

# FRAGMENT

by

# FRAGMENT

Feminist Perspectives on  
Memory and Child Sexual Abuse

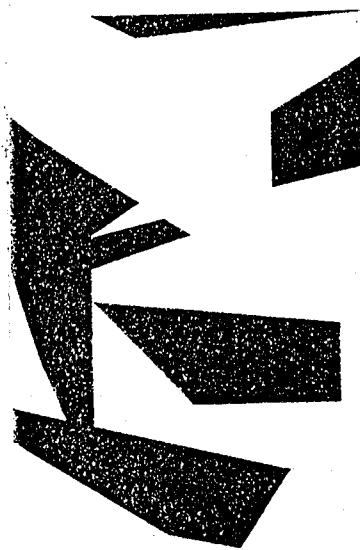
Edited by

MARGO RIVERA



Copyright © Margo Rivera, 1999

Published by:  
gynergy books  
P.O. Box 2023  
Charlottetown, PEI  
Canada C1A 7N7



GROOMED FOR  
SILENCE,  
GROOMED FOR  
BETRAYAL

Cindy B. Veldhuis  
& Jennifer J. Freyd

*We cannot afford to become captives of our own pain. Victimization  
has to be shared — and transcended — together.*

— Hanan Ashrawi<sup>1</sup>

What does it mean to speak about abuse? What does it mean to hear about abuse? Does speaking about abuse foster healing? Must it be spoken in a certain way or can it just be blurted out as one discusses the weather and what to eat for dinner? For the hearer, is it enough just to listen or must there be a certain listening stance? Does the listener's response have an impact on the trauma survivor, on her or his processing and/or memory for the event?

And what effects do the words of the abuser have on the traumatized? Can the perpetrator's words (and silences) have an influence on the victim's memory for the event? Can perpetrators and others involved in her or his life have an impact on how the survivor processes the event? Can

a perpetrator influence how deeply the abuse subsequently impacts the survivor and whether or not the survivor tells anyone else?

In this article, we seek to explore the relationships between language and memory in the context of childhood abuse. We will consider this language-memory relationship from various perspectives, including the role of childhood development, the role of adult disclosures, the role of societal responses to disclosures and, especially, the role of perpetrator communication on the victim's subsequent memory and processing of the event. We theorize that, in addition to victim motivations related to coping with betrayal trauma (that is, betrayal by someone close to them), certain patterns of communication within the perpetrator-victim relationship and related patterns of communication within the larger social networks surrounding the perpetrator-victim relationship will have predictable effects on victim awareness and memory of the abuse — and perhaps that the perpetrator can exploit these very dynamics to suppress the child's knowledge of the abuse.

We will focus on the most frequent pattern of childhood sexual abuse: male perpetrator, female victim, female non-offending parent. Some of what we discuss may or may not generalize to other abuse patterns (male victim, female offender, male non-offending parent). For now, we have chosen to explore the more frequent scenario, because it accounts for so many cases of abuse and because we believe it both emerges from and contributes to societal patterns of patriarchal oppression of girls and women. Given this focus in this chapter, we will often use the female pronoun for victims and non-offending parents and the male pronoun for perpetrator.

We also focus on specific "grooming" techniques perpetrators use in gaining and maintaining access to children, including a discussion of things perpetrators look for in choosing children. In doing so, we wish to also state that, while some perpetrators look for certain vulnerability clues in the children and their families, even children who come from very strong and supportive families may be abused.<sup>2</sup>

### Abuse, Memory and Betrayal Blindness: Our Starting Point

*Truth changes colours depending on the light.*

— Eve's Bayou<sup>3</sup>

We take as a starting point the empirically demonstrable facts that many people are abused and traumatized in childhood and that, furthermore, many of those abused and traumatized children grow into adults who experience some significant lapse in memory of the event. While these claims have a long history of controversy and disbelief, we consider the evidence for both propositions (that many are abused and that many of those abused fail to remember the abuse) to be quite strong. In her 1996 book, *Betrayal Trauma: The Logic of Forgetting Childhood Abuse*, Jennifer Freyd has summarized evidence for the reality of childhood abuse and the reality of memory failures for childhood abuse.<sup>4</sup>

While the evidence is strong that some people forget real abuse, the evidence is also strong that memories are subject to error and distortion and indeed, that some memories are highly inaccurate. Memories vary from essentially accurate to essentially inaccurate for both recovered memories and never-forgotten memories. These issues are explored more fully in Freyd's article "Science in the memory debate"<sup>5</sup> along with a discussion of some of the ways science has been used and misused in the memory debate.

Our focus in this article is on understanding the role of communication on awareness of real abuse. We will be building upon Freyd's Betrayal Trauma Theory.<sup>6</sup> Freyd proposed a theory of betrayal trauma and betrayal blindness that attempts to account for how and why people forget childhood abuse and other intimate betrayals. Betrayal trauma refers to events that have a high level of social betrayal, such as being sexually abused by a parent, beaten by a partner or raped by a close friend. Betrayal blindness refers to the victim's tendency to remain unaware of betrayal, whether that betrayal be partner infidelity or childhood sexual abuse. Betrayal Trauma Theory offers an explanation for how and why victims may respond with betrayal blindness to betrayal traumas.

A crucial aspect of Betrayal Trauma Theory is to separate two broad dimensions of traumatic experience: life-threatening or fear-inducing aspects of the event versus social-betrayal aspects of the event. Each of these dimensions of the event is hypothesized to relate to different forms of later distress. When these different forms of distress all occur in the same person, that person may be diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, some people may have only some symptoms or forms of distress after a trauma, and we believe this is because of the underlying nature of traumatic events themselves.<sup>7</sup>

According to Betrayal Trauma Theory, traumatic events can be harmful to people in two fundamental ways. One dimension of harm is the

fear-inducing, life-threatening and terrorizing dimension of trauma. This dimension of trauma is hypothesized to be related to subsequent symptoms of anxiety, intrusive recollections and hyperarousal (for example, an exaggerated startle response). The other way trauma can harm is due to social betrayal. Betrayal Trauma Theory suggests that amnesia and unawareness are primarily related to the social betrayal aspects of a traumatic situation. Some traumas, like a violent rape by a partner, have high levels of both life threat/fear-inducing and social betrayal. Other traumas may be highly fear-inducing, but without high levels of social betrayal. An example would be a natural disaster followed by community cooperation.

Most important for this article, some traumas may have very high levels of social betrayal without a great deal of immediate fear-inducing life threat. An example of such an event would be slowly escalating incest between a physically affectionate father and his young daughter. Our focus in this article is on the social-betrayal dimension of negative life events, particularly childhood sexual abuse and the related forgetting and unawareness for these betrayal events. Betrayal Trauma Theory proposes that it is adaptive to forget certain kinds of betrayal — as in childhood sexual abuse by a trusted caregiver — because forgetting allows the relationship to survive. By not knowing about the abuse, the victim can continue to behave in ways that inspire mutual attachment, instead of pulling away and withdrawing and thereby risking abandonment or even worse treatment. In other words, abuse may be forgotten, not for the reduction of suffering, as has so often been assumed, but because remaining unaware of abuse by a caregiver is often necessary for survival. In addition to theorizing about why abuse is forgotten, in previous works on Betrayal Trauma Theory Freyd has proposed various cognitive mechanisms that could be involved in forgetting.<sup>8</sup>

The perspective offered by Betrayal Trauma Theory is, on the one hand, a perspective that emphasizes the individual victim's motivations and mechanisms and, on the other hand, a perspective that implicitly recognizes the social context surrounding the victim that creates the need for unawareness and forgetting. In addition, Freyd has argued that communication plays a crucial role in awareness, that knowledge gets transformed through communication in ways that profoundly influence awareness. The process of putting something into a narrative — into language — changes the way we think about and remember an event.<sup>9</sup>

Freyd also speculated about perpetrator dynamics, suggesting a pattern she called DARVO for Deny, Attack and Reverse Victim and

Offender. This DARVO pattern is hypothesized to be one that the perpetrator uses in response to attempts at victim disclosure.<sup>10</sup> In this article, we argue that DARVO and other perpetrator strategies not only help the perpetrator avoid accountability, but also impact victim awareness of the abusive events.

We will go beyond the earlier work on Betrayal Trauma Theory by integrating the social dynamics involved in the perpetration and perpetuation of abuse with not only mechanisms of forgetting, but also motivations for forgetting. We argue here that the very mechanisms that perpetrators use to gain access to their victims relate in important ways to the forces that underlie unawareness, silence and forgetting. In this article, we also consider other perpetrator methodologies for initiating and maintaining abuse and how these methodologies may impact victim awareness just as they support the abuse.

We believe that the search for the mechanisms underlying unawareness of abuse eventually needs to be multi-faceted one. There is no one mechanism or any one absolute way in which the memory is lost or kept. Ultimately we must examine the issues from political, societal, familial, community and individual levels (and the interactions of these various levels). We must take into account individual cognitive mechanisms and also social-relational mechanisms of how information can be kept from awareness. In this article, we seek to use such a multi-faceted and ecological approach to the questions of amnesia and unawareness of abuse.

### Developmental Issues of Knowing and Talking about Trauma

For young children, it is in dialogue with the parent that memory, and especially autobiographical memory, is formed. Parents create a framework with which they enable the child to develop a self and a memory framework of her or his own. How then would this impact memory for trauma? If a child discusses a traumatic event with a parent, is she or he more likely to recall that event later on? Gail Goodman of University of California at Davis and her colleagues investigated whether mothers' support, or lack thereof, would have a strong effect on children's subsequent recollection of a trauma.<sup>11</sup>

In their study of 46 children (ranging in age from three to 10 years) who were to undergo a Voiding Cystourethrogram Fluoroscopy (VCUG),

a very invasive and often humiliating procedure used when children have bladder or kidney problems, Goodman and her colleagues found that higher suggestibility (errors made because of misleading questioning) and poorer recall correlated with a mother who had no time to help her child through it. It appeared that the mothers who did not offer physical comfort to the child after the procedure, who did not explain the procedure to the child in advance or who did not verbally comfort the child afterwards had a negative impact on the child's memory for the event. Their children were more likely to make errors in recalling the events. Intriguingly, how distressed the child was during the exam was not related to her or his ability or inability to recall what happened.

When a traumatic event occurs, the child is likely to want to talk about the event with someone: to gain support, to validate the reality, to voice the pain and to connect with another. Some traumas are highly shareable (such as being bitten by a dog or experiencing an earthquake) and probably are discussed within the family. After speaking about a shareable event, a child is likely to be comforted, to be allowed to cry, to express anger or hurt and to talk about it until the emotional valence of the event dissipates and until the child can make sense of what occurred.

Some traumas however, are not so shareable, especially sexual abuse. Sexual abuse has great components of shame, humiliation and isolation and is often inexpressible in language. Additionally, children do not fully understand what has happened to them. Yet their silence has been demanded by the perpetrator. Together, all of these factors render sexual abuse unutterable. The child or family is likely to suppress discussion of the events. This suppression makes sense from a variety of perspectives: the child might not be believed, might be punished or rejected; the family might be shattered; the non-offending parent might feel responsible. It may be easier to resist reality than to risk losing one's family.

It is in discussing the full experience of the event that the event gets fully and stably understood and encoded. Language shapes what is recalled and highlights what is noteworthy. What about trauma that is not discussed — not made prominent, not made memorable? What would happen if a parent refuses to talk to the child about the trauma or tells the child that it is her fault that the abuse occurred? What happens to the child's memory for that event? Is it retained, if it is not shared? Further, what happens to the memory of an event if the child is told that what she remembers "never happened"?

### Disclosing Trauma

Kathy Pezdek and Chantal Roe of the Claremont Graduate School did a study on the suggestibility of memory for touch,<sup>12</sup> which has important implications for the study of traumatic memory — implications that are not usually considered. Frequently, the literature about suggestibility is applied to suggestibility toward false memories of events and especially toward false memories of sexual abuse. The conclusion is drawn that children and adults are vulnerable to the creation of false memories of sexual abuse when it did not actually occur. However, it is useful to consider the findings a bit more closely.

Pezdek and Roe found that it is easier to change a memory than to implant or erase that memory and, in their study with four- and 10-year-olds, implanting and erasing occurred at very similar rates. Perhaps then, this should be considered to indicate that children's memories are more changeable than implantable. These changes in the memory could be brought about by suggestions of the appropriateness, causes or severity of the events. Another suggestibility paradigm offering insight into this is the research on eyewitness testimony. In these studies, participants' memories for events (such as films of an auto accident) can be changed through suggestion. Elizabeth Loftus was able to change participants' memory for events they witnessed by suggesting details that did not actually occur.<sup>13</sup> When a child discloses, this research suggests that, more likely than being vulnerable to implantation of false memories, children are vulnerable to others changing what is remembered. This may then indicate that children's memories for events may be altered through talking, and when they speak of their abuse and an alternative reality is suggested, this may be what is encoded and remembered.

Children who disclose violence are sometimes met with reactions of denial ("It didn't happen," "You are lying") or accusations of wanting or instigating the abuse ("You led him on," "You wanted it, you are a whore"). Sometimes, they are believed but told to forget, or receive no reaction whatsoever. Nearly 14 percent of the mothers in a study by Jessica Heriot did not believe that their children had been abused and almost 12 percent of the mothers were unsure or inconsistent. Furthermore, the more attached the mother was to the perpetrator, the less likely she was to protect, support or believe her child. And the more severe the abuse, the less likely she was to take action or believe her child.<sup>14</sup>

It is possible that the findings of Goodman et al. on children who underwent invasive medical procedures could be extended to experiences of abuse. When mothers did not comfort or talk sympathetically to their children after the medical procedure, the children were more likely to make errors of omission and commission in later interviews. If a child has an incomprehensible sexual encounter with an adult and is then unable to discuss it with the mother, or if the mother is unsupportive, then perhaps that memory is more vulnerable to suggestion, or possibly the processing of the memory is stunted.

This leads to some questions that deserve further study. If the mother says, "That never happened, you are lying" and/or acts as though all is normal, what does this do to the encoding of the memory? What effect does this social-relational mechanism have on the awareness of the abuse? Can this in effect erase the memory for the trauma, as suggested by the Pezdek and Roe study? Can a suggestion that an abusive event never occurred actually cause the child to lose awareness of the event?

Returning to Pezdek and Roe's findings, children's memories are often alterable, if the right conditions exist (especially if the false event itself seems plausible within the child's autobiographical memory).<sup>15</sup> However, we propose that just as likely, if not more so, children are induced to forget that sexual abuse occurs. Freyd calls this "alternative reality defining statements" (such as "That never happened," "You are lying," "Forget about it") and posits that these statements may well have an effect on the subsequent amnesia for sexual abuse.<sup>16</sup> We theorize that children's memories for traumatic events can be erased or changed, or new versions of events can be implanted in dialogue with the non-offending parent. We also propose that the perpetrator's negations, suggestions and alterations can change memory for the events or perhaps even suppress memory. If the child is told that it is her fault, that she is to blame for the abuse or has led on the abuser, this may well alter her narrative and subsequent processing of the trauma. She may then incorporate this into her memory of the events and perhaps still retain a trace of the original events. Alternatively, the new narrative may replace the child's memory for the event, and take precedence. Just as a child can be convinced falsely that something happened,<sup>17</sup> a parent can also impose an alternative interpretation onto the events. If a child discloses to an adult that she has been abused, the parent may agree that the events occurred, but may say, "Yes, that happened, but you led him on; you wanted it." The parent may then be implanting false information and thus changing the child's perceptions of

the event. As a consequence, the event becomes labeled in the child's mind as, "I seduced my father into having sex with me," especially since this explanation has been made to seem completely plausible to the child through the perpetrator's grooming process. As mentioned earlier, the more plausible the implantation,<sup>18</sup> the more likely the child is to believe it to be true. As we will demonstrate, the perpetrator works very hard to convince the victim that she is as responsible for the abuse. If this is later reinforced by her mother or other significant adult, she is likely to replace conflicting narratives with the one that states that the abuse was her fault.

### Role of Blame, Self-blame, Shame and Humiliation

Blaming the child for the abuse allows the non-offending parent to remain in relationship with the abuser. This may be especially advantageous if the abuser is the partner, boyfriend or husband of the non-offending parent. It could perhaps be a way of resolving the cognitive dissonance that arises when she tries to reconcile the two thoughts of: "This man abused my daughter" and "This man is my husband and I am dependent upon his support." A similar function is attributed to the role of self-blame in the victim.<sup>19</sup> In order to preserve her relationship with the abuser, the child may sacrifice her self-view and transfer the blame to herself and her own actions. However, while this self-blame may allow the child to continue being in relationship with the abuser, it has long-term detrimental effects.

In a study by Curtis McMillen and Susan Zuravin, they compared the blame attributions and subsequent functioning of 154 low-income women. Women in the study who either blamed the perpetrator or blamed no one for the abuse seemed to fare better in a variety of spheres than women who blamed themselves or their family. Those who blamed themselves suffered lower self-esteem, decreased ability to feel comfortable with intimacy and higher relationship anxiety.<sup>20</sup>

There is as well a relationship between the level of sexual activity and resulting shame and self-blame. In their study of 666 women (192 of whom had been sexually abused), Patricia Coffey et al. found that increased levels of sexual activity in the abuse (that is, abuse involving penetration of some kind) were correlated with higher levels of self-blame and stigma (defined as feeling bad, ashamed, tainted).<sup>21</sup> This is material for further investigation: Does shame and/or humiliation have an effect on memory of abusive events?

## Abusers' Effects on Disclosure Process

It's important to digress for a moment and add to the issue of children's disclosures to non-offending parents and relatives. Typically, children disclose to their mothers first, and as mentioned earlier, the outcome of this early disclosure has significant impact on the sequence of events that occur in reaction to the abuse and in the child's subsequent processing, memory and experience of the event. While this is important, it is perhaps not sufficient to place the blame on the non-offending parent for efforts, or lack of effort, to protect the child. One piece of the puzzle that can offer insight on mothers' reactions to disclosure can be found in a feminist examination of the complex relationships that affect the mother.

Offenders are quite skillful at appearing trustworthy, at slithering their way into families and into the confidence of whomever they wish. An important component of the grooming process is setting up family members so that they side with him and discount the child. As mentioned earlier, the closer the mother is to the perpetrator, the more likely it is that she will remain loyal to the perpetrator and disbelieve and fail to protect the child.<sup>22</sup> Perpetrators can (and sometimes do) use this to their benefit. Further, the family dynamics when the abuser is a primary caretaker are important to note.

In Mary de Young's 1994 study on maternal reactions to abuse disclosures, many of the mothers were themselves sexually, physically or emotionally abused by the offender and felt they had no resources for survival should they choose to leave him.<sup>23</sup> Just as children may become blind to the betrayal of the perpetrator to save their relationship with him, the mother may do the same. Just as perpetrators seek out children who will be silent or not believed, perhaps they seek out similar qualities in the mother.

### Perpetrator Induced Amnesia

Freyd proposes that it is the element of betrayal that influences a child's memory or amnesia for the abuse.<sup>24</sup> According to Freyd, children must depend on caregivers for survival, but this is compromised in cases of abuse by caregivers. She suggests that people are natural detectors of betrayal,<sup>25</sup> and when betrayal is detected we remove ourselves from contact with the betrayer. In cases where the child is abused by a caregiver, the child must maintain attachment with the caregiver for survival, and in order to do, so must remain unaware of the betrayal. To remain aware of

the betrayal is to cause the child to detach from the caregiver, and thus threaten survival.

Freyd also examined several studies to parcel out the relationship of the victim to the perpetrator, and their recall of the abuse. In a re-analysis of data collected by several investigators, Freyd found that forgetting was significantly associated with incestuous abuse. Yet, in some cases, children become amnesic of abuse by a non-caretaker.<sup>26</sup> Elliott, Browne, and Kicoyne studied incarcerated sex offenders and found 32 percent were the parent of the victim, leaving a full 68 percent who were not in a primary caretaking role.<sup>27</sup> If the offender is not in a caretaking role with the child, and thus the child need not remain unaware of the abuse for survival, what then causes this amnesia?

### In Dialogue with the Abuser

As the studies mentioned earlier, children's memories for events are greatly influenced by dialogue as the event is occurring. What, then, would the abuser's words during the abuse do to a child's memory of the abuse? Can the abuser cause the child not to remember or increase the detrimental effects of the trauma? Can what the abuser says determine whether the child talks about what happened?

Just as mothers' dialogues with their children during events affect the child's encoding of memories, we propose that perpetrators create conditions conducive to unawareness by talking during the abuse. In looking at the means by which offenders gain access to children and maintain access to them, it seems that their very methods decrease the child's ability to talk about the abuse and increase the child's proclivity to forget the abuse. Specifically, we will examine the ways in which the perpetrator can groom the child for silence, betrayal, disbelief by others, unawareness and self-blame, and ultimately "groom" them for amnesia.

### Groomed for Silence

*You can spot the child who is unsure of [herself] and target [her] with compliments and positive attention.*

— Michele Elliott, Kevin Browne & Jennifer Kilcoyne<sup>28</sup>

Offenders choose children who appeal to them and who will not speak or will not be believed when they do speak.<sup>29</sup> In the Michele Elliott et al.

study, the child's appearance was important in choosing a victim, but not nearly as important as her behavioural characteristics. Offenders stated that they looked for children who were young or small, lacked confidence (49 percent cited this as the main way they decided whom to abuse) or had family problems and/or were alone.<sup>30</sup>

Anna C. Salter describes a teacher who gave his students self-esteem scales and then used the scores to determine whom to molest.<sup>31</sup> Another offender said, "Kids who felt unloved or not appreciated were easiest to victimize, they needed the love I gave them."<sup>32</sup>

Silence protects the offender from discovery and allows him to continue the abuse. Offenders choose children who are already isolated or will work to isolate the child. Methods of isolation include: making the child feel special (which causes her to depend on the abuser and may also make others jealous of the "special" relationship); turning family members away from the child; keeping her from having friends; and forcing her to focus solely on the abuser's needs.<sup>33</sup> The child may enjoy the special attention and may thus remain silent to preserve the good parts of the relationship. "There were moments I remember enjoying. I mean, I was the ugly one and this was the closest thing I had ever experienced to love because I really did feel unloved. The only physical affection that I remember were the incidents with my father."<sup>34</sup>

It is useful to note also that in studies of barriers to disclosure, adult survivors will echo the offenders' methodologies for ensuring silence. Thomas Roesler and Tiffany Wind surveyed 228 women survivors and found that their top reasons for non-disclosure included shame/guilt, fear for safety, loyalty to the perpetrator, fear of blame or punishment and fear for safety of family.<sup>35</sup>

### Groomed for Betrayal

*Unless the child and I like each other and find each other attractive, it doesn't work. I have to feel as if I am important and special to the child and giving the child the love she needs and isn't getting.*

— From: Michele Elliott, Kevin Browne & Jennifer Kilcoyne<sup>36</sup>

Offenders create a strong bond between the child and themselves — a bond that is ripe for betrayal. Even if the offender is not the primary caretaker, he can maneuver himself into a role in the child's life such that the child is highly dependent upon him for survival. Offenders may hang

out at playgrounds, meet children through friends or family, become child-care providers or baby-sitters or may even date single women with children so that they can abuse her children. Also, as some offenders choose children with already troubled backgrounds, who are insecure, who lack strong adult role models, who are vulnerable and/or lonely, they can easily wend their way into the child's life.

"... then I begin my game. I start out by saying something to him in a way to make him feel good about himself (e.g. 'Hey buddy, how's it going? It sure is good to see you, I've been thinking about you a lot lately. I think you're one of the neatest guys I know. You're more mature than most kids your age.') ... I showered potential victims with small gifts ... Kids really enjoyed the unexpected extras I showered them with. My purpose in the small gifts was to win the child's trust."<sup>37</sup>

This offender had an 80 percent "success" rate with the children he approached and molested up to 100 children both within and outside his family. It is important to digress for a moment and state that in the Elliott et al. study of 91 convicted offenders, 70 percent of the men had offended against one to nine children, 23 percent had abused 10 to 40 children and 7 percent abused 41 to 450 children.<sup>38</sup> These statistics are significant for a variety of reasons, but, for the purposes of this section, it is most useful to state that they indicate that these offenders are highly skilled at gaining access to children and at maintaining silence. Were they unable to keep the children from disclosing the violence, there is no way they could offend at the alarming rates they do.

Betrayal Trauma Theory proposes that children often forget abuse by caregivers, because remaining aware of the abuse threatens survival.<sup>39</sup> It seems as though perpetrators groom children for such a betrayal. By finagling their way into the family, by gaining the trust and love of the victim, the abuser is in effect making the child dependent upon him. If the child speaks of the abuse or remains aware of the abuse, she threatens the relationship and her own survival. Lucy Berliner and Jon Conte researched children's feelings about their perpetrators and the abuse. More than half of the children stated that they loved, liked, needed or depended upon their abuser. One child said, "At that time, I really needed love and he did love me and told me this. He made me feel like I was really important."<sup>40</sup>

Abusers want the children to be so dependent upon them, so trusting and so devoted to them that despite the abuse, the children remain silent;

and the children's feelings can then be exploited. One offender stated that he "counted on them loving me enough not to tell."<sup>41</sup> Abusers count on the children's desire to please, the children's dependence upon them and the family's trust in them to maintain the silence.

### Groomed for Disbelief

These perpetrators are not men most would consider dangerous to children; they are the ones people trust with their children. In order to maintain the relationship with the child and to ensure further access to the child, 20 percent of offenders also gain the trust of the family. One offender in the Elliott et al. study stated that because he was so beyond suspicion, he could abuse the child while the family was in the room.<sup>42</sup>

One offender describes his methods of stalking children and their families for months before even approaching them. He assessed their "interests, needs and weaknesses,"<sup>43</sup> so that he could approach them in a manner that would guarantee that they would be receptive to him. Offenders often place themselves in a role with the family that elicits a great deal of trust such as the role of coach, teacher or daycare provider. Salter quotes an offender who discusses his relationship to his victims' families, "In the meantime, you're grooming the family. You portray yourself as a church leader or music teacher or whatever it takes to make the family think you're okay ... And you just trick the family into believing that you are the most trustworthy person in the world. Every one of my victims, their families just totally offered, they thought that there was nobody for their kids than me."<sup>44</sup>

In the case of this offender, the family continued to deny that he hurt their children even after the offender confessed to the abuse, and they maintained a relationship with the perpetrator while he was in prison. By creating an environment where the family becomes more aligned with the offender than with the victim, the offender ensures that he will be believed over the child. Not only will he not be punished, but he will actually receive the family's blessing to continue having access to the child. Thus, when children do speak of the abuse, they are often disbelieved, discounted and blamed.

The following is a statement made by Patrick, a youth minister who admits to molesting "53 hands-on definite victims and 42 others that can be questioned [because of their age]":

"I knew if he told, there would be little or small amounts of belief in him. No one would believe him basically if he told. And in fact they didn't. When it became a bigger issue, when I was investigated, the

head of the department of my county said, 'You have nothing to worry about, we can tell from the very beginning that this is all a big scheme.' And it was dropped almost as quickly as it came about ... I had many people: counsellors, church leaders, leaders of the community to come up and stand in my defence ... I had a minister come to me and tell me, he said ... 'Roll with the punches and stick with it, you're doing a good job,' he said, 'and in the end, you'll be blessed for it.'"<sup>45</sup>

This offender later states that, "The more I got into my deviancy, the more I would try to do what was good in the eyes of everyone else." He further admits that his work as a minister, his work with disadvantaged children, his accomplishments in school, were all to cover up his offences. This is not uncommon among perpetrators, and it contributes to their double life, a life where their public selves are highly regarded and trusted by many, while molesting children in private.<sup>46</sup> Sex offenders create a persona for themselves that is highly trustworthy and credible, even in the face of disclosures of abuse. The youth minister quoted above said that people would respond to disclosures by saying, "We know him, and this is not something he would do." To which he responds, "And that is true, because I was very careful that they did not see that behaviour." Not only are offenders careful that the behaviour itself is not seen, but also that the behaviour can in no way be matched onto them. Consequently, others may not even be able to fathom the abuser doing anything harmful because they have come to trust and believe the perpetrator so. When a young girl disclosed that she had been raped and impregnated by her mother's boyfriend, the mother stated, "I would have a hard time believing that somebody in my home, who I loved and trusted, would hurt any of my children."<sup>47</sup>

When the abuser succeeds in getting others to believe him, he can then get them to blame the child. Offenders work to keep their victims in silence and to keep them discredited should they speak. As the youth minister quoted above stated, despite the fact that he had been caught twice before being incarcerated and despite the fact that he had at least 53 victims, he was able to convince those around him that the child was lying.<sup>48</sup> He skillfully convinced others that he was the true victim of false reports and that the actual victim is to blame for the course of events. Not only does this play on family members' or society's desire to trust the abuser, it plays into the child's own self-blame.



### Groomed for Unawareness

*Confusion and doubt are not only the experiential scar tissue of trauma, they are the cunning goals and purpose of the traumatizer. In a state of doubt the victim cannot recognize her or his own voice.*

— Gilead Nachmani<sup>49</sup>

Offenders may often create an environment in which the child really has no idea what is happening. By playing on the child's lack of sexual knowledge and the child's desire for connection, the offender can progressively increase the sexual aspects of their relations. Twenty-eight percent of the offenders in the Elliott et al. study slowly desensitized their victims, so that the sexualization of activities became normalized. Thirty-two percent framed the sexual activities as helpful to the offender.<sup>50</sup>

Desensitization and normalization activities are used to create a relationship in which sexual activity is a "natural" part of the relationship. Some offenders began by talking about sex, offering to teach the child about sex, asking the child about her own sexual attractions, leaving sexual materials lying around to pique the child's interest (or to use as an excuse for discussing sex) and slowly work up to touching. Forty-seven percent of the offenders used accidental touching as a way to gauge the child's reactions and to normalize physical contact.<sup>51</sup> Slowly and progressively, the child is seduced into a sexual relationship with the offender.

Perpetrators create an alternative reality, one in which the victim's sense of reality is denied. The person who gives her the most attention, the most affection, is the one hurting her. The offender seduces her into a relationship with him; he tells her he loves her, gives her presents, makes her feel special, all while preparing her for silence and abuse. Children who have little to no knowledge of sexual activities, who are vulnerable due to their age, lack of social support and level of insecurity and who gradually become dependent upon the abuser for affection and attention, are increasingly led into adult sexual activities for which they have insufficient knowledge or language. It is not a part of their reality and thus they have no way of processing normally what is occurring. Adding to that are the things offenders say to place their actions into an increasingly confusing, yet progressively "normalized" sphere of abuse. In the Elliott et al. study, 33 percent told their victims not to talk about the abuse ("because other children would be jealous" or "your mother wouldn't like it"); 42 percent told the children that it was just a game or necessary for their education; 24 percent threatened the child with physical

force or used anger to silence; and 20 percent told the child that they would lose the offender's love if they spoke.<sup>52</sup>

Some offenders place their activities so firmly in what is considered normal that secrecy does not even become an issue. They assure the child that the sexual abuse is a part of normal adult/child activities, that it is "what other little girls/boys do with their daddies," and may even tell the child that there is something wrong with her if she does not want to engage in the sexual activities ("You are being mean to daddy" or "You are frigid").

### Groomed for Self-blame

One offender said, "Secrecy and blame were my best weapons. Most kids worry that they are to blame for the abuse and that they should keep it a secret."<sup>53</sup> Offenders also place the blame on the child. To say, "It would hurt your mother if you told" places the culpability for the abuse squarely on the lap of the child. The offender's contention that the child wants the sexual contact and perhaps even instigated it, combined with the offender's coercion, create a great deal of shame and self-blame in the victim. Gail Wyatt and Michael Newcomb found that psychological coercion correlated with self-blame. The more the victim is manipulated into the abuse, the more she will take on responsibility for what occurred. They point out also that even years later, the victim will have difficulty in assigning blame to the perpetrator and will fail to see the coercion and manipulation in words such as, "If you have sex with me, I won't tell your mother that you seduced me." The child in this instance will likely believe that she did in fact seduce the perpetrator and thus is unlikely to disclose, as to do so would be to admit to her own responsibility.<sup>54</sup>

It is important to note that just as this serves as a methodology for seducing the child, the offender also uses it as a way to convince himself that the child is a willing participant. Carolyn Hartley studied the thought processes offenders use to decrease their own inhibitions about abusing. One of the four main distortions of thought was reducing responsibility. Offenders in the study convinced themselves that the children wanted or even invited the abuse, "It, it seemed like ... she really wanted me to do it. It really seemed that way."<sup>55</sup>

The abusers in this study were convinced that were the child to express displeasure, they would end the abuse. However, in the Elliott et al. study, only 26 percent said that they would stop the abuse if the child said no; 49 percent said they were not concerned about the child's distress and 25

percent said that they would continue the abuse even if it caused the child great distress.<sup>56</sup> This is important to keep in mind when judging responsibility for abuse and in critically analyzing offender statements. Perpetrators convince themselves that the child is an equal partner in the abuse and may convince others of the same. At least one in five perpetrators uses victim blame to deny culpability.<sup>57</sup>

Incarcerated offenders admit that they cause the children to respond as though they invite the abuse. "When they refused, he would act angry, 'sulk' and leave the room. Two of the girls just ignored his reactions. The daughter he offended more seriously felt sorry for him and re-engaged him."

R: "She came back and she felt sorry that I was down ..., 'Don't feel bad, dad. Don't feel down. It's okay.' And I can remember her saying that several times through the times I touched her. She didn't want me to do it ... And every time I had something that I did to her, almost every time, it was that she came back. That was my doing, that wasn't hers. I finagled her into that ... I knew she would ... I manipulated her into those [behaviours]."<sup>58</sup>

Another negative effect of victim blame is the exploitation of sexual arousal. Jan Hindman found that children who experience sexual arousal during the abuse are more likely to experience more severe long-term consequences of the abuse. The sexual arousal is interpreted by the offender as the child's experiencing the abuse as pleasurable. The child internalizes this and blames herself for the abuse.<sup>59</sup> Salter states that offenders will use the child's physical responsiveness to justify the abuse. "Because she is responding physically, she must really be enjoying it, therefore what I am doing is not wrong." While this is a normal response to physical stimulation, the child is likely to internalize it as wanting the abuse and is likely to feel shame for the arousal.<sup>60</sup> As adults, the victims may continue to feel shame for their physical reactions and feel that they were to blame for the abuse.<sup>61</sup>

The children are told that to talk about the abuse would tear the family apart and cause the involvement of the authorities. "If you tell, you're going to get into trouble ... They're going to throw you in jail. You'll never see each other again. The whole family will end up in jail, not just me."<sup>62</sup> Thus, the child is convinced that she is as much to blame for the abuse as the abuser and if she were to speak, she would wreak havoc on the entire family. So, not only is she to blame for the abuse itself, but if she were to speak of it, she would be to blame for the break-up of the family.

### Groomed for Amnesia

Her reality has been altered, her trust betrayed, her voice muted and her words disbelieved. The perpetrator has methodically conditioned his victim to endure the abuse in silence. All of these factors decrease the likelihood that she will disclose the abuse to another person. Therefore it is unlikely she will get assistance from anyone else in reappraising the events.

Perpetrators use the grooming process to confuse the child, to desensitize her, to normalize the abuse and to create a bond of silence. This directly interferes with the child's ability to know what is real and what is not and does not allow her to assign a coherent narrative to the abuse. Since she is also likely to be punished or disbelieved upon disclosure, or at least has been convinced by the perpetrator that bad things would happen were she to speak, she is unlikely to share what is happening. In not sharing, in not assigning a narrative to the abusive events, according to shareability theory, the information is likely to remain dynamic and sensory in nature and thus less accessible and retrievable.<sup>63</sup> In other words, the events are stored in the mind not as words, not as stories, but as fragments — dynamic, sensory fragments that cannot be easily spoken or shared. As the events are not shareable, they are also not knowable.

According to Salter, "Grooming presents enormous difficulties for survivors. At the heart of it lies the engagement, manipulation and betrayal of the child's trust. The depth of the betrayal is often much worse than the formal relationship with the offender would suggest, because he has used that formal relationship as a springboard to emotionally seduce the youngster in a much deeper way. The relationship with the offender is often not just a relationship, but a relationship of persuasive warmth."<sup>64</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the closer the perpetrator is to the victim, the less likely she is to be believed if she discloses the abuse.<sup>65</sup> If she is also dependent upon him for survival (physical or emotional), she may need to remain unaware of the abusive aspects of the relationship in order to stay in relationship with him, according to Betrayal Trauma Theory.<sup>66</sup> Because the perpetrator has worked so hard to create a relationship of love and trust, to remain aware of the betrayal would cause the victim to disengage and risk losing a vital relationship. She thus is likely to inhibit recollection of the negative aspects of the relationship and cling to the positive aspects.

The offender seems to work hard to create confusion and self-mistrust in the child and to cause the child to grow increasingly dependent not only

upon the abuser himself, but also on the abuser's version of reality. The child thus loses any trace of what is really occurring and is likely to "forget" the abuse. The perpetrator benefits when the child loses awareness of the abuse, as he can then continue to abuse her and other children without fear. In listening to the words of the perpetrators and in studying their methods for grooming and abusing children, it sometimes seems as though they engineer the entire process to implant amnesia of abuse in the child.

## DARVO

*I think that one of the biggest traits among child molesters is the fact that they lie.*

— Douglas Pryor<sup>67</sup>

Freyd proposed DARVO as a model of what happens when offenders are confronted with their abuses. DARVO stands for (1) Deny, (2) Attack, (3) Reverse Victim-Offender and fits in well with the methods offenders use to silence their victims. Just as offenders demand silence of their child victims, they demand continued silence as the child becomes an adult.<sup>68</sup>

### (1) Deny

As discussed earlier, perpetrators deny that they are abusing the child throughout the abuse itself. They deny to the child over and over that what is occurring is abusive; they deny their own culpability; they deny that the abuse is harmful; and they deny any control over what is occurring. This denial continues even after the abuse is disclosed. Through his work with sexual offenders, Gordon Hall has found six ways in which the perpetrators deny their actions after disclosure.

- *Outright denial:* Completely denies any responsibility and denies any truth to the allegations.
- *Amnesia:* Denies any recollection of its happening due to the passage of time, the use of drugs or alcohol and/or being asleep at the time.
- *Minimization:* Admits to some inappropriate behaviour, such as fondling, or states that the abuse occurred only once. Denies that penetration occurs or that it occurred over a longer duration. Also may

minimize effects to victim and denies that any violence occurred or that it had any negative consequences.

- *Projection:* Places culpability with the victim, or may blame drugs or alcohol or sexual addiction.
- *Redefinition:* May admit to being aggressive and having trouble with anger and states that this causes the sexual aggression.
- *Conversion:* Confesses to the violence, but states that he has been reformed and will never do it again or that he has suffered enough from his own guilt and depression.<sup>69</sup>

Elizabeth Mertz and Kimberly Lonsway call these types of denial "language games." An example they use is of a perpetrator who states, "I accidentally touched her when helping her into her pajamas."<sup>70</sup> This statement could of course be true. However, accidental touch is an early stage of desensitization in the grooming process and therefore touch such as this could be "accidentally on purpose," and a precursor to intensified sexual activities. Salter notes that children who disclose abuse while they are being groomed are at a particular disadvantage.<sup>71</sup> Although they may experience the contact or attentions as unwanted and uncomfortable, the actions are ambiguous and thus can easily be dismissed by the perpetrator or by non-offending adults. The perpetrator statement could also be an example of minimization on the part of the offender who, when confronted, minimizes the intentionality of the action: "It was just an accident."<sup>72</sup>

### (2) Attack

Offenders blame their victims for the abuse. They state that the child seduced them, that she wanted the abuse, that she needed it for her sexual education or that she deserved it. This blaming and attacking often continues when the adult discloses and may be blamed for "tearing the family apart."

She may be "diagnosed" (often without an actual examination) as having a "syndrome" or "disorder" that serves to locate her memories in the realm of a mental illness.<sup>73</sup> Mertz and Lonsway cite an offender who attacks his victim and her mother by calling them "overly sensitive, neurotic [and] angry."<sup>74</sup> Thus, she remembers or speaks of abuse because there is something wrong with her. If she seeks therapy because of her memories of abuse, the therapist is then attacked, because the therapy then

results in "shattered families and lawsuits ... Given their entrenched belief in recovered memories, they are perfectly capable of rationalizing away the palpable pain and bewilderment of the accused parents." <sup>75</sup>

### (3) Reverse Victim/Offender

R: "In this country, we're puritanical when it comes to sex. Others don't look at it like we do. Like in Sweden, eleven is legal, eleven or older. I don't know about other countries. It's looked on differently elsewhere ... If a twelve and fourteen-year old boy jack off [together], it's okay. But if I do it with them, then I should go to jail or be put in an institution." <sup>76</sup>

This quote is particularly interesting as it exemplifies the last two pieces of DARVO. The offender attacks society and its conventions by claiming that we are too "puritanical" in our views of sex. Then he calls himself the true victim of such a society and states that if he were to engage in "normal" sexual behaviour with boys, he would be punished.

By denying, attacking and reversing perpetrators into victims, reality gets even more confusing and unspeakable for the real victim. The victims' ability to perceive reality is distorted, removing the events and experiences even further from language. These perpetrator reactions increase the need for betrayal blindness. If the victim does speak out and gets this level of attack, she quickly gets the idea that silence is safer.

### Sociocultural Contributions to Abuse and Unawareness

We believe that there are cultural beliefs and values that allow the continued perpetration of sexual abuse and that deny the victim the right to a voice. Some of these abuse-supporting beliefs include:

- Parents, especially fathers, have the right to do whatever they please with their children.
- Family matters should be kept private.
- Adults are to be believed over children; their memories and perceptions are accurate.
- Child abuse happens, but after a certain age, the victim should just "get over it."

- There is great tolerance for acts committed while under the influence of drugs and alcohol. <sup>77</sup>
- Talking about violence and abuse is worse than the acts themselves. <sup>78</sup>
- Society is tolerant of sexual interest in children, <sup>79</sup> and believes that children have sexual desires and the ability to consent or not to sexual activities.
- Men tend to sexualize, <sup>80</sup> and cannot control themselves.
- Once a woman is sexual, she is tainted and any further sex cannot be considered rape.
- Children and women who allege abuse are themselves disordered.
- Memory, especially children's and women's memory and/or memory for abuse, is implicitly untrustworthy. <sup>81</sup>

Together these beliefs help bystanders support perpetrators of abuse. Individuals and larger social groups, who hold some or all of these beliefs, may not perpetuate abuse directly, but may nonetheless contribute to the perpetuation of abuse and to the continuation of silence.

### Talking as an Adult

*Awareness of the existence of sexual abuse of children is too painful and too threatening to encounter unmediated; hence, fully understanding responses include shrinking away from it or flatly denying its existence.*

— Lynn Henderson <sup>82</sup>

Intriguingly, just as a child who speaks of sexual abuse encounters resistance, blame and denial, the adult may find herself faced with similar disbelief. An adult who speaks of sexual abuse may also be told that she must "get over it," that she is confabulating or just trying to gain attention by fabricating trauma narratives. The results of Heriot's 1996 study on maternal protectiveness <sup>83</sup> offer insights into adult disclosure. Mothers are less likely to believe and protect if the offender is someone trusted and also less likely to believe and protect if the abuse includes penetration; perhaps this same pattern occurs when the victim grows up and talks about the abuse. If a woman describes fondling by a stranger, is she more likely to be believed than if she describes forced penetration by her father? If she describes abuse by someone no one trusts, as opposed to abuse by the "pillar of the community," does this alter how we as a society judge her

reliability? Take, for example, the documented abuse case of a seven-year-old girl who was strapped to a torture wheel, beaten and shown a sexually explicit film. The abuse was discovered accidentally when police investigated the drowning death of a three-year-old girl (whose autopsy indicated that she had been sexually abused).<sup>84</sup> Had the seven-year-old purposely disclosed the abuse, would she have been believed?

Given what we understand about the propensity of non-offending parents to disbelieve abuse disclosures when they involve severe abuse, it is likely that she would have been dismissed as confabulating. Had she come in and described scenes of torture, being strapped to a wheel, had she described the "somasochistic dungeon filled with whips, leather masks, a coffin and a guillotine,"<sup>85</sup> would the adults to whom she disclosed have taken her seriously? Would they have labelled her crazy or desperate for attention? Or might it have been suggested that the memories had been implanted by an unscrupulous therapist or a vengeful mother? And what will happen when she speaks of this when she is an adult?

Again and again women are ostracized for speaking of the abuse. Silence is reinforced; speaking is punished. Why is it that the act of speaking is more threatening than the act of sexual violence against women and children? A woman who disclosed the abuse to her mother describes her mother's reaction: "She told me that I had ruined her life."<sup>86</sup> The abuser did not ruin the mother's life; the daughter, by merely speaking the truth, did. Jon R. Conte describes the difficulty in empathizing with victims of sexual abuse:

"Many of us, when viewing the adult members of our families and communities who abuse their own children and noting the resemblances between those adults and ourselves, tend to overidentify with the offender and thereby minimize what they do. As a result, we connect not with the pain of the victims or the needs of the adult sexual offenders to be helped to control their own behaviour, but rather with what it would be like if we were removed from our homes, lost contact with our family or had to experience the other logistical and emotional problems that the incest offender faces when the abuse is disclosed."<sup>87</sup>

This stance is well explicated by the words used to describe the boys accused of raping a young woman in the Glen Ridge, New Jersey, gang-rape trial: "They're such clean-cut boys ... it's such a shame ... I'm a mother and I have such compassion for what they're going through."<sup>88</sup> Despite the fact that the boys did not deny raping the young woman, the

town rallied around them and insistently defended their actions and blamed the young woman. This overidentification with the perpetrator is alarming and unfortunately common.

Adults who speak of early traumas are blamed for infecting the culture with their narratives. They are told that their stories spread "'over the landscape like a stain' infecting the culture with a mixture of sorrow, depression and impotent rage."<sup>89</sup> The descriptions of abuse cause others to feel helpless; they force the culture to become aware of the traumas children endure and render the listener impotent to effect change. Women and girls finally begin to speak of the violences in their lives, finally feel as though they have a right to safety and a right to control their own bodies, and they are at once discredited and blamed for speaking. Fine et al. note that it is not the actual abuse or violence that causes society to fragment, but the act of speaking of the abuse or violence: "We watch the girl/woman wither as she sees her story be denied, denigrated, reconstituted or respectfully discarded ... Her demands for male accountability, once voiced, are considered shrill, partial and vengeful if repeated."<sup>90</sup> Is there a right way and a wrong way to speak of trauma? To criticize the manner in which women talk about the abuses they have experienced may serve to deny their experience and their right to discuss it.

## Further Explorations

Many of the issues that we have raised in this chapter regarding abuse, awareness, communication and perpetrator dynamics deserve further exploration. It may also be fruitful to draw parallels to related bodies of literature. For instance, culturally based denials of interpersonal violence and abuse and culturally based criticisms of those who speak about this violence and abuse are topics that feminists have explored in great detail over the past few decades. These topics have also been explored with a specific focus on incest and sexual abuse. A next step may be to connect these analyses by focusing on the ways perpetrators take advantage of the victims' needs to remain unaware and take advantage of society's complicity in that unawareness.

There is also a compelling similarity between the grooming process outlined in this paper and grooming techniques used to support other forms of violence such as political torture, preparation for war, domestic violence and rape.<sup>91</sup> This holds implications for further study into memory disturbances

and effects on processing in a variety of violent acts where the victim is slowly groomed for dependence upon the abuser and where the violent and abusive behaviours are normalized.

There also may be parallels between the grooming process in child sexual abuse and the victim's subsequent difficulty with understanding what is and isn't violent or abusive in later relationships. Perhaps "normalizing" past abuse leads the victim to ignore signs of abuse in other relationships and causes her to remain unaware and silent when violence is perpetrated against her in future relationships.

While more questions may have been raised than answered in this article, we have sought to shed light on issues that are of deep importance to humankind. Our particular goal has been to extend and bridge previous work on victim awareness, the role of communication and perpetrator dynamics. Much research remains to be completed. We have raised questions that beg empirical research. In other cases, clinical wisdom and conceptual consideration will be most valuable. We believe that the precision and rigor of scientific and scholarly approaches, combined with compassion and attention to lived experience, offer great promise for the study of abuse and individual and collective awareness for that abuse.

## Endnotes

1. Hanan Ashrawi, in Sapphire, *American Dreams* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), p. ix.
2. The preparation of this manuscript was supported in part by grants to Jennifer Freyd from the University of Oregon Center for the Study of Women in Society and a Summer Research Award from the University of Oregon. We are grateful to Ken Pope, Grant Fair, Louise Armstrong, Anna Salter, Cheryl Capek and Diana Cook.
3. Kasi Lemmons, *Eve's Bayou* (Trimark Home Video, 1997).
4. Jennifer J. Freyd, *Betrayal Trauma: The Logic of Forgetting Abuse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).
5. Jennifer J. Freyd, "Science in the Memory Debate," *Etics & Behavior* 8, 2 (1998), p. 8.
6. Jennifer J. Freyd, "Betrayal Trauma: Traumatic Amnesia as an Adaptive Response to Childhood Abuse," *Etics & Behavior* 4 (1994), pp. 307-329; Freyd (1996); Jennifer J. Freyd, "Violations of Power, Adaptive Blindness, and Betrayal Trauma Theory," *Feminism & Psychology* 7 (1997), pp. 22-32; and Jennifer J. Freyd, "Memory for Trauma: Separating the Contributions of Fear from Betrayal," invited chapter for Jon R. Conte (ed.), *Child Sexual Abuse: Knowns and Unknowns — A Volume in Honor of Roland Summit* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, in press).

7. Freyd (in press).
8. Freyd (1994; 1996; in press).
9. Jennifer J. Freyd, "Shareability: the Social Psychology of Epistemology," *Cognitive Science* 7 (1983), pp. 191-210; and Freyd (1994; 1996; 1997; in press).
10. Freyd (1997).
11. Gail S. Goodman, Jodi A. Quas, Jennifer M. Batternam-Faunce, M. M. Riddlesberger & Jerald Kuhn, "Predictors of Accurate and Inaccurate Memories of Traumatic Events Experienced in Childhood," in Kathy Pezdek & William P. Banks (eds.), *The Recovered Memory / False Memory Debate*, (San Diego: Academic Press, 1994), pp. 3-28.
12. Kathy Pezdek & Chantal Roe, "The Suggestibility of Children's Memory for Being Touched: Planting, Erasing and Changing Memories," *Law and Human Behavior* 21, 1 (1997), pp. 95-105.
13. Elizabeth L. Loftus, *Memory: Surprising New Insights into How We Remember and Why We Forget* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1980).
14. Jessica Heriot, "Maternal Protectiveness Following the Disclosure of Intrafamilial Child Sexual Abuse," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 11, 2 (1996), pp. 181-194.
15. Pezdek & Roe (1997).
16. Freyd (1996).
17. Pezdek & Roe (1997).
18. Ibid.
19. Curtis McMillen & Susan Zuravin, "Attributions of Blame and Responsibility for Child Sexual Abuse and Adult Adjustment," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 12, 1 (1997), pp. 30-48.
20. Ibid.
21. Patricia Coffey, Harold Leitenberg, Kris Henning, Tonia Turner & Robert T. Bennett, "Mediators of the Long-term Impact of Child Sexual Abuse: Perceived Stigma, Betrayal, Powerlessness and Self-blame," *Child Abuse and Neglect* 20, 5 (1996), pp. 447-455.
22. Heriot (1996).
23. Mary deYoung, "Immediate Maternal Reactions to the Disclosure or Discovery of Incest," *Journal of Family Violence* 9, 1 (1994), pp. 21-33.
24. Freyd (1996).
25. Leda Cosmides & John Tooby, "Cognitive Adaptations for Social Exchange," in J. H. Barkow, L. Cosmides, & J. Tooby (eds.), *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 163-228.
26. Such as Ross Cheit's case, as discussed in: Freyd (1996).
27. Michele Elliott, Kevin Browne & Jennifer Kilcoyne, "Child Sexual Abuse Prevention: What Offenders Tell Us," *Child Abuse and Neglect* 19, 5 (1995), pp. 579-594.
28. Ibid., p. 584.

29. Anna C. Salter, *Transforming Trauma: A Guide to Understanding and Treating Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995).
30. Elliott, Browne & Kilcoyne (1995).
31. Salter (1995).
32. Elliott, Browne & Kilcoyne (1995).
33. For more discussion, see: Kathleen Monahan, "Crocodile Talk: Attributions of Incestuously Abused and Nonabused Sisters," *Child Abuse and Neglect* 21, 1 (1997), pp. 19-34.
34. Susan Forward & Craig Buck, *Betrayal of Innocence: Incest and its Devastation* (New York: Penguin, 1979).
35. Thomas A. Roesler & Tiffany Weissman Wind, "Telling the Secret: Adult Women Describe Their Disclosures of Incest," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 9, 3 (1994), pp. 327-338.
36. Elliott, Browne & Kilcoyne (1995), p. 584.
37. Salter (1995), p. 75.
38. Elliott, Browne & Kilcoyne (1995).
39. Freyd (1996).
40. Lucy Berliner & Jon R. Conte, "The Process of Victimization: The Victim's Perspective," *Child Abuse and Neglect* 14 (1990), pp. 29-40.
41. Salter (1995), p. 88.
42. Elliott, Browne & Kilcoyne (1995).
43. Salter (1995), p. 68.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
45. Anna C. Salter, "Truth, Lies, and Sex Offenders" [Videotape No. 81492 of the series *Listening to Sex Offenders*] (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Video Productions, 1997).
46. *Ibid.*
47. Inara Verzemnieks, "Girl's Family Defends Man Accused of Raping 12-year-old," *The Oregonian* (August 21, 1997), p. B6.
48. Salter (1997).
49. Gilead Nachmani, "Discussion: Reconstructing the Methods of Victimization," in Richard Gartner (ed.), *Memories of Sexual Betrayal: Truth, Fantasy, Repression and Dissociation* (Northvale, NJ: Janson Aronson, 1997), p. 202.
50. Elliott, Browne & Kilcoyne (1995).
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*, p. 590.
54. Gail E. Wyatt & Michael Newcomb, "Internal and External Mediators of Women's Sexual Abuse in Childhood," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 58, 6 (1990), pp. 758-767.
55. Carolyn Copps Hartley, "How Incest Offenders Overcome Internal Inhibitions Through the Use of Cognitions and Cognitive Distortions," *Journal of Interpersonal*

- Violence* 13, 1 (1998), p. 35.
56. Elliott, Browne & Kilcoyne (1995).
57. Nathan L. Pollock & Judith M. Hashmall, "The Excuses of Child Molesters," in Gordon C. Nagayama Hall, *Theory-based Assessment, Treatment, and Prevention of Sexual Aggression* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 98.
58. Douglas W. Pryor, *Unspeakable Acts: Why Men Sexually Abuse Children* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), p. 141.
59. Jan Hindman, *Just Before Dawn: From the Shadows of Tradition to New Reflections in Trauma Assessment and Treatment of Sexual Victims* (Ontario, OR: AlexAndria Associates, 1989).
60. Salter (1995).
61. Hindman (1989).
62. Salter (1995), p. 90.
63. Freyd (1983; 1996).
64. Salter (1995), p. 81.
65. Heriot (1996).
66. Freyd (1996).
67. Pryor (1996), p. 27.
68. Freyd (1997).
69. Hall (1996).
70. Elizabeth Mertz & Kimberly A. Lonsway, "The Power of Denial: Individual and Cultural Constructions of Child Sexual Abuse," *Northwestern University Law Review* (in press).
71. Salter (1995).
72. For a thorough discussion of the denial tactics of offenders, see: Mertz & Lonsway (in press).
73. Kenneth S. Pope, "Science as Careful Questioning: Are Claims of a False Memory Syndrome Epidemic Based on Empirical Evidence?," *American Psychologist* 52 (1997), pp. 997-1006; and Kenneth S. Pope, "Memory, Abuse and Science: Questioning Claims about the False Memory Syndrome Epidemic," *American Psychologist* 51, 9 (1996), pp. 957-974.
74. Mertz & Lonsway (in press).
75. Mark Pendergrast, *Victims of Memory: Incest Accusation and Shattered Lives* (Hinesburg, VT: Upper Access, 1996), p. 197.
76. Pryor (1996), p. 182.
77. Hartley (1998).
78. Michelle Fine, Toni Genovese, Sarah Ingersoll, Pat Macpherson & Rosemarie Roberts, "Insisting on Innocence: Accountability by Abusive Men," in Brinton Lykes, Ali Banuazizi, Ramsay Liem & Michael Morris (eds.), *Myths about the Powerless: Contesting Social Inequalities* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), pp. 128-158.

79. Hartley (1998).
80. Ibid.
81. Sue Campbell, "Women, 'False' Memory and Personal Identity," *Hypatia* 12, 2 (1997), pp. 50-82.
82. Lynn Henderson, "Without Narrative: Child Sexual Abuse," *Virginia Journal of Social Policy & the Law* 4, 2 (1997), p. 481.
83. Herior (1996).
84. Melanie Burney, "Cops Probe Drowning, Find Dungeon," Associated Press (May 29, 1988, 20:42 EDT).
85. Ibid.
86. Fine, Genovese, Ingersoll, Macpherson & Roberts (1996).
87. Jon R. Conte, "The Incest Offender: An Overview and Introduction," in Anne L. Horton, Barry L. Johnson, Lynn M. Roundy & Doran Williams (eds.), *The Incest Perpetrator: A Family Member No One Wants to Treat* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990) pp. 19-27.
88. Fine, Genovese, Ingersoll, Macpherson & Roberts (1996).
89. Charles Baxter, in Will Hermes, "Too Many Stories: Are We Getting Paralyzed by Narrative Overload?" *Utne Reader* (October 1997), p. 41.
90. Fine, Genovese, Ingersoll, Macpherson & Roberts (1996).
91. For more information, see: Judith L. Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1992).