IDENTITY AND BEHAVIOR: EXPLORING AN UNDERSTANDING OF "BEING" AND "DOING" FOR CATHOLIC PRIESTS ACCUSED OF THE SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS IN THE UNITED STATES

By

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Abstract

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The problem of the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests in the United States has been problematized as a phenomenon that is, in part, a distinction of the priesthood. Although it is known that there are sex offenders in the world who are not, nor were they ever, priests, this study sets forth to uncover whether or not the priests in the sample are, in fact, different on typical psychological risk factors than the at-large sex offender. More importantly, in the absence of notable differences on risk factor characteristics, this study explores the ways in which narrative structures are used to tell difficult stories. It also supplements an understanding of the specificity of the problem of abuse in the Church, and the ways in which priests use both classic vocabularies of motive as well as vocabularies that are culturally rooted. The narratives paint a picture of the ways accused priests make sense of their identity as men, as moral leaders, and as men accused of sexual abuse, particularly as these are understood within the Catholic subculture of sin, repentance, and redemption. The specific risk factors described are deviant relationships to sexuality, social interaction deficiencies, and low esteem. In general, priests are no different on most of the measures, and when they are the comparative sample sizes are

small, requiring a cautious use of the findings to make universal claims regarding priests. What is unique to the priesthood is the trajectory of the story of coming to this peculiar master status, and the mechanisms for managing the allegations made against them which, whether true or not, interrupt the priest's narrative. Priests use similar stigma management techniques as other sex offenders with victims who are minors and/or adults. Some priests in this sample denied allegations outright or, when they admitted to them, engaged in the process of disavowal from the "sick self", often after they had received some sort of treatment. Admitters also used typical techniques of neutralization, the content of which, at times, were illustrative of an understanding of self as fallible and forgivable.

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Framework

Chapter 1 The Contemporary Crisis

Modern Moral Panic

The fervor with which the media covered the "child sexual abuse scandal" in the Catholic Church over the last decade has opened the door to a formal and more public study and analysis of this behavior as perpetrated by priests in the United States. Popular culture seems to argue that the priesthood has become a métier for pedophiles. Although the attention and focus on the crisis of abuse has exploded in this century, the phenomenon did receive some notice in the early 1980s. Gilbert Gauthe, then a 27-year-old priest in the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana, was said to have secretly abused a boy as early as 1972, the year of his ordination. In 1975, Gauthe's behavior was brought to the attention of diocesan authorities, although this would not be the first time Church leaders were to be notified of his abuse of young boys. When he was confronted by authorities, he simply indicated that the behavior was "imprudent" and would not happen again, and each time he was referred for some type of psychological treatment. But this behavior continued, and media reports claim that he abused hundreds of young boys until he was removed from ministry in 1983. Gauthe was criminally indicted in late 1984, accused of abusing no less than 39 minors when he was a priest, but admitting to the abuse of only 37 minors. He was finally convicted in 1985 on one count of aggravated rape for sodomizing a boy under 12 years old, and 11 counts each of aggravated crimes

against nature, committing sexually immoral acts with minors, and crimes of pornography involving juveniles.[1]

Another prominent case appeared in the *Boston Globe* in the early 1990s. A group of alleged victims was seeking compensation for abuses said to have occurred in the 1960s, but the accused, James Porter, a former diocesan priest of Fall River, Massachusetts, had already been removed from ministry in 1969, and formally laicized[2] in 1974. Like Gauthe, Porter's abusive behavior was brought to the attention of Church authorities as early as 1963, just three years after his ordination. By 1967, he was finally sent for treatment in New Mexico, and after two years of unsatisfactory reports, Porter was removed from active ministry. In 1992, Porter was reported to have admitted to abusing 50 - 100 minors, although in 1993 he only pled guilty to sexually abusing 28 children, and was subsequently sentenced to 18-20 years in a Massachusetts prison. In 2005 he died in prison of complications related to cancer.[3]

The discussion or public debate about priest sexual abuse in the first decade of the 21stCentury is informed not only by the earlier Gauthe and Porter cases, but also by that of former diocesan priest John Geoghan, who served in the Archdiocese of Boston. One

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[1] Berry, J. (1985). "The Tragedy of Gilbert Gauthe {Part I}**."***The Times of Acadiana.* May 23; Bishop Accountability website site – priest offender database downloaded July 23, 2009 http://bishop-accountability.org/member/index.jsp

[2]. . . to have Ordination or Solemn Religious Profession declared null and void. Essentially, the laicized individual is considered never to have held any clerical or religious rank in the Catholic Church.

[3] Bass, A. (1992, May 8). **"**Nine Allege Priest Abused Them, Threaten to Sue Church."*Boston Globe;* Franklin, J., & Matchan, L. (1993, December 7). "Porter gets 18-20 years: 22 describe ex-priest's abuse, impact on their lives." *Boston Globe* Archive; Unknown. (1992, July 2). "Anguished Cries Fell on Deaf Ears Despite Evidence, Church Muffled Charges That Rev. Porter Sexually Abused Children." *Boston Globe*. Bishop Accountability website site – priest offender database downloaded July 23, 2009 http://bishop-accountability.org/member/index.jsp

civil lawsuit reported that abuse began as early as 1973, just over 10 years after Geoghan's ordination. Other accounts indicate that Church leaders were made aware of the accusations against Geoghan as early as 1984. Geoghan is said to have "retired" from active ministry in 1993, and the first civil lawsuit against the Church pertaining to this case was filed in 1996. Geoghan was finally defrocked (laicized) two years later, and, in 2000, he was convicted of fondling a 10 year old boy, although he was purported to have abused up to 130 victims. Geoghan was murdered in prison in 2003.[4]

More recently, we see the revelation "across the pond" of a "crisis" of maltreatment, inclusive of sexual abuse, of youngsters in the care of Catholic priests and sisters in Ireland (Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, 2009). The cases in Ireland are unique to residential schools and included non-sexual abuse, spanning from the 1930s through the 1990s, when most of the facilities were closed. Nonetheless, those charged with the task of modeling higher standards of behavior have been exposed as having engaged in behavior that is "vile" and abusive. The media reporting has called the problem "endemic" in the Catholic Church.[5]

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[4] Paulson, M. (2001, January 30). "Law Added to Suits against Ex-Priest."*Boston Globe*; Lombardi, K. (2001, March 23). **"**Cardinal sin**:** Sex-abuse victims of former priest John Geoghan charge that Cardinal Bernard Law was told of Geoghan's criminal activity as early as 1984 but did nothing to stop it. Now they want to know why." *Boston Phoenix;* Burge, K. (2002, January 19). "Geoghan found guilty of sex abuse: Boy was assaulted at Waltham pool." *Boston Globe*; DeMarco, P. (2002, January 20). **"**Geoghan's alleged victims set hopes on his next trial**."***Boston Globe*; Bishop Accountability website site – priest offender database downloaded July 23, 2009 http://bishop-accountability.org/member/index.jsp

[5]McDonald, H. (2009, May 20). " 'Endemic' rape and abuse of Irish children in Catholic care, inquiry finds." *Guardian.co.uk (Ireland)*; Sharrock, D. (2009, May 20). "Ireland unveils long-awaited report on Catholic child abuse." *Timesonline.co.uk.*

Again, in spring of 2010, in the early days of the Catholic Lenten[6] season – one of redemption and rebirth, Pope Benedict XVI was drawn into the scandal as the result of an allegation against a priest in his charge in Germany in 1980. The pope was accused of not having done enough to respond to the abuse, fueling conspiratorial views that the Church has been engaged in a long time cover-up of sexual abuse. It is not the response of the Church that is the focus of this study, but the abundance of media coverage on the topic points to the relevance of the scientific inquiry into the phenomenon of abuse in the Church.

While the media focuses on offenders who have multiple victims over long periods of time, or on those who have re-offended after being removed and/or treated and then returned to ministry, ". . . these offenders are unusual both in the Church and in the population of non-clergy sex offenders" (Mercado, Tallon, & Terry, 2007, p. 5). Evidence suggests that the cases presented in the media are atypical, given that data derived from a 2004 study investigating this behavioral trend found that only 4% of priests (approximately 4300) over five decades (1950 - 2002) had been formally accused, and that a majority (55%) of those accused had *only one* formal allegation. (John Jay College, p. 51) As we know from other criminal justice and victim reporting data, the numbers of known cases of priest offenders may be underestimated. The data collected in the context of the current study offers a glimpse into an understudied and often

[6] According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "the real aim of Lent is, above all else, to prepare men for the celebration of the death and Resurrection of Christ…the better the preparation the more effective the celebration will be. One can effectively relive the mystery only with purified mind and heart. The purpose of Lent is to provide that purification by weaning men from sin and selfishness through self-denial and prayer, by creating in them the desire to do God's will and to make His kingdom come by making it come first of all in their hearts." http://www.catholicity.com/encyclopedia/l/lent.html. Retrieved April 16, 2010.

misunderstood subject. Of all of the criminological concepts that are available for exploration, the "dark" figure of crime for sexual abuse may be one of the most difficult to assess. But, given the reporting wave in the Catholic Church at the turn of this century, and the fact that there was consistent media coverage and pervasive visibility of direct service and advocacy organizations for individuals experiencing childhood sexual victimization, John Jay College (2004) figures can be considered stable and representative of actual incidents and offenders. In fact, since the John Jay College report, data on the incidents of sexual abuse collected by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) and published by the USCCB Office of Child and Youth Protection, shows similar historical trends in incidents of behavior, with overall reports dropping dramatically since the "Boston scandal" in the United States. (2003; 2004; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008) Today, less than 5% of incidents included in the CARA data represent present day behavior from (1995 - 2008). All things considered, since social norms restrict sexual interactions between adults and minors, and a cultural practice in the Catholic Church of celibate chastity for priests limits sexual behaviors in general for these men, the data indicating that 4% of priests in ministry 1950 – 2002 were accused of the sexual abuse of a minor is actually considerable.

The media cases presented above are extreme, and support the common perception that those who sexually victimize children are predatory and persistent offenders, acting in a normative vacuum, somehow existing outside the situational contexts within which all other "moral citizens" live. The non-stop yearlong media focus on Geoghan's case brought to the fore thousands of reports of sexual victimization of minors. It also brought about critiques of the response of the Church to both victims and

accused priests. Yet this study is *not* designed to focus on these criticisms, or the retribution or recovery of victims, or even the punishment, management, and rehabilitation of offenders. The present study intrepidly sets forth to uncover factors that may be associated with patterns of the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests, and highlights the problems associated with sampling and measurement. The ideas addressed in the following chapters have been prompted by the need to explore the phenomenon from a more culturally located and critical micro-level perspective. While assessing risk factors as measured in the *Identity &Behavior (I & B)* survey is part of the task, it is clear that there has been no one casual factor attributable to the sexual abuse of a minor. This study cannot assess causality, and is oriented toward a sociological interpretation in order to understand identity and behavior, as these concepts relate to the priesthood and sexual abuse.

The methodological approach in this study is two-fold, using surveys containing both closed and open-ended responses, as well as interviews with accused and non-accused priests serving in dioceses in the United States. Additionally, archival data is used to validate the sample. This study constructs a multi-dimensional depiction of the phenomenon of sexual abuse by Catholic priests in order to better understand individual, situational and cultural factors which contribute to overtly sexually abusive behavior. In particular, the study explores the ways in which a priest's understanding of the relationship between his professional or clerical role (master status) and his self-identity is situated within the Catholic culture of redemption, and how this is associated with offending. There is a cultural disconnect between the public perception of a priest as a devoutly chaste man and as a man who engages in sexual behaviors with minors. Yet

these behaviors did and do occur within the context of Catholic beliefs and practices, and serve as a reminder to all human beings, including priests, of humanity's fallibility and potential for redemption. Thus a tension or contradiction is present between being a "spiritually fertile" leader of the Church, as well as a fallible human. In this context, a priest accused of the sexual abuse of a minor may present self and role perceptions and narratives differently than those priests with no allegations.

Purpose and Questions

Cases against the accused clerics have been brought to the attention of church leaders and, given the zero tolerance response (*see Appendix A*), priests are removed from active ministry until the allegation can be substantiated or refuted within the structure of the judicial process of the Catholic Church. It is important to note that cases may not have been reported to criminal authorities as a result of the statute of limitations. This study uses mailed self-report surveys to obtain data for analysis of risk factors and a sample of interview participants, as well as to explore qualitative cultural interpretations of identity and behavior. The method of distributing surveys through dioceses was chosen as the optimal method of data collection, given that most members of the population of interest, (priests accused of the sexual abuse of a minor) were not found guilty or even charged in the criminal justice system, and therefore were not accessible using typical forensic sampling techniques. These priests were not in criminal facilities, but were, and often still are, in contact with the diocese from which they were removed. It is important in the process of acquiring the sample to provide accused priests with an instrument with which they can sit and reflect, while also allowing them the opportunity to have an anonymous voice without having to directly interface with church leaders. Upon

reflection, if the participant so chose, he was able to interact with church leaders to facilitate his participation in an interview. A participant need not have completed the survey in order to consent to an interview.

The purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which the Catholic culture of redemption relates to a priest's understanding of his professional role and self-identity, and how these may present differently for those accused of the sexual abuse of a minor compared to those with no allegations. In particular, the study seeks to understand how the priests made and make sense of the relationships between their master status (vocational/priest) and their *self*-identity. An obvious tension or conflict between these two identities is present for priests who have been accused of sexual abuse, and interviews show how the reconciliation of the conflict is rooted in the particular culture of temptation, sin, contrition, redemption. Interactive and reflexive processes of identity management serve as a means to this reconciliation. Priests with personal narratives, and the culture, practices, and standards of the church all interface to create contexts that have made room for the sexual abuse of children. In order to structure an understanding of the stories told by priests after the crisis of 2002, to support the application of cultural criminological thinking in other organized or semi-organized subcultural contexts, *and* so as not to simply "demonize" or "pathologize" offenders, it is important to consider the following questions:

1. What, if any, risk factors are associated with the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests?

2. How does an individual interact with traditional narrative structures as he talks about his identity incongruities in a given cultural context, particularly when these are uncomfortable stories inconsistent with the dominant discourses on sex?

3. What is the relationship of the individual to his cultural context and to his understanding of his own behavior as he engages in the process of identity management?

4. In the "life course" of a man taking on the role of the priest in the context of temptation, lapse and redemption, what vocabularies of motive specific to the Roman Catholic Church are drawn upon to help make sense of the conflict between the sex offender and the chastely celibate priest?

In effect, by conducting an analysis of quantified survey responses, open-ended replies and follow-up qualitative interview content, this study is able to uncover the context of the sexual abuse of minors by men vowed to celibate chastity. In addition, this study yields information about the ways in which these men engage in the processes of identity-making and manage the complexities associated with the ontological change integral to the *Sacrament of Holy Orders*. The operationalization of the variables is further discussed in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 2 - Conceptual Mapping: Reviewing Prior Research

Statistical Snapshot: Comparing Offenders

Although there is a "hidden figure" of crime, it is still important to make a best effort to paint a picture of sex offenders given what *is* known. One way to do this is to analyze the data that prior researchers have been able to collect on sex offenders and priest sex abusers. Data *commonly referenced*, and easily understood by the general social culture, in terms of discussing the extent of the (non-Catholic) "problem of crime" is derived from official reports to criminal justice agencies, as well as using information collected nationally from victims. The victim data is inclusive of victim accounts that may not have been officially reported to criminal justice agencies. From these sources, as well as from findings derived from forensic samples of sex offenders, researchers are able to talk in limited ways about individuals identified as having committed one of the following: a wide range of offenses against minors (victims age 0-17 years old), *sex* offenses against adults and/or minors, or sexual assault *specifically* against minors. Knowing something about the at-large populations in these categories provides context for understanding some proportion, albeit a limited one, of priest offending. Although there is self-report data available, this comparative snapshot of priest and at-large sex offenders is a generalized comparison of data readily accessible to the public discussion of sexual abuse.

Comparing "risk factor" data derived from priests accused of the sexual abuse of minors to those in the general population of known sex offenders is helpful in dispelling

the myth of the archetypal "pedophile priest," conjured up as an explanation for the recent trend in reports of offending by priests. This image suggests that seeking out the lifestyle of a priest, which includes access to young people as well as commitment to a "deviant" non-sexual lifestyle is, in itself, odd. As a category, the Catholic priesthood is pathologized and stigmatized on the whole, when, in fact, it is only a small proportion of priests who have been identified as abusers. While correlates of sex offending for those offenders with adult victims and those with youth victims indicate variations between the two offender types, the differences are negligible. Variables that some researchers call predictors or risk factors for sexually offending against minors can be shown to correlate with an increase in vulnerabilities for offending, but the presence of these variables does not by any means constitute s guarantee that an individual will sexually offend. The brief statistical snapshot presented is simply a backdrop against which to consider the overall statistical findings pertaining specifically to those priests included in the samples obtained for analysis in this study.

A 2004 study of the United States sexual abuse crisis provides data for several thousand (4,392) Catholic priests who had been in active ministry from 1950 – 2002 (John Jay College, 2004). According to these data, only 24% (n=1021) of accused priests were reported to the police, and only 9% (n=92) of those reported to the police were charged with a crime (John Jay College, 2004). Thinking about this last statistic, those 92 men who were charged with a crime account for only 2% of all accused priests in that sample. Few of these men were introduced into any forensic samples of sex offenders, which is the way "child molesters" are most often studied.

Suggested explanations for low reporting to police agencies are twofold. The first is that the culture of understanding of victimization was different in the 1960s, 1970s, and even in the early 1980s when the bulk of offense were reported to have occurred. Sex crimes were still situated in the realm of the "personal", and criminal interventions were in their infant stages. The second explanation is that, given delays in reporting, sometimes up to 30 years later, the statute of limitations for criminal prosecution may have expired in many instances. Regardless of official criminal status, Catholic priest offenders can be compared to lay or non-cleric specific populations of known sex offenders on key characteristics, shown in below.

An analysis of data for sexual assault (or forcible sex offenses)[7]extracted from the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)[8], and other statistics from the Bureau of Justice allows for the construction of a loose "profile" of the sex offender, as seen in *Table 1*. Overall, the individuals who are reported to have sexually abused a minor are generally white male adults in their middle 30s, who are known to the victim, and are more often an acquaintance rather than a family member. They often have the opportunity to encounter the victim in some familiar residence or surrounding, rather than in a public space or temporary setting (i.e., car, park, swimming pool, etc.).

Data shows that offending priests are nearly always white (99%) when compared to the at-large offender population. This makes sense given that the population of Catholics in the United States has been largely white, and it is this population from

[7] Any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. Four categories: forcible rape, forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and forcible fondling (Snyder, 2000, p. 13).

[8] . . . analysis of data from 1991-1996, derived from reports by policing agencies in 12 states.

whence priests have been most often drawn for seminary, particularly prior the turn of this century.

Table 1 Sexual Abuse of Minors: At-large & Priest Offender Comparisons

		At-large Sex Offenders[a]	Priest Sex Offenders[b]
Race	White	74% (N=219)	99% (N=4257)
Age at incident	Central Tendency	32 – 38 y/o	35 – 39 y/o
	35 years +	46% (N=136)	57% (N=1812)
Offense Location	Occur in a Residence	70%	65% (N=5902[c])
Social Relationship	Family	34% (N=19,639)	<1% (N=39)
	Acquaintances	59% (N=34,079)	50% (N=2638)[d]

[a]Data for *race*, *age* and *location of offense* for at-large offenders are derived from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC). *Summary of Sex Offender Characteristics 1992, Intake Sample Population. Social relationship* statistics for at-large offenders are derived from "Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement: Victim, Incident and Offender Characteristics." *NIBRS Report, 2000*. Base for victim identified offender characteristics: N= 57,762 for data collected in 1991 – 1996.

[b]*Nature& Scope* data (John Jay College, 2004, pps. 43, 44, 51, 80, 82).

[c]Based on victim reports, not number of priests.

[d]Based on data measuring "socializing with victim/victim's family" One cannot assume that because a priest is ministering in a parish, that he will actually meet all parishioners. Some parishes are extremely large.

Comparing the central age range at the time of offense, the average age of the individuals in 2004 priest sample is slightly older, although not by much, than the average age of the known at-large "child molester." About 10% more priests fall on the older side (35+ years old) of the central age range (*Table 1*). In order to get a sense of

what this means in general, one can look to the United States Census statistics for the age distribution of the overall population of men falling in the central age range population demographic. The most recent statistics indicate that 17% of the adults in the United States are men between the ages of 35 – 44 years old.[9] Both at-large offenders as well as priest offenders are three times as likely to come from this age group. That said, if we consider the variable of age alone, we might conclude that any man in this age group is a potential sexual abuser of children and adolescents. This is an extremist interpretation. There is, of course, no way of knowing how many 30-something men in the United States are actually sexually abusive of either adults or minors. However, we do know that it is the confluence of characteristics presented as correlates for offending that yield the most "predictive" of models for offending, although these models must be interpreted with caution.

Considering the relationship of the offender to victim, conceptualized as family member or acquaintance, statistics in *Table 1*show that although about one-third of the at-large offenders are family members of the victims (thus defining the behavior as incest), and well over half are acquaintances. Priests do have unique affiliations with the laity in general, as well as with specific parishioners and those with whom they interact in both sacramental and ministerial roles. They are not "family" in the blood or nuclear sense of the concept, but they could be considered to have a role that is, at times, more intimate than an acquaintance, and they are certainly not "unknown strangers." Priests do have blood relatives (least often children), but the data show that reports to the church were almost never made about priests abusing their own family members (<1%, *Table 1*).

[9]U.S. Census Bureau Census (2000) Summary File 1.PHC-T-9.Population by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Origin for the United States.

However, it might be said that priests fill a "parental" or extended familial role for some Catholics who actively socialize with priests, or seek counsel in times of need.

A majority (85%) of abusive priests were pastors, associate pastors, priests in residence, or teachers in the diocese at the time the alleged incidents occurred. (John Jay College, 2004). However, socialization with the family, a better measure of social contact indicating that one is closer than a stranger yet not as intimate as family, is a valid measure to compare with at-large offenders. The 2004 data show that only half of the accused clerics in that sample actually socialized with the victim/victim's family at the time of the incident. Yet we must also consider the special roles of clerics in the lives of the active Catholic laity. The remaining balance of priests who did not socialize with victims, but were also not family members of victims, cannot be considered actual strangers to their victims. They are not the mythical man jumping from the bushes or offering candy on the street corner. As indicated, a majority of offending priests were affiliated with the diocese in a role that is somewhere between stranger and acquaintance, particularly given the fact that a priest is someone with whom one can have deep personal conversations and seek counsel, or with whom one can engage in the intimate Sacrament of Reconciliation (confessing one's sins).

No extant research points to characteristics of offender race, age at offense, or relationship to victim as predictors of offending. Rather, these characteristics, as shown in *Table **1***, are evident for *non-random* samples of offenders. The "official" data characterizations commonly presented as stronger "causal" indicators contributing to criminal behavior are linked to the following: history of offender's substance abuse, behavioral problems, developmental vulnerability (childhood instability or family

problems), and physical or sexual victimization. This last factor is presented as notably important and specific to sex offender pathology. Plenty of individuals report similar difficult or problematic histories, yet they never. This supports the critical criminological perspective that associating these historical factors with sex offending is problematic. Given what we do know, though, can we say that priest offenders are "sicker" or more "predictable" than at-large offenders?

As the "sickness" of sex offending is commonly explained by a variety of static "causal" factors like sexual deviance, social interaction deficiencies, or low self-esteem, *Table 2* is a statistical comparison of forensic samples of sex offenders using disaggregated data in order to pull out descriptions of those with victims who are minors. These data are difficult to glean from many of the official data sources. The at-large sample is compared to known characteristics of priests accused of the sexual abuse of minors, which was collected as a part of the clinical segment of the *Causes & Context Study* (Terry, 2011), the umbrella study under which data for the current *Identity & Behavior (I & B)* data are derived. Any comparisons are helpful but limited because all of this is data may be incomplete, inadequately conceptualized, or most certainly, under reported.

Table 2 At-large & Priest Offender Causal Factor Comparisons

		At-Large Sex Offenders [a, b]	Priest Sex Offenders [c]
Substance Abuse History	Drug only	37% (N=54)	15% (N=14)
	Alcohol only	36% (N=53)	33% (N=32)
Behavioral Problems	Mental health history	41% (N=64)	66% (N=73)
Abuse in Childhood	Physical	9% (N=26)	11% (N=12)
	Sexual	10% (N=30)	35% (N=39)
Childhood Instability [d]	Absent caregiver	46%	5% (N=5)
	Living disruption	12%	29% (N=23)
	Familial substance abuse	31%	47% (N=46)

[a]Statistics for substance abuse history and mental health problems for at-large offenders in this table are specific to sex offenders with youth victims. These are derived from the *Summary of Sex Offender Characteristics 1992, Intake Sample Population.* The data from this report have not been updated. The population of this report includes all sex offenders entering the Ohio prison system, April 15, 1992 - June 12, 1992. Statistics from this report, as well as the following one, are used because the data are disaggregated by child, teen and adult victims. Data were reanalyzed, and those with adult victims were removed. The data are not out of date, as many of the accused priests actually offended well before 2002, when 85% of the incidents of abuse were reported.

[b]Statistics for *childhood abuse history* for at-large offenders are specific to sex offenders with youth victims. These are from the *Profile of ODRC Offenders Assessed at the Sex Offender Risk Reduction Center* (2001). The sample of this report is sex offenders assessed in the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's Sex Offender Risk Reduction Center, January 1, 1999 - May 31, 1999.

[c] Priest statistics are derived from the *Causes & Context* clinical segment (pending publication, 2011).

[d] *Childhood instability* figures for at-large offenders are for *all* types of offenders, and are not disaggregated by offense type. The included figures are from *Criminal Offender Statistics*. (BJS, 1997). Sample sizes are not clear.

On an anecdotal note, in reference to how an accused cleric might relate to or understand some of these risk factors (namely, substance abuse), one priest who admitted to his offenses said of himself in the *I & B* interview, "I did not drink – I had to practice drinking wine so that I would not spit out the Blood of Christ! I had my first beer when I was 36 years old. That's the kind of guy I was." This cleric juxtaposes himself to yet another archetype of the priesthood – the "whiskey priest" who is literally a drunkard, and brings with him shame on the priesthood. Upon examination of the comparative data (*Table 2*), what is evident is that the priest sex offenders with victims who are minors are half as likely to have drug abuse problems, but are no more or less likely to have alcohol problems than the at-large sample. In fact, neither of these substance abuse history measures is reflective of a majority of offenders in either sample.

Proportionally, priest offenders are rarely victims of childhood physical abuse, as is the also case with at-large offenders. Priests are dramatically (nine times) less likely to have had an absent caregiver in childhood than at-large offenders. But priest offenders actually have higher proportions on several indicators than the at-large offender. The first is mental health history. Two-thirds of the priests in the sample have some indication of a history of mental health issues. This particular variable is the only one for which a majority of either sample is represented.

A few things can be said of this difference between priest offenders and at-large offenders on the variable measuring the presence of mental health problems. The first is that many individuals have histories of mental health issues, from depression and anxiety to psychotic disorders, but this does not mean that they sexually offend, or even engage in other criminal behaviors. Secondly, those in the priest sample are in a *residential*

psychological treatment facility, while those in the at-large sample are in a criminal facility. Thirdly, the measure of mental health history only assesses presence or absence of that history, not the type, and the clinical staff is more apt to note in the cleric's file the presence of a history of mental health issues than those conducting intakes for incarcerated samples. Lastly, having a mental health history is not indicative of mental instability.

Priest offenders are three and one-half times more likely to have histories of childhood sexual abuse than at-large offenders, but this difference still accounts for only one-third of the priests in the sample. It is clearly not the only predictor of import for either sample, but it does constitute one of the most notable differences between offender groups. The overall goal of this study is to better understand what is going on with *priest offenders*. Therefore, the known differences between at-large and priest offenders are not of primary concern.

Two childhood instability measures are of import for priests, although there is a lesser difference found between clerics and at-large offenders. Priests are about two and one-half times as likely to have had living disruptions (inclusive of multiple moves and foster care), although this only accounts for just over one-quarter of the priest clinical sample. Additionally, priest are one and one-half times as likely to have a family history of substance abuse, representing nearly half of the clerics, compared to only about one third of at-large offenders. As a reminder, these particular childhood instability measures are not specific to abuser with victims who are minors because available data were not disaggregated.

A variety of factors could explain the differences between priest and at-large offenders evident in *Table 1* and *Table 2*, but these differences are not the subject of this paper. The important differences for the current study are those between accused and non-accused priests as these differences manifest on a variety of "risk factors" assessed in this study. However, the discussion section of this paper does explore how the patterns uncovered relate to what is already known about at-large sex offenders. The official figures for sex offending depict the identity of the sex offender as a relatively immutable defining characteristic, reducing the individual to a distinct criminal behavior, perhaps destined to be this "thing" by his own unfortunate circumstances, sometimes ones that cannot be changed when the offender reaches adulthood.

The statistics do not report whether the at-large offenders are doctors, janitors, homeless men, or even Catholic priests. There are no clear data to show exactly how many offenders are leaders of various religious entities entrusted with a moral master status and the trust and care of a "congregation" with members who are also minors. Anecdotal reports lend evidence to support the case that along with Catholic priests, Rabbis, teachers, coaches and scout leaders also have been accused of sexual misconduct with a minor. For example, in April, 2010, an Oregon state court, held the Boy Scouts of America civilly responsible for what was called "the persistent abuse" by the court of a now 38-year-old man, abused in 1983-84 by an assistant scoutmaster.[10] It is problematic that offenders in official samples are only defined by their affiliation to a victim, as a family member, acquaintance, or stranger, while other valuable information is omitted. The offenders are catalogued by the law as rapists, forcible fondlers, or sodomites. The

[10] Millman, J. (2010, April 14) Boy Scouts Lose Sex-Abuse Case. *The Wallstreet Journal.*

relationship among these classifications then allows the public to draw upon a quick reference as to the relative "sickness" of the offender, and to formulate a response often involving some degree of disgust or damnation.

Table 3 Number of victims reporting substantiated cases of sexual abuse occurring 1990 - 2008

Periods of victimization	*Number of victims reported to child protective agencies in U.S.* [a]	*Number of victims reported to the U.S. Catholic Church* [b]
1990 – 1994	588,007	418
1995 – 1999	566,629	253
2000 – 2002	268,200	46
2003 – 2007	339,081	47
2008	Not available [c]	13
TOTALS	1,761,917	777

[a]See Finkelhor & Jones, 2004; US Dept. of Health & Human Services. (2008) *Child Maltreatment*; Child Trends Data Table 1 "Percent of children who are victims of maltreatment, and distribution by gender, age, race and Hispanic origin and type of maltreatment, 1990 – 2006."

[b]*Nature & Scope*, 2004; USCCB, Office of Child & Youth Protection, Annual Report for 2007.

[c] US Dept. of Health & Human Services had no data for 2007 - 2009 as of the publication of this study.

Before proceeding to the theoretical perspectives framing the analysis of offender data collected for *I & B* study, it is important to stress that the problem of sexual abuse of minors is not unique to the Catholic Church. *Table 3* shows that the number of victims reporting incidents by priests between 1990 and 2008, the date of the most recent data on this problem, is just under800 individuals. The reports are of incidents that were said to have actually occurred in the years 1990 – 2008. The cases reported to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and presumably outside the realm of the

Catholic Church, were also cases of abuse that were substantiated and that took place during those years. These data do not include any incidents that were reported over 5 years after their occurrence. The proportion of cases occurring *within the Catholic Church* are a fraction, in fact less than 1%, of all cases of child sexual abuse reported in the United States for the years 1990 – 2008. Although nearly 11,000 individuals came forward with an accusation of sexual abuse by a priest over a 50-year period, 74% (N= 4,555) came forward in the period of 1990 – 2002, and only a small fraction of the reports made during those years actually occurred in that time period (John Jay College, 2002, p. 60). Since the end of the data collection for the John Jay College (JJC) study, CARA has continued to collect data on these types of abuse incidents in the Church. Those numbers are in *Table 3* as well.

The point in presenting these data is to show that it is clear, even with under-reporting of sexual abuse in all settings, that the problem in the Church is simply one among many, and not unlike the problems reported in mainstream society. Sexual abuse of minors is not a standalone Catholic problem. Children and teens are abused by priests, teachers, day care workers, doctors, fathers, cousins, siblings, etc., and there is no evidence to suggest that priests have offended, do offend, or will offend at higher rates than any other category of individual. Assessing correlated risk factors present for priests is important for gaining an understanding of the phenomenon in psychological terms. However, as of yet this type of analysis has not done enough to prevent the occurrence of the sexual abuse of minors. Therefore, it is imperative to obtain a better understanding of contextual factors, namely those of the subculture defining one's master status, as these may contribute to offending.

The Psychopathology of Sexually Abusive Behavior

A myriad of psychometric measures are used to assess what are called dynamic factors of offending, and social scientists consistently evaluate individual level characteristics in order to establish a systematized approach to understanding the etiology of sex offending. Taxonomies have been developed in an attempt to standardize frameworks for treatment, and these classifications had a simple start as offenders were defined as pedophiles[11] who are either fixated or regressed[12] (Groth & Birnbaum, 1978, p. 176). It is not out of the ordinary for humans to categorize concepts. What is problematic about classifications is that they often characterize the central tendency of the distribution, thus making it difficult to make sense of the cases that do not match the profile.

That said, contemporary research offers two categories of offenders who sexually interact with minors. *Pedophiles* are diagnosed as individuals who have repeated, strong and sexually arousing fantasies about *prepubescent children*, while those who have this same attraction toward *adolescents* have been classified as *ephebophiles*[13]. The fixated and regressed categorizations were designed to cluster sex offenders based on their

[11] Pedophilia has been included in American Psychological Association (APA) and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) since1968. This disorder is characterized in the DSM-IV-TR "by intense sexually arousing fantasies, urges, or behaviors involving sexual activity with a prepubescent child (typically age 13 or younger). To be considered for this diagnosis, the individual must be at least 16 years old and at least 5 years older than the child." Source . . . http://allpsych.com/disorders/paraphilias/pedophilia.html.

[12] *Fixated: having* sexual desires/preferences for children; not likely to have age–appropriate healthy sexual contacts; emotionally immature; preoccupied with children. *Regressed:* primarily age-appropriate & "normal" sexual interests; may turn to sexual contact with children as a mechanism for coping with stress/ as a substitute for an absence of age-mate partner.

[13] The APA currently does not distinguish ephebophilia from pedophilia as a diagnosable paraphilia, although the latter has been studied as a unique offender category.

primary sexual interests and motivations, beyond age-related characteristics of the victim. A later model, the Massachusetts Treatment Center Child Molester Typology (*MTC: CM3),* limited to extra familial child molesters, essentially refined the Groth typologies (fixated and regressed) to focus on the *degree of fixation* and the *amount of contact*[14] (Knight & Prentky, 1990). Regardless of the origin and development of these methods of organizing offenders, much of the research on sexual offending against children is not generalizable, as the samples are regularly derived from clinical or forensic populations, often assessing male perpetrators who have multiple victims (Langevin, 1985; DiNallo, 1989; Pothast, 1989; Brody, 1992; Bouchard, 1992; Smallbone &Whortley, 2004; Schultz, 2005; Mandeville-Norton & Beech, 2009).

About a quarter of a century ago, in an introduction to a collection of research studies investigating sexual anomalies, namely "sadists, rapists, pedophiles, voyeurs, incest offenders, homosexuals, transvestites and transsexuals," there was said to be a dearth of research on sexual aggression and aggressors. (Langevin, 1985:p1) Much has changed since then. That collection of analyses was based on a forensic clinical sample of admitted sex offenders at what was then the Forensic Services of the Clark Institute of Psychiatry in Toronto, Ontario. The following questions relevant to the current research addressed in that series of analyses are focused on similarities and differences in the "erotic profiles" of identified pedophiles, their degree of aggressiveness, and the etiology of offending (Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, Russin, & Hook, 1985; & Langevin, Hucker, Ben-Aron, Purins, & Hook, 1985).

[14]*Degree of fixation:* focuses on high/low fixation; high/low social competence. *Amount of contact*: centers around high/low contact; interpersonal/ narcissistic; low/high injury; sadistic/non-sadistic. CSOM, downloaded from http://www.csom.org/train/etiology/4/4_1.htm#backtrack1

These researchers utilized a number of standardized or repeatable measures of what are called "dynamic" factors assessing erotic preference and aggression, some of which are still used today. The following are examples of the instruments and assessments used: Clarke Sex History Questionnaire (SHQ, 1977); phallometric testing; Freund Gender Identity Scale; MMPI Mf Scale; MMPI; 16PF I Factor; 16PF; Bem Androgyny Scale; measures of sex hormones; measures of brain abnormalities; Clarke Parent Child Relations Questionnaire; Personality Diagnoses; Buss Durkee Hostility Inventory; Clarke Violence Scale; substance abuse surveys. The findings were applied to men already diagnosed as pedophiles.

Langevin's assessment approach, although over 25 years old, is similar to those applied recently by Mandeville-Norden & Beech (2009), who tested and clustered a sample of sex offenders (n=477) identified as having violated minors aged 14 or younger in England and Wales. Preliminary treatment facility assignments were made by the U.K. Prison Service after administering the Initial Deviance Assessment (IDA) , which is a risk assessment testing four problematic areas: "(deviant) *sexual interests*, *distorted attitudes*, (level of) *socio-affective functioning*, and *self-management problems*" (p309). High deviance offenders showed problems within three of these areas, and were assigned to different treatment facilities than low deviance offenders. Regardless of whether offenders were assessed as high, moderate or low deviance offenders, Mandeville-Norden and Beech administered ten psychometric tests in order to place the offender in a certain length treatment program based on the offender's level of need for treatment.[15]

[15] Short-Self-esteem Scale (Webster, Mann, Thornton & Wakeling, 2007); UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980); Under-assertiveness Scale (from the Social Response Inventory;

Whether investigating the problem of "deviant" sexual behavior of sex offenders in the first decade of the 21st century, or in the 1980s when we first had public knowledge of offending priests, all of the aforementioned measurement tools find foundation in postulates meant to help better understand the etiology of the sexual abuse of minors. The following concepts have been posited as causal factors for abuse: *offender's own history of maltreatment (poor beginnings), (*Bouchard, 1992; Brody, 1989; Dhawan & Marshall, 1996; Hanson & Slater, 1988; Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Terry, 2006);*deviant sexual interests* (DiNallo, 1989; Finkelhor, 1984; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, Russin, & Hook, 1985; Marshall, Serran & Marshall, 2006; Robertson, 2001; Smallbone & Whortley, 2004b; Ward & Seigert, 2002)*; social interaction deficiencies* (Bouchard, 1992; DiNallo, 1989; Finkelhor, 1984; Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, Russin, & Hook, 1985; Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009; Marshall, Serran, Marshall, 2006; Terry, 2006; Whortley & Smallbone, 2006); *coping maladjustments* (Bouchard, 1992; Carter & Estes, 2006; DiNallo, 1989; Hall & Hall, 2007; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Laws, Hudson, & Ward, 2000; Marshall, Anderson, & Fernandez, 1999; Marshall, Serran, & Marshall, 2006; Schultz, 2005; Terry, 2006; Ward, & Beech, 1997; or *distorted thinking and feeling*, particularly as this relates to a lack of victim empathy (Abel, Gore, Holland, Camp,

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Keltner, Marshall, & Marshall, 1981 *as cited in* Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009: p 312); Personal Distress Scale (from the Interpersonal Reactivity Index; Davis, 1983); Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale (Nowicki, 1976); Victim Empathy Distortions Scale (Beckett & Fisher, 1994 *as cited in* Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009, p313); Cognitive Distortions Scale & Emotional Identification with Children Scale (both from the Children and Sex Questionnaire, Beckett, 1987 *as cited in* Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009: p 313; Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (Paulhaus, 1989 *as cited in* Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009 p 314; Risk Matrix (RM2000; Thornton, Mann, R., Webster, S., Blud, L., Travers, R., Friendship, et al, 2003).

Becker, & Rathner, 1989; Brody, 1989; Bumby, 1996; Bumby, 2000; Covell & Scalora, 2002; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Hanson, Gizzarelli, & Scout, 1994; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004; Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009; Marshall, O'Sullivan, & Fernandez, 1996; Stermac, Segal & Gills, 1990; Ward & Siegert, 2002).

No *one* factor is said to cause the sexual abuse of minors, but it is clear that a combination of factors can go a long way in explaining the associated behaviors rooted in the offender's own problems, be they psychological or emotional. A brief synopsis of the literature on several risk factors associated with sex offending will be presented before introducing the present study's more sociologically oriented framework for the investigation of the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests in the United States.

Early life disruptions.

It is not unheard of to say that criminal offenders often have, themselves, been victims of maltreatment, particularly in childhood. Sex offenders are not excluded from this presumption. Evidence indicates that some offenders were physically, sexually, or emotionally abused by parents, other family members, or even those outside the family. (Bouchard, 1992; Brody, 1989; Dhawan & Marshall, 1996; Hanson & Slater, 1988; Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Terry, 2006)

What is meant by maltreatment or "poor beginnings"? Brody (1989) suggests that a lack of "good" childhood support and "bad" or unemotional fathering, or "poor relationships" with parents (Terry, 2006) may be a part of the histories of those who sexually offend. Marshall and Barbaree (1990) say of the childhood experiences of sex offenders that "poor socialization, particularly a violent parenting style, will both

facilitate the use of aggression as well as cut the youth off from access to more appropriate sociosexual interactions" (p. 260).Social scientists have insight into the phenomenon of poor childhood experiences, as is seen in Marshall's portrait of Tom, a man who was arrested and charged with over 40 counts of sexual assault involving more than 100 children over a 15-year period. Marshall writes that

> Tom had an unfortunate childhood. His parents were quite old, emotionally remote, and he did not have any friends. He knew no other children until he went to school; his parents did their best, usually successfully, to keep him from forming friendships. They told Tom he was unattractive and that girls his own age were evil (1996, p. 320).

Bouchard (1992) calls this having a dysfunctional family of origin, and in a study comparing intra- and extra-familial offenders, a majority of these offenders viewed themselves as rejected children, while about one-quarter had been sexually victimized in childhood. In a review of the literature on the relationship between prior sexual victimization and sex offending, Hanson and Slater (1988) found that just over one-quarter (28%; N=1717) of studied offenders indicated a history of prior sexual victimization, although there were notable differences depending on the conceptualization of "sexual victimization." Hanson and Slater point out that the more inclusive the definitions, the greater the likelihood of self-reporting of prior victimization.

Evidence in support of the link between prior sexual victimization and offending has been presented by Dhawan and Marshall (1996) who studied 45 sexual offenders (29

rapists, 16 abusers of children) in a forensic treatment program and compared them to 20 non-sexual offenders. It is difficult to discuss statistical significance of differences, given the sample size. These researchers found that sexual offenders had a significantly greater chance (58%) of being abused than did nonsexual offenders (46%). This difference is not especially notable. Presenting these findings another way, one could say that, out of ten sex offenders, about six (6) would have been sexually abused. Out of ten non-offenders, approximately five would have been sexually abused. Dhawan and Marshall also presented evidence that rapists (62%) were more likely to have been sexually abused in childhood compared to those accused of molesting a young person (50%) (p. 12). If a base rate of ten is used to understand these statistics, about six rapists and five "child molesters" would have indicated that they were victims of childhood sexual abuse. Overall, these are relatively scant variations, and do not say much about the relationship between offending and non-offending, or the relationship between different types of offending behaviors.

To date, much of the evidence points toward a correlation between childhood maltreatment and sex offending later in life, but there is no research to support a direct *causal* relationship between poor beginnings and sex offending. The differences between populations are often minimal. The overall argument is that negative experiences in childhood hinder proper or normal development in relation to inhibitors to sexual aggression later in life. Marshall (1996) points out that the literature does not support any presumption that *all* sex offenders have themselves been sexually abused, or even that they have experienced other forms of maltreatment in childhood. Some have, and some have not.

Ample evidence shows that many people have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in childhood or adolescence. Child maltreatment statistics for 2007 show that approximately 1% (794,000) of children had been victims of maltreatment, and, of all the substantiated claims, victims were most often girls (52%) and non-white.[16] Also, most were victims of neglect compared to other forms of abuse more strongly linked to later offending.[17] If childhood maltreatment is an indicator of future sex offending, and official data show victims of childhood abuse and neglect are more often non-white girls who are most likely experiencing non-sexual abuse, then how many of these young people could be expected to grow into adulthood to become "child molesters"? Given the presumption of a correlation between childhood maltreatment and offending, the child maltreatment statistics show a profile of the "potential offender" markedly different from the profile of those who have actually been identified as being sexually abusive of minors. If the postulate of the "dark figure of crime" is accepted, the contradiction between the available data on victims of childhood trauma by adults, and data on adults who sexually abuse minors, is an artifact of underreporting. This could be underreporting of the sexual abuse of male children, abuse *by* female perpetrators, or it could also point to a lack of understanding of the true relationship between childhood victimization and later sex offending.

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[16] The following numbers are per 1,000 children of the given race: African-American=17; American Indian/ Alaska Native/multiple races=14; Hispanic=10; white=9; Asian=2. *Child Maltreatment.*(2007), pps. 25-26.

[17] 59 % were victims of neglect, 11% were abused physically, 8% were sexually abused, 4% were psychologically maltreated, less than 1% were medically neglected, and 13.1 percent were victims of multiple maltreatments and 4% were victims of "other" types of maltreatment like "abandonment," "threats of harm to the child," or "congenital drug addiction."U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. (2009). *Child Maltreatment.*(2007) Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. (pps. 23-24)

Deviant sexuality.

Studies have found that some sex offenders are interested in —or are aroused by—things thought to be outside the sphere of normal or appropriate sexual interests and behavior (DiNallo, 1989; Finkelhor, 1984; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, Russin, & Hook, 1985; Marshall, Serran & Marshall, 2006; Robertson, 2001; Smallbone & Whortley, 2004b; Ward & Seigert, 2002). Historically, one of the myths about sexual violence is that men are easily provoked and cannot control their sexual urges, which has lead, even today, to the practice of victim blaming. This reference is important because the profile of these sex offenders provided earlier describes the typical offender as male. The underlying presumption is that rape and sexual assault are *sexually* motivated behaviors. Sex is not a problem when it occurs within the confines of socially acceptable contexts, like that of a heterosexual marriage in the effort to create children or express love, particularly for the person of religious zeal, or at least earnest practice of faith. But contemporary secular culture is abundant with sexually enticing iconography interlaced with messages of self-indulgence and immediate gratification, all the while glorifying the quest for perpetual youth as is manifested through the body. In this context, then, what sexual interests are deviant?

The DSM-IV-TR, which some might argue is the "official" guide to social deviance, includes criteria for diagnosing both sexual disorders (paraphilias) and the lesser problem of sexual dysfunctions. If the impairment of normal sexual functioning does not result from medical or physiological problems, disorders or dysfunctions may be formally identified. The following are some of the symptoms that may be used to determine dysfunction or disorder, otherwise known as deviance for the purposes of this

discussion: delayed orgasm, quick orgasm, delayed onset of sexual activity, early onset of sexual activity, non-procreative sex, no sexual interest, no sexual fantasies, avoiding sex, exposing one's self (genitals) to strangers, using non-living objects for sexual arousal, desire to experience or inflict pain or humiliation as a part of the sexual encounter and voyeurism, viewing individuals in various states of undress and intimate physical interaction.

There have been assessments of sexual excitement brought on by images of children, and the data are derived from measures of physiological arousal, such as the penile plethysmograph (PPG). Research using samples of convicted pedophiles has positively identified changes in blood flow to the penis when child specific sexual stimuli have been introduced to these men (Blanchard, Klassen, Dickey, Kuban, & Blak, 2001; Freund & Blanchard, 1989; Freund & Blanchard, 1989; Murphy & Barbaree, 1994). Earls and Quinsey (1995) argue that measuring physical arousal is effective in identifying offenders and non-offenders, as validated by participant self-reports and criminal histories. Researchers have pointed out that a positive indicator of deviant arousal is more accurate than negative indicators – meaning that some measures may fail to identify a deviant relationship to sexuality of individuals who later offend (Freund & Blanchard, 1989*).* Therefore, physical arousal stimulated by thoughts of or actions towards minors certainly cannot be the only measure for identifying those with sexual interests in children.

The important aspect of being *diagnosed with* a psychosexual disorder or dysfunction is that it is determined by a clinician who concludes that the problem is *persistent* and *hinders or interferes with the person's daily functioning*. In order to

address issues of treatment for these conditions, it is important to go beyond physiological arousal, which brings us back to the psychological assessment of deviant sexual desires and responses. Pedophilia is considered to be a part of the list of sexual problems, as noted in the DSM-IV-TR, and the disorder is marked by persistent and intense fantasies, urges *or* behaviors involving a *prepubescent* child (typically age 13 or younger).

What is problematic about the sexualization of pre-pubescence? Sexualizing someone who has yet to reach puberty, understood as the onset of physical sexual development, may be troublesome because of ensuing social expectations and roles associated with sexual interaction, particularly for certain types of sexual relations. So sexualizing someone who has yet to learn and understand those expectations seems to be the greater problem, rather than actually having erotic desires towards the young person. But what, then, can be said of those who are sexually drawn to and interact with minors who have reached puberty? Is this still socially problematic? Are child molesters sexually motivated?

Given the greater acceptability, even in contemporary society, of heterosexuality, over other sexual identities, it can be argued that the sexual objectification of women is "normal", and untamed sexual urges towards adult women, even when acted upon with an unwilling participant, are more normal than urges towards and behaviors with a prepubescent child. Additionally, the early "model" of child sexual abuse was intra-familial "father-daughter" incest, where the eldest daughter replaces the mother. The daughter is pressed into a new role, and all that this role entails. Given this model, one could argue that, given its heterosexual construction, it is less problematic to sexualize a

female child than a male child because, *in time*, she will ripen in form for normal heterosexual encounters. The sexual motivation towards a female minor, then, makes some sense if it is contextualized in the gendered norm of active and passive roles of heterosexual encounters. The presumption is that girls will eventually grow to be women who have sex with men.

In the scale of normalcy of sexual targets, the least understood is that of the age disparate same sex encounter between an adult male and a minor. But, in a society that has legal and moral taboos against sexual interactions between adults and minors, and between actors of the same sex, here it is asked - is it the taboo itself that interests the offender? At this point, the "problem" of same sex sexual interaction must be introduced. Dissecting the problem of sexual abuse requires that children be viewed as gendered, in order to "make sense" of the offending behavior and, perhaps, the impact of the abuse on the child. In a study of *non*-incarcerated paraphiliacs (N=561), the findings showed that those with a marker of deviant sexuality molested boys nearly five times as often as they molested girls. (Abel, Becker, Mittelman, Cunningham-Rathner, Rouleau & Murphy, 1987). Same-sex sexual interaction is culturally presumed to predicate homosexual identity. Those who sexually abuse young boys are presumed to be homosexuals. In mainstream culture, with use of such phrases as "nailing," "pounding," or "screwing," heterosexual dynamics of sex in require that males are active and females are passive in the interaction. In the "natural order" of sexual interaction, males do not have things don*e to* them, as is appropriate for females. It is considered natural that girls would have things done *to* them. What is unnatural about the sexual abuse of a male child is that boys do not have things done to them; therefore the abuser has a misunderstanding of appropriate

sexual dynamics in general, outside of the fact that sexual encounters with young people are not accepted in contemporary society. Given that framework, the problem is the homosexuality of the abuser, rather than the sexual encounter with the child or adolescent.

Homosexuality, although no longer listed as a diagnosable disorder in the current version of the DSM, is still socially differentiated from accepted "natural" (read coital) sexual behavior. Taboos against publicly identifying as a homosexual (now gay, lesbian, queer) were strong at least until the dawn of the modern sexual revolution in the mid-1900s. Even so, there is a presumed "slippery slope" in terms of willingness to engage in what are considered sexual perversities. Until 2003, homosexual (read "non-procreative" or aberrant), sex acts between consenting adults, were criminalized in the United States.[18] Given this social context for making sense of sexual norms, public opinion presumes that the willingness to identify as a person who perverts a dominant sexual norm (homosexual) is the tip of a slippery slope toward other sexual perversions.

An Australian study of adult males convicted of sexual offenses against children (N=362) showed that "the prevalence of diagnosable paraphilias was low, with only 5% meeting formal diagnostic criteria for multiple (two or more) paraphilias other than pedophilia" (Smallbone & Whortley, 2004a, p. 175). Not all sex offenders have reported

[18]*Lawrence v. Texas* (02-102) 539 U.S. 558 (2003) is a landmark gay rights case. In a 6-3 Supreme Court ruling, the sodomy laws in Texas were struck down. This was in contradiction to the 1986 decision in *Bowers v. Hardwick, (*478 U.S. 186 (1986), which upheld a challenged Georgia statute, where the Court found there to be no protection of sexual privacy under the U.S. Constitution. Lawrence directly overruled *Bowers*, holding that the determination in that case viewed the liberty interest too narrowly. Intimate consensual sexual conduct was ruled to be part of the liberty protected under the Fourteenth Amendment. As a result, similar laws pertaining to sodomy lows applied to both homo and heterosexual sex.

a preference for "deviant" sexual stimuli or arousal patterns, and there are individuals in the at-large population of non-offenders who participate in "communities" of sexual deviance, like bondage, discipline, or engagement in consensual voyeurism in sex clubs, parties etc. In a 2002 news article,[19] Dr. Fred Berlin, founder of the Johns Hopkins Sexual Disorders Clinic, said that "Men overall are vulnerable to many more sexual fetishes and disorders than women, with pedophilia just one more biology-based 'way of going awry'." It seems, given this, that it may actually be *normal* for men to have what is otherwise considered to be a deviant relationship to sexuality.

Social interaction deficiencies.

Another cluster of characteristics associated with sex offending is social interaction deficiencies or poor social and relationship skills (Terry, 2006). These include, but are not limited to: intimacy deficits, isolation and loneliness (Bouchard, 1992; Bumby, 2000; DiNallo, 1989; Hall & Hall, 2007; Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009; Ward & Seigert, 2002); emotional and intellectual disturbances (DiNallo, 1989; Finkelhor, 1984; Hall & Hall, 2007; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, Russin, & Hook, 1985; Marshall, Serran, & Marshall, 2006; Whortley& Smallbone, 2006); and poorly developed masculinity and aggression (Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, & Russon, 1985; Robertson, 2001). The suggestion is that these deficiencies stunt development of appropriate social, intimate and/or sexual relationships with other adults. It is possible that, given the offender's emotional or intellectual immaturity, loneliness or isolation from adults could be

[19] Elias, M. (July 2002). Is homosexuality to blame for Church scandal? *USA Today*. Downloaded fromhttp://www.usatoday.com/news/2002-07-15-church-gay_x.htm

assuaged by interaction or relationships with young people, some of which may become sexual. Turning again to Marshall's description of longtime repeat child molester, we see Tom's transition from childhood into adulthood. Tom was said to have had

> no self-confidence and was particularly afraid of girls. He lived alone after his parents died, and except for his church activities, his work, and his volunteer time spent with older people, Tom's only emotionally satisfying time was spent with children (1996, p. 320).

Is Tom a sexual "predator" or a "sad and lonely man" fulfilled by doing things for others but, at times, overstepping socially acceptable interpersonal boundaries with minors? As previously discussed, the commonplace understanding of sex offending, particularly against children, is that offenses are committed by individuals who are compulsively deviant and who often manifest some measureable or diagnosable disorder. It seems as though social deficiencies lead to an experience of emotional and physical loneliness, which then provides the motivation for seeking sexual intimacy with minors. Loneliness, measured in one of the many assessment tools mentioned previously, has been associated with one subset of child molesters not identifiable by victim-type. (Bouchard, 1992; Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009; Marshall, 1989) Changes in attachments or social bond structures may be a part of the process contributing to loneliness.

There are several layers to the concept of social inadequacy. One, "emotional disturbance," as measured by the MMPI, is said to be present in sex offenders who choose young or "under age" victims, while a slightly different concept - stunted emotional, sexual or psychosexual development - may also be a motivating factor in the

sexual abuse of minors (Brody, 1992; Bumby, 2000; DiNallo, 1989; Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, Russin, & Hook, 1985; Robertson, 2001). Some researchers also argue that the "inability" to socially interact in a normal healthy way with women, as presumed for those who engage in adult-adult same sex behaviors is a marker of social inadequacy. (Bouchard, 1992)

Another example, in popular culture, of a socially inept adult accused of being a child molester is that of the now-deceased pop music star Michael Jackson. In 2003, Jackson was accused for the second time of engaging in sexually inappropriate behaviors with minors. Since about 1990, Since about 1990, Jackson invited sick and less fortunate children, whom he referred to as ``friends``, to a compound in California called the *Neverland Range*[20], to play with him at his amusement park, zoo, and other facilities. Some of the children slept over, in the same room or the same bed with Jackson. One news reporter wrote

> Whether or not he has ever touched a boy inappropriately, Michael Jackson seems too emotionally stunted to act in any grown-up way, including a deviant sexual one. Naive, juvenile, and terribly damaged, he seems pathetically incapable not just of criminal intent, but of adult consciousness.[21]

In 2005, Jackson was found *not guilty* on all criminal charges although, in the court of public opinion, debates abounded as to the "strangeness" of the behavior between an adult man and his child fans. That Jackson seemed inordinately preoccupied with

[20]Referencing the fictional world of Tinkerbell, the lost Boys, and Peter Pan, who is the "boy who never grew up."

[21] Weisberg, J. (2005). Arrested development: The tragedy of Michael Jackson.*Slate.com* online newspaper. Downloaded from . . . http://www.slate.com/id/2120889/

children, at the expense of nurturing healthy adult relationships, is the very thing that made him suspicious. He is guilty at least of having what popular culture commentators interpret as social interaction deficiencies or behaviors that may correlate with the likelihood of sexually abusing minors.

Coping maladjustments.

Some offenders are said to have difficulties managing their emotions appropriately, while others are impulsive, occasionally having difficulty managing urges, or failing to think about the consequences of their behaviors (Hall & Hall, 2007; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Marshall, Anderson, & Fernandez, 1999). Evidence shows that other offenders have used and/or abused drugs and alcohol, which may have impaired their ability to think through consequences as well, either in the situational moment, or overall(Bouchard, 1992; Carter & Estes, 2006; Terry, 2006; Widom & Hiller-Sturmhofel, 2001).Research findings in this area show inconsistencies in the relationship between abuse and offending.

Another aspect in the realm of coping maladjustments, is self-esteem or self-concept. An individual with poor self-concept or damaged self-esteem often does not properly manage the strain of the break-up of a relationship (i.e. divorce), changes in responsibilities at work, changes in personal health, or any stressor that is believed by the individual to be the result of individual failings (Brown, 2005;DiNallo, 1989; Marshall, W.L., & Mazzucco, 1995;Marshall, Serran, & Marshall, 2006; Schultz, 2005; Shine, McCloskey, & Newton, 2002). Coupled with other factors, these maladjustments could contribute to offending, although there is no indication that any of these factors are

unique to sex offenders. Nonetheless, the emotional and behavioral self–regulation difficulties have been noted as strong correlates of sex offending.

Sex offending and esteem.

Although this study is meant to assess social and cultural factors associated with sex offending, particularly the molestation of minors, the discussion would be lacking if some measure of psychological risk factors correlated with sex offending were not analyzed. Self-esteem is constructed as self-evaluation (beliefs and emotions about competence and worth) in relation to one's identity and the estimation of one's self may be reflected in behavior. The dimension of competence refers to the degree to which people see themselves as capable or useless, and the worth dimension refers to the degree to which individuals feel they are valuable (Cast & Burke, 2002).In the literature on deviance, low self-esteem is a characteristic most often associated with juvenile delinquency (Kaplan, 1975; Kaplan,1982). This is relevant to the study of priest offenders in that, just as juveniles are moving through a period of social learning as they progress to awards maturity (or adulthood), so too do priests progress through a period something like the growing pains of development within the world of Catholicism as they incorporate an understanding of the role norms and expectations of the priest into their own concept of self. This progression is experienced in juxtaposition to their own early experiences as members of the laity. Likened adolescence, growing in to any new role is rife with issues of awkwardness and uncertain social status, and these are said be related to the development of esteem. (Fields, 1994)

Researchers have found links between self-esteem and sex offending, but there are still deficits in our ability to generalize to the diverse population of sex offenders. (Brown, 2005;Marshall, Champagne, Sturgeon & Bryce, 1997; Marshal, Marshal, Serran, & O'Brien, 2009; Marshall, & Mazzucco, 1995; Shine, McCloskey, & Newton, 2002) Given that sexually offending against minors, or any offending for which one is caught, engages the processes of labeling and stigmatization, evidence suggests that lower self-worth may actually be the result of punishment, which is, in part, meant to intervene in and stop the potential for repeated offending. Given this knowledge, Marshall and Barbaree (1990) suggested that low self-esteem was one of the main factors that led to the commission of a first sexual offense, but this study does not differentiate among the various types of sex offenders. Subsequently, Marshall, Champagne, Sturgeon & Bryce (1997) found that the at-large population of sex offenders shares a widespread range of features with low self-esteem individuals overall, and these features are believed to be associated with the start or continuance of behaviors that are sexually abusive, regardless of victim age or sex.

In a non-generalizable comparison of child molesters and non-offenders (N=47), Marshall and Mazzucco (1995) found that, compared to those not identified as criminal offenders of any type, those who were identified as molesters had lower self-esteem. It is possible that the lower levels of esteem could be the result of being caught and punished for criminal behavior. Alternatively, Shine, McCloskey, & Newton (2002) studied a forensic sample of offenders (N= 690) and found that those who committed sex offenses did *not* significantly differ on the measure of self-esteem from those in prison for non-sex offenses. The study found that the norm in the prison was low esteem, but that within

group categorical comparisons of sex offenders, differences appeared between those with adult victims (rapists) and those with victims who were minors (child molesters). *Lower* levels of esteem seem to be more prevalent for *rapists* than for child molesters. Further findings indicate that those with male victims (adult or child) tend to have lower self-esteem than those who offended against females.

The *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale* (RSE) (1965) and the *Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory* (CSEI) (1967/1981) feature among the most widely used systems for measuring self-esteem. Esteem can be used as an indicator of assessment of *self*-worth, as well as how one feels about the self in comparison with similarly situated others. Self-esteem scales vary in the number of indicators used to assess dimensions of esteem, ranging from 10 (RSE) to over 100, as with the *Tennessee Self-Concept Scale* (TSCS) (1965). A variety of dimensions are covered measuring the presence and absence of esteem, as well as the degree of positive and negative esteem. Given the overall goals of this study, it seemed best to use the RSE, particularly because it has been used to assess juveniles at that significant stage in development in which social status is being questioned and processed. The RSE, created by sociologist Dr. Morris Rosenberg, is said to be the most widely-used and adapted measure of self-esteem in the social sciences. The original scale contains tens items, measured as a Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The original sample for which the scale was developed was a random cluster sample of high school juniors and seniors (n=5024) from 10 New York state high schools. The scale has been validated multiple times in the last 40 years, and the reliability of the measure is not questioned for this study. The manner and purpose of the modifications to the RSE for this study will be discussed in the methodology.

Cognitive distortions.

The literature on self-esteem clearly indicates that people differ in their bases of self-esteem. Their beliefs about what they think they should do or who they should "be" in order to meet standards of worth may be dependent on inaccurate social perceptions, or distorted interpretations of norms and expectations. It is important to note that Marshall, Marshall, Serran and O'Brien (2009) found that low self-esteem, no matter when it develops in the lifespan of the offender, generates shame, which may then block an acknowledgment of harm to the victim (empathy) as manifested by the offender denying having offended or denying that the victim suffered at all (Brody, 1989; Bumby, 2000; Covell & Scalora, 2002; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Mandeville-Norden & beech, 2009; Ward & Siegert, 2002).This process of rationalization specific to the psychological roots of offending is called cognitive distortions. Distorted thinking and feeling ranges from pro-offending attitudes to an anti-social interpretation of one's own behavior in the world, minimizing or even nullifying the perceived impact sexual abuse has on a victim, as mentioned earlier (Stermac, Segal & Gills, 1990).

This way of inaccurately perceiving one's impact or harm on others is *not* unique to sex offenders. All people engage in some form of distorted perception, although it may not be to the extent that criminal offending is turned in to personally acceptable behavior. Many people offer reasons for "cheating" on spouses or life partners, for leaving work early or coming in late, or even for drinking alcohol to excess. We know what is "wrong" with each of these behaviors, be they unhealthy, illegal or otherwise socially problematic. In spite of the fact that nearly all sex offenders know that rape and sexual assault of adults or minors is illegal and harmful, they are able to engage in these

same cognitive processes in order to diminish the importance of that knowledge to fit their own circumstances or behavioral choices. Essentially, sex offenders can use distorted social perceptions to give themselves the "go-ahead" to do something that they know to be wrong, thereby minimizing the potential for feeling bad about their actions. The *types* of cognitive distortions that sex offenders use, however, are often related specifically to their own problem behaviors, as mentioned in the previous sections on social interaction deficiencies and coping maladjustments. Attempts have been made to assess various types of distortions among different samples of sex offenders. Researchers have found that bent interpretations of social norms are common and present to a greater degree with sex offenders than non sex offenders and the public at large (Abel, Gore, Holland, Camp, Becker, & Rathner, 1989; Bumby, 1996; Hanson, Gizzarelli, & Scout, 1994).

What appears to be most problematic for the public with regards to the sexual abuse of children and adolescents within the Church is the lack of victim empathy, both by individual priests and by Church authorities in to allegations. Empathy deficits have been identified as interpersonal issues, but the explanation for the lack of empathy is tied to the issue of distorted social perceptions. The ability to put oneself in the place of another was thought, for a time, to be indicative of the overall emotional deficits of sex offenders, but it is now believed that these empathic deficits are specific to offenders' perception of their victims (Bumby, 2000;Hanson& Morton-Bourgon, 2004; Marshall, O'Sullivan, & Fernandez, 1996). I argue that an individual may not identify as a "victim" at the time of the abusive interaction. Therefore, processes involved with triggering victim empathy on the part of the offender may not be engaged. We all perform behaviors

that hurt others, even if only mildly, but it is not until we see that the person is experiencing harm, *or* that we are told, sometimes well after, that we have done harm that we might engage with empathy. Some of the recorded behaviors in the situations of sexual abuse (disrobing, touching over the clothes, and viewing pornography) are not violent, or even intrusive in egregious ways that one might clearly identify in the immediate moment as harmful. If the person being victimized *does not respond* as a victim *immediately* (by telling the abuser to stop, or filing a complaint), it is possible that the processes employed in empathizing with a victim may be absent in the offender. Consider "date rape." It was not until the concept was clearly identified and defined that women were able to concretely experience those situations as ones in which they were victimized. They may have felt uncomfortable, or "not right", but given other social ideals about dating, sexuality and gender roles, women just saw themselves as experiencing a part of what it is to be women, not victims. Dialogues in the literature become divergent discussions about the long-term effects of victimization (being or identifying as a victim), in part dependent on when the individual comes to identify and understand him or herself as a victim.

Both cognitive distortions and victim empathy have been assessed using psychometric tools. Rather than attempting to understand abstract concepts utilizing concrete measures (scales or inventories), this study relies on qualitatively derived data. This approach is taken in order to work toward a more detailed understanding of the social and cultural context within which priests offend. It is simply not enough to be able to identify those individuals who may more readily engage the use of cognitive distortions. It is important to understand the peculiarities of perception given the role of

priest in relation to morality and sexuality. In order to explore these concepts, this study relies on a sociological theoretical framework for collecting and interpreting data.

Again, there is no evidence that *one* factor has been determined to *cause* adults to engage in sexual behavior with those under the age of consent. It is possible that a multifactor model may help in determining who is at risk to offend, but the question of the ethics of intervening in sexual violence before it starts. If society believes that the risk factors for sexually offending against minors are clearly identifiable, is it reasonable to block opportunities such as access to the priesthood, for all individuals who "possess" one or more of the correlated characteristics identified in the literature? Kaufman, Mosher, Carter, & Estes suggest that this may not be a reasonable response as

> it is not surprising to find that sexual offending against children and teens is associated with a variety of etiological dimensions. There is broad consensus among researchers that sexual offenders are heterogeneous and that sexual offending against children is a multi-dimensional, multi-determined phenomenon (2006, p. 102).

In order to give fair play to the concepts associated with sex offending, the risk factor analysis included here is based on the distribution of responses for the sample of priests in the *Identity & Behavior* survey on the dimensions of social maladjustment, poor esteem, and sexual deviance. But the analysis does not stop there, as the study is multidimensional in its approach. The premise of the present study is that social and cultural factors contribute to patterns of sexual offending. Confirming this is a task best tackled in the analysis of the structure and content of priest narratives about their own

identity and behavior. If the emerging patterns are more fully explored, policies and practices may be developed to intervene in the processes that support the negative impact of childhood disruptions, a deviant relationship to sexuality, deficiencies of social interaction, maladjustments in coping with stress, and distorted thinking. None of these factors exists in a vacuum of experience, and, as noted psychiatrist R.D. Laing wrote, "We all know from our personal experience that we can be ourselves only in and through our world . . ." (1960, p. 18). In other words, we make meaning of our experiences as individuals, intentionally mediated through interactional, structural and cultural processes. How do these processes relate to the behavior of sexual abuse perpetrated by Catholic priests?

Other Parameters of Pathology

People who make the biggest mistakes are often the holiest.

--Mary Kassan, as quoted by Hull-Mast (1990)

It is of the "holy" that one speaks in the same breath as one talks about the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests in the United States. Holiness, as it is understood, is not a condition that is endemic in secular society, and is not one that is associated with sexual deviance. Commonly, psychological literature identifies criminally deviant behaviors as ones that are motivated by both static and dynamic factors attributed to the individual, and these factors are recognized as inherent in violent, sexually motivated, or serial offenders. The literature does not focus on spiritual factors or characteristics considered in religion to be sacred, which may contribute to the intensity of the response of the public upon learning about priests sexually abusing young people.

Given the presumption that "the holy" are unique only in their positive attributes and contributions to society, it seems as though the priest's status and presumed characteristics that are supposed to make him "right" for the priesthood contradict or at least muddle the picture of the pedophile. It is the concise, paint-by-numbers portrait of the offender, sexual or otherwise, that is the crux of the framework of trait-based explanations of offending. Thus, those researchers oriented towards psychologically or biologically rooted explanations of offending continue to use this approach.

Attempting to help courts standardize the concepts of "heinous" "depraved," or "horrible," forensic psychiatrist Michael Stone of Columbia University, has developed what is called the "Depravity Scale," which has also come to be known as the "scale of evil." The twenty-two point scale measures "psychopathic tendencies[22]", "aberrant personality," "antisocial" and "narcissistic[23]" traits, all of which are diagnosed using inflexible, pervasive, non-substance-induced symptoms associated with distress or negative consequences in the life of the individual being assessed, and evident in two of the following four areas: thoughts, emotions, interpersonal functioning, and impulse control. (DSM IV) The scale also includes one of "sexual perversity," which is most relevant to the concepts being presented in this study, and for which there are eight

[22] According to the DSM IV, psychopath and sociopath are now covered under the "Antisocial Personality Disorder" for which the prognosis is "not good." http://allpsych.com/disorders/personality/antisocial.html.

[23] Another personality disorder defined in the DSM IV is the "Narcissistic Personality Disorder." The symptoms "revolve around a pattern of grandiosity, need for admiration, and sense of entitlement. . .of being more deserving than others based solely on their superiority. These symptoms are. . .a result of an underlying sense of inferiority and are often seen as overcompensation . . . [people with this disorder] are often envious and even angry at others who have more, receive more respect or attention, or otherwise steal away the spotlight." The prognosis for this disorder is "limited."
http://allpsych.com/disorders/personality/narcissism.html

categories of psychiatric disorders called "paraphilia or sexual disorders.[24]" These disorders are said to have a "good" prognosis, as long as the root issues are addressed and recognized by the diagnosed individual.

The methods of measuring these concepts are often themselves static, limited to inventories and checklists, or the factors are bullet point characteristics assessed by clinicians practiced in the "science" of forensic interpretation, such as Dr. Stone. These interpretations, over time, have generated offender profiles or archetypes. As a result of this development, when accused offenders are assessed, their cases may be interpreted to "fit" the model, rather than to defy it. Although some of the psychometric data used to link behavior to individual pathology can be neatly analyzed, packaged and displayed, the inventories often only consist of personality measures or catalogues of traits that are present in both non-offenders and offenders alike.

Clinical variables associated with sex offending captured by psychometric assessments are as follows: deviant sexual arousal, interest, or preferences; cognitive distortions; social, interpersonal, and intimacy deficits; victim empathy deficits; poor self–management skills; under-detected deviant sexual behaviors; history of maltreatment.[25]The myriad "tests" of these characteristics do have the shortcoming of inflexibility, and they can inevitably miss the nuances of an offender's interpretation or understanding of his victim, the overall context in which the abuse occurs, as well as the

[24] The categories are outlined as follows: exhibitionism, fetishism, frotteurism, pedophilia, sexual masochism, sexual sadism, transvestic fetishism, and voyeurism. DSM IV. http://allpsych.com/disorders/paraphilias/index.html.

[25] These characteristics are derived from the training materials under the topic of "common characteristics of sex offenders" in *Understanding Sex Offenders: An Introductory Curriculum*, made available by Center for Sex Offender Management, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs. www.csom.org/train/etiology/3/slides/slides.htm#sect3sld1

offender's own roles and behaviors. The tools applied in previous research about both priests and at-large sex offenders are limited in their scope. Even with standardized tools, sample sizes are often too small to be able to identify generalizable patterns of behavior. While clinical analysis of cases may be more useful than psychometric indices for making observations of offender perceptions, it is important to note that these methods are most often based on individuals who represent egregious cases, like those of Gauthe, Porter, and Geoghan, whose stories do not best capture the spectrum of offense patterns.

None of these critiques are new, nor are they unique to the perspective of this study. Rather, these points underlie the classic debate over quantitative versus qualitative research. When trying to understand the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests in the United States, the commonplace explanations of offending (previously mentioned) based on quantitatively-oriented assessments administered to clinical and forensic samples, are insufficient. Most accused priests for whom there is data have not been a part of these treatment or criminally incarcerated populations. In spite of these concerns, I will challenge my own preferences and assumptions and work towards the practice of methodological integration by introducing multiple scale measures, discussed in a later section.

The statistical snapshot presented in an earlier section, and most of what we know about sex offending and offenders, whether specific to the sexual abuse of minors or not, is derived from clinical, forensic, and almost entirely non-priest samples. What is known about the priest population is specific to Roman Catholic's in the United States, and sample sizes are either small, or when large, derived from clinical or archival files. Therefore, simply accessing a sample, collecting data, and conducting an analysis does

not indelibly validate the comparison of findings presented in the previous section. Nor does it allow us to apply the results to other "deviant" priest behaviors, national contexts outside of the United States, or even other religious organizations or groups, whether Christian or not. What we know of identified or accused offenders merely provides a static benchmark of understanding from which to begin this analysis.

Sociology, Identity, and Transgression

This study evaluates the behavior of priests within the larger "American" context of provocative sexuality - one that presents sexuality as aggressive, available, enticing and woven into the fabric of everyday life in society, one that is loaded with contentious debates on issues like the legal status of prostitution, abortion and same sex marriage. At the same time society still insists that the criminal justice system uses old school Puritanical branding of those who are identified as sex offenders. This is a period in which ideologies about sexual identity and behavior cannot be more bifurcated, as permissiveness abounds, so too do reifications of what is "bad." The bright line test for what is unacceptable, then, is established when the sexual abuse of a minor is juxtaposed to some of the more untoward sexual behaviors in the Puritan or Catholic traditions. Thus, homosexual behaviors, or selling sex, or even extra-marital affairs are essentially "permissible" within the mainstream secular discourse about sex, as long as the participants are adults. The alternative qualitative approach may better allow for an engagement of the cultural disconnect between a specific and contextually located *identity* (priest) and a socially restricted *behavior* (any sexual interaction). Priests are ontologically elevated from the laity within the subculture of Catholicism. Despite this, the present study attempts to situate these offenders within the sub-cultural framework of

the fallibility and the potential for redemption of humans, a class of creatures to which priests still belong.

Identity-making is a process of understanding one's self as this relates to social culture, particularly as defined by a master status or primary identity. This identity is challenged when who we *think* we are is not what is reflected back to us by the "others" in our social circles. The quintessential existential inquiry is "*who am I?*" This question elicits a plethora of trajectories in which to find a meaningful answer. It seems simple enough to say "*I am human*," but in a social structure that reinforces cognitive binaries (white/black, male/female), this response requires juxtaposition with what I am *not.* If I am "human", then I am *not* an "animal." This statement of logical reason underlies the longstanding social debate of "nature versus nurture" explanations of human behavior, particularly those that stand out as challenging to core social norms. These norms are situated in cultural practices.

> To be an identified self is to be a 'displayed' self. Display means to 'fold apart' or 'unfold' into meaningful patterns of interaction and symbolic presentation that communicate the self (Weigert, Teitge, & Teitge, 1986, p. 50).

We (humans) generally distinguish ourselves from *them* (animals) by arguing that we have higher intelligence, are capable of rational thought (argument, logic, conclusions, hypotheses), have the ability to communicate with complexity, as well as the ability to be civilized by subduing our basic instincts, most of which relate to survival of both the communal and the individual body (waste elimination, sex, hunger, and shelter). Conversely, when human interaction is expressed through the body, or between bodies,

we liken ourselves to primal beings. It is considered "base" or vulgar to reference the primal functions of the body, and civilized culture is predicated upon the backstage performance of the functions of the body, and the front stage performance of the abstract human "self". When humans engage our "animalistic" body by imposing it upon another (as with the sexual abuse of a minor), the existential question is answered for us. We are animals, sometimes even "predators." But is it possible that only *some* homosapiens are human, and others not? Or it could be that, in order to manage and define who we are as a race of beings and as individuals, we engage in a process of generating, externalizing and internalizing that abstract self through individual identity, one rooted in social place and personal history.

The myriad psychodynamic assessments of a person's biographical experiences, though easily systematized, often rely upon responses to pre-categorized questions of "what if. . .", "what would. . .", and "what have . . .," related to thoughts, words, feelings, and actions. These items lack the ability to comprehensively explore the relationship between the chronological facts of one's life and the interpretation and meaning of these facts to the individual. The foundation of the present study is built on the evidence that macro level social and cultural factors contribute to the micro level perception of one's self as a social actor, and that behavior reflects some level of this perception or relationship to self. If social researchers investigate meaning-making within cultural contexts, we may be able to better understand and possibly intervene in the processes that support the negative effects of poor beginnings, a deviant relationship to sexuality, deficiencies of social interaction, maladjustments in coping with stress, and distorted thinking that are believed to be associated with sex offending. How do these processes

relate to the behavior of sexual abuse, specifically abuse that is perpetrated by Catholic priests?

Making meaning in the looking glass: the "divided self".

One way to depart from the strictly psychological explanations of offending behavior is to look toward the ways in which humans construct and understand the meaning of the specific, as well as the general, social and cultural circumstances in which their own sexualized interactions occur. June 2010 marked the 41st anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York City, which were born out of the earlier civil rights movements of the 1960s, and that sparked the gay liberation movement and ignited ensuing identity movements. Ina time of fascination with reality television, and external presentations of self through web-logging (blogging), You-tube, Tweets, Facebook posts and other social networking utilities in the popular media, it is imperative to recognize the significance of the process of identifying and recounting the self. Narratives are one way in which to present the self. These allow us to uncover individual frameworks for understanding personal experience. The use of narrative assessments allows us as researchers to present an intensive, rich and seemingly more accurate depiction of the priesthood and the surrounding debate about sexuality, chastity, and sexual abuse of minors within the context of temptation, sin and redemption. Stories reflect interpretations of self, context, culture and behavior, as experienced through thoughts and feelings in everyday life.

As people tell stories about themselves, they link to and characterize other social actors as well. Accounts are made of which individuals are brought together as a class or

group and how this is accomplished, as well as about who individual people are within some social cluster, and how they interact with the mores of that cluster. These stories are ever changing, as the narrator recounts the past (revising as memory allows), manipulates the present (fitting it in the situation of the telling), and facilitates the future (presenting who one wants to be or to be seen as). Some chronicles are characteristically archetypal, as in the more benign "rags-to-riches" story or the modern marvel of the "supermom". There is also the contemporary "victim-to-survivor" narrative, and the more malevolent "pedophile priest." The models for understanding one's own experience are born out of cultural frameworks that are then reiterated by striving toward or shying away from the standard.

There are some archetypal scripts from which ordained men may frame their own image, from the Sacramental Priest, the Minister Priest, Whiskey Priest, and the Pedophile Priest. The former two types of priests are strongly associated with the performance of the religious role – the duties or functions of the priest in the Church. The latter two speak more to the human failings of the man, and they are *not* positive scripts. Instead, they are ones against which a priest contrast his own master status, juxtaposing the "good" against "bad." This contrast of human self and holy man is one that is specific to the status of those men accused of sexual abuse of minors. The distinction must be situated in the Catholic context in order to best understand the failings of the mind and flesh that co-exist with the other qualities of a man anointed as a facilitator between God and other human souls. Fr. Cozzens writes about the priesthood, saying that

> A vocation to priesthood . . . may well build on the natural psychic predisposition for priestly ministry that is constituted by the shaman or priest archetype. In this light . . . a true vocation to service . . . become the ‘truth' of the presbyter. He has been anointed, marked, if you will, for ministry as a priest. His desire for priesthood, then, is more than a career choice, even one based on the conscious motivation to do something worthwhile with his life. His vocation is cradled in dialectic of grace building on nature (archetypal predisposition) and his response in faith to the mysterious promptings of his soul which are affirmed by the consensus of the local church and confirmed by the call of the diocesan bishop (2000, p. 72).

Regardless of the content of scripts, they are merely rods against which a man can compare himself, or honors to which he can aspire. A priest’s successful accomplishment of his role says nothing of how he incorporates an understanding of the man beneath the vestments.

As discussed previously, forensic samples and quantitative measures though useful, are problematic, and the question arises as to what other methodologies might best capture the sensitive and controversial accounts of sexual abuse of minors by priest offenders. As previously noted, studies using only closed-ended assessments or psychologically oriented case studies are limited in their capacity to generate multi-dimensional data. In order to make sense of the “telling” of the self, it may be most useful to access and analyze the first person account of identity and behavior. The setting for these accounts in this research is the qualitative response, the open-ended survey responses, the therapeutic written “story of me”, along with non-clinical face-to-face interviews. Using measures like these allows us to hear priests as they speak for

themselves regarding their personal and professional experiences over time. It is a forum for respondents to discuss their own perceptions of behavior that others may consider to be *un*becoming of a Catholic priest.

From the early works of Mead (1934) and Goffman (1959) through the present day, certain sociological frameworks contend that identity is formed as a part of the process of social interaction in which individuals present themselves, and society reflects back some image of that self, be it a positive or negative one. Multiplicities of identity are dependent on context, and along with the production of both the self and the social identity, also known as master status (Hughes, 1958), we come to understand that the manifold realities that humans experience are fluid and subjectively meaningful (Alcoff, 2006; Friese, 2002; Deaux, 2000; Plummer, 1995; Goffman, 1963; Goffman, 1967, Morris, 1962; Goffman, 1959).This was previously mentioned in the discussion of the archetype, the perfected image to which one aspires or from which one recoils. The priest's identity is not one that is simply reflected back by God, an abstract entity once made manifest in His son, Jesus Christ. Instead, the priest relies on human others, family, peers in the priesthood, vocational superiors, and lay parishioners alike, to assess his role accomplishments.

Goffman (1963) suggested that humans develop personal identities which allow each and every person to be uniquely identified among a collection of individuals. The biographical details of our personal identities are, in part, shaped by the roles we play in the collective, which could be that of sister or father in the family unit, or of boss or secretary in the world of work. Throughout the phases of life, from the time of introduction into the social world and on to adulthood, one comes to one's own personal

(self) identity by means of individualized narratives interacting with the larger social and cultural meta-narratives. It is important to consider the ways in which Catholic priests interact with these identity structures in order to better understand how some may engage in behaviors that are seemingly "unbecoming" of a priest. An exploration of interviews of both accused and non-accused priests, some of whom have engaged in and talk about other behaviors that do not "fit" with the public perception of the priest, allows for a better understanding of the relationship of identity, behavior and culture.

It is not a novel concept in the discussion of identity management to say that we are born into or achieve social status in various formal and informal groups (religious, occupational, family, racial, sexual orientation, economic, etc.) Social identities must also be validated in order for each of us to process our perceptions and behavioral choices as framed by group norm expectations (Alcoff, 2006; Hewitt, 2003; Capozza & Brown, 2000; Deaux, 2000; Worchel, Iuzzini, Coutant, & Ivaldi, 2000). Individuals come to know multiple social identities as a part of interactions within various referent groups.

The dramaturgical framework for the analysis of behavior allows us to see that regular people present the self through performances of their own reading of the social scripts to which each has access; these readings may be intentional or unintentional expressions in the process of impression management (Goffman, 1959). Impression management is the processes of validation or invalidation of one's identity. As an individual takes on one or another role (chosen or imposed), and is attributed a positive or negative stigma, the individual "becomes" the role in response to external cues marking formal and informal steps along the way, which establishes his or her place in the social

structure. One is apt to manage a self-impression that is consistent with the goal of acceptance of both formal and informal roles. What then, can we say of those who behave in ways inconsistent with the expectations of a given role? How do they manage the private understanding of themselves when their behavior is incompatible with the public's reflection of them?

Relevant to this study is the professional role, as experienced by priests. For them, the identity is a work role, but given that there is also a sense of "calling" for some, and that the work pertains to spiritual and moral cultural norms, this particular vocation pervades the public and private spaces in the life of the cleric. It is similar to the role of a doctor, in that this is also a role defined in part by professional skills that are learned over time, and an identity that assumes some standard of behavior when the standards established by governing bodies are met by the applicant to the "title", earned by committing to an oath of service. Nonetheless, though a doctor can wield a scalpel in order to repair the body, priests alone are charged with mending the soul. Absent the body, Catholics believe that it is only the soul that remains. Cozzens, points out that the attraction or call to priesthood is internally motivated towards the redemption of the priest's own soul, and externally validated as he acts in service to God the Father as the priest ministers to the laity. To become a priest is not merely to "get a job", but rather to acquire meaning, to be useful, and this meaning is found in the context of the Catholic faith and practices.

The role is one that may not be shed easily. The Catholic Church teaches about an ontological change that occurs upon ordination to the priesthood. What is the meaning

of this change? "The interpretive process itself is both individual and social: the effort to establish meaning is performed by the individual and is subject to modification upon her critical reflection, but is always conditioned by the concepts, narratives, values and meanings that are available in her social and discursive contexts" (Alcoff, 2006, p. 127). How do priests experience and / or integrate the self, particularly given that identity is understood through a process of internalization of individual experience and making meaning of the social expectation of others (Morris, 1962)?

For the priest, the process of identity formation begins with who he is as a man in the world, by name and biographical history. A secular, non-Catholic perception of the priest is that he has disconnected, if not schizophrenic, identities that may be incongruent with one another. This may be true, but the nature of these other "selves" need not conflict with the moral weight of the master status. For the priest himself, and within the Catholic context, there may be a particularly strong dichotomy between role norms and expectations because priests are at once humans expected to be moral exemplars and chaste celibates. This incongruence for priests may be indicative of tension between the master status and the self -identity, and must be negotiated through a variety of social processes. From here, the priest may sculpt his reality using vocabularies of motive available to him in order to address problems of identity that confront him. This does not assume that these motives are right or wrong, good or bad. These motives are simply rationales for choices made. An example can be found in the literature on desistance from criminal careers. Maruna (2001) has found, in his narrative explorations, that when individuals commit acts of deviance, they separate their ideal self (the moral leader) from the weaker failed self (the sinner) – compartmentalizing one from the other. Basically,

those identified as criminal "desistors" engage the "liberating" narratives, while those who are stuck in the loop of recidivism hold the view that the problem of their behavior is within them as they internalize their stigmatized criminal status. The former can be paralleled with the Catholic framework, while the latter is in line with the Puritan perspective on deviance.

Giddens issues a reminder that one's identity is not rooted in behavior alone, nor even specifically is it rooted in the reactions of others. Rather, it is located in "the capacity *to keep a particular narrative going.* The individual's biography, if she is to maintain regular contact with others in the day-to-day world cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them in to the ongoing 'story' of the self" (1991, p. 54).Thus, it is required that the stories of the priests are assessed in terms of their understanding of the priesthood, their relationship to the role, and the specific cultural components of Catholicism that shape their interpretation of behavior, whether their own or that of others.

Goffman (1963), in his discussion of stigma and the management of what he called "spoiled identity", suggests that the purpose of having a *personal* identity is to allow each of us the possibility of unique identification and distinction within the larger community of intimates and strangers alike. So whether we are internalizing and externalizing a positive or negative identity, the experience and interpretation of this is, in part, unique to us as individuals. Identity management refers to the negotiation between the personal self and the multiplicity of social selves that may be imposed by or sought

within some larger culture or social structure, or the ongoing "story of the self" presented above.

For priests, the process of heeding the "call" or following the suggestion to join the seminary is a part of the process of internalizing the efforts of socialization, learning techniques of identity management unique to the Catholic priesthood. There may be parallels in other religions, but none are as organized or as centralized as that of the Roman Catholic Church. Seminary learning, along with the formal steps towards ordination to priesthood, clearly document the process of personal identity intersecting with the standards of the priestly role, when the individual man begins to assume the social identity as his primary role or master status. What he does, who he is, and the patterns of how he is to behave are, for the most part, loosely scripted in a way that establishes the foundation for the expectations of self and others in social interaction (Pothast, 1989). Giddens (1991) reminds us that the self-identity is *not* a passive one solely determined by external forces. Individuals have impact on the local circumstances which, in turn, have global consequences for others. For example, the conditions of behavior for abusive priests of yesteryear have had a massive impact on the response to and expectations of priests today.

Priestly role as master status.

> *. . . our present-day . . . self, like the broader institutional contexts in which it exists, has to be reflexively made. Yet this task has to be accomplished amid a puzzling diversity of options and possibilities* (Giddens, 1991, p. 3).

Individual transitions from one circumstance to another, like the transition from wife to widow, officer to sergeant, or lay person to priest, have always required that we reorganize the way we think about the *self* in relation to the rest of the world, and these transitions are most often ritualized within culture through *rites of passage*. The same is true within the Catholic traditions of the sacraments. It is the Sacrament of Holy Orders that bestows upon the priest "the character to act in the person of Christ." Giddens (1991) argues that anyone with a secure self-identity has biographical continuity against which to engage in the reflexive processes of identity management through personal relationships. Although these relationships are important for intimacy and expression of the self, they may also be "risky and dangerous" when juxtaposed to the primary role through which we were introduced to these relationships.

Relationships, be they temporary and passing encounters or extended and repeated interactions, are established based on expectations, and these expectations are outlined by what is perceived to be the primary role or master status of all actors involved. *Master status* denotes the primary identifying characteristic of a person (Hughes, 1958). It is the status that is most prominent to the individual in the construction of his identity, and can be ascribed, as with gender or race, or achieved, as with religious or professional group membership. The master status supersedes all other identifying traits of the individual, becoming the fulcrum around which his self-perception is balanced, and the how the individual believes others perceive and validate that status. It is the master status that most commonly influences a person's behavior. The cultural context within which a master status is experienced by an individual and valued and validated by others is useful for understanding patterns of offending and non-offending.

That said, one's primary social role must also interact with the *personal* identity, which is said to be that thing which differentiates one individual from another. Identities situated in personal experience as well as cultural expectation are what allow us to know how we are related to others, given that our *self* is organized around past experience, and that experience is perceived and processed within a given framework or context (Hewitt, 2003). If a man is ordained to holy orders in the Catholic Church, then he is forever the priest, at least in the eyes of others, unless he travels away from his diocese, without vestments or collar, interacting with those who know nothing of his "work" or of the master status that, in other moments, shape his daily life and routine. Of course *he* will know of his other identities, and if the priesthood is a calling or vocation that is all consuming requiring one to subvert other possible identities (son, brother, uncle, lover), it stands to reason that the meaning of that master status stays with the cleric even in the absence of the social reflection from his congregation or fellow ordained brothers, or even those who recognize the symbolic presentation of that status. But some questions come to mind. How does one maintain an understanding of his *self* in the context of the all-consuming priesthood? Is there room for a "self" in this context? What does it mean to be a priest? These and other questions will be addressed in the section about the cultural components of the Catholic Church and the priesthood as they pertain to this study.

Returning to the concept of self-esteem, which is the affective response to self-objectification, Fields writes that it is "the high or low level of self appreciation that an individual achieves and internalizes as a result of individually arrived at perceptions of how he . . . is valued by group affiliates and the larger society" (1994, p. 7). This useful

definition aids in the understanding of the place of esteem in the relationship between identity and behavior. As Goffman points out, a process of role-taking and role-making essentially embody the performance of one's primary social role, and this process involves both engaging and *not* engaging in behavior, given the context of the social interaction (1959; 1961). As social relationships become entangled as a result of role expectations placed upon the priest, his self-esteem becomes dependent on role performance and how he perceives this performance to have been received by those for whom he actively executes his role. (Hewitt, 2005) Psychiatrist R.D. Laing wrote in 1961 that

> it is difficult to establish a consistent identity for oneself – that is, to see oneself consistently – in the same way – if definitions of oneself by others are inconsistent or mutually exclusive. . . To 'fit in with' them all [other identities imposed] or to repudiate them all may be impossible (p. 71).

Yet those for whom we perform our roles can confirm our identities, sometimes through evocative reactions to our presence. Again more questions come to mind. In just what ways are behaviors constrained in the process of role performance? Does the Catholic Higher Power (Yahweh, God, or Holy Trinity) in its abstraction, find its way into the audience of those for whom a priest performs? For an accused priest, is sexual abuse a way to evoke a response to confirm some part of his "self" not often invoked? And how can the parts of the whole exist side-by-side, or within the same individual when the expectations of each are at odds with one another?

Socially, a person's "work", "job", "occupation", or "vocation" is something by which others evaluate him, and it is also something by which he assesses himself. It is important to point out that the role of the priest is, in some regards, a "work" role, in that he receives income for performance of certain tasks. But these tasks are not simply academic, administrative, labor, or service oriented, but also ones that cannot be performed (except in very extreme circumstances) unless special status has been conferred upon the individual who is engaged in the task. What is unique about priests is that the services that they render are ones pertaining to the souls of others, particularly as priests provide access to God through the maintenance of the religious ritual and the encouragement of spiritual practice. Becoming a priest is a process of making sense of and heeding the "call," or complying with the suggestion by elders.

Becoming a priest takes several steps: the decision to explore the possibility of priesthood, intensive education in the ways of the Catholic Church and the priesthood, practical experience in ministry, and ordination. The present study focuses on diocesan priests and the acquisition and understanding of their roles. The process of becoming a priest occurs over a minimum of six years, depending on when one first experiences the "call," what type of educational institution one enters, and what type of priest one desires to become (diocesan or religious). Upon ordination, diocesan priests begin their fulltime ministry. Priests are called to be forthright messengers of hope, strong community leaders and spiritual guides for the laity. Priests are individual men presenting

themselves on a routine basis as upright, moral church leaders through whom lay church members may seek reconciliation with God.[26]

The priestly identity is one earned through a process of achievement and, once the Sacrament of Holy Orders is administered, the individual man becomes a member of a non-secular group assigned a higher status than that of the laity. On the topic of men and work, Hughes writes that "the Catholic clergy probably represents the most complete removal of the person from his *milieu natal* for professional life" (1958, p.31). For the priest, this happens through the process of seminary training, in which men are immersed in a ritualized life of control and formality. Stages of socialization are demarcated, in part minimizing or expunging who the cleric was in the past, in order to marshal him toward the man he will be in the future. This process leads towards a diminution of the importance of the priest's biographical narrative in the reflection of his identity. Hughes also tells us that ". . . the person cannot . . . escape judgments. His particular [personal role] asserts itself and may come in to conflict with the office which he fills. The fusion of personal role and office is perhaps never complete save in ritual" (1958, p.61). So when we think back to the discussion on esteem, we can wonder how much of the self gets lost, and how much the external assessment by parishioners, superiors or peers in the clergy supersedes any sense of worth a priest may have in his own unique life experience. To this, Hughes writes

> The economy of energy and will, devotion and judgment peculiar to the individual does not completely disappear when he is clothed with an established, even holy, office. The more secular offices make fewer formal demands upon the

[26] This study only explores Diocesan roles. Further explanation can be found in the discussion on sampling.

> individual; they require less suppression of individuality. They are less symbolic and more subject to the test of effectiveness of action . . . (1958, p. 63)

In light of this understanding of the push to understand the micro-level understanding of one's identity and its meaning, we know that priests are called to be forthright messengers of hope, strong community leaders and spiritual guides for the laity. These expectations are engaged by all of those socialized in the Catholic Church, and many non-Catholics also hold some regard or reverence for a priest when encountering him in his clerical attire. Weigert, Teitge, and Teitge, researchers working to present an understanding of the development and use of the self as a concept within sociology and social psychology, state that,

> like the meaning of any other object in our socio-cultural context, the human individual is defined within the symbols and meanings available in our historical time. . . . we take these meanings to be . . . socially constructed. . . . intentional, interactional, structural and cultural processes and objects enter into our definition of ourselves and into the public definition of us by others (1986, preface, *x*).

In a discussion of the relationship between identity and behavior, Hewitt says that we use the "self" as a principal item in "efforts to achieve control over . . . conduct, for it is because we can imagine ourselves that we can guide our own conduct in a direction that will suit the situation as a whole and make sense of others . . ." (2003, p. 79) Stanosz, sociologist and ordained Catholic priest, says that priests are socialized to internalize and commit to a *new* identity (2006).

Priestly formation is not unlike other forms of professional socialization that involve "rites of passage" from lay person to professional. Some distinct characteristics are a part of the components of identifying who a cleric is in comparison to the laity. The life of a priest is characterized as follows:

- . . . permeated by the three-fold charge given priests at ordination to teach, to sanctify, and to govern
- . . .steady prayer first and foremost centered in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist . . . , the Liturgy of the Hours, and the liturgical cycles, but also in prayer that is personal and devotional. . .
- . . .a deep devotion to the person of Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary, Lord and Savior . . .
- . . . of obedience that is apostolic, communal, and pastoral . . .
- . . . lived in communion with one's bishop and the presbyterate. . . includes sacramental, apostolic, and fraternal bonds . . .
- . . . celibate chastity . . . "a sign and stimulus of love, and as a singular source of spiritual fertility in the world". . .freely accepted, shows that the priest is "consecrated in a new way to Christ" and offers in himself a reflection of the virginal love of Christ for the Church
- . . . gratitude for the material blessings of God's creation coupled with a simple and generous lifestyle . . . cares for and is in solidarity with the poor, works for universal justice, makes himself ready and available for all those in

> need, administers the goods of the community with utmost honesty, and offers a courageous prophetic witness in the world . . .
>
> -USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, pgs. 12-13

Therefore, the process of becoming a priest involves a differentiation of professional role identity from that of the laity, of which the priest was once a member. Formation is said to be a process not of passivity, but of active identity shaping through participation in the social process of becoming a priest. (Stanosz, 2006)

If one has failings as a human that cannot be rectified with the expectations of the priestly role in an immediate social interaction, could this conflict be related to the perpetration of acts of sexual abuse? The tension between who one is as a human individual and who one is as a "spiritually fertile" leader of the Church can be a breeding ground for deviant acts, even when the priest has knowledge of the various institutional and social constraints against these acts.

Another a question is whether or not there are ample opportunities for priests, who have developed lay personal identities, to differentiate themselves in the midst of the routinization of their professional role identity. Priests are known by their first names to some members of their peer social circles and some members of the laity, but they are often addressed as "Father", both professionally and personally. How does this apply to an understanding of the sexual abuse of minors? Presuming that priests have knowledge of the social constraints against sexual interaction (penetrative, other contact and non-contact) with minors, that priests are held to a higher moral standard of behavior as a result of their role, and that priests are managing their personal and professional role

identities in situated contexts, we must understand that the conditions for behavior are not only defined by the moment, but also by the culture within which the social interaction takes place.

Situating the Self: Cultural Vocabularies and Sexual Deviance

The interactive and reflexive processes of identity management may serve as a means of reconciling the tension between self and priestly role within the Catholic context of temptation, lapse and redemption. Alcoff suggests that the process of interpretation is social and individual, saying, "the effort to establish meaning is performed by the individual and is subject to modification upon her critical reflection, but is always conditioned by the concepts, narratives, values and meanings that are available in her social and discursive contexts" (2006, p. 127).

It is important to understand the contexts within which priests come to understand their identity in relation to their behavior, especially because priests are held to and commit to different and higher standards of moral behavior. Hughes aptly states that "[M]any occupations cannot be carried out without guilty knowledge. The priest cannot mete out penance without becoming an expert in sin . . ." (1958, p. 80) Priests, as men with personal narratives, and participatory individuals in the culture, practices, and standards of the church live in a context that has, in some way, made room for the phenomenon of sexual abuse as this confronts the Church today.

Individuals make choices within the contexts or scripts available to them. Studies of rationalizations for deviance examine perceptions of one's actions *after* one has committed deviant acts and been publicly stigmatized. An example of this is Sykes and

Matza's study of the applying techniques of neutralization in self-report explanations of one's own delinquency (1957). The study found that individuals have access to ways of neutralizing shame and guilt once a deviant label has been applied.

If identities are situated, and behavioral choices are made within the contexts of available scripts, then techniques of neutralization are scripts that are used as a way to manage a negative self-identity activated by feelings of guilt and shame once bad acts are discovered. What is deemed to be deviant or not is not black and white, and an individual who makes a choice to act (or not) does so in with an understanding of who he or she is in the given context. The individual negotiates between the world of acceptable meanings of conformity and neutralizations allowing for deviance. In his study in deviance disavowal and child molesters, McCaghy states that "[a]major problem for any individual whose behavior has been labeled deviant is to manage his identity when interacting with others" (McCaghy, 1968, p. 43).

As his exploratory study of criminal careers, Maruna uses narratives of offenders who are in the process of desistance from offending in order to better understand how these individuals make sense of their own identities after experiencing negative stigma for behaviors in which they once (and maybe only once) engaged. Maruna finds that ". . . those who are reformed have had to relinquish an old self and invent a new one" (2001, p. xvi). Instead of inventing a new identity, an offender may gravitate toward a non-deviant master status, one that may hold a social worth of higher value, and presumably one that is consistently and positively validated by others. When one reforms the self, it may take the form of "sinner-turned-saint." The process of identifying with a "good"

versus a "bad" identity may be more amenable in a context that allows for neutralization of deviant acts.

Maruna states that stigmatized offenders "must develop a pro-social identity" (2001, p. 7). Narratives about the self develop through social interaction. Validation, obstacles and opportunities contribute to changes in identity. For those who offend, the offending self-identity may be malleable in a context that provides a means for the redemption of negative self-image. Given the finding that many offenders present themselves as good at the core, and that the bad acts were just that, bad acts, the distance from a master status that is either positive or negative does not seem exceptionally great.

The culture of the Catholic Church emphasizes that humans have the knowledge of temptation - as humans, we are all subject to it, and sometimes we are tempted by horrible things; moral lapses – we are all, without exception subject to these lapses. By the same token, we all have the capacity to be redeemed. Confession is available to those seeking redemption. In the Catholic Church, deviants or "sinners" are allowed redemption through a practice of reconciliation. It is not enough to say that a priest knows he can go to confession and will be forgiven for his bad actions. What is important is that, once deviance has occurred, those who wish to avoid a negative self-identity may seek forgiveness, not as a way to restore balance upset by the sin, but as a way to minimize the effects of guilt and shame for sinning in the eyes of God. Although Catholicism demands that we "do unto others as we would have done unto ourselves,"[27] a person's identity as a child of God is confirmed by God alone, and not by those against whom that person may sin. Deviance is neutralized through the prospect of redemption. This

[27] This is accompanied by the requirement of a firm purpose of amendment and avoidance of sin.

prospect may allow a priest to restore a negative self-concept as it relates to his priestly role, after sexually abusing a minor. This would lend itself to the possibility of non-persistent offending as a means of fending off the potentiality of facing spiritual stigma.

There are several ways to manage stigma in the Catholic Church. One can minimize responsibility by believing and saying that evil influences lead one to behave in sinful ways. In addition to seeking forgiveness from God through confession and penance, another way to manage the stigma of wrongdoing is to avoid sinful behavior by becoming more active in the Church, and participating in the role of a devout person. Stigma can also be staved off through such extreme measures as exorcism. Lastly, one may mange the negative impact of deviant behavior on one's personal identity by leaving the church. For individual men who have sought, through a specific process and rites of passage to become men of the cloth, any one of these paths is an option. It seems, though, given the potential for absolution, priests may choose to manage any conflict between who they are as individuals and who they are as priests by seeking redemption from God, and subordinating their personal identity failings within their priestly identity.

Overall, priests who molest children do not fit the pattern of persistent offending, and sexual offending may be a part of a diverse pattern of deviance for priests. Given previously noted statistics, many offending clerics do not appear to have a "career" in sexual or non-sexual offending behaviors. These priests have no known history of progressive or serious offending from which to desist. My argument is as follows: in the context of a Catholic redemption script, one positing that, as a human, one is tempted, lapses, and may reconcile one's identity through forgiveness, a priest with a low self-concept may be more distanced from his priestly role, and more prone to moral lapses.

The Catholic redemption script may allow a priest to neutralize the shame of his moral lapse, and seek to reconcile his personal identity with his priestly role.

If behavior is the externalization of the self, or a way to reiterate a self that seems abstract, a way to inject the human self into the ever-consuming master status, then the sexual abuse of a minor could be a considered a distorted validation of self. But it is clear that a temporary lapse must then be understood and interpreted in the context in which one lives one's daily existence. A priest who sexually abuses a minor may use neutralizations to manage the negative stigma associated with the externalized behavior, and these are derived from the cultural context of sin and redemption in Catholicism. These neutralizations / distortions are ways of interpreting experience in both the general context (role, culture) and in the specific situation (priest, minor, sexualized interaction).

A micro-level analysis situated in symbolic interactionist research has, to date, most poignantly framed explorations of the negotiation and presentation of the self, as well as the formation of identity as this occurs in social contexts. In the setting of vocational celibacy and religious taboos against self-pleasure, non-procreative sex, and pederasty, social interactionist research provides a perspective through which to explore how clerics, particularly those accused of the sexual abuse of a child, have managed their sexual identity. This sexual identity is structured by traditional social and gender identity norms, role scripts assigned at birth by biological sex and played out through culturally conveyed heterosexuality, and then re-scripted for a cleric upon entering the vocation.

Narrative Explorations

Stories of sexual encounters abound in print media, motion pictures, and on the Internet, and sex is acceptable in the mainstream market culture, overall, *except* in situations such as: when it is bought or sold; occurs in public spaces; happens before marriage; or is engaged in with young people or children. In order to best comprehend this hierarchy of acceptability, sociologist Ken Plummer argues that a framework of the "sociology of stories" can show how narratives of sexual experiences are personal, but have become part of the social fabric, and telling these sexual stories can be construed as empowering, or as political actions (1995). This makes sense, given that at one point in history punitive processes were in play for a variety of sexual interactions, dependent upon when and where the events occurred and who engaged in the behaviors. Historically, the language for talking about sex and sexuality did not exist. But today, we can understand sexual stories through the communally viable story, lived, expressed, promulgated and retold. The stories of coming out, as well as stories of rape and sexual abuse recovery are understood using the social conditions of the telling, along with the issues of identity and community that are actively engaged in the tales.

First, it is important to understand the mechanism for the telling of the story or of one's motivation to action, before we can articulate an understanding of the content and meaning of the recorded motive. This understanding can be gained through an exploration of the role of narratives of priests, both written and oral. The content of narratives will be addressed in the next section. In general, qualitative data add dimensions to understanding of the specifics of human behavior and, in this case, priestly life, expectations and experiences within the Catholic cultural context of temptation, sin

and redemption as a means of making sense of individual behaviors seemingly contradictory to the role of the priest. But it is not only the content of the stories that matter. People tell stories about themselves as well as others. They tell stories of what brings them together as a class or group, as well as about their individual location within that group. These stories are ever changing, as they are a telling of the past (revising for the present), a manipulation of the present (to fit the context of the telling), and a facilitation of the future (who one wants to be, or be seen as). Some stories take on archetypal characteristics, as in the victim as survivor or, now, the pedophile priest.

We tell stories about ourselves, as well as others. In order to be defined as sexual, a person must identify himself as such, or be identified by the state or by the victim, who tells a story of victimhood in which the abuser is assigned a role. The reader need not accept this qualitative description, but it does not make the narratives of the victim or the state any less "true." Sociologically speaking, there is nothing essential about behavior. In and of itself, it is a passing event – not endless and not a person's identity. An individual becomes a priest or a mother, or a husband, or a Catholic, as one may also "*un*become" any of those "things."

A person's life story is a "conversation of narrators," either with the multiple selves or with literal others. When these others are absent, it is the cultural symbols and identity archetypes against which we compare ourselves in order to construct our story. This is the dialogical self, determined by the referent of the narrator (I, me), as well as the position (internal, external) (Raggatt, 2006). This latter concept is specific to social or cultural context. In order to construct a coherent identity, the narrator must understand some synthetic self – even when he may act in ways inconsistent with that which he *is*, as

a man and/or as a priest (Halbertal & Koren, 2006). Using written and oral narrative formats allows for an exploration of the relationship between the raconteur's personal and master cultural stories, and of the ways in which these are integrated or disassociated. *How does the accused priest tell his story in light of either his behavior or accusations of behavior?*

Those confronted with the task of managing a spoiled identity, one "founded on a deep division between their internal, psychological experience of the self and the role possibilities of their culture", or the identity possibilities imposed by others (victims or accusers) as they tell their own stories is of particular interest (Goffman, 1963, p. 178). Because the accounts of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in the United States occurred in a cultural setting that has unique norms used to frame, recount and understand each person's story, and because the Catholic context has the sacramental dimension of Holy Orders and the lifestyle of celibate chastity, obedience and ministry for priests, it is also important to extract cultural vocabularies of motive from the narrative structure.

Cultural Vocabularies: Motives for Behavior

> *Motives are imputed or avowed as answers to questions interrupting acts or programs . . . They stand for anticipated situational consequences of questioned conduct. Intention or purpose (stated as a 'program') is awareness of anticipated consequence; motives are names for consequential situations, and surrogates for actions leading to them. Behind questions are possible alternative actions with their terminal consequences.* (Mills, 1940, p. 905)

In 1966, Kai Erickson talked about the Puritan relationship to deviance. Given that the United States has historical roots in Puritan processes of essentializing and labeling "problematic" behavior, discussion of narrative structure and content must be understood in this context. Historically we have had a prudish and repressive relationship to sex in the United States, but we have also seen an extremely *expressive* sexual culture developing in the late 1960s and 1970s, the period in which the peak of reported sexual abuse cases in the U.S. was evidenced to have occurred (John Jay College, 2004).

The self that is understood and told is not only defined by the moment of the telling, but also by the cultural context in which action or inaction occurs. Within a mainstream or dominant culture are subcultures - collective creations, articulation of solutions to common problems, or understanding of motives and expectations experienced within dominant cultures. So the narratives located in subcultures are particularly compelling conduits – both the structure of the story, *and* the content – for the vocabularies of motive and techniques of neutralization of behavior choices.

It is in this context that individuals drift into and out of various types of sexual deviancy, some of which are more serious or grave than others. This deviance is not only criminal, but social as well. Interpreting some condition, thought or action as socially deviant is dependent upon the specific as well as the general situational context. In this study it is the specific context of the celibate priest committing sexual acts, and in the general context, it is adults engaging in sexual behaviors with minors. Both of these contexts shape the ways in which the behaviors are interpreted by the offending priest as well as by victims and others to whom this information becomes public or disclosed.

Mills writes that motives for behavior are not fixed, nor are they inherent to an individual. Instead, these things are "the terms with which interpretation of conduct *by social actors* proceeds. . . The differing reasons men give for their actions are not themselves without reasons" (1940, p. 904). The phenomenon of priests being accused of the sexual abuse of minors is interpreted in a culture that makes room for the prospect (and reality) of sin, the feeling of remorse or guilt, along with the opportunity for repentance and redemption. Ordained men clearly have some orientation toward the respect and admiration for the laws of the Church, which are not unlike the laws of the civil society in which the Catholic Church exists today. Priests agree to conform to the normative system of Christian beliefs in general, and specifically, at least in theory, to the religious expectations of the priesthood.

It is imperative that the discussion of this sensitive subject, that of sexual abuse of children and adolescents by Catholic priests, is considered in cultural context, just as we would need to understand opiate use differently among doctors, street junkies and those with terminal diagnoses. Therefore, the sexual abuse of minors by priests must be understood in terms of the role of the cleric in the Catholic Church, which is a particularly strong and devoted subculture. Thus, we might expect that priests, as well as lay Catholics, would be able to access the specific narratives of temptation, sin, and redemption as opposed to, yet situated within puritanical notions of essentialism and predestination. It is important to consider how this context might produce a conflict between the priestly identity or master status and the self-identity, or the identity of the individual man. Evidence from *Identity & Behavior* interviews points to the reliance upon the Catholic teachings and framework of sin and redemption, as well as to the fact that

priests reference culturally specific realities of daily life that are indicative of "being" Catholic, and/or "being" an ordained priest.

Catholicism, sin, and redemption.

There is a somewhat criticized theological perspective, considered "privatized", wherein our quest for God is seen as a quest for self, and that, upon understanding that we are limited as humans, that our existence is finite, we seek union with an ethereal God (McBrien, 1981). In fact, the anxiety generated by the recognition of our own humanness is argued to be that which causes sin, in that "we seek to bring anxiety under control by pretending we have power or knowledge or virtues or special favors from God, and this pretense leads, in turn, to pride, cruelty, injustice. Or else we seek escape from our anxieties by turning inward and pursuing a life of sensuality" (McBrien, 1981, p. 160). This interpretation of function of sin also says that sin is universal, but not certain. In fact, McBrien, who focuses his writing, in part, on the theological, doctrinal, and spiritual dimensions of the Catholic tradition, goes on to argue that

> [s]*in* is an exercise of human freedom *against* the relationship [with God]. The sinner remains radically open to the possibility of conversion and forgiveness. If grace were not still available to the sinner, conversion and forgiveness would be impossible. The call of God to conversion and repentance . . .[28] would be meaningless unless there were some basis in the human person responding to the call. Grace supposes even in the sinner the capacity to receive it (1981, p. 160).

[28]*1 Corinthians 1:9; Galatians 2:20; Romans 8:28-3;*

Instances of what other disciplines or paradigmatic perspectives call "acting out," engaging in deviance, or committing crime could be interpreted in the Catholic setting as exercising human freedom against God. This would include even sins that are particularly offensive or egregious, regardless of who commits the acts, as with the sexual abuse of a minor.

As previously mentioned, priests are typically born into Catholic families and proactively reared with Catholic teachings and practices. As they are trained in seminary, they engage in more rigorous study of the text and precepts of the Bible, which is meant to help them fulfill the mission of the Church and the goals of the priesthood: to have an active personal faith life, to engage in public ministry of the Word, and to broaden the vision of the Church (Schuth, 1990). As stated earlier, priestly formation is meant to aid priests in fulfilling the responsibilities to teach, to consecrate and to direct Church ministry and the spiritual development of the laity, focusing on sacraments, Liturgy, and prayer. Herein lies the complexity of self-role integration, in that these men are acculturated to be the beneficiaries of the responsibilities of the priesthood, later learning not only to participate as an individual, but also as spokesperson for the Church, the faith, and God. So what is it, specifically, that is written and interpreted regarding the phenomenon of sin, and how the sinner is restored?

McBrien, in his summary of the origins, theology, teaching, traditions, and developments, and moral values of the Roman Catholic Church, points to language in both the *Old* and *New Testaments* to illustrate the existence and connotation of transgression, and what this means for faithful Catholics who do sin. The first

interpretation (below) is derived from *Old Testament* verses written in the chapters of Exodus, Deuteronomy, Leviticus, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. This interpretation is shaped by the original "codes" or "moral laws" outlined by God and presented to Moses in the Decalogue (Ten Commandments). McBrien writes that sin

> is a substituting of human concerns and interests for God's sovereign will.[29]We sin against God whom we do not see by violating the rights of our neighbor whom we do see.[30]Rejection of the neighbor is the rejection of God[31] (1981, p. 953).

This understanding of *Old Testament* verses shows the conflict of the state of being human with a belief in the Divine. When we align ourselves with God's will, this puts us on the path to the grace of redemption, but, inevitably, we come to the moment of contemplating and/or engaging in sin.

The *New Testament*, however, focuses more on the importance and process of forgiveness of sins, rather than on what we might call a puritanical or punitive approach to acting out of line with established moral codes and the will of God. An important tenet in Catholic teaching is that all those born into the world are born with what is called "Original Sin" dating back to the fall of man from the story Adam and Eve.[32]Catholics who participate in the Sacrament of Baptism are released from this Original Sin. The capacity to be relieved of Original Sin results from the offering of Jesus' life and His

[29]*Exodus 21:1*;*Deuteronomy 9:7 – 21*

[30] *Leviticus 19:9-18*; *Isaiah 1:23 – 25*

[31]*Ezekiel 18:3-32*

[32]*Genesis 3:1-3*

death on the cross. By example, then, Catholics come to understand forgiveness because "Jesus himself associates with sinners and calls them to repentance[33]. . . But the sinner need only to ask for forgiveness.[34] There is joy in heaven over the sinner's return" (McBrien, 1981, p. 953). Therefore, if it is true that a Catholic is to forgive and befriend the sinner, at least for those who actively practice the faith, then it should be true that offending priests can be accepted as men who have sinned and are deserving of forgiveness, should they seek it. One understanding of the process of temptation and sin, then, is that it is a battle between the external flesh with the internal spirit, aligning with the desire to live out God's will. As practitioners of the faith, individuals have the "free will" to ally themselves with the will of God. In so doing, individuals can be seen in the likeness of God, rather than as defined by individual acts of transgression against God *if* the individual chooses to realign with the will of God after he or she strays off course.

Of course, the Ten Commandments provide a frame for understanding just what a sin *is*. But the list is not exhaustive, and is in need of consistent contemporary interpretation by the Church based on a general understanding of the spirit rather than simply the letter of the moral laws set forth in these Commandments. This process of revision is not unlike that of the judicial branch of government in the United States does, interpreting the meaning of the Constitution (and later Amendments) penned nearly two and a quarter centuries ago. The Commandments, though, were written in a time before Christ, meaning that the documents are well over 2000 years old. Although the basic principles are the same, the actual embodiment of infractions differs today. Catholics are

[33]*Matthew 9: 10, 12*; *Luke 15:1-2*;*Luke 19:7*

[34] *Luke 18:13-14*

taught about levels or gravity of sin, from venial to mortal. They are also given a solution to the reality of sin, namely, repentance and reconciliation. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#1855 – 1864: Liguori, 1994, p. 129) outlines these as follows:

> *1855* Mortal sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God's law; it turns man away from God, who is his ultimate end and his beatitude, by preferring an inferior good to him. Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it.
>
> *1856* Mortal sin, by attacking the vital principle within us - that is, charity - necessitates a new initiative of God's mercy and a conversion of heart which is normally accomplished within the setting of the sacrament of reconciliation: When the will sets itself upon something that is of its nature incompatible with the charity that orients man toward his ultimate end, then the sin is mortal by its very object . . . whether it contradicts the love of God, such as blasphemy or perjury, or the love of neighbor, such as homicide or adultery.... But when the sinner's will is set upon something that of its nature involves a disorder, but is not opposed to the love of God and neighbor, such as thoughtless chatter or immoderate laughter and the like, such sins are venial.
>
> *1857* For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must together be met: "Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent." . . .
>
> *1859* Mortal sin requires full knowledge and complete consent. It presupposes knowledge of the sinful character of the act, of its opposition to God's law. It also implies consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice. Feigned ignorance and hardness of heart do not diminish, but rather increase, the voluntary character of a sin.
>
> *1860* Unintentional ignorance can diminish or even remove the imputability of a grave offense. But no one is deemed to be ignorant of the principles of the moral

law, which are written in the conscience of every man. The promptings of feelings and passions can also diminish the voluntary and free character of the offense, as can external pressures or pathological disorders. Sin committed through malice, by deliberate choice of evil, is the gravest. . .

1862 One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent.

1863 Venial sin weakens charity; it manifests a disordered affection for created goods; it impedes the soul's progress in the exercise of the virtues and the practice of the moral good; it merits temporal punishment. Deliberate and unrepented venial sin disposes us little by little to commit mortal sin. However venial sin does not set us in direct opposition to the will and friendship of God; it does not break the covenant with God. With God's grace it is humanly reparable. "Venial sin does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace, friendship with God, charity, and consequently eternal happiness."While he is in the flesh, man cannot help but have at least some light sins. But do not despise these sins which we call "light": if you take them for light when you weigh them, tremble when you count them. A number of light objects makes a great mass; a number of drops fills a river; a number of grains makes a heap. What then is our hope? Above all, confession.

1864 "Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin." There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss.

Being a sinner is being one who has knowledge of the moral codes and intent to violate them. And if a person believes in the teachings of Roman Catholicism, then he will seek to stay on the path to God. When he finds himself lost to temptation and

indulgence, he has a mechanism in which he must engage in order to find his way back to the flock of the faithful. This is an allusion to the parable of the lost sheep, one of several that are referenced by individuals, including priests sampled for this study, who sin and seek forgiveness. The parables are culturally-based tools of stigma management, allowing those who stray not to be ostracized, but brought back into the fold, particularly if the mission of the Church is to spread the Word, rather than to limit the followers among some purist elite. The absence of sin (after Baptism) is *not* the benchmark of membership in the Catholic Church. This remains true whether one is a lay person or an ordained priest, brother, or sister.

What is imperative to membership in the Catholic faith is the practice of repentance, in the form of informal personal prayer and in the more formal Sacrament of Reconciliation. But there is an outline for what it means to seek forgiveness. It is not merely in the act of seeking absolution that one is forgiven. Rather, the faithful person must be true to oneself by seeking to *be* one who heeds the will of God, and consistently *behaving* accordingly. So even when one does *act sinfully*, reconciliation is the process of restoring one's self to the path of the seeker. A *sinner* is one who refuses to return to the path. In other words, to sin is to stray, but straying need not mean one is forever lost. The reality of sin is presented in the *Catechism*(#386- 387) as follows:

> *386* Sin is present in human history; any attempt to ignore it or to give this dark reality other names would be futile. To try to understand what sin is, one must first recognize *the profound relation of man to God,* for only in this relationship is the evil of sin unmasked in its true identity as humanity's rejection of God and opposition to him, even as it continues to weigh heavy on human history.

> *387* Only the light of divine Revelation clarifies the reality of sin . . . Without the knowledge Revelation gives of God we cannot recognize sin clearly and are tempted to *explain it as merely a developmental flaw, a psychological weakness, a mistake, or the necessary consequence of an inadequate social structure, etc.* Only in the knowledge of God's plan for man can we grasp that sin is an abuse of the freedom that God gives to created persons so that they are capable of loving him and loving another[*emphasis mine*] (Liguori, 1994, pgs. 97-98).

The teaching tries to organize thinking around the spiritual nature of sin. It is tantamount to a violation of one's relationship to God, even when it is embodied in harm to another human. So in order to rectify the damage done to the relationship, one must be contrite, confess the sins, promise to sin no more, and accept the penance assigned. The penance may be to simply stop doing the sinful actions, to commune with God through prayer, or, when possible, to make amends to those we have harmed. One need not formally participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation with another human being, such as priest or other person, although it seems as though doing so brings new perspective and shows greater desire to conform to the will of God by handing the sins to the confessor. To be forgiven of mortal sin, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is *required*, except in circumstances when a person is dying and/or no priest is available. But it seems as though what is absent in the process of repentance is contrition, at least as the practice may be interpreted and applied in a contemporary context. The sacrament may have come to be interpreted as an exchange between confessor and penitent, similar to a conversation between the "always listening and never judging" bartender and a lamenting/confessing patron. It is as if *doing* the ritual exchange is, in fact, tantamount to *being* repentant. As illustrated in the Catechism, nothing about the interpretation of sin is

really located in the act(s), but in the intentions. In fact, confession is only one-quarter of the *Rite of Penance*. Integral to the rite are also sorrow; satisfaction; and absolution (McFadden, 1994).

In the past, particularly at or before the time of the second Vatican Council and the major social changes during the 1960s and 1970s, the cultural frame in the United States would have been more consistent with Catholic teaching. The Puritan roots of American culture meshed nicely with the slow integration of Catholic missionaries since early colonization, and the rapid influx of Irish immigrants in the mid-1800s made the U.S. a good fit for growing Catholicism. But with the rise of secularization, many active Catholics began to deviate from Catholic teachings (Schuth, personal conversation, April 2010).

It seems as though *contrition* in the process of reconciliation is missing from those who do harm to others but do not immediately take responsibility. It is not as if the offending priests did not know that what they were doing was wrong. In fact, the Church has been over-productive in the various pronouncements of what constitutes sexual sin, although these are mainly about consenting adult behaviors that are considered morally wrong - sex before marriage, fetishism, or homo-sex. First and foremost, the cleric must have understood that what he was doing was sexual in nature, even if the events did not consist of actual sexual acts. If accused clerics were not able to integrate an understanding of these sexual behaviors as wrong because of the age of the individuals with whom the behaviors occurred, then they certainly knew it was wrong, or sinful, to be wantonly violating their own promise of celibate chastity.

The historical origins of the mandate of celibate chastity will not be explored here or elsewhere in this analysis. Instead, in the analysis of culturally situated narratives of offending, the use of the issues surrounding celibacy is investigated. The coming chapters will first explore the processes of conceptualization, measurement, and data collection and analysis of characteristically descriptive psychological measures, along with culturally rooted identity management techniques collected using narrative data.

Procedural Approach

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Characterizing Dimensions

The hypotheses here center on the measures of the relationship between the self and the vocational master status in order to understand any disconnect between these two manifestations of identity. It is the contention of this study that the separation or distancing of the "bad" acting individual from the "good" acting individual is evident in those who engage in untoward behaviors, ranging from excessive drinking, to gambling to adultery, as well as the sexual abuse of a minor. This framework is applied to priests who have been accused of the sexual abuse of a minor, exploring the self-role disconnect using survey responses and interviews for the *Identity & Behavior* study. Additionally, comparisons are made to data derived from archival files of *The Loyola Psychological Study of the Ministry and the Life of the American Priest*, henceforth called *Loyola*, along with clinical files of accused clerics sent for in-residence therapeutic treatment (Kennedy, & Heckler, 1971). The importance of including a comparison of the *Identity & Behavior* sample to the *Loyola* sample will be discussed in a later section. With the intention of preventing future sexual abuse of minors by identifying factors specific to offending, accused and non-accused priests are compared a several measures. Hypotheses tested in this study suggest that accused priests will:

- more often display risk factors associated with sex offending than non-accused clerics;

- rely on different narrative structures than non-accused clerics when talking about their priest master status;
- employ the same techniques of neutralization as rapists with adult victims;
- manage identity incongruities through a discernible reliance on the Catholic culture of redemption in order to make sense of their failed self.

The aforementioned role-self disconnect for accused clerics is measured more specifically as follows:

- More marked sexual deviance.
- Greater degree of social interaction deficiencies (before and after ordination)
- Lower self-esteem compared to role esteem
- Intense role involvement and poor self-care
- Fragmented narratives relaying
    - a more dramatic transition to priestly status
    - disparity between role expectations and reality of experience of priesthood
- Reliance on cultural interpretations of the problem of abuse (vocabularies of motive) as a means of maintaining distance between the "bad" self-identity from the "good" priest status

The ensuing sections are inclusive of hypotheses outlined using variables expressly measured by the *Identity & Behavior* survey and follow-up interviews. The survey (*see Appendices C & D*) included measures of demographic characteristics, several scales of esteem, pre-clergy experiences, seminary education, priestly role concepts, relationships with peer priests, and relationships with superiors. The interviews allow for an exploration of narrative structure, or the ways in which priests talk about the construction of their story

and imposition of stigmatized identity, the process of making sense of identity (i.e. the self, master status, ontological change, *becoming* a priest, and *being* a priest), and the cultural vocabularies upon which they may draw in order to understand the offense behavior (*see Appendices E & F*).

The measures included here are used to either substantiate or refute the more generalized hypotheses presented above. As evidenced in the literature, the behavior of sexual abuse has been studied using the positivistic perspective, explaining conduct by psychological defects or negative personal biographical experiences that can be clearly identified and measured. The current study tested whether or not some of these characteristics were disproportionately present for accused clerics, and findings are presented and discussed in Chapter 5. Additionally, narratives of meaning situated in cultural contexts, upon which a priest shapes an understanding of his own identity and behavior are explored in detail, the results of which are presented in the section on narrative structures (Chapter 6) and the section on techniques of neutralization (Chapter 7).

Possible predictors.

Predictors of the sexual abuse of minors are many, and the following section is a brief summary of the overarching concepts under which many individual characteristics may fall. As outlined in Chapter 2, these characteristics are: negative early life experiences, sexual deviance, social interaction deficiencies, coping maladjustments and cognitive distortions. The overall summary of the individual risk factors is relatively brief, as this study focuses specifically on only three of these concepts associated with offending, which are deviant relationships to sexuality, social interaction deficiencies and low esteem.

As is typical, all methods of data collection in this study include, at the outset, measures of demographic variables such as age, family structure (number of siblings, parent level of education), highest level of education and race/ethnicity. Characteristics specific to Catholic cultural upbringing are also measured, such as the age at which the cleric first decided to enter the priesthood, number of family members active in church ministry prior to the priest entering seminary (as a measure of cultural and family influence), age at which the cleric entered the seminary, and the single factor contributing to his decision to enter the priesthood as well as the number of family members in religious life at the time of the survey.

Sexual deviance.

As presented earlier in this study, one suggested predictor of sexual deviance is - sexual deviance. Specifically, sexual deviance, the acceptance of behaviors inconsistent with heterosexual romantic relationships, does not promote the eventual construction of the micro-society – the mother, father, and children. Active heterosexuality, which exists on a spectrum (dependent on one's "moral" code) includes the promise of the perpetuation of the human race. It also helps one to understand the ways in which an individual is "supposed" to socially interact, given one's sex and how this is related to the procreative process. Knowing the role functions of a sex based social contract aids in understanding the presumption that those who violate the gender norms, assigned by sex group (male/female) are deviant, regardless of the *type* of actual behavior. Although there seems to be a hierarchy of non-acceptability, the degree of negative response to different types of deviant sexual behaviors depends on a variety of factors, which are not the focus of this study. The point is that it is presumed that one type of non-normative sexual practice predicts other sexual deviance.

If an individual is willing to explore the fringe of what is acceptable sexual behavior and relationships, then she or he is most certainly able to, must have already, and/or will continue to remain in the sexual periphery. This periphery is inclusive of pre-marital or extra-marital sex, same-sex sexual encounters, or the commitment to a life of celibate chastity, as is particular to the sample of priests. One supposition is that the willingness to cross one sexual boundary is a slippery slope to crossing others, like sex with children. In fact, social conservatives have often suggested that sexual deviants "prey" on their victims, seeking out settings that will facilitate ease of access to a victim pool. Anecdotally, in conversations with individuals not working in the field of criminology or participating in the study of sexual deviance, comments were made that presumed many priests are gay and become priests because they are running from their own sexual desires, or seeking out the homo-social environment in which to assuage any abnormal feelings, particularly in a hetero-normative, marriage-and-family oriented social culture. A descriptive analysis of sexual deviance is assessed through the use of variables measuring pre-seminary dating and sexual exposure, as well as an indicator of the cleric's sexual identity: how he sexually identified upon entering seminary as well as what the cleric's sexual identity is, if the qualitative survey responses yielded signs of a clearly discernable sexual identity. Deviance is a relative concept, so when clerics were asked to consider deviance or morally inappropriate behaviors, this was inclusive of behaviors that would be problematic for a lay person (something like a "sin") as well as anything that could be thought of as "unbecoming" of a priest or "man of the cloth." Both accused and non-accused priests were asked about the concept of deviance.

In spite of much evidence pointing to the fact that most identified sex offenders who have child or teen victims are heterosexually identified (regardless of the sex of their

victim), there is still the presumption that the priests who offended are/were homosexual. They may not necessarily have identified as "gay", but they are presumed to have been queer or willing even to *contemplate* a sexual attraction to another male. It was gleaned from the interviews whether or not the individuals identified now as heterosexual or not (inclusive of homosexual experimentation, desire or outright identity), to see if there are more homosexually identified than heterosexually identified priests who were accused. Another aspect of the spectrum of sexual deviance is the lack of development of an understanding of one's sexual self, through actual youthful experimenting. Other variables measuring pre-seminary orientation toward sexuality include: romantic experience; sexual experience; sexual identity. Questions on these variables are designed to provide the researcher with a clear sense of how the priest understood himself prior to beginning the process of priestly role socialization. Some of the open ended responses related to sexuality, in a roundabout way, yielded information that aided in identifying clerics as hetero, homo, or bi – sexual, whether in theory or in practice.

The research is not meant to target homosexual social life in the survey, but rather the level at which one is willing to talk about one's own sexuality with others, regardless of what the sexual identity is. In this regard it would seem that those who are more secure with their own sexuality may be more willing to talk about being a celibate and/ or gay, bi or straight man.

In an effort to increase the validity of the findings on some measures, *Identity & Behavior* responses are compared by cleric type (accused, non-accused), a procedure described in greater detail later. Any differences uncovered are validated by comparing the overall *I & B* sample to responses provided on measures the Loyola Sentence Completion

Blank for Clergymen (*LSCBC*) data derived from the *Loyola* archival data.[35] The importance of the use of this data is presented in the discussion of secondary data, included at the end of this chapter. The LSCBC instrument includes measures of psychosexual maturity, as well as assessments of Church, faith and religion, and an item measuring perceived sexual orientation, as identified by the interviewing therapist. This is one way to validate our sample, by noting any differences between the *I & B* respondents and the respondents for the randomly derived cohort of priests in ministry at the time of the *Loyola* study. This is a fair comparison, in part, because nearly two-thirds (62%) of the priests in the current sample were ordained within two years of the publication of that study, making them a part of the population of priests at the time of *Loyola* study sampling.

Although the measures in the *Loyola* study are static and include secondary assessments by interviewing therapists, some measures do include the original words of the cleric in response to the open ended questions. The *Loyola* study also includes the only available historical data on "normal" priests, helping us to better understand how individuals in a contemporary sample of priests assess their experiences, attitudes and opinions, particularly as they do so retrospectively.

Social interaction deficiencies.

As presented previously, another suggested risk factor for future offending, although identified only as a correlate to offending, is the presence of some variation of social maladjustment or isolation as a result of weak social bonds. Social isolation is important when considering that parish priests are public figures, in a position which requires at the least, casual and/or superficial social interactions. The internalization of

[35] See appendices C, D, E of the *Loyola* study for actual interview questions, evaluation guides, and self-administered survey measures.

problem solving, or inner struggles, may lead to, perpetuate, or be the result of social maladjustment, so it is difficult to say if it is, in fact a predictor of sex offending against minors. In order to assess the reliability of findings of social maladjustment of sex offenders, the *Identity & Behavior* survey assesses social relationships as specific to the priestly status, in addition to the a priest's willingness to seek personal interaction, or guidance for somewhat sensitive personal issues.

In addition to the sexual experience and identity issues conceptualized and presented above, it could also be said that, in terms of maladjusted social relationships, an accused priest may be less likely to discuss his sexual identity with others. The survey asks several questions regarding whether or not the cleric has spoken with various "others" about his sexual identity. The ability to be frank with family, non-clergy peers, clergy peers, spiritual mentors and superiors about one's own sexuality, be it a sexual identity, or a discussion of celibate chastity, or even active sexual encounters is not indicative of someone with tenuous social bonds.

It is important to get a sense of early or pre-seminary social bonds. The survey includes measures of family size and whether or not the cleric had pre-seminary romantic or dating partners, as well as whether or not the cleric had friends who entered seminary with him. This last measure is one that presupposes social isolation if a cleric enters seminary alone, rather than in a pair or group of others who are like-minded in this endeavor.

Overall, accused priests may be from smaller than average families, in which they did not learn specific techniques for interacting with peers, techniques that may typically be learned from a variety of interactions with siblings. In terms of romantic partners or

peers entering seminary, accused clerics may not have had experience with dating and may have entered seminary in isolation or with very few others. This may have additionally stunted the development of social bonding techniques said to be important to the process of reaching out in times of emotional, spiritual, psychological or physical need.

Once in the priesthood, a pattern of weak bonds, or the cleric's own unwillingness to reach out to others, may continue or even develop anew. Patterns of continuation of social interaction deficiencies were assessed using the interview data, while the surveys used specific categorically measured questions about work and collegial relationships with peer priests and superiors. Respondents were also asked to assess whether or not they believed that there was adequate institutional support for development of priests in their human formation as well as in their vocation. If the social bonds thesis is appropriately interpreted, we would expect to see that accused clerics perceive that there is less help available to them in terms of personal growth - a weak connection to the institution- and they will have more negative assessments of relationships with peers and superiors indicative of social isolation and social maladjustment.

Low esteem.

Rosenberg self-esteem scale.

The *Identity & Behavior* survey included a number of measures of esteem as a means of assessing a key risk factor for offending, that of low *self-esteem*. Given that the data collection in this study is, for the most part, limited to self-response surveys, the need for assessing psychological constructs typically measured by long and detailed inventories had to be counterbalanced with the ability to entice individuals to willingly participate in the study on their own time, without compensation. For that reason, after an investigation

of tools previously used to measure concepts associated with various forms of deviance, the brevity of certain self-esteem measurements led to the conclusion that esteem is the best construct to assess (Fields, 1994).

In an effort to explore a new way of measuring the concept, this study developed multiple measures of esteem. Internal measures of esteem for the self and the role (how the cleric assesses himself as a man in the world, as well as how he sees himself in his vocation as a priest) are included, along with measures of the cleric's perceptions of how external "others" assess him in his role as a priest. The external measure is meant to assess whether or not the priest sees that his identity is being positively reflected, and how this may differ compared to the ways he sees himself as a priest and, ultimately how this may correlate with his self-esteem. The five scales are derived from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale or *RSE*. (1965)

The original RSE is a Likert scale using a response structure based on a four-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree, to Strongly Disagree to ten statements. The original adolescent subject was asked to respond to the statements of his/her own general feelings about him/herself. The original sample consisted of just over 5000 juniors and seniors in ten randomly selected schools within New York. The specific RSE statements to which the subject responds are positively worded to assess self-satisfaction, seeing good qualities in one's self, feeling as competent as others, feeling like a person of worth, and having a positive attitude. The negatively worded items assess the degree to which the respondent feels no good at all, not proud, useless, wishes he has more respect for himself, or feels like a failure.

These scale measures are meant to capture self-esteem. Although the scales were developed to measure esteem in adolescence, it is of the opinion of this researcher that the development of the vocational role occurs over time, likened to adolescent development, during which one is socialized to the expectations as well as the reality of the vocation. Because identity occurs as a process of internal conversation as well as external validation, the scales assess how the priest sees himself, as well as how others see him.

Identity & Behavior scales.

The five scales created in order to measure priest perceptions of esteem were operationalized using the RSE framework of self-esteem. The items were modified in order to assess the following: perception of self (self-esteem); perception of priestly role (priestly role esteem); perception by peer priests (priestly role esteem by role peers); perceptions by superiors (priestly role esteem by role superiors); parishioner perceptions (priestly role esteem by lay parishioners).[36] The respondent was asked how he believed each of the referent groups perceived him in his role as a priest. The period he was asked to assess was dependent on his status as an active or inactive priest. Inactive priests were asked to assess the perceptions of themselves and others encountered in their career as priests until the time when they were removed as a result of an allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor.

[36] Respective scales can be found on pages 2, 5, 9, 11, 13 of the original *Identity & Behavior* survey.

Active clerics were asked to assess their perceptions in their career as parish priests until the time of the implementation of the Dallas Charter and Norms (2002).

The order of statements to which the priests were asked to respond was modified from that of the RSE Scale in order to cluster positive and negative statements in a way that would flow better for an adult respondent. Additionally, the statements were modified to the past tense. Each of the five scales was included in specific sections of the survey framed by a clearly defined point of reference. The scales were presented in the matrix format, allowing the respondent to fill in a radio button in the column that best represents how he saw and felt in relation to the specific referent and timeframe for the given scale. The option "no opinion" was added to the response categories. Overall, if it is the case that those who sexually offend have lower esteem, we will see that the accused clerics will manifest lower esteem on all levels compared to the non-accused clerics. If a priest is socially maladapted, he may have an ego that allows him to regard himself more highly, as a man and as a priest, than those who have the capacity to "judge" him. We may also see that priests who have the indicators of social maladjustment may have low self-esteem, seeing that others value him more than he values himself. This introduces the possibility of identity disconnect, where the priest finds value in his role as a means of minimizing his self-loathing.

In an effort to increase the validity of the findings on some measures, the *Identity & Behavior* sample is again compared to the sample from the *Loyola* study. Specific responses from the LSCBC and a measure of positive mental health from the *Personal Orientation Inventory* (POI, 1966), are assessed against comparable measures administered to the *I & B* sample.

Identity and culture.

Constructing identity.

Two possible settings for "telling" the self in research are the qualitative or open-ended survey response, as well as the interview – the chance to give an account of one's self that serves best the situation in which the telling takes place. The *Identity & Behavior* surveys and interviews ask the same questions of both the accused and the non-accused priests. Priests were asked to think back to when they first had the inclination to enter seminary. This was followed up with a narrative of personal understandings and perceptions of the role and duties of a priest, how these things changed or remained the same over time, and how the clerics, as individuals, managed these changes in or contradictions between perceptions of role performance and actual experience in the vocational role. If there are differences in behavior related to the experiences associated with the journey toward the priestly role, we may see that accused priests say that their decision to enter seminary occurred at an earlier age than the non-accused priests, and may have been decided during enrollment in minor seminary.

Priests who have been accused might not have experienced a clearly identified transition from lay-person to priest, as the non-accused priests may have done, which may be associated with an absence of a clearly defined self outside the role of the priest. In the interview the priest is asked if he takes time for himself outside of his role as a priest, as well as how he interacted with others – peers, superiors and parishioners and particularly how he symbolically engaged with the notion of "formality" with different types of persons. Consistent with the notion of distancing a "bad self" from a "good self" (Maruna, 2001), one hypothesis is that accused priests do not have a strong sense of an integrated

self, and this will manifest as a lack of formality with parishioners, and will be reflected in a narrative of negative experiences in early priesthood, particularly with their pastors.

Incorporating the qualitative survey response into the measure of identity, it is possible that accused priests will indicate external factors contributing to the decision to enter seminary and proceed to ordination, not internalizing the identity, more often indicate a strong dissonance between priestly role expectations and the reality of priestly life upon ordination. Accused priests may also more readily or more often express a failed self along with a failed relationship with, or a disconnect from, God or the spiritual self. To this end, the accused clerics may be more consumed with priestly role performance (sacraments, counseling, administrative duties) rather than self-care. In terms of self-assessment of their own lapses, we can expect that accused priests were not able to strongly connect to the wrongfulness of their sexual acts with minors, and may have had difficulty connecting to negative feelings about behaving in ways that are "unpriestlike."

Toward the end of the interview, the priests are asked to externalize their reflections by talking about specific or abstract priest peers, in order to help contribute to a more detailed understanding of the following: how clerics can manage a commitment to priestly life yet still lapse; and how the respondents saw others coping with their own unpriestlike behaviors. It is expected that those who are accused may see others as equally "bad" as themselves as a means of deflecting the stigmatized identity with which they now live. They may perceive that other priests are hiding alcoholism, drug use, gambling, or deviant but consensual hetero- or homo- sex. In the process of identity-making, we reflect, in part, on who we are by reflecting on who we believe others to be, and on how we think we are perceived by others. This is the classic cycle of the *Looking Glass Self*, if there is projection or externalization, there reflection, deflection, and internalization are present.

The current study is organized to understand this process at the moment of glaring identity contradiction found in a Catholic priest who sexually abuses young people.

Culture and meaning.

Walter Fisher, a researcher in the field of communications, has suggested that behavior or action can be understood as an essential part of stories, at that it is grounded in particular histories and cultures, with different genres of discourse being erected (1987). We can assess the perception of cultural reasons by exploring the rhetorical logic used by humans through the process of narration. Sociologically, we can try to understand the sexual abuse of minors, or moral lapses, by those who are representatives and servants of the Church and committed to a life of celibate chastity as framed by the Catholic culture of temptation, sin and redemption. The *I & B* interviews are examined for constructions of meaning specific to the Catholic context upon which accused and non-accused clerics may draw in order to make sense of this particular type of sexual deviance.

We will look for moments of what McCaghy calls "deviance disavowal," or techniques of neutralization rooted in cultural vocabularies that go beyond mainstream secular explanations for offending. In particular, we might expect to find that accused priests will frame their experiences (abusive behavior, accusations, or church response) by referencing parables of redemption or specific biblical texts, more often deflecting blame toward specific protocols of the Church, like poor seminary training concerning the reality of life in the priesthood. Additionally, it is expected that accused clerics will less often recognize or talk about the impact of their behavior on the victim by framing it as "sin" against god, or failing of the spiritual self.

The analysis does not solely rely on evidence from the interviews and qualitative survey responses. Summaries of data derived exclusively from clinical files of priests accused of the sexual abuse of a minor and sent for in-residence therapeutic treatment are used to increase the sample size for the open ended reflections of self, Details of the data are described elsewhere. Written narratives are drawn from questions used by clinicians at the treatment center, which were used as tools for presenting an understanding of individual histories relating to coming to the ministry, demographic and family information, descriptions of the behavior that brought the accused priests to the institute, as well as the priests' own feelings about their behavior.

It is central to this study to remind the reader that there is *no evidence* that: the sexual abuse of young people by priests occurred, on the whole, as group events; anything specific in the practices of the Catholic religious faith condones sexual abuse, much less sexual behavior without the utmost focus on procreation and/or reflections of marital love. This is not an attempt to dismantle a longstanding tradition of religious teaching or faith. By applying a cultural framework, this study is only meant to explore the use of what has been called vocabularies of motive, or what could be understood as cultural cues that shape the ways individuals, and members of organized cultural groups, come to understand not only themselves as beings, but their own actions as reflections of self.

Sampling Design: Categorizing Clerics

Although there are many types of religious ministers, this study is solely concerned with individual men ordained for diocesan priesthood and who have served in active ministry in the Catholic Church, particularly in the United States. This is not a traditional forensic sample of criminal offenders. The population of known priest offenders is chosen because it is available as a result of John Jay's contribution to research on the study of the

Nature and Scope of Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church: 1950 – 2002, (2004), henceforth *Nature & Scope*, commissioned in response to the most recent (2002) "child sex abuse scandal" involving the Catholic Church. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) permitted John Jay College to approach each diocese for participation in the various phases of the overall *Causes & Context* study. Non-priest members of the Church (nuns, employees, contractors, lay volunteers) have committed acts of sexual abuse against children and adolescents, and priests have engaged in sexually inappropriate behaviors with adults. That said, it is the crisis of child sexual abuse and the fear of the predatory "pedophile priest" that shapes the choice of the target population for the current *Identity & Behavior* study. A definition of the priest subgroups is described below, followed by specific details of sample acquisition.

Accused clerics.

Accused priests are those clerics who have had formal allegations of sexual abuse of a minor(s) brought against them, and for whom these allegations have not been cleared either by the Church or outside agencies. The allegations resulted in a removal from ministry, as per the *Charter for the Protection of Young People* (also known as the "Dallas Charter") by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (*see Appendix A*). The individuals sought for inclusion in the sample had not been reinstated at the time of the solicitation for participation in the study. Therefore, their status is "accused."

The "Dallas Charter" was a policy developed in 2002 by the Church in the United States in response to the crisis of surge in reporting of thousands of cases of sexual abuse of minors. This policy, in part, mandated the removal of all clerics with an accusation in their personnel file of having committed sexual abuse, whether or not the incident(s) had been responded to at some earlier point in time. The existence of this "characteristic" for

any priest was enough for removal from the public practice of ministry, and enough for inclusion in this study. Essentially, the Dallas Charter is a "zero tolerance policy," which means that most of the priests against whom allegations were lodged were still not in active ministry at the time of the survey distribution. Although the men were removed from active ministry, many remained in contact with the diocese, as administrative purposes required, or collegiality allowed. In order to facilitate the highest level of participation and to avoid sampling bias, the offending priests were called "inactive" in all pertinent communication, as this term specified "status" related to ministry rather than abuse.

There are a variety of possibilities of priest cases that do and do not fall into the inactive (accused) category, and these were clarified after the initial outreach as a result of questions from the diocesan contacts. (*see Appendix B*) The formal allegations need not have been made to a law enforcement agency and, in fact, most (76%) were not. (John Jay College, 2004, p. 60) Accused priests who had been laicized, or returned to secular status, at the time of our survey were also given the opportunity to participate if they were made aware of the survey or interview, but these men were not proactively sought. Their participation was the result of word of mouth.

Because an accused identity is something that is imposed (whether accepted by the cleric or not) by those self-identified as victims, the goal was to include priests who have admitted as well as denied allegations who voluntarily agreed to complete a survey and/or a follow-up interview. It is not the factual truth of the accusation with which this study is concerned.

Non- accused clerics.

The comparison sample is comprised of *non-accused* cleric. During the data collection phase, these clerics were known as the "active" group of individuals because their status allowed them to practice ministry officially rather than being on restricted or no public ministry within the structure of the Catholic dioceses. These men may have been retired or not at the time of the second wave of solicitations for participation, but they were *never formally* accused of the sexual abuse of a minor. In order to have an equivalent comparison group of non-accused clerics, an initial analysis of the accused cleric data was conducted prior to distribution of the second wave of surveys. As a result, it was established that, in addition to the characteristics mentioned above, the "active" clerics, sought for participation by the diocesan contact distributing the surveys, should have been at least 55 years of age, and have had substantial parish experience at the time of responding to the survey.

The target sample size for this study was determined by the known number of accused diocesan clerics as reported for the *Nature & Scope* study (2004). Approximately 3300 priests against whom credible or substantiated allegations of sexual abuse were known to be alive at the time the allegations were reported (1950 – 2002) (John Jay College, 2004, pgs. 95& 97). This is 4% of the priests in diocesan ministry in that period. There is no way of knowing how many of those clerics were alive and in contact with the diocese from which they were removed at the time of the survey distribution. Best practices employed to minimize sampling bias suggests that all dioceses are included in the outreach, and that other avenues are explored for connecting with accused clerics. Adequate response rates for mailed surveys is approximately 50%. If half of the dioceses to which surveys were mailed (N=194, see *Table 4.* ***Participation in Survey Dissemination***

by Catholic Jurisdiction Type in the U.S.) had just one accused cleric responding, there was a reasonable expectation that a quota of 100 accused clerics would participate. This is approximately 3% of those on record known to be alive at incident report, as found in the *Nature & Scope* data (2004). The quota was met and exceeded by 25%. A description of the sample distribution and demographic characteristics is presented in the next chapter. It was clear that the base number of surveys for the non-accused priests would at least match the number of accused cleric surveys received, as this population size was known, and the population easily accessed. It was also recognized that the willingness to respond would most likely be higher (as it is) for individuals who have not been accused because they were not facing scrutiny as a result of their individual behavior.

At every phase of this study, the objective was to be as inclusive as possible. This comparison sample was solicited on a volunteer basis, and members of the non-accused sample had the same opportunity to anonymously return the paper surveys, or complete them online, as did the accused clerics, and they had the same option of participating in the follow-up interview. In order to increase the validity of the comparison, these non-accused clerics were drawn from dioceses that had originally agreed to distribute the survey to accused priests, as well as dioceses that had indicated willingness to distribute surveys only to priests in active ministry.

Accessing information.

Surveys.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) agreed as a body when it accepted the proposal from John Jay College that the study of the causes and context of the problem of sexual abuse would best be served if the outreach for respondents was directed through each U.S. diocese, eparchy, archdiocese, and

archeparchy. The sampling design proposed to the USCCB was rooted in the knowledge that some accused priests were still in contact with the diocese from which they were removed. The support from the conference of bishops was in no way a command to participate, and some entities did not meet the requirements for involvement. The requirements for diocesan participation are discussed below. It is possible that the USCCB could have issued a directive against involvement in this study, for any and all segments, but this would have been prohibitive to the method of data collection deemed most valid by the principal research team. This scenario makes sense, given that there are pending criminal and/or civil trials. If data collection within the institution had been blocked by the USCCB, individuals in violation of clearly stated administrative policies or suggested practices of the hierarchically organized institution of the Catholic Church in the United States (and worldwide) could have been confronted with negative consequences.

If dioceses chose not to participate, even when they had accused clerics with who they were in contact, there were other possible avenues of outreach. It is possible, however, that participation would have been sparse, given that some of these priests were still supported[37] by their diocese, and these men may have feared that knowledge of their participation would result in the loss of that support. Others, angered and hurt by the Church's implementation of the Dallas Charter, may not have wanted to aid the Church in its effort to single out, stigmatize and potentially prosecute the accused.

Anecdotally, accused priests who were interviewed did mention fear, hurt, and anger as a matter of hearsay from other accused priests they knew. One accused cleric explicitly mentioned initial reticence based on these feelings, as well as fear of self-

[37] This support is, for the most part, financial, in that some receive a stipend and/or medical benefits and/or housing provided by the diocese from which the cleric was removed. This is not the case for all.

incrimination given litigation pending at the time of the interview. Obviously even *if* those who participated had these feelings, this did not impede their ultimate decision to take part in the survey and/or interview. For some, an emotional reaction may have fueled participation in the study.

This study would not have yielded nearly the same meaningful results if the bishops had not sanctioned universal participation in the United States. Given that the proposal for the larger study from which data for these analyses were derived was selected and partially funded by the USCCB, it makes sense that the Conference of Catholic Bishops would support the suggested sampling design. Lastly, the Bishops did not interfere in any way in the construction of data collection instruments, nor did any request specific names of participants or copies of surveys or interviews. All data analyses offered to any individual Bishop, participant, lay person, or institution were presented in the aggregate, stripped of unique identifiers, as pledged in the informed consent to which the research team is adamantly committed.

In early February of 2008, letters of notification were sent first to the diocesan or eparcherian bishops as a reminder of the outreach *(see Appendix G)*, and, as a courtesy, the communication included a copy of the first wave packets intended for the sample of accused clerics, the contents of which will be described later. By mid-February, packets for accused priests were assembled and mailed in bundles to the Vicar for clergy, or the Vicar General.[38] In some cases, in spite of the best efforts of the research team, the individuals identified via the USCCB web page were no longer the contact for the dioceses regarding

[38] In each diocese, this office is essentially charged with the responsibility of providing "ministry to the ministers," inclusive of: administrative policies pertaining to the life and ministry of religious persons; wellness issues; vocations; formation of candidates for ordination to priesthood and diaconate; infirmed priests; and retirement.

the desired sample. Thus, the bundles were forwarded to some other individual designated by the diocese or eparchy. The distribution of these bundled packets was as follows: Archdioceses received 20 accused cleric packets, diocese and archeparchies received 10, and eparchies received 5 packets. Overall there are 202 entities to which survey bundles could have been sent. In the end, approximately 2000 surveys were sent to 194 Catholic jurisdictions. These packets were sent in advance of any knowledge by the research team as to the commitment on the part of dioceses or eparchies to distribute surveys.

As part of the process of reaching out to both accused and non-accused priests in each diocese, the Vicar or designee was asked to forward the survey packets, as well as to return to the research office a response card *(see Appendix H)* in an addressed, postage paid envelope indicating if the Vicar or designee would distribute the *Identity & Behavior* survey to the priests we call "inactive," in February of 2008; if he would aid in the coordination of follow-up interviews *if* clerics preferred not to call the toll-free line or send an anonymous email to the research office; if he would, in May of 2008, administer the surveys to willing "active" clerics who met the requirements, as well as coordinate those interviews with the research team; or, finally, if the Vicar or designee simply declined to participate. Those who declined participation were asked to indicate if they did so because they had no qualifying "inactive" clerics, or simply because they rejected the request to participate, regardless of the overall support of bishops. Additional survey packets were available upon confirmation of participation and any time thereafter. Non-responsive entities were re-contacted approximately six months after the distribution of the initial survey (*see Appendix I*). These efforts did not guarantee participation, nor was there a 100% response rate. Even if a diocese had priests with allegations, there was still the possibility that a decision would be made neither to participate, nor to respond.

It was clear that some dioceses would not distribute surveys to inactive priests, even when still in contact with such a priest. In an effort to be inclusive of accused priests who may no longer be in contact with a church agency and, given the knowledge of non-participation of some dioceses with accused priests, an effort was made to reach out to and include in the sample, individuals associated with *Justice for Priests and Deacons*, a group known to have access to or communication with accused priests. At the time of the survey, no other organized groups were known to the research team that could assist in the distribution of surveys to accused priests. *Justice for Priests and Deacons* was established to aid accused clerics in understanding their rights under Canon Law and to process appeal cases for removal from ministry. A letter of outreach was sent in July of 2008 *(see Appendix J*). Rev. Msgr. Michael Higgins, canon lawyer and the key contact for the agency, indicated that he would bring this request, along with the copy of the accused cleric survey packet, to the next meeting of the Board. Upon follow-up, Msgr. Higgins indicated that the group declined to aid in the distribution of the survey packets, as it was not in their interest to do so.

In addition to providing paper surveys, the option of completing an online survey was made available to both clerical categories. In the participant outreach letter (*see Appendices L & M*), web addresses specific to each clerical category were included in the letter appropriate to the respondent. The online surveys were created using the SurveyGold software and secure processing server, licensed to John Jay College. Responses are encrypted and processed through the SurveyGold server, which removes Internet protocol addresses prior to forwarding responses in order to allow for anonymity while ensuring that multiple surveys are not submitted from one *IP* address. The survey response file created a unique identifier for each respondent. The inactive clerics were given a web

address in their letter that differed from the online link given to active clerics, who received their letters in a later wave of survey distribution. The survey responses received via the web were processed into separate data files by clerical type, and were later coded by clerical category and the files were merged. Online survey participation was not anticipated to be frequent, given that many of the accused clerics were known to be much older and of a generation not accustomed to online interfacing. In fact, only 9% of the sample (N=45) responded online, and about one-third of these respondents were accused priests.

Once the channels maximizing the distribution surveys to the intended sample groups were established, bundles of survey packets were sent, as described earlier. The second wave was preceded by a letter of reminder to those who had agreed to aid in the distribution of this round of surveys to the second group of clerics (the active clerics) (*see Appendix K*). The survey packets, for both accused and non-accused clerics, had multiple components organized to give the potential participant the maximum amount of information in order to best inform the decision to contribute or not. For participating dioceses and eparchies, the priest serving as the contact was asked to send to each inactive priest and, in the second wave of survey distribution (approximately 6 – 8 months later), to each active cleric, a sealed envelope containing a postage paid return envelope, a cover letter inviting the cleric to participate as mentioned above; the Research Participation Statement and Consent (*see Appendices N & O*); and the *Identity & Behavior* survey (*Appendices C & D*).

With each set of survey packets, for accused and then non-accused priests, the potential participant was offered a specific invitational message, clearly identifying him in the category for which he met the criteria for participation. The only enticement offered

was the opportunity to contribute to an understanding of the phenomenon by completing the survey (with limited opportunity for extended open-ended responses), and proceeding to a follow-up interview in order to supplement his responses. Most surveys for inactive (accused) clerics were received within seven months (March – September, 2008) of the first wave of survey distribution, and the second wave of surveys sent to active (non-accused) clerics were also received within seven months (May – December, 2008).

Interviews.

Early conceptions of this phase of the study included only an interview structure in order to better understand the causes and context of sexual abuse, as discussed by accused priests. As mentioned earlier, many priests were abruptly removed from active ministry after the implementation of the "Dallas Charter." Upon much consideration, it became clear to this research team that, without the buffer of a relatively benign survey, there may have been no participation at all. The team accepted the possibility of being limited to the use of survey data. The ostracization of accused clerics did little to promote their faith in any effort sanctioned by the USCCB. Priests may have been willing to complete surveys allowing them to maximize their control over the information they provided. Interviews, on the other hand, allow for more candid, less prepared responses. A respondent who feared being attacked in an interview, or who worried that he would reveal potentially incriminating information (despite the promise of anonymity or confidentiality), might have been more reticent to participate in an interview without first having a positive experience of completing an inanimate survey.

Upon completion of the paper or online survey, priests were asked if they would be willing to participate in an in-depth interview. Those who consented to an interview were asked to contact the *Causes & Context* study by calling a toll-free number between

specified hours and days in order to set up a day and time for them to call in for a scheduled interview. They were also provided with the option of emailing the *Causes & Context* email account from an anonymous address, one that did not include identifying information. In the event that a participant preferred to add a layer of anonymity, the contact information and formats were also sent to the Vicar who had agreed to distribute the surveys (*Appendix J*). Of course, contact was accepted from those who left their name and number, or those who chose to email from a non-anonymous account, following all protocols to keep this information confidential to all but this researcher, as I was the only individual on the project assigned to conduct the *Identity & Behavior* interviews. All interviews were conducted in a seven month period, from April – November of 2008.

Respondents were able to participate via telephone, the appointment being scheduled by the Vicar or diocesan contact, who was also to assign the interviewee a four-digit code starting with a two-digit prefix as assigned in the letter of outreach for scheduling interviews. As an example, the four digit code for a diocese with four interviewees would be 3000, 3001, 3002, and 3003. The Vicar, or his designee, informed the participant priest that he should refer only to his code number when calling the toll free number for the interview. The Vicar coordinated the scheduling of the actual interview, unless the participant chose to contact the research team, as described above.

Telephone interviews were conducted in a private office space at John Jay College. The interviewer prepared the interview station with the consent script, as well as the appropriate interview questions, dependent on cleric category. Open ended questions were asked in order to assess experiences related to becoming a priest as well as facts or knowledge of the sexual abuse of minors, as is pertinent to the sample subgroup (*see Appendices K & L*). Interviews were conducted using a telephone headset that facilitated

the use of a digital recording device, and were carried out at the pace of the participant, which typically lasted 1.5–2 hours. There was an agreement that if the call was dropped, or the participant needed a break, we could, and would, stop the interview and the interviewee would call back when he was ready. If there was a need to continue the call at a later date, another appointment was scheduled, and if the interviewee asked the interviewer to discontinue the recording, either temporarily or permanently, that request was honored.

Initially, it was proposed that in-person interviews would be held in a location that was not on Catholic Church property, so as to be as welcoming as possible to accused clerics. There was the option of a screen so that anonymous participants could remain anonymous. A total of fifteen face-to-face interviews were requested, and conducted. The first participant to request an interview invited the researcher to his home, where he felt most comfortable. He also indicated that, in conducting the interview in his home, he was placing trust in the integrity of the principles of confidentiality promised by the research team. In total, all of the in-person interviews of accused clerics occurred in their own residences. The non-accused priests were interviewed in their parish residence (usually the rectory), or a space used for parochial purposes. These priests, overall, seemed the least concerned about the confidentiality of their identity, although all protocols were followed, regardless of the category of the priest.

Archives.

Archival files and secondary data analyses are often useful in research. Specifically, when data are derived from historically comparable samples, it is possible to validate the use of the primary sample to make statements about the population under study, although not necessarily in probabilistic terms. This study compares one historical

sample, described below, to findings from the *I & B* survey. Additionally, the use of supplementary raw qualitative data from the sub-population of interest, accused clerics in this case, increases the quantity of data and decreases potential biases introduced when non-random samples are analyzed. This study uses written narrative data to contribute to the analysis of the structure and content of priest interviews.

Secondary data.

In 1971, psychology professor and former Catholic priest Eugene Kennedy published findings from a study assessing psychological characteristics of Catholic priests in ministry at that time. The Loyola sample is derived from a larger study, commissioned in 1967 by the National Opinion Research Council (NORC) to study the life and ministry of American priests overall. The larger study conducted by NORC employed a stratified random sampling design. The strata were related to religious orders as well as diocesan size, as some dioceses were (and still are) are much larger than others. These strata were arranged in geographical order according to the major U.S. census regions at that time. From these strata, random samples were drawn.

A variety of assessments were administered to a random subsample of the NORC respondents, one of which was the previously mentioned POI (Personal Orientation Inventory). Those who completed the POI were randomly sampled for participation in the *Loyola* psychological segment of the study of priests. Further, a subsample of those priests was randomly chosen for participation in an in-depth interview. The data from the interview was not used in this study, although it would be useful at a later date to explore whether there are enough transcripts to compare to the *I & B* interviews. Analyses by the original researchers indicated that the groups were representative of the following

distributions: types of priests; region; age. Just over half of the *Loyola* sample is comparable to the age of the *I & B* sample in the late 1960s (26 - 45 y/o). This is also the period just prior to the peak of sexual abuse incidents, as indicated in the *Nature & Scope* study, and in data collected and presented by CARA, as mentioned in Chapter 1.

Given these probabilistic sampling techniques, the *Loyola* sample is comprised of a normal distribution of ordained priests at that time, which, as stated earlier, was around the peak of sexual abuse. The *I & B* sample has similar demographic characteristics as sample used to assess the psychological well-being of American priests. A comparison of the *Loyola* and *I & B* samples on comparable measures seems an unbiased technique of validation of the *I & B* sample. Also, Kennedy concludes that the men in the *Loyola* sample are typical men, with issues similar to lay men, at least at that time. They were not overly sexual or non-sexual some were gay and some not, some from broken homes, some not, etc. This is important because, as is evidenced in personal conversations as well as online cartoon art and a variety of news media stories, the public's perception is often that priests are abnormal because they want to be committed to celibacy, to not get married, not have sex, not have children, etc.

In late September of 2008, over a period of three days, two members of the *Causes & Context* research team went to reassess the data from that study by examining original instruments. The data for the 1971 study are available in the Loyola University of Chicago archives, and are inclusive of evaluations of in-person interviews conducted by clinical psychologists, and four surveys completed by the interviewees. The participants in the study were volunteers, and there were no assessments of whether or not the respondents in 1969-1970 had been accused of sexual misconduct against adults or minors. There is no

way to match participants in that sample to the clerical subgroups in the *Identity & Behavior* sample. It is the summary assessments of the interviews and surveys that have been used as comparison statistics to those collected in the *I & B* measures of sexuality, esteem, and social interaction.

Clinical data.

For three days, in the summer of 2009, I, along with a senior researcher, had the unique opportunity to access information from clinical files of men previously in the care of a therapeutic residential community. The institute is a not-for-profit agency that provides support to persons actively in or seeking to engage in Christian ministry, including consultation, clinical treatment and leadership education.

The archival files reviewed specifically for the *Identity & Behavior* portion of the *Causes & Context* study were those of priests accused and sent to the facility for ongoing treatment as a result of the problem of sexual abuse. The clerics were coded by first and last initial, date of birth, and date of ordination and qualitative data were gleaned from fifteen files containing both clinical assessments of the progress of the cleric, and written responses to pre-specified questions.

The clerics targeted for this analysis were those in treatment in the mid to late 1980s, because the written responses seemed to be in use most frequently, or the data were available only in files compiled in the 1980s. The written responses read more like personal journals, rather than simple presentations of fact, and are most helpful in terms of assessing how the clerics, make sense of themselves as priests and persons who have engaged in sexual encounters with minors. There was no attempt to randomize the files assessed, or to make a comparison to clerics with other presenting problems, even if these

were sexual problems with adults. The purpose for the inclusion of these narratives was twofold. The first is to increase the data available for analysis of narrative structure and content. The second is to understand differences that may exist in the telling of a narrative in different formats and contexts.

Ethical considerations.

Data on all of the sample subgroups were collected through the use of mailed surveys and in-depth follow-up interviews, as described. All surveys and interviews were redacted in ways that assure responses were not linked to any one individual. All information is associated with the respondent number, and securely stored in a separate location so that clearly traceable responses are no longer associated with any specific survey and interview participant. All data analysis was conducted solely on datasets that included no identifying information about individuals, parishes or dioceses. The study data reside only on removable drives, and have been securely stored when not being analyzed.

As described previously, the Vicar or assigned diocesan contact for accused clerics was asked to distribute surveys in order to "blind" the identities of those who were solicited for participation. Not until participants deliberately identified themselves in their survey, request for an interview, or other communication, was anonymity broken. All identifying data (i.e. name of the diocese) was coded numerically for those accused and non-accused clerics who volunteered to be interviewed, anonymously or confidentially. All survey respondents were provided with the written Research Participation Statement for them to keep, and a consent form to be returned with the completed survey, and kept in segregated files. All interview participants were asked to give oral consent, asked if the conversation could be digitally recorded, and were provided with the opportunity to have the recording stopped at any time. Lastly, all participants were provided with information

about, and an opportunity to receive, counseling should they have become distressed by completing the surveys or interviews. In the event that counseling was sought, the choice of a therapist was to be made by the diocesan leaders.

All members of the research staff processing data were carefully trained in ethical principles of anonymity and confidentiality, as relates to data management. All researchers received certification via an online course on the protection of human research subjects for social and behavioral investigators. Up-to-date certificates of completion of this Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) course were maintained. The utmost care was employed in maintaining the anonymity, or confidentiality when appropriate, of all participants. It was firmly understood that this was one of the only opportunities for some accused clerics to voice their opinions and be valued in a process that stripped them of a status that, as many of them expressed, they deeply valued, in spite of their behavior. It is this researcher's opinion that the accused clerics are good men who engaged in bad acts, and that, as willing participants, they should be treated with the respect of established ethical protocols.

Although no permission was needed, John Jay College researcher and data analyst, Margaret Smith, met with Eugene Kennedy prior to accessing the archival data from the 1971 study mentioned earlier. This meeting was meant to gain a better understanding of what could be expected from the archived files namely, information not expressly reported in the published study. All files were already stripped of identifiers, as they were available in a publicly accessed library archive at the University of Loyola, Chicago.

The files accessed and summarized from the residential clinical treatment facility were not stripped of identifying information before the research team arrived for data

collection. As with all phases of the study, the utmost care was taken to assure the confidentiality of all information, and the subjects were coded so as to remove clearly identifiable characteristics. The sample files were for men treated in excess of twenty years prior to the data collection. The buffer of time interferes with identifying specific individuals. No files left the secure archival file room, as information was summarized in Word documents, and once we were able to retrieve all data specific to the interests of the *Causes & Context* study, the files were destroyed by the residential treatment center.

Chapter 4 - Describing the Sample

The study of the causes and context of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church does not purport to definitively answer questions about sexually inappropriate behaviors with minors in general, or within the specific social and cultural milieu of Catholicism. In spite of a "hidden" figure, or under-reporting, of sexual abuse of minors by priests, it is a constructive endeavor to assemble knowledge of what *is* known. Doing so paints a portrait of the identified priest offender, offenses, victims and institutional setting in which the behaviors occurred (and may still be occurring). One way to do this is to use the data that has been collected in the official study of the *Causes & Context of Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church*. The *Identity & Behavior* segment of the larger study allows for discussion, although in limited ways, about priests identified as having committed a wide range of sexual offenses against minors (age 0 – 17 years old) while serving as active ordained clerics in dioceses within the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church in the U.S. It is possible to explore distinctive and comparable characteristics by juxtaposing accused clerics to non-accused clerics. Knowing something about the non-accused clerics who agreed to participate in this study provides a context for understanding the relationship between identity and behaviors, although it does *not* permit wide-sweeping statements about all priests who have or will abuse, and is not specifically applicable to men never ordained as Catholic priests, or men who abused prior to or after serving in active priestly ministry in the United States.

This chapter presents known characteristics of responding priests of both types, with the caveat that the sample is not-random sample. The description begins with an assessment of participation rates by Church jurisdictions in the United States, followed by a description of the overall survey sample, then a comparative analysis of notable

differences between accused and non-accused priest participants. The analysis also involves secondary data comparisons of comparable baseline characteristics derived from a normally distributed sample of priests assessed in the *Loyola* study (1971) as a means of validating the *I & B* sample. The *Loyola* study included psychological assessments comparable to, although not the same as, some of the risk measures used in the *Identity & Behavior* survey. Topically specific analyses are presented in greater detail in forthcoming chapters.

Catholic Jurisdiction Participation.

Previous research indicates that 4% of diocesan and religious order priests (approximately 4300) have been formally accused of the sexual abuse of a minor over a 52 year period (1950 – 2002) (John Jay College, 2004). Given that many accused clerics are no longer in contact with the diocese or the church, or are now deceased, the *Causes & Context* research team initially organized over two-thousand (N=2170) *Identity & Behavior* survey packets for accused clerics and mailed these to 96% of these (194 of 202). Of the 202 entities, only the Dioceses for the Military Services, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico were not included. Nearly one-third surveys went to archdioceses[39] or archeparchies, while two-thirds were sent to dioceses and eparchies (Table 4).[40] About one-quarter (N=40, Table 4) of those entities to which surveys were shipped indicated *ineligibility* because there were no candidates who met criteria of the study. Less than 10% (N=16) confirmed that they chose not to participate. Nearly half (47%, n=90) of the

[39]Diocese: administrative entity administered by a bishop. Archdiocese: is such an entity, but has a higher status based on, e.g., size, location, and historical significance, size or some combination of these characteristics. Eparchy/Archeparchy: similarly structured, except, in this study, the terms reference Eastern Catholic entities in the United States.

[40]Archdioceses were sent 20 packets; archeparchies were sent 15 packets; dioceses were sent 10 packets; eparchies were sent 5 packets. Additional surveys were always made available upon request.

entities to which accused cleric survey packets were sent indicated a willingness to distribute these surveys and help process interview appointments. The remainder did not respond, and in some cases there was no clear evidence that the correct individual ever received the initial mailing inviting participation. Therefore, of the total contributing entities, there was a potential of just over one-thousand (N=1095) accused surveys to have been distributed and returned. This does not mean that each entity was able to actually distribute surveys all accused clerics, as there may not have been as many accused clerics as there were surveys, or there may have not been contact with all of the clerics to whom packets could have been distributed. In total, over one-hundred (N=125) accused cleric surveys were completed and returned, which is an 11% return rate from all arch/dioceses.

The non-accused cleric survey packets were distributed only to those entities that affirmed their participation. There was a presumption, supported by response rate of non-accused priests, that there would be a greater degree of participation from clerics who were never accused, so fewer actual survey packets were sent to those Catholic arch/dioceses that had agreed to disseminate *I & B* surveys to non-accused priests. In total, just under one-thousand (N=990) non-accused cleric surveys were mailed. The response rate (37%) is much higher for the non-accused clerics, as was anticipated, yielding a final sample size of nearly four-hundred (N=369) clerics who had never been formally accused of the sexual abuse of a minor. The response rate for the non-accused sample is higher as a result of controlled distribution of actual surveys to this population. Again, sending surveys for non-accused priests only to dioceses also agreeing to disseminate surveys for accused priests assured some comparability in terms of regional differences in parish sizes, types, leadership styles as well as seminary training, given that most diocesan priests are educated in the region or diocese in which they later serve in active ministry.

Table 4. Participation in Survey Dissemination by Catholic Jurisdiction Type in the U.S.

	Archdioceses (N)	Archeparchies (N)	Dioceses (N)	Eparchies (N)	Total (N)
Accused packets: confirmed receipt by jurisdiction	16% (31)	1% (2)	75% (145)	8% (16)	100% (194)
Participation Status					
No response	29% (9)	100% (2)	20% (29)	50% (8)	25% (48)
No candidates	3% (1)	0% (0)	22% (32)	44% (7)	21% (40)
Confirmed non-participation	3% (1)	0% (0)	10% (15)	0% (0)	8% (16)
Confirmed survey dissemination	65% (20)	0% (0)	48% (69)	6% (1)	46% (90)
Distribution of Accused Surveys	Archdioceses	Archeparchies	Dioceses	Eparchies	Total
Number of mailed accused packets	620	20	1450	80	2170
Number of potential packets distributed to accused clerics by participating entities	400	0	690	5	1095[a]
Proportion of total potential accused surveys distributed	37%	0%	63%	<.05%	100%
Distribution of Non-Accused Surveys	Arch dioceses	Arch eparchies	Dioceses	Eparchies	Total
Number of potential packets distributed to non-accused clerics by participating entities	295	0	690	5	990[b]

[a]A total of 125 accused surveys came to the research office via postal mail or online format. This is 6% of all actual packets shipped out, and 11% of all potential packets distributed by confirmed participating Catholic jurisdictions.

[b]A total of 369 non-accused surveys were received. This is 37% of the total non-accused packets sent out to participating arch/dioceses.

Responding Cleric Characteristics

The analyses presented here are from the *Identity & Behavior* data, derived from just over four-hundred (N=437) completed surveys. Although more surveys were actually received, after comparison of cleric subgroups (accused and non-accused) by ordination cohorts (in decades), it was discovered that only non-accused clerics were ordained after 1989. Therefore, in order to allow for a valid comparison between accused and non-accused clerics on this key characteristic, those with no ordination year data and those who were ordained after 1989 were removed from analysis. As will be noted later in this section, ordination year is important because major changes occurred in the larger social culture as well as within the Catholic Church in historical decades. These dramatic and broad sweeping changes may have contributed to priests' understanding of identity and behavior. In essence, the choice to approach the data in this manner serves as a control for the potential effects of historical differences that could have contributed to any differences found between accused and non-accused clerics.

The generalized as well as comparative sample characteristics are described below. The final proportion of accused clerics in this sample is about one-quarter (26%, N=114) compared to a majority of non-accused clerics (N=323) (*Table 5*). Nearly all of the *I & B* sample (99.5%) is white, which is fairly consistent with the racial distribution of clerics in the United States who were ordained in the cohorts included in the analysis. Although the racial demographic for priests is changing, as priests come to minister in the United States from Mexico, Central and South America, as well as Africa, the racial representation of priests in this sample is not indicative of sampling bias.

In the course of developing the *I & B* survey and interview questions, contributors, whose participation was confidential and who will not be directly cited here, indicated that one explanation specifically applied to the problem of sexual abuse of minors in the United States, and also applied to other types of "problematic" behavior of priests, is that such behaviors are imported by the "F.B. I." (Foreign Born Irish). In fact, one interviewee indicated that , while in ministry in the United States, he consistently felt that Irish priests were held responsible for many of the problems of the priesthood (alcoholism, poor financial management, as well as sexual abuse). It is important to note that this particular participant is Irish born and raised. This blanket claim, in part, implies that the Irish heritage, life, culture, or education that is a contributing factor to the problematic behavior of priests. The data from this sample provide no evidence in support of this thesis. When comparing the distribution of country of seminary attendance, the priests in this sample are largely educated in the United States (91% accused and 95% non-accused).

Also included for demographic comparisons are measures of age, years of significant events, education, and seminary information. The measures of age are meant to help us understand chronology, if not social maturity, of the individual at three specific moments: time of survey; when he first decided to enter priesthood; when he entered seminary. The distributions of the decade of seminary entry and ordination are also described in order to contextualize the historical period in which these priests *came to* and *took action on* their decision to become priests.

The relationship between having a low intelligence quotient and engaging in criminal behavior has been a focus of debate for several decades. Although sociologists have, in effect, removed it from the list of possible factors influencing criminally deviant behavior, the IQ measure continues to generate a significant amount of scientific research

and a substantial number of publications. Both family and personal educational achievement will be used as approximate measures of the relationship between intelligence (as knowledge exposure) and offending.

Historically situated measures

Referencing *Table 5*, at the time of survey completion the average age of respondents was 66 years old, and nearly three-quarters of the sample distribution fell within one standard deviation of the mean age, 58 – 73 years old. Comparatively, the accused priests are older, on average (69 years), and have a slightly larger and more positively skewed age range (41-92 years) than the non-accused clerics. Although accused clerics are older and slightly more dispersed, within each subsample the clerics' age distributions are homogenous, with about three quarters of the each group falling within one standard deviation of the respective means for age. A typical individual in this priest sample is much older (by 34 years)[41] than the commonly studied sex offender who has a victim aged 17 or younger, and this can be explained by the time lapse between offense and reporting, clearly evident in the surge of delayed reports of abuse made at the turn of this century (John Jay College, 2004). Often, as noted earlier, the offenders in the non-priest samples are members of forensic populations who are apprehended and processed in a time period closer to the actual allegation.

Most of the accused clerics included in the *Identity & Behavior* sample were accused of behavior occurring six years or more before the survey distribution in the current study, which was in 2008. As a reminder, to be eligible for inclusion in this study, the accused cleric must have been removed from active ministry as a result of the Dallas

[41] See Chapter 2, *Table 1*.

Charter (effective in 2002), explained in the previous chapter. As an exception, two priests who had been removed prior to the Charter were included in the study because they were still in contact with the agent of the diocese. In the years following the initial wave of priest removals after the implementation of the Charter, relatively few accusations have been made[42] and, thus, comparatively few clerics have been removed. Therefore, even if the typical accused cleric in this study had been accused as late as 2002 (or after), only 10% of formally lodged complaints of abuse against a minor were made within 5-10 years of the actual incident (Smith, Rengifo, & Vollman, 2006, p. 579). In fact, nearly half (45%) of the known cases of abuse were reported 10 – 30 years after the incident(s). (Smith, et al, 2006, p. 579) Given these statistics, it is not likely that the typical accused cleric in this sample was actually in his sixties when he engaged in abusive behavior. Further details about actual age at incident are available only for those accused clerics who agreed to participate in an interview.

Table 5. Age distribution of the Identity & Behavior sample

	Overall	Accused	Non-accused
N (Valid %)	437 (100%)	114 (100%)	323 (100%)
Mean	66	69	65
Median	65	69	64
Mode	63, 68, 69	70	57
Std. Deviation	7.4 (58– 73)	7.6 (61-77)	6.6 (58 – 72)
Range	51 (41-92)	51 (41-92)	45 (44-89)

[42] See Chapter 2, *Table 3*

What one can say about these clerics is that they are at an age where they have a significant amount of life experience, having lived through a number of decades of social change. They have the capacity to reflect on historical changes in the Church from their own point of view. What is problematic about the age of the subjects is that the survey asks the individual to think about his experiences over his active career in the priesthood. Many of these careers spanned decades. As with all retrospective studies, details may be fuzzy, simply as a matter of course or as a matter of mental degeneration, and a respondent may interpret facts from yesteryear using the lens of a lifetime of experience, rather than from the perspective he may have taken at an earlier moment in his own life course.

Table 6. Comparative analysis of age (in years) at which priests in Identity & Behavior Sample decided to enter priesthood & enter seminary

	Overall		Accused		Non-Accused	
	Decide to enter	Enter seminary	Decide to enter	Enter seminary	Decide to enter	Enter seminary
N (Valid %)	430 (98%)	434 (99%)	110 (96%)	112 (98%)	320 (99%)	322 (99%)
Mean	17	18	17	18	17	18
Std. Dev.	5.3	4.9	5.7	5.0	5.2	4.8
Range	40 (5-45yrs)	37 (11-48yrs)	40 (5-45yrs)	36 (12-48yrs)	34 (5-39yrs)	28 (11-39yrs)

Given this picture, and examining statistics shown in *Table 6*, we see that most of the priests came to priesthood about 45 years before they completed the survey. The overall sample decided to enter priesthood at age 17 (on average) and actually entered the

seminary about a year after that decision; no average differences were found by clerical subgroup. Accused clerics have a slightly larger range in age at which they *decided to enter the priesthood* (range = 40 years) as well as the age at which they actually *entered the seminary* (range = 36 years) compared to the non-accused group (*decided to enter* range = 34 years; *entered* range = 28 years). Both subsamples are equivalently distributed on these age variables.

It was not long after the *decision to enter* the priesthood that the typical priest in the sample *actually entered* into the seminary, entering going in just over one year after the decision. This is important because it may indicate that the decision and the action were not necessarily made at the spur of the moment. Seminary training is not only inclusive of a focused learning about the vocation and requirements of the priesthood, but it also provides a general college education. It is not clear from these data how many men entered and attended seminary just for the education, or left because they no longer wanted the vocation. What is known is that these men came to seminary and ended up as ordained priests, typically coming to their decision and acting on it at or around the age of consent, at a time when they had little other life experience.

The Second Vatican Council, commencing in 1962, served to establish major and radical changes in liturgical practices, seminary learning and the inclusion of the laity in church life beyond prayer. Not quite three-quarters of this sample *entered the seminary* before the start of the implementation of the changes of the Council, just after the Council ended in 1965, while about one-third were *ordained* by that time (*Table 7*). A smaller proportion (13%) of the overall sample entered seminary between the time the Council ended and 1970, which is within 5 years of the initial, though not uniform, execution of the

changes devised by the Council. Thus, for the most part, these men would have grown up and have been trained, with the "old school" practices of the Church.

Table 7 Period of seminary entry & ordination to priesthood

	Overall	Accused	Non-Accused
Enter by 1965[a]	71% (N=336)	83% (N=95)	70% (N=223)
Enter 1966-1970[b]	13% (N=61)	7% (N=8)	15% (N=49)
Total enter by 1970	84% (N=397)	90% (N=103)	85% (N=272)
Ordained by 1965	34% (N=148)	47% (N=54)	29% (N=94)
Ordained 1966-1970	23% (N=102)	25% (N=28)	23% (N=74)
Total ordained by 1970	57% (N=250)	72% (N=82)	52% (N=168)

[a] End of Vatican II in which major changes in Church practices were outlined
[b] Period immediately prior to decade of peak abuse incidents.

Although a larger percentage of accused than non-accused priests entered seminary (+7%) and were ordained (+8%) by the end of Vatican II, the difference is slight. A far greater proportion (+18%) of accused clerics were actually ordained by 1965 prior to the conclusions of the Council. By 1970, the start of the peak decade of abuse incidents, 72% of the accused priests in the sample, compared to only 52% of the non-accused priests, had been ordained and were active in ministry. It is possible that seminary socialization to the

master status as well as the expectations of the daily life of a priest might not have paralleled changes in the Church.

It stands to reason that this comparison of priest subsamples may not be a valid one. The slight differences in the historical period of their seminary training and post-ordination exposure to ministerial experience might have been influenced by dramatic shifts in lay social culture, and by changes in church culture, particularly as the former is increasingly open to inclusion in the latter. Ultimately these shifts are thought to have been generated by similar social elements (when comparing rates of change in various types of overall deviance, not just changes in the Church) These social changes may or may not be linked to offending. The point here is to simply be transparent about the fact that the subsamples are not matched on these variables. Therefore, a secondary data comparison of the 1971 *Loyola* study of a "normal" sample of priests with similar ordination years aids in validating the *I & B* sample. The analysis of secondary data characteristics is found later in this chapter.

Education measures.

Educational achievement of the cleric's parents, particularly the father, has been used to approximate social class (Kohn, 1969). Levels of education and social class well below national averages have been associated with criminality, and sex offenders are said to have lower IQs than non-sex-offenders. In particular, Guay, Ouimet, and Proulx (2005) found that non-differentiated sex offenders scored lower overall on their measure of intelligence, compared to those incarcerated for non-sexual offenses. The *I & B* survey included measures of parental level of education and priest education beyond seminary requirements.

Table 8. Historical US Census Data of Population Educational Attainment by Gender (all aged 25 + yrs)

	Education Level	Overall	Women %	Men %
1940	High school graduates	20%	22.5%	17%
	Bachelor's or higher	5%	4%	5.5%
1950	High school graduates	28%	31%	25%
	Bachelor's or higher	6%	5%	7%
1960	High school graduates	27%	37%	30%
	Bachelor's or higher	8%	6%	10%

Keeping in mind previously presented age data (*Table 5*), the central tendency of the age of participating clerics is in the mid-60s, with a majority (76%) of the sample being born between 1930 and 1950. Examining United States Census data for that period for level of education achieved by adult men and women (25 years or older) shows that a very small proportion of the population had bachelor's degrees or higher (3.8 – 5.5%)[43] (*Table 8*). This represents individuals reporting education to the level specified *by the time of* the collection of the census data. This means that the U.S. Census participants were educated in at least the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, the period during which the priests in the *I & B* sample were born. Therefore, these statistics can be used to understand parents of priests compared to the rest of the U.S. population in terms of educational achievement.

Parental level of education as a marker of educational exposure for the cleric may not be the best indicator of intelligence as it is traditionally measured, and as it has been

[43]*U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Education& Social Stratification Branch*. (2002) *United States Educational Attainment of the Population 25 Years and Over: 1940 to 2000*. Downloaded from http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/education/phct41/US.pdf

associated with offending. But, it could serve as a marker of potential aptitude for learning and could contribute to biographical opportunity paths thought to be limited by lack of education. What is clear from the measure as included here is that schooling and education were a part of the cleric's family experience to a greater degree than the population at-large in the decades in which the clerics were growing up and in the care of their parents. One thing that can be said is that prior to Vatican II, divorce was not an acceptable option for practicing Catholic families. It could be presumed that both parents were regularly in the household unless travelling for work, incarcerated, or deceased. Regardless, even if the clerics in this sample lived only with one parent, this parent was likely to be slightly more educated than average.

Given the statistics presented in *Table 9*, it is clear that the parents of these clerics were more educated than what was typical in the at-large population, regardless of gender. It is not clear if these particular clerics were raised by one parent, both parents, or neither parent. The data show that, more often than not, the sample has parents who have had at least some high school education, if not having completed high school, although it appears that mothers were more likely to have had some high school (47%) compared to fathers (38%). These distributions are similar for both cleric subsamples (accused and non-accused). About one quarter of the sample (22-23%) had mothers and fathers who had some college education or were college graduates, and these distributions are similar for both clerical subgroups as well.

Table 9. Parental Highest Level of Education for Clerics in the Identity & Behavior Sample

	Overall %)		Accused %)		Non-Accused %)	
	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father
Some grade school or GS graduate	25% N=108	30% N=130	27% N=30	32% N=36	24% N=78	29% N=94
Some high school or HS graduate	47% N=199	38% N=164	47% N=53	35% N=40	45% N=146	38.5% N=124
Trade/clerical	3% N=14	3% N=14	2% N=2	4% N=5	4% N=12	3% N=9
Some college or graduated	22.5% N=98	23% N=97	22% N=25	20% N=23	23% N=73	23% N=88
Post graduate	3% N=12	5% N=23	2% N=2	4% N=5	3% N=10	6% N=18
Unknown	1% N=4	2% N=7	1% N=1	3.5% N=4	1% N=3	1% N=3
TOTALS	N=435	N=435	N=113	N=113	N=322	N=322

What can be said about the level of educational achievement of the clerics themselves? Although they may had parents who were somewhat more educated than the population at large, it is the actual level of intelligence of an offender that is technically associated with offending in general. Seminary education is lengthy and amounts to a graduate degree or its equivalent. The questions asked in the *I & B* survey were meant to

assess highest level of education beyond seminary, which could include academic disciplines not necessarily specific to religious life or Catholic doctrine, like a Master of Social Work, a degree in law, or even a medical degree. It is evident that the sample is highly educated or, at the least, that the clerics have been exposed, for an extended period of time, to the process of formal education and all that this may entail.

Table 10. Decade Cohorts of Seminary Entry for Identity & Behavior Sample

	Overall	Accused	Non-Accused
1929-1949	8% N=36	12% N=14	7% N=22
1950-1959	38% N=162	47% N=54	34% N=108
1960-1969	39% N=168	30% N=34	42% N=134
1970-1979	12% N=52	10% N=11	13% N=41
1980-1989	3% N=13	1% N=1	4% N=12
Total	N= 431	N=114	N=317

First, it is important to consider how the clerics themselves are situated in terms of academic pursuit, as compared to the population at large. Overall, clerics in the sample entered seminary in the 1950s (38%) and 1960s (39%) although there is a difference between accused and non-accused priests (*Table 10*). For the most part, accused clerics

entered seminary in greater proportions than non-accused clerics until the 1970s, although the greatest differences are the 1950s and 1960s, when 12-13% more accused entered seminary in that twenty year period. Returning to general U.S. Census data on levels of education (*Table 8*) in the decades for which a majority of clerics in this sample were in seminary it is evident that a very small proportion of men in the United States were pursuing higher education. The priests in the sample were already ahead of the educational curve in comparison with the rest of the population, as well as in comparison their lay male counterparts.

More often than not, *I & B* participants went to seminaries specifically dedicated to the preparation of men for the priesthood (85%, N=368). It is true in this sample that a larger proportion of the accused priests (94%, N=106) attended these types of seminaries than those who were not accused (82%, N=263). It is clear from interview data that the goal was priesthood, rather than a general education. But the accused clerics have obtained additional degrees at a higher rate than non-accused clerics (*Table 11*). About one-third of non-accused clerics did not have any additional education beyond seminary, compared to less than one-fifth of the accused.

This tells us is that the *I & B* sample groups are fairly equivalent on the measures of education overall, and when differences occur these are skewed in favor of accused clerics having higher levels of education. Comparing the *I & B* sample to the sample of incarcerated sex offenders, from which much of the data of sex offending populations are derived, priest populations are more educated in general, as are priest offenders. Thus, data from the *I & B* sample substantiate the sociological tradition of refuting the hypothesis that low intelligence or lack of education contributes to offending. Even if the accused priest in this sample pursued his additional education after the abuse or his removal from ministry,

it cannot be unilaterally said that a person who sexually abuses a child is intellectually challenged or did not have access to good education, as our sample overall is more highly educated than known criminal populations, and yet some members of the sample have offended against minors.

Table 11. Clerics Highest Level of Education for Overall Identity & Behavior Sample and by Cleric Subgroup

	Overall	Accused	Non-Accused
None beyond seminary	29% N=115	18% N=15	31% N=100
BA/BS/Equivalent	9% N=36	13% N=11	8% N=25
Master's/Law	53% N=216	60% N=50	52% N=166
PhD/Medical	9% N=37	9.5% N=8	9% N=29
N	404	84	320

Secondary Data Validation Characteristics

As noted earlier, the purpose of comparing the *Identity & Behavior* sample to data derived from a sample of clerics participating in assessments for the *Loyola Psychological Study of the Ministry and Life of the American Priest* (Kennedy & Heckler, 1971) is to validate whether or not the *I & B* sample is comparably distributed or if it is vastly

different from a cohort of men in seminary and ordained at about the same time. It is evident already that these men, offenders or not, are different on the education measures compared to the population at large. How different the *I & B* study participant from the typical priest of his time? It is not possible to make diocesan comparisons with the *I & B* data, as it is not clear exactly which dioceses actually distributed surveys, even with an affirmation that a diocese would do so. Additionally, priests were not asked to indicate their diocese on the survey.

Although Kennedy reports a final sample size of 271 cases, data useful for overall analysis in this study were retrieved for 283 cases for which there were archived files. The two variables on which the *I & B* and the *Loyola* samples can be compared for purposes of further validation of *I & B* findings are ordination year and birth year. It is clear that no one in the *Loyola* sample was ordained after 1970, as this is the year data collection was completed and analyses conducted. There is an overlap in terms of the ordination cohorts for both samples. Over one half (53%) of the *I & B* sample and just under two-thirds of the Loyola sample was ordained 1950 – 1970 (*Table 12*).

The proportion of the samples available for comparison in these years leading up to and inclusive of great change within the Church (Vatican II) allows for reliable comparison on measures included in the analysis of certain predictors. The risk factor analyses will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter. In order to increase the validity of the comparisons, all priests ordained before 1950 in both samples, and all priests in the *I & B* sample ordained after 1970 will be excluded from all proceeding analyses of these two samples. Data from comparable psychological measures are compared between samples to show how the *I & B* clerics may be similar to or different from a cross-section of priests

evidenced to be normally distributed on psychological assessments included in the *Loyola* study.

Table 12. Decade of Ordination Comparisons for Identity & Behavior and Loyola[a] Samples

	Identity & Behavior Sample			Loyola
	Accused	Non-Accused	Overall	
1940 – 1949	3% N=3	1% N=3	1% N=6	23% (N=50)
1950 – 1959	16% N=18	9% N=29	10% N=47	34% (N=73)
1960 – 1965	29% N=33	19% N=62	22% N=95	23% N=50
1966 – 1970	25% N=28	23% N=74	23% N=102	19% N=41
1971 – 1989	28% N=32	48% N=155	43% N=187	--
	N=114	N=323	N=437	N=214

[a]Kennedy, E., & Heckler, V. (1971). *The Loyola Psychological Study of the Ministry and Life of the American Priest.* National Conference of Catholic Bishops: Washington, D.C.

For the *Loyola* study, age was calculated by subtracting birth year from time of participation (1970), given that the data collection of the Loyola study occurred over a period of one year during 1970. The representative priest in the *Loyola* sample is just over 30 years younger at the time of participation in that study compared to the *I & B* sample (*Table 13*). That said, if the priests in the *Loyola* sample were to have participated in the *I*

& B study today (38 years after the *Loyola* study), they would fall into a similar age cohort of participants, ranging from 65 – 85 years old. So these clerics are comparable on other measures that may be influenced by historical experiences or cultural practices, such as esteem, sexuality and social interaction, all concepts measured in the current study. When possible, comparable measures will be assessed from the Loyola study for these risk factors.

Table 13. Comparative Age Distributions (in years) for subsample of clerics ordained 1950 – 1970 (Identity & Behavior and Loyola)

	Identity & Behavior Sample (2008)	Loyola Sample (1970)
N	229	164
Mean	70.7	37.3
Median	70	37
Mode	69	31
Std. Deviation	4.7	6.8
Range (Min – Max)	22 (63 – 85)	29 (27 – 56)

The *Loyola* study contains no data on parental *or* cleric levels of education, age at which the cleric decided to enter the priesthood, age at seminary entrance, or seminary type. Therefore no comparison with the *I & B* sample is possible on these variables. What is meaningful about the age and ordination information is that it shows that both samples were exposed to similar global historical changes in the United States, so any differences

evident in comparative measures of each overall sample may be due to a biased sampling design of the *I & B* survey. If that is the case, then the use of findings related to predictors of sexually offending against minors should be approached and applied cautiously. But the use of the *I & B* sample to draw conclusions about differences between accused and non-accused clerics, is validated, given that the overall *I & B* and *Loyola* samples *are similar* in their distributions on equivalent measures described in the next chapter. The few differences found between accused and non-accused priests in the *Identity & Behavior* study are statistically reliable.

Chapter 5 - Predicting Risk

No *one* factor is said to predict the sexual abuse of minors, but it is clear that a combination of factors can go a long way in explaining the associated behaviors rooted in the offender's own problems, be they psychological or emotional. If this is the case, then the accused clerics in this sample will more often present with one or more of the following negative predictors of offending: *deviant sexual experience/exposure; social interaction deficiencies;* and *low esteem* (Bouchard, 1992; Carter & Estes, 2006; DiNallo, 1989; Finkelhor, 1984; Hall & Hall, 2007; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, Russin, & Hook, 1985; Laws, Hudson, & Ward, 2000; Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2009; Marshall, Anderson, & Fernandez, 1999;Marshall, Serran & Marshall, 2006; Robertson, 2001; Schultz, 2005; Smallbone & Whortley, 2004b; Terry, 2006; Ward, & Beech, 1997; Ward & Seigert, 2002; Whortley& Smallbone, 2006).

Many of the measures used in the I&B survey and interview ask the cleric to think back to a period upwards of 60 years earlier, or ask for recollections of the cleric's "career" as an ordained priest, a period consisting of decades with several parish assignments and duties and roles that went well beyond the ministering of the sacraments to the laity. This study is not assessing causality. Therefore, differences in this sample between accused and non-accused clerics, other than their status in relation to an allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor, cannot be used to develop instruments assessing risk. Rather, the aim of the *I & B* analysis is to explore what, if any, differences exist on what are considered to be known risk factors for sex offending. This model assumes that one who engages in sexual abuse

does so because he has traits that separate him from those who do not sexually abuse minors, and that contribute to a propensity to offend.

Of the many measures used as "predictors" of sexual offending, the following are described in this chapter: deviant sexual experience/exposure, social interaction deficiencies, and low esteem. All of these have been associated with sex offenders who have both adult and non-adult victims. The individual-level characteristics assessed here are meant to contribute to the understanding of the etiology of sex offending, by comparing the findings from the *I & B* survey to those from prior clinical or forensic samples categorized by victim type. It is not out of the ordinary to categorize concepts. What is problematic about systems of classification is that they often characterize the central tendency of the distribution, and make it difficult to make sense of the cases that do not match the profile. The priest cases do not match the classic profiles on the risk factors assessed here. The comparative measures are not the same, but are similar, and are the best available, given the nature of the concepts under study.

Although contemporary psychological research has introduced the classification of sex offenders with victims aged 17 years old or younger as the *pedophiles* and *ephebophile,* the sample comparisons in this section of analyses will only differentiate the accused clerics from the non-accused clerics, along with a variety of other subgroup comparisons, like pre- and post- ordination measures, or sexual "identity", as well as ideological comparisons based on perceptions of celibacy and sexuality. As previously defined in the Chapter 2, *pedophiles* are receive a diagnosis based on evidence of repeated, strong and sexually arousing fantasies about *prepubescent children,* while those who have this same attraction toward *adolescents* have been classified as *ephebophiles.* This study

relies on data collected from men accused of having abused at least one individual below 18 years of age, while in ministry as a Catholic priest in the United States. Many of the men may never have entered a criminal institution as a result of their behavior and are, therefore, unlikely to have been included in typical forensic populations of sex offenders.

Deviant Sexual Experience/Exposure

In an effort to increase the validity of the findings on some measures, comparisons are made between *I & B* responses and responses on equivalent measures included in the Loyola Sentence Completion Blank for Clergymen (LSCBC) data derived from *Loyola* study archives.[44] This instrument includes measures of psychosexual maturity, as well as assessments of Church, faith and religion, and an item measuring perceived sexual orientation, as identified by the interviewing therapist. Highlighting any noteworthy differences between the samples, particularly when comparing men ordained to ministry in similar cohorts (1950 – 1970) as discussed in the previous chapter, shows whether or not the *I & B* sample yields reliable results overall, in order to allow for a comparison of accused to non-accused clerics in the *I &B* sample. These validation comparisons of the 1950 – 1970 cohorts will only occur between the *Loyola* sample and the overall *I & B* sample on variables for which both studies have comparable measures. The accused and non-accused clerics are compared using ordination cohorts prior to 1990, because there are no accused clerics ordained after 1989.

As previously noted, sex is not considered legally or morally problematic in the framework of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church when it occurs within the

[44] See appendices C, D, E of the Kennedy study for actual interview questions, evaluation guides, and self-administered survey measures. Kennedy, E.C. (1971). *The Loyola Psychological Study of the Ministry and the Life of the American Priest*. Washington, DC: USCCB.

confines of socially acceptable contexts, like that of a heterosexual marriage either in the effort to create children or to express love. On the other hand, contemporary secular culture, is abundant with sexually enticing iconography interlaced with messages of self-indulgence and immediate gratification, all while glorifying the quest for perpetual youth as is manifested through the body. In this context, then, what sexual interests are deviant?

Given that prior research has found evidence of an association between sexual offending and arousal by or curiosity about sexual interests and ideas outside the dominant norms, it is important to assess some components of sexually deviant attitudes and behaviors (DiNallo, 1989; Finkelhor, 1984; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Langevin, Hucker, Handy, Purins, Russin, & Hook, 1985; Marshall, Serran & Marshall, 2006; Robertson, 2001; Smallbone & Whortley, 2004b; Ward & Seigert, 2002). These must be understood within both contexts mentioned above as the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests is explored in greater detail. Suffice it to say that heterosexual and potentially procreative sex acts have been the normative standard over the period in question, particularly in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church. It goes without saying that sexually charged incidents with minors or sex acts with minors are not accepted by society at large, whether or not they are heterosexually normal acts. This is reflected in statutes across jurisdictions in the United States.

Measuring sexual exposure/ experience.

Experience, identity and attitudes not considered "normal" within the purview of Catholic doctrine concerning sexual standards and practices were measured and analyzed in this study. Although Catholic principles emphasize sexual abstinence until marriage, this practice of chastity is not the same as the commitment to celibate chastity for the men

included in this study. Most Catholics are not celibate and, in spite of the fact that it is the norm for priests, priests with negative attitudes towards the practice of celibacy could be considered deviant. Also deviant are any negative perceptions of the changes in the Church and/or lay attitudes (although not doctrines) towards sexuality. Also, any disconnect from sexual discussions is considered problematic and an unhealthy approach towards sexuality, whether one is sexually active or not. Individuals who cannot adapt to changing ideologies about sex may be conflicted about their own relationship to or feelings about sex and sexuality, and may not have an integrated sexual self, even within the framework of the practice of celibate chastity.

But what *is* considered to be sexually deviant in the dominant culture? One way to understand this is to locate it within the social context within which Catholics are situated. Analyzing comparative statistics for youth sexual behavior, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data show that 47% of teens in the 9^{th} – 12^{th} grades engage in some form of sexual activity (CDC, 2008, p.21). There is evidence that teen pregnancy is down and that this may be the result of engaging in oral sex, *rather* than in intercourse (which may lead to pregnancy). So is oral sex normal if one wants to avoid pregnancy? Or is the only normal sex that which can lead to pregnancy? Evidence from the 1970 National Opinion Research Center (NORC) survey data of sexual attitudes and behavior, confirms that, prior to the decade of the sexual revolution, Americans were largely conservative and were moral absolutists in their attitudes towards various non-marital (heterosexual) and/or non-coital behaviors (Klassen, Williams, & Levitt, 1989). Contemporary statistics seem to indicate that coital sex is not the only kind of sexual encounter one might have, and that this is not abnormal. But was this the case for priests when they were coming to seminary in the 1950s, 1960s, and even the 1970s?

The *I & B* survey did not ask *what* behaviors occurred. Instead, the clerics were asked *if* sexual behaviors took place when they were teens, pre-seminary. No data related to sexual behavior are available for the decades from which the age cohort of this sample of Catholic men are drawn, but the configuration of dating pre-1960s was more structured and supervised than it is today. Sexual interaction, or at least "sex" may have been difficult to engage in given restrictions on dating, and behavior may have been rather innocuous compared to what is said to be the pattern of sex acts occurring among teens since the early 1990s (oral sex to intercourse). There does seem to be some consistency for youth in engaging in sexual behaviors over time, even if the behaviors have changed. Sexual interaction as an adolescent seems "normal."

The *I & B* survey did not include any measures of sexual arousal, current sexual orientation or specific sexual practices. Instead of measuring who can be identified as sexually deviant in behavior alone, this analysis identifies other ideological correlations that may be more prevalent in those priests who have been accused of abuse. In the absence of a static diagnostic measure, this analysis includes an assessment of pre-seminary experiences and understanding of identity, as well as one's ideological connection to the vow of celibacy, willingness to talk about sexual identity with others, and motivation to connect to changes in social norms surrounding sexuality. The comparisons of the *I & B* sample to that of the randomly derived *Loyola* sample are based on equivalent *Loyola* study measures of sexual orientation, psychosexual development, and self-report scores on a personality inventory used in the *Loyola* study. Some measures of sexual identity are assigned by the clinician and are not defined by the behavior of the priest.

Although the homosexual civil rights movements in the United States have advanced the acceptance of "gayness," in popular culture, as well as in various legislative policies, there are still conservative leaders who believe that same sex sexual interaction, identity and relationships are bad, evil or tantamount to bestiality and pedophilia. Therefore, it is imperative that there be a measure of sexual identity in a study of sex offenders, particularly a study of offenders with victims who are not adults. Although an assessment of a priest's current sexual identity and sexually-oriented behaviors is important, all of the priests in this sample were accused prior to their involvement in the *I & B* survey, and current identity may have changed since then. Therefore, current sexual "orientation" or "preference" is not assessed directly here. Instead, there are measures of pre-seminary understanding of sexual identity, as well as experience or practice in dating, and with whom the experience occurred. The presumption is that those who indicate that they dated or had sexual interactions with members of their own sex are not strictly heterosexual. This challenges, then, the notion of the fixity of sexual identity as it is viewed by conservatives, especially if respondents have interactions with the same sex, but understand themselves to be heterosexual. It opens the door to say that it is not homosexuality, per se, that is the causal factor in sex offending, but rather a poor sense of one's sexual identity in the context of a culture that condemns acting out that identity.

It is important to point out that sexual identity is in not determined by the type of sex acts or the sex of the victim. Sexual orientation is understood as defined by the sex of the individual(s) to whom one is romantically and/or sexually attracted. Some clinicians, as well as admitted offenders, have come to understand and explain attraction to certain age groups of minors as a sexual orientation, rather than simply sexual orientation as defined above. Case in point, the literature addressing male-on-male prison rape does not suppose

that offenders are gay. Viewing sexual attraction to young people shapes the choice to assess sexual behavior and identity in a way that is less traditional, as well as more oriented towards the goal of the *I & B* study, which is to make sense of how a cleric understands his own behavior in relation to his identity as a Catholic priest, who is also a human being who is developing emotionally, physically, intellectually, as well as sexually.

Analysis of sexual exposure/experience.

The first level of analysis involves the use of pre-seminary measures of dating as well as sexual experience, and the sex of the partner. Overall the distributions of those with and without romantic dating experience prior to entering the seminary are equivalent (*Table 14*). There is some difference between accused and non-accused priests in terms of prior dating experience. Data show that the accused priests are 9% more likely to have had no romantic or dating partners prior to entering seminary. One suggestion is that this might have been a result of entering seminary at a younger age, so mean age at which these priests entered seminary is also included for analysis.

Table 14. Pre-seminary romantic dating partners (boyfriends or girlfriends) and Age at which cleric entered seminary (in years)

	Overall sample		Accused		Non-accused	
	Dating experience	Age enter seminary	Dating experience	Age enter seminary	Dating experience	Age enter seminary
Yes	48% N=208	Mean = 20	41% N=46	Mean = 20	50% N=162	Mean = 20
No	52% N=228	Mean = 16.5	59% N=67	Mean = 17	50% N=161	Mean=16.5

Interestingly, those who had prior dating experience in the overall sample entered seminary when they were about 20 years old, and those who did not were just under 17 years old. The distribution of mean age entering seminary for those with and without dating experience does not differ by clerical type. Both clerical subgroups with no prior dating experience were younger by 3.5 years on average than those with dating experience. It does make sense that men who did not have romantic dating partners *prior* to seminary were younger when they entered. Although it is more often the case that the accused clerics in this sample did *not* have prior dating experience (59% vs. 50%), the difference[45] is not large enough to call a "lack of dating experience" a characteristic of sexual deviance, as priests without prior sexual experience did not have as much exposure to potential sexual interaction with a dating partner.

Table 15. Pre-seminary sexual experience (males or females) and Age Enter Seminary (yrs)

	Overall sample		Accused		Non-accused	
	Sexual experience	Age enter seminary	Sexual experience	Age enter seminary	Sexual experience	Age enter seminary
Yes	38% N=165	Mean = 20	41% N=47	Mean = 19	36.5% N=118	Mean = 21
No	62% N=272	Mean = 17	59% N=67	Mean = 17.5	63.5% N=205	Mean=17

[45] All differences presented in this analysis are statistically significant, but the findings should not be used to speak about all priests, given that this is not a randomly derived sample.

Questions regarding sexual interaction prior to seminary were asked in order to avoid the presumption that there was sexual activity while dating. Overall, a larger proportion of the *I & B* sample did *not* engage in sexual behaviors prior to seminary (62%, *Table 15*) than the proportion that did not date (52%, *Table 14*), and the clerical subgroups are similarly distributed on these measures of sexual deviance. Thinking about age at which the clerics entered seminary, those who did *not* have sexual interactions prior to seminary were younger on average, as were those who did not date (both means = 17years old). Upon comparing clerical subgroups on the measure of sexual behavior before seminary, it seems as though accused clerics who *did* have sexual interactions prior to seminary were two years younger, on average, when they entered seminary (mean=19 years) than their non-accused counterparts.

Table 16. Sexual experience prior to seminary: sex of partner.[a]

	Overall	Accused	Non-Accused
Male only	14% N=24	30% N=14	9% N=10
Males & females	26% N=43	43% N=20	19% N=22
Female only	60% N=90	28% N=13	72% N=85

[a]*This data is for clerics in the Identity & Behavior sample who had sexual interactions prior to seminary.*

Upon further analysis, of the 38% of the sample who indicated that they had engaged in sexual activity prior to seminary (although this contradicts Catholic teachings about sexual relations even today), 40% of those men indicated that they had engaged in sexual activities with either males only (15%) or both males and females (25%) (Table 16). If it is to be presumed and accepted that behavior alone determines an identity, which is then presumed to be static, then this data shows that less than two-thirds of the sample could be deemed "straight" overall (female only sexual interaction).

As seen in *Table 16*, although accused clerics in this sample were more likely to have had "homo" or "bi" sexual interactions (73%) compared to non-accused clerics (28%), less than two-thirds of accused clerics actually had a clear sense of their own sexual identity before entering seminary, compared to 83% of the non-accused priests (*Table 17*). Accused priests were more likely to have identified as homo or bisexual[46] prior to seminary than the non-accused; they also are more likely to indicate that they *did not have a clear sense of their sexual identity* (*Table 17*). An overwhelming majority of non-accused priests had a clear sense of their sexual identity as heterosexual. When accused clerics did have a clear sense of their identity, they, too, were more likely to understand themselves to be heterosexual, though not to the same degree as the non-accused priests.

[46] The question did not ask about identifying as "gay" or "straight", as these are politically loaded terms. Instead, clerics were asked if they identified as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, asexual, or not sexually aware. The term "bisexual" was not particularly in use at the time when many of these men were entering seminary. Although the clerics were asked to think about what they knew *then*, they were using a lens filtered by contemporary knowledge and language that makes "bisexual" an accessible identity.

Table 17. Crosstabulation of Pre-seminary Sexuality Measures, by Cleric Type			
Pre-seminary, did cleric have a sense of his sexual identity?			
	All	Accused	Non-Accused
No	23% N=98	37% N=42	17% N=56
Yes	77% N=337	63% N=70	83% N=267
If yes, Sexual Identity Categories			
	All	Accused	Non-Accused
Hetero	77% N=236	54% N=33	83% N=203
Homo/Bi	23% N=70	46% N=28	17% N=42

The comparison of all clerics by sexual identity and sexual behavior pre-seminary, as seen in *Table 18*, shows that 10% of those who self-identified as heterosexual had homo or bisexual experiences before entering seminary. This distribution of pre-seminary sexual identity by sex of partner (pre-seminary) behavior does not vary by cleric type, and it is important to point out that the sizes of the subsample of accused priests are extremely small. Even those who identified as homo or bisexual prior to entering seminary had *only heterosexual* interactions. Accused clerics who identified as homo or bisexual prior to entering seminary were half as likely to have had only heterosexual experiences, but they were still able to identify as homo or bisexual. These data show that there is the presence

of the variation between self-identification and behavior for both groups of priests, and that behavior does not necessarily determine identity, and identity should not presuppose behavior.

Table 18. Pre-Seminary Sense of Sexual Identity by Sex of Sexual Partners and by Cleric Type

Sense of Sexual Identity	Sexual Behavior	All	Accused	Non-Accused
Heterosexual	male only/ both sexes	10% N=9	11% N=1*	10% N=8
	Female only	90% N=80	89% N=8	90% N=72
Homo/bisexual	male only/ both sexes	76% N=35	86% N=18	68% N=17
	Female only	24% N=11	14% N=3*	32% N=8*

Comparing the *Identity & Behavior* sample to the *Loyola* sample on recoded variables measuring sexual identity as gleaned from the files, we see that these two samples do differ. First, sexual identity in the *Loyola* study was identified by a psychologist during an interview, rather than by asking the cleric himself. There was no differentiation in time, as in pre or post seminary sexual behavior or identity. The archived data contained impressions by a clinical psychologist, and when he made a clear indication of an identity in the archived paper file, it was coded for comparative analysis with the *I &*

B data. If the sexual identity was unclear, then the case was coded as such, and three-quarters of the *Loyola* sample had *no clear* indicator of sexual identity (*Table 19*).

The participants in the *I & B* sample was not asked what their current sexual identity is, or how it may have specifically changed since they entered seminary. Instead, the elaboration responses included on the survey were analyzed for clear evidence of sexual identity, namely, if the clerics said, "I see myself as . . .," or "I am . . .," or "I fell in love with a (man or woman)." For purposes of validity in terms of identifying clerics as homo/bi-sexual or heterosexual, comments were interpreted conservatively, and only 15% of the sample had indicators of a clear sexual identity at the time of participation in the study.

Table 19. Sexual Identity Derived from files for Loyola[a] and Identity & Behavior[b] samples.

	Loyola sample	I & B sample
Heterosexual	89% N=65	68% N=46
Homosexual/Bisexual	11% N=8	32% N=22

[a]25% of total sample had clear sexual identity data.

[b]15% of total sample had clear sexual identity data.

Although an overwhelming majority of men in each overall sample were identified as heterosexual, the *I & B* sample had a smaller percentage of clearly identifiable heterosexual participants (68%) than did the *Loyola* sample (89%). Sexual identity may influence other comparative measures like social interaction and esteem when assessing

how accurately the *I & B* sample represents a normal distribution of clerics (as the *Loyola* sample is said to do). These data comparisons are simply meant as a reference point for the degree of validity of using the *I & B* sample overall to reliably assess differences seen between the accused and non-accused priests. It is a possibility that definitions of sexual identity presented by the psychologist or by this researcher may be inaccurate. The differences between the normally distributed *Loyola* sample and the *I & B* priests are not remarkable on the measure of sexual identity, particularly given that clear indictors of sexual identity are available for only a small proportion of each sample. One could argue that the *I & B* sample can be compared to the normally distributed *Loyola* sample on risk factor measures included in this study, thus validating the use of the *I & B* data to formulate some understanding and response to the problem of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church.

Social Interaction Deficiencies

Another cluster of characteristics associated with sex offending measured in this survey is "social bonds." Characteristics associated with sex offending are factors such as intimacy deficits and isolation. Essentially, the hypothesis is that individuals with weak social bonds or "social interaction deficiencies" as conceptualized in this study, are at risk for maladaptive behaviors. This covers a wide range of deviance, inclusive of the sexual abuse of children and adolescents. Evidence suggests that social interaction deficiencies stunt the development of appropriate social, intimate and/or sexual relationships with other adults. The literature suggests that emotional or intellectual immaturity and loneliness or isolation from other adults could be assuaged by interaction or relationships with young people, some of which may become sexual. This concept is important when one considers

the fact that parish priests, given the nature of the work, are public figures who are still in need of private relationships. These private relationships may be minimal, superficial, or interrupted by the public status of the priest. Are social interaction deficiencies more prominent for the accused priests in the *Identity & Behavior* sample?

There are several layers to the concept of social interaction deficiencies and its relationship to deviance. In order to maintain the validity of the application of the *I & B* findings, as well as the reliability of the comparison to indicators of social maladjustment in the literature on sex offenders, the survey measured social bonds on both active and passive levels, interpersonal and institutional levels, as well as in ways that are unique to the priests' status. The respondents were not asked to talk about the degree of their social bonds, but rather the presence or absence of specific behaviors indicative of participation or non-participation in social interactions.[47]

Measuring social interaction.

In order to get a sense of early life social bonds, the survey asks several questions regarding pre-seminary social context related to family size, the presence or absence of dating, and friends entering seminary with the respondent. Family size is an indicator of the presence of intimate age mates with whom a cleric could have learned or practiced social interaction. Dating was addressed earlier in relation to sexual deviance, where the lack of dating could be considered problematic insofar as it is a level of intimate and relationship practice that has not been explored. It is included again here because different social skills may be developed in romantic or dating relationships in which a differing

[47]Specific questions can be found on pages 1, 3, 4, 8, and 9-12 of the original *Identity & Behavior* survey (Appendices C & D).

level of intimacy may develop, in comparison to relationships with siblings or peers. Measuring the whether or not peers were present upon entering seminary helps get at the component of isolation, an experience which may contribute to social interaction deficiencies, as well as connection to the level of intimacy involved in peer non-sibling and non-romantic relationships.

Once in the priesthood, a pattern of weak bonds, or unwillingness to reach out, may continue or develop anew. Those who have weak social bonds will not be as active in reaching out to others. The cleric was also asked whether or not he has, in his career, spoken with various "others" about the rather intimate issue of his own sexual identity. These others include non-clergy friends, family, clergy peers, parishioners, and superiors in the Church. A discussion of this nature would require a degree of openness and trust, particularly with adults. The survey did not ask about the specific sexual identity addressed in those conversations.

Therefore, the clerics were asked questions about their perceptions of their own work and collegial relationships, along with their experience of identifying and addressing problematic behaviors of their peer priests and superiors. "Problematic" was not defined in the survey, and could include anything that the respondent considered problematic. Lastly, respondents were also asked to assess whether or not they felt that there was adequate institutional support for development of priests in their human formation as well as for their vocation as a whole. If the social bonds thesis is being adequately interpreted, then it can be expected that accused clerics perceive there to be less help available to them in terms of personal growth - a weak connection to the institution- and that they will present

more negative assessments of relationships with peers and superiors, indicative of social isolation and social maladjustment.

Analysis of social interaction.

Pre-seminary bonding.

Given that a majority of the sample was born between the mid-1930s – 1950, a review of the U.S. Census Bureau trend statistics shows that an average of about 3.5 persons lived in a family in 1940, 1950, 1955, 1960 and 1965, the periods in which these men would have been adolescents (U.S. Census, 2008). Data show that very few individuals in the sample came from single child homes (7%) (*Table 20*). By contemporary standards, families typically have about 2 (mean=1.86) biological children in the household (U.S. Census, 2000). Only 16% of the *I & B* sample would fit this description, having only one sibling. Over one-third of the priests actually come from families that might be considered quite large by contemporary standards, having 3 – 5 siblings. Interestingly, an equivalent proportion of clerics came from extremely large families in which there were ten or more children (including the cleric). If multiple configurations of family structure (parent, siblings, and the cleric) are considered, about 40% of the *I & B* sample falls within the U.S. Census average family size (mean=3.5). The distribution of the *I & B* clerics is such that less than one-tenth were only children, and about one –third had 1 or 2 siblings, which is relatively consistent with the average American family size for the period in which these clerics were children and adolescents (*Table 20*). Equivalent proportions of clerics in the sample had romantic or dating relationships before seminary as did not, and equivalent proportions had or did not have friends who entered the seminary at the same time they did (*Table 20*).

Table 20. Distribution of Pre-Seminary Social Bonds (siblings, dating partners, peers entering seminary)

Number of Siblings			Pre-Seminary Dating		Friends Enter Seminary	
	0	7% N=32	Yes	48% N=208	Yes	47% N=205
	1 - 2	34% N=147				
Mode = 2 Median = 3	3 - 5	39% N=168	No	52% N=228	No	53% N=231
Mean = 3.5	6 - 8	12% N=53				
Max=15	9+	7% N=31	Total	N=436	Total	N=437
	Total	N=431				

The survey provides an adequate pool of the social interaction categories on which to make subgroup comparisons on measures of early life or pre-seminary social interactions. The most notable difference between accused and non-accused priests is that the clerics with an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor (11%) are more likely to be only children (have no siblings) compared to those with no allegations (6%) (*Table 21*). Additionally, only about one-third of accused priests had 3 – 5 siblings, compared to over 40% of the non-accused. Although there are slight differences between clerics in the number of siblings in their family, this does not speak to their location in the sibling order,

any age differences between a cleric and his siblings, or if any siblings perished or was present for only some portion, but not all, of the cleric's childhood. A runaway, incarcerated, or dead sibling may or may not have been included in the count of a cleric's siblings.

Table 21. Cleric Sub-group Comparisons of Pre-Seminary Social Bonds (siblings, dating partners, peers entering seminary)

Siblings					Pre-Seminary Dating			Friends Enter Seminary		
	Accused	Non-Accused	#	Accused	Non-Accused		Accused	Non-Accused		Accused	Non-Accused
Mean	3.4	3.7	None	11% N=12	6% N=20	Yes	41% N=46	50% N=162	Yes	44% N=51	48% N=157
S.D.	2.9	2.7	1-2	36% N=43	33% N=104						
N	N=112	N=323	3-5	33% N=37	41% N=131	No	59% N=67	50% N=161	No	56% N=64	52% N=171
			6-8	12.5% N=14	12% N=39						
			9+	5% N=6	8% N=25						

In terms of external sources of social interaction exposure, two levels are assessed here. The first is the intimacy of romantic dating, as discussed in the previous section. Less than half (41%) of accused clerics had romantic dating partners (whether males or females) compared to exactly half (50%) of the non-accused. Another degree of social interaction intimacy beyond sibling interaction and romantic or dating interaction is simple peer group interaction, especially among those who may follow a similar vocational path. Neither

group showed considerable differences in the distribution of clerics who did or did not have friends who entered seminary with them. Overall, both groups were slightly more likely to enter seminary alone (*Table 21*).

Examining data presented in *Table 22*, a layered cross-tabulation of reported romantic dating or peer relationships prior to seminary, it is evident that nearly two-thirds of the accused priests who did not have friends entering the seminary also did not date, compared to less than half of non-accused clerics. Of those clerics who did have peers entering seminary with them, there are no differences between clerical subgroups on the dating distributions.

Table 22. Relationship Between Cleric Status, Dating & Peers Entering seminary

	Dating	Accused	Non- Accused
No Peers	*No*	62% N=40	46% N=78
	Yes	38% N=24	54% N=84
Yes Peers	*No*	56% N=28	54% N=84
	Yes	44% N=22	46% N=73

Post-seminary bonding.

Candid conversations

A priest's ability to be frank with family, non-clergy peers, clergy peers, spiritual mentors and superiors about his own sexuality, be it his sexual identity, or discussion of celibate chastity, or even a discussion of active sexual encounters, is not indicative of

someone with tenuous social bonds. Therefore, this first set of post-seminary analyses focuses on whether or not priests had conversations with various others about his sexual identity.[48]

Table 23. Groups with Whom Cleric Spoke About His Own Sexual Identity

	Overall	Accused	Non-Accused
Superiors	27% N=115	39% N=44	22% N=71
Family	30% N=129	34% N=38	28% N=91
Non-clergy friends	58% N=251	59% N=67	57% N=184
Fellow priests	68% N=293	66% N=74	68% N=219
Spiritual advisor	74% N=321	73% N=83	74% N=238

In general, it seems as though a majority of priests spoke about their sexual identity, but *not* with their family or superiors. However, in general, they were most likely to speak with their spiritual advisor (74%), followed by peers in the clergy (68%), and then non-clergy friends (58%) (*Table 23*). Priests not only talk about sexual and/or intimacy

[48] These questions can be found on the last page of the *Identity &Behavior* survey, in the section entitled "Ordination and Life in the Clergy." (Appendices C & D)

issues with others, as is the case in the counseling work of the ministry, but they also talk about their own sexual identity. There appear to be no definitive problems among the *I & B* priests in terms of a willingness to speak with others about personally sensitive issues. But upon comparison, an accused cleric is almost twice as likely to have spoken to a superior about his sexual identity. No marked differences are displayed in any of the other groups with whom a cleric may have had conversations about his sexual identity.

In- group relationships

The next aspect of social interaction or social bonds that was measured is a passive one – the perception that the cleric has of relationships with his peers and superiors. This is measured in two degrees of closeness, by asking the cleric about his *work* relationships, as well as his *friendships.*[49] Another aspect of social interaction within these categories is more proactive, measuring respondent's reaching out or seeking advice from peers and superiors, again at the level of work-related problems and personal-related problems.[50]

It is evident that nearly all of the respondents in this sample perceive that they have positive *work relationships* with both *peers and superiors*, and *positive friendships* with *peers* in the clergy (*Table 24*). But a smaller proportion of indicate positive friendships with superiors, which may be why they also do not, on the whole, talk about their sexual identity with their superiors. It is most likely that the superior being referenced is the Bishop, but this was not specified in the survey question. As is evidenced by the passive measure of post-seminary social bonding, clerics believe that they have good relationships with peers and superiors overall.

[49] These scales can be found in questions 54 & 63 of the survey. (Appendices C & D)

[50] These measures can be found in questions 559 - 62 & 68 - 71 of the survey. (Appendices C & D)

Assessing the proactive measures of social interaction, specifically the seeking of advice for personal and work problems, again it is clear that an overwhelming percentage (83%) of responding priests had sought advice from peers for both work *and* personal problems, while far fewer reached out to superiors for work concerns (65%) and fewer still for personal advice from superiors (41%) (*Table 24*). Although the perception of work relationships and friendships with superiors is positive overall, the practice of reaching out to these individuals for advice is does not the fact that clerics indicate that they have positive relationships with their superiors.

Table 24. Measures of Passive and Active Social Interaction for All Clerics in the Identity & Behavior Sample

Work relationships	Peers	Superiors
Positive work relationships	99% N=438	98% N=422
Seek advice for work problems	83% N=360	65% N=280
Friendships		
Positive friendships	98% N=433	77% N=329
Seek advice for personal problems	83% N=360	41% N=175

A comparative analysis of accused and non-accused priests reveals two instances in which there is evidence of what might very well be considered a deficiency of social interaction for those accused of sexual abuse (*Table 25*). Although a majority of all clerics

do seek advice from their peers for both personal and priestly role related problems, only three-fourths of those accused have proactively sought help for work-related concerns, and only two-thirds have sought help for personal problems, compared to about nine out of ten non-accused priests for those same measures (*Table 25*).

Table 25. Measures of Passive and Active Social Interaction by Clerical Subgroups

	Peers		Superiors	
Work Relationships	Accused	Non-Accused	Accused	Non-Accused
Positive work relationships	97% N=110	99% N=328	96% N=105	98% N=317
Seek work problem advice	77% N=85	92% N=294	63% N=70	66% N=210
Friendships				
Positive Friendships	96% N=107	99% N=326	75% N=82	77% N=247
Seek personal problem advice	68% N=76	89% N=284	39% N=42	42% N=133

Another proactive engagement of social bonds is the practice of confronting people when they participate in behaviors thought to be "morally inappropriate."[51] This is

[51] These questions can be found on pages 10 & 12 of the survey.

indicative of social responsibility as embodied in friendship, moral codes, and role expectations as a priest. Morally inappropriate behaviors were not identified in the survey. The interviewees provided some detail about other deviant behaviors in which peers and superiors were said or known to have engaged.

Confrontation and/or the reporting of the individual could be out of concern for the well-being of that peer or superior, others involved in the scenario, the interests of the Church, the image of the brotherhood of priests, or it could have been prompted by the altruistic engagement with morality. This is measured by asking respondents to indicate whether or not they ever confronted and/or reported individuals in the clergy (peers or superiors). About 5 – 8% of the sample either did not answer these questions, or indicated anecdotally on the survey that they were not aware of any morally inappropriate behaviors on the part of their peers and superiors in the priesthood.

Table 26. Cleric's Proactive Social Interactions Regarding Morally Inappropriate Behaviors

	Peers	Superiors	Peers		Superiors	
	Overall		Accused	Non-Accused	Accused	Non-Accused
Confront	42% N=178	8% N=34	30% N=33	47% N=145	15% N=16	6% N=18
Report	30% N=126	6% N=23	24% N=26	32% N=100	9% N=10	4% N=13

It is clear that clerics were five times more likely overall to confront or report a peer *rather than* a superior whom the cleric believed was engaging in morally inappropriate behaviors (*Table 26*). Participants in the *I & B* sample are about half as likely to confront peers and just under one-third as likely to report a peer for inappropriate behaviors as they are to reach out to peers about their own problems (*Table 24* & *Table 26*). They will reach out for themselves, but not try to correct others. Correcting others shows concern for the larger social welfare, as well as for the individual who may need to be confronted. Social bonds are not simply self-serving.

In a comparison of clerical subgroups, there are some pronounced and interesting differences. First and foremost, accused clerics are much less active (30%) in *confronting their peers* than non-accused clerics (47%). They are also less likely to have *reported peers*, although the gap between clerical groups is narrower for this measure of social interaction. Although both clerical groups are least likely to confront or report superiors, it is evident that accused priests are more likely to do both as compared to non-accused priests. Although the analysis of reaction to inappropriate behavior of superiors is based on a small subset of the overall sample (N=57) as well as the subset of the accused (N=26), it contrasts clerical response to peers in that accused priests were 2 – 2.5 times more likely to *confront and report superiors* than their non-accused counterparts.

One final measure to consider is that of institutional bonds. This is assessed in the survey by asking whether or not the cleric perceived that superiors provided adequate institutional support for his development as a priest. Two-thirds of the sample identified that they felt that superiors made adequate institutional support available to them for their development (*Table 27*). Qualitatively, data suggest that this support was for spiritual direction (days of prayer/reflection, annual retreats), continuing theological education

(clergy conferences, workshops, study days, theological Institutes), mutual support among priests, sabbaticals, and counseling/rehabilitation. Accused clerics were dramatically less likely to have perceived that there was good support provided by church institutions for their development and growth.

Table 27. Measure of Institutional Bond

	Overall	Accused	Non-Accused
Institutional Support Available	66%	45%	73%
Total	276	48	228

Again it is important to evaluate the current sample against the similar cohort of men who participated in the *Loyola* study to see how the *I & B* priests differ on comparable social interaction measures. These measures assess the following: the degree of feeling exposed and vulnerable or covered and defended; whether or not the cleric feels as if he can be trusted or lets others down; the cleric's assessment of having short-lived versus enduring relationships; his sense of loneliness or belonging; whether or not he is on guard or trusts others; whether he is affectionate or not; and whether he is one who shares with others or feels lonely. These are all measures of the degree to which one is open to relationships and has a sense of self that allows one to participate in friendships that are intimate and appropriate. These findings are presented in *Table 28.*

Table 28. Loyola study measures of Social Interaction		
	N	%
Sense of loneliness	50	42%
Covered and defended	39	33%
On guard with others	31	26%
Lonely	28	24%
Short-lived relationships	25	21%
Undemonstrative	25	21%
Let people down	18	15%

No measures of social interaction from the *Loyola* study relate to pre-seminary experiences. The most prominent social interaction deficit for the *Loyola* sample is that 42% had a sense of loneliness rather than belonging, although only one-quarter actually indicated that they *were* lonely (*Table 28*). One-quarter to one-third indicated that the priests were on guard with others or, to some degree, covered and defended. Unfortunately, it is not clear with any of these measures if there was a specific group with which they were on guard or from which they were closed off. About one-fifth of these priests indicated that they were not affectionate and had relationships that were short lived. Again, it is unclear if these measures are related to other priests, parishioners, non-clergy friends or even family. Social interactions measures from the *Loyola* study showed that the sample of priests was least likely to indicate that they let others down, although it is unclear as to whether or not this is in reference to themselves as friends or as priests. Overall, not all of the priests in the randomly derived sample are open and free in their relationships. They

are, in fact, distanced in a way that may be healthy, given the professional aspects of their role and the need to balance the requirements of celibate chastity. Given that that priests hear intimate confessions and offer counsel to those in distress, confidential contributors to the development of the *I & B* survey and interview questions suggested by that, inevitably, boundaries are overstepped in the context. It seems as though the *I & B* sample is as open and socially adept with non-clergy friends, fellow priests and spiritual advisors as the *Loyola* sample, a cohort from which the current sample was drawn (*Table 23*).

Thinking about how proactive clerics are in terms of seeking help from others, the *I & B* sample seems more willing to seek out advice from peers than the *Loyola* sample (*Table 24*). But the current sample is similarly situated to the archival data sample in terms of guardedness and being covered and defended when it comes to proactively seeking advice with superiors. This indicates that the differences seen between the accused and non-accused clerics in the *I & B* sample are drawn from a group of clerics who are, indeed, comparable to the *Loyola* sample.

Low Esteem

Falling under the umbrella of coping maladjustments, as presented earlier, a subset of risk factors said to be correlated with sexual offending are as follows: difficulties managing emotions; propensity to impulsivity; use and/or abuse of drugs and alcohol; low esteem. The last concept is the focus of this section. Researchers have found links between low self-esteem and sexual offending, but there are still deficits in the ability to generalize to the diverse population of sex offenders (Brown, 2005;Marshall, Champagne, Sturgeon & Bryce, 1997; Marshal, Marshal, Serran, & O'Brien, 2009; Marshall, & Mazzucco, 1995; Shine, McCloskey, & Newton, 2002). It has been said that individuals with poor self

concept or damaged self-esteem may inappropriately resolve feelings of disconnect or incongruity when their experiences do not match what they had expected in their jobs, in their relationships, etc. In fact, the conflict between feeling and experience may stimulate low self-esteem. Findings from the written narratives and interviews are presented later to explore the prospect of discord experienced by priests in this sample, and any differences that may be unique to accused clerics. Although the aforementioned problematic coping techniques may be present in the lives of sex offenders, they are in *no way unique* to sex offenders.

Though the relationship between low esteem and deviance is classically associated with the development of juveniles, it is relevant to this study in that, just as juveniles are moving through a period of social learning as they progress toward maturity (or adulthood), priests undergo a social learning process as well. In seminary, they progress through a period not unlike the growing pains of adolescent development, albeit within the specific cultural context of Catholicism, as they incorporate the role norms and expectations of the priest into their own concept of self. This progression is experienced in juxtaposition to their own early experiences as members of the laity.

Measuring esteem.

In a best effort to measure predictive risk factors for offending, the *Identity & Behavior* survey relies on multiple constructions of the previously tested Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) (1965). Given the overall goals of this study, it seemed best to use the RSE, particularly because it has been used to assess juveniles at that significant stage in development in which social status is being questioned and processed, which is an underlying framework for understanding the process by which a man becomes a priest.

Also, the data collection in this study is, for the most part, limited to self-response surveys. Therefore, the need for assessing psychological constructs typically measured by long and detailed inventories had to be counterbalanced with the ability to entice individuals to willingly participate in the study on their own time, without compensation. For that reason, the brevity of the RSE, modified for use in this study, is helpful for assessing five levels of esteem. The specific RSE statements[52] to which the subject responds are:

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
2. At times, I think I am no good at all.
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6. I certainly feel useless at times.
7. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

These measures of esteem are meant to assess how the individual sees him/herself. Positive esteem is measured by self-satisfaction, perception of good qualities and doing things as well as others, feeling like a person of worth, and having a positive self attitude. The negative esteem is measured by the participant's perception of himself as no good,

[52] The original scoring on the items measuring the presence of positive esteem (numbers1, 3, 4, 7, and 10) is as follows: Strongly Agree=3; Agree=2; Disagree=1; Strongly Disagree=0. A higher score means higher self concept. The reverse scoring is applied to the negative self concept items (numbers 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9). The sum of all responses provides a self-esteem score, with higher scores indicating higher self-esteem.

useless or a failure, having nothing much to be proud of, or wising to have more respect for himself.

The five scales created in order to measure priest perceptions of esteem were shaped using this framework of self-esteem. The items were modified in order to assess the following: perception of self (self-esteem); perception of priestly role (priestly role esteem); perception by peer priests (priestly role esteem by role peers); perceptions by superiors (priestly role esteem by role superiors); parishioner perceptions (priestly role esteem by lay parishioners).[53] It is important to stress that the latter four scales are meant to assess how the priest sees himself as a priest, and then how he perceives the regard that "reflective others" (peers, superiors, parishioners) have for him in his role as a priest. The respondent was asked to state how he believed that each of the referent groups perceived him in his role as a priest. It is important, when trying to understand the role of esteem for an individual enmeshed in a vocational role that heavily involves relationships with and service to others in a diocesan context, to attempt to measure the potential disparities between how a priest feels about himself as a man in the world compared to how he perceives himself in his external vocational role. This is the "internal-external" assessment of identity esteem, as developed for this study.

If previous research presents evidence that sex offenders have lower esteem, then it is expected that accused clerics will have lower esteem (higher scores) on the overall esteem score, as well as in each external group referent assessed. Additionally, the accused priest will more often see himself negatively as a man in the world, compared to how he sees himself in this vocational role as a priest. Further exploration of the explanations

[53] Respective scales can be found on pages 2, 5, 9, 11, 13 of the original *Identity & Behavior* survey.

presented by accused clerics (using qualitative data) yield a more interesting picture of the potential self redemption presumably inherent in the priestly role. These findings are presented in Chapter 7. It is hypothesized that accused priests will value their role performance more positively than their own self. If "being" supersedes "doing", and individual men "are" the role even in the absence of "doing" the rituals, then the "being" may be a place of salvation or refuge from the negatively valued self, manifested as low self-esteem. The following poem, written by a prisoner in 1934, is an apt representation of the concept of self-assessment:

When you get what you want in your struggle for self and the world makes you king for a day, just go to the mirror and look at yourself and see what that man has to say.

For it isn't your father or mother or wife whose judgment upon you must pass. The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life is the one staring back from the glass.

You may be like Jack Horner and chisel a plum and think you're a wonderful guy. But the man in the glass says you're only a bum if you can't look him straight in the eye.

He's the fellow to please-never mind all the rest, for he's with you clear to the end. And you've passed your most dangerous, difficult test if the man in the glass is your friend.

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years & get pats on the back as you pass. But your final reward will be heartache and tears if you've cheated the man in the glass.

The Guy in the Glass (a.k.a *The Man in the Mirror*), D. Wimbrow, 1934

If the man in the mirror is not the man beneath the religious vestments, then a disconnect between the assessment of self and role, and the perception that others have of that role, may lead to distorted ways of thinking about one's actions, particularly when the actions are in violation of both social and religious norms, some of which are specifically applied to the vocational role. How does a priest who has broken not only his vow of celibate chastity, but also the legal norm of adult consent for sexual interaction, make sense of himself and his behavior? This is investigated in greater detail in analysis of qualitative survey responses and interviews, but in the context of low self-esteem, these clerics may have additional challenges to seeing themselves as whole individuals, inclusive of the failed man and the exalted priest. An alternate supposition is that non-accused clerics may have a more positive assessment of self which may connect them to their role differently than accused clerics, and provide them with space to resolve problems in a manner that promotes greater self respect, as this is rooted in positive esteem.

Given that sexually offending against minors, or any offending for which one is caught, engages the processes of labeling and stigmatization, we do know that lower self-worth may actually be the result of punishment, and punishment is, in part, meant to intervene in and stop the potential for repeat offending. Unlike the original RSE assessment, this study does not ask the participant to respond with his perceptions of himself or others *at the present moment,* and he is not asked to assess himself prior to the alleged incident. Instead, the period for which the each cleric is asked to assess his esteem is dependent on his status as an accused or non-accused priest. The clock cannot be turned back in order to measure these perceptions for a period closer to actual behavior or allegations, and it is known that feelings change temporally. Therefore, clerics were asked

to consider the period of career post-ordination. The accused priest was asked to assess his own perceptions of himself and the perceptions of others from the start of his career through the time he was removed as a result of an allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor. This, for many, was in 2002, often a number years after an alleged incident occurred, or a resolution was reached after an admitted incident. Those priests who were not accused were asked to assess their perceptions of themselves and that of others from the start of their career as a parish priest through the implementation of the Dallas Charter and Norms (2002).

The order of statements to which the priests were asked to respond was modified from that of the RSE Scale in order to cluster positive and negative statements in a way that would flow better for an adult respondent. Additionally, the statements were modified to the past tense, to match the request that the clerics think about their career in active ministry or prior to 2002, or the period prior to mandatory removal, as instituted in the "Dallas Charter" (*see Appendix A*). The specific items for each scale can be found in the *Identity & Behavior* survey (*see Appendices C & D).*

Each of the five scales was included in specific sections of the survey framed by a clearly defined point of reference. So, although there were fifty questions about esteem in total, each set of questions was asked in the appropriate order in the survey, based on the content of each section. The response categories differed from the RSE Scale in that the *Identity & Behavior* survey assessed the *frequency* (always, often, sometimes, never) of agreement with each statement, rather than *degree* (strongly agree – strongly disagree). The lower the actual score overall, the higher the esteem. So if a cleric has high esteem he will agree that he always or often felt self satisfaction, that he had good qualities and did

things as well as others, felt like a person of worth, and had a positive self-attitude. For the negative concept items, if the cleric had little negative esteem, the cleric would only sometimes or never agree to the statements about being no good, useless or a failure, or not having much of which to be proud, or wishing he had more respect for himself.

Some priests completed all scales, while others completed only a few. Comments were added from time to time to indicate why the respondent may not have completed the scale – or crossed the scale out – particularly for the scale assessing how the priest believed that the superiors saw him in his role as a priest over time. Anecdotal evidence indicates that accused clerics had a degree of contempt for superiors as a result of feeling abandoned by the Church and the representatives of the hierarchy, and the thought of considering the "opinion" of their superiors was not an option.

Analysis of esteem.

Before presenting the analysis of esteem scores, it is important to note the internal consistency of the scales used by running a Cronbach's alpha test of the individual items. Although the reliability of the RSE has been validated, the items in the self-esteem scale in the *I & B* survey were reworded and therefore are not the same. The measures of role esteem and the perceptions of the "reflective others" are new and patterned after the self-esteem items used in this study, with changes made to the syntax of the statements to match the target referent (self-on-self, self-on-role, perception of peers, superiors, and parishioners on the cleric's role). Overall it was presumed that the important aspects of the items are the specified concepts of esteem, rather than the referent individual. Conventional practice in scale validation is that an acceptable reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for comparing groups is, at the least, 0.7 or 0.8. Lower levels are

sometimes used in other research. Fortunately, all inter item correlations for the five scales of esteem meet the accepted levels (*Table 29*).

Table 29. Esteem Inter-item correlations

Scale [a]	Cronbach's alpha
Self	.84
Role	.78
Peers	.77
Superiors	.82
Parishioners	.83
Overall Esteem[b]	.87

[a]Scales using 10 items.
[b] ∑ self, role, peers, superiors, parishioners (5 items)

Upon analysis of each subset of esteem scales, the participants in the sample have high self and role esteem overall, as well as a high perception of how they think others evaluate them in their roles as priests (*Table 30*). The *overall* esteem score ranges from 50 – 200, and scores from 50 – 87 are considered high esteem. An overwhelming majority (97%) of the sample had esteem scores falling in the "high" esteem range. Most often the respondents indicated high esteem and is evidenced in perfect esteem scores (50 points).

The individual esteem scale scores have a possible range from 10 – 40, with a score of 10 being a perfect measure of high esteem. Scores from 10 – 17 are considered high esteem. Given the results of the overall esteem measure, it stands to reason that nearly all participants have high self-esteem, role-esteem, and perception of how peers, superiors and parishioners view them in their role as priests (*Table 30*). Although the means show high

esteem for all sets of scores, the modal response for each measure indicates a perfect high esteem score (10). The distributions are positively skewed but within acceptable standards. Self-esteem is the measure with the smallest proportion of clerics responding with "high" esteem (84%). An additional 14% (N=55) fall within the "moderately high" range (88 – 125), yielding an overwhelming majority having positive esteem. Additionally, self-esteem is the most dispersed measure (s.d. = 3.5), but given the range of scores overall, each distribution is similarly spread.

Table 30. Descriptive Statistics for Composite Esteem Measures [a]

	Self	Role	Peer	Superior	Parishioner	Overall [b]
N (% of sample)	390 (88%)	395 (89%)	331 (75%)	347 (78%)	363 (82%)	262 (59%)
Rounded Mean[c]	14	13	13	13	13	66
Mode	10	10	10	10	10	50
Std. Deviation	3.6	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.9	11.6
Skewness	.93	.93	.79	.87	.70	.75
S.E.S.	.12	.12	.13	.13	.13	.15
Percent of scores in "high" range	84% N=328	92% N=363	95% N=314	95% N=314	92% N=330	97% N=254

[a] Modal response for each scale is a perfect high esteem score.

[b] Score ranges 50 – 200. High esteem ranges 50-87.

[c] Although there is a positive skew for all scores, when rounding to the nearest whole number, the mean is equal to the median.

A comparative examination of mean esteem scores for cleric subgroups shows that, in general, there are no notable differences in the distributions for accused compared to

non-accused clerics (*Table 31*). All of the mean esteem scores fall within the "high" range. The overall measure of esteem is missing in 40 – 50% of the cases, but the sample sizes are large enough to compare. Additionally, the results are not skewed, given that a vast majority (89 – 100%) of the sample scored very high on all 50 individual measures of esteem. The accused cleric scores are slightly more dispersed and positively skewed on all measures, but more notably on the measure of self-esteem. As well, accused priests are more positively skewed the measures of peer, superior and overall esteem, although none of these measures are statistically significant when differences between mean scores for each clerical group are compared. The only measure of esteem with a statistically significant result is *self*-esteem, where accused clerics score more negatively than non-accused clerics, although the scores are within the "high" esteem range. This is a non-random sample, so the findings cannot be applied to the population of priests in general, but given the number of esteem measures included for analysis, the significant differences were reported. It is the case that when difference between clerical groups existed, they were significant.

Table 31. Comparative Cleric Composite Esteem Measures

	Self P=.001		Role		Peer		Superior		Parishioner		Overall	
	Accused	NON Accused	Accused	NON Accused	Accused	NON Accused	Accused	NON Accused	Accused	NON Accused	Accused	NON Accused
N (Valid %)	96 (83%)	294 (88%)	96 (83%)	299 (89%)	87 (76%)	244 (73%)	90 (78%)	257 (77%)	86 (75%)	277 (83%)	61 (53%)	201 (60%)
Rounded Mean [a]	15	14	13.5	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	65	66
Mode	11	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	57	50
Std. Deviation	4.3	3.3	3.3	2.8	2.9	2.6	3.2	2.6	3.0	2.9	12.3	11.7
Skewness	.91	.81	.94	.91	1.2	.60	1.3	.52	.68	.72	1.0	.68
S.E.S.	.25	.14	.25	.14	.26	.16	.25	.15	.26	.15	.30	.68
High scores	76% N=73	86% N=282	89% N=85	92% N=275	94% N=82	95% N=232	91% N=82	97% N=249	91% N=78	91% N=252	95% N=58	98% N=197

[a] *Although there is a positive skew for all scores, when rounding to the nearest whole number, the mean is equal to the median, therefore the rounded mean is reported.*

Reiterating the finding that less than 11% or, most often, less than 4% of the *I & B* clerics indicated responses measuring low esteem, a few noticeable trends emerge from an examination of the comparative grouped frequency distributions for the high versus low esteem scores. Just about three-fourths (76%) of accused clerics compared to 86% of non-accused clerics had high *self-esteem* (*Table 31*). There are less disparate but similar trends for the score of the cleric's perception of his superior's esteem for him as a priest (91% accused vs. 97% non-accused), followed by role esteem (89% accused vs. 92% non-accused). It may be useful to look further at the single items within each scale of esteem to see if there are other notable differences between accused and non-accused priests in this sample.

Each individual item or concept measured in a scale set (self, role, peers, superiors, and parishioners) was re-coded as a dichotomous variable. This was accomplished by combining the response categories measuring the strong presence of positive indicators of esteem, or the absence of negative indicators of esteem. For example, if the respondent indicated that he sometimes or never had a positive attitude toward himself as an individual, this was considered a lack of positive esteem, given that the response measured the degree of frequency for which a cleric always, often, sometimes, or never felt the way suggested in the statements to which he was responding. If a cleric often or always wished he had more respect for himself, this indicated low esteem.

Upon assessment of individual items within each scale, there are some small differences between accused and non-accused clerics that should be noted (*Table 32*). Two individual items have multiple indicators of low esteem. Firstly, clerics sometimes

or as often as *never* had a positive attitude about themselves as individuals or as priests. Secondly, clerics often or as often as *always* wished that they could have more respect for themselves as men and as priests. Additionally, accused priests are more likely to have a lack of satisfaction with themselves as individuals and have a lack of self worth. Despite the fact that most clerics have high esteem overall, when there is evidence of poor esteem the findings indicate the accused clerics' low esteem is more pronounced. No other individual measures of positive or negative esteem yielded differences greater than 1% between cleric types.

Table 32. Comparisons of Low Esteem Measures by Cleric Type[a]

	SELF Internal Assessment		ROLE Internal Assessment	
	Accused	NON Accused	Accused	NON Accused
Lack of Positive Attitude	15% N=17	7% N=21	5% N=6	1.5% N=5
Presence of Wish More Respect	19% N=20	9% N=29	15% N=15	5% N=14
Lack of Satisfaction	14.5% N=16	5% N=16	([a] p <.01)	
Lack of Worth	11.5% N=13	5% N=15		

Overall, findings from the *Loyola* study suggest that the priests of that period are both *normally* distributed and *similarly* distributed on many measures as compared to men not ordained to the vocation of the priesthood at that time. The priests in the *Loyola* study are normal in that they span the range of personality and behavioral traits of lay men in society. Kennedy argues that one cannot modify the expected character of priests based on the norms of lay men, simply because it is the *lay man* who seeks the vocation. As a reminder, the final *I & B* sample used for all analyses is from the same historical cohorts as the men in the *Loyola* sample. Recoded measures of data derived from a paper survey of priests assessed in the Loyola study show that those priests were, for the most part, well-adjusted on measures of esteem. This statement is supported by the data of comparable measures of self and role evaluation (*Table 33*).

Table 33. Loyola study measures of Esteem or Feelings About Self

Self	N	%	Role	N	%
Low esteem	44	44%	Role dissatisfaction	32	33%
Self-doubting	37	31%	Unskilled	18	9%
Inconsistent feelings about self	34	29%			
Self-condemning	23	19.5%			
Unworthy	19	16%			
Sense of emptiness	15	13%			
Unloved	12	10%			

Most priests did not feel unloved, empty or unworthy as individuals or unskilled as priests. The findings for the *I & B* sample on comparable measures of esteem are consistent with the *Loyola* sample. A slightly larger proportion of the *Loyola* clerics were self-condemning, and about one-third had inconsistent feelings about themselves, were self-doubting, or were dissatisfied in their role as priests. Most notable is that nearly half of the priests in the *Loyola* sample indicated low self-esteem. It appears as though the *I & B* sample differs from the *Loyola* sample in that the current study has respondents that seem to highly evaluate themselves as individuals and priests, and feel that others highly evaluate them as well overall. Given the assessment that the *Loyola* sample is normally distributed, it seems that the participants in the *I & B* sample have an abnormally good internal and external assessment of themselves. This could be a result of the fact that this sample is not truly representative of the population of priests, although there are some comparable characteristics, *or* it could be an artifact of historical change in perceptions about the priestly role in contemporary society.

It is important to point out that the *Loyola* survey assessed the feelings of the respondents at that point in time. The *I & B* survey asked both accused and non-accused priests to consider their careers as a priests and then answer the questions in response to that career overall, either removal from ministry (for accused priests) or the Dallas Charter in 2002 (for non-accused priests) (*see Appendices C & D).* The time orientation of the *I & B* survey may skew the results to show that priests had an overall satisfaction and positive esteem or contentment that allowed them to continue to serve (or to desire to continue service if they had already been removed) in the priesthood rather than leave for some other profession.

Discussion of Risk Factor Findings.

Deviant sexual experience/exposure.

What does all of this mean? The goal of analysis of quantitative measures was to uncover potential differences in the presence of specific risk factors said to be associated with sexual offending. So the question is, are accused clerics notably different from non-accused clerics on the measures included in the *Identity & Behavior* survey? Each of the risk factors associated with sexual offending present varied differences between clerical subgroups, most of which cannot necessarily be controlled prior to seminary.

To begin, assessing deviant sexual exposure or experience is meant to aid in an understanding about whether or not the clerics who were accused of the sexual abuse of minors were actually deviant or different in some way with regard to the moral and social norms concerning sexual identity or behavior as measured for this study. The literature supports the hypothesis that if sexual deviance is a predictor of offending, then the accused clerics will more often present characteristics that are different from the norms, and different from the "normal" or non-accused priests in the sample.

While the sample of teens in the CDC's YRB Study referenced earlier in this chapter, is not specifically Catholic, it is notable that in decades *not* known for sexual freedom and evidenced to be sexually conservative (pre-1960s), 43% of the *I & B* sample indicated having had some form of sexual experience before entering seminary[54] (*Table 15*), and there are no differences between clerical subgroups on this measure. This finding is especially interesting considering that Catholic culture is often touted by

[54] The question asks about behaviors ranging from kissing and/or petting to intercourse or penetration (in the Pre-Clergy section of the *Identity & Behavior* survey, Appendices C & D).

outsiders as being more sexually repressed than the dominant culture, and that the Catholic Church teaches that pre-marital (and, in the past, non-coital) sex is sinful. The overall *I & B* sample might actually be considered more wanton than was the typical Catholic teenage boy in the 1950s, although the sample does seem to be comparable to what we know of teen behaviors in decades from the 1960s through today. Those who had more dating and sexual experience did enter seminary when they were out of adolescence, compared to those with no experience, but there is no way to tell from the data exactly how old the clerics were when they engaged in sexual behaviors, or how often they engaged in these behaviors (*Table 14* & *Table 15*).

The most notable differences between clerical subgroups are found on the variables measuring sexual identity and behavior. The data shows that it was not abnormal for either type of priest to have engaged in same-sex sexual interactions prior to seminary, whether exclusively homosexual or not, although it is the case that accused clerics more often had same sex and bisexual experiences prior to seminary (*Table 16*). Many have suggested that it is homosexuality that has caused, or is a causal factor in abuse; the evidence shows that over one-quarter of the non-accused clerics had not been accused of the sexual abuse of a minor in the years prior to 2002. Given what is known about the reporting of abuse in the church as mentioned in earlier chapters, the evidence shows that *only some* men who have had bisexual and homosexual pre-seminary experiences have offended. The evidence also shows that some men having the same pre-seminary experiences *did not offend*. Excluding individuals with homo- or bi-sexual pre-seminary experiences may not resolve the issue, especially when the sexual identity is understood as one not solely defined by behavior.

First, not all of the clerics in the sample had a sense of their sexual identity prior to seminary (*Table 17*), although an accused cleric was dramatically more likely (2.2 times) to have been *unclear* as to his sexuality. When he *was clear,* he was just as likely to be hetero or homo or bisexual, whereas non-accused clerics were more likely to have been clear about their sexual identity and to have identified as heterosexual. This points more to the uncertainty of sexual identity as the "deviant sexual issue" rather than the homo or bisexuality itself. This is particularly interesting given that these men are entering a vocation that does not allow them to explore sexuality in ways that are more commonly accessible to lay people.

It is also notable that over half of the clerics who had been accused still identified as heterosexual and, although homosexuality is considered sexually deviant in the Catholic Church, the fact that some of those who identified as homosexual or behaved in non-heterosexual ways were *not* accused weakens the argument that homosexuality is causally linked to "pedophilic" behaviors. Given the caveat that this is a non-random sample, any differences must be *cautiously* interpreted. What is not known from these findings about sexuality is how the accused priests came to view their sexuality after seminary socialization and exploration of the vow of celibate chastity, or during the periods of transition from the fraternal environment in seminary to the multifaceted and unknown world of parish living and ministry. This will need to be further explored in order to understand how individuals who have human development issues can connect with sexual issues in the absence of acting on them. Celibate men are not supposed to be sexually active, but sexual activity is one way in which individuals come to understand their own sexual identity.

Social interaction deficiencies.

The concepts addressed in the *I & B* survey measure interaction at varied levels of intimacy, trust, or practice forming social bonds. Social bonds are said to keep people from isolation, particularly because isolated problem-solving does not allow for the broadest set of solutions. One could argue that the small percentage of accused clerics coming from single child homes may not learn adequate peer socializing skills because of decreased exposure to age-mates or non-adult siblings. They may also come to expect that they are the center of attention and have underdeveloped capacity to defer to others, or an inability to appreciate that other people exist, and have thoughts, feelings, and actions unrelated to the focus of the priest. The intimacy of living with people does structure social interactions skills differently. The use of family history variables to screen priests away from the pursuit of ministry presumes that: the evidence is causal; a 5% difference between a small proportion of accused priests (N=12) and non-accused priests (N=20) is, indeed, enough evidence of risk for offending (*Table 21*). As pointed out in the discussion of sexual deviance, this is another instance of correlation, rather than clear prediction of future offending.

One problem, though, is that sibling relationships are not clearly explored in the literature on the impact of family structure on deviance. The absence of siblings does not mean that the cleric did not have cousins or neighborhood peers with whom to play or socially interact. It is not indicative of a "broken" home, but it is a situation not like the normative experience of others in the period of childhood and early adolescence. Overall, if most of the clerics came from similarly oriented family sizes in terms of siblings, then how might we explain the ways in which family structure influences

behavior? This question is outside of the scope of this study, but is explored elsewhere in the social science literature, and should be considered in light of the findings of the current study.

Further discussion on *pre-seminary sociality* based on the data presented indicates that accused clerics entered seminary with what seems to be less social experience or practice at establishing, developing and maintaining social bonds (as measured in this study) than non-accused clerics (*Table 22*). Accused clerics were (slightly) less likely to have had no friends or no romantic experience, but these differences are nominal. When clerics had friends entering seminary with them, they were fairly equivalent in their distribution on dating, but when clerics had *no friends* entering seminary, the accused clerics were 1.3 times more likely to have had no dating experience either (*Table 22*).

In the absence of pre-seminary friendships in which peer groups move on to the same endeavor (the priesthood) the data suggest that accused clerics head to seminary less practiced at "friend" level social interaction, which may leave them vulnerable to the development of socially inappropriate sexual interactions with young people later in life. It is suggested that friendships, more than romantic or sexual relationships, are scenarios in which adolescents learn to interact socially in the world, rather than in the privacy of home or family groups, or the privacy or dating intimacy, even when the latter two types of relationships occur in public spaces. It is difficult to say that the propensity to offend sexually against minors is caused by these specific social interaction deficiencies. The differences between priest sub-groups on these measures of pre-seminary social bonds are small and are not strong indicators of risk. It is a point that could be addressed in seminary training, more strongly encouraging the development of platonic relationships,

and potentially allowing for dating while in seminary, which has not been the case for the men in the *I & B* sample.

After individuals enter the seminary, and once they are socialized into the priestly fraternity and ordained, they are older, and presumably matured and practiced in their socially interactive skills, particularly given that parish priests have quite a bit of engagement with their parishioners inside and outside of ceremonial rituals, as is presented using narrative analysis in Chapter 6. One supposition for questions included on the survey is that if someone was deficient in his ability to socially interact, he may not talk at all about a personally intimate issue like his own sexual identity. The data show that all clerics are similarly distributed with regard to the group with whom they were willing to (and did) speak to about their own sexuality (*Table 23*). The groups are: family, non-clergy friends, fellow priests, superiors and spiritual advisors. The relationship with a spiritual advisor is one that is confidential and designed, hopefully, for candidness in all regards, so it makes sense that priests in general would speak with their spiritual advisors most often when compared to the other groups. Accused and non-accused clerics showed no differences in this practice. When either clerical subgroup did not speak with a spiritual advisor, it is not clear if it is because they did not want to do so, or they did not have a consistent spiritual advisor with whom to speak. It is not a requirement to have a spiritual advisor.

The findings for peer group social interaction yield no differences between cleric sub-groups. Both speak with their clergy peers most often, and it makes sense that clerics would speak with one another about their sexual identity, particularly because they come to an understanding of this as it is framed by the vow of celibate chastity. A priest may

expect a greater sense of understanding from a fellow priest because they are both confronted with similar and very sensitive issues. It seems normal then that clerics would be less likely to discuss their sexual identity concerns with their non-clergy friends, and even less likely to do so with their family. Although there are no differences between accused and non-accused clerics on their willingness to speak with non-clergy friends, one-third of accused clerics spoke with *family members* about their sexual identity, compared to only about one-quarter of the non-accused (*Table 23*). This could be the result of greater intimacy with family members, *or* it could indicate that accused priests had to have a conversation with members of their family after they were accused, in order to explain the situation that was likely to or had already become newsworthy.

All clerics were least likely to speak with superiors about their sexual identity, and one suggestion concerning the low rate of apparent frankness with superiors is that it could simply be the result of less actual contact, and contact that is more formal. The context within which many clerics may actually interact with a superior may not be conducive to the intimacy involved in a conversation about sexual identity. It is interesting, then, that this is the category for which there is the largest difference between clerical subgroups, and that the difference is not in the direction one would expect because of the limited and formal contact mentioned above. More often it was accused clerics who engaged in this particular proactive social and intimate interaction with superiors. What is not clear is who initiated the contact. It is probable that these accused clerics spoke with their superiors about sexual identity as a result of meetings to specifically discuss sexual behavior, namely an allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor. This may not be the case. It is also possible that when non-accused priests spoke with

their superiors, they did so for similar reasons – that non-accused clerics had been accused of sexually inappropriate or abusive behaviors with an adult, or sexual issues other than abuse. Abuse of adults and non-abusive sexual behaviors, though not the focus of this study, are known to have occurred on the part of both interviewees and confidential contributors to the development of this study, and most likely constitute the more prevalent sexual issues of priests (sexual impropriety with adults). Later review of qualitative data explores this point.

The next level of social interaction is with peers and superiors in the clergy, in terms of perceptions of the work and personal relationships as well as the willingness to seek help or advice for problems related to personal or work-role issues (*Table 24*). It makes sense that clerics overall would not necessarily be as likely to perceive positive friendships with superiors compared to friendships with peers, and certainly might be less likely to seek help for personal problems from superiors as opposed to peers. Another possibility is that priests felt like they do not want to bother their superiors with what might be considered mundane role-related questions, or impertinent personal problems. It may also be the case that clerics see their peers and spiritual advisors as adequate outlets for these proactive social interactions. Although members of the accused sample displays a lower likelihood of reaching out to peers for both work and personal problems, they still do so more often than seeking support from superiors. So the perception of positive relationships is not indicative of an expectation of commitment to actually "do" or enact the relationship.

As previously pointed out, clerics may have fewer interactions with those who are "higher-ups" in the chain of command in the Catholic Church, which may make it

difficult to develop friendships, but they do indicate overwhelming that they have positive *work* relationships with both peers and superiors. But clerics do not seek *work-role* related advice from superiors as often as they seek such advice from peers. It may be less beneficial for a priest to seek out advice for work-role problems from an individual (superior) who has control over his parish assignments. In a way, clerics are employees of the Church, and superiors are managers of the workforce, so asking for advice might be perceived as pointing out one's problems as an employee. This may, in turn, interrupt any possibility for advancement, particularly given that becoming a pastor was not as easy for the cohorts in this sample as it has become today.

Interestingly, the fact that accused priests are less likely to see superiors as providing adequate institutional support for personal development may be associated with their lower likelihood of seeking superiors out for problem-solving advice (*Table 27*). Or, a disconnect from the hierarchical institution, as embodied in superiors, may muddle what it is that accused priests see as the support mechanisms available to them. If clerics do not *perceive* that there is institutional support, regardless of whether or not that perception is accurate, this may serve to further isolate individuals who may already feel disconnected. This could explain why accused priests were not quite half as likely to have felt that no institutional support was available to them. It is difficult to say whether this perception is what the accused clerics actually felt while they were in ministry, or if it is an interpretation of institutional support now that they have been "ousted" by the Church as a result of an allegation. Further exploration of excuses and justifications as these shape perceptions are presented in Chapter 7.

When it comes to the most proactive and difficult of social interactions, that of confronting and reporting peers and superiors for morally inappropriate behaviors, all clerics are 5 times as likely to confront and report peers rather than superiors for engaging in "inappropriate" behaviors (*Table 26*). But when accused and non-accused clerics are compared, there are interesting differences in behavior. Accused clerics are less likely to confront and report *peers,* and, although they are nowhere near as likely to confront and report superiors as they are peers, accused clerics are more likely to be proactive in addressing the moral impropriety of superiors. By confronting and reporting peers less often, do the accused priests feel less of a connection to the processes of the institution, and the responsibilities to the moral codes, their role in the Church, and their relationship to the priestly brotherhood? Or, do they assuage their own guilt by not confronting or reporting the "deviance" of others in their "class" (peers)? It could be that this sample of priests has been able to identify moral inappropriateness, but did not see the outlet for addressing it, which is another interpretation of why the accused may have perceived a lack of institutional support for personal development. Lastly, it could be that the accused clerics differently engaged with the Catholic doctrine as exemplified in the following Gospel passage about judgment:

> [1]*Stop judging, that you may not be judged,*
>
> [2]*For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you.*
>
> [5]*You hypocrite, remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye.*
>
> Matthew 7: 1, 2, 5 - *New American Bible*

The dogma removing judgment from man and reserving ultimate forgiveness to God might best explain the response of accused priests to their peers, but what then can be said of the fact that the accused priests in this sample were about twice as likely to confront and report *superiors* compared to their non-accused counterparts? The difference could be reflective of an artifact of the response of the superiors to the allegation of sexual abuse, in that angry accused clerics confronted and reported superiors after they themselves were removed from ministry. As a reminder, all clerics with an accusation on record were summarily dismissed as of 2002, even if the incident had been previously addressed. Unfortunately there is no time order measure of confrontations or reporting to substantiate this conclusion.

Low esteem.

Low esteem has been found in juveniles who offend, as well as in forensic samples of sex offenders, with child molesters having the lowest esteem among offending populations, as previously introduced. Overall, this sample holds itself in very high esteem (*Table 30*). Upon examination of individual items within each esteem composite scale, the differences are nominal, if they appear at all (*Table 31*). If low esteem is an indicator of deviance or sexual abuse of a minor, then the findings related to the absence of positive esteem or the presence of negative esteem are important to understand. When there are differences between the clerical subgroups, they are for self and role measures of esteem, rather than for how the priests think others view them in their performance as priests (*Table 32*). Those with low esteem are few in number, so comparative analysis findings should be interpreted with caution. The accused clerics also have a lack of self-satisfaction and self-worth compared to the non-accused, again in small proportions. But

the fact that accused priests more often lack a positive attitude about themselves in their role as priests or as individuals could be an artifact of their allegation(s) of abuse, rather than an accurate assessment of their career in ministry, in spite of the fact that they were asked to consider their time from ordination to removal. It is difficult not to see oneself through the lens of dismissal and negative social stigma.

Additionally, it is hard to interpret these negative findings given that an overwhelming majority of accused priests scored for high esteem on all measures, whether composite or individual. Accused clerics could have already addressed esteem issues if they have been to therapy. Any low esteem could also be a residual effect of labeling and punishment. It is also surprising that the priests overall do not have lower esteem, given the current condemnation or stigma that the priesthood has received as a result of allegations of sexual abuse (and the ensuing pubic scandal). Is there an air of disconnect from this phenomenon, or overcompensation for the blight on the priesthood that has resulted from this phenomenon?

The evidence here suggests that although accused clerics differ on several measures from the non-accused, no *one* factor can be determined to *cause* these ordained adult men to engage in sexual behavior with those under the age of consent. It is possible that a multifactor model may help in determining who is at risk to offend, but the question then arises as to the ethical nature of intervening in sexual violence before it starts. If we think we know who has the capacity to offend, what are we, as a society willing to do to intervene? One resolution by the Church is to deny entrance to those who identify as homosexual. The evidence here does not support the idea that homosexuality is the problem. Rather, the issue of one's own clarity about one's sexual identity seems to

be one of the most disparate between accused and non-accused clerics. In combination with a perception of a lack of institutional support, which is the factor showing the greatest difference between accused and non-accused priests, sexual identity confusion may result in behavior that is unacceptable for a priest, namely the sexual abuse of a minor (for this sample). All other differences between the clerical subgroups range between 5-17%, although most of the time the subgroups differ by 10% or less.

Kaufman, Mosher, Carter, & Estes, (2006) remind researchers that there are multifactor models of initiation into all types of criminally defined behavior and that ". . . it is not surprising that sexual offending against children and teens is associated with a variety of etiological dimensions" (2006, p.102). When there is a correlation between offender status and the etiological dimensions measured in the *Identity & Behavior* survey, the relationship is evident in only a very small proportion of the sample of accused clerics. Since the premise of the present study is that social and cultural factors contribute to patterns of sexual offending, the following sections will explore these more fully. This is done by assessing extended interviews with both non-accused and accused Catholic priests, as well as narrative data from accused clerics in the form of archival clinical data of written accounts of self-understanding while in treatment for offending behavior.

Narrative and Meaning

Chapter 6 - Sociology of Sexual Stories

Ken Plummer, sociologist and editor of *Sexualities,* a journal established to encourage research focused on understanding sexualities in the *social* rather than *clinical* context, has argued that it is vital to understand all sexuality within the framework of the "sociology of stories." This framework illustrates the ways in which narratives of sexual experiences are personal and have become part of the social fabric, and that the telling of sexual stories can be construed as a political action, or somehow empowering, or disempowering, depending on, when, how, and to whom the story is told (1975). So the sociological lens is not only useful in understanding how individuals make meaning or come to interpret social interactions, but also in understanding the ways stories are constructed and recounted. How, where, when, why, and to whom the story is told all matter. It is only after an exploration of the ways in which a story comes into being that one can dissect the content of what the raconteur is saying.

Prior to the turn of the millennium, and certainly in the mid-1900s and earlier, punitive vilified and eradicated a variety of sexual interactions, some of which had no names, labels, identities or historical stories. This also holds true, to some extent, in the present day. There was a time, however, when there was no language or means of talking about one's sexual experiences (good or bad). The process of the political and public debates about sexual impropriety has evolved from the personal – developing from a

communally viable story of dominance and subjugation, queerness, chastity, victimhood and more, all lived, expressed, promulgated and retold (Plummer, 1995). The stories of coming out, rape and sexual abuse recovery are understood using the social conditions of the telling, along with the issues of identity and community. These are actively engaged within in the tales, but the account of the abuser has had no "community" in the traditional sense of the term. This situation has changed in the last decade or so with the advent of technology allowing for anonymous communication.

In *Wayward Puritans: A Study of the Sociology of Deviance* (1967), Kai Erickson examined the Puritan relationship to deviance. Given that the United States has historical roots in the Puritan processes of labeling and essentializing "problematic" behavior, it is important to articulate that this discussion of sexual abuse perpetrated by priests occurs at a point in time when there are both permissive and repressive practices at play in response to sexual stories, along with a historical memory of strong religiosity and prudishness. Case in point, in the U.S. after serving the terms of incarceration, individuals convicted of sex-related offenses (generally with the exception of buying or selling sex between adults) are forced to register in a system that perpetually labels them as "predators" or essentially flawed persons, who are presumably compelled or predestined to offend. But, sociologically speaking, and even if we only speak of criminal statutes, there is nothing essential about behavior. Behavior – in and of itself – is a passing event – not endless and not one's fixed identity. A person becomes a priest or a mother, a husband, or Catholic, just as he or she may also *un*become these things, through laicization or the death of a child, divorce, or excommunication. Under Catholic teaching, though, sin (of any kind), is inevitable for all humans, and not something that is treated, at least theoretically, as inherently bad in the individual sinner. Instead, as the framework of redemption is laid out,

the sin can be removed only if one repents and is absolved. So this subcultural norm is in stark contrast to the dominant ideology on sexual offending, particularly against minors. Sin is not fixed for a Catholic who has been baptized, and it is not something for which a person can be cast out of society if he repents or atones.

In terms of making meaning in the telling of one's story, it is true that as individuals give accounts of events, they speak both of themselves *and others*. They tell stories of what brings them together as a class or group, or what differentiates them, as well as who they are individually within that group. These stories are ever changing, as they are a telling of the past (revising to fit the present), a manipulation of the present (to fit the context of the telling), and a facilitation of the future (who one wants to be, or be seen as). Some stories take on archetypal characteristics, as in the victim as survivor or, now – the pedophile priest. In order to be defined as a sexual abuser, a person must identify himself as such, or be identified by the state or by the victim, who tells a story of victimhood in which the abuser is assigned a role. A priest need not accept the qualitative description or categorization as an abuser, but this does not make the narratives of the victim or the state any less "true."

The practice of narrative analysis helps social scientists theorize about the ways in which individuals come to understand, in part, some of the things that are supposed to be psychologically correlated with and predictive of sex offending. In this study, it is suggested that these could also be identified as the characteristic components of the "story of a sex offender." But this also allows us to go beyond a simple behaviorist approach to the study of human sexuality. This is derived from how the story is told, to whom the participant is speaking, as well as what the story actually is, the truth of the narrator.

The mechanisms through which an individual may engage in the "telling" of the self, or of other people or institutions, is through personal journal entries, written responses to clinical assessments, general open ended survey responses, as well as interviews or guided conversations. In the case of the *I & B* study, the responding clerics provided narratives through the latter two formats. Since the accused participants knew that they were included *because* they were accused of sexual abuse, they may have come to the survey or interview with the story of *the abuser self* in the fore.

Most certainly, in the archival written clinical assessments, the questions asked of the priest in treatment pertained to life histories and the sexual incident(s) that may have brought them into residential treatment. So the abuser self is again the reason for the assessment, and individuals are in treatment in the hopes of changing something about themselves that is related to the abusive behavior. In the case of the *I & B* data, stories were clearly addressed not only to me as the researcher, but also to all those making accusations (regardless of acceptance of responsibility on the part of the accused), to the church community that may have shunned the accused priest, as well as toward their own Bishops or the church hierarchy in general.

Many respondents took advantage of the opportunity to include additional comments at the end of the written survey, or to contribute additional comments at the end of the interview. It was clear that the clinical assessments were directed specifically to the psychologist as such, rather than a recounting of the life history for the cleric's own purposes. The interviews explicitly provided an opportunity for those who seem to have been silenced in the discussion, as their voice might have done harm to them, their cases (criminal or civil) and the Church. But one accused priest says,

> *For 12 years I have sat here with no voice – not being able to talk about this except in groups or therapy, this whole situation is a way for me to talk about this and maybe give back in some way so someone else can be helped besides me. This is real important to me.*

As a social scientist, the goal of research is to uncover the patterns that do exist in the world. It is not to tell the politically correct story, nor to recount the ideas that are damning to an outcast population. So the remainder of this exploratory analysis is a narration of the story of how I, as a researcher, came to these accounts, and a discussion of the common themes that were drawn forth as the Catholic priests told their stories. Narrative structure is about two things: the form and the content. Different patterns emerge when analyzing rigidly defined concepts as opposed to the richness involved in the details provided by qualitative data. It is a classic debate that has slowly begun to allow researchers to utilize multi-methodological approaches to data collection in order to address commonalities across offender types, while parsing out nuances that are as important to the understanding of identity and behavior. A hypothesis framing this analysis is that accused priests show evidence of identity disconnect. Examining the form of the narrative, disconnect may manifest as being schizophrenically told – out of order, illogical, or a jumble compared to the cogently organized traditionally narrative structure, specifically: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action. This chapter considers the form, while the following chapter considers the content of the narratives within the framework of vocabularies of Catholicism as these shape specific techniques of neutralization used by accused priests to make sense of who they are in the world.

Exposition

All participants were aware of the general purposes of the narrative situation in which they chose to participate. None were expressly impromptu. The written responses allowed for deliberation, although it was clear that some respondents self-edited after they had written their responses on the page. This was only clearly evident for the paper surveys. The online version could not track edits. A handful of priests, both accused and non-accused, opted to type long responses in letter format, which were submitted along with a completed survey. Given the absence of grammatical and spelling errors, it is assumed that these were edited, but the qualitative texts were also self-guided responses, or "comments." It is important to recognize that editing introduces an element of control or management of identity in a way that allows the author to lie or omit negative information more comfortably – without looking at an interviewer, or even to divulge uncomfortable details more freely, given the buffer of writing rather than speaking. The purpose of the written narrative is also important. Clinical assessments are reviewed by counselors, and the author of the narrative must later interact with the counselors, often as pertains to the very content of the narratives. Responding to survey questions, however, did not require a further contact.

Written comments offered an array of feedback about the survey itself, the Dallas Charter and/or the church hierarchy, as well as accused priests' comments about their own bad acts, rife with techniques of neutralization, although some did express remorse for behavior. This last category is explored in greater detail in the next chapter. The comments about the survey were both positive and negative. Some, mostly accused, priests thanked the research team for allowing participation, while others harshly criticized the survey as

inadequate and targeting the accused rather than the Church. This negative response introduced a potential obstacle in data collection. If priests were angry, fearful or hurt by the process of being removed from ministry, would there be any response to the survey? What about participation in interviews? One such indicator early on in the data collection phase came from an accused priest who, in addition to completing the 15 page paper survey, actually took the time to compose a six (6) page typewritten response, which includes the themes noted above.

> *After reviewing your questionnaire, I confess I am disappointed. I was hoping to discover questions that would penetrate to the core of the problem of sexual abuse. Every one of your questions has to do with causes, none with context. Instead of investigating the Church, to see why it produced child-abusing priests, you are investigating the abusers. You will not understand the problems of the Church, without investigating the Church itself . . .*

He then speaks for all accused priests, illuminating a potential reason for non-participation in either the survey or interviews, saying,

> *. . . There is an abiding fear among priests on leave to even share their true stories with each other. We have formed a support group and meet monthly, but we know next to nothing about each other's sexual history. . .*

The previous written response does point out that there is a story to be told, and one that is unique to the experiences of those accused, regardless of the "truth" of their accusation. This is explored in greater detail in the section on narrative structure. Interestingly, after all of the lambasting of the study and the Church, this particular accused priest thanked the researchers, writing in conclusion to his letter -

I applaud your efforts and pray that your work will truly benefit the Church. I hope your study helps heal her and the priesthood I love so much.

Another illustration of frustration and anger came in a slightly different manner from an accused priest. Not long after mailing the initial round of surveys for accused priests, a response came in the form of a blank survey and a post-it note, saying

I started to fill out your survey when it dawned on me that the Roman Catholic bishops in this country consider me a piece of garbage. Consequently, I refuse to contribute to or support their hypocrisy.

Lastly, there was a colorful response using language and imagery specific to Catholicism, reiterating, anger, frustration and hurt. This response also points to the importance of including a culturally specific framework for understanding the way in which priests make sense of the world, which will be explored in later chapters.

[written survey responses]

. . . your survey went in the shredder. No one seems to care or understand the "hell" suffered certainly by me and it is still a daily cross to carry trying to do God's will who is all I depend on for mercy and forgiveness, for allegedly doing very little.

There are many, many good men out there still . . . who have been totally abandoned. If you think your survey helps, it is a bit late, when for 50 years or maybe 500 the whole preparation was inadequate in this regard. . . .

These comments, as well as those derived from the clinical files are useful, but information collected is oriented around the written format. Responses could be mulled over, clearly stated, and detailed, and arguments were often substantiated with outside evidence that may not have been at the fingertips, or on the tip of the tongue in an interview.

The interviews were a bit different and felt more impromptu or off-the-cuff compared to the written responses, in that the questions were not sent to the participant in advance of the interview, except in one case of an accused cleric. There was no opportunity to prepare for the exact questions in advance, although it is clear that some of the clerics anticipated particular question types. Accused clerics clearly knew they would be talking about their own circumstances. Additionally, the interview questions were designed to and did establish a non-combative rapport with the priest prior to engaging in a discussion of abuse or other deviance, whether committed by the cleric or known to have been committed by other priests. It was evident to me that this non-combative format was unexpected by the cleric, creating an interaction that allowed him to have an increased sense of control, and to begin with a focus on the good parts of his story. This seemed to disarm the respondent against any armor of anger, which may have existed under the presumption that the study was meant to demonize all accused priests, and each individual respondent as well.

Participation in an interview required a leap of faith, a degree of self-confidence, or some measure of trust that the interview would not be troublesome, and that a final analysis might not be damning. Having the choice to participate either in an in-person or telephone interview allowed for the increased comfort of the cleric, since the decision was

his. For those participating in an in-person interview, my willingness to travel to the homes of over half of the interviewees allowed each man to see and meet me, the interviewer, in all appearances a harmless young woman, rather than a finger-pointing bishop or lawyer or angry parishioner. There was always the possibility, that while participating in a telephone interview, the cleric might have seen me as an abstract church representative, and that this would bring about negative feelings reminiscent of what the cleric felt towards the bishop or other church leader who may have treated him in a way that fostered distrust and animosity. Instead of bristling at the treatment by the Church, the participants were able to soften towards me. It was often impressed upon each participant that it was important to have as comprehensive a picture as possible, and the only way to do this would be to include the voices of those cast out. The interviewees were also given the opportunity to refuse recording the interview, in part or in total, and they were told they could end the session at any time, for any reason, no explanations required.

Some accused clerics were very prepared to defend themselves and wanted to talk about the incidents, the allegations, the accuser(s), or even the church hierarchy regardless of the questions established for the survey. In these events, I was able to listen and pull out relevant information that may have touched on questions meant to be asked in the second half of the interview. Or, when relevant, I was able to steer the respondent to "hold that thought" until the end of the interview. Typically, I indicated that the respondent would have plenty of time for additional questions or to fill in any gaps that he felt I may have left during the interview. This worked well and, although the accounts of the self, assessment of role performance, and details about allegations of abuse were situated in the research format, I believe a trust was established between myself and the respondents, whether the interview took place on the telephone or in person. Case in point – one accused priest

contacted me in July of 2008 initially asking for further information, because he had been referred by another priest who had participated. It was not until September of 2008 that his interview took place, in person, in his home and, even then, he indicated that he considered cancelling just that day. His reticence turned trust can be illustrated by the fact that when he was asked about consenting to the interview itself, as well as the recording of the interview, he replied yes to both and asked, *"Do I get a copy of the recording?"* I responded that he could. He replied, *"I would like that."* This particular interview lasted about one and three-quarter hours. As we approached the last 15 minutes of the interview, this cleric reiterated his initial distrust with the study as well as anger with the Church, by saying

> *I am so, uhm, weary and leery of attorneys and church personnel and people like yourself who – some of my friends said "Hey, have nothing to do with you [me, the researcher]. Why dig this stuff up again? But I feel so strong, you know, that, that, when history writes – summarizes this – I think it is not the individual priests, if they are innocent that will stand out. It's the Church's institutional mishandling of it. The Church should be writing a book of lamentations . . . I think the institution is dodging this and it's getting off.*

He made a few more comments about the structure of the story that should be told, which I will talk about shortly, but, in wrapping up the interview, this exchange points to a slight shift in perspective, at least towards his participation in the study.

> *I said, "I really do appreciate the fact that you have enough confidence in me today to at least share –"*
>
> *He interrupted by saying, "You have been given access to the – to my heart."*

> *To which I replied, "I hope that what comes is that you find that your trust was worthwhile."*
>
> *He said, "Well, that tape, there you know . . . there is enough in there to identify me very easily, and there are other people who I referred to. That's a sacred trust that might be violated, but I have had such bad history of trust being violated, you know so, I don't want it to happen again . . . I want to be a kind of a part of this conversation and, you know, so I would take that risk and then – in fact I called your office and left a message and you called back."*

Interestingly, during the entire interview there was a bottle of red wine on the table. Upon completion of the interview, Fr. X offered me a toast as a gesture of good faith that I would represent him and his story honestly. I hope that I have his confidence, and that of all other participants.

The Rising Action

How can we come to an alternative understanding of the relationship between identity and behavior, particularly when that relationship seems contradictory or disconnected, for example when a celibate priest has sexual interactions (regardless of with whom)? One way to do this is by assessing the types of narratives to which priests have access when recounting the "beginnings" of various phases of their story. One such question asked in the *Identity & Behavior* interview is "What led you to seminary?" I consider this the rising action of the respondent's coming to priesthood. One could also consider the dramatic story of coming to the status of "abuser", or "priest removed from active ministry." I chose to explore the narrative formats as they unfold in the life of a Catholic boy who, once he understood that his story was to be framed by priesthood,

became a man of the cloth, and only *later* was accused of the sexual abuse of a minor in the context of his role as a priest. The story of sexual abuse perpetrated by priests in the Catholic Church has taken on a particular structure, given that the events, cognitions, and neutralizations have taken place *in the context of Catholic culture.* Any analysis of the stories of these men that did not first begin with the path to his master status would be remiss.

It is also true that the lens of the responding cleric is retrospective. He tells his tales with the knowledge and nuance of all that has transpired. Interviews can be somewhat rehearsed if a respondent is asked to tell his story often, as a priest, as an abuser, in therapy or in defense of self. The archival narratives referenced for content in the next chapter, are deliberate and specific to the context, where respondents are given time to ponder was *has happened*, what recollections "best fit" the situation of the telling (including those characteristics and events that *could have been* indicators of trouble to come), if only that were the story that was being told at that time.

One accused priest talks about behavior that he now understands as problematic. It becomes important that this part of recognition about himself and his story is woven into the interview. Almost as if by differentiating time (then and now), he is already distancing from the self that acted out by sexually abusing a minor.

> *. . . I was always, well, up until 5 years ago (2003), very eager to behave in very confrontative type behavior with people . . .I was most eager to confront people . . . that got me into , I won't say trouble, but certainly heartache that I inflicted on others, and on myself that I now regret as I look back. . . .*

One who has been accused will tell a different tale than one who has not, as will an accused priest who admits to the allegation compared to one who denies it. Also, a priest who has gone through some sort of psychiatric or therapeutic treatment will have access to another pattern of events and language with which to present his narrative. These are explored in Chapter 7, the chapter on the cultural application of sin and redemption.

Coming to the story.

Two narratives appear to be at play in the life of a Catholic man deciding to enter the seminary. The first, of course, is the general story of how we as a human race came to be, and the second is how individuals are to "be" Catholic. The benchmarks of active engagement in the Church are the Sacraments. This is true for those born and raised in a Catholic subculture, or for those who come into the community through intensive immersion via the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program. Regardless, the specific cultural components of the content of the milestones of Catholic practice certainly outline the order and direction that the "Catholic story" is expected to take in order to *possess the Catholic master status*. "It is by our participation in God, who is the infinite power to resist the threat of nonbeing, that we acquire the 'courage to be' fully, even in the face of these three forms of anxiety [about the meaning of life, the burden of guilt and the fear of death]." (McBrien, 1981: 123).

Richard McBrien, a professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame and a priest of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, writes that the standard of sacramentality is a principal theological component of Catholicism, and that the ". . .human community as a whole responds to its experience of the divine through the sacramental mode. . . *any finite reality through which the divine is perceived to be*

disclosed and communicated, and through which our human response to the divine assumes some measure of shape, form, and structure" (emphasis added) (1981, p. 732). This happens through the Sacraments, which are not mere exchanges or transactions between God and any given human, like purchasing one's daily coffee or the morning paper. They are acts of God that represent the Church as an organism, not simply a building or even the congregation itself. Sacraments are acts of the Church, the expressive story of what the Church is and does. And a Christian is identified as ". . .a radically social human person in whom God is present in grace but who is, at the same time, prone to act against the divine presence." (McBrien, 1981: 952) This *is* the story of the Christian – a being most certain to act in opposition to grace given by the Supreme Being *because* he is human. The story of the sinner is that of the Christian, wherein temptation is ever- present and sin is succumbing to that temptation, from which Christians may be redeemed, through the Sacraments. The ways in which this shapes the content and the meaning of the allegations of sexual abuse of minors for accused priests will be explored further in the next chapter.

The *Sacrament of Holy Orders* is not open to all, so it is a turning point in the story of the particular type of Catholic who is able to receive the grace of this sacred ritual. Even when one may desire to become a priest, and even train to do so, the assessments by others have the ultimate authority to determine the direction of the story. In what ways do the paths of a men seeking ordination differ, as it most certainly does, from the various paths of lay Catholics? Becoming a priest is a biographical event that culminates in Ordination, which cannot be "officially" experienced or sanctioned by those not immersed in this subcultural religious system. This is not to say that other religious cultures do not have processes by which one becomes "holy" or a leader, but the process that is specific to the

Catholic Church is the one in which men are acculturated to the master status that is eventually undertaken - the man as priest. Only in the setting of the Catholic Church can this story be told. Although many people outside of the Catholic Church are able to recognize a priest, this is *not* the same as understanding who the priest *is* in the life of the Catholic.

The patterns that emerged in an exploration of interviews about how priests came to their own stories are presented in this section. These stories are situated in the process of seminary training, transitioning from "lay" self to seminarian ("priest in training"), to "ordained" man. All the while the stories are woven into, reiterated, and/or re-routed by interactions with parishioners and other clergy, as well as the accusers, their families, and sometimes officers of the law, psychologists or other members of therapeutic communities once accusations were made known to the priests, their superiors, and/or other community members.

It is important to have a sense of what drew (or pushed) boys to enter seminary, with the intention to become ordained men and all this identity entailed. On the basis of this research, what this (active priesthood) actually included was not exactly what many priests had expected. For many men in the cohort of this sample, this was due in part to the fact they entered seminary just prior to and/or were ordained around the time of the Vatican II, resulting in discussions of and changes in the practices of the Church. Sr. Katarina Schuth[55] writes about the challenges in the ministerial formation of seminarians for the life of the priesthood, given "changing dynamics of parish life and structures . . .

[55] Since 1960, Sr. Schuth has been an active member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Rochester, MN. She is a researcher and teacher at the Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN, where she currently holds an Endowed Professorship for the Social Scientific Study of Religion. Her expertise in seminary training helps shape this analysis.

growing . . . diversity of congregations, and to the increasing importance of the universal character of the Church." (1990: 370) This is especially true since the changes of Vatican II have permeated Catholic life. As was previously noted, the Church was opened up to the laity, who began to work side-by-side with the clergy blurring lines, roles and expectations previously in place. So, with that, when the participating priests were asked what led them to seminary, all priests in the sample talked about the decision, which is a turning point in the life course of each young man. One such story is that of the "call", which manifests in different ways. Although, in the end, the call is either "heeded" or not by the man telling the story, along the way he has some external prompting as to how the story might or should unfold. This is an account of an accused priest.

> *Let's see . . . right after I got out of high school I went in to the military. It was during those three years in active service (1968 – 1971) that I first, I guess, sensed that God was calling me to the ministry . . . and I talked with the army chaplain where I was . . . stationed . . ., and he seemed to feel that it was an authentic calling and then we - from there he helped me make arrangements to enter a seminary within 3 months after I left the service.*

What is interesting is that, upon further prompting, this priest clarifies the process of understanding and participating in God's plan for him, by talking about the fact that he did not anticipate that this could be a viable story of his life given the biography of his mother.

> ***. . .*** *when I first sensed that "call" as I would name it, I said back to God two things. I said, "well first of all, I said, this can't be for real, because first of all you know mom, was divorced, she was married in the church way back in the early 1940s she divorced her first husband, and told by a priest that if she ever*

> *remarried she would be excommunicated, and she did remarry, and uh stopped going to church and all that." So I said "with that kind of history frankly my sexual orientation being gay, uh, homosexual," I said "given those two things this can't be for real." And yet I sensed God saying to me "It is for real, in spite of those two realities." So I guess that is how I can best describe that as a calling. So when I sensed that God was saying to me "yeah I understand these two things, and I understand them better than you and yet I'm still asking you to be a priest" . . . that's sort of how it went for me.*

God is integral to the story of coming to the decision to enter seminary, although humans guide some of the interpretation of the conversation with God. But there are other influences, like close positive role models or external invitations or prompts to consider the life of ministry, both of which helped to shape the story of coming to seminary. The following two narratives are from non-accused priests.

> *There were a number of religious in the family and from the opportunities that we had to meet with them and to socialize with them, I could observe and from the others that I saw serving in my own home parish, that there were some people who were happy serving, uh, in the church who were single, who were dedicated and that in a sense it allowed priesthood to be looked at as a ministry of a fulfilling way of living because there were so many around and a number of them were quite happy . . . I had entered seminary as a freshman in high school, but came back home because it had only been a couple of years since my dad died . . . I came back home and attended the local parish high school and continued an education there and at the end of uh, well about the middle of my senior year of high school,*

> *a parish priest whom I was very fond of as far as just the way he handled himself and dealt with parishioners, said "so what are you going to do when you get out of high school?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. I'm thinking about teaching is one thing or social work is another." He said "Ever thought about goin' back to the seminary?" And I said "No, not really." He said "Well, ya know, they, uh, priests end up doing a lot of teaching across the course of their lives and there's a type of social work that is involved also in priesthood. And so, maybe you ought to think about that." So, I did and took the exams for entrance and evidently did well enough to get in.*

So this priest did not express a strong internal draw or calling, but rather saw that it was not a bad way of life. But it seems as though the change he made to his own story, returning home after a year of high school seminary, was externally rerouted. As is illustrated, a priest in his parish suggested college seminary, and the respondent did well enough on the exam to get in, so he went. He entered the formal narrative of the "seminarian," structured, controlled, and demarcated by benchmarks towards ordination, another chapter in his life story.

This next priest, who was not accused of sexual abuse, also had external encouragement guiding him in the direction of the priest narrative, as he recounts what led him to enter the seminary:

> *I suppose the immediate decision was an invitation from my 8th grade teacher and my sister, and they encouraged one of my pastors, after obviously they had watched me and I had been very involved in church and attending training in altar*

> *service and all that kind of thing, ya know? So, they asked a question. "Did you ever think about it?" And I had thought about it, so.*
>
> [The pastor] . . . *wrote a letter of recommendation and always encouraged me and ya know as far as working around the sacristy or he's complimented me on what I knew and how I did things. Ya know that kind of thing.*

Now these were certainly not the only ways of coming to the priesthood. There was mention of a "faith" in God and the Liturgy, in addition to the cleric believing that he had the skills to do what it is he thought priests did – particularly in the "celebration" of the Mass and other liturgical and sacramental rituals. One accused cleric mentioned that the idea of the priesthood had occurred to him in about the 8th grade, and that he sought out a priest with whom to discuss this idea.

> *"In fact,"* he says, *"it's* [how he decided to enter the priesthood] *always I have trouble finding an answer for."*

So whatever the connection to or relationship with God, the story of the follow-through was certainly shaped by positive models and direct support or even prompting from individuals for whom the priest felt some deference or respect at the time of contemplating Holy Orders.

Negotiating a master narrative.

The multiple paths which one might travel on the road of life, as is evident for these men who became priests, are not mapped out solely by the individual himself. It is like the story of Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz,* who was once a girl on a farm in Kansas, but gets swept up in a tornado, is deemed a "good witch" by the Munchkin's, and in turn exposes

the "Wonderful Wizard of Oz" as a fraud, or just a man, whichever you prefer. Then, as she clicks the heels of her ruby slipper clad feet, she awakes from her concussive slumber to find that she is home, as the girl she always said she was, even as she skipped down the yellow brick road with the Lion, the Scarecrow and the Tin Man on the way to Oz. She returns to the story of Dorothy, the farm girl from Kansas, somewhere on the other side of the rainbow. Along the way the farm girl or "good witch" stories were reaffirmed or disconfirmed by a collection of characters on either side of the rainbow. So who was she? If I had written the story, Dorothy would have become the *Queen of Oz,* but that is not my story to tell.

And what of the man – turned – priest? A priest is symbolically represented and his status is socially reiterated, but he is still a man beneath the vestments. Do the two identities, both assumed and imposed, exist in parallel universes, as did Dorothy's identities? How do we make sense of the of the contradictions between the Catholic expectation of human being (including priests) as fallible men who have been assigned higher moral bright lines as priests, and the expectation that priests will also aid in the redemption process of lay people?

This is clear example of the notion that priests are perceived to have what can only be understood as disconnected, schizophrenic, or multiple identities that are not necessarily incongruent with one another, but certainly are not reinforced in tandem with one another. This is, in part, because their master status is differentiated from narratives of the laity, where those not ordained situate their own narratives and differentiate these from that of the priest. It is clear that one way a man becomes able to tell the tale of the priesthood, as

mentioned earlier, is through the formal mechanisms beginning in seminary and culminating in ordination to priesthood. One accused priest said,

> *"Ordination is a public and powerful ceremony . . . There are steps to becoming a priest. It's not like osmosis . . ."*

As is illustrated in Figure 1, one cannot just identify with the story, but must become and live in the role. The *I & B* interview asks the cleric about his transition as a man from lay Catholic to priest. He is also asked how he "lived in" his role. These questions explore the mechanisms by which a priest manages the layered, situated, and interactive stories of himself as a man in the world, and who he is as a priest.

Figure 1. Priest Disrobing

One accused cleric indicates that the process of transition is not as sharply divided as I intimated, and expresses that it does not happen without the contribution of others in the web of interactions. This is illustrative of Goffman's ideas of the *looking glass self*, a model that requires not only our own presentation of self, but our experience of the reflection back by others of that presentation. The accused cleric says,

> *. . . since I entered the seminary at a young age, it was going from seminarian, more than going from lay person. Ok? I think that's a little different. I do remember . . . during the summer of my diaconate year of preaching . . . being struck by the fact that people really took what I had to say seriously and that was, there was a striking moment when saying "Ok, I'm up here talking. People down there are listening. This is really an important interaction. And I think that was probably the moment when I began to say "Ok, this, this, this really does affect people's lives."*

But another priest, this one not accused of sexual abuse, talks about having a relatively clear understanding (mentioning, of course, a learning curve) of the story that is to come in his life, not only the structure, but also the meaning. He says,

> *I didn't know all the ramifications it would have meant but I think I knew what it meant to be a priest. I don't think I just woke up I think that uh if you want to say that the seminary system or course prepared you so that when the time came you were ready to say 'yes' when the Bishop asked you to promise obedience to me and you know will you be ordained or whatever it was that they asked us and so forth and by that time I felt yes that was the thing for me because I mean everything seemed to be pointing towards that, I mean that was not too much the negative side*

> *as far as that goes, I mean I had, everybody has some qualms or doubts but as time went on I think more and more that the system kind of you know was leading you to the day of ordination and that's where you know, where we went.*

Coming to an understanding of the arc of one's "priest" tale is not simple, but rather subtle, not unlike apprenticing for many other manual trades or professional employment. What is unique to the priesthood is that its status is accompanied by different social and moral expectations, ones with which the cleric must interact. This means that his story is, in part, determined by a script set forth by expectations of who he is as a minister of the sacraments, as one who counsels in times of need, as well as one who administers to the tangible needs of the parish buildings, schools, etc. But the ordained men also understand that some things are *not* expected of them as priests, which creates a conflict for the man within the role. One example of this is in the satirical cartoon (Figure 2) in which the life of a priest is depicted as one of contradiction between what is considered the "natural" needs of a man, and a job he assumes which calls for a duty to God, religion and faith and to himself. The image points to an unpolished, cigarette-smoking, and probably hung over heterosexually active man. In an earlier chapter an accused priest was quoted as saying that he had not even had his first drink until he was 36 years old, much less, smoked cigarettes, or told dirty jokes.

Figure 2. Sunday Mornings

One interviewed cleric who was accused and admits to being sexually abusive said

> *. . . as priests, families come to trust us- you know because the last thing they would expect is that a person of the cloth would violate their kids. That's the last thing that they would expect of someone who they would come to trust as much as a clergy person . . .*

The scripts of role performance are inclusive of "do's" and "don'ts." But it is not only the external expectations with which the priest must interact in order to make sense of his life as a man of the cloth. There are also accounts from the interviews of external realties - changes in parish assignments that are requested and denied, or assignments that

are essentially imposed, and to which the priest must ultimately succumb in order to fulfill his obligations as a priest, given his promise of obedience. This is not to say that these changes were miserable or not accepted with grace. Rather, it is simply to point to the fact that the vocation to the priesthood is externally shaped by institutional and cultural forces. The priest must adapt to these dynamics his understanding of his own cleric identity, and the identity of the man beneath the vestments.

As with Maruna's narrative explorations of criminal careers (2001), in a manner of speaking, offenders use neutralizations or disavowal techniques that allow them to take on a new story. Any incongruence between the self and the role experienced by priests may be exemplary of a similar tension between a master status, whether chosen or imposed, and a self-identity, one that is negotiated through a variety of social processes connected to expectations of others. This can be part of the role-distance process, a mechanism that allows a priest to deny the failure of the human self by living in the master narrative. All other subplots in the story may be left un- or under- developed. This gets played out as the cleric distances himself for his personal story, as Joseph, or Peter, or . . . "any man" by engaging his priestly role. Essentially it is a process of "self-othering" or "self-labeling," differentiating the "bad" self or "sinner" from the "true self" or the master status. A priest may do this by engaging the master narratives and becoming the super priest, or priest-aholic, forgoing any real focus on his life in pursuit of "being" the priest. He allows the master narrative to "take over" in order not to thoroughly collapse, not only as a failed priest, but a failed human, not worthy of God's love. In the following narrative excerpt, a priest talks about not only the expectations that he perceives to be imposed upon him by his parishioners, and that are, therefore, true for him, but also tells of the ways in which he

manages his insecurity about the social expectations of others by relying on the predictable tales of the priest.

> *In uncomfortable social situations, "funerals and weddings" outside of the liturgical aspects of them. . . For example, weddings, I never liked going to the reception because I knew that I would be with people, number one who didn't even come to the service, and I just feel very awkward interacting with people I don't know . . . and funeral situations sometimes . . .*

This priest feels safe and comfortable in the liturgical aspect of his role, rather than as a social individual. This "shyness" or social discomfort is not necessarily problematic, and is experienced by many others in the world. These moments of *using* the role that could intensify the self-role distance which, in turn, may contribute to acting out in egregious ways(like sexual abuse) for those already held to extremely high moral expectations as priests, without consideration of the integration of their human development. These men get lost in the ontological battle between the "real" me and the "other" me, thereby losing the notion of the self to the priest master status. In seminary training over the last quarter century, there was a period of emphasis on the development of the overall man in the role – an incorporated approach to the vocation – the "integration model" of human, spiritual, pastoral and intellectual formation.

As mentioned previously, the changes that have permeated the Church since Vatican II have introduced challenges to addressing the formation of the seminarian. Living as a priest since the mid-1960s has included making sense of shifting structures of parish life and priestly ministry. This priest clearly evinces a connection to and reliance upon what is called the "identification" model of formation. This model is indicative of having

externalized role expectations, requiring prompting from others rather than an internal locus of control, and often there is a distance from God. The lattermost aspect of the identification model will be explored in greater detail later, in terms of understanding how priests who did admit to abusing minors, have used a culturally specific "relationship with God" as an element in understanding or making sense of their behavior. The cleric from the previous quotation goes on to explain how he uses his role to minimize his own discomfort and enhance his own integration into the community. He describes his role as follows:

> *. . . sometimes I was expected to show up at the reception – and the reason I dreaded it, hey I am going to be mingling with people I don't know in an environment I am not necessarily comfortable in – so my out was ' I really can't go because I have another liturgy or I've got confession.'*

This is not the "work-aholic" narrative, wherein the cleric feels he *must actually* work. Rather, it draws upon that of the "super priest," who appears to have to do all things priestly, all of the time, never to have a free moment from doing the work he has been called or ordained to do. The technique of engaging this narrative is based solely on his *perceptions* of the more informal character he thinks he is required to play if he stays for the non-religious or social scene of many sacramental celebrations, like baptisms, Holy Communion, confirmation, weddings and sometimes funerals.

The "work-aholic super priest", or "priest-aholic", is clearly evident in several of the interviews of both accused and non-accused priests, although it did not necessarily span the entirety of their priesthood, and often ended when health problems prevailed, or when allegations were brought. In this study, of course, the allegations specifically pertain to the sexual abuse of minors, but other "priest-aholics" could also have been accused of

sexual harassment or impropriety with adults, gambling or financial misappropriation, or alcoholic tendencies.

In general, the overworking was a means of gaining positive affirmation in the role *or* to create isolationism. This accused cleric says,

> *I prided myself on being what I would now call a workaholic priest, I was putting in 12-hour days and working hard and one of my bishops once remarked "you know you're the hardest working priest I've got." And I took that as a compliment I didn't see that as "gee, you know maybe I should be concerned about this." So the priesthood was my life – totally my life. There was not a time in those 23 years where I saw myself as other than being a priest, nor did I, well I didn't consciously see myself moving in and out of that role.*

This narrative is juxtaposed to that of the previous accused cleric who led his parishioners to believe he was always working, thus engaging the "priest-aholic" narrative as a means of isolating himself from all others – peers in the clergy, lay friends, parishioners served by the priest.

Both of these clerics understood themselves through a culturally specific master narrative. This allowed each to become isolated in the priest role, though somewhat differently, because this internal or self-narrative seems not to exist, as is the case of the actual or behavioral workaholic priest, or not expressed, as with the latter example, the theoretical workaholic.

The following cleric understood early in his process that he needed to control the story into which he was being incorporated in the Church, in spite of the fact that a piece of his personal narrative goes against the expectations of Catholic doctrine (being gay or

engaging in same-sex sexual behavior). This part of his story could have precluded him from his desired priestly identity if his attraction to men was made known.

> *In seminary you usually chose, or one was chosen for you, a spiritual director that you went to. Actually, some had good ones, but I never really used them to let out my real, true intense feelings . . .often I would get so far in describing a situation I was feeling or what was going on in my life, because I was afraid . . .so I never told any priest that [his passive attraction to men] for the last four years (of seminary). . .I think out of fear . . .of being kicked out.*

In the eyes of this accused priest, in order to be included in the meta-narrative of the priesthood, he was required to undermine a sub-narrative, his sexual identity narrative. This theme repeats itself later as accused priests talk about how they "became" accused.

There is also the issue of "controlling" the context of interactions, particularly when it comes to community exchanges outside the specific sacramental or liturgical context. One priest established a way to be part of the lives of the parishioners, but not by awkwardly inserting himself into their lives. He still relied on his master status as his primary identity for social interaction.

> *. . .one of the things that I instituted . . . was setting aside two evenings a week that would get me the opportunity to enter and visit people in their homes, and the way I did that, again because I was introverted, I said this is what is going to work for me and hopefully for the folks, I would put up a sign up list on the bulletin board at church . . . and say "ok folks, I am asking you to invite me into your homes." And you know they would laugh and then I would explain the process, and it went really well because then I knew that I would be coming, they would be expecting me and they would welcome me. . .here's the commitment I am making . . .it gave*

> *me an opportunity to interact in a situation that was much more relaxed outside of liturgy. . . I really enjoyed doing that.*

He felt comfortable having a degree of control over the staging of the interaction, the time, the purpose, and the actors – all relatively known quantities. He did try to inject himself into the community, but because it was so controlled, it was neither fully integrative in his own self-formation, nor with the community at large. This issue of control re-emerges when the accused priests are called to account for allegations of abuse, allegations that sidetrack the cleric from the trajectory of the life course he set out to live, as defined by his master status.

But others may not have been so affected by the need to protect the self by sublimating part of their identity, or controlling the opportunities of others to come to know them as priests. In talking about his understanding of the role of the priest, another cleric, this one non-accused, informed me that

> *. . . working with people, uh, in fact actually that's, I would say that I think that, that's one of the things that I am very pleased with my priesthood, is that I do relate to people well and I get along with people very well as you can see all around, those were all either weddings or baptisms, or families and so forth, they keep sending me pictures of them and so forth. Uh yeah uh that's been one of the things, it wasn't just uh… of course you know the regime that we came up through was one in which you know the altar rail separated us from the people and thank God the second Vatican Council came along and destroyed, not destroyed, but removed all those things and so forth and that was the best thing that ever happened. And so I think that yeah there was more to it than just you know being on a pedestal and so forth because I*

saw these as human beings, people that could relate to us and you could talk to them and they could talk to me and so forth.

His acceptance of changes in the Church and the role of the priest appear to be welcomed and well integrated. He seemed willing to "live in" the role while embracing the man within that could connect to the laity. For him, the priest on the pedestal had been removed from the story, allowing him to connect to people, as he and they are humans introduced through their religious structure.

What is evident in these examples is that the priest narrative, coming to and living within, is not a monolith. Rather, it is differently experienced given a variety of situational factors that shaped priests' connection to the "call" or the desire for ministry as a vocation, as well as whether they were motivated internally or externally. Questions arise as to the overall well being of priests who do not attend to both the external expectations and their own internal selves. Identifying only with one's master status is problematic in that it is not an integrated approach to understanding one's multiplicity of roles and selves needing consistent development. Case in point, one cleric who was arrested for his sexual behavior, talked about how consumed he was in his role. He had been treated previously in a residential sex offender program, and was given a clean bill of (mental) health by therapists (nearly 30 years prior to our interview), and his arrest occurred years later. In talking about how he saw other priests make sense of their own "unpriestlike behavior" (not sexual abuse of minors), he says,

. . . if they have a pattern already of being honest with themselves, which I was not. I saw some priests seemed to be able to do this, and some not facing.

He then goes on to talk about his own identity management, recognizing his technique only after his abusive behavior was made very public, through his arrest.

> *I think I had no identity whatsoever, none, apart from what I was doing, not who I was being, what I was doing as a priest. I could not say that then, but I know now that it is true. . .If I had not been sent to the state hospital, I would either be dead, through suicide for sure, or , uh, I don't know what would have happened to my life. I often remind myself 'thank God for the grace of a second chance.'*

Diagnostic claims cannot be made about any of the interviewees, given that I am not a trained and certified clinical practitioner, nor were these defined therapeutic sessions. But, if this excerpt were read with the narrative framework of psychological pathology, in which the goal is to name the problem inherent in this man accused of sexual abuse, then the revelation of a self-image replaced by a vocation-based master status could be identified as some sort of personality disorder. What this means is that many behaviors can fit rather neatly into the broadly defined psychologically aberrant stories. These are often characterized, in part, by "acting out" in ways that are not appropriate for anyone, whether or not he is a priest. Yet this story was not typical of the men interviewed for the *I &B* study, nor was this pattern found in the written clinical narrative explored in greater detail in the next chapter. What is pertinent is that multiple stories can be and are told, and the purpose of the presentation matters, along with the ideological framework applied to the interpretation of facts presented.

How the story is structured is limited in terms of understanding meaning and perceptions used to make sense of the world for a priest who is also man. This is explored in the next chapter. Until then, exploring the narrative structure of the "crisis of sexual

abuse in the Church" as experienced by Catholic priests is required. The climax of the tale of *becoming* an abuser is considered next. The narrative format and structure is not in the *doing of sexually abusive acts*, but in the way the storyline is introduced into the biographical plot of the men who have been removed from ministry in the Catholic Church as a result of an *allegation* of the sexual abuse of a minor. As a point of reference, most of the allegations were substantiated to the degree that a review board decided on the priests' removal from ministry. These are not necessarily the same as traditional standards of criminal evidence. This story of sexual abuse is superimposed whether the priest wants it or not, whether he confirms the content of the claims or not, or whether he has been an archetypal priest or not.

Pinnacle of the Plot.

Nearly all of the accused clerics informed me of how the accusation came to light, whether to the Church leaders, the police, the media, or even to them directly. Essentially, this is the telling of the climax of the abuser narrative. At the time that the abuse was disclosed or reported to the external world by the accuser, the clerics could no longer control their own biography. The accused clerics readily addressed the interview question when I asked them to describe the situation that brought them to inactive ministry. Therefore, although the cleric may not have participated in the public casting of his role as an abuser, he has had to confront it and include it within his own external narrative, regardless of whether or not he concurs with it. And in so doing, he did not necessarily need to internalize or incorporate the narrative of the victim into his own. This is sometimes called a lack of victim empathy.

Being identified as an abuser is a new master status imposed not once, but multiple times in a way that interrupts the flow and structure of the story in which the cleric has lived, often for years, before the narrative threads begin to unravel. Again, all of this occurs whether or not the priest confirms or denies the allegation(s). The process of the story-telling at this stage is enveloped by the need for stigma management. Stories can be told selectively, depending on whether or not the audience is amenable to hearing the *priest's* account, or the account of an *abuser*. The context and audience shapes the content. When deconstructing the form and content of narratives, it is important to consider when the story is told, for what purpose, to whom, in what format, and at what moment the narrator is in relation to the events he is telling. A story told years after an event might be understood and relayed quite differently than an event experienced just hours before. One accused priest, denying the allegations made against him, wrote in the *I & B* survey what he called an "unsolicited comment" (even though the survey provided space for additional comments), by saying

> *. . . only after false and vicious accusation was made against me by an immoral first pastor-and seemingly unjustly believed by the superiors whom I naively appealed, only to be excoriated . . . this experience broke me interiorly emotionally-and caused me to regard myself with suspicion . . . believing, in spite of myself, that they must be "correct" and "*agere sequitur esse[56]*!"*

[56] This is an expression in the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas, which means "action follows being" or acting according to our nature. So to act according to human nature is instinctual, and this is not inherently bad.

This example is not only illustrative of narrative interruption or the climax for accused priests, but also, this cleric is taking an anonymous moment to reshape the story of himself as an accused person by engaging in blame shifting or condemning his superior.

The various techniques of neutralization are employed throughout the stories and will be discussed in great detail in the next chapter. What is important here is that this technique is employed in the process of telling the cleric's story in a safe place, possibly in a way he has not been able to do so in any other context. An interview might actually have kept this particular cleric in his guarded place, holding back, whereas the buffer of a written response provides access for both the respondent and the researcher to what some might consider an irrelevant subplot, or even an untruth. Untruths need not be told. In a legal situation, to say anything may be incriminating. Given the delicacy of the issue altogether, it would not be in the cleric's favor to appear so angry or venomous. This would not be of service in the court of public opinion, which is yet another context in which his story is told – and not solely by him. Another accused priest, who admits to his abusive behavior, wrote an extensive letter, a portion of which is as follows:

> *. . . A few disconnected thoughts: It has been my experience that some immature priests have been more imprudent than impure in their relations with young people, and have subsequently been accused of abuse, especially since all the publicity. Secondly, I firmly believe my fellow priests when they tell me they have been falsely accused. Priests deal with so many troubled youth, and we just have no recourse once accused. We are guilty!*

This account, as in the previous example, raises the question about the veracity of claims, not to argue for or against any one allegation, but to illustrate that it is not really the *actual*

story that matters. The truth would seem to belong to the narrator. What matters, rather, is whether or not the griot who speaks the story of abuse is the one with the socially validated voice, the one whose truthfulness we do not contest in such grave matters, the voice of the young people. For, even when it is the adult victim that comes forward, the story is that of the child who was sexually abused.

If the events are "true," then the cleric must contend with the juxtaposition of the internal narration (how he understands his *self)* to the public presentation (his priestly status). The question becomes, is he confronting the story of the failed priest or the expected sinner? If he denies the allegations, or claims that the allegation is false, then the accused cleric must interact only with the social stigma in order to make sense of who he is in the world. He must don the figurative scarlet letter, interacting with the claim that he is a pedophile. This is not to say that the scores of allegations that have come forward over the years are false. Rather, this is an exploration of the narrative process of claims-making as is encountered by the very priests accused of sexual abuse.

Another accused cleric tells of his very public "outing" as an abuser, with no interaction between him and his superiors or the victim. The discreditable character flaw is revealed, which is the key to "outing." The story had taken a life outside of him, and, in this interview, as he denied the allegations he had the opportunity to talk about how he lost control of his narrative:

> *In . . . 2005, uh . . . the person who alleged all of this molestation, uh, was interviewed in the local paper, which I chose not to respond to in the paper. Um . . . and, uh . . . another young person from that same time period, uh, read that and wrote, uh, to, uh, well, I know he sent a copy to me and I'm not sure who else he sent*

> *it to, whether it was the parish or the diocese, that, that the description of me in the newspaper did not match at all any of his memories of me and I had been at their home and, uh, and he had been associated with young people of this parish and he simply, this did not make any sense to him at all.*
>
> [Later that year] *the parish . . . published a statement which was kind of a resume of stuff* [regarding the allegation and response of the Church], *and I published a letter at the same time . . . My concern is that simply by mere repetition, these things become more credible. . . .. That's the only public statement I have made.*

There is a literal battle of words occurring around the telling of the accusation, by the accuser, the parish, and even a young person who supports the story of the unstained cleric. Writing it down seems to make it more real, and possibly more "true" for each of the characters in the story. This interview segment illustrates the ways in which the many narrative selves are at once integrated and differentiated, depending on the content as well as the ability of the subject to tell his own story, rather than to contend with the ways in which others usurp that ability, whether for purposes of praising or denigrating the subject. In his oral telling, the priest indicates that no one affiliated with the Church, until our interview, *ever asked him to tell his own account.* The cleric, and his legal "team", participated in a concrete narrative development. The cleric argues that the story-telling has no guidelines and is not transparent, which makes it difficult for him to confront the narrative– particularly when he is trying to deny, or minimize the seriousness of the claims, as illustrated here:

. . . at that time, [a family member of his] *was hospitalized and died. We were actually word-smithing that statement at the hospital in between doctors. . . I was never given any opportunity to contest the allegations. . .*

The Review process of the allegations . . . It's done . . . all in secret . . . no standard guidelines . . . No notes . . . [and it is] *supposed to be confidential . . .*

Eventually, . . . , I get the copies of the interviews which I'm supposed to have a right to read and respond to. . .the day before the . . . holiday the Vicar for Clergy and the person from the board come out to convey to me that the review board, "found it was credible to suspect misconduct."

. . . I get the official document, which says, that . . . I'm dispensed from the obligation to wear clerics, which was kind of funny, (Laughs) *and . . . after a while I looked at it and said, very interesting, it says dispensed from the obligation, it does not prohibit me from wearing them. And canonically, you know, that makes a big difference.*

. . . in the course of all of this I wrote a letter to the bishop . . . I said, I feel like I have been without a voice. I've had no communication. . . Uh, I, uh . . . I said in the process . . . I submitted documents. I was never - - none of those documents were ever acknowledged as having been received and distributed to the board.

. . . nobody ever asked a single question about what role I played. Um . . . the, uh . . . I mean, the assumption in the interviews with family once the civil case was settled, the assumption in all the interviews for the review board was that everything in the depositions was true and there was no effort to look at anything.

> *One thing was when I submitted my letter, my statement, to the review board, was I asked about a dozen people to write letters either because they were part of that extended group and therefore saw the interactions, saw me interacting with this family, or, uh, they saw me interacting with their own family or they were young people that I interacted with. And one, one young lady, not so young anymore, but uh, um . . . but one thing she said was that "in the course of the 30 years I've known Father [REDACTED], that his behavior has never changed. He has been consistent in his interactions and they were always appropriate . . ."*

In the context of the interview this cleric provided a great many details, from the life history of the family situation of the accuser's family. The family was presented as broken and in need of mending, a task the cleric took on as minster in the parish. In the process of assuming his voice in the interview, he employed those techniques called neutralizations as a way to distance himself from the man the accuser claimed him to be.

Another accused cleric, admitted to being inappropriately attracted to young men and admitted that he did sexually abuse a young man who was in late adolescence and residing in the cleric's first parish field experience prior to ordination. When the cleric brought the issue of this inappropriate attraction to the awareness of his pastor, it was agreed that he would proceed immediately to a residential therapeutic center. In this interview he speaks, not unlike the previous cleric who denied his allegation, about having, and not having, control over his narrative. Again, this cleric provided the context or setting that he deemed appropriate for my understanding, and his own, of the details he was about to reveal to me.

> . . . *that realization* [of crossing the line of sexual abuse] *scared me, to the point that I realized "I can't stay here anymore. It is obviously not a healthy place for me, so I need to get out. So at that point . . . and I called him [the Bishop] up and I said I need to see the Bishop . . . so I saw the Bishop and I said "Bishop, here's what I experienced last week . . . ," I told him just what I told you [the interviewer]. Then I asked him for a few things: 1) To immediately terminate my assignment, 2) to send me out somewhere for treatment, because I think I've got some issues that I need to look at. So he agreed to both, and within 10 days time I was on my way to a residential therapeutic treatment center for priests and I went through a week long evaluation period, and at the end we had a call with the Bishop sand we all agreed that "yes [there is a problem] . . . And we would recommend that this man stay here and go through our program." So I readily agreed, and the Bishop agreed, and we all agreed. Then the indication at the time is that I would probably be there 5-6 months.*
>
> *So they set up a "final status review" . . . and the plan was that we would outline a timeline for my transition back into ministry. Just days before, my primary therapist said "this is what we anticipate is going to happen. At your request, we will allow you to go back to your diocese for a presbyteral conference . . . , and then have you come back here, tie up loose ends, process everything here, and then prepare to leave here and return to ministry . . . There should be no surprises.*

Thus far the cleric has "realized" a potential narrative in his attractions to adolescent boys, and turns over the story to others to address what he clearly sees as problematic. But, after

relinquishing a part of his story, he is surprised and seemingly devastated by the character in his own story that he is asked to assume, as he clearly did not perceive this as a role in which he would be cast if he came forward or "outed" himself. He works towards a collaborative story until he does not like the unfolding of the plot, and then he was not permitted to take back the pen in order to amend the script now being written *for* him. Now he is confronted with the actuality of the suppressed reality, or the man from whom he was trying to distance himself – he must now explore the story of the man with the impulses, rather than the priest seeking to maintain his master status by taking care of that which may interrupt it (and which already has).

> *. . . So I go to the status review . . . and that's when the roof came crashing down on me. That's when the director of the program said "we no longer believe that it was just the situation that you were in, that led you to act the way you did toward the kids . . . He said "we now believe that there is something innate within you that long pre-dates you going out to that assignment, that is probably more than likely the cause of what you experienced there, so we're recommending that you plan to stay here at least 6 more months."*
>
> *That is not at all what I was anticipating, nor my Bishop . . .I didn't know how to take it. And as this person was talking there was a voice deep down inside that was saying "you know he is right" and I was saying "shut up, I don't want to hear that, because I want to get the heck out of here and get back to ministry. So, by the end of that day, the Bishop, myself, and the institution, we all agreed that we would follow through with the original game plan, as far as attending the presbyteral meeting and coming back to the facility , and also to determine if I was willing to stay in the next 6 months.*

Interestingly, this cleric also talks about the struggle of managing his story instead of revealing his problematic behavior. He knew his story would change, and he wanted to stay on the trajectory of the priesthood. As he talks about abuse that he recalls occurring at or just prior to ordination (1960s), he says:

> *I could choose to keep it to myself, you know and I'm going through all this, uhm, and . . . I could just get through this program and just get back to ministry, or I can just do the right thing and expose this to the appropriate authorities – to my Bishop and to the people here at the therapeutic arena and let the chips fall where they may. I knew if I were to do the right thing – I knew that that would more likely cost me my ministry – based on the Dallas Charter. . . if I were to deliberately deceive everyone around me . . . and deceive God, and I said to myself "do I want to do that?" Am I prepared to give up a relationship with God just to keep my ministry, and I realized I can't do it, I can' t. That cost would be more that I could bear. So I said, I gotta do the right thing. And the right thing is to disclose this . . .*

This priest's control or withholding of a private or internal narrative, he says, is because he *knows* his life story will change if he "outs" himself, not as a pedophile, but as having acted in a sexually and socially inappropriate manner as a priest. Telling this story in the interview is another technique of engaging the process of deviance disavowal, as he does not want to contend with the public perception of that part of his identity, but he explains why he kept it hidden or disconnected from the presentation of his master status. Interestingly, he never acknowledges that the victim would have been aware that the events occurred, or whether or not the victim knew it was wrong at the time of the abuse. What is clear is that the cleric knew his behavior was wrong, but that he could live out the priestly

narrative in spite of his human narrative of sin. Yet his potential for further engagement of the sinner narrative was too much for him to bear, specifically because the wantonness of the layering of sin would cost him something important to his overall story, and that is his relationship with God.

These three examples are woven composites of the 16 participating interviewees who were accused of sexual abuse at some time in their active ministry. In order to participate in the interview, accused priests were not asked for proof of innocence or guilt, nor actual evidence of the story, other than what the cleric recalled and experienced. One adamant denier actually did bring documents and a written history for me to follow as evidence of the poor character of the accuser, as well as out of order facts that, to the cleric, clearly indicated that the allegations could not be true. It is not particularly the truth of the matter that is important, but rather the way the narrative is processed and repeated in the various contexts of the telling. The stigma management resolutions that develop when a priest's master narrative is interrupted and publicly wrested from him are addressed in the next section.

Resolution.

Once a priest is accused and either found guilty of a crime, which happened least often overall, or once the claims are validated by Church authorities and the Dallas Charter policy is implemented, the cleric must contend with this new biographical narrative. He is a priest in limbo, not yet laicized, as happens to few priests, but not permitted to publicly participate in active ministerial duties. There are the insistent claims of the denier, the one who engages very specific neutralization techniques in order to interact with the imposed narrative as abuser, as well as the myriad identity management techniques enlisted by those

who admit to their sexually abusive actions. Of particular note is the retrospective, post-treatment "recovery" or "sinner turned saint" story.

As previously mentioned, the entire narrative process in this research setting is retrospective. Although some clerics speak of the narrative choices they were making *at the time about which they are speaking*, all that we have is the story at hand. The more prevalent narrative is that of the "sick" individual who has done right and sought out or participated in mandated treatment. He uses therapeutic language and expresses seemingly appropriate remorse and *some* victim empathy while constructing an image of himself as reformed – no longer that man, a man he did not understand and can now see as deficient. If he "only knew then" . . .

This narrative came through in both written and oral form in the *I & B* surveys and interviews. The following excerpt from a letter written by an accused cleric and admitted abuser presents the trajectory of recovery. It also reads as a defense of a new idealized identity akin to the "sinner turned saint" model as the process of disavowal is engaged. He first stumps for *Sexaholics Anonymous* (SA), educates the research team as to the principles of this 12 step group[57], and suggests that SA has seemingly uncovered a back-story for those who engage in sexual deviance (also considered an addiction, spiritual malady, or psychological compulsion).

[57]Modeled on the 12 steps and 12 traditions of *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

> *They* [SA] *have discovered the impact of being abused as a child and its resulting abuse of others. 60% of SA members were themselves abused as children. They publish excellent literature.* [58]
>
> *. . . From my own experience and the experience of dozens of others with whom I have met in counseling and SA, the vast majority of abusers of minors were abused as minors themselves, We experienced an exciting pleasure that we were not ready or capable of handling. The attendant guilt, shame and fear were overwhelming to a child of six, (as in my case by an older neighbor boy). . .*

The explanations he offers involve typical predictors of sexual offending, which were not found in the *I & B* sample. He tells a collective story into which he is inserted as a typical case, offering many "reasons" (to be explored in the next section). He goes on to "out" himself as a "sexaholic" in recovery, consistently living the narrative of the psychologically ill man on the mend

> *. . . I was in treatment in the 80's and have been active in SA ever since, founding new groups throughout our area. I have sponsored Catholic and Protestant clergy and numerous lay people. I have adjusted very well to being an inactive priest, as I am supported by so many good lay people and priests who have always loved me and cared about me. I have the respect and friendship of my bishop. I have acquired a peaceful, even joyful sexual sobriety. . . .*

Even he recognizes the aspect of narrative format, pointing to consistencies in the stories he has heard, and with which he identifies, to reinforce a "real" identity script that allows for character re-development. He goes on to reiterate the archetypal sexaholic, relying on a

[58] SA does not claim to be a research institute.

psychologically rooted explanation: compulsion. He also points out his own distorted thought process, the solution he saw to escaping his "bad self" writing,

> *People in SA amazingly tell almost the same story. We became fascinated with sexual images, were overwhelmed by the powerful sexual urges we felt... In my case, I wanted to do something to overcome my sexual problems and to make myself whole and healthy again. I wanted to feel clean and good about myself. I thought the priesthood would do that!*

Another accused cleric discusses in an interview the process of participating in the psychological narrative, as he expected it to flow, although it did not. As an aside, his expectations are not without cause, given that in the Catholic faith, the sinner-to-saint narrative is inevitable for humans, or, maybe not the actual achievement of sainthood, but aspiration toward it as one battles with foreseeable temptation, yielding to that temptation, and making amends for sinning. Given the popular discourse of a "self-help" "psychobabble" culture, situating the subcultural beliefs about sin and redemption within the dominant expectations about seeking help makes sense as a mechanism of identity management, rather than a tool of personal growth. But this priest's intent to appear changed was not reflected back to him.

> *. . .after I got [to the treatment center], the therapist that I was working with who deals specifically with sexually presenting issues, he left the place, and it took them 6 weeks to get a replacement for him, so in that intervening time, my main therapist and I, and the group therapy, we focused on other non-related issues that I still needed to face about myself, and we didn't do that much work on the presenting issue, I thought.*

> *. . . they got [a new] therapist, and he was meeting only with us as a group – not individually, only in group once a week. So by the end of [the year] the staff had come to conclusion . . . I go to the status review . . . and that's when the roof came crashing down on me. That's when the director of the program said "we no longer believe that it was just the situation that you were in . . ." He said "we now believe that there is something innate within you that long pre-dates you going out to that assignment, that is probably more than likely the cause of what you experienced there, so we're recommending that you plan to stay here at least 6 more months." That is not at all what I was anticipating, nor my Bishop . . .I didn't know how to take it. The very next day – a terrible repressed memory "catapulted" itself to my consciousness . . .*

His description includes language not used in common vernacular to talk about life events, unless the story is being told about a specific cultural context – that of self-help, recovery or psychological treatment. Issues are "presenting" and memories are "repressed." It seems as though he perceives that he willingly assumes the task of "becoming well", that all will go as planned. He has expectations. What he planned was to resume his interrupted narrative – as if it were possible.

Another accused priest again distances his offending self from whom he believes he really is, outside of the psychologically rooted problems with which he must come to terms. He identifies himself and his behavior with a label that is generated by the APA, applied to him by a therapist, and internalized as a means of distancing his bad self from the person he is today.

> *It took me [6 months] to come to terms with what I really needed to come to terms with, and that is, the pedophile impulse that I felt during that last year in ministry,*

> *I was eventually able to accept the fact that that pedophile impulse had been there continuously for 25 years . . .I have to acknowledge, and therapy helped me to face myself honestly enough to realize that as I look back at least to the point of when I was first ordained or maybe even a little before that , that what I would [now] describe is that that pedophile impulse had been there, but I also had to come to terms with the fact that I've had a very sexually addictive history that goes ALL the way back to grade school . . . but coming to terms with the fact that I have had a sexually charged, sexually addictive history that goes back basically 50 of my 58 years*

Retrospectively recognizing indicators of what was wrong with him creates a chasm between the man he could not have helped being because he had extensive and lifelong "sick" impulses, and the repaired man he is today. Although he is not *recounting* a pedophile's story, he is *identifying with* this story, one that readily includes built-in mechanisms for neutralizing the negative impact of donning the "scarlet letter."

Yet another accused priest, who also admits to his behavior, looks back into his life and presents plot points identifying factors that could have been used as predictors of what was to become his narrative.

> *. . . led me to seminary . . . as I grew older, I think there were attending circumstances. Such as in my home, my father was an alcoholic – violent by words, not necessarily by actions – our home life was moderately messed up, although I did not, uh – this is reflecting afterwards – I didn't identify it as such then. . . . I was an altar boy in grammar school and taught catechism even when I was in 9th and 10th grade . . . always had a gift, back then, of relating well to kids that were younger*

than myself – I mean this was long before any molestation took place . . .I just always felt a closeness to the Lord, like he really understood who I was and how I felt, and other people really did not . . . In retrospect, I can kind of see how I felt special or different, which ties in to the ability later on to deny psycho-sexual maturity and not to face issues, like I am different from the other boys, and maybe I am better.

In relating to younger people [a propensity toward] . . . In teaching – was not only the authority, but the person they could turn to – I was good at listening and counseling and getting across ideas to other people.

Now I can see [after psychiatric hospital and intense therapy for 10 yrs], *that I learned in a way how to manipulate people. I know that sounds terrible, but nobody's motivation is perfect, but I also saw that my gifts had more to do with teaching people, keeping them spellbound. I was a very good speaker. I saw how people respond and I really liked the kind of feedback I got. And if I came across a priest later who did not have those gifts, I think subliminally – I am better than that guy.*

Like other clerics, he also uses the psychological language to recount what brought him to where he is today. He pinpoints moments of clear orientation towards, or comfort with, young people, although it is clear that this is not specifically sexual. Instead, the way he tells it, it is an emotional need fulfillment and an esteem boost as he talks about being a good speaker, listener and counselor.

But this last cleric also discusses a very explicit thought pattern that set him apart from other clerics. He distanced himself from substandard others – other priests. It is as if

he sees that disavowal is a process that has been integrated into his story and that this is part of what was problematic for him. He was a better priest, and this appears to have been the identity he used to help navigate the processes of identity making as a not only a priest, but a good priest, better than others.

Understanding the narrative processes of logic in which individuals present and interpret culturally specific meanings (vocabularies of motive) is a subsequent step. The next section will sift through the messy, uncomfortable reasons, explanations, justifications, fabrications, and/or truths as accused priests offer their perceptions of themselves, their accusers, the allegations and Church leaders. A sociological understanding of the sexual abuse of minors, or moral lapses, by those who are *representatives and servants of the Church*, requires the inclusion of both classic techniques of neutralization used by sex offenders, as well as those subculturally specific to the Catholic model of temptation, sin and redemption.

Chapter 7 – Disavowal, Culture, and Redemption

> *In 1976, Gauthe's*[59] *behavior came to the attention of other clergy . . . [The pastor] confronted Gauthe . . . [who] said, "I am not a homosexual." [The pastor said], "whatever you are, you'll have to go for treatment."*
>
> *Gauthe remained active as a priest . . . while seeing . . . a psychiatrist, for six sessions culminating in February 1977. The diocese paid the bill. [The pastor] never inquired of Gauthe about his treatment. [Later when] asked why by an attorney . . . in deposition, [the pastor] replied,* ***"I am trained as a priest to forget sins."*** [emphasis mine]
>
> The Tragedy of Gilbert Gauthe {Part I} By Jason Berry
>
> *The Times of Acadiana* May 23, 1985

In order to structure some understanding of the stories told by priests after the crisis of 2002, and to augment the application of cultural criminological thinking in other organized or semi-organized subcultural contexts (like schools, sports teams, Boy/Girl Scouts, Catholic Churches) rather than to simply "demonize" or "pathologize" offenders, it is important to consider the following questions:

1. How does an individual interact with the story of sexual deviance, and his place in it, in a given subcultural context?

[59] Gauthe, ordained in 1972, was the first widely publicized case in the clergy sex abuse scandal. The first allegations against him came out in 1983. It has been suggested that he had sexually abused at least 125 children. He was convicted in 1985 of abuse of as many as 39 young children from 1972-1983. He served 10 years for these cases, and he was again accused and charged in 1997. In 2008, Gauthe went to prison for failure to register as a sex offender, and in April of 2010, was released and is currently living in Texas.

2. How do those with deviant relationships to the dominant discourse on sex, particularly those whose deviance is considered egregious, understand and explain themselves?

One way to find answers to these questions, though the answers are not definitive, is to explore the vocabularies of motive rooted in Catholicism.

The self that is understood and explained is not only defined by the moment of the telling, as with interviews or responses to clinical questionnaires, but also by the cultural context in which understanding, perception and behavior actually occurs. These contexts are often studied as subcultures, or collective solutions to common issues, problems, or concerns, outlining the social expectations of those who ascribe to the mores of these subcultures. These subcultures are *not* specifically subversive, reactionary or rebellious against the prevailing norms. Rather, they are viable in and of themselves. This is true of the Roman Catholic traditions, as these have grown and morphed into a hierarchically institutionalized structure over time. Within each tradition, religious or otherwise, there are expectations for what is acceptable, often defined by the social location of the group member, or subcultural practitioner. Both historically and in contemporary time, social movements have arisen around the reshaping of the expectations of or limitations imposed upon various social actors within a culture – serfs, slaves, women, blacks, Hispanics, Muslims, gays, etc.

The birth of Catholicism is surrounded by much strife and opposition from those in power at the time of Christ, and there have been various historical moments of persecution or deviant status for Catholics themselves. But this study is exploring a particular type of deviance for a particular class of individuals within the Catholic culture, the ordained

diocesan priests. Not only are these men expected to live a Catholic existence, they are also given the task of exemplifying it and ministering the rituals that aid in the practice of the faith of lay persons.

Even with knowledge of institutional and social constraints against engaging in sexual deviance, it is important to recognize the tension between what it means to be a fallible human *and* a "spiritually fertile" leader of the Church, particularly for priests vowed to celibate chastity and held to a higher moral standard of behavior. Priests are managing their personal and social identities in situated contexts, and we must understand that the conditions for behavior are not only defined by the moment, but also by the culture within which the social interaction takes place. The culture of the Catholic Church emphasizes that, as humans, we are subject to temptation(sometimes by horrible things); moral lapses; and redemption. But there is also the interpretation and application of these cultural concepts. Although it is NOT enough to say that the knowledge that one can go to confession and receive absolution will lead to wantonly sinful actions, or in the case of priests, the sexual abuse of minors, it is in this cultural framework that individuals make sense of who they are or have become in light of recognition that they have acted against the accepted standards of their religion.

Mills suggests that

> (w)hat is needed is to . . . locate . . . *vocabularies* of motive in historic epochs and specified situations. Motives are of no value apart from the delimited societal situations for which they are the appropriate vocabularies. They must be situated . . . Motives vary in content and character with historical epochs and societal structures. (1940, p. 912)

Motives are supposed to underlie cognitive patterns. This is the language with which people describe their motivations and account for their conduct. In thinking about the role of the cleric, the cultural expectations of an ordained priest, the religious declarations regarding sexual behavior and identity, as well as the expectations of responsibility of the Church hierarchy in times of crisis or need, multiple types of stories can be and are told by accused priests. These are clearly prioritized and weighted within larger cultural norms.

Sexual Offending, Identity, and Culture

In the Catholic tradition, there is a particular ritualized process of what some social scientists have identified as "deviance disavowal." This concept is applied to all types of deviant identities and behaviors. It is one mechanism for dealing with the emotional, psychological, and social harms of a negative label, a process of distancing oneself from the identity or specific behaviors deemed "bad" or against dominant norms; in this case, engaging in sin – by thought, word, or deed. In the Catholic subculture, the Sacrament of Reconciliation allows a wayward individual to come back to the fold, if he repents and makes amends.

Another method of stigma management, of course, is identity integration, whereby individuals readily accept negative labels and "live" these (self-fulfilling prophecy), or wrest the power of the label and diminish its negative value by making the label acceptable when used by "in-group" members.[60] Overall, deviance disavowal is a technique that has also been used by many, including those who have assumed identities and practices of sacred traditions outside the dominant religious paradigm in different historical periods.

[60] This is not unlike the use of the word "nigga" by African Americans, and "fag" or 'dyke" by gay men and lesbians. These examples are simplistic, and this form of stigma management goes beyond linguistic techniques, but a discussion of these is outside the purview of this dissertation.

This process was engaged by those who came to what was once simply Christianity but is now, for the purposes of these analyses, Roman Catholicism.

Social scientists have explored the ways in which sex offenders have engaged in stigma management through the process of deviance disavowal. What has been discovered, as described earlier in this study, is the use of what are called techniques of neutralization which are heavily reliant on cultural vocabularies of motive. The studies of sex offenders have focused on post hoc explanations of behavior (DiNallo, 1989; Langton, Barbaree, Harkins, Arenovich, McNamee, Peacock, Dalton, Hansen, Luong, & Marcon, 2008; Mann & Hollin, 2007; McCaghy, 1968; Scully & Marolla, 1984; Sykes & Matza, 1957). The analysis of *I & B* interviews, which were conducted over a period of approximately one year from the summer of 2008 through early fall of 2009, explores whether or not techniques of neutralization are also used by Catholic priests accused of the sexual abuse of a minor, and in what ways these neutralizations have been shaped by "vocabularies" specific to Catholicism.

Interestingly, the techniques applied by the priests who admitted to sexually abusing minors, are not only indicative of how they manage their current label as "pedophile priests" since being publicly accused, but also how they had internally managed, controlled, or disavowed themselves of the deviant label that *could have or would have been* applied if their actions were made public. These processes also occur in a context in which God is omniscient *and* omnipotent. Even if the external world is unaware of a person's deviance, there is no way to hide from the higher authority. The management of this relationship with God becomes important for priests, as it may be for others of the Catholic faith. And the dialogue with God is, for all intents and purposes an internal one.

This is not the only culturally-based vocabulary of motive utilized by accused priests, but it is one that must be addressed, given the integral role priests have in serving as proclaimers of the Word for God, and as intermediaries between God and practicing lay Catholics.

Using the definitions put forth by Scully and Marolla (1984), the clinical file data as well as data from the *I & B* interviews are used to outline the ways in which priests accused of the sexual abuse of a minor rely on both excuses and justifications. They attempt to rationalize their behavior, or neutralize the effects of guilt and self-blame after having behaved in ways contradictory to the dominant sexual norms of society, and for members of the ordained priesthood. That a person offends makes him unique or not normal, but in his offending, he becomes normal. So it is the "normal" or "normalized" understanding of self that is interesting, on the whole. It is best left to therapists, caseworkers, judges, parole officers and parole boards, as well as Church leaders to determine the fate of individuals against whom allegations of sexual abuse have been made. The goal of this study is to explore narratives in order to uncover priests' patterns of perception and understanding of their own behavior, and to present these to the reader to do with as she or he sees fit. [61]

More often than not in the data collected for this study, when accused priests did admit that an incident or incidents had occurred, they used excuses and justifications to manage the effect of labeling. Consistent with cultural criminological perspectives, Sykes and Matza argued that those who violate social norms (sinners, in the subcultural context) share the values of the larger society, on the whole and, in theory, they are not "totally

[61] At this juncture, the data presentation needs a point of clarification. As with many narrative analyses, examples of concepts are often presented on a case-by-case, participant-by-participant basis. In an effort to maintain the utmost degree of anonymity promised to each participating priest, this analysis is organized by concept, rather than by case.

immune from the demands for conformity made by the dominant social order" (1957, p. 665). Yet today priests are confronted with the mainstream societal images and expectations of wanton sexual behavior as well as the glorification of youthfulness (although not necessarily sexual interaction with minors, especially those who are pre-pubescent).

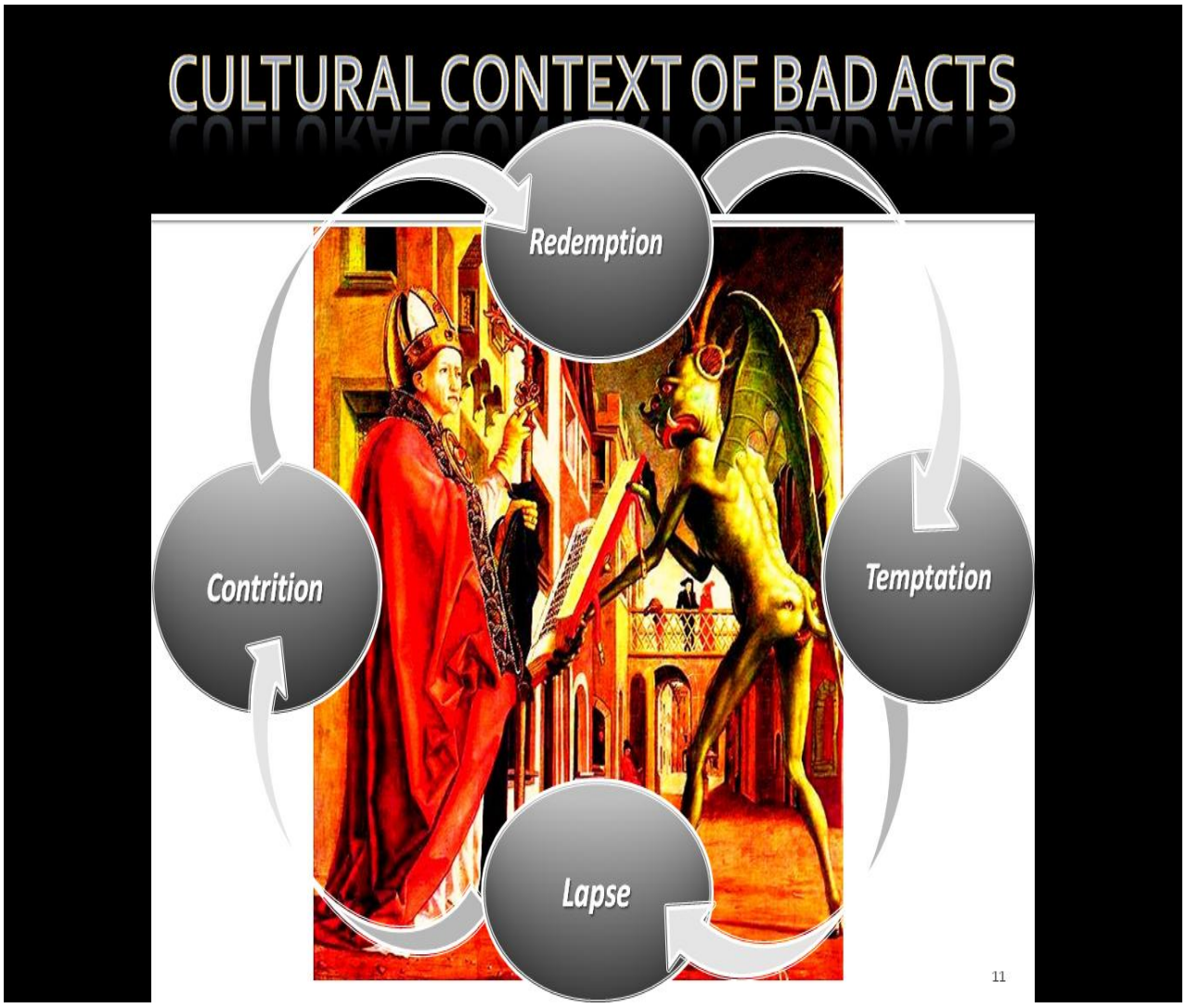
Nothing in the application of these techniques suggests that priests *used* Catholicism to do bad things, and the interpretation of the written and spoken narratives of clerics as culturally located is not intended to lay blame on this particular subcultural frame. Rather, examples are presented as "best fit" responses for each of the classic justifications used by sex offenders as they manage their identities (priest, sinner, scoundrel) once they are "outed" and have to face public scrutiny. It is the case that some clerics did not have to face any large scale public shaming when allegations became known to Church officials, as the allegations were addressed years before the 2002 reporting spike. The way that these accusations were addressed are not a part of this study, and results of the patterns of understanding and response by Church leaders can be found in other analyses derived from data collected by the John Jay College follow-up study, *The Causes & Context of Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church.*[62]

The reported peak periods of sexual abuse (1970s) in which priests in this sample, as well as in the sample for the initial John Jay Study (2004), were said to have abused had a different yet similarly situated historical culture characterized by tremendous focus on a counter youth culture that was sexually "free" and exploratory. As noted previously, this was also in the period of shifting norms of practice in the Catholic Church post-Vatican II.

[62] The published reports should be available sometime in 2011.

Nonetheless, what *is* accepted is that sex with actual minors is wrong (in most cases), and that sex with anyone is wrong (but forgivable) for priests. This norm is accepted by the dominant culture and embodied in laws, consistent with the teachings of the Church. The subcultural norm of Roman Catholic forgiveness is merely a nuanced interpretation or functional derivative of the dominant norm, serving the needs of the Church.

Figure 3 Catholic Cultural Context



To reiterate, the norms to which the cleric is to conform are twofold: those of dominant society, and those within the subcultural narrative of Catholicism. These do

overlap in many ways, although the latter is the primary cultural framework of priests. The contextual frame of sin, sex and redemption are presented in analysis of the *content* of written and oral explanations or understandings offered by the accused priests. Figure 3 is an illustration of the cyclic nature of the process of sin and redemption, one in which all who believe in the faith may and do participate.

The stories told by priests are illustrative, in some sense, of disconnect between sexual behavior and priestly identity, one in which the human individual is said to be ontologically changed upon ordination as the bishop confers "an indelible spiritual character" which is not "repeated or conferred temporarily." Once ordained, the cleric may be relieved of his duties but "he cannot become a layman again in the strict sense, because the character imprinted by ordination is forever" (*Catechism* #1582 - 1583: Ligori, 1994, p. 395). Ordination does not give priests a higher status than lay people although, interpretively, the requirements of the role do lend themselves towards an awe-inspiring characteristic, particularly as priests head the ritualistic practices so integral to the practice of the faith. The catechetical definition is a simple linguistic explanation of a concept that is permanently received by priests only once in a lifetime, and presents an identity that is often juxtaposed to the laity.

Extreme responses such as sexual abuse may result from a greater degree of disconnect from the expected ontological satisfaction of "being" and the mundane (or stressful) reality of the material life of the priesthood. This is not unlike the stress of aspiring to be the ideal breadwinning family provider in a time of economic uncertainty. The priest, trained primarily as a spiritual and sacramental leader, struggles to make sense of his role in the context of an impoverished church in disrepair, or, for example, the

reality of living not with a mentor but with an alcoholic pastor. Additionally the priest has the responsibility of managing the tension between the physical needs or expressions of human intimacy while maintaining a commitment to the promise of life as a chaste and celibate religious person. The disconnect between the model and reality, or the abstraction and actuality, may be maintained, or managed by the use of techniques of neutralization, particularly as these are rooted in one's subcultural paradigm.

All of the techniques of neutralizations, rationalizations, and explanations outlined in Sykes'& Matza's model were employed by accused priests in both the written and spoken narratives in this study, although it is not necessarily the case that each respondent employed all techniques. The excerpts and quotations used in this analysis do show some overlap in techniques used, but each excuse and justification is exemplified by the "best fit" narrative selection. Before we can understand the meaning of excuses and justifications, the social and historical interpretation of sin must be explored.

Sex, Celibacy, and Sin.

As introduced earlier, the prospect of committing sins is inevitable, although sin is not something to which one *must* succumb. Sins are thoughts and actions that take one away from the Creator, but giving into the temptation does not preclude a restoration of the relationship with God. Two textual examples from the *New American Standard Bible* paint a clear picture of the who, what, why, where, when, and how the concepts of temptation, lapse, contrition and reconciliation are part of fundamental eschatological existence. Sin begets sin, and the process is only interrupted by seeking forgiveness.

> [8]But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. [9]I was once alive apart from the

> Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; [10]and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; [11]for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.[63]

The second example points to the true nature of sin – as a violation of the commandments, yes, but also as a turning away from God. Sin is not only located in the thought or action against another. Fundamentally it is a wrong against God, and it is God from whom we must seek forgiveness.

> [1]Bless the LORD, O my soul, [3]Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases; [4]Who redeems your life from the pit, Who crowns you with loving kindness and compassion. [8]The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in loving. [9]He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. [12]As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.[13]Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.[64]

This passage also points to a God of love, one concerned with the spiritual well-being of the sinner. The sin itself is wrong in part because of the stain it places on the soul of the sinner until he repents. Many of the scripture references seem to focus on the damage of the self and one's relationship with God, although some do mention damage to others as well. As presented earlier, sin is an "infidelity to the covenantal relationship with God and ourselves"(McBrien, 1981, p. 953). One priest summarizes what it means to sin and be

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[63]Romans 7:8-11.

[64]Psalm 103 : 1,3-4, 8-9, 12-13.

forgiven, at least for the men charged with the role of confessor in the *Sacrament of Reconciliation*:

> *Priests believed that all sin was forgiven and forgotten even by God . . . It was all, a matter between God and the sinner. This . . .extended to all sin: masturbation, homo and heterosexual activity, pornography . . . Most confessors are very kind in confession . . .are quick to grant absolution, realizing that God is merciful and that there is no sin that God will not forgive. Priests . . . well aware of human weakness and deal with sexual sin regularly. They are trained not to judge . . . but to be . . . generous in mercy. This is particularly true to fellow priests, who come to them with their failures in chastity. . . And as priests accepted the human weaknesses of married people . . . so priests accepted the weaknesses of their fellow priests...regardless of what their problems were.*

In light of this cultural concept, it is clear that perfection in thought and action is not required, but something to which even ordained men might aspire. So understanding sex, celibacy and sin requires us to keep this context in mind. But just how do priests interpret the vow of celibate chastity? This is, of course, one of the cultural precepts that is violated when one sexually abuses a minor.

In the Church, celibacy is viewed by some as a unique commitment to God. But, in its uniqueness, also increases the rigidity of guidelines for behavior by broadening the range of actions and intentions that fall under the umbrella of sin, which fractures the relationship with God. The range of *unacceptability* for the laity is different, at least, in some ways. The following priest has a rather literal description of the abstinence involved in celibacy as he says:

> *Celibate . . . means a body-soul person forgoes genital & romantic friendships and activities to love God and neighbor in a single state for sake of the Kingdom of Christ.*

Celibacy, in these terms, is "sacrifice" of what is an eventuality for most heterosexual lay Catholics who marry in the Church. If one were not to become a priest, it is presumed that one would then get married and have a family (in the traditional sense), or remain single, celibate and chaste. Understanding the Catholic teachings about the life of Christ, which priests aspire to emulate, this sacrifice pales in comparison to the sacrifice of death on the cross. It is a figurative "cross" to bear.

But another interpretation is less portentous. The following cleric, ordained in the mid 1950s, says

> *However, one's thoughts and/or desires (and temptations), by committing to celibacy, one offered his overt and personal sexuality to God in Christ for him to use as he willed for the good of souls.*

Celibacy here means turning one's sexual will over to God, which might then make it seem easier not to sin – because one has relinquished his will. The catechism teaches that in " sin man preferred himself to God and by that very act scorned him. He chose himself over and against God . . ." (*Catechism* #398: Liguori, 1994, p. 100). Ultimately, sin seems to be taking one's will back, in any area, great or small. Celibacy, then, just broadens the spectrum of possibility for sexual sin.

What is a sexual sin? The bright-line rule for sexual behavior in the Catholic Church is that sexuality is to be indulged only in the expression of love between

heterosexual partners in a sanctioned religious marriage, as well as for the purposes of procreation. Here are two examples of accused clerics talking about sin. One says,

> *I was raised in an era where everything was a mortal sin.*

Another clearly outlines what sin *is*, writing in a clinical narrative as follows,

> *Certain activities are sinful. All homosexual activities are sinful. Sex outside of marriage is sinful."*

The priests know what sin is in general. They know what sexual sin is in particular. They understand celibacy as a sacrifice or a gift of sorts. How, then, do they make sense of their sexual failings? They do so by integrating excuses and justifications into their stories, all of which are rooted in the discourse of mainstream society as well as Catholicism.

Excuses.

The first half of the analysis takes the reader through a composite construction of identity management narrative by looking at instances in which the accused cleric uses excuses to admit that he actually committed the behavior *but* . . . These excuses are known as *"denying the victim"* and *"denying responsibility."* The second half of the chapter talks about the use of various types of justifications for action. A justification occurs when one admits to the interactions, events, or acts, but does not admit to the *wrongfulness of these.* Instead, the individual engages in techniques known as "*minimizing harm", "appealing to a higher authority"*, and/ or "*condemning the condemners*."

Participants in the *I & B* sample denied the victim his/her status by claiming that a) the accuser participated or seduced the cleric by being seductive or precocious; b) the accuser did not fight back or say anything then. The accused cleric denied responsibility by

making claims that he was either “not well” (in the throes of addiction or substance use), or he was compelled by “sick” or “sinful” impulses. These explanations, of course, are not necessarily accurate representations of the cleric’s state at the time before, during or after the alleged events. But it could be the case that his perceptions of himself and the victim could have allowed him to continue in his role as a priest in spite of not only violating his vow of celibate chastity, but also social norms around having sexual interactions with youth. The denial of responsibility is the clearest illustration of the process of deviance disavowal in action.

Deny responsibility.

Addiction/Sexual Compulsion/Spiritual Weakness

The written and spoken narratives point to typical techniques of neutralization, one of which is the deflection of one’s actions from one’s self-identity. I did not do it. Rather, the sick-self did it. A force beyond the cleric’s control contributed to his behavior, which allows him to deny full responsibility. This is not unlike the legal claims of diminished capacity. It was the alcohol and drugs, says one accused cleric:

> *My life was governed by alcoholism and drug dependence until 7 years of ordination. My disease profoundly affected my entire life as priest and person and sexual being.*

What is interesting is the subcultural language used to talk about these types of denial of responsibility. Another accused priest intertwines the sick narrative with that of the sinner, and a distorted understanding of what the priesthood could do for this sick-and-sinful self.

> *I wanted to do something to overcome my sexual problems and to make myself whole and healthy again. I wanted to feel clean and good about myself. I thought the priesthood would do that! . . . I wanted to be a saint, I prayed very hard, fulfilled all my priestly obligations, worked very hard, and accomplished more than I ever dreamed . . . But the demon never left me. On the day of my ordination, I was a sick man and didn't know it. . .*

Yet another accused priest suggests that he partook in the subcultural practice of forgiveness, and therefore talking about the sinfulness of his compulsion is moot.

> *I know I was committing sin and confessed it in the sacrament of penance. I found it difficult to stop . . . The evil I wanted to avoid, that is what I was doing but found it difficult. I was ashamed to talk about it except in confession.*

Sin can be harmful to another human being, thus explaining the need for penance and the "firm purpose amendment," or to sin no more. Some accused clerics seemed not to identify this aspect of sin as involving other people. Instead it appears to be a personal temptation, a failed struggle with an evil force. There are demons that draw one in to sin. When the demons are persistent then one is sick, weakened in the fight against transgression.

Other examples of spiritual weakness are engaged within the overall framework of Catholicism. In these examples, humans are weak because they lack an earnest prayer life which distances them from their relationship with God. One may fear God when it seems as though God is far away, and this strengthens a reliance on self-will, lending itself to sinfulness. Here is how a few of the accused priests talk about why they abused minors.

[Written file narrative]

I realized how human and weak we were and how without a deep relationship to Jesus, an active prayer life, love for our people and devotedness to our service of them I too would hurt and break-down the people of God. It was a wakeup call.

[Interview]

I abused only because of weakness in earlier years. With the Grace of God I have overcome it in last 25 years. I didn't pray enough, I felt that God understood. I'm sure he did.

[Written file narrative]

Through counseling and spiritual direction on my own, reading and broadening of horizons, I found a God of love, not fear.

These three examples clearly illustrate that the priests are submerged in a social situation that gives them a language with which to make sense of their failings, regardless of what these failings actual are. Since there are commandments, and even criminal laws, ultimately it with the relationship with God that one must be concerned when considering who one is in the world, whether one is a priest or not. It makes sense that priests rely upon the Church principles they are given when acculturated to Catholicism, and again to the role of cleric. This does not mean that they rightly interpret or apply these teachings. The last of the three quotations is illustrative of the mainstream therapeutic discourse merging with that of Catholicism and the priesthood.

Immaturity/Lack of Development

More consistent with the discourse on offending and developmental deficiencies, some accused clerics relied on clinical or psychological explanations, in lieu of cultural ones. This may have been a mechanism for distancing the bad self from the good self – the bad self being outside the faith. In order to keep a cleric's Catholic or priestly identity unmarred, the offending must be understood in mainstream vernacular. The first cleric talks about stunted sexual development.

> *Sexually I matured very late--too late and after ordination. That's why--I believe--I acted out with one person early on but my appreciation of the joys and struggles of sexuality have since grown and matured--although too late for me to save my active ministry.*

The excuse for offending here is that the cleric just did not have the sexual development/ maturity that one who would not do these things might have. What is interesting in this explanation is a hint of a justification, which will be further discussed in the following section. Simply stated, the cleric alludes to the fact that *he* has *lost his active ministry*, rather than recognizing the harm done to the accuser. This is also considered a lack of victim empathy.

One could also call the previous example illustrative of emotional immaturity, but that is not how the responding cleric defined or experienced it. Accused priests who claim emotional immaturity say things such as are exemplified in the following two excerpts:

[Interview excerpt # 1]

I am also aware that I tended to reach for closeness with parishioners and their families out of personal need and, again, immaturity. It is in this context that I understand my inappropriate reaching out to children to fill my need for closeness. I still feel that priests treat each other quite poorly on many occasions and fail to support one another in a healthy and consistent manner.

[Interview excerpt # 2]

. . . those years it is clear to me that I was emotionally an adolescent and using young men to satisfy emotional needs that I could not satisfy in an adult, mature fashion. Part of the reason was that the emotional/sexual part of my life was split off from the rest.

Both of these men said these things after they had been in some form of treatment mandated as a result of the allegation made against them.

Another accused priest referenced in the narratives chapter wrote a long letter in which he discusses the causes of sexually impulsive and compulsive behaviors, as he has come to understand them by attending meetings of *Sexaholics Anonymous*, which he identifies as a place in which those who are sexually sick can recover. But he also discusses how the consistent narrative (as he sees it) can explain, and essentially excuse, abusive behavior. Part of this narrative includes sexual abuse in the cleric's own childhood. In his letter he writes:

. . . [we] turned in on ourselves, failed to develop psychologically and psychosexually, and instead became psychosexually fixated at the age at which we

> *were molested. We did not develop friendships with other boys our own age, as we were not growing emotionally proportionate to our chronological age. When a man is sexually attracted to a boy, it's because he is still a boy himself. My sister only recently told me that during recess in grade school, I never played with my own classmates, but always with the younger grades.*

He uses clinical language to talk about what many consider to be moral issues. He has removed the responsibility of the Church from the debate about who is at fault by saying that it really is no one person's fault, because it is a disease of the mind, or misunderstanding of what is appropriate, a case of retarded psychosexual development. However it is named, it still fits within the framework of excusing behavior by denying responsibility for one's actions.

Deny victimhood.

Shifting the onus.

In the previous section, the accused cleric, the abuser, is in reality one-in-the-same as the offender from whom he is distances himself as he denied responsibility for his sexually abusive actions. But where does the *accuser* actually fit into the process of a priest excusing his behavior? Of course, the way an accused priest can deny that status is to deny the accuser his or her status. There are several ways to deny someone their victim identity. In doing so, the accused priest once again excuses his behavior. One way to blame the victim is to indicate that the victim – or the victim's family – colluded in setting up the conditions that allowed the abuse to happen. The priest might argue that the controls against his sick or sinful impulses were diminished. Therefore, the victim or those responsible for the minor are to blame. Below are examples:

> *. . . What happened was, this family was part of a social group. . .they invited me to dinner, invited me to a variety of parties and such that they had at their house. And, uh, so I got to be friends with them. There was a group of us who would go up to . . . the vacation home . . . two of the sons had gone on long backpacking trips with me. Um, two separate trips. And I had done some ski days, um . . . a day of skiing, with, with some of these . . .*

In another example, the cleric blames family circumstances, or family problems, which allowed him to enter and participate more actively in the lives his victims' families:

> *Uh, but what happened in the course of this was, uh, the father left, walked out, uh . . .with a 19-year-old who had been living with them . . . I mean, it just, you know, but looking at that, the family dynamic was a severely dysfunctional family.*

The following excerpt explicitly blames the victim – not so much accusing *him* of anything. Rather, the onus of the initiation to physical intimacy is placed on the one who later accuses the cleric of sexual abuse:

> *I first was attracted to a boy when I was a deacon and teaching religion in his parish. I would sit on my desk and he would wrap his legs around my legs. I enjoyed it and he seemed to like me very much.*

Another accused priest, after intensive residential treatment – psychological and physical – makes clear in his interview that he is the responsible one. But he has access to this reasoning after therapy, and this was clearly not what the cleric was aware of at the time of the "relationship." The cleric minimizes the victimhood of the accuser when he talks about the relationship as follows:

> *The person I abused was 17 at the time. He was interested in the seminary – he wanted to go in to the seminary at that time. He was a former altar boy, but I was not in that parish anymore. And I never, EVER, got involved with any altar boy or any kids in any parish I was assigned. It was this one and, uhm, at that point in time, I was at* [redacted] *before I became a pastor.*
>
> *This was 1987 when the sexual behavior happened. I met the young man when he was 15, in a parish prior to that. I am sure, I mean, there was grooming, in the sense that I went out to dinner with him and I am sure it meant a lot to him but I had the power, I had the position I had the name, I was the priest. And, it began at the* [assignment prior to pastorship] *because there was the drunk old man* [pastor] *upstairs and I lived in his residence . . . and it went on from that time until 1991, I believe, because he went in to seminary. And at certain times I would say "this has to stop, you know, this is wrong." Sometimes he would say "this has to stop it's wrong" - to each other- and it didn't sometimes I was the one who initiated, sometimes he was the one who initiated, but still – I'm ultimately responsible for this. So it continued for 4 years . . .*

The cleric above takes responsibility after the fact, but even in talking about it, he places some of the "job" of ending the "abuse" on the accuser, who sometimes said "this should end, this is wrong." And yet another cleric introduces the victim as participant.

> *One of those young men took a shine to me, and on one of the fishing/camping trips something happened that should never have happened . . .*

If it were not for what the cleric puts forth as somewhat of a crush on the part of the accuser (a.k.a. victim), the sexual interaction (abuse) might not have happened.

It is evident in these examples is that the "bad self" or the sinner is not engaged as master status of the cleric. Akin to denying responsibility, the accused clerics, even when admitting that sexually inappropriate events occurred, do not identify their actions as *abusive*. Therefore, the cleric is not to blame. If the family had not included him in their lives, or if the family of the victim was not so broken, or even if the victim himself was not so intimately forward, none of these things would have happened. There would have been no sexual interaction, therefore no allegations, and no challenge to the cleric's master status.

Shifting the focus.

In the following examples, it is evident that yet another way to deny an accuser his/her victim status is to shift the focus. In these quotes, there is no accusing victim. Instead, the "victim" is the accused, the brotherhood, the Church and even God Himself. Everyone else *but* the accuser is a victim of the sexual abuse.

[Written file excerpt]

I am ashamed of my behavior and the trouble that I have caused for myself and my community [of Brothers] I am like the Prodigal Son[65]*, who has taken advantage of my gifts and talents for my own satisfaction.*

[Written file excerpt]

I cannot believe that this has happened to me. . . .I know God already forgives me and accepts me for who I am. He understands much more than me about my

[65]*Luke 15: 11-32*

failure. He loves me . . . I am glad that I am able now to talk with the Bishop and I see that I have hurt MYSELF and I am my own enemy . . .

These examples also point to the cleric's reliance on cultural concepts to understand this "plot twist" in his story. These concepts allow the accused cleric to talk about the general wrongs done to everyone but the victim. These clerics embody the element of sin that generalizes the harm focusing on the disgrace to himself, his fraternity and his Church, rather than the explicit harm to the victim. On some level, the notion of sin, at least as it is presented in many examples included in this analysis, allows one to lack empathy specifically for the direct victim. This lack of victim empathy is also intertwined with and clearly identified as a justification for the sexual interaction. This priest expresses that there is no harm in the interactions because they are "consensual" (as perceived by the priest).

Justifications.

The use of justifications for one's actions is another form of disavowal used by some accused clerics. This sample justifies their actions by diminishing the wrongfulness of the behavior, or simply deflecting the harmfulness as the responsibility belonging to others. The clerics minimize harm by downplaying what actually occurred, or by the use of language surrounding the "relationship" between them and the victim. This is often interwoven with blaming the victim. In an appeal to a higher authority, a cleric might make a claim that he is only really responsible to God, not his accusers; therefore he need only seek redemption from God. If he connects to the responsibility to the victim, then he may make amends directly, but resist recognizing the impact of his actions on the larger community, given that his actions occurred while he had the trust of his priestly role. Lastly, the cleric might actually condemn the condemners – or criticize his attackers – be

they the media, the Church hierarchy (Bishops), the parishioners, or the families of the victim. This technique overlaps with the appeal to a higher authority, particularly if the priest has sought and feels that he has been given forgiveness by God, and occasionally by the victim if direct amends were made.

Again, these justifications do not necessarily represent what the cleric was actually thinking at the time before, during, or after the alleged events. But it could be the case that his interpretation of these things today *may* have been how he learned to understand and manage his identity after the sexual abuse, which allowed him to continue on as a priest, despite his infractions against both the dominant sexual culture, and the subcultural expectations of chastity.

Although the excuses allow the cleric to say "Yes, I performed the actions, but ***I*** did not really do it," the justification framework suggests that he has done something for which he can be forgiven by God, (*appeal to a higher authority or loyalty),* was not really harmful to the victim or anyone (*denial of harm),* and/or is not the *real problem (condemn the condemners).* All of these techniques are deflective, allowing the cleric to essentially deny that he did anything *wrong*, whereas the excuses allow him to admit that he engaged in wrongful acts, but that it *was not his fault.* These rationalizations serve as a tool for justifying his actions.

Subcultural appeal.

The holding of one's subculture and all of its precepts, particularly when it is institutionally organized, is not the same as appealing to a "delinquent subculture," as is discussed in the literature on rationalizations for delinquency. Instead, a person aligns himself with his subculture in order to understand his master status and the attending social

expectations, particularly as he is thrust into the experience negative labeling. His "bad acts" are not supported by the subculture, but some of the cultural components allow the cleric to make sense of the wrongfulness of his actions not as an endpoint, but as the beginning of redemption. Case in point:

> *I frequently go to confession to ask for forgiveness, and after my steam bath encounters, I would repent and starve myself, and go to confession as quickly as possible.*

This accused priest, who was in residential treatment, invokes the processes unique to Catholicism in order to minimize the guilt he feels, or in order to impose as intense a penance upon himself as he believes matches his wrongs. His starvation is a means of pain, suffering and of somewhat cleansing himself of the wrongs, as a result of using the actual rite of penance. Interestingly, acts of starvation, self-flagellation and extreme acetic practices are, in and of themselves, subcultural practices of Catholicism that are *not* commonly used today by most practicing Catholics.

The following cleric actually felt more comfortable and safe revealing his transgressions in the very process in which he would also be forgiven.

> *I know I was committing sin and confessed it in the sacrament of penance. I found it difficult to stop . . . The evil I wanted to avoid, that is what I was doing but found it difficult. I was ashamed to talk about it except in confession.*

Absent the possibility of reconciliation, the wrongfulness of his action might have been viewed differently, and he may have engaged different techniques, justifying his actions, or

even excusing them. In fact, this cleric also excused his behavior as a sexual (and evil) compulsion, intertwined with trying to deflect the wrongfulness from himself.

Conversely, the following priest explains that he knew what was available to him, regarding his faith and redemption, but feared it.

> *I have drifted far from the Sacrament of Reconciliation over the years because I have been ashamed to speak about my sinfulness and no doubt I would be told to discontinue my intimate relationships. I have managed to construct a wall of secrecy around my 'personal' life, yet I strongly believe in the love of God and the grace of God's forgiveness. Although I cannot come up with an image of God I can experience the God who consoles me in sin, sorrow and suffering by showing me peace of mind and encouraging me to serve his people more. Psalms 103, 131, and John Chapt.8 V 1-11 are texts that I can apply in this situation.*[66]

At the time of his sinfulness, he recognized that there was a higher authority to which he could appeal, but it was only when he is asked to account for himself to others that he makes the distinction between his failed self and his master status. He points to his willfulness and distance from his relationship with God as a way of explaining why he did not engage in the subcultural practices that he knew might heal him spiritually.

Another method employed by accused clerics to rationalize the wrongfulness of their actions is to call upon their relationship with God and the possibility of redemption,

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[66]*Psalm 103*: Praise for the Lord's Mercies. See the section on Sex, Celibacy and Sin in this chapter for excerpts from this Psalm.

Psalm 130: Hope in the LORD'S Forgiving Love.

John 8: 1-11: The Adulterous Woman.

which would then make the discussion of the wrongfulness of actual acts moot. If a cleric who abuses believes that he has been absolved, as sinners who participate in the *Sacrament of Reconciliation* can be, then the slate is wiped clean, with the understanding that the sinner will refrain from that type of sin, hopefully any sin, in the future. The distorted understanding is that the behavior is no longer wrong because it is forgiven. The wrongfulness lies in sinning again.

> *From an offender 30 years ago with one 16 yr. old to an immediate sinner and wounded healer, I openly confess my transgression in 1999 although I wanted to do so in 1994 but was refused permission by my Bishop. . . Total openness from the pulpit in the presence of my superior gave me support, forgiveness and strength from my people who accepted my apology and encouraged me to move on. I also did something with the victim.*

This cleric sought forgiveness from his parishioners, as well as from the victim. Therefore, the subcultural process of forgiveness should be enough to end the process of condemnation in his case. Or so it seems that this is what he is saying. There are hints of pointing fingers at the Church leaders who he suggests have not allowed him to confess earlier – which added to the overall controversy when the issue finally came to light. This hints at condemning those (bishops) who have enacted policies to further punish priests who may have already sought and received forgiveness in the Church, which is the higher authority in the grand scheme of Catholic order.

The next accused priest identifies with his failed human self and how that self was distanced from the cultural practices of the faith. One element of the cultural practice is to nurture a relationship with God/Jesus.

> *I realized how human and weak we were and how without a deep relationship to Jesus, an active prayer life, love for our people and devotedness to our service of them I too would hurt and break-down the people of God. It was a wakeup call.*

One view of this excerpt is that the cleric sees himself as having been more vulnerable to sin because he was a failed practitioner of the faith (in spite of his master status as a priest.) His failing was as a man, not as a priest. What he did wrong was not the sexual abuse, per se. Instead, it was a subversion of the higher authority or the subculture to which he belongs, to his own mortal flesh. In fact, another cleric called himself "spiritually dead" in reference to his sins of the body. The particular focus on the relationship with God, and "award" of forgiveness from Him, is also mentioned by several clerics.

> [Written file excerpt # 1]
>
> *I know that God is still calling me today . . . He already forgives me and accepts me as I am and for whom I am. He understands much more than me about my failure. He loves me . . .*
>
> [Written file excerpt # 2]
>
> *Although I know that healing lies within, I have denied the need (and it is there) for others to mediate your word to me. I have wanted to 'redeem myself,' because I have been afraid to surrender to this process. I have wanted to do this myself, 'neatly', without embarrassment, not trusting you, others, or myself.*
>
> [Written file excerpt # 3]
>
> *I believe more strongly than ever that the Lord loves me unconditionally; He is my friend, full of care and mercy.*

The understanding that an infraction (sin) is one that must first be mended with God seems evident in these examples of accused priests appealing to the higher authority. That authority is God. But the cleric, in referencing his own relationship with God, the sin that marred that relationship with God is still focused on his own personal failings, rather than actually recognizing any harm to the victim.

No harm.

Accused priests employ a number of justifications in an attempt to negate the harm they have done to victims. It is important to note that many instances of sexual abuse occurred at a time in social history, late 1960s – early 1980s, when there was scant or newly developing knowledge about the concepts of sexual violation, victimization, and long-term impact of sexual victimization.[67] Priests may have been uncomfortable with their actions, but it does not mean that they viewed them as criminal *or* harmful to anyone but themselves. This analysis is situated in the context of contemporary knowledge about and attitudes towards the sexual abuse of minors and its effects on victims. That said, these clerics are intelligent and educated men exposed to the changing times, if not by their own actual experiences, then certainly by what they hear from parishioners who may seek counsel or the *Sacrament of Reconciliation.*

Not all of these justifications are solely rooted in subcultural interpretation. Some are simply references to "relationships", "not sex", or even events that "happened only

[67] An historical analysis of this type of information derived from data collected in the larger John Jay College study of *The Causes & Context of the Sexual Abuse of Minors in the Catholic Church in the United States.* The published reports should be available in February of 2011. This is not a review of victimization literature or rape law development, but of the larger historical context in which many of these incidents occurred that must be recognized when discussing historically situated events.

once or so long ago." Here are some examples of the "no sex" or "just one time" or "so long ago" justifications:

> [Written file excerpt # 1]
>
> *I admit that I did touch a young girl once, but very tentatively in her genital area, but I do not recall "full-blown" sexual incidents.*
>
> [Written file excerpt # 2]
>
> *The young man never had an erection nor did he climax when we were together.*

Because, according to these clerics, the behavior was not sex, it was not interpreted as wrong. They consider that the only type of sex is intercourse, and without intercourse, there is no sexual abuse. The subtext is that abuse is about sex. This is, of course, a very narrow interpretation of sex, and a misinterpretation of sexual interactions with those who cannot give consent in the manner defined by law. In a conversation (April 21, 2010), Sr. K. Schuth shared that in the decades prior to the start of Vatican II, when many of these men were being raised in devout Catholic households,[68] "gateway" behaviors like kissing and petting were considered sins, in part because they *could lead to sex*, which is reserved for procreation and marriage. This is a slippery slope interpretation of sexual behavior that lends support to the rationalizations employed by these clerics, who came of age before the changes implemented by the second Vatican Council.

[68] Vatican II commenced in 1962. Dramatic changes took place as a result of this meeting of the Council. 85% (N=411) of the *I & B* sample were born at or before 1950. They would have been at the age of puberty or beyond well before the impact of Vatican II would be felt, as the Council ended its affairs in 1965 and the implementation of the changes would happen en masse by the early 1970s. In the periods prior to Vatican II, sex was rather taboo and reserved for procreation only, while this changed after the Council for Catholics, and ran parallel to the socio-sexual changes occurring in the country at large.

Other allusions to onetime occurrences were perceived to be *trivial*, indicating that it is the repetitive nature of abuse that is harmful, at least in the eyes of the responding clerics.

[Written file excerpt # 1]

My offense was relatively minor . . . and it was only that one time . . .

[Written file excerpt # 2]

Nothing like that ever happened again.

[Open ended –survey response]

No one seems to care or understand the "hell" suffered certainly by me and it is still a daily cross to carry trying to do God's will who is all I depend on for mercy and forgiveness, for allegedly doing very little.

This last cleric appears somewhat self-centered as he focuses on the harm done to him and grasps onto the subcultural reference to hell, carrying a cross, and the forgiveness that he should receive, especially because he believes his acts were not egregious. In fact, he claims they were the opposite. But the notion that it is not really a problem if one only abused or sexually interacted once is a justification that is devoid of victim empathy. Evidence now shows that even one instance of sexual abuse can have a lasting negative effect on the victim.

Yet another justification is that the event(s) occurred long ago. This framework is essentially minimizing harm by implying that it is so long gone as to be forgotten. There is historical distance between the incident(s) and the accusation.

[Open- ended survey response]

I was accused in 1994 for something I did 30 years earlier.

[Interview response]

My memory was of an event of me having sexually abused a boy maybe 25 or so years earlier.

As is clear from the John Jay College 2004 study, most of the abuse reported in 2002 did not, in fact, occur that year. Two-thirds of all victims reporting in 2002 indicated that the abuse actually took place in years prior to 1980 (John Jay College, 2004, p.90). It is the case that a bulk of the events occurred a long time ago. This makes it easier for the cleric to justify his view *now* that there must be no harm, possibly because it was not reported sooner. It raises the question of the effectiveness of punishment applied well after the fact. Given that the criminal justice system, or any socially responsible institution, is not solely designed to punish, the distance of time helps the cleric to minimize the harm (in his own mind) inflicted by him on the accuser, to the degree that the person is just an "accuser" rather than a victim. In spite of the distance of time, the cleric does not indicate an awareness that actual damage occurred, whether emotional, physical, social, psychological or spiritual.

Another cleric, although he does not suggest that what happened between himself and any minor was anything but sex, he wrote in the comments section of the survey that

Sex is not the only sin-Greed + cover up and pride + avarice hurt more people. I think greater sins exist of course. Abusing a minor is terrible! But so is murder, theft.

The priest references sex as a sin, yes he does *not* reference *with whom* the sex occurred, which is the actual problem at hand. This excerpt is illustrative of a gross oversimplification of the issue, and diminishment of the gravity of the sin, while it is yet another way to deny the injury or at least minimize the harm done to the victim. This cleric also introduces the cultural reference of the sins of Greed and Pride, two of the *Seven Deadly Sins.* Interestingly, it seems as though he is saying that these types of sins are more difficult to forgive, thereby deflecting attention from the cleric for having acted in a "sexually sinful" manner. Comparatively, he seems to say that sex is not "as bad" as murder or theft. It is like someone saying that kissing is not sexual because it is not intercourse. Again, these are attempts to renegotiate one's master status, particularly when the stigmatized identity brought about by an accusation so strongly opposes that which was held sacred prior to the allegation.

The following example is a longer quote as the cleric goes into the situational explanation of what he said was common behavior. This cleric distances himself in chronological time from the incidents, while also interpreting the behaviors he admits to as nonsexual, although physical. This accused priest denied the allegations made against him as not sexual, because the incidents involved backrubs and roughhousing, and often in front of others. His rationale is that the behavior was normal for those times, in that historical moment.

> *Now, one of the things you see that doesn't help in all this is, that this is going back, we're looking at the '70s. One of the things was, you know, part of life in those days was giving people back rubs. And so, and I was straight forward in, in my own testimony, is that yes, I gave these kids back rubs. Part of it, and they were not the only kids, there were other families for whom this doesn't even register on the,*

the, uh, the radar. Um . . . but part of it was when you are in a big family and you have all kinds of people around, to pop in when somebody has gone to bed, and spend a few minutes with them, is kind of quiet time when you can have some one-on-one conversation. Um, not to be done today, but, um, it made some sense in those days. Um . . . the, uh . . . um . . . but it was not more than that. . .it was just common. Ok. Uh . . . he also makes allegations about kind of domineering roughhousing. Well, again, that was kind of common with more than this family. It was always done, it was usually the kind of thing that would happen in the living room, it was done, you know, in . . . 25 to 30 years ago. Late '70s, early '80s.

The cleric historically situates his actions. Although historically situated factors or changing cultural norms may have contributed to abuse, this does not mean that the effects of the behaviors were not harmful, even if the actions were actually commonplace. It is important to add that the allegations made against this priest do not come from those who were minors at the time of the incidents. Rather, the accusers were all post-pubescent. Although this does not excuse the behavior or reduce any harm, it does, in fact, change the thinking about the typologies of offenders as pedophiles vs. ephebophiles, as previously defined.

Another technique of minimizing harm employed by some of the accused clerics is to call the interaction between the accuser and the accused something other than an abusive interaction. The language below points to a framework that suggests that the interaction occurred as a part of a friendship or relationship, be it a romantic one or not, or even as part of a relationship with the family

.

[Written file excerpt # 1]

I found friendship in post-pubescent boys.

[Written file excerpt # 2]

I would die rather than to hurt a child. Having said this I am guilty of having a relationship with a person.

[Interview response # 1]

When we got home, [from a camping trip on which an incident occurred] *I suggested to him that we go to a counselor and talk about what had happened so that it would never happen again and that it would not interfere with our friendship. We spent time with the counselor, together and alone, and remained friends until he moved back East as an adult.*

[Interview response # 2]

Well it would be, I mean there be just certain times that I would visit [the family of the accuser] *when I was in the area. . . I uhh, I often was invited to overnight at this family's home.*

These accused priests are dancing around the actual sexual interactions to set up the context of why they were in contact with the victim in the first place, namely through harmless encounters or invited relationships. A relationship requires nurturing and participation of all parties involved. It appears as though the priests feel there were established relationships with the victims and/or the victims' families. This makes sense, given that the priests were at least ministering in the parishes in which they were accused.

Condemn the condemners.

This last category for justifying behavior is a deflective technique in which church leaders are blamed for poorly preparing seminarians for life in the priesthood. Clerics may not blame the church leaders for the sexual abuse itself, but for how poorly the leaders dealt with the issue, in a manner that was reactionary and unforgiving. The use of justifications was not necessarily to show that the behavior was wrong, but rather to deflect from the wrongfulness of the priests' actions by shifting the focus to the church hierarchy. So these respondents simply ignore their behavior altogether. This technique is known as "*condemning the condemners*." The clearest example of this is as follows:

> *I have been treated by the Church as if it* [the abuse] *were much worse. . . While I have been dealt with civilly, I have experienced little compassion, forgiveness or support from those in positions of authority in the Church.*

It is as if this priest is saying the Catholic practice of forgiveness should outweigh the harm done to the victims. It seems that the cleric interprets forgiveness as "no action" on the part of anyone in response to his allegations. This may be a self-serving interpretation, one that seems to eliminate the "penance" part of the process of reconciliation, or one that considers public embarrassment to be suffering enough. This perspective is notably present for those clerics who were sent to psychological treatment but were still removed, or those who may have served jail time, or made amends with victims well before the 2002 scandal.

All of the following examples have some element of the cultural reference "judge not lest ye be judged."[69] Several of the responses seem to posit that the accused are part of a "sacrificial" swath created by the "edicts" of the Dallas Charter. As defined earlier in this study, those included in the accused group were not only accused, but also removed from active ministry (or *extremely* limited) as a result of allegations, regardless of when they occurred, or without due process considerations similar to that of the criminal courts. The allegations were, in some cases, said to have been reasonably substantiated, and therefore the cleric was removed, with no opportunity for rebuttal. Sometimes, clerics were removed prior to substantiation simply because it was in the midst of the crisis. Because of the extreme cases, the Church enacted a no tolerance policy, to which these clerics vehemently respond as follows:

> [Interview response]
>
> *Some of my attitudes came in the early days of my priesthood. I was an assistant to pastors who lived a double standard. One had five motels, got a girl pregnant. Some of the novels of Andrew Greely didn't help my attitude toward sexuality.*
>
> [Open-ended survey response # 1]
>
> *. . . I was reconciled and "forgiven" by my Diocesan Bishop, who in 2002 withdrew that "forgiveness" and denied my rehabilitation "for the good of the church" i.e. to protect himself and church money. He succeeded in neither*

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[69] *Matthew 7*:1-6; 12

[Open-ended survey response # 2]

You will not understand the problems of the Church, without investigating the Church itself . . .

[Open-ended survey response # 3]

Your survey adds insult to injury, salt to the wound another nail in the cross to one who is trying to live a holy life having been abandoned by Bishops, priests and church with cold calculation; dropped like a rock, never an effort of any kind of charity or reconciliation, have they ever heard of the parable of the lost sheep.[70]

Note that there is also cultural language and imagery embedded in the responses - speaking of forgiveness, nail in the cross (referring to the crucifixion of Christ), the lost sheep – all references to parables from Jesus, or experiences in the life of Jesus as it is believed that he lived to die for the salvation to humankind.

The following excerpts from interviews further illustrate what these accused clerics think the "real problem" is. These justifications remove focus from the wrongfulness of sexually abusive behaviors.

Not to give an excuse for anything, but . . . is not easy sometimes to give input or feedback in this terribly wounded situation without it sounding like shifting the personal responsibility or a lack of empathy. Please understand this is not my intention. The broken clergy often medicated their pain in any number of ways including with alcohol, food, and/or sex, - including the abuse of minors. This does not and should not in any way diminish personal responsibility. But it was

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[70]*Luke 15: 1-6*

> *well known that in many cases Bishops were not protecting abusive clergy, but rather those good old boy senior pastors who needed associates in their big prosperous parishes and thus the Bishops kept a steady stream of clerical bodies going in and being carried out of very difficult and extremely abusive situations.*

The example above is of a priest who realizes that what he is saying could be interpreted as him not assuming responsibility, but he feels almost compelled to condemn the condemners. He seems to be saying "If only the leaders had done things differently in the past, this 'crisis' would have been avoided." But this cleric is not speaking about *his* actions and what might have stopped him from sexually abusing a minor. He is externalizing blame.

Yet another accused cleric, while condemning the hierarchy recognizes that appearing angry may not be of service to his case. He prefaces his statement by stressing that he is *not* angry, but he then proceeds to show his annoyance with the effects of the Dallas Charter – the zero tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse.

> *I don't feel angry at the institution. I am saddened by the way my Bishop and other bishops have treated me and others, after public knowledge of abuse. I meet periodically with other "Dallased" priests and all are shunned by the episcopacy. I vowed if my accusation and public embarrassment could in any way help the church, I want to help as to prevent this in the future. Also, I am surprised, given the lack of institutional support, that more accused priests don't commit suicide – a strong initial tendency* [once accused and removed from ministry].

This cleric intimates that the damage done by the allegation and response of the hierarchy is exemplary of the Church has of forsaking the accused as members of the Roman Catholic institution.

Another example of this sense of feeling abandoned comes from a priest who denies having sexual interactions with a young woman when she was a minor. He says,

> *. . .And the institution, even though it paid for my attorneys and my salary, emotionally, the Bishop never came out to see me. The retired Bishop did, and he'd ask me, you know "How you feeling?" and I said, "Abandoned." Then*[the Bishop in service] *has his secretary call me up and invite me to lunch, and I said* [to himself] *"Feck that!" If he has to be told that one of his priests out there is hurting and struggling with this thing, then . . .*

It is not enough to condemn the hierarchical leaders of the Church for their response to the scandal of abuse. Accused clerics also held Church leaders responsible for what could only be called "poor socialization" to the life of the priesthood. They seem to be saying that poor seminary preparation is the problem. According to the accused priests, if each man had been adequately trained to the realities of the life, he may have been able to make better choices in terms of whether or not to actually receive the *Sacrament of Holy Orders*, or even better adjust to loneliness and realities of the life of celibate chastity. No *one* cleric said that the vow of celibate chastity was the actual problem, but rather what was taught about the realities of this particular cultural practice. Examples are as follows:

> [Open-ended survey response]
>
> *Openness in seminary and spiritual direction were missing before ordination.*

[Interview]

In entering the seminary at the age of 13 (1951), we were told we were not allowed to date because we could lose our religious vocation. If you date you could be dismissed from the seminary. It would show that you didn't have a religious vocation. You were told also that you could not have "special" friendship. If you did, you were suspect.

[Open-ended survey response]

In the context that my seminary training did not deal with issues of sexual identity in what I now consider a healthy manner (basically it was not dealt with at all), celibacy was presented in the context of a legal obligation.

These statements are not verified as fact, but rather presented here as perceptions of the problem as it has been manifested in the lives of the responding clerics. The problem, in this instance, is the responsibility of the Church leaders to adequately train men for the priesthood – or so the accused priests are saying.

As discussed earlier in the analysis, social interaction deficiencies were minimally different between accused and non-accused priests overall. When there were differences, particularly related to the realities of living in active ministry, the *I & B* findings show that accused clerics were 11-15% less likely to seek advice or help from peers for work or personal problems (*Table 25*). Following is one cleric talking about his process of coming to a sense of isolation that he felt he was not prepared to handle in seminary:

When I was first ordained, my classmates were not nearby, and I was not real close personally with anyone. We [classmates] *rarely got together. In my first*

> *assignment, it was still a honeymoon. The loneliness and personal frustrations took a back seat to the excitement of ministry. In my second assignment, reality hit hard. It took a few years and a crisis where a priest friend was essential in his assistance to realize the absolute importance of intimate (non sexual) priest friendships.*

This poor preparation might actually first be experienced as a result of the structure of parish ministry. Priests live with only one or two others (if in a group at all today), and they are given much more responsibility than when they were on summer leave from the seminary, cutting grass at their home parish.

> *One of the major factors in my downfall was not having frequent contact with fellow clergy. Isolation is a reality in a very rural area. Since being accused and having gone through a treatment program I now have various tools to utilize in dealing with life issues and can now relate to others in an appropriate manner.*

This priest *now* identifies his problem as one of social interaction deficiencies. He uses the clinical structure to help him understand how he came to be in the stigmatic place he was in at the time of the interview. Part of this, though, is shifting some of the responsibility to the fact that he was given a "rural" ministry. He does not say that he did not reach out to others. Rather, he is passively "isolated."

If clerics do not speak about feeling isolated, then they do speak about being abused themselves – not sexually, but emotionally psychologically, and sometimes physically by their pastors, especially in their early assignments. They experience a shock between the loving communal seminary setting and the more isolated and "horrific" experiences of active ministry.

> *Also there is no mention of how pastors treated their associate (priest).Some pastors were emotionally abusive of their associates. The pastor (some) let their associate know that the rectory (priest's house) was his place. As a result the associate feel that it was his home. In many cases there were tensions in the house. At that time pastors ruled and associates had no say. This led to many problems for the associate, especially loneliness.*

It is not the actual ministry that was problematic. Rather, it was the abuse by church leaders, the "blind eye" of higher-ups aware of (non-sexually) abusive priests; no oversight, or "quality control" as some professions may call it.

So these justifications, along with excuses, are employed in order for the cleric to protect against self-blame. This is a particularly tricky place to be for one who is held as a moral exemplar while still being undeniably human and living within a subculture that acknowledges the reality of sin, and the possibility for redemption. As Sykes and Matza (1957) wrote, ". . . the delinquent represents not a radical opposition to law-abiding society but something more like an apologetic failure, often more sinned against than sinning in his own eyes." (p667). This is clearly evident in this previous example. But the reliance on any process that deflects blame for something that one has *actually* done is not consistent with the principle of seeking forgiveness in the Catholic subculture. If one admits to an action and recognizes it as wrong or sinful, assuming full responsibility is a part of the process of redemption.

It is inevitable that the techniques of neutralization used by priests for any deviance, including the sexual abuse of minors, will be rooted in the culturally specific vocabularies of motive. The vocabularies may be *misunderstood or selfishly employed,*

but they allow an accused priest to manage the stigma that interferes with his own personal narrative, while stripping him of his revered master status. The cultural threads, represented in a flawed theology here interwoven with the various excuses and justifications for one's actual or alleged behavior, are clearly expressed in a portion of this interview:

> *The Church . . . the whole thing about our faith is that our God embraced the flesh, the human flesh, body in Jesus of Nazareth, and honored it so that human flesh is good, because God saw it as good for God's son, so it is good. So everything is touched with grace. So the Church – even when you come out of the mother's womb you are stained with Original Sin– so rather than go down the road of grace following grace, we said "ah, sin followed sin" and big trouble from the getgo, so you're constantly struggling to get out of this mess rather than saying "hey, we're in good shape," because Jesus said we're in good shape, because Jesus put us in good shape. He took on our heart and our mind and our flesh and our story, and the Church should be <u>validating</u> human flesh, not, not torturing it. .*
>
> *. . . why can't we rejoice in being human and sexual – Jesus had very little to say about the whole issue anyway, when the woman was caught in adultery and was about to be stoned, He said "well, look at yourselves." And that's what the Church should have done. Don't throw the first stone because you have issues in your own life. And The Church threw stones at wretches like me and said, "get the hell out of here." As if they think that's going to resolve it. So I think the Church needs to explore the wonder of the incarnation of God in the flesh, not the devil . . .*

As pointed out earlier, these techniques of neutralization are not necessarily used independently of one another, and no one type of offending cleric uses one type or another more often. Evidence to this effect is actually best summarized by the cleric above in his discussion of God's relationship to the body and how this relates to sexual sin.

But why would any accused priest even respond to questions about his allegations? If he is truly repentant and can see the harm he *has* done, to the victim, to the community, to the Church, to his brotherhood, then what purpose could it serve to publicly engage these neutralizations which, in and of themselves, could bring further harm to others while helping the cleric to feel better about himself? These words of an earnest cleric might best explain the reasons for responding:

> *. . . The reason is simply to help restore the Church to a period of peace, reconciliation and outreach to all who have been hurt (victims) the People of God who have been scandalized as Catholics or non-believers and the abusing priests whose actions were very wrong but who need healing forgiveness too and in some cases--another chance to help good come from evil. It's all about redemption and Jesus' message of life--for saint or that of a sinner.*

This attitude may come too late, for those who have already been victimized directly and indirectly, by the harm of sexual abuse to the body, mind and spirit. It may similarly be too late to repair, community trust and the image of the Church.

Chapter 8 Summary and Conclusions

Is one who has engaged in "despicable acts," or at least been accused of them, beyond our help? Is there a way to understand the behavior of accused priests within the context of their religious master status as this interacts with their "other" narratives? Do we cast the first stone once a priest is accused of sexual abuse? Or does the Catholic framework, if not distorted, allow for a different approach to understanding and addressing the sin, the sinner, and those sinned against? The evidence from the sample included in these analyses seems to indicate that accused clerics are not "lost causes." They need not be cast off by society at large, nor by the Catholic subculture within which they have offended. What is still not clear is how to *prevent* sexual abuse by priests, or by adults in general, whether their victims are adults, adolescents or children.

If the Roman Catholic Church in the United States is interested in resolving or, at the least, addressing the problem within its own ranks, it might be useful to focus on more integrative formation approaches in seminary, as well as continued development post-ordination. Given that priests are in the care of and have access to the resources of the Church, a new approach to formation would not be difficult to implement. What form these programs take, whether required or voluntary, are up to Church leaders, based on evidence derived from this study, the larger *Causes & Context Study*, as well as the continually evolving literature on sexual offending in general. The Church has access to these priests directly as they progress through seminary, and continued integrative formation may be the key, referencing the integration model of formation, which focuses on all aspects of development in transparent and non-stigmatizing ways. The risk factors identified in this study are not unique to priests, sex offenders, or priest offenders. What is

unique is the opportunity of the Church to redirect the potential negative effects of risk factors. It is the case that the offenders in this sample and those in the 2004 John Jay College study, *Understanding the Nature and Scope of the Sexual Abuse of Minors in the United States, 1950 -2002,* came through seminary prior to the era of self exploration of the 1960s – 1970, during which time not much thought was given to an integrative approach to seminary formation.

No *single* sweeping approach will prevent abuse, but denying entry to homosexual priests will certainly *not* stop this problem. It seems evident that, although heterosexual orientation is preferred, it must be recognized that individuals who have pursued ordination have not had a clear sense of their own sexual identity, be it homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual. More thorough self-understanding may be a key element in addressing the issue of sexual impropriety with minors, and possibly other sexual or social interaction problems that arise for men in the priesthood.

The answer is not to eliminate or deny access to individuals identifying as gay. In terms of Church standards, the problem is not in a person's identity, but in his actions. There is a saying that we must "love the sinner, but not the sin." But sin is inevitable – so do those who sin become the demons who fell prey to temptation? One answer is to better understand the meaning of sexual abstinence in real human terms. But we cannot point to celibacy as the problem either, because there is evidence that many lay men in the secular world engage in sexual abuse and are married to, or sexually active with, other adults. Also, there are celibate people in the secular and religious worlds who never abuse.

One direction for further research would be to compare members of the clergy in who have engaged in other forms of deviance (sexual and non-sexual), as is investigated in

the clinical segment of the *Causes & Context Study*. It would be particularly helpful to include behaviors that are considered "compulsive" as well as those that are only wrong in light of subcultural norms – such as like having an affair with a parishioner, or overcharging for performing services at weddings and funerals. We must remember that the discussion of deviance includes a spectrum of behaviors that have different values in various contexts. This includes sexual behavior, from abstinence to compulsion, from coital to oral, and from fetishized to romantic interactions.

In a non-religious context, when a married person has an affair, it is only a violation of a civil contract. In a religious setting, it is a moral violation. Each framework also has mechanisms for addressing the problem of adultery. What is unique about the case of sexual abuse of minors is that it is wrong, in general, to have sexual interactions with those who are not of the adult age of consent – or the age of 18 years old. But there are some gray areas regarding 16 and 17-year-olds in "relationships" with individuals ranging in age from 18 to mid 30s. Some of these relationships have occurred without incident, and some with dire consequences for the adult partner, even if the adult is just older than 18 years old. Regardless, what seems to be the greater issue is, as a cleric was previously quoted as saying, is that priests are entrusted with the care of the moral well-being of the laity. This role is in the context of the norm that priests are perceived to be sexually abstinent and safe individuals with whom the laity can have deep, honest, and intimate conversations; that they are repositories of secrets shared in order to obtain forgiveness from God.

Although Roman Catholic officials in the United States have been proactive in writing and implementing policies addressing responses to both accused priests and

victims, these are, to date, for the purposes of providing avenues for victims to lodge allegations and/or receive psychological help; educating community leaders and families as to the signs of abuse; and continuously collecting data on the effectiveness of the implementation of these policies, as well as the scope of the problem of abuse. It is imperative that we pay close attention to the details of the cultural and/or sub cultural context in which individuals are making sense of their own identity and behavior. Each incident is situated, and narratives are prioritized and weighted within larger cultural norms.

An analysis of the problem of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church could yield information applicable to other institutional settings in which a clear master status is sought and achieved by individuals. If the socialization or acculturation process for achievement of the status is similar to that of priests, then a similar pattern of disconnect or feeling distanced from the individual beneath or consumed by the role could occur, and could be used to explain away or neutralize any deviance. This statement may be more applicable to individuals who are responsible for, or are in some way leaders of, groups or institutions with some element of religiosity or culture of specific principles addressing sexual morality, not unlike the Catholic Church's subcultural context. So these findings may be most applicable in other religious contexts, whether Christian or otherwise. The problem is that many of these leaders are not trained or socialized in the same or even a similar manner as Catholic priests.

Additionally, the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church lends itself to mending the relationship with a higher authority (God), rather than with the victim or individual-level relationships. This may contribute to the distorted thinking or

interpretation of culturally defined concepts related to sin or deviance. If other institutions are willing to release their data or open themselves to further study, a comparative analysis could be implemented. In other contexts in which there is supposed to be a social and cultural *absence* of sexuality or sexual behavior – specifically for adults charged with the care of young people, such as teachers, coaches, or Scout leaders, there is a different social restriction regarding interactions between adults and young people not specifically framed by the religious morality imbued in the role of the priest. Even when adults are in charge of the care and well-being of young people who are at the dawn of their sexual discovery (or at least at the early stages of pubertal development), more classic neutralizations may be employed for sexually inappropriate behavior, ones that rely on dominant gender norms regarding gender and sexuality depending on who is the victim and who is the accused. The "Mrs. Robinson" or "cougar" phenomenon contributes to the myth that all boys should cut their sexual teeth by having sex with an older woman. The culture of "May-December" romances, particularly for men older than their female partners, sometimes by as much as 50 years, clearly indicate that age disparities are not to be entirely scoffed. But these sexual interactions are considered appropriate for individuals who have at least begun sexual development physically, although not necessarily emotionally, or those who are enhanced physically by medicinal aids, even when they are beyond the age that was once thought to be sexually possible for old men.

The question arises as to the judiciousness of the assessments of guilt for many of the men involved in what some might call a pandemic of reporting of behaviors that occurred years prior to disclosures that came forward in the wake of the Geoghan case. Could all of those behaviors have been considered sexual abuse *at the time they occurred* (in the 1950s, 60s, 70s, and even 80s), or is it possible that they were inappropriate only for

a priest? Of course, this question is specific to interactions with adolescents, those who have reached the age of sexual exploration, an age that in contemporary times is more clearly defined as off limits to those who are technically adults, even when young people are seemingly precocious. It is possible that behaviors genuinely initiated by adolescents were initiated *because* the priest was a trusted individual. The question then arises as to why the priest did not exercise good or better judgment, rather than giving in to intimacy expressed through sexual gratification.

This study was not an exploration of when it is acceptable for two individuals to have sexual encounters. The contemporary net of acceptable sexual behaviors has been widened, although this has been limited by the notion of consent, which can be socially malleable when a young person has reached the onset of sexual exploration but not the age of consent. Nor is this study meant to pass judgment on men, priests or not, who have been accused of, or who have admitted to, the sexual abuse of a minor. Rather, this study is meant to shed more light on the social problem of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church by gaining an understanding of the process of identity-making as it relates to behavior for Catholic priests, specifically in the absence of any notable psychological factors that would indicate priests to be more susceptible to sexually abusing minors than other men. If anything is clear from the findings presented in these analyses, it is that the problem of the sexual abuse of minors in *not unique* to the priesthood or the Catholic Church. Furthermore, it would be a serious failure of responsibility to young people if the findings related to a culturally specific understanding of identity and behavior were not explored further in other institutional contexts.

Appendix A

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

Preamble

The Church in the United States is experiencing a crisis without precedent in our times. The sexual abuse of children and young people by some priests and bishops, and the ways in which we bishops addressed these crimes and sins, have caused enormous pain, anger, and confusion. Innocent victims and their families have suffered terribly. In the past, secrecy has created an atmosphere that has inhibited the healing process and, in some cases, enabled sexually abusive behavior to be repeated. As bishops, we acknowledge our mistakes and our role in that suffering, and we apologize and take responsibility for too often failing victims and our people in the past. We also take responsibility for dealing with this problem strongly, consistently, and effectively in the future. From the depths of our hearts, we bishops express great sorrow and profound regret for what the Catholic people are enduring.

We, who have been given the responsibility of shepherding God's people, will, with God's help and in full collaboration with our people, continue to work to restore the bonds of trust that unite us. Words alone cannot accomplish this goal. It will begin with the actions we take here in our General Assembly and at home in our dioceses/eparchies.

The damage caused by sexual abuse of minors is devastating and long-lasting. We reach out to those who suffer, but especially to the victims of sexual abuse and their families. We apologize to them for the grave harm that has been inflicted upon them, and we offer them our help for the future. In the light of so much suffering, healing and reconciliation are beyond human capacity alone. Only God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness can lead us forward, trusting Christ's promise: "for God all things are possible" (Mt 19:26).

The loss of trust becomes even more tragic when its consequence is a loss of the faith that we have a sacred duty to foster. We make our own the words of our Holy Father: that sexual abuse of young people is "by every standard wrong and rightly considered a crime by society; it is also an appalling sin in the eyes of God" (Address to the Cardinals of the United States and Conference Officers, April 23, 2002).

The Conference of Bishops has been addressing the evil of sexual abuse of minors by a priest and, at its June 1992 meeting, established five principles to be followed (cf. Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Restoring Trust*, November 1993). We also need to recognize that many dioceses and eparchies did implement in a responsible and timely fashion policies and procedures that have safeguarded children and young people. Many bishops did take appropriate steps to address clergy who were guilty of sexual misconduct.

Let there now be no doubt or confusion on anyone's part: For us, your bishops, our obligation to protect children and young people and to prevent sexual abuse flows from the mission and example given to us by Jesus Christ himself, in whose name we serve.

Jesus showed constant care for the vulnerable. He inaugurated his ministry with these words of the Prophet Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord. (Lk 4:18)

In Matthew 25, the Lord made this part of his commission to his apostles and disciples when he told them that whenever they showed mercy and compassion to the least ones, they showed it to him.

Jesus extended this care in a tender and urgent way to children, rebuking his disciples for keeping them away from him: "Let the children come to me" (Mt 19:14). And he uttered the grave warning about anyone who would lead the little ones astray, saying that it would be better for such a person "to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Mt 18:6).

We hear these words of the Lord as prophetic for this moment. With a firm determination to resolve this crisis, we bishops commit ourselves to a pastoral outreach to repair the breach with those who have suffered sexual abuse and with all the people of the Church. We renew our determination to provide safety and protection for children and young people in our church ministries and institutions. We pledge ourselves to act in a way that manifests our accountability to God, to his people, and to one another in this grave matter. We commit ourselves to do all we can to heal the trauma that victims/survivors and their families are suffering and the wound that the whole Church is experiencing. We acknowledge our need to be in dialogue with all Catholics, especially victims and parents, around this issue. By these actions, we want to demonstrate to the wider community that we comprehend the gravity of the sexual abuse of minors.

To fulfill these goals, our dioceses/eparchies and our national conference, in a spirit of repentance and renewal, will adopt and implement policies based upon the following.

To Promote Healing and Reconciliation with Victims/Survivors of Sexual Abuse of Minors

ARTICLE 1. Dioceses/eparchies will reach out to victims/survivors and their families and demonstrate a sincere commitment to their spiritual and emotional well-being. The first obligation of the Church with regard to the victims is for healing and reconciliation. Where such outreach is not already in place and operative, each diocese/eparchy is to develop an outreach to every person who has been the victim of sexual abuse* as a minor by anyone acting in the name of the Church, whether the abuse was recent or occurred many years in the past. This outreach will include provision of counseling, spiritual assistance, support groups, and other social services agreed upon by the victim and the diocese/eparchy. In cooperation with social service agencies and other

churches, support groups for victims/survivors and others affected by abuse should be fostered and encouraged in every diocese/eparchy and in local parish communities.

Through pastoral outreach to victims and their families, the diocesan/eparchial bishop or his representative will offer to meet with them, to listen with patience and compassion to their experiences and concerns, and to share the "profound sense of solidarity and concern" expressed by our Holy Father in his Address to the Cardinals of the United States and Conference Officers. This pastoral outreach by the bishop or his delegate will also be directed to faith communities in which the sexual abuse occurred.

ARTICLE 2. Dioceses/eparchies will have mechanisms in place to respond promptly to any allegation where there is reason to believe that sexual abuse of a minor has occurred. Dioceses/eparchies will have a competent assistance coordinator to aid in the immediate pastoral care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other church personnel. Dioceses/eparchies will also have a review board, the majority of whose members will be lay persons not in the employ of the diocese/eparchy. This board will assist the diocesan/eparchial bishop in assessing allegations and fitness for ministry, and will regularly review diocesan/eparchial policies and procedures for dealing with sexual abuse of minors. Also, the board can act both retrospectively and prospectively on these matters and give advice on all aspects of responses required in connection with these cases. The procedures for those making a complaint will be readily available in printed form and will be the subject of periodic public announcements.

ARTICLE 3. Dioceses/eparchies will not enter into confidentiality agreements except for grave and substantial reasons brought forward by the victim/survivor and noted in the text of the agreement.

To Guarantee an Effective Response to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors

ARTICLE 4. Dioceses/eparchies will report an allegation of sexual abuse of a person who is a minor to the public authorities. They will cooperate in their investigation in accord with the law of the jurisdiction in question.

Dioceses/eparchies will cooperate with public authorities about reporting in cases when the person is no longer a minor.

In every instance, dioceses/eparchies will advise victims of their right to make a report to public authorities and will support this right.

ARTICLE 5. We repeat the words of our Holy Father in his Address to the Cardinals of the United States and Conference Officers: "There is no place in the priesthood or religious life for those who would harm the young."

When the preliminary investigation of a complaint (cc. 1717-1719) against a priest or deacon so indicates, the diocesan/eparchial bishop will relieve the alleged offender promptly of his ministerial

duties (cf. c. 1722). The alleged offender will be referred for appropriate medical and psychological evaluation, so long as this does not interfere with the investigation by civil authorities. When the accusation has proved to be unfounded, every step possible will be taken to restore the good name of the priest or deacon.

Where sexual abuse by a priest or a deacon is admitted or is established after an appropriate investigation in accord with canon law, the following will pertain:

- Diocesan/eparchial policy will provide that for even a single act of sexual abuse (see Article 1, note *) of a minor — past, present, or future — the offending priest or deacon will be permanently removed from ministry. In keeping with the stated purpose of this Charter, an offending priest or deacon will be offered professional assistance for his own healing and well-being, as well as for the purpose of prevention.
- In every case, the processes provided for in canon law must be observed, and the various provisions of canon law must be considered (cf. *Canonical Delicts Involving Sexual Misconduct and Dismissal from the Clerical State*, 1995; cf. Letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, May 18, 2001). These provisions may include a request by the priest or deacon for dispensation from the obligation of holy orders and the loss of the clerical state, or a request by the bishop for dismissal from the clerical state even without the consent of the priest or deacon. For the sake of due process, the accused is to be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel. When necessary, the diocese/eparchy will supply canonical counsel to a priest or deacon.
- If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied (e.g., for reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the offender is to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly, to wear clerical garb, or to present himself publicly as a priest.

ARTICLE 6. While the priestly commitment to the virtue of chastity and the gift of celibacy is well known, there will be clear and well-publicized diocesan/eparchial standards of ministerial behavior and appropriate boundaries for clergy and for any other church personnel in positions of trust who have regular contact with children and young people.

ARTICLE 7. Each diocese/eparchy will develop a communications policy that reflects a commitment to transparency and openness. Within the confines of respect for the privacy and the reputation of the individuals involved, dioceses/eparchies will deal as openly as possible with members of the community. This is especially so with regard to assisting and supporting parish communities directly affected by ministerial misconduct involving minors.

To Ensure the Accountability of Our Procedures

ARTICLE 8. To assist in the consistent application of these principles and to provide a vehicle of accountability and assistance to dioceses/eparchies in this matter, we authorize the establishment of an Office for Child and Youth Protection at our national headquarters. The tasks of this Office will include (1) assisting individual dioceses/eparchies in the implementation of "safe environment" programs (see Article 12 below), (2) assisting provinces and regions in the development of

appropriate mechanisms to audit adherence to policies, and (3) producing an annual public report on the progress made in implementing the standards in this Charter. This public report shall include the names of those dioceses/eparchies which, in the judgment of this Office, are not in compliance with the provisions and expectations of this Charter. This Office will have staffing sufficient to fulfill its basic purpose. Staff will consist of persons who are expert in the protection of minors; they will be appointed by the General Secretary of the Conference.

ARTICLE 9. The work of the Office for Child and Youth Protection will be assisted and monitored by a Review Board, including parents, appointed by the Conference President and reporting directly to him. The Board will approve the annual report of the implementation of this Charter in each of our dioceses/eparchies, as well as any recommendations that emerge from this review, before the report is submitted to the President of the Conference and published. To understand the problem more fully and to enhance the effectiveness of our future response, the National Review Board will commission a comprehensive study of the causes and context of the current crisis. The Board will also commission a descriptive study, with the full cooperation of our dioceses/eparchies, of the nature and scope of the problem within the Catholic Church in the United States, including such data as statistics on perpetrators and victims.

ARTICLE 10. The membership of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse will be reconstituted to include representation from all the Episcopal regions of the country.

ARTICLE 11. The President of the Conference will inform the Holy See of this Charter to indicate the manner in which we, the Catholic bishops, together with the entire Church in the United States, intend to address this present crisis.

To Protect the Faithful in the Future

ARTICLE 12. Dioceses/eparchies will establish "safe environment" programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses/eparchies will make clear to clergy and all members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse.

ARTICLE 13. Dioceses/eparchies will evaluate the background of all diocesan/eparchial and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors. Specifically, they will utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies. In addition, they will employ adequate screening and evaluative techniques in deciding the fitness of candidates for ordination (cf. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Program of Priestly Formation*, 1993, no. 513).

ARTICLE 14. When a cleric is proposed for a new assignment, transfer, residence in another diocese/eparchy or diocese/eparchy in a country other than the United States, or residence in the local community of a religious institute, the sending bishop or major superior will forward and the receiving bishop or major superior will review — before assignment — an accurate and complete description of the cleric's record, including whether there is anything in his background or service

that would raise questions about his fitness for ministry (cf. National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conference of Major Superiors of Men, *Proposed Guidelines on the Transfer or Assignment of Clergy and Religious*, 1993).

ARTICLE 15. The Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse and the Officers of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men will meet to determine how this Charter will be conveyed and established in the communities of religious men in the United States. Diocesan/eparchial bishops and major superiors of clerical institutes or their delegates will meet periodically to coordinate their roles concerning the issue of allegations made against a cleric member of a religious institute ministering in a diocese/eparchy.

ARTICLE 16. Given the extent of the problem of the sexual abuse of minors in our society, we are willing to cooperate with other churches and ecclesial communities, other religious bodies, institutions of learning, and other interested organizations in conducting research in this area.

ARTICLE 17. We pledge our complete cooperation with the Apostolic Visitation of our diocesan/eparchial seminaries and religious houses of formation recommended in the Interdicasterial Meeting with the Cardinals of the United States and the Conference Officers in April 2002. Unlike the previous visitation, these new visits will focus on the question of human formation for celibate chastity based on the criteria found in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*. We look forward to this opportunity to strengthen our priestly formation programs so that they may provide God's people with mature and holy priests. Dioceses/eparchies will develop systematic ongoing formation programs in keeping with the recent Conference document *Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests* (2001) so as to assist priests in their living out of their vocation.

Conclusion

In the midst of this terrible crisis of sexual abuse of young people by priests and bishops and how it has been dealt with by bishops, many other issues have been raised. In this Charter we focus specifically on the painful issue at hand. However, in this matter, we do wish to affirm our concern especially with regard to issues related to effective consultation of the laity and the participation of God's people in decision making that affects their well-being.

We must increase our vigilance to prevent those few who might exploit the priesthood for their own immoral and criminal purposes from doing so. At the same time, we know that the sexual abuse of young people is not a problem inherent in the priesthood, nor are priests the only ones guilty of it. The vast majority of our priests are faithful in their ministry and happy in their vocation. Their people are enormously appreciative of the ministry provided by their priests. In the midst of trial, this remains a cause for rejoicing. We deeply regret that any of our decisions have obscured the good work of our priests, for which their people hold them in such respect.

It is within this context of the essential soundness of the priesthood and of the deep faith of our brothers and sisters in the Church that we know that we can meet and resolve this crisis for now and the future.

An essential means of dealing with the crisis is prayer for healing and reconciliation, and acts of reparation for the grave offense to God and the deep wound inflicted upon his holy people. Closely connected to prayer and acts of reparation is the call to holiness of life and the care of the diocesan/eparchial bishop to ensure that he and his priests avail themselves of the proven ways of avoiding sin and growing in holiness of life.

By what we have begun here today and by what we have stated and agreed to,

We pledge most solemnly to one another and to you, God's people, that we will work to our utmost for the protection of children and youth.

We pledge that we will devote to this goal the resources and personnel necessary to accomplish it.

We pledge that we will do our best to ordain to the priesthood and put into positions of trust only those who share this commitment to protecting children and youth.

We pledge that we will work toward healing and reconciliation for those sexually abused by clerics.

We make these pledges with a humbling sense of our own limitations, relying on the help of God and the support of his faithful priests and people to work with us to fulfill them.

Above all we believe, in the words of St. Paul as cited by Pope John Paul II in April 2002, that "where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more" (Rm 5:20). This is faith's message. With this faith, we are confident that we will not be conquered by evil but overcome evil with good (cf. Rm 12:21).

This charter is published for the dioceses/eparchies of the United States, and we bishops commit ourselves to its immediate implementation. It is to be reviewed in two years by the Conference of Bishops with the advice of the National Review Board created in Article 9 to ensure its effectiveness in resolving the problems of sexual abuse of minors by priests.

* Cf. c. 1395, §2. Notice that a sexual offense violative of §2 need not be a complete act of intercourse, nor should the term necessarily be equated with the definitions of sexual abuse or other crimes in civil law. "Sexual abuse [includes] contacts or interactions between a child and an adult when the child is being used as an object of sexual gratification for the adult. A child is abused whether or not this activity involves explicit force, whether or not it involves genital or physical contact, whether or not is initiated by the child, and whether or not there is discernible harmful outcome" (Canadian Conference of Bishops, From Pain to Hope, 1992, p. 20). If there is any doubt about whether a specific act fulfills this definition, the writings of recognized moral theologians should be consulted and, if necessary, the opinion of a recognized expert be obtained (*Canonical Delicts Involving Sexual Misconduct and Dismissal from the Clerical State*, 1995, p. 6). We also note that diocesan/eparchial policies must be in accord with the civil law.

The document *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). It was approved by the full body of U.S. Catholic bishops at its June 2002 General Meeting and has been authorized for publication by the undersigned.

Msgr. William P. Fay

General Secretary, USCCB

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Appendix B

SEXUAL ABUSE of MINORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH:
UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM
March 24, 2008

Most Reverend Name
Diocese
Address

Respected . . .

We are sending this follow-up letter about the Identity and Behavior survey because we now realize that the situation is more complex than we anticipated it to be. This letter is written to clarify the precise group of priests (or "universe") to whom the anonymous survey should be distributed. If you (or your designee from the diocese) have already had discussions with us with about the survey, we apologize for this duplication of effort.

We emphasize that the research team has no knowledge of the identities of those individuals to whom the surveys have been given or will be given. It is our purpose to provide each and every priest who has been removed from ministry following an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor, and who has not been reinstated, an opportunity to contribute to the Causes & Context study. Hence these points of clarification:

1) **Removed from ministry:** We have asked that the survey be given to any priest who has been removed from active ministry following an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor, **and who has not been returned to active ministry**, but who remains in contact with the diocese. The survey is only for those individuals who fit all three criteria:

    a. Removed from ministry following and allegation of sexual abuse of a minor
    b. Not yet returned to active ministry
    c. Still in contact with the diocese

    Some of the individuals who fit these criteria may no longer be priests, but we would ask that survey be distributed to this group as well.

2) **Accusations of the abuse of an adult**: the survey should not be given to those with allegations of sexual abuse of an adult.

3) **Determination of the allegation**: the survey should be sent to a priest removed from ministry, if he meets any of the following criteria **and** if this can be done without undue difficulty on your part:

    a. the case of the priest removed has not been concluded by the Vatican,
    b. the case of the priest has been concluded by the Vatican and the priest has been dismissed from the clerical state,

c. the case of the priest has been concluded by the Vatican and the priest has been laicized,
d. the case of the priest has been concluded by the Vatican and the priest has been commended to a life of prayer and penance,
e. the case was presented and the priest was dismissed a number of years ago
f. the priest is from another diocese, has been removed from ministry following sexual abuse of a minor and now lives in your diocese.

The reason we asked that you only send a packet to a priest who remains in the diocese, and not to those who live outside the diocese is because we did not want to burden each diocese with the task of locating those priests who had left the diocese. If you are able to send survey packets to those outside the diocese without undue difficulty on your part, **we would appreciate it**.

Cases that do not meet our criteria are as follows:

1. f the case of the priest has been concluded by the Vatican and the priest has been returned to ministry by the direction of the Vatican, a packet should **NOT** be mailed to him.
2. If the case of the priests is such that he was accused, put on leave, and then reinstated by after an investigation without the cases being sent to the Vatican (the priests maintained they were falsely accused), the packet should **NOT** be mailed to him.

If you find the priest suitable for active ministry, then he is not different to us from others in active ministry.

In summary, we wish to provide each priest who has been removed from ministry after an allegation of abuse of a minor, and who has not been reinstated, the opportunity to contribute to the Causes & Context Study.

It is our hope that this information is useful for determining how to participate in this segment of the Causes & Context study. If you have sent back your response card, and, given these clarifications, would now like to receive additional surveys, please contact the research team as indicated below.

With respect,

Karen J. Terry, PhD
Principal Investigator
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
899 Tenth Avenue
New York, NY 10019
causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu

Margaret (Maggie) Smith
Causes & Context Study
(Phone) 212-237-8963
(Fax) 212-237-8030
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Appendix C

Instructions

Please answer the questions based on your experience and perceptions of yourself prior to being told of an allegation of sexual abuse against you. For most answers, select only one response unless directed otherwise. All survey data is completely confidential. In your response to any question, please do not use any proper name or specific identifying references.

Demographics

2. Race/Ethnicity
- [ ] American Indian or Alaska Native
- [ ] Asian or South Asian
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] Hispanic
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific islander
- [ ] White
- [ ] Other race/ethnicity: _____

3. Your age: _____

4. Number of siblings: _____

5. Do you have siblings or other relatives currently in religious life?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No ***(Skip to Q. 7)***

6. If yes to previous question, please indicate the religious role and relationship of the individual to you. (If the individual is a sibling, please indicate if s/he is older or younger than you)

_____

7. Number of family members active in church ministry *priorto your entering the seminary*: _____

8. In addition to seminary education, have you completed an additional professional degree? ***(Please check all that apply.)***
- [ ] Master's degree
- [ ] Doctoral degree
- [ ] Law degree
- [ ] Medical degree
- [ ] Other: _____

9. What year did you complete the above degree? _____

10. Which type of seminary did you attend?
- [ ] A seminary that solely prepares men for ordination as Catholic priests
- [ ] A theologate (i.e., Catholic University)

11. What was the highest level of education completed by your mother?

[ ] Some primary
[ ] Grade school
[ ] Some High School
[ ] High school graduate
[ ] Some College
[ ] College graduate
[ ] Post graduate
[ ] Trade or Clerical School
[ ] Unknown

12. What was the highest level of education completed by your father?

[ ] Some primary
[ ] Grade school
[ ] Some High School
[ ] High school graduate
[ ] Some College
[ ] College graduate
[ ] Post graduate
[ ] Trade or Clerical School
[ ] Unknown

Perception of self

13. The following is a scale measure of how you saw and felt about yourself ***as an individual in the world***, or as a ***member of society prior to being aware of the sexual abuse made against you***. Please choose the response that best describes your agreement with the statement presented

	Always	**Often**	**No opinion**	**Sometimes**	**Never**
a.) I felt that I was a person of worth					
b.) I felt that I had a number of good qualities					
c.) I felt that I was a complete failure as an individual					
d.) I was able to do things as well as most other people					
e.) I did not have much to be proud of as an individual					
f.) I had a positive attitude toward myself					
g.) I was satisfied with myself as a member of society					
h.) I wish I could have had more respect for myself					
i.) As a person, I felt useless					
j.) I thought I was not a good person at all					

Pre-clergy Life

14. How old were you when you decided to enter the priesthood?

15. What single factor contributed most to your decision to enter the priesthood?

16. Prior to entering the seminary, did you have romantic dating partners (boyfriends or girlfriends)?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

17. Prior to entering the seminary, did you engage in any sexually intimate behavior with males or females (anything ranging from kissing and/or petting to intercourse or penetration)?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No ***(Skip to Q. 19)***

18. If yes to previous question, were these behaviors with
[ ] Males only
[ ] Females only
[ ] Both males and females
[ ] Not applicable

19. Prior to entering the seminary, did you have a sense of your sexual identity (meaning that you were aware that you were specifically attracted to men and/or women)?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No ***(Skip to Q. 21)***

20. If yes to previous question, please choose the identity that best applied prior to entering the seminary:
[ ] Heterosexual
[ ] Homosexual
[ ] Bisexual
[ ] Asexual
[ ] Not sexually aware
[ ] Other:

Seminary Life

21. In what country did you attend seminary? _____

22. If you attended seminary in the United States, in what state? _____

23. What year did you enter the seminary? _____

24. How old were you when you entered the seminary? _____

25. Did you have friends who entered seminary at the same time as you?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

26. Of the following, what kinds of seminary training did you receive in preparation for a life of celibate chastity? ***(Select all that apply)***
[ ] Instruction about of sexuality and sexual development
[ ] Guidance about types of sexual behaviors- appropriate and inappropriate
[ ] Guidance about friendship in a context of celibacy (with men and women)
[ ] Training for ministerial relationships with parishioners
[ ] Education in the moral and ethical dimensions of celibacy
[ ] All of the above [ ] None of the above

27. A detailed discussion of which of the following topics was included in the program of preparation for celibate chastity while you were in seminary? ***(Select all that apply.)***

[ ] Appropriate boundaries for friendships with parishioners and other members of the ministry
[ ] Gender identity and homosexuality
[ ] How to understand the emotional dependency a priest may inspire in members of his parish
[ ] All of the above
[ ] None of the above

28. Your seminary curriculum included specific classroom preparation for which of the following? ***(Select all that apply.)***

[ ] Coping with loneliness
[ ] Supervision of lay employees
[ ] Financial and real estate management
[ ] The physiology of human sexuality
[ ] Moral responsibility to the well-being of the laity
[ ] All of the above
[ ] None of the above

29. What form did the preparation for clerical life take when you were in seminary?

[ ] Classroom instruction only
[ ] Classroom instruction and spiritual advisement
[ ] Classroom instruction and parish assignments
[ ] Classroom instruction, spiritual advisement, and parish assignments

Perception of priestly role

30. The following is a scale measure. **When you think about your career in active ministry**, please choose the response that best describes how you saw and felt about yourself ***in your role as a member of the clergy***.

	Always	**Often**	**No opinion**	**Some times**	**Never**
a.) I was a priest of worth					
b.) As an active priest, I had a number of good qualities					
c.) I felt that I was a complete failure as priest					
d.) I was able to perform my duties as well as most other priests					
e.) As a priest, I do not have much to be proud of					
f.) I took a positive attitude toward role as priest					
g.) I was satisfied with my performance as a priest					
h.) I wished that I had more respect for my clerical role as a priest					
i.) As a priest, I felt useless					
j.) I thought that I was not a good priest at all					

Ordination and Life in the clergy

31. In what year were you ordained?

32. How many assignments have you had since being ordained?

33. During any of your assignments, did you ever do any of the following? ***(Select all that apply.)***
- [ ] Teach human sexuality to middle school/junior high school students
- [ ] Teach human sexuality to high school students
- [ ] Counsel couples as to issues of sexual intimacy
- [ ] Counsel adolescents individually on issues of sexual intimacy
- [ ] Often listen to individuals talk about sexual behavior in confession
- [ ] All of the above
- [ ] None of the above

34. Are you comfortable discussing issues related to sexual behavior?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

35. Were you taught in seminary that "celibate" is a sexual identity?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

36. Do you believe that "celibate" is a sexual identity?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

37. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

38. Do you feel that people can have a sexual identity without engaging in sexual behaviors (anything ranging from kissing and/or petting to intercourse or penetration)?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

39. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

41. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

42. How do you feel about secular society's changes in the attitudes towards sexuality in your lifetime?

43. Do you feel that your own attitudes about sexuality have changed since becoming active in ministry?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

44. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

45. Has your understanding of your own sexual identity changed since becoming active in ministry?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

46. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

47. Have you ever talked to members of your family about your sexual identity?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

48. Have you ever talked to friends who are not members of the clergy about your sexual identity?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

49. Have you ever talked to peers in the clergy about your sexual identity?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

50. Have you ever talked to a spiritual advisor about your sexual identity?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

51. Have you ever talked to your superiors about your sexual identity?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

52. Have you ever participated in social activities related to a specific sexual identity? (e.g. parade, rally, book club, art opening)
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

53. Have you ever gone to places that are geared towards a specific sexual identity? (e.g. bookstore, art gallery, restaurant, bar, community center)
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

Perceptions by Peer Priests

54. The following is a scale measure. ***When you think about your career in active ministry***, please choose the response that best describes how ***your peers in the clergy perceived you in your career as a priest prior to public knowledge of the accusation against you.***

	Always	**Often**	**No opinion**	**Some times**	**Never**
a.) Fellow priests saw me as a religious leader of worth					
b.) My peers in the clergy viewed me as a priest with a number of good qualities					
c.) Fellow priests viewed me as a failure in my role as a religious leader					
My peers in the clergy perceived me as one who could do things as well as most other priests					
e.) Fellow priests were not proud of me as a religious leader					
f.) My peers in the clergy had a positive attitude toward me in my role as a priest					
g.) Fellow priests were satisfied with my performance as a priest					
h.) Fellow priests wished they could have had more respect for me as a priest					
i.) My peers in the clergy saw me as useless in my role as a priest					
j.) My peers in the clergy did not think that I was a good priest at all					

Relationships with Peer Priests

When responding to the following questions, please choose the option that best answers the question in ***reference your experiences while you were in active ministry.***

55. Did you generally have positive work relationships with your fellow priests?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

56. Did you have positive friendships with your fellow priests?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

57. When you became aware of the mistakes of fellow priests, did you learn from them?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

58. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

59. Did you seek advice from your fellow priests when you were dealing with challenges of a personal nature?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

60. Did you seek advice from your fellow priests when you were uncertain how to proceed in matters related to your role as a priest?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

61. Did you ever confront a fellow priest who you knew to be engaging in behaviors that were morally inappropriate?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

62. Did you ever report a fellow priest who you knew to be engaging in behaviors that were morally inappropriate?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

Perceptions by Superiors

63. The following is a scale measure. ***When you think about your career in active ministry***, choose the response that best describes how ***your superiors in clerical life perceived you in your career as a priest prior to public knowledge of the accusation against you.***

	Always	**Often**	**No opinion**	**Sometimes**	**Never**
a.) My superiors saw me as a religious leader of worth					
b.) My superiors in the clergy viewed me as a priest with a number of good qualities					
c.) My superiors viewed me as a failure in my role as a religious leader					
d.) My superiors perceived me as one who could do things as well as most other priests					
e.) My superiors were not proud of me as a religious leader					
f.) My superiors had a positive attitude toward me in my role as a priest					
g.) My superiors were satisfied with my performance as a priest					
h.) My superiors wished they could have had more respect for me as a priest					
i.) My superiors saw me as useless in my role as a priest					
j.) My superiors did not think that I was a good priest at all					

Relationships with Superiors

When responding to the following questions, please choose the option that best answers the question in ***reference your experiences while you were in active ministry.***

64. Did you generally have positive work relationships with your superiors?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

65. Did you have positive friendships with your superiors?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

66. If you were made aware of the mistakes of superiors, did you learn from them?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

67. Please elaborate on your response to the previous question.

68. Did you seek advice from your superiors when you were dealing with challenges of a personal nature?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

69. Did you seek advice from your superiors when you were uncertain how to proceed in matters related to your role as a priest?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

70. Did you ever confront a superior who you knew to be engaging in behaviors that were morally inappropriate?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

71. Did you ever report a superior who you knew to be engaging in behaviors that were morally inappropriate?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

72. Do you believe that your superiors have adequately provided institutional support for your development as a priest?
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

73. What institutional support is available to help your development as a priest?

Parishioners

74. Do you think that parishioners see priests as having a sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual), even though they have taken a vow of celibacy?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

75. How do you think your parishioners perceived your sexual identity?

[ ] Heterosexual
[ ] Homosexual
[ ] Bisexual
[ ] Asexual
[ ] Other:

Parishioners Perceptions

76. The following is a scale measure. ***When you think about your career in active ministry***, please choose the response that best describes how you believe that your ***parishioners perceived you in your career as a priest prior to public knowledge of the accusation against you.***

	Always	**Often**	**No opinion**	**Some times**	**Never**
a.) My parishioners viewed me as a religious leader of worth					
b.) My parishioners saw me as a priest with a number of good qualities					
c.) My parishioners viewed me as a failure in my role as a religious leader l					
d.) Parishioners perceived me as one who could do things as well as most other priests					
e.) Parishioners were not proud of me as a religious leader					
f.) My parishioners had a positive attitude toward me in my role as a priest					
g.) Parishioners were satisfied with me as a priest					
h.) My parishioners wished they could have had more respect for me as a priest					
i.) My parishioners viewed me as a useless priest					
j.) My parishioners did not think that I was a good priest					

Additional Comments

77. Please add any additional comments here:

Participation in Follow-up Interview

Thank you! We very much appreciate your participation. If you respond "Yes" to the following affirmation, please inform your Vicar so that he will contact with the research team and help coordinate the interview so as to maintain anonymity/confidentiality.

78. Please indicate your response to the following statement: *"I wish to participate in an in person interview at a later date, which, at my request, may be conducted either confidentially or anonymously. Anonymous interviews will utilize a screen, and consent to participation will be witnessed by a third party."*

[ ] Yes- Anonymous [please inform your vicar]
[ ] Yes- Confidential [please inform your vicar]
[ ] No

Appendix D

Instructions

Please answer the questions **based on your experience and perceptions prior to the implementation of the Dallas Charter and Norms (2002) for addressing accusations of sexual abuse**. For most answers, select only one response unless directed otherwise. All survey data is completely confidential. In your response to any question, please do not use any proper name or specific identifying references**.**

The only difference with the Non-Accused survey is the historical reference in the instructions, noted in bold above.

Appendix E

1. Demographics:
    a. Into what racial/ethnic category would you put yourself?
    b. What is your age?
    c. What is you highest completed level of education?
    d. What type of seminary did you attend and where?
    e. In what year were you ordained?
2. What led you to the seminary?
3. Many come to seminary with a particular understanding of the work of a priest. How would you describe your understanding of priestly duties (sacramental or ministerial or both) upon entering the seminary?
4. Did your understanding of priestly duties change over time?
    a. If YES,
        i. In what ways?
        ii. How did you come to manage your this change in your understanding of priestly roles?
    b. If NOT, what do you think helped to maintain your understanding?
5. Can you talk about your personal experience transitioning form a lay person to a priest?
6. Were you a parish priest?
    a. If NOT, talk about your role as a priest and experiences in that role in the church (or discuss the many roles / experiences you had over time)?
    b. If YES,
        i. at what point in your career did you become one,
        ii. and for how long?
        iii. Please talk about your experiences as a parish priest. [duties, relationships, major events, setbacks, celebrations, regular activities]
7. Please tell me a bit about, what you observed in terms of priest interactions with parish families.
8. Can you describe ***your*** interactions with families it the parishes in which you served.
9. In your different relationships, how formal were you with others?

10. How formal were others with you? [Other priests, Superiors, Parishioners, Friends, Family] Did you ever try to differentiate or distinguish yourself as a person from yourself as a priest?

    a. If YES, how?

    b. If NOT, please talk about . . .

11. Did you ever take time for yourself outside your role as a priest?

    a. If YES, in what ways?

    b. If NOT, please talk about . . .

12. Have you ever tried to distinguish yourself as a priest from other priests in your parish/diocese?

    a. If YES, how so?

    b. If NOT, please discuss . . .

13. Did you actively take on certain duties in the church

    a. If YES,

        i. please describe the duties / roles?

        ii. What were your reasons for assuming the duties / roles

    b. If NOT, could you discuss reasons?

Now I would like to talk about allegations/accusers/situations . . .

14. Please describe the situation that brought you to inactive ministry . . .
    a. Talk about Individual[s] alleging abuse
    b. # of individuals that have made allegations against you.
    c. Age[s] / Sex[es]
    d. When reported?
15. How did you come to know the individuals[s] making allegations?

16. Did you have regular interactions with the individual?

    a. If YES, please describe the nature of these interactions

        i. in the context of regular church activities, outside of those activities,

        ii. your initiation? the family's? as a result of the nature of your role as a priest? ?

    b. If NOT, how did you come to encounter them on the occasion of the alleged abuse?

17. Did you anything special for the individual – [buy them candy, magazines, video games, reward them with movies, or taking them to sporting events or even weekend retreat]

18. Please discuss the circumstances of the alleged abuse –

    a. When is it said to have occurred? [year, time of day, how long after your ordination]

b. Where? [physical environments of all events] – [what brought you together with the accuser in this environment, how often?]

c. What were the circumstances under which you were alone with the child?

d. How long was it supposed to have occurred? [# of times, period of time, event duration]

e. What was said to have happened? [actual acts, interactions]

19. Can you talk about the ways in which individuals can manage a commitment to priestly life yet lapse?

20. What did you know about the lapses of other priests? [referencing ANY types of deviance - alcohol abuse? Sexual behaviors with adults? Drugs, financial misappropriation – not just sexual abuse]

21. How did you see others coping with their own behaviors that were unpriestlike?

22. Could you please talk about other behaviors that you have engaged in that could be considered unpriestlike? [alcohol abuse? Sexual behaviors with adults? Drugs, financial misappropriation].

    a. Did you feel about your own lapses?

    b. How did you understand your lapse[s]/ deal with or manage feelings about your lapse[s]?

23. How do your current circumstances shape what you see as your place in society today?

24. Do you have any additional comments?

25. Do you have any questions?

I would like to thank you for your participation today. Should you have follow-up questions, concerns, or additional comments, you may contact any member of the research team by calling 888-470-2808; 212-237-8963; or by emailing causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu . Please reference your identification number if you choose to be in touch.

For those who may not want to talk about actual allegation, proceed with the following:

26. Would you please talk about the "relationships" that you had with families and children in your role as a priest?

    a. 'were you spending time with kids, if so where, doing what types of activities', where? etc

    b. did you ever do special things for those with whom you interacted [buy candy, magazines]

27. Have your relationships with people changed as result of accusation? If so how, with whom and how? If not, which ones, why do you think not?

Appendix F

The only difference for the Non accused is found in the last portion of the interview, when non-accused clerics are asked to talk about the following

Now I would like to talk about KNOWN allegations/accusers/situations . . .

1. Do you know of any cases in your diocese of priest accused of the sexual abuse of a minor?

    a. If YES, describe the situation. Talk about what you know of the individual[s] alleging abuse [# of individuals accusing, age[s] when reported? Sex[es]

    b. If no, SKIP TO NEXT SECTION –

2. Talk about the capacity in which the accused priest may have come to know the individuals[s] making allegations?

3. Talk about whether or not the accused priest had regular interactions with the individual[s]?

    a. If so in what capacity?

    b. If not, how did the involved parties come to the situation in which the abuse was alleged to have occurred?

4. Talk about what you noticed in regards to the nature of the relationships between the accused priest and the minor[s]. Did the accused do anything special for the individual[s]

5. Please discuss what you know of the circumstances of the alleged abuse. When is it said to have occurred [year, time of day] Where? [physical environments of all events] What were the circumstances under which the accused was alone with the minor[s]? Over what period of time was the abuse alleged to have occurred? What was said to have happened?

6. Please talk about the ways in which individuals can manage a commitment to priestly life yet suffer lapses (not only that of sexual abuse)?

7. What did you know about the lapses (other than sexual abuse) of other priests? [examples - alcohol abuse? Sexual behaviors with adults? Drugs, financial misappropriation]

8. How did you see others coping with their own behaviors that were unpriestlike?

9. Could you please talk about other behaviors that you have engaged in that could be considered unpriestlike?

10. How did you feel about your own lapses?

11. How did you manage feelings about your lapse[s]?

12. How did you understand your lapses in relation to your role as a priest?

Additional comments?

Appendix G

**SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH:
UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM**

February 15, 2008

«BISHOP»
«DIOCS»
Address

Your Eminence / Your Excellency,

Enclosed you will find copies of research materials for the Causes & Context study that are now being distributed to all dioceses and eparchies in the United States. As we have said when we have made presentations to you on the progress of the research, the results of this work have great value not only the Catholic Church, but to other social institutions, and, most profoundly, to our understanding of human behavior. We have been and continue to be grateful for your cooperation with this complex and sometimes burdensome research process.

These copies are for your personal review, so that you will be aware of their content. It is not necessary for you to respond to us, but if you wish to do so, you may contact us directly by telephone, fax or email:

[TELEPHONE] [FAX] [EMAIL]

The Identity and Behavior Survey. We are sending a box containing sealed packets to the Vicar General or Vicar for Priests in each diocese. An introductory letter to the Vicar will explain what we are asking – that a packet be given to each priest who has been removed from ministry as a result of an allegation and who remains in the diocese. Each priest who receives a packet will have the option of responding anonymously or with confidentiality. If the Vicar decides not to distribute the surveys, we ask that he return a response card to us. If we receive a positive response from the Vicar and some priests in a diocese, we will, later in the spring, send a box of very similar surveys to be distributed to a small number of priests in active ministry. At the end of the survey, we suggest that individual priests may be willing to be interviewed by members of our research team. If this is the case, we would work out the details with the Vicar for an individual diocese, or with a person whom you designate. The interview can be done with or without the researcher learning the identity of the interviewee.

The Seminary Leaders Survey. This survey will be mailed directly to all individuals available now who held a position of Dean, Chief Executive Officer or Spiritual Director of a diocesan major seminary between 1960 and 2000. Each respondent will have the option of replying anonymously or having their signed response kept confidential. We will apply all the protections of human subjects that were used in the Nature and Scope research – numerical coding, consents kept in a locked, secure space, and then destruction of any and all materials that could be linked to an individual respondent.

It is important to us that everyone we communicate with about this research understands that all responses are voluntary and confidential, and that any respondent may return a survey anonymously. The consents for each survey provide for a confidential response or an anonymous one.

Appendix H

RESPONSE CARD for VICARS – on cardstock, back-to-back, copies in color, to be returned in a postage paid # 10 envelope.

front side . . .

1. I will distribute the survey packages for the Causes & Contexts research **YES** **NO**
2. I will notify the research group if any priest is willing to be interviewed. **YES** **NO**
3. This diocese has no priests who qualify for this survey **YES** **NO**
4. I will need an additional **_____(#)** of survey packets to distribute.

over→

Backside . . .

Most direct postal address: _____

_____

_____

Direct telephone: _____

Direct email address: _____

Appendix I

SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

May 19, 2008

«Vicar_General»
«DIOCS». . .
«ADD1»

Respected «Vicar_General»,

In February, the research team at John Jay College sent a letter, response card and package of surveys to the Bishop and to the Vicar General of the «DIOCS». The package of surveys was delivered on «Date_delivered» and signed for by [NAME]. Our hope was that you would cooperate in the distribution of the surveys to priests not in active ministry as the result of an allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor. Although most dioceses have responded, we have not yet heard from your diocese. The research team would like to reach out to you once again for your help in this project, and hope you will return the enclosed card expressing your willingness to participate. Please contact us if you would like to discuss any aspect of this research – by phone at 212-237-8963 or via email at Causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu

Some dioceses have expressed reservations about contacting inactive priests directly. In response, we have sent stamped envelopes with the Causes & Context return address to these dioceses and they have simply affixed the names and addresses, inserted the research packet, and sent them out. If the issue of direct contact with inactive priests is a concern to you, please let us know and we will send stamped envelopes to you. Please let us know if there are other accommodations we can make to ensure your participation with the research.

We emphasize that the survey of priests is an important step in the research affirmed by the Body of Bishops at their meeting in Washington, DC, in November of 2005, to study the "Causes and Context" of the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. This survey will provide valuable data for those who are working diligently to respond to this issue within the Catholic Church. The research results are also very valuable to those in the forensic, academic and treatment communities. In order to carry out this research and give full assurance of anonymity of those who are willing to complete the surveys, we again ask for your cooperation with the following:

- Distribution of a survey packet to each priest with whom you have contact who has been removed from ministry as the result of an accusation of sexual abuse of a minor.
- Notification to the research team of individual accused priests who indicate that they are willing to participate in a follow-up interview.
- Distribution, at a later date, of the Identity and Behavior Survey to a sample of priests in your diocese who are in active ministry.

An additional sheet with Points of Clarification and answers in included with this letter. We do still hope that you find this research to be faithful to the mission of the Catholic Church, and decide to distribute these packets to those priests with whom you still have contact who have had an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor, and have been removed from active ministry as a result. Again, we would be grateful if you could return the enclosed card in the envelope provided indicating whether or not you have chosen to distribute these surveys, and thus, to assist us with the research. We will follow up on this letter in mid-June.

Appendix J

SEXUAL ABUSE of MINORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

Date
Dear Father,

This letter describes a survey that is an important step in understanding the situations framing the "Causes and Context" of the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. The John Jay research team is aware that some priests removed from ministry as the result of an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor have not had the opportunity to share their experiences. We know that several dioceses are not distributing surveys to inactive priests. We would like all priests with allegations to be provided the opportunity to receive and complete a survey. The anonymous survey will provide valuable new data not only to those who are struggling to respond to the damage within the Catholic Church, but to those in the forensic, academic, and treatment communities.

Anonymity. The research team sent sealed envelopes to the Justice for Priests and Deacons organization, at which point the envelopes were labeled, and the packet forwarded to you. The research team in no way knows to whom the surveys have been sent. Responses to the survey will not be linked to any individual priest.
We ask you to read the enclosed materials – a Research Participation Statement and a Survey of Identity and Behavior. If you are willing to help us with this research, please affirm your participation, and complete and return the survey. It is important for you to understand that the research team has no knowledge of the identities of those to whom the surveys have been given. If you prefer to take the survey online, you may do so at the following link: http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/survey/idbehaviorsurvey.htm.

It is our hope that you find this research to be faithful to the mission of the Catholic Church, and we will be grateful for your cooperation. If you wish to participate in an anonymous follow-up interview, please call us at 888-470-2808, Monday – Friday 11:00 – 5:00pm Eastern Daylight Time in order to schedule an interview appointment. Or, if you have an anonymous email address, you may email us from at causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu. In order to assure you the option of remaining anonymous, please only refer to yourself as an inactive priest seeking an interview. At that time you will receive an identification number.

If you have already received a survey through a diocesan contact, and you would be interested in talking with us further in an interview with a member of our research team, but do not wish to schedule through the diocesan contact, please communicate with the research team by calling or emailing as noted above. If you desire not to complete a survey, but are willing to participate in an interview, please also contact us as described.

Appendix K

**SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH:
UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM**

25 June 2008

«VG_Revised»
Diocese
Address

Dear Name:

This is a follow-up letter to thank you for agreeing to participate in the distribution of the Identity and Behavior survey to accused, inactive priests. It is now time for your continued participation in assisting in the distribution of the survey to active priests. Distributing this survey to **active priests who have never been accused of the sexual abuse of a minor** will provide valuable *comparative* data not only to those who are struggling to respond to the damage within the Catholic Church, but to those in the forensic, academic and treatment communities. We have included ten (10) survey packets. In order to carry out this research and give full assurance of anonymity of those who are willing to complete the surveys, we are asking for your cooperation with the following:

- Distribution of a survey packet to priests who:
    - Have NOT been accused of the sexual abuse of a minor
    - Are at least 55 years of age, and
    - Have had substantial parish experience

- Notification to the research team of individual priests who indicate that they are willing to participate in a follow-up interview. Participation in the follow-up interview is solicited at the end of the survey, and we explain that participation can be either confidential or anonymous.

Along with this letter there are packets that include the statement of purpose of the study, cover letter to the participating priest, form to consent either anonymously or confidentially to participation, and an Identity and Behavior survey, similar to the first distribution. The survey may also be taken online and is found at http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/extra2/ccactivesurvey.doc

Again, we hope that you find this research to be faithful to the mission of the Catholic Church, and decide to continue your assistance with the distribution of these packets to active priests.

Identity & Behavior Letter of Invitation to Accused Clerics

Appendix L

SEXUAL ABUSE of MINORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

Letter of invitation to participate

October 2008

Dear Father,

This letter describes a survey that is an important step in the research affirmed by the Body of Bishops at their meeting in Washington, DC, in November of 2005, to study the "Causes and Context" of the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. Most of what we know about sexual abuse of youth by adults is based on what we know about offenders in the general population. This anonymous survey will provide valuable new data not only to those who are struggling to respond to the damage within the Catholic Church, but to those in the forensic, academic, and treatment communities.

We ask you to read the enclosed materials – a Research Participation Statement and a Survey of Identity and Behavior. If you are willing to help us with this research, please affirm your participation, and complete and return the survey. It is important for you to understand that the research team has no knowledge of the identities of those to whom the surveys have been given, except that you are a part of the sample of active priests who have not been accused of sexual abuse. If you prefer to take the survey online, you may do so at the following link: ***http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/survey/idbehaviorsurvey.htm.***

It is our hope that you find this research to be faithful to the mission of the Catholic Church, and we will be grateful for your cooperation. If you would be interested in talking further in an interview with a member of our research team, please communicate this willingness to us. You may set up a telephone or in-person interview by calling 888-470-2808 Monday-Friday between 12:00-5:00 pm Eastern Daylight Savings time. Or, you may email from an anonymous account to **causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu** to schedule the interview.

Appendix M

SEXUAL ABUSE of MINORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

Letter of invitation to comparison sample of active priests

October 2008

Dear Father,

This letter describes a survey that is an important step in the research affirmed by the Body of Bishops at their meeting in Washington, DC, in November of 2005, to study the "Causes and Context" of the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. Most of what we know about sexual abuse of youth by adults is based on what we know about repeat offenders in the general population. By participating in this anonymous survey, you will provide data allowing for a *comparison* with responses of accused priests. **You are a part of a sample of priests who have NOT been accused of the sexual abuse of a minor.** The contrasting data is both new and valuable, not only to those who are struggling to respond to the damage within the Catholic Church, but to those in the forensic, academic, and treatment communities.

We ask you to read the enclosed materials – a Research Participation Statement and a Survey of Identity and Behavior. If you are willing to help us with this research, please affirm your participation, and complete and return the survey. It is important for you to understand that the research team has no knowledge of the identities of those to whom the surveys have been given, except that you are a part of the sample of active priests who have not been accused of sexual abuse. If you prefer to take the survey online, you may do so at the following link: **http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/extra2/ccactivesurvey.doc.htm.**

It is our hope that you find this research to be faithful to the mission of the Catholic Church, and we will be grateful for your cooperation. If you would be interested in talking further in an interview with a member of our research team, you may do so by using the following link: **http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/extra2/activepriestsinterview.htm**. If you prefer to speak with us directly, you may set up a telephone interview by calling 888-470-2808 Monday-Friday between 1:00-4:00 pm Eastern Daylight Savings time. Or, you may email from an anonymous account to **causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu** to schedule the interview.

Appendix N

INFORMED CONSENT

This study is being conducted by an independent research team from John Jay College of Criminal Justice / CUNY & Fordham University

RESEARCH PARTICIPATION STATEMENT – Identity and Behavior Surveys

This letter explains the motivation for the study of the causes and context of the sexual abuse of children by Catholic priests in the last half-century. The survey you have been asked to complete has several purposes that are outlined below. It is important that you read that statement of purpose and give careful consideration to whether you find common ground with this project. Your participation in this study is **completely voluntary**. If you believe you can support the purposes of this project, please complete the affirmation and continue to the survey. You have the right to receive counseling if, as a result of the survey questions, you become distressed or uncomfortable. If the survey causes distress, please stop and do not continue. You may skip any question or withdraw from the study without penalty. This survey should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. This survey has been sent to all dioceses with a request to distribute to all priests **who are not in active ministry following an allegation of sexual abuse**.

Statement of Purpose

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, issued by the Conference of Catholic Bishops in June of 2002, calls for the promotion of healing and reconciliation within the Catholic Church in the United States, sets out a basis for an effective response to future allegations of abuse and establishes procedures for accountability for church leaders. A study of the causes and context of the sexual abuse of minors by priests is a central part of this response.

The research team from John Jay College and Fordham University has been selected to do this study. We seek information and assistance from priests for the purpose of understanding the events we are studying and church response, as well as perceptions of change in the role of the priest in the church. We hope that you will reflect on your life as a priest and help us by sharing what you know and understand. The survey may be completed on paper or in an online version. We are grateful for your consideration. **This research has great value, not only for the Catholic Church, but for all who work for the safety of children and the health of community.**

Resources for Counseling

This survey has the potential to cause emotional distress. If, as a result of your participation in this survey, you find that you want to talk to someone who has professional training to assist those who have been involved in sexual abuse, you have that right. We suggest that you seek assistance should you come to feel distressed by your participation in this study.

Anonymity of survey information

If you respond by checking to signal your affirmation, and use the reply envelope, your response will be anonymous. If you complete the online version of the survey, the IP or internet address from which your response is sent is not recorded. Data from this survey will be integrated in the study, and presented in aggregate (summary) form, first to the Body of Bishops, and then in a formal report.

We recognize that this survey may be time-consuming to complete, and we are grateful for the assistance you are willing to give us.

If you have any follow-up questions about this content of this interview, or the study, please contact the researchers at:

Causes & Contexts Study
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
555 West 57th Street, Suite 607
New York, NY 10019
(Telephone) 212-237-8963.
(Fax) 212-237-8030
Causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you may contact the John Jay College Institutional Review Board at:

Office of the Institutional Review Board
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
899 Tenth Avenue, Suite 330
New York, NY 10019
(Telephone) 212-237-8961
irb@jjay.cuny.edu

PLEASE RETAIN THIS STATEMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS.

February 2008

Affirmation of Consent for Research.

If you understand and support the purpose of this research, please indicate your agreement by checking the appropriate box below.

"I have read the Research Participation Statement and understand each of its sections. I confirm that I understand that this is an anonymous survey and I understand both the purpose and the procedures for this study and wish to participate."

(Select only one.)

Yes **No**

No answers will be linked back to the respondent. When elaborating your response to any question, please do not use specific identifying references.

Please return this affirmation of consent form with your survey in the reply envelope.

Appendix O

INFORMED CONSENT – Identity and Behavior Survey Comparison Sample

This study is being conducted by an independent research team from John Jay College of Criminal Justice / CUNY & Fordham University

RESEARCH PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

This letter explains the motivation for the study of the causes and context of the sexual abuse of children by Catholic priests in the last half-century. The survey you have been asked to complete has several purposes that are outlined below. It is important that you read that statement of purpose and give careful consideration to whether you find common ground with this project. Your participation in this study is **completely voluntary**. If you believe you can support the purposes of this project, please complete the affirmation and continue to the survey. You have the right to receive counseling if, as a result of the survey questions, you become distressed or uncomfortable. If the survey causes distress, please stop and do not continue. You may skip any question or withdraw from the study without penalty. This survey should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. This survey has been sent to all dioceses with a request to distribute to **all priests who have never been accused of allegation of sexual abuse.**

Statement of Purpose

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, issued by the Conference of Catholic Bishops in June of 2002, calls for the promotion of healing and reconciliation within the Catholic Church in the United States, sets out a basis for an effective response to future allegations of abuse and establishes procedures for accountability for church leaders. A study of the causes and context of the sexual abuse of minors by priests is a central part of this response.

The research team from John Jay College and Fordham University has been selected to do this study. We seek information and assistance from priests for the purpose of understanding the events we are studying and church response, as well as perceptions of change in the role of the priest in the church. We hope that you will reflect on your life as a priest and help us by sharing what you know and understand. The survey may be completed on paper or in an online version. We are grateful for your consideration. **This research has great value, not only for the Catholic Church, but for all who work for the safety of children and the health of community.**

Resources for Counseling

This survey has the potential to cause emotional distress. If, as a result of your participation in this survey, you find that you want to talk to someone who has professional training to assist those who have been involved in sexual abuse, you have that right. We suggest that you seek assistance should you come to feel distressed by your participation in this study.

Anonymity of survey information

If you respond by checking to signal your affirmation, and use the reply envelope, your response will be anonymous. If you complete the online version of the survey, the IP or internet address from which your response is sent is not recorded. Data from this survey will be integrated in the study, and presented in aggregate (summary) form, first to the Body of Bishops, and then in a formal report.

We recognize that this survey may be time-consuming to complete, and we are grateful for the assistance you are willing to give us.

If you have any follow-up questions about this content of this interview, or the study, please contact the researchers at:

Causes & Contexts Study
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
555 West 57th Street, Suite 607
New York, NY 10019
(Telephone) 212-237-8963.
(Fax) 212-237-8030
Causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you may contact the John Jay College Institutional Review Board at:

Office of the Institutional Review Board
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
899 Tenth Avenue, Suite 330
New York, NY 10019
(Telephone) 212-237-8961
irb@jjay.cuny.edu

PLEASE RETAIN THIS STATEMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS.

October 2008

Affirmation of Consent for Research.

If you understand and support the purpose of this research, please indicate your agreement by checking the appropriate box below.

"I have read the Research Participation Statement and understand each of its sections. I confirm that I understand that this is an anonymous survey and I understand both the purpose and the procedures for this study and wish to participate."

(Select only one.)

Yes **No**

No answers will be linked back to the respondent. When elaborating your response to any question, please do not use specific identifying references.

Please return this affirmation of consent form with your survey in the reply envelope.

Appendix P

**SEXUAL ABUSE of MINORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH:
UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM**

Letter of follow-up for assistance with Interviews

Date

«Vicar_General»
«DIOCS». . .
«ADD1»
Address

Respected «Vicar_General»,

We would like to thank you for your assistance in the distribution of the Identity and Behavior Survey, which is a part of the Seminary Segment of the Causes and Context Study. We have received many surveys from both samples of priest to whom dioceses have distributed the survey. We have no way of knowing from which diocese we have received surveys, as a part of the process of maintaining confidentiality. We ask, at this time, that if you have received notice from any priest to whom you sent a survey that he is interested in a follow-up interview, that you contact us for scheduling by calling 888-470-2808 or emailing causes-context@jjay.cuny.edu.

Interviews may be scheduled Monday – Friday, between 11:00am and 3:30pm Eastern Standard Time. If alternative days/times are more convenient for an interviewee, it may be best to contact us using email. When you schedule an interview, please do so by assigning the person with an identification number with the **prefix XX** (example XX01, XX02, etc). Interviews last approximately 1.5 hours.

If it is more convenient, you can simply forward the enclosed letter with this information to those priests to whom you distributed a survey (both active and inactive). They can then contact us directly to schedule the interview. We will, at all times, maintain full confidentiality with all communications.

In person interviews are possible, if the individual prefers. It may be easiest to schedule in-person interviews via email, although we are happy to speak with on the telephone regarding this matter as well. Again we thank you for your desire to assist with this important research, and we do hope to hear from you soon to schedule follow-up interviews.

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