car crash and had continued to experience trouble sleeping. He had started to buy cannabis to alleviate this problem and became a user. A friend then suggested to him to grow it instead of buying it and so Ray started growing it, he felt this was a safer option for him since it reduced the risks involved in finding someone to buy it off. Ray felt using cannabis had changed his way of looking at life, when he was younger he used to get involved in fights a lot, especially if he had been drinking, fighting no longer interested him and he put that down to his new found perspective on life that cannabis had given him. Cannabis had helped him calm down and he felt more settled in life now.

Ray's parents split up when he was 12. He remembers them arguing and that his dad used to always be scrapping and hitting people, including Ray's mother. Since they divorced Ray and his sister have had what he described as a happy home life. His father went missing from Ray's life between the years of 12 and 18. Ray was very upset when his parents divorced and he no longer had contact with his dad. His father was with another woman and Ray felt that he was no longer part of his father's life which he found distressing. He had hated his father for a period, when his father lived at home and used to hit his mother. Ray had sort of forgiven him for this because he no longer hurts his mother and she had her boyfriend and was happy. Ray described his dad as being more of a brother to him now that he has his life sorted and he lives somewhere else.

Ray left school at 16 with no qualifications. Ray had not liked school, he was a good worker when he attended but he mostly did not attend school. He felt that the teachers treated them like little kids whereas he expected to be treated with respect by the teachers and treated more like an adult. Ray got in a lot of fights at school, he put that down to the fact that he was tall and people tended to pick on him for that. In his opinion people picked on him to prove a point, it was a case of if I do him then everyone else will be frightened of me. Ray use to truant a lot, he had always hung around with kids who were older than him and so all his friends had already left school so instead of going to school he use to meet them in town where they hung about together. Ray had been attending college and found a completely different experience to school, he was actually treated

with respect at college and they didn't try to undermine him as the teachers at school had.

Ray had been working since leaving school. He had been employed in a range of jobs from printing to working at a saw mill and labouring work. A year and a half ago he had been involved in a car accident and had been on sick leave since then. He had received bad head wounds and severe whiplash. Both his doctor and his probation officer had recommended that Ray stay on sick leave but he had decided he wanted to get back to work. Ray had also recently been attacked with CS gas and slashed with a knife, someone had accused him of being a 'grass'. Ray had not informed the police about the attack. It had continued to prey on his mind, however, and he was on medication from his doctor to help him sleep and he had attended counselling which had helped him over the worst.

Ray was keen to find a job and get some money behind so he could buy some land and build a house for himself.

Probation Client Six - Roger

Roger was 22 years of age and serving a year long probation order for fiddling the dole. Apart from being cautioned at the age of 9 for trespassing on farmer's land with some of his friends, this was Roger's first offence. He had fiddled the dole because he had ended up in debt as a result of his gambling; he had begun gambling on horse racing and found himself in debt.

Roger no longer lived at home with his parents and sister, but was living in his own flat. He and his father didn't get on from when Roger was 14 until he moved out of the house at 18. During this period they clashed over everything, they had a few scuffles but nothing major.

Roger attended some of 6th form school before leaving just before he turned 17. He left with eight GCSEs. Roger had enjoyed school up until he had to move school when the family had to move home, his father was in the RAF. He started a new school halfway through 4th year and found it to be totally different. He didn't attend school regularly after the family moved, when he truanted he went off to play the slot machines. He considered himself an underachiever and that he could have gone on to university he just couldn't have been bothered to study. He found the teachers to be very militant and until 6th form they refused to treat them like adults. Roger used to get into fights at school though the fights had nothing to do with school, more often than not they were about girls.

Roger had been working since leaving school. Up until recently he had been doing mainly labouring work but he now had his own sales business. He enjoyed having his own business because he didn't have anyone else telling him what to do and he could do what he wanted. Roger was aiming to be in a position to retire at 30.

Probation Client Seven - Stephen

Stephen was 22 years of age and serving a year's probation order for threatening a prosecution witness.

Stephen was first arrested when he was 15 when he got drunk and ended up in a fight, he was bound over. He had also received four or five formal cautions since the age of 12. Stephen had only ever been in trouble for fighting. Stephen felt that he started drinking when he was too young, he was 14/15, and couldn't handle it. He usually drank about eight or nine pints a night whereas he felt he could probably only handle four or five. All his fights occurred when he had been drinking. His present offence occurred after a night out drinking, he was drunk and started shooting his mouth off about threatening to hit someone and it was captured on camera.

Stephen's parents separated at some stage in his childhood but got back together, the separation was not something Stephen was keen to discuss. He figured he had been spoilt by his parents and that they might have been too soft on him. He got on well with both his parents, neither of them expected him to get into so much trouble. At the moment his father socialises with him partly because he enjoys it and partly to keep an eye on Stephen. Up until the age of 17 Stephen did not get on that well with his father. Then his dad had a heart attack and that shook Stephen and made him realise he had been taking his father for granted, after that his attitude towards his father changed. Stephen identified part of his problem as being that he was 'a spoilt brat' but his older sister now tries to keep him on the straight and narrow.

Stephen left school at 16 with no qualifications. He found school boring, all he enjoyed was sports. After the first three years of secondary school Stephen started to truant a lot, the school did not seem that bothered it never sent letters home. For the first three years Stephen was in the top classes but when he started to disrupt classes he was sent down to the bottom class, it was then that he started truanting. He would do anything to get attention, he and his friends would compete and show off, see who could do the funniest things. Stephen was bullied in his first year at school but eventually ended up being more like the bullies. There was a crowd of them and they used to pick on people and make their life a misery. Stephen was excluded from school twice for throwing an egg at the headmaster and for fighting in a football match. At the time of interview Stephen was attending an IT course at the local college.

Stephen started work straight from school. He had done work experience at school with a caravan company and they offered him an apprenticeship but he was sacked after three months. Since then he had done labourer's work. He worked for his parent's business now. He was confident he would not be back in court but the threat constantly played on his mind because he did end up back in court then he would definitely end up in prison.

Probation Client Eight - Tim

Tim was 24 years old and serving a six month probation order for assault and criminal damage.

Tim was first arrested when he was 9 for arson after setting a shed on fire. He considered it 'kid's stuff' but he received counselling for it. He was formally convicted at the age of 16 for committing fraud. Around the age of 16/17 he was also convicted of assault for which he received a fine and a twelve month conditional discharge. Tim didn't identify himself as a criminal, he had never committed theft or burglary. He put it down to the teenage years, 'you go out on a Friday night, you get drunk, some people start some bother and you get dragged into it'. It had reached a stage where Tim was going out drinking and not remembering what he had done and his friends would tell him the next day to expect a visit from the police. It started to frighten him so he stopped drinking to that extent. Tim didn't see his behaviour as being anything special it was just what every teenager went through.

Tim identified an unsettled family life as part of the reason behind his problem teenage years. His mother left when he was 6 months old. His father had a choice of putting him and his older sister into care but chose not to. His father, however, was always out at work and Tim felt that he did not have a stable background; he was always being left with his grandmother or his next door neighbour. Tim also felt his father always favoured his sister. Tim felt that he missed out not having a mother, the mother always seemed to love the son and the father loved the daughter and he never had that. He no longer speaks to his father, he resented his dad not being home and the fact that his father never offered him any guidance regarding what Tim should do with his life. Tim had a son of his own whom he had no contact with.

Tim was expelled from school when he was 15, without any qualifications. Tim hated school, he did not get on with the teachers and they did not get on with him. His reports identified him as intelligent but always disrupting classes. Tim felt he was blamed for anything that went wrong in the school. Tim bullied others when he was at school, he said he was looking for respect and wanted to be accepted by his peers. Tim was suspended four times in two months (just prior to his expulsion) during his last year of school, for bringing fireworks to school, wrecking a science lab and drenching a teacher with a tin of paint.

Tim went to college for two years to get training in joinery. Since then he had been working in mainly labouring jobs. He had been unemployed for almost a year. He had been trying to get his head sorted and he would really like to get a job because it keeps him occupied. He had been worried about getting bored and then he would end up drinking again which would mean he would end up in trouble again. Ideally he wanted to get out of the country and get away from it all.

Probation Client Nine - Vincent

Vincent was 43 years of age and serving a 12 month probation order for the possession of heroin.

Vincent was first arrested aged 12 for vandalising a building site and stealing nails, for which he was fined. At 16 he was convicted of theft and sentenced to a young offenders' institution. Since then Vincent had served 4 more prison sentences, with most of his offences being drug-related. When he was younger, around 19/20 years old, Vincent got into a lot of trouble fighting after he had been

drinking. Vincent felt that he was easily influenced and was always trying to get a bit more drunk than anyone else, he wanted to try and impress people. At this time his foster parents brought in a psychiatrist to talk to him about it, who informed him that he had an addictive personality.

Vincent was a registered heroin addict and had been using heroin for a large part of his life. Vincent first started using heroin because it gave him a sense of security and well-being. His drug taking had led him to commit property crime. Vincent felt that a lot of his crime was the result of wanting to impress people, trying to be macho and showing off, he put his assault convictions down to that, even some of the thefts he carried out were to show off, though later in life these were motivated more for the money they provided for drugs.

His mother had died when he was a baby and he had never known his father. Vincent was adopted by his mother's best friend and her husband who had two daughters of their own. Both his adoptive parents are dead now. He got on very well with his mother but not as well with his father, though they got on alright. He felt that because he wasn't his blood son his father gave much more attention to his daughters. Vincent remembered being taken to a children's home when he was about 4 years old and felt that this was done as a veiled threat, this was where he would end up if he didn't behave.

Vincent was 15 when he left school with no qualifications. He had wanted to get out of school as soon as possible, he was keen to earn some money as early as he could. He pretty much drifted through school, although he would come out in the top five for marks at school Vincent felt that he was never offered any guidance from his school about what he could do with his life. It was the same with his father, his dad pushed his sister to go to university but he never pushed Vincent or offered him any advice.

Vincent had been working on and off all his life on building sites and in factories. He had been unemployed for about the last four years. His main concern was to try and resolve his drug problem; at the time of interview he was on a methadone course. If he managed to sort out his drug problems then he was thinking of going to college to get some qualifications to help him find a decent job. He wanted to achieve a steady way of life and a steady job which would then give him a platform to start rebuilding his life.

Appendix Two

Interview Schedules

Prisoner Interview Schedule

Interview date:

Number:

Length:

Prison:

Date of Birth:

Age:

Ethnic Group

White

Black English

Black African

Black Caribbean

Black Other

Asian English

Asian Pakistan

Asian Bangladesh

Asian Other

Chinese

Other (Details)

Marital Status:

Single

Married

Cohabiting

Separated

Divorced

Widowed

Other (Details)

Any change in position since custody:

Any children:

Who were you living with before you came into prison ?

~~Q1. How long have you lived in this area ?~~

Q2. Where are you originally from ?

Q3. Have you moved around much ?

If yes, how often, what areas and how long living there.

Q4. Have you ever lived outside this country ?

If yes, where and for how long.

Q5. Date of arrival here:

Q6. Are you on remand awaiting trial, convicted awaiting sentence, or sentenced?

Offence(s):

Length of Sentence (if applicable):

Q7. Have you been in prison before ?

If yes, how many times ?

which prisons ?

First of all I'd like to ask you some questions about your previous involvement, if any, in crime.

Q8. Have you ever been formally cautioned ?

Age of first formal caution:

Number of formal cautions:

Q9. How old were you when you were first arrested ?

Q10. What were you arrested for and can you describe what happened as you remember it ?

Q11. How old were you when you were first convicted ?

Q12. What were you first convicted for ?

Did you receive a custodial sentence ?

If yes go to Q14.

Q13. How old were you when you received your first custodial sentence ?

If applicable, how old were you when you received your first adult prison sentence?

Q14. Can you describe how you felt about being in custody for the first time, as you remember it ?

Q15. Have your feelings about being in prison changed over time ?

If yes, in what ways

If no, why not

Q16. Number of previous court appearances:

Q17. Number of previous custodial sentences:

Which types of institutions: (probe DC, YOI etc)

Q18. Date of last discharge from custody:

Length of time at liberty ?

Any contact with family during that time ? (Details)

Any employment during that time ?(Details)

Any contact with friends during that time ? (Details)

Moving on to free time....

Q19. How would you normally spend your free time, when not in prison ?
(prompt pub, sport, girlfriend / partner, family, hang around with friends)

Why do you choose to spend your free time in that way ?

Q20. Are you more likely to spend your free time

by yourself

with friends

with your partner / girlfriend / family

other (details)

Why is this ?

Q21. Do you spend your free time differently if you are with your friends than if alone or with your girlfriend or family ?

If yes, in what ways ?

Q22. Do you find it relatively easy to fill in your free time in a way that you enjoy

Why ?

Q23. How much do you normally drink ?

Not at all

A few pints a week

Quite a lot, esp at weekends

More than 2 pints a day

Other (Details)

Q24. What do you feel you get from drinking ?

Q25. In your opinion, has drink/alcohol affected any aspect of your life ?

If yes, in what ways and how ?

Have you ever talked to anyone about this ? If yes, who and why ?

Q26. Would you say that drink/alcohol has played any role in your committing crime?

If yes, what sort of role ?

Q27. Have you ever used drugs ?

If yes, what sort of drugs have you used ?

Q28. What do you feel you get out of taking drugs ?

Q29. In your opinion, have drugs affected any aspect of your life ?

If yes, in what ways and how ?

Q30. Would you say that drugs have played a role in your committing crime ?

If yes, what sort of role ?

Have you ever talked to anyone about this ? If yes, who and why ?

Q31. When you have committed crime has it been predominantly

By yourself

With someone else

With a group

Other (Details)

Why ?

Q32. When you have committed crime has it been predominately

an opportunity arose

encouraged by others (probe others = friends)

planned alone in advance

planned with others in advance (probe others = friends)

planned for you

other

Why ?

Q33. Why do you think you got involved in crime and ended up in prison ?

Q34. Is there anything or anyone who you think might have helped keep you out of committing crime ? (Details)

I'd now like to ask some questions about your life outside prison, such as your family background, the education you may have received and your employment experience, if any.

Remember if mother/father deceased ask about substitutes, same if fostered.

Q35. Can you tell me something about your family background ?

(probe - mother/father/brothers/sisters/step mother/step father/step or half brothers/step or half sisters)

Q36. Did your mother play an important part in your family life ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no, why was this ?

If absent from family, did you have any thoughts or feelings about this ?

Q37. How did you get on with your mother ?

Why do you think that is ?

Has your relationship changed over the years ?

If yes, when did it change and in what ways did it change ?
(probe why do you think this is ?)

Q38. Do you think your mother had expectations of you ?

If yes, what were they and how did they make you feel ?

Q39. If still has contact with mother - has your mother ever commented on your criminal behaviour and time in prison ?

If yes, what has she said and how has that made you feel ?

Q40. Did your mother work ?

If yes, did this have any effect on the way your family got on ?

In what ways ?

Did she need any qualifications for this job ?

Q41. Did your father play an important part in your family life ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no why was this ?

If absent from family, did you have any thoughts or feelings about this ?

Q42. How did you get on with your father ?

Why do you think this is ?

Has your relationship changed over the years ?

If yes, when did it change and in what ways has it changed ? (why do you think this is ?)

Q43. Do you think your father had any expectations of you ?

If yes, what were they and how did that make you feel ?

Q44. If still has contact with father - has your father ever commented on your criminal behaviour and time in prison ?

If yes, what has he said and how has that made you feel ?

Q45. Did your father work ?

If yes, did this have any effect on the way your family got on ?

In what ways ?

Q46. If unemployed, how long has your father been unemployed ?

Q47. If unemployed, do you think his unemployment had any effect on relations within the family?

If yes, what type of effects ?

Q48. Do you think your father's unemployment had any effects on you?

If yes, what do you think they were ?

Q49. Do you think your father's unemployment had any effect on the way your father related to you?

If yes, in what ways ?

How did this make you feel about your father ?

Q50. If has children, how would you compare the relationship you had with your parents to the relationship you have with your children ?

Q51. Is there any history of parental separation in your family ?

If yes, how old were you when this happened ?

How did this affect your family life ?

What happened to you ?

How did this make you feel ?

Q52. Have you ever witnessed violence between your parents ?

If yes, how often:

What did you make of this violence ?

Q53. Were your parents ever violent towards you as a child or adolescent ? (Details)

If yes, how did that make you feel towards your parents ?

How did it make you feel about yourself ?

Q54. Were your brothers or sisters ever violent towards you as a child or adolescent ? (Details)

If yes, how did that make you feel towards your brothers/sisters ?

How did that make you feel about yourself ?

Q55. Have you ever been in care ?

If yes, was it in a foster home or children's home ?

What was it like ?

Q56. Overall, how did you get on with your foster parents / the people who worked in the children's home ?

the other children in the family / home ?

Now to turn to your education experiences

Q57. How many years did you spend at school ?

Q58. What, if anything, did you enjoy most about school ?

Why ?

Q59. What,if anything, did you enjoy least about school ?

Why ?

Q60. How would you describe your experience of going to school ?

Q61. What did your friends think of school ?

Do you think this affected your view of school ?

If yes, in what ways and why ?

Q62. How would you rate yourself at school, would you say you were in the

top half

middle

bottom half

of your class ?

Q63. Did you ever have extra classes or special classes ?

If yes, what was this for ?

How did this make you feel ?

Q64. Did you ever get into trouble with the teachers ? (Details)

If yes, why do you think this was ?

Q65. Did you ever get into fights with other people at school ? (Details)

If yes, why do you think this was ?

Q66. Did you ever get bullied at school ?

If yes, why do you think this was ?

Q67. Did you play truant from school at all ?

If yes, how often ?

If yes, what did you do when playing truant ?

Why did you play truant ?

Q68. Were you ever suspended, excluded or expelled from school ?

If yes, why was this ?

Q69. Do you have any qualifications from school ? (Details)

Q70. Do you have any qualifications since leaving school ? (Details)

Q71. How old were you when you left school ?

Q72. If applicable, do you ever regret leaving school as soon as you could ?

Why ?

Q73. Would you ever get involved in education again ?

Why ?

Turning to work...

Q74. Have you ever had a job ?

If no, why and then go to question 81

Q75. How old were you when you started working ?

If started working at a young age - why did you start working at that age ?

Q76. How many jobs have you had since you started working ?

Q77. What type of jobs have you worked at ?

Q78. Is there any particular reason you go for that sort of work ?

Q79. How long has your longest period of continuous employment been ?

Q80. How long has your longest period of unemployment been ?

How do you feel during these periods of unemployment ?

if family, how does it impact on your family life, if at all ?

Q81. How important is it for you to have a job ?

Why ? (prompts money, family, self - esteem)

Q82. If you had a choice, what type of work would you like to do and why ?

I'd now like to ask you some questions about what demands and expectations men experience in society today.

Q83. What do you see as the main role of men in society ?

Q84. In your opinion, what are the main advantages of being male ?

And the main disadvantages of being male ?

Q85. Could you complete the following sentences for me:

People expect men to...

Men can...

Men can't...

Q86. Do you often worry about things ?

If yes, what do you worry about ?

If no, why not ?

Q87. Do you often feel frightened or scared ?

If yes, what makes you frightened ?

If no, why not ?

Q88. Do you often cry ?

If yes, about what ?

If no, why not ?

Q89. Do you often feel angry ?

If yes, what makes you angry ?

If yes, do you often express this anger and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q90. Do you often feel proud about the things you do ?

If yes, what sort of things ?

If no, why not ?

Q91. Do you often talk about how you are feeling ?

If yes, to whom ?

If no, why not ?

I'm now going to read out a number of statements and I would like you to say whether you agree or disagree with the statement and then whether you think most men would agree or disagree with it and why.

Q92.

Agree / Disagree

I feel that the demands of being a man limit me as a person.

Prisoner:

Most Men:

Why ?

Men should be allowed to sort out their differences by fighting

Prisoner:

Most Men:

Why ?

Men have to be aggressive to survive in this society

Prisoner:

Most Men:

Why ?

**People who can not express their feelings in words
are more likely to use violence**

Prisoner:

Most Men:

Why ?

**It makes men feel stronger and more manly if they
are able to show their strength by intimidating
(a) men (b) women**

Prisoner :

Most Men:

Why ?

**Q93. What do you do if you have a problem or are feeling down ?
(Probe would you turn to anyone for help - who)**

Q94. Do you think committing crime plays any role in how you think about yourself ?

If yes in what ways ?

If no, what role does crime play in your life ?

Q95. Could you identify what is most likely to happen to you in the next year ?

Q96. Could you identify what it is you fear or worry about for the next year ?

Q97. If it were possible, what would the future you most desire for yourself be ?

Q98. How satisfied are you with your life at the moment ?

Finally, I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences of being in a male prison.

Q99. In your opinion what are the main characteristics of a typical man ?

Q100. Would you describe yourself as a typical male ?

If yes, why ?

If no, why not and in what ways do you see yourself as being different ?

Q101. Do you think men who commit crime are any different from the typical male ?

If yes, why and in what ways.

If no, why not ?

Q102. Do you think prisoners are any different from the typical male ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q103. Do you think men find prison easier than women ?

Why ?

Q104. What sort of experience would you say imprisonment is for the average prisoner ?

Quite interesting,positive

Endurable

A struggle

Indifferent

Other

Why ?

And for you personally ?

Q105. What do you think is the worst thing about being in prison ?

Why ?

Q106. Do you feel you have to behave any differently in prison than you would normally ?

If yes, why is that and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Do you think this has any effect on you in the long term ?

Q107. How would you describe the way you mix in here ?

- Pretty much on your own
- Mostly with one mate
- With a few close friends
- Part of a small group
- Float around with a lot of people

Why do you choose to mix in this way ?

Q108. How important are the views of the people you mix with in here when you are making decisions about how to act in prison ?

- Very important
- Sometimes important
- Not at all important
- Other

Why is this ?

Q109. Do you have any close friends in here ?

If no, why not ?

Q110. Do you think men mix in prison differently to how they mix on the outside ?

If yes, in what ways ?

Q111. Do you have any difficulty fitting in, or getting along with other prisoners?

If yes, in what ways and why do you think this is ?

Q112. How would you describe your relationship with staff ?

Why do you think it is like that ?

Q113. What are the main ways in which prisoners and staff relate to each other ?

Q114. Is it easy for prisoners to get along with staff here ?

Why ?

Q115. Are staff-prisoner relations in this prison similar to any other prisons you have been in ?

If no, how do they differ and why ?

Q116. When you have a problem or a worry in prison, who are you likely to turn to for help, if at all?

Q117. The more vulnerable a man feels internally the more likely he is to build an outer shell that hides that vulnerability

Would you agree or disagree that this statement is true for men in general

Why ?

Would you say that this statement is more or less true for a man who is in prison ?

Why would you say this ?

What do you think would happen to a man who shows his vulnerability ?

Q118. Do you think time in prison can be used constructively ?

If yes, in what ways can it be used constructively ?

If no, why can it not be used constructively ?

Q119. Is there anything that you would like to accomplish whilst here ? What ?

Q120. Do you feel hopeful and optimistic about your release ?

If yes, in what ways and why ?

If no, why not ?

Thanks for answering all my questions. Is there anything that you would like to add yourself about the experiences of male offenders either inside or outside prison.

Probation Client Interview Schedule

Interview date:

Number:

Probation office:

Length:

Date of Birth:

Age:

Ethnic Group:

White

Black English

Black African

Black Caribbean

Asian English

Asian Pakistan

Asian Bangladesh

Asian Other

Chinese

Other (Details)

Marital Status:

Single

Married

Cohabiting

Separated

Divorced

Widowed

Other (Details)

Any Children:

If yes, number male, female:

Who are you living with presently?

~~Q1. How long have you lived in this area ?~~

Q2. Where are you originally from ?

Q3. Have you moved around much ?

If yes, how often, what areas and how long living there ?

Q4. Have you ever lived outside the country ?

If yes, where and for how long ?

Q5. Date of commencing Probation Order:

Length of probation order:

Offence sentenced for:

Q6. Have you been on probation before ?

If yes, how many times ?

Q7. Have you ever been in prison ?

If yes, how many times:

which prison(s):

First of all I'd like to ask you some questions about your previous involvement, if any, in crime.

Q8. Have you ever been formally cautioned ?

Age of first formal caution:

Number of formal cautions:

Q9. How old were you when you were first arrested ?

Q10. What were you arrested for and can you describe what happened as you remember it ?

Q11. How old were you when you were first convicted ?

Q12. What were you first convicted for ?

Did you receive a custodial sentence ?

If yes, go to Q14

Q13. How old were you when you received your first custodial sentence ?

If applicable, how old were you when you received your first adult prison sentence ?

Q14. Can you describe how you felt about being in custody for the first time, as you remember it ?

Q15. Have your feelings about being in prison changed over time ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q16. Number of previous court appearances:

Q17. When you have committed crime has it been predominantly

- By yourself
- With someone else
- With a group
- Other (Details)

Why do you think that is ?

Q18. When you have committed crime has it been predominately

- an opportunity arose
- encouraged by others (probe others-who)
- planned alone in advance
- planned with others in advance (probe others)
- planned for you
- Other

Why do you think that is ?

Moving on to leisure or free time

Q19. How would you normally spend your free time ?

(prompt pub, sport, girlfriend / partner, family, hang around with friends)

Why do you choose to spend your free time in that way ?

Q20. Are you more likely to spend your free time

- by yourself
- with friends
- with your partner/girlfriend/family

other (details)

Why is this ?

Q21. Do you spend your free time differently if you are with your friends than if alone or with your girlfriend or family ?

If yes, in what ways ?

Q22. Do you find it relatively easy to fill in your free time in a way that you enjoy

Why ?

Q23. How much do you normally drink ?

Not at all

A few pints a week

Quite a lot, esp at weekends

More than 2 pints a day

Q24. What do you feel you get from drinking ?

Q25. In your opinion, has drink/alcohol affected any aspect of your life ?

If yes, why and in what ways

Have you ever talked to anyone about this ? If yes, who and why ?

Q26. Would you say that drink/alcohol has played any role in your committing crime ?

If yes, what sort of role ?

Q27. Have you ever used drugs ?

If yes what sort of drugs have you used ?

Q28. What do you feel you get out of taking drugs ?

Q29. In your opinion, have drugs affected any aspect of your life ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

Have you ever talked to anyone about this ? If yes, who and why ?

Q30. Would you say that drugs have played a role in your committing crime ?

If yes, what sort of role ?

Q31. Why do you think you got involved in crime and ended up on probation ?

Q32. Is there anything or anyone who you think might have helped keep you out of committing crime ? (Details)

I'd now like to ask some questions about your life outside prison, such as your family background, the education you may have received and your employment experience, if any.

Remember if mother/father deceased ask about substitutes, same if fostered.

Q33. Can you tell me something about your family background ?

(probe - mother/father/brothers/sisters/step mother/step father/step or half brothers/step or half sisters)

Q34. Did your mother play an important part in your family life ?

If absent from family, did you have any thoughts or feelings about this ?

Q35. How did you get on with your mother ?

Why do you think that was ?

Has your relationship changed over the years ?

If yes, when did it change and in what ways did it change ?

(probe why do you think this is ?)

Q36. Do you think your mother had expectations of you ?

If yes, what were they and how did they make you feel ?

Q37. If still has contact with mother - has your mother ever commented on your criminal behaviour and time on probation or in prison ?

If yes, what has she said and how has that made you feel ?

Q38. Did your mother work ?

If yes, did this have any effect on the way your family got on ?

Did she need any qualifications for this job ?

Q39. Did your father play an important part in your family life ?

If absent from family, did you have any thoughts or feelings about this ?

Q40. How did you get on with your father ?

Why do you think this was ?

Has your relationship changed over the years ?

If yes, when did it change and in what ways has it changed ?

(Probe - why do you think this is ?)

Q41. Do you think your father had any expectations of you ?

If yes, what were they and how did that make you feel ?

Q42. If still has contact with father - has your father ever commented on your criminal behaviour and time on probation or in prison ?

If yes, what has he said and how has that made you feel ?

Q43. Did your father work ?

If yes, did this have any effect on the way your family got on ?

In what ways ?

Q44. If unemployed, how long has your father been unemployed ?

Q45. If unemployed, do you think his unemployment had any effect on relations within the family?

If yes, what type of effects ?

Q46. Do you think your father's unemployment had any effects on you?

If yes, what do you think they were ?

Q47. Do you think your father's unemployment had any effect on the way your father related to

you ?

If yes, in what ways ? How did this make you feel about your father ?

Q48. If has children, How would you compare the relationship you had with your parents to the relationship you have with your children ?

Q49. Is there any history of parental separation in your family ?

If yes, how old were you when this happened ?

How did this affect your family life ?

What happened to you ?

How did this make you feel ?

Q50. Have you ever witnessed violence between your parents ?

If yes, how often:

What did you make of this violence ?

Q51. Were your parents ever violent towards you as a child or adolescent ? (Details)

If yes, how did that make you feel towards your parents ?

How did it make you feel about yourself ?

Q52. Were your brothers or sisters ever violent towards you as a child or adolescent ? (Details)

If yes, how did that make you feel towards your brothers/sisters ?

How did that make you feel about yourself ?

Q53. Have you ever been in care ?

If yes, was it in a foster home or children's home ?

What was it like ?

Q54. Overall, how did you get on with your foster parents / the people who worked in the children's home ?

the other children in the family / in the home ?

Now to turn to your education experiences ?

Q55. How many years did you spend at school ?

Q56. What, if anything, did you enjoy most about school ? Why ?

Q57. What, if anything, did you enjoy least about school ? Why ?

Q58. How would you describe your experience of going to school ?

Q59. What did your friends think of school ?

Do you think this affected your view of school ?

If yes, in what ways and why ?

Q60. How would you rate yourself at school, would you say you were in the
top half
middle
bottom half
of your class ?

Q61. Did you ever have extra classes or special classes ?

If yes, what was this for ? How did this make you feel ?

Q62. Did you ever get into trouble with the teachers ? (Details)

If yes, why do you think this was ?

Q63. Did you ever get into fights with other people at school ? (Details)

If yes, why do you think this was ?

Q64. Did you ever get bullied at school ?

If yes, why do you think this was ?

Q65. Did you play truant from school at all ?

If yes, how often ?

If yes, what did you do when playing truant ?

Why did you play truant ?

Q66. Were you ever suspended, excluded or expelled from school ?

If yes, why was this ?

Q67. Do you have any qualifications from school ? (Details)

Q68. Do you have any qualifications since leaving school ? (Details)

Q69. How old were you when you left school ?

Q70. If applicable, do you ever regret leaving school as soon as you could ?

Why ?

Q71. Would you ever get involved in education again ?

Why ?

Turning to work

Q72. Have you ever had a job ?

If no, why and then go to question 79

Q73. How old were you when you started working ?

If started working at a young age - why did you start working at that age ?

Q74. How many jobs have you had since you started working ?

Q75. What type of jobs have you worked at ?

Q76. Is there any particular reason you go for that sort of work ?

Q77. How long has your longest period of continuous employment been ?

Q78. How long has your longest period of unemployment been ?

How do you feel during these periods of unemployment ?

if family, how does it impact on your family life, if at all ?

Q79. How important is it for you to have a job ?

Why ?(prompt money, family, self - esteem etc)

Q80. If you had a choice, what type of work would you like to do and why ?

I'd now like to ask you some questions about what demands and expectations men experience in society today.

Q81. What do you see as the main role of men in society ?

Q82. In your opinion, what are the main advantages of being male ?

And the main disadvantages of being male ?

Q84. Could you complete the following sentences for me:

People expect men to...

Men can...

Men can't...

Q85. Do you often worry about things ?

If yes, what do you worry about ?

If no, why not ?

Q86. Do you often feel frightened or scared ?

If yes, what makes you frightened ?

If no, why not ?

Q87. Do you often cry ?

If yes, about what ?

If no, why not ?

Q88. Do you often feel angry ?

If yes, what makes you angry ?

If yes, do you often express this anger and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q89. Do you often feel proud about the things you do ?

If yes, what sort of things ?

If no, why not ?

Q90. Do you often talk about how you are feeling ?

If yes, to whom ?

If no, why not ?

I'm now going to read out a number of statements and I would like you to say whether you agree or disagree with the statement and then whether you think most men would agree or disagree with it and why.

Q91.

Agree / Disagree

I feel that the demands of being a man limit me as a person.

Probation Client:

Most Men:

Why ?

Men should be allowed to sort out their differences by fighting

Probation Client:

Most Men:

Why ?

Men have to be aggressive to survive in this society

Probation Client:

Most Men:

Why ?

**People who can not express their feelings in words
are more likely to use violence**

Probation Client:

Most Men:

Why ?

**It makes men feel stronger and more manly if they
are able to show their strength by intimidating
(a) men (b) women**

Probation Client :

Most Men:

Why ?

**The more vulnerable a man feels internally the
more likely he is to build an outer shell that hides
that vulnerability.**

Probation Client:

Most Men:

Why ?

**Q92. What do you do if you have a problem or are feeling down ?
(Probe would you turn to anyone for help - who)**

Q93. Do you think committing crime plays any role in how you think about yourself ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no, what role does crime play in your life ?

Q94. Could you identify what is most likely to happen to you in the next year ?

Q95. Could you identify what it is you fear or worry about for the next year ?

Q96. If it were possible, what would the future you most desire for yourself be ?

Q97. How satisfied are you with your life at the moment ?

Finally, I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences of being a male probation client

Q98. In your opinion, what are the main characteristics of a typical man ?

Q99. Would you describe yourself as a typical male ?

If yes, why ?

If no, why not and in what ways do you see yourself as being different ?

Q100. Do you think men who commit crime are any different from the typical male ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q101. Do you think men who have been on probation are any different from the typical male ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q102. Do you think men who have been in prison are any different from the typical male ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q103. Do you think men find being on probation easier than women ?

Why ?

Q104. What sort of experience would you say probation is for the average male client ?

Quite interesting

Endurable

A struggle

Indifferent

Other

Why ?

And for you personally ?

Q105. What do you think is the worst thing about being on probation ?

Why ?

Q106. Do you feel you have to behave any differently whilst on probation than you would normally?

If yes, why is that and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Do you think this has any effect on you in the long term ?

Q106. Do you think male offenders on probation relate differently to male probation officers than female probation officers ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

Q107. Do you prefer male or female probation officers ?

Why ?

Q108. How would you describe your relationship with staff here ?

Very good

Mostly good

Reasonable

Sometimes difficult, depending on the individual

Generally Tense

Why do you think this is ?

Q109. What do you find is the most effective way of maintaining good relationship with your probation officer ?

Why do you think this is ?

Q110. Are there any aspects of the staff-client relationship you would like to change ?

Why ?

Q111. Do you think time on probation can be used constructively ?

If yes, in what ways can it be used constructively ?

If no, why can it not be used constructively ?

Q112. Do you feel hopeful and optimistic about life after the completion of your probation order ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Thanks for answering all my questions. Is there anything you would like to add yourself about the **experiences** of male offenders, either those on probation or more generally.

Prison Staff Interview Schedule

The main purpose of this research is to find out about the lives and backgrounds of men who commit crime and come to prison again and again. Since many prisoners will have been in prison on more than one occasion some of the questions will be about experiencing prison life. On the basis of your personal experience I would appreciate it if you would answer some questions so that I have some idea how staff see the situation.

Interview date:

Number:

Length:

Job Title:

First of all I want to ask you some questions about your own work.

Q1. How long have you been in this prison ?

Q2. Have you had the same job all the time ? (Details)

Q3. When did you join the Prison Service ?

Number of years in service:

Q4. What establishments have you worked in ?

Q5. What are your current responsibilities ? (Details)

Q6. What do you spend most of your time on ? (Details)

Q7. What aspects of your work do you think are particularly valuable
To you ? Why ?

To the prisoners ? Why ?

Q8. What aspect of your work do you think are least valuable
To you ? Why ?

To the prisoners ? Why ?

Q9. What would you identify as the most important aspect of a prison officer's job ?

Why ?

Q10. Why do you think the average prison officer joins the Prison Service ?

Is that why you joined ?

If no, why did you join ?

Q11. Do you think there is job satisfaction for the average prison officer ?

Why is this so ?

Q12. If answer is lack of job satisfaction: what impact do you think this lack of satisfaction has on:

The work prison officers do ?

A prison officer's self esteem ?

Prison officers' life outside the prison ?

Would you say this is the impact it has on you ?

If no, what sort of impact, if any, does it have on you ?

Q13. What impact, if any, do you think the largely negative public image of prison officers has on:

The work prison officers do ?

A prison officer's self esteem ?

Prison officers' life outside the prison ?

Would you say this is the impact it has on you ?

If no, what sort of impact, if any, does it have on you ?

Q14. What are the main problems faced by a prison officer during his/her work and/or career ?

Is there any way in which these could be better overcome ?

Q15. In your opinion, what is the lasting effect, if any, of spending time in this prison

on staff ?

and on a prisoner ?

Why do you think this is ?

Q16. Do you think spending a large amount of time in a predominantly male environment has any effects:

on staff behaviour ?

on prisoner behaviour ?

If yes, in what ways and why ?

Q17. Do you think there are any particularly positive aspects to being in a predominantly male environment:

for staff ?

for prisoners ?

If yes, what are they ? If no, why not ?

Q18. Do you think there are any particularly negative aspects to being in a predominantly male environment:

for staff ?

for prisoners ?

If yes, what are they ? If no, why not ?

Q19. Do staff ever feel concerned for their safety ?

Under what circumstances ?

Could you describe what you feel when you find yourself in such a circumstance ?

Q20. Do you ever discuss these feelings/experiences with anyone ?

(Prompt with other work mates (at what level), partner/spouse/friends, member of the care team)

If yes, with whom and why this person(s) ?

If no, why not, how does it make them feel ? would you like to talk to someone about it ?

Q21. Do you think staff ever experience feelings of depression, anxiety or unreasonable levels of stress ?

What do you think are the most important triggers of this kind of experience and why ?

Q22. Do you ever experience any depression, anxiety or stress ?

If yes, do you do anything to deal with these feelings ? (Details)

If no, why do you think that is ?

Q23. Overall, would you say working in a prison is

Quite interesting

Endurable

A struggle

Indifferent

Other

Why ?

I'd now like to ask you a few questions about relations between prisoners, prisoners and staff and between staff.

Q24. How would you describe prisoner-prisoner relationships on this wing ?

Very good

Mostly good

Reasonable

Sometimes difficult (depending on the individual)

Generally tense

Why do you think this is ?

Q25. How would you describe prisoner-prisoner relationships in the prison as a whole ?

Very good

Mostly good

Reasonable

Sometimes difficult (depending on the individual)

Generally tense

Why do you think this is ?

Q26. What are the main ways, if at all, in which prisoners socialise together ?

Why do you think this is ?

Q27. Could you identify any factors which can cause difficulties between the prisoners ?

Why do you think this is ?

Q28. Are there any aspects of the prisoner/inmate culture you would like to change ?

Why ?

Q29. How would you describe staff-prisoner relationships on this wing ?

Very good

Mostly good

Reasonable

Sometimes difficult (depending on the individual)

Generally tense

Why do you think this is ?

Q30. How would you describe staff-prisoner relationships in the prison as a whole ?

Very good

Mostly good

Reasonable

Sometimes difficult (depending on the individual)

Generally tense

Why do you think this is ?

Q31. How would you describe the ways staff and prisoners interact ?

Why do you think staff and prisoners interact in this way ?

Q32. What do you find is the most effective way of maintaining good relationships with prisoners ?

Why do you think this is ?

Q33. Are there any aspects of the staff-prisoner relationship you would like to change ?

Why ?

Q34. How would you describe staff relations on this wing ?

Very good
Mostly good
Reasonable
Sometimes difficult (depending on the individual)
Generally tense

Why do you think this is ?

Q35. How would you describe staff relations in the prison as a whole ?

Very good
Mostly good
Reasonable
Sometimes difficult (depending on the individual)
Generally tense

Why do you think this is ?

Q36. Do staff have much contact with each other outside of the prison ?

Why do you think this is ?

Q37. Are there any aspects of staff relations you would like to change ?

Why ?

Q38. Are there any similarities between the way staff interact with each other and the way they interact with prisoners ?

If yes, what are they and why ?

If no, what are the major differences and why ?

Q39. Do you think prisoners relate to female prison staff any differently from male prison staff ?

If yes, in what ways and why ?

Q40. Do you think female staff treat prisoners differently from the way male prison staff treat prisoners ?

If yes, in what ways ?

Q41. Do you think staff relate to female prison staff any differently from male prison staff ?

If yes, in what ways and why ?

Q42. How important do you think it is to have female staff ?

Why ?

If mention all male environment - ask why they think it is better not to have one ?

Q43. What are the main advantages of being a male prison officer ?

And the main disadvantages ?

Q44 What are the main advantages of being a female prison officer ?

And the main disadvantages ?

I would now like to ask you a few questions about the prisoners you work with.

Q45. Could you first of all describe the men who return to prison again and again
Do they fall into any particular types or are they all very different ?

Q46. Do you think men who commit crime are different from the typical male ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no, in what ways ?

Q47. Do you think committing crime plays any role in how prisoners think about or value themselves ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If yes, does this have any effect on how you do your job ?

If no, what role, if any, do you think crime plays in their life ?

Q48. Do you think men who have been in prison are different from the typical male ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q49. Do you think men find prison easier than women ?

Why ?

Q50. Do you think there are certain types of men who find time in prison easier than others ?

If yes, why do you think they find it easier ?

If no, why not ?

Q51. What sort of experience would you say imprisonment is for the average prisoner ?

Difficult/Hard

Endurable

Reasonably easy

Quite easy

Very easy

Other

Why ?

Q52. What, in fact, do you think are the main effects of imprisonment on the average prisoner ?

Q53. Would you agree or disagree with the statement that ..the more vulnerable a man feels internally the more likely he is to build an outer shell that hides that vulnerability

If agree, why do you think it is men cannot show vulnerability ?

What do you think would happen to a man who shows his vulnerability ?

If disagree, why ?

Would you say that this statement is more or less true for a man who is in prison ?

Why is this ?

Q54. Do you think prisoners have to act, behave or feel differently than they normally would on the outside ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q55. Do you think staff have to act, behave or feel any differently when working than they normally would on the outside ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q56. What do you think prisoners do if they are having a problem or feeling down while in prison ?

Q57. Can prisoners find rewarding things to do in this institution or opportunities to improve themselves ?

Q58. What kind of values, if any, do you hope to impart to these men whilst they are in prison ?

Why is this ?

Q59. Do you think time in prison can be used constructively ?

Why and in what ways can it or can it not be used constructively ?

Q60. Would you like to see any changes in the ways male offenders are currently dealt with in prisons ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Thanks for answering my questions is there anything else that you think should be known about the situation of male offenders - either inside or outside prison.

Probation Staff Interview Schedule

The main purpose of this research is to find out about the lives and backgrounds of men who commit crime and come to probation and prison again and again. On the basis of your personal experience I would appreciate it if you would answer some questions so that I have some idea how staff see the situation.

Interview date:

Number:

Length:

Job Title:

Q1. When did you join the Probation Service ?

Number of years in Service:

Q2. How long have you worked in this office/area ?

Have you had the same job all the time ? (Details)

Q3. Have you worked anywhere else ? (Details)

If yes, how does this office/area compare to the others ?

Q4. Could you, first of all, identify what you consider to be the main aspects of your job as a probation officer ?

Q5. What do you spend most of your time on ? (Details)

Q6. What aspects of your work, if any, do you think are particularly valuable to you ? Why ?

to your clients ? Why ?

Q7. What aspects, if any, do you think are least valuable to you ? Why ?

to your clients ? Why ?

Q8. What would you identify as the most important aspect of a probation officer's job ?

Why ?

Q9. What values, if any, do you hope to impart to your male clients ? Why ?

female clients ? Why ?

Q10. What percentage, approximately, of your clients would be male

female

Q11. How difficult an experience, if at all, would you say probation is for the average client ?

Why ?

Q12. Do you think men and women experience probation differently ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q13. Do you think men find probation easier than women ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q14. What, in your experience, are the main worries of men while they are on probation ?

How can these worries be reduced ?

Q15. What, in your experience, are the main worries of women while they are on probation ?

How can these worries be reduced ?

Q16. Do you think male offenders on probation relate any differently to male officers than female officers ?

If yes, why do you think this is and in what ways ?

Q17. Do you think female offenders on probation relate any differently to male officers than female officers ?

If yes, why do you think this is and in what ways ?

Q18. How would you describe staff-client relationships ?

Why do you think this is ?

Q19. What do you find is the most effective way of maintaining good relationships with your male clients ? Why do you think this is ?

female clients ? Why do you think this is ?

Q20. Are there any aspects of the staff-client relationship you would like to change ?

Why ?

Q21. In your opinion, what are the main advantages of being a male probation officer ?

And the disadvantages ?

Q22. In your opinion, what are the main advantages of being a female probation officer ?

And the disadvantages ?

I would now like to ask you some questions about the men who you work with on probation.

Q23. Could you, first of all, describe the men who return to probation again and again ? Do they fall into any particular types or are they all very different ?

Q24. Do you think men who commit crime are different from the typical male ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q25. Do you think committing crime plays any role in how your male clients think about or value themselves ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, what role, if any, do you think committing crime plays in their lives

Q26. Do you think there are certain types of men who find a life of crime, and all that it entails, more attractive than others ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q27. Would you agree or disagree with the statement that the more vulnerable a man feels internally the more likely he is to build an outer shell that hides that vulnerability.

If agree, why do you think it is that men can not show vulnerability ?

What do you think happens to a man who shows his vulnerability ?

Would you say this statement is more or less true for a man who is involved in crime ?

Why is this ?

Q28. Have you ever worked with men who have been or who are in prison ?

If no, go to question 35

Q29. Do you think prisoners are different from the typical male ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q30. Do you think men find prison easier than women ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q31. Do you think there are certain types of men who find time in prison easier than others ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q32. What sort of experience would you say imprisonment is for the average prisoner

Difficult / Hard

Endurable

Reasonably easy

Quite easy

Very easy

Other

Why ?

Q33. What do you think is the worst thing about being in prison for prisoners ? Why ?

for staff ? Why ?

Q34. Do you think time in prison can be used constructively ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q35. Do you think time on probation can be used constructively ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Q36. Would you like to see any changes in the ways male offenders are currently dealt with by probation ?

If yes, in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

In some probation areas/offices attempts have been made to explore the relationship, if any, that might exist between the masculine identities of male clients and offending behaviour.

Q37. Do you have any programmes in operation exploring this issue ? (Details)

Have you received any training in relation to exploring masculine identity and offending behaviour?

Q38. Do you think this idea of a possible relationship between masculine identities and offending behaviour could be of any use to probation work done with male offenders ?

If yes, why and in what ways ?

If no, why not ?

Thanks for answering my questions, is there anything else that you think should be known about the situation of male offenders - either those on probation or more generally.

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