

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

FORMULATING A RESPONSE TO BULLYING AS EXPERIENCED AND
INTERPRETED BY CHURCH OF ENGLAND CLERGY WITHIN ONE DIOCESE.

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A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Anglia Ruskin University for the
degree of Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology.

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

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This research is an investigation into the prevalence and pattern of bullying that the clergy of a single Church of England diocese experience in the course of their ministry. The purpose of this is to develop a framework for anti-bullying activity within the diocese.

This study consists of a mixed method approach in four parts. Part One is the examination of my experiences as a curate, growing out of my perception that I experienced bullying by my training incumbent. Part Two is an analysis of the current anti-bullying policy of the Church of England. Part Three is a numerical component based on the Negative Acts Questionnaire. Part Four is an interpretive phenomenological analysis of the interviews of eight clergy within the diocese. Together these parts form a significant critique of the current approach within the diocese and suggest features for an improved approach.

The findings of this study are that: there are barriers to the disclosure of bullying which can usefully be thought of as either partial or double silencing; the current anti-bullying policy does not reflect the complexity of the concept of bullying; in contrast to an official position rating bullying as rare in the church context, bullying in the diocese is not rare and is comparable to levels of bullying in other British work contexts; when clergy talk about bullying they reveal an organization with vulnerabilities to bullying offering an ineffective response.

This study formulates the key features for an alternative framework for anti-bullying measures within the context of the Church of England diocese.

Key Words: Bullying, Clergy, NAQ, FraIM, IPA, Girard.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AC Archbishops' Council

ACAS Arbitration and Conciliation Advisory Service

CIPD Chartered Institute of Personnel Development

DaW Dignity at Work

DRCS Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee

FraIM Foundation for an Integrated Methodology

IPA Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

ISSF I See Satan Fall Like Lightning

L. Location (used in reference to Kindle books).

NAQ-R Negative Acts Questionnaire-revised

PaSC Promoting a Safe Church

ABBREVIATIONS OF CATEGORIES OF NEGATIVE ACTS

NB No bullying

NC No Concern

ONE Occasional Negative Encounters

OB Occasional Bullying

PI Physical Intimidation

S Severe bullying

SB Systematic Bullying

SC Some Concern

SWC Some Work Criticism

WRB Work Related bullying

INTRODUCTION.

There is a considerable body of research examining workplace bullying. However, there is little published material explicitly relating to research in the context of a Church of England diocese. This study addresses this omission by investigating experiences of bullying described by the clergy of a single diocese. Foundational to this study is that there are negative acts which can be experienced in any workplace. Examples of these acts include offensive remarks, being ignored and aggressive gesturing. The prevalence and pattern of these negative acts can be used to provide evidence for the presence of workplace bullying (Einarsen, Hoel and Notelaers, 2009).

The research questions this study explores are:

- To what extent do the clergy of a Church of England diocese experience bullying in the course of their ministry?
- What insights can be generated by analysing the experiences participant clergy brought to mind as a result of participating in research to establish the extent of bullying?

A purpose of the study is to provide information to help the diocese as an organization to be able to respond appropriately to current insights within the field of workplace bullying. This involves building an evidence base to support the diocese's planning of anti-bullying activity and raising bullying as a significant concept for the organization. Beyond the duration of this study, my long term purpose is the integration of an effective anti-bullying strategy within the normal processes and structures of the diocese.

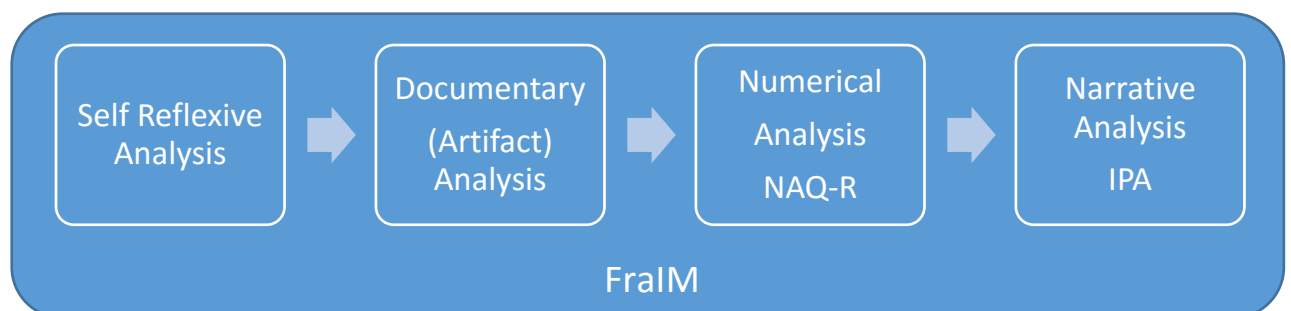
A four-part approach is taken in line with the methodology, "Frameworks for an Integrated Methodology", FraIM (Plowright, 2011). Part One is an exploration arising from my perception that I experienced bullying while I was a curate. Part Two is a documentary analysis of the Dignity at Work (Archbishop's Council, 2008) which I will shorten to DaW. This is the policy in which the Church of England grounds its response to the presence of bullying within the church. Part Three is a numerical study investigating the extent of bullying by measuring the prevalence and pattern of negative acts experienced by the clergy of the diocese. Part Four is a study of accounts of experiences brought to mind in response to participation in Part Three. These accounts are analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, IPA (Smith, Flowers and

Larkin, 2009). Together these four parts constitute whole which was formed over a six-year research process.

Parts One and Two should be considered as preparatory work that establishes the need for the empirical work in Parts Three and Four. Part One has a strong self-reflexive element and opens up my own position as an insider researcher to critique from the reader. In Part Two, I question whether DaW is an adequate response to my experiences as a curate. A key feature I draw on in this analysis is the assertion in DaW that bullying is rare in the Church of England. From my perspective, this exemplifies the unsuitability of the material it contains. Using insights from the field of workplace bullying and a model for organizational change (Lewin, 1947) I argue that Dignity at Work is an inadequate response to bullying. DaW both minimizes the significance of bullying and lacks the research base which I suggest is fundamental to an anti-bullying policy that has integrity.

Parts Three and Four address the need for empirical data. In Part Three, data is gathered through the use of the NAQ-R (Einarsen, Hoel, and Notelaers, 2009). I will demonstrate that this is a well-established quantitative tool for measuring both the prevalence and pattern of negative acts to develop a description of bullying in the diocese. However, to support a challenging process of change, the diocese needs a richer picture than numbers alone can provide so the fourth part takes a complimentary qualitative approach. Whereas, Part Three restricted respondents to describing frequencies of predetermined negative acts in the past six months, Part Four provided greater freedom for respondents to become participants and share their interpretation of experiences of their choice which they relate to bullying.

DIAGRAM (I) A FOUR PART APPROACH

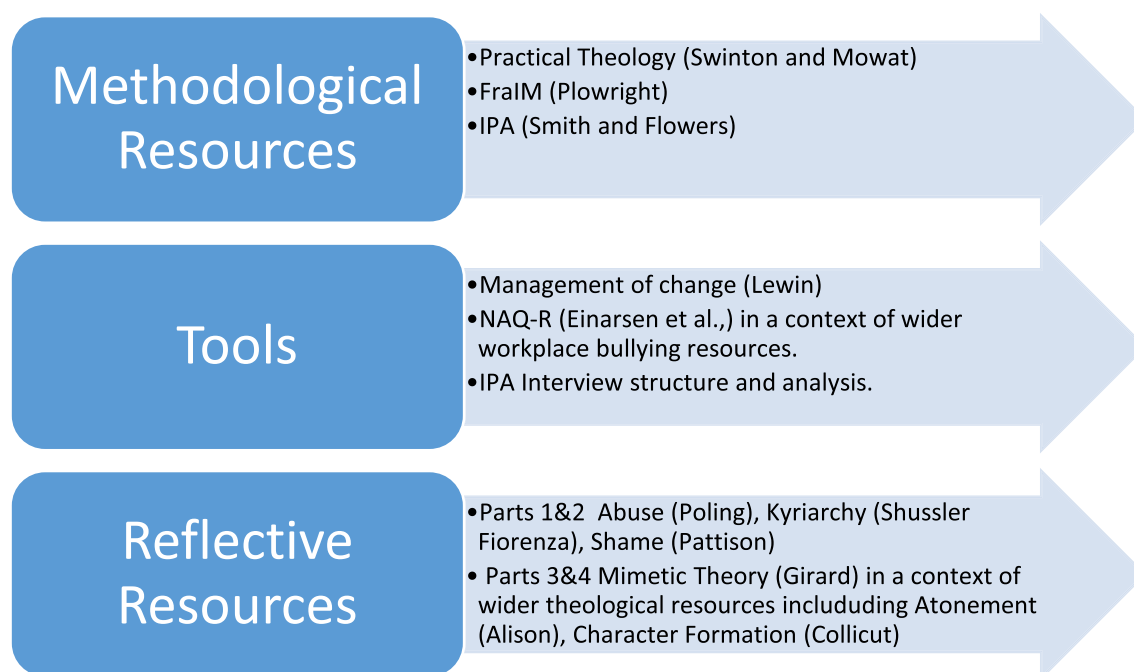


Overall the four parts of this work come together to establish what I believe to be a strong argument that the view promulgated by the House of Bishops, that bullying is rare, is out of touch with the day to day experience of clergy. Sixty-seven clergy within the diocese have considered the frequency of negative acts in their ministerial lives, 11 per cent of cases reveal the systematic experience of negative acts which can be categorised as severe bullying. In the case of eight clergy, their interpretations have been examined through interviews which reveal familiarity with, and acknowledgement of, the existence of bullying. Also present are significant indications of ambivalence in addressing bullying. I bring the insights of survey and interview together to suggest an alternative framework for anti-bullying measures within the diocese.

INTEGRATION OF THEORETICAL STRANDS

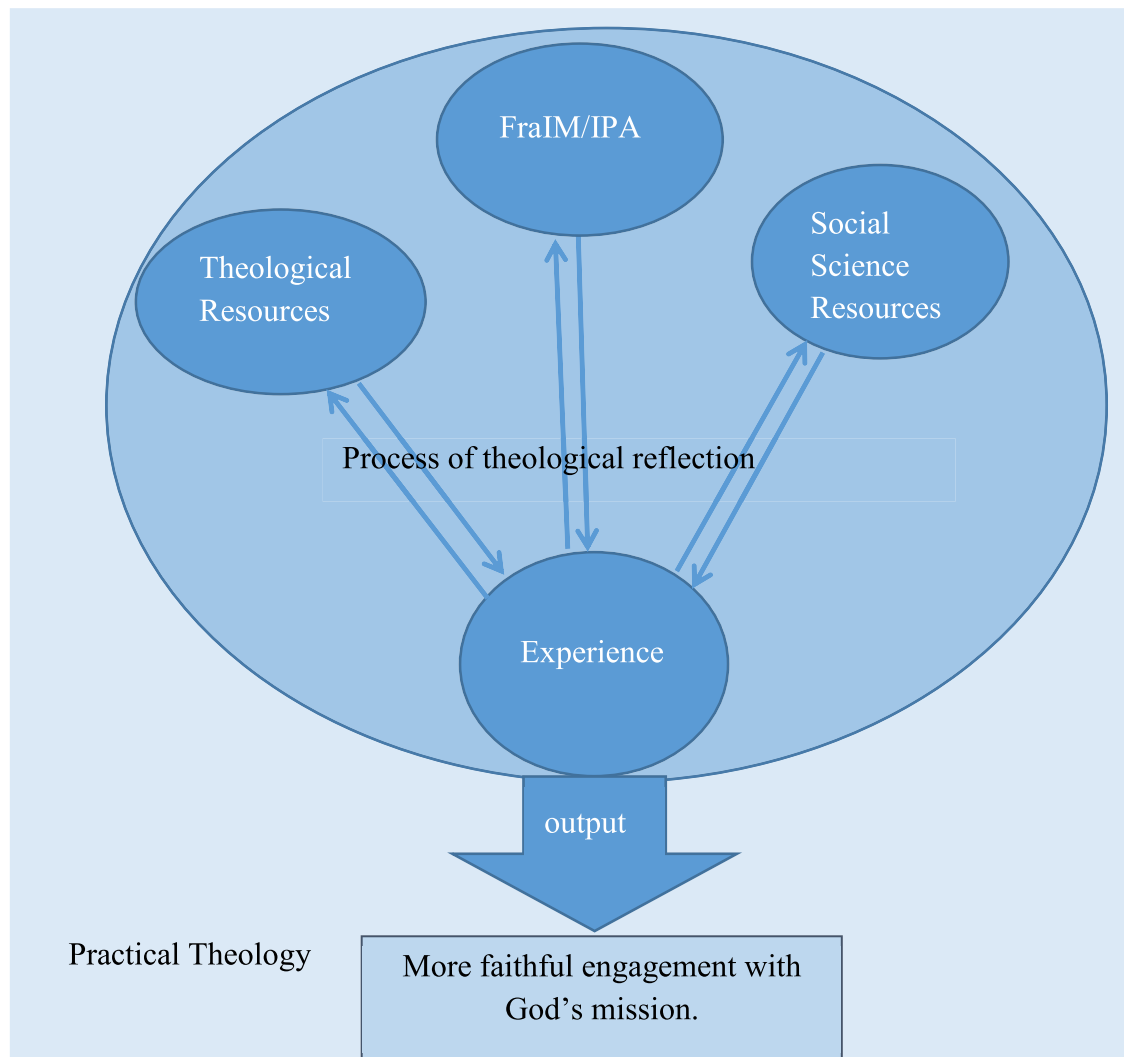
The framework structuring this work of practical theology consists of interplay between experience and insight. The experience begins with my own and extends to colleagues through survey and interview. Insight is drawn from social science sources and theological sources. It is experience which provided the stimulation to look at theological and psychological literature and this literature which provides tools to examine experience. The social science contributions are workplace bullying literature, Lewin's model for organizational change and Plowright's FraIM (Plowright, 2011). The main theological methodological resource is Swinton and Mowat's description of practical theology. This is used especially with reference to its identification of the role of practical theology, "to recognize distorted practice and to call the Church back to the theological significance of its practices and enable it to engage faithfully with the mission of God" (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.25). This study interacts with two levels of distorted practice: the presence of bullying and the institutionalized inadequate response to bullying. The key theological contribution is from Girard's Mimetic Theory (Girard, 2001). Theological ideas which are used as critical lenses for evaluating Mimetic Theory include Satan, sin, atonement, ecclesiology and the imitation of Christ. Together these resources build an argument for change and therefore justify the inclusion of the Lewin model for bringing change. (Lewin, 1947). These strands running alongside each other, are summarised in diagram (ii) below.

DIAGRAM (II) RESOURCE USE



These strands were developed further to generate the overall theoretical framework for this study. In the model presented in diagram (iii) below, the centrality of experience reflects my perception that it is experience in its widest sense that mediates input from the other areas.

DIAGRAM (III) THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.



The professional aspect of this doctorate invites elucidation of the relationship between this thesis and my profession. As a parish priest it could be assumed that my focus would be at parish level. However, clergy are oriented towards the “whole mission of the church pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical” (Pastoral Measures Act, 1956). Each of those categories is dependent on human relationships so can suffer when bullying is present and either tolerated or responded to ineffectively. By selecting the level of the Church of England diocese as my focus, I also open up the potential for change both at parish level and, if practice is shared, across other dioceses. I see working at the diocesan level as something which contributes strongly to my potential for future professional development. Although, the overall focus is at the diocesan level,

the engagement with bullying has a direct bearing on current parish work and my ability to interpret and resolve past experiences. Discussion of these areas will be included in my reflection on ministerial development over the six years of doctoral study (Chapter 14). A choice might have been made to include the material of Chapters Three and Four as appendices. I consider that this would detract from the sense of there being a starting point from which my professional thinking has developed.

KEY BOUNDARIES

The professional nature of the doctorate has a significant influence on the boundaries of this study. The first boundary is my choice to limit participants to Church of England clergy. This boundary reflects the deliberate choice that I would use an insider perspective. I consider that a useful degree of homogeneity is achieved because I am a member of the clergy interviewing other clergy. A further narrowing is the decision to focus on a diocese in which I am known. This may enhance my credibility with participants. The diocesan bishop has the reassurance of having been involved in the initiation of the work and there is the potential for direct impact on the professional context. Accordingly, it is intended that an audience for this study is the diocese concerned.

A second boundary for this study is that of ministerial life. Participants are asked whether they have experienced the negative acts associated with bullying in the course of their ministerial lives. In studies of this nature set in other contexts, neither *workplace* nor *being at work* are controversial ideas. If we consider the word *workplace* to have the components of work and place, for clergy, both are problematic. To investigate the bullying of clergy in their workplace would invite the criticism that, for clergy, ministry is not work and they have no single place for their activity. The difficulty of using the word *work* is illustrated by considering that whereas employees might receive a payment for work, clergy receive a stipend in order to release them from the need to work. Given that describing ministry as work can be interpreted as ignorance there is a tension in language which recurs throughout this study. I therefore use the concept of ministerial life to separate out the negative acts a person might experience as a private individual and negative acts experienced because they are a member of the clergy. For instance, if a bus driver were to be questioned about negative acts relating to work then a neighbourly dispute would be naturally excluded. For clergy it may or may not be relevant depending on the motivations of those involved. By

asking clergy about negative acts experienced in ministerial life I am allowing the participants to make their own judgement, (the validity of which may be irresolvable.)

The focus of this study is preparation for change. Often studies involving change would include the implementation of change and impact of change. However, working with the timescales of a professional doctorate and a process that already has four parts, there is a need to draw a boundary concerning the closing of this work. Study of the diocese's implementation of change regarding bullying and evaluation of that change will be a separate piece of work if my recommendations are adopted.

A final significant boundary relates to where this study stands within the British Legal system. Bullying does not currently have the equivalent legal standing to harassment in British Law although there are moves to change this. Bullying becomes significant through its connection to harassment and other legally recognized concepts such as constructive dismissal. This study takes the situation at the time of writing as a given and makes no detailed exploration of this area. Employment tribunals are mentioned in a contextual way as something shaping perception but detailed analysis of employment tribunals is outside the scope of this study.

CHAPTER 1 CONTEXT

Plowright outlines five contexts to be considered, organizational, professional, national, theoretical and policy (Plowright, 2011, L. 314). My examination of context begins with a brief discussion of the Church of England as an organization and my role within it. I then outline examples of issues related to bullying as they have appeared in the press. There are two purposes in this: first, they offer supporting evidence for the relevance of this thesis to ministerial life; secondly, they offer living examples of complexities that the Church of England is meeting as it engages with employment law. Finally, the contextual factors will be brought together with Firestein's (2012) work on ignorance to illustrate the gap in knowledge which this thesis is designed to address.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT AND MY ROLE WITHIN IT

This work is carried out within one Church of England Diocese with the clergy who are based there now. However, their memories, reflections and experiences sometimes relate to other dioceses. This is not problematic as the focus of this study is around how one diocese responds to the clergy it has now. This will inevitably include people who have encountered bullying behaviour and anti-bullying policies in other dioceses. I am not providing a demographic analysis of this diocese in order to maintain a degree of anonymity for the diocese of study; however, a useful picture to hold in mind would be a diocese where the population is divided relatively evenly between urban and rural living, with many market towns and a city finding its way in the light of an industrial past.

The picture of the diocese can also be broadened by consideration of organizational culture. Looking at organizational models, Ganesini (2010) summarises and contrasts different type of organizational culture citing a working definition by Deal and Kennedy of "the way things get done around here" (p.20). An examination of the description of *the way things get done* compared to experiences of bullying shows an indistinct boundary between normal ways of relating to others and bullying. Therefore, descriptions of cultures that resonate with church practices are relevant. The three cultures below are all broadly associated with bureaucracies.

- process culture concentrating on how things are done rather than what is to be achieved (Ganesini, 2010, p.20);
- academy culture marked by stability and the valuing and nurturing of expertise (p.21);

- role culture, which combines structure, authority, delegation and relates power to position rather than expertise (p.22).

I identify role culture and academy culture as representing conflicting ways of getting things done, whereas process culture could be compatible with either. For the purposes of setting a context for the study I let this rest at the level of highlighting there are competing cultures within the Church as an organization but I see a clear potential for further work in how the presence of conflicting cultures within an organization relates to bullying.

A further insight into the complexity of the Church of England as an organization can be gained from considering the role of a diocese within the Church of England. There is a risk of thinking hierarchically of a diocese as a local branch of a national organization. A sense of this as a dangerous oversimplification comes from a legal judgement from a tribunal, related to bullying within the Church of England, that the Church of England does not exist as a legal entity.

Despite its central position in society as the established Church, the Church of England has no legal personality. It can neither sue nor be sued. The piecemeal approach of legislation over the years has resulted in the title “Church of England”, denoting an amalgam of an infinite number of bodies with no clear picture as to how the various parts interact with each other. Ultimate authority lies with the Church’s Parliament, the General Synod, subject to the approval of the Westminster Parliament. (Employment Cases Update, 2012)

A significant lack of control within the organization is illustrated by the progress of the Dignity at Work (AC, 2008) policy document through this *amalgam of bodies*. The Archbishops’ Council generated a report which the General Synod commended to dioceses. Dioceses were then able to choose their own response which in the case of the diocese of study led to inaction.

PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT

Looking at my own context allows me to draw out further relevant features of the organization. I am the rector of a rural multi-parish benefice. Historically this would have conferred an entitlement to receive tithes. Since tithes have passed out of law, the defining feature of my post no longer exists. For the previous eight years, I occupied the same post as priest-in-charge. It has been difficult to explain the nature of the change

from priest-in-charge to rector to both friends and parishioners including churchwardens. The closest I was able to come was to say that I was temporarily in that post for 8 years and am now permanent. However, even then it is a strange *temporary* post, as a priest-in-charge typically has a six-year license.

There are unusual features in the permanent post when it is compared to other employment. Historically, a rector could stay in post as long as they wished, except for circumstances such as severe and persisting pastoral breakdown. A newly appointed rector now falls under the relationship of Common Tenure. This brings modern employment considerations such as health and safety legislation, redundancy and capability into consideration. This shift brings both new protections and new vulnerabilities. However, neither has had time to become well tested in law so there is a sense of ambiguity around the employment relationships in the Church of England. This is in contrast with commercial organizations of similar size, where employment would be governed by a well understood contractual relationship.

The features within Common Tenure that relate to this study stem from a rights and responsibilities approach. Under Common Tenure clergy, amongst other things, receive the new “access to a grievance procedure” and “rights of appeal to an employment tribunal if removed from office on grounds of capability” (Church of England, 2014). Insight into this situation is exemplified by occupational health guidance from the Archbishops’ Council. It does not relate occupational health provision to health and safety legislation as might be expected; instead it is related to the potential problems in defending capability procedures at an employment tribunal if occupational health guidance is not followed. Clarification within the occupational health guidance states, “This advice is provided by the Archbishops’ Council to assist the development of good practice. It does not constitute formal guidance under the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009” (AC, 2014). This highlights the advisory capacity of the Archbishops’ Council to dioceses which supports to my analysis of organizational complexity. Further, as bullying may be linked with occupational health issues, it demonstrates that this should be expected to be a complex link rather than a simple duty of care.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT - BULLYING OF CLERGY VIEWED FROM THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

The need for dioceses to be able to address bullying effectively can be demonstrated from those cases which come to the public eye. The experience of Mark Sharpe is particularly notable in that it was a long running legal campaign where each individual feature needed to be addressed separately. This started at the level, as mentioned previously of whether the Church of England legally exists, the next level of uncertainty relates to whether as a pre-Common Tenure incumbent there is any sort of employment relationship. This is illustrated in the original judgement, as compared to the inconclusive outcome of the appeal.

I do not see that within the complex statutory structure of the Church of England it is possible to imply that any relationship between a freehold rector in the Church such as Mr Sharpe and any identifiable person or body which could be said to be consensual and contractual. (Church Times, 2012)

Followed by:

A long-running dispute between the Revd Mark Sharpe and the Bishop and Diocese of Worcester must restart its long journey through the courts after a ruling that an employment tribunal had erred in deciding that clerics were office-holders. The judge declined, however, to rule on whether they should be awarded employee status. (Church Times, 2013)

The outcome of this process has been that a pre-Common Tenure incumbent does not have the equivalent rights of an employee to an employment tribunal. This made it irrelevant to go on and consider whether the responsibilities of an employment relationship were met. However, the trigger for all this was the claim that Mark Sharpe was harassed for four years and driven out of his parish without receiving support from Church leadership. The cost in time and money to deal with this will have been substantial. These are resources which now cannot be used for mission. The cost to the credibility of a religious organization seen to be fighting a legal battle with a member of the clergy who in turn describes a lack of support in dealing with a “toxic parish” (BBC News, 2009) is unmeasurable. If a diocese is making financial decisions relating to anti-bullying procedures and occupational health support, then the cost of legal challenge in an area lacking precedents should be a significant factor. The future implications of this increase the relevance of this study as common tenure clarifies the

legal position regarding rights to an employment tribunal so over time the church will lose the legal obstacle which prevented its approach to bullying being examined.

A second recent example with the possibility of far reaching effect was featured on the Radio 4 Sunday programme. The Bishop of Buckingham was speaking on the disciplinary measures enacted, on a newly married gay member of clergy, by the acting Bishop of Southwell. He asked, “Why would you exploit their weakness in a way that seems almost like bullying?” (BBC Radio 4, June 2014). In the later discussion of the problematic role of power in bullying, this comment will be explored in more depth. For now, the points I would draw out are the public association of a bishop with bullying behaviour and the lack of certainty. Whether the behaviour is actual bullying or *almost like* bullying depends on definitions of bullying, a problem this thesis seeks to address.

These examples are relevant as an indication of complexity. They demonstrate the issues I am working with are real and public, reflecting the great need for work in this area.

THE POLICY CONTEXT

The Church of England’s anti-bullying approach is primarily within Dignity at Work (DaW) (AC, 2008). Chapter Four is a detailed critique of this document but I first draw out how this sits within wider policies. This is particularly relevant as DaW links “Abuse, harassment and bullying” (p.iv). This invites examination of how the Church of England’s policies relating to abuse compare with DaW. *Dignity at Work* was produced on behalf of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee (DRCSC) of the Archbishops’ Council. The forward is written by the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds, it is offered in an advisory capacity, as further guidance building on the existing grievance and complaints procedures. Although eight years old, the currency of DaW is indicated by it being referenced in the Professional Guidelines for the Clergy 2015 (Church of England, 2015). These professional guidelines are further advanced by a commentary, *Clergy in a Complex Age* (Harrison and Innes, 2016). Here bishop Paul Butler highlights the need to name and confront the misuse of power but does not use the word bullying (Butler, 2016, p.41). This indicates the marginal position of official engagement with bullying as a concept.

Promoting a Safe Church (PaSC, Archbishops’ Council, 2006) is the main document relating to safeguarding adults in the Church of England. The forward is written jointly by the Archbishops of York and Canterbury and they commend it to the diocese for

careful study. Its weight is highlighted by a supporting policy statement from the House of Bishops. This policy is particularly relevant as it includes within its definition of vulnerability, “a permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events, for example bereavement or previous abuse or trauma.” Bullying is named as a form of abuse but given no individual treatment. In contrast to DaW, the presentation of PaSC suggests a document claiming greater significance. I interpret this from the weight indicated by the jointly written forward and the commendation for *careful study* rather than *further guidance*. This supports my concern that responding to bullying has the potential to be further marginalised by wider safeguarding concerns.

The report Protecting all God’s Children (Archbishops’ Council, 2010) is developed out of Promoting a Safe Church and is again promulgated jointly by the archbishops.

Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused (Archbishops’ Council 2011) is a significant report which the Bishop of Hereford and the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham “hopes parishes and dioceses will use as an important resource.” Here the word *hope* again reinforces the advisory nature of these policies.

Current criticisms of Church of England safeguarding procedures (Church Times, Jan. 16) highlight the failure to implement even the 2006 PaSC effectively. This is despite the strong encouragement to do so by both archbishops. The DaW and PaSC documents have commonality in the relevance of the abuse of power and patchy implementation. Even without a specific causal link, I would argue that this points to an underlying driver and the need for urgent attention to both. To summarise, in regard to the policies above, the key points to draw out are that anti-bullying activity is present but underrepresented in the context of abuse related policies and that it shares the weakness of all the policies in that a diocesan decision to adopt them is optional.

THE GAP IN KNOWLEDGE.

Trafford and Leshem (2008) identify addressing a “gap in knowledge” as a key element of doctoral work. (p.38) Much of the contextual and preparatory work has highlighted a lack of engagement with bullying at both a conceptual and empirical level. This has given rise to the gap that this study seeks to address. The existence of a gap in knowledge relates closely to Firestein’s work on ignorance (2012). A key feature of Firestein’s work is that it draws attention to “apparent knowledge [which] stands in the way of ignorance” (p.22). This further relates to the idea that something may “become true as the result of repetition, not experiment” (p. 28). Applying this to my context the

apparent knowledge is that bullying in the church is rare; the repetition that concerned me was that each of the dioceses who have adopted the model policy repeat this uncritically to all readers of their anti-bullying policy. It would be more helpful to admit ignorance and say we do not know how prevalent the experience of bullying is in the church context. This demonstrates the danger of ignorance being masked rather than explored. Firestein specifically writes from a nomothetic perspective, however, I see my survey work as having a broad connection with his view of experiment.

The second area of ignorance is that the body of knowledge relating to workplace bullying lacks definitive agreement over what bullying is. This can be seen through the different treatment of harassment and bullying in the CIPD document below:

The Equality Act 2010 defines harassment as “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”. Bullying is not specifically defined in law but ACAS gives the following definition: “Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.” (CIPD, 2016)

It is correct in its description of the ways that bullying may be characterized but it may also be characterized differently. This is matched by the mental struggles of interviewees as they seek to identify bullying and describe its characteristics. As a small scale study the aim here is not to resolve this problem but to understand how to work within these limitations.

CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

As a study of four parts integrating numerical and narrative data, this might be seen as a methodologically complex piece of work. The key methodological strands relate to the following:

- Establishing the choice of the FraIM methodology through exploring the philosophical challenges of mixed method research (MMR), (Teddle and Tashakkori, 2011).
- Outlining the interaction between the practical theology methodology (Swinton and Mowat, 2006) based in hermeneutic phenomenology and IPA (Smith and Flowers, 2009) which is a social science methodology.

Bringing together these methodologies arose from addressing two needs and a preference: the need to justify a mixed methods approach; the need to ground this work as practical theology; and a preference for a methodology that had a strong connection with the practical outworking of method.

PHILOSOPHICAL CHALLENGES

In a search for a methodology I began with the impression that there was a need to work within a consistent philosophical paradigm so that there was coherence between ontology, epistemology and methodology. It made sense that there would be coherence between how I believed the world to be, what I understood knowledge to be and the framework for obtaining further knowledge. However, when it came to identifying a paradigm to work within, this sense became ephemeral. Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2011) capture my struggle when on the one hand they present detailed tables describing paradigms (p.118) but also describe “blurring and shifting as emblematic of a dynamism that is critical if we are to see qualitative research begin to have an impact on policy formulation or the redress of social ills” (p.119). Given that bullying is a social ill and policy is part of how a diocese functions, this was a useful pointer for me that I should not expect my approach to fit neatly within a single category.

Based on the awareness that my thesis included both survey and interview, descriptions of MMR drew my attention. I gained insight into the underlying nature of my struggle through Morgan’s treatment of paradigms (Morgan, 2007). Of the four alternative views presented, the ideas most relevant to me are: paradigm as an all-encompassing world view (p.51) and paradigm as the agreed beliefs of a “community of scholars” (p.61).

This enabled me to see that I was subconsciously using the world view idea but finding that I could not align myself completely to one paradigm. The *community of scholars'* approach released the concept of the paradigm from being right or wrong to becoming a choice of how to work. This then harmonised with Lincoln, Lynham and Guba's (2011) recognition of the shifting nature of paradigms discussed above.

Understanding a paradigm to be the agreed beliefs of a community of scholars was helpful to me in understanding why I was struggling with the concept of identifying a paradigm. As a professional doctoral student studying practical theology, the experience of sharing in the agreed beliefs of a community is a different experience than it might be in other academic settings. As a practitioner first and a researcher second I am part of a community which meets together only a few times a year and who are studying a subject where diverse beliefs are acceptable. There is no strong reason for me to have any particular allegiance to a paradigm. This resolution of concerns over paradigm increased my confidence that my mixed method approach could be justified theoretically.

An indication that mixed method methodology would be useful to me was my strong identification with Teddlie and Tashakkori's, description of the characteristics of mixed method research (2011). Their work is situated in "methodological eclecticism" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2011, p.286). This is significant as I am advancing a piece of work which has qualitative and quantitative elements. Adding to this, my bringing together of practical theology and social science insights, I think eclectic is a fair description of my methodological approach. The strands which seem particularly relevant are: support for an iterative approach; and allowing the research question to shape the study (pp.286-287). The appeal of an iterative cycle approach to research is a close correspondence to the cyclical nature of practical theology. I had previously been thinking of the research as a survey followed by interviews but the iterative cycle brings a coherence that reaches back into the preparatory work.

Tashakkori offers a useful conceptualization of the iterative cycle as:

The context or logic of justification- the processes associated with the testing of prediction, theories, and hypotheses, and the concept or logic of discovery- the process associated with understanding a phenomenon in more depth, the generation of theories and hypotheses. (2011, p.288)

I can see my first reflections as having a tone of informal auto ethnography in the context of a practical theology reflective cycle, this allowed me to generate hypotheses which the survey tests to a degree. The results of the survey as input to interviews then allow the interviews to examine the validity of my quantitative work. I believe the survey results will have greater validity when presented alongside the qualitative material. This therefore represents the “choice of ‘best’ methods for answering research questions” (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2011, p.286). Although there is a more detailed discussion of validity and generalizability to come, the main resonance I would identify here is the iterative nature of my own learning process as a researcher.

The characteristic of focussing on the relationship between the research question and the methods to be used has a helpful quality that those supporting the MMR approach recognized “the centrality of the research question was initially intended to move researchers (particularly novice researchers) beyond the intractable philosophical issues associated with the paradigms debate and towards methods best suited to their investigations” (p.288). As a novice researcher who was beginning to see the paradigms debate as an academic conspiracy, I received this with a feeling that I had finally found a sensible and practical voice and was not surprised to find the descriptor *pragmatism* linked to the MMR methodology.

This is not to say that MMR is immune from being pulled back in to the philosophical debate. To resist this difficulty, I chose not to follow strands within MMR where it seeks to classify itself with Johnson’s definition of “dialectical pragmatism as a supportive philosophy for mixed methods research” (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2011, p. 290). Instead I prefer to follow Biesta’s contention that “pragmatism should not be understood as a philosophical position amongst others, but rather as a set of philosophical tools that can be used to address problems” (Biesta, cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori p.290). This putting the problem first and then seeking tools, reflects my own way of working in that I conceived a purpose for my research and a method of addressing that purpose long before I started wondering about philosophical implications. The usefulness of the MMR methodology is therefore to validate this approach through its compatibility with an established academic position.

If Morgan (2007) and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2011) both offer support mixed methods as a direction to look for a methodology, then it is Plowright that offers the detail. Plowright has developed Frameworks for an Integrated Methodology (FraIM) as “a

pragmatic integrated methodology, a relativist social epistemology, a realist social ontology, a realist object ontology” (Plowright, 2011, L. 3456).

At the heart of Plowright’s framework is a two realities approach where the emphasis is on positivism as mind-independent reality and constructivism as mind-dependent reality (2011, L.3313). The two realities approach stands in contrast to the idea of a single reality only accessible through scientific (positive/post positivist) or constructivist means. In social science research there are benefits from there being no need to choose one or the other. Mind-dependent reality and mind-independent reality can both be helpful. With a single reality there was a choice to be made between mind dependent and mind independent reality, by recognizing two realities the need to choose is removed.

From a traditional perspective this study could therefore be criticised for combining quantitative and qualitative work because quantitative work has been associated with positivism and qualitative with constructivism. From Plowright’s perspective the distinction is unnecessary. Instead, Plowright employs the vocabulary of numerical and narrative data with the further shift that numerical data may tell a story and narrative data may be analysed through numerical approaches. From this it follows that the link between qualitative work and inductive approaches and quantitative work and deductive approaches is also weakened. The focus then shifts from rigid rules demarcating the types of conclusions drawn from a particular methodology to a more individualistic consideration of whether the conclusions of a particular study are warranted (2011, L.2507).

Plowright’s pragmatic approach prioritises methodology over philosophy. He characterises the pragmatic approach as “truth is what works” (2011, L. 3444). As it is methodology that drives the answering of research questions, Plowright’s approach is consistent with the needs of this study. Philosophy, however, is acknowledged as making a secondary contribution to the warranting of conclusions. Plowright bases his work in critiquing the basic division between positivism/post positivism and constructivism. I note that there is no discussion of critical realism within this. This brings two possibilities to mind. First, that by uniting a spectrum from positivism to constructivism the need to discuss critical realism as a specific example falls away; secondly, that Plowright’s framework is essentially critical realist in nature. In support of the second possibility is his use of Bhaskar, who is deeply connected with critical realism, in constructing his two realities argument (2011, L. 4759). Even if the second

possibility can be justified Plowright's overall contribution of providing a theoretical basis for crossing boundaries still stands together with a usable package of philosophy, methodology and method. Considering the scope of this work I would draw a boundary that includes the need to be aware of the possibilities described and excludes the need to reach a philosophical resolution. Overall, the pragmatic approach is a good fit with my desire to effect change. Throughout the study I have seen the need for both quantitative and qualitative work to make my best argument for change. To reiterate the argument of chapter four the numerical work and subsequent statistical analysis demonstrates the importance of change and gives a necessary guide to the scale of resources required for change. The narrative work guides what sort of change could be helpful. A methodology supporting the use of numerical and narrative data enables the research question to be addressed.

The subject area of bullying is highly compatible with a relativist social epistemology. The survey alone brings together social phenomena and numbers in a way that defies any purist approach. Furthermore, this exploration of methodology has led me to an appreciation of a tension within the workplace bullying field which I now see as resolvable through the realist social ontology/ relativist social epistemology distinction. This allows me to assert that bullying is a real phenomenon but that trying to arrive at an absolute knowledge that there has been bullying and that there is a person who is a bully and a person who is a victim of that bully is a fruitless pursuit. This connects with the different roles of objective and subjective understandings of bullying.

Returning to two realities of the mind-independent bounding the mind-dependent allows me to place bullying so deeply within the mind dependent realm that the relativist position must dominate the absolutist. This will be demonstrated in the analysis of transcripts where participants speak from a visceral absolutist position but to differing extents are aware of failings in the position. Therefore, I argue the case that an effective response to bullying requires a relativist position. The difficulty this leads to is that the absolutist position has a certain moral authority that a relativist position lacks.

A further strength of Plowright's framework is that it offers a perspective on a difficulty within practical theology. This is articulated by Swinton and Mowat with the question "Does reality exist" (2006, p.36). For them, the weakness of the constructivist approach is that "the Christian tradition claims to have received revelation. If reality is totally inaccessible, then so is revelation" (p.37). They resolve this by adopting a critical realist position of a "reality [that] can be known a little better through our constructions while

at the same time recognizing that such constructions are always provisional and open to challenge” (p.37). Furthermore, Swinton and Mowat identify with Hunsinger’s insistence of a “realist ontology...affirming that God really speaks through the biblical witness” (p.88). Plowright’s realist object ontology and realist social ontology can be seen as offering a wider and more specified understanding of the meaning of realist. This allows for God to exist as both mind dependent and mind independent while the relativist social epistemology acknowledges the limitations of revelation. I see this as being in line with, but distinct from, Swinton and Mowat’s position.

Final arguments for the choice of a mixed method methodology relate to a discussion of empirical research by Schilderman (2012). He links qualitative research to mapping out a new field and quantitative research to more developed areas where there are already tools to use (Schilderman, 2012, p.126). This parallels the qualitative and quantitative elements of this study. Bullying in the church can be seen as a relatively new field and workplace bullying as the more established field. I am bringing together the quantitative tool of the established field with a qualitative examination of the new field. Walton (2014) references the same work by Schilderman as she traces the converging paths of Empirical and Feminist Practical Theology. She identifies Empirical Theology as coming out of a German and Dutch school (p.6) and focussed on quantitative methods. This is initially contrasted with Feminist Practical Theology as “reflexive-qualitative” (p.10). However, she notes:

Research methods are increasingly combined rather than placed in binary opposition. Writing is increasingly reflexive and narrative research methods have proved increasingly useful in Empirical and Feminist Theological Research (p.10).

This allows me to situate this work as proceeding out of the trend identified by Walton, bringing together the quantitative element of the survey with the reflexive-qualitative elements of my own experience and the experience of the interviewees.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

METHODOLOGIES

A key feature of Swinton and Mowat's critique of practical theology is "the way in which it has utilized other sources of knowledge, such as the social sciences, has tended to push its primary theological task into the background" (2006, p.7). Given the discussion of MMR and FraIM is currently in terms of social science methodology the place of theology needs to be defined. Swinton and Mowat outline a position where theology must be the overarching methodological framework for practical theology research. The previous paragraph has demonstrated a philosophical compatibility between FraIM and theology which is an essential criterion from their point of view. However, there is a challenge in their approach for this thesis to give a primacy to theology. This is in contrast to "mutual critical conversation" approaches (p.80) where there is a more equal dialogue between theology and social science. An argument in favour of the more equal dialogue is that the secular employment world seems to be ahead of the church in responding to workplace bullying. However, even though what the secular world has to say is most relevant to me, the desire to listen still comes from a theological position of concern for church practice which leans towards the primacy of theology position. (By using the word *secular*, I am not intending to deny a religious dimension, I am simply reflecting the presence of areas of discourse where the religious dimension is not deliberately articulated.)

I see it as important to define carefully how this thesis fits with practical theology to avoid it being seen as simply a piece of social science research examining what happens in a church context. When considering this Swinton and Mowat come to six defining characteristics of practical theology: aim; mediation; theory; interpretation; phronesis; mission (2006, p.25ff).

1. Considering the aim of practical theology as "the quest for truth and development and maintenance of faithful and transformative practices in the world" (p.25) brings the contrast between the problematic nature of truth and a clear relationship between an effective response to bullying and transformative practice. I believe the issues around truth have been effectively addressed above in the discussion of realist social ontology. So as far as the task is concerned this work falls clearly into practical theology.

2. Practical theology is described as mediating between "Christian tradition and the specific problems and challenges of the contemporary social context" (p.26). Workplace bullying is a concept that has arisen out of the contemporary social context. Given that

the secular world is ahead of the church in this area the investigation of the part that church tradition is playing within this is very significant. A key question relates to what there is within church tradition that places the church as followers rather than leaders in this area.

3. As regards theory, the key dynamic of this thesis is an oscillation between practice and reflection which is demonstrated by the two-way nature of arrows on diagram (iii). I have placed experience centrally and reflect on that experience through the lenses of contemporary workplace bullying research, change management and theological resources. Each of these brings a theoretical input allowing current practice to be challenged. This will be discussed later in the context of hermeneutics. An aspect of this experience, which relates back to the primacy of theology, is that this is the experience of a practicing Christian deliberately engaged in theological activity. So although placing experience centrally may suggest theology is not central, this is not the case. It is however, true to say that scripture is not central to my theology, it is present but the weight I give to interpretation leads me to favour testing scripture against experience and not vice versa. The centrality of experience reflects my practice of faith.

4. Swinton and Mowat describe practical theology as “an interpretive discipline which offers new and challenging insights into Christian tradition in the light of fresh questions” (2006, p.26). The interpretation of the interview data offers a challenge to well established ideas around the structure of ministry and the nature of authority in the church. A helpful insight is that an interview can be analysed through a social science framework but it can also be analysed through “theological exegesis” (p.12) using the resources of scripture and tradition. For Swinton and Mowat their recognition of the importance of interpretation works itself out in their use of hermeneutic phenomenology as something which encompasses methodology and method. As I justify below, while agreeing with the importance of hermeneutics the approach of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, IPA (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) is compatible and more helpful.

5. The importance of phronesis is related to “an embodied, practical knowledge which will enable a particular form of God-oriented lifestyle” (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.27). There is the potential for movement from a person beginning to think about negative acts, to examining whether they ever treat others in this way; whether they experience them from others; how they might respond if they are a witness of negative acts which could be the start of an embodied change.

6. Finally, Swinton and Mowat's focus on mission culminates in the question "Who is God and how does one know more fully His truth?" (p.27) This resonates with my sense that there is a strong tradition of the church as Christ's body on earth. People learn about God from interaction with the church. Therefore, a church where bullying is poorly addressed is at great risk of supporting a picture of a bullying God. Given there are descriptions of God, such as "a kind of all-too-human oriental despot who overtly exploits shame in the interests of bolstering his own power and control" (Pattison, 2000, p.236) there is a case for those who would not support the theology of a bullying God to also work to address bullying within the church.

Summarising the position of this work with regard to the social sciences and practical theology there is a very strong element of social science present which comes through FraIM and workplace bullying research, however, this study fits well with all the features of Swinton and Mowat's description of practical theology.

THE ROLE OF HERMENEUTICS

As mentioned above practical theology is interpretive. This invites the explicit consideration of hermeneutics. Bringing the language of FraIM into this discussion, there is a task of interpreting numerical and narrative data. Brown describes practical theology as, 'the field of theological inquiry and practice that seeks to discern and respond to the transforming activity of God within the living text of human action.' (2012, p. 112) By describing, a living text of human action, Brown usefully highlights that hermeneutical approaches which have their origin in the interpretation of written texts can be extended to the interpretation of human activity. Brown identifies the close relationship between practical theology and hermeneutics arising from Schleiermacher's realization that "the interpreter must attend as well to the psychological dimension, seeking to understand the mind of the author" (2012, p.113).

Hermeneutics brings a useful attention to the interpreter and their interpretive stance. A significant feature of this is my position with respect to formative features of my own journey. The ability to step aside from this is referred to as bracketing. In the hermeneutics of Gadamer there is a bias against the bracketing of experience as "our prejudices are not impediments to understanding but are precisely what gives us stance toward and purchase on, whatever we are seeking to understand" (Brown, 2012, p.114). Further, in *Truth and Method*, Gadamer reclaims prejudice from current negative

connotations, describing it as the “historical reality” of our being (2004, p.278). The self-reflexive component of chapter three establishes this research and the motivation to do it, as coming out of the historical reality of my being, this treatment of the nature of my insider status is fair warning to the reader, allowing them to make their own judgements regarding this work. Participants may well have responded because they know something of me and my ministry or simply recognize me as a colleague.

My desire to engage with this material as a practical theologian rather than a social scientist is again part of my historical reality. Substantial bracketing would leave this work in a kind of limbo. This is not to say that bracketing has no place in Gadamer’s hermeneutic, this work cannot simply be a vehicle to present my own views. There is an attempt to make a fair interpretation while knowing that my interpretations are grounded in my own historical reality. Linking back to FraIM, this relates to producing conclusions which are warranted. (Plowright, 2011, L.2507). The fair interpretation grounded in a particular historical reality is described by Gadamer in terms of *horizon*. “To acquire a horizon means to look beyond what is close at hand- not in order to look away from it but to see it better, within a larger whole and a truer proportion” (Gadamer, 204, p. 304). This accurately reflects the intention of this thesis.

The Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) reflects Gadamer’s approach to prejudice by describing the analysis of interview data as a double interpretation. This makes explicit that there are two interpreters. The person talking about bullying is already making interpretations and I am interpreting those interpretations (L.786). Those who encounter this study then make their own interpretations in the light of who they are and knowing something of who I am. A further advantage of IPA is the close link between their methodology and how narrative is interpreted. This fills a gap within FraIM which sets up a place for analysing narrative data without suggesting any particular method for doing it. A notable feature of the hermeneutics within IPA is the choice to sit with both the “hermeneutics of empathy” and the “hermeneutics of suspicion” (L.801). This again relates to the advantages and challenges of my insider researcher position. The experiences that are common to me and the participant offer the opportunity for empathy but at the same time I have to be careful that I am not simply assuming that the experience was the same for each of us.

A final dimension hermeneutics offers to this study is an understanding of an apparent contradiction in which practical theology is often portrayed as cyclical (Cameron et al, 2010, L. 979) whereas the arrows of the theoretical framework on diagram (iii)

represent an oscillation. I understand this in terms of Brown's identification of "interpretive experience" within Gadamer's hermeneutic. (Brown, 2011, p. 114). I also relate it to the prior concepts of Heidegger's "Dasein...Being-already-engaged-in the world" (p.113) and Schleiermacher's "hermeneutical circle" (p.113) with its movement between the part and the whole. For me as an insider researcher, Dasein is the whole and moving out to a particular theoretical lens is the part. Learning, action, experience and reflection make more sense to me when brought together as Dasein than spread out around a cycle to be followed in order.

DISCOUNTED METHODOLOGICAL POSSIBILITIES

Having justified my positive choices, I would like to discuss briefly some paths not taken. Swinton and Mowat's presentation of Hermeneutic Phenomenology gave way to IPA because of a contradiction between hermeneutics and phenomenology which they identify but do not effectively resolve. They identify that "there are tensions and differences between these two perspectives: with one seeking to explain the world and people's experiences within it in an objective, unbiased way and the other...claiming that interpretation bias and prejudice are crucial to the ways in which human beings encounter the world" (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.108). They are prepared to work within this tension but for me the dissimilarity outweighs the similarity. The name Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis expresses better that there is some connection with Phenomenology without looking like a type of Phenomenology. (This argument has resonance with Grondin's (2014) identification of hermeneutic phenomenology with Ricoeur and phenomenological hermeneutics with Gadamer.) In addition to this I was also looking for a methodology with explicit connections to the method of analysing the interviews. IPA provides this. A further advantage of IPA when compared to narrative analysis was the emphasis within narrative analysis of "intensive interaction with the narrator to explore memories and deeper understandings of their experiences" (Chase, 2011, p.423). Given that speaking about bullying risks emotional pain to the participant I did not want to use a method that deliberately pulled all of the details out of a painful experience. IPA interviews typically last between 45 and 90 minutes, stand alone and offer the opportunity to speak about difficult experiences. This provided a better ethical fit with my intentions.

A significant question for methodological choice was whether this work could be construed as action research and specifically as Theological Action Research. This was resolved by the desire to sit comfortably within the chosen method. A strength of TAR

was the categorization of formal, normative, professed and operant theology (Cameron et al., 2010, L.1045). Although these categories are interesting, challenging and relevant to the material they come with a strong element of working as a team with co-researchers (L.1298). Even though I do consider those who have answered the survey and interviews to be participants rather than respondents, I do not see them as co-researchers. This position has been described as purist and the condensing of the concept of team to one researcher can be acceptable within TAR. My choice was to avoid further blurring of models.

CONCLUSION

To sum up a complex methodological position: this work is specifically situated under an overarching practical theology title which is compatible with the social science mixed method methodology FraIM. The survey itself is enough to justify a mixed methods approach as the questions themselves have narrative categories, however, bringing the survey together with the interviews moved this work strongly into the area FraIM seeks to address. Practical theology has been presented as interpretive so Gadamer's hermeneutics form a link between practical theology and hermeneutic phenomenology, my preferred variant of which is IPA. Together these articulate my position as an insider researcher and the understandings I bring to this thesis.

PART ONE

CHAPTER 3: SILENT VICTIMS? REFLECTION ON THE CLERGY DISCLOSURE OF BULLYING.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the thinking and analysis of the opening part of my doctoral journey. It is included because a significant area in the warranting of research is the owning of perspective. It represents the *being-already-engaged* with the church. It is notable that the key voices identified at this stage of the doctoral journey are different to the key voices of the overall theoretical framework. In the course of this study I have, indeed, widened my horizons. The key categories here of society, shame and gender represent the near horizon; the work of Pattison, Poling and Schussler-Fiorenza was close at hand as I began to consider my own experiences. The work of Girard and those sources which critique Girard developed in response to looking further afield. The situating of this study within the work of Girard reduces the significance of these categories as the horizon is wider, however, they remain a valid part of the field of view.

THE STIMULUS FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCH.

The diocesan bishop lays a problem before me: the union Unite has written informing him that the bullying of clergy is rife and yet he is not aware of any bullying in the Diocese. The Diocese has approximately 250 clergy holding a bishop's license so if the bullying of clergy is rife then it is likely to be present here. As someone with an interest in the area he asked if would I look into this. The background he was referring to came through my MA dissertation, written during my second year as a team vicar, "Evaluation of good practice in the curate- trainer relationship." (Wood, 2009) Since bullying is one of the things that can go wrong in the curate-trainer relationship, this thesis is a development of that work.

An initial examination of the Bishop's observation indicated that there is not necessarily a discrepancy between Unite's claim and the Bishop being unaware of bullying. As there are some 20,000 licensed Church of England clergy (Archbishops Council, 2011) it would be fair to estimate two enquiries from within the Diocese. However, with a number this small it may be that there are no clergy within the Diocese who have contacted Unite. This could suggest that there is no discrepancy between the Bishop's awareness of bullying and actual incidences of bullying. However, an aspect of my previous study leads me to think that this is not the case. I encountered a significant

number of curacies where the relationship between curate and incumbent had become unsustainable. (Confidentiality prevents me from giving a specific number.) Curates in this position have been found new training incumbents and completed curacies, so their difficulties seem not to have been about their competency. The presence of a high level of breakdown in curate-incumbent working relationships and a diocesan bishop who is unaware of bullying are together suggestive of poor communication and/or conceptual difficulties around identifying the presence of bullying. My interpretation of the starting point for this work is that:

- there are incidences of bullying within the Diocese;
- it is unclear whether these are part of Unite's data;
- there is a degree of silence around bullying which has led to the person with ultimate charge for pastoral care of clergy being unaware of occurrences of bullying.

The opening conversation with the Bishop suggests a simple numerical question, how many clergy are being bullied in the Diocese? However, there are underlying questions to deal with. These include understanding what determines whether a member of the clergy will report bullying and a more fundamental question of what is bullying? This chapter will focus on the first of those questions. The next chapter will address the second question.

PAST PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

My own experience offers a rich resource for inquiry. There was a particular dynamic for me as the Bishop set out his interest in bullying. As a curate I had felt that my training incumbent's behaviour towards me had drifted from being unpleasant but professionally tolerable into behaviour that was specifically bullying. In looking for someone who could help, I did consider the diocesan bishop. I thought he was a person who I could appropriately ask for help and who might have the skill to provide appropriate help. So two years into my curacy, when the Bishop asked me how things were going, I ventured that I was finding my training incumbent a bit difficult. His response was to assure me that he knew how difficult my training incumbent was and that I was valued for being able to cope with him. My first attempt at voicing a desperate situation had ended with silence. It had been pastorally closed down. Effectively, I was now being asked to explore the silence by the person who had silenced me. Four years after the initial problem, in a moment where I really could have

said something about my own experience I was silent. This behaviour was a trigger for my professional curiosity. It led me to wonder if elements within my own silence are held in common with other clergy who are silent about bullying. This raised the possibility for enquiry into whether this insight was my unique perspective or whether there are commonalities in life experience which lead to both being bullied and being silent about bullying.

In order to begin to talk about bullying, a key term to deal with is whether those who are bullied are *victims*. Websites which offer help to bullied clergy tend to be resistant to the use of the term victim.

Victims of bullying are usually caring, committed and competent individuals ...they are no more likely than anyone else to be weak individuals with little self-confidence or self-esteem, and a "victim mentality". Hence, it may be helpful to use the word "target" rather than "victim" to describe someone who is being, or has been bullied. (Balmnet, undated)

The word "victim" allows disingenuous people to tap into and stimulate other people's misconceptions and prejudices of victimhood which include the inference that the person was somehow complicit in the abuse. (Bully OnLine, undated)

I am sympathetic to the desire to avoid misuse of the word *victim*, however, use of the word *target* detracts from describing bullying as an activity which has an impact on the person who is bullied. Perhaps it is true that anyone can be a target of bullying but this does not exclude the possibility that issues around self-esteem control how a person responds to bullying.

When I examine my own silence, the factors which were in my conscious thinking related to: how I wanted to be perceived by the institution; my care for my incumbent; and my care for myself. The Bishop's initial comment had the effect of silencing me because a curacy is a training post, a time to become demonstrably ready for ministry. An image I had picked up during the training process for being ready for ministry was toughness. Parish ministry is tough and the minister must be tough to survive. I'm not sure this was ever overtly taught but was simply there as a background. I was seen as being able to cope with my incumbent because I had been tough. To need help was to give up something which the Bishop valued in me (just before I would need his support to move to my next post). I could see this would not be a good move. There was also an

undeniable relationship with my own self-image; I liked to think that I had this quality of toughness and there was a certain kudos in being the curate who could work with a notorious training incumbent. To give this up did represent a loss. Even as a priest-in-charge four years later, similar influences were present.

There is a degree of risk involved in breaking the silence concerning bullying. There were positive qualities in the training relationship: my incumbent was very skilled in leading a challenging parish; he took his responsibility for supervision seriously; his rudeness and hostility were directed at the chapter, the deanery synod and other professionals but not usually at me. There was some sense in which I was his protégé, his opportunity to change how clergy were. There was a sense of mutuality in the relationship, it was part of normal expression to speak in turns of me being his curate, him being my incumbent. Part of my rationalization was to understand and excuse his behaviour. There were very difficult things going on in his life that he was dealing with as best he could. I did not want to set in motion something which would make him angrier and not address the underlying issues. Overall, there was a combination of loyalty and self-preservation in action. I had doubts about whether I would be listened to and fears of what would happen if someone did listen. It did not seem there was a safety net to catch either of us. In the early stages of stress in the relationship, the risks of breaking the silence did not seem to outweigh the benefits of keeping silent.

A second strategy I had adopted after I felt his behaviour had crossed into overt bullying was another attempt to be heard. I wrote a detailed letter to my training incumbent explaining the incidents which concerned me and suggesting a mediator who would not have been threatening to him. His response was around my not having evidence for my assertions and not needing to do anything this late in the curacy. He rejected my suggestion of a mediator without suggesting one himself and instead put forward a plan where we could ignore each other for the last few months. This response was very closely in tune with my own fears but for opposing reasons. His use of the term *evidence* played into my fears of an escalating and ugly formal process. I did not doubt the strength of my evidence but thought it inevitable that it would draw him into a disciplinary process rather than a pastorally supportive process. I now realise this was probably wrong as incumbency gives great protection compared to other professions. I was drawing assumptions about organizational response shaped by my experience of the teaching profession into the church context.

It is significant that I am not describing absolute silence but instead degrees of silence and the process of being silenced. I was not a completely silent and invisible victim of bullying that no system could have helped. The Bishop could have heard a comment about difficulties coming from a curate as something to explore. A training incumbent could have been prepared for the role with something that included, *if your curate thinks you are bullying her and asks for mediation then you both need help*. The features I would pick out were that I was silent with respect to official processes and I was easy to silence with respect to unofficial processes.

PAST PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

The identification of these silences and the emotional charge they hold are resonant with what would initially seem a very different part of my experience; growing up in an abusive environment. A conversation held during my teenage years, set in a context of prior sexual abuse and ongoing emotional abuse, provide key insights into my own silence. Somewhere around fourteen my father had caught me doing something wrong in the normal run of teenage life. He was going to tell my mother and I tried some teenage blackmail to get me out of a tight spot. I said, "If you tell mum, I will tell her what you did to me." In a way this was a bluff, I did not have a particularly clear memory of what he had done. His response was to say, "I've been sorry for what I did all my life." He walked away and that was the end of the conversation. The way I made sense of this is that the guilt and shame from the sexual abuse exacerbated an existing drinking problem which led to his violent behaviour. Our household was very disordered but this remained largely secret even past his death. The most that would have ever been acknowledged even to the wider family was that my stepfather had a temper when he was drunk.

If I look at this from the perspective of my silence, then initially my silence came from ignorance. When you are eight there are all sorts of things your parents do that you do not like, the abuse was just one of those things. I had interpreted the abuse as something normal and to be put up with so of course I did not say anything. Looking back, I had a medical problem at the time which was unusual for someone of my age, if my doctor had chosen to ask some questions he could have got to the truth very quickly as I had not known there was anything to hide. It was during my teenage years where I gradually acquired the sense that there was something to hide. At the same time there started to be programmes on the television relating to child abuse. From these I learnt what child abuse was; that children were not generally believed by the people they told, that it if

they were believed it ended up with courts and prison. These programmes intending to educate the public and address a great social wrong silenced me very effectively. There was no evidence from all those years ago. There was a chance that my step father would once again admit the abuse but I had no desire for the whole family to fall apart or my stepfather to go to prison, so I did not tell anyone. Somewhere along the line I formed the impression that people found it hard to cope with child abuse so it was impolite to burden them, however, I did have a great desire to speak. I created the rule that if anyone ever asked if I was abused I would tell them. It took until I was almost thirty, paying a counsellor, and had explained that I couldn't speak about this unless she asked me directly, that I finally was able to speak. Bringing this into a public forum relates to the death of both parents, and my sense that it is an important element in my experience of silence.

The first parallel I see is an early phase of silence because of a lack of awareness of wrong, and a failure to register that my being unhappy is a sign that something is wrong. However, I saw being unhappy as a failing within me that I should hide. This phase was completely invisible to me until this piece of writing. This develops into the knowledge that I was unhappy because some wrong was done to me. With this comes the desire to speak but because there is now the knowledge that someone has done wrong it immediately brings an adversarial system to mind. Will I be believed or disbelieved? Will my abuser be helped or punished? It also brings to mind winning and losing.

The person who speaks risks reputation, they risk economic loss; these risks hold for both now and the future. For official channels these risks are very clear and this led to the tentative search for someone who might be sympathetic. In the family setting there were many comments I made over the years where my mother could have said, "What do you mean by that?" These were brushed away just as the Bishop brushed away my difficulty. I do not know whether either of them was aware that there was abuse present and deliberately did not go there; or simply did not see abuse; or could not imagine there might be abuse to see. Running through all of this is my care for the person who abuses me, my concern for the boundaries of those I might speak to and for myself, preservation of what there is, no matter how unacceptable it might be.

I notice that it is surprisingly easy for me to replace the specific terms sexual abuse and bullying by the general term abuse and find so much similarity between my childhood experience and my professional experience. However, I know that I should not be

surprised because the feelings that went with these times were and are so similar. Bullying and sexual abuse hold different places in law and social acceptability but they felt the same to me. That does seem an extreme statement but I feel it is my statement to make. There is an anger within me that my professional experience as an adult within the Church would evoke childhood experiences of sexual abuse. This is a motivation for ending my own silence and trying to offer to others a way out of their silence.

INTRODUCTION TO KEY VOICES AND IDEAS.

I find that the relationship between my own experience and the research area of the clergy experience of bullying are illuminated by three writers Poling, Pattison and Schussler-Fiorenza. Significant themes these writers enable me to draw on, in order to understand the nature of silencing are society, shame and gender. A significant source of critique for these writers is represented in the work of Johnson (2010) who suggests that attitudes to the interaction between social science and theology can be represented on a spectrum with five major divisions and extremes where one or other of the components is excluded. (L. 52)

Poling and Pattison help me understand the dynamics of abuse and silence. Poling achieves this by relating sexual abuse to the abuse of power and Pattison achieves this by considering abuse as leading to feelings of shame in the victim. They especially help me to understand why my experience of the Church and my experience of sexual abuse elicit similar feelings. Although they make incidental references to bullying as an abuse of power neither of them has an explicit focus on bullying in the workplace. It is my experience which has led me to make this connection. Poling helps me understand how people with power might abuse and silence others and Pattison helps me understand that silence may be the action of a shamed person and offers a mechanic for the perpetuation of shame.

Schussler-Fiorenza represents a richness of perspective in that she claims her field as spirituality rather than pastoral theology and offers an overtly feminist perspective. This is a helpful balancing voice because Pattison and Poling are both men criticizing patriarchy who have elements of feminism within their work but do not categorize their work as feminist. There would also seem to be complex gender issues present which my experience alone risks oversimplifying. As a female child abused by a stepfather, and a female curate bullied by a male incumbent, who then reads accounts critical of patriarchy, it would be easy to fall into seeing abuse and silencing as something done by men to women. However, Schussler-Fiorenza's use of Kyriarchy offers a subtler

analysis of gender roles which counteracts this (Muers, 2005, 442). Kyriarchy an amalgamation the Greek words *kyrios* (Lord) and *archein* (to rule) (Schussler-Fiorenza, 2001, p.118). She uses it to describe how women are willing to hold and use power within patriarchal structures. Through the use of Kyriarchy, the abuser/victim dynamic is overtly and deliberately lifted beyond a male/female dynamic.

Poling is an American theologian whose significant work, “Abuse of Power in the Church” was published in 1991. This closely relates to his developing understanding of the field he calls practical theology which he describes as “theological interpretation of the unheard voices of personal and community life for the purpose of continual transformation of faith in the true God of love and power toward renewed ministry practice” (Poling, 1991, p.187). His later writing looks specifically at sexual abuse in the Church context and also at practical theology as a subject. There is great resonance between his *unheard voices* and my experience of degrees of silence. I identify with that position of *unheard voice* and find here a theologian who offers a permission to speak.

Pattison is a British theologian who came to practical theology through pastoral care and liberation theology. Writing “Shame” in 2000, Pattison describes practical theology as a conversation of four moments: listening to “contemporary experiences and insights” (2000, p.11); inquiring into the Church’s response; consideration of change within the Church, the Church speaking back into contemporary experience. Pattison, like Poling, sees practical theology as transformative. Poling has a focus on ministerial practice that links back into the historical roots of practical theology (Pattison and Lynch, 2005, p.409). However, the significant advance in practical theology that they both model is allowing experience to speak back to theology. Pattison characterizes Poling’s work as “radical-liberationist” based on its attention to social context, structures of power and well-being (p. 420). The main strength I find in this work is his identification of sexual violence as an abuse of power protected by society. To continue the parallel with bullying invites the consideration of bullying as an abuse of power protected by society. Poling criticizes traditional ways of understanding the relationship between God and creation as not serving the needs of victims, however, I am not confident in the implications he draws from this as his elevation of creation has pantheistic qualities. Given that Poling wrote almost twenty years ago it is telling that I do not see a great deal of change in how things are with respect to society’s protection of abusers and the lack of a theology that meets the needs of victims.

Schussler-Fiorenza, working mostly in America, brings together much of her earlier thinking in, "Wisdom Ways" (2001). Her approach is compatible with both Pattison's and Poling's definition of pastoral theology in its attentiveness to experience and transformative aspirations. This is demonstrated by advocating a spirituality that "sustains rather than mutes struggle for self-esteem, survival, and transformation." and a "rhetorical- emancipatory" approach (Schussler-Fiorenza, 2001, p.3). This process is described as, "shifting your focus from biblical interpretation construed as an even better explanation of the text to biblical interpretation as a tool for becoming conscious of structures of domination..." (p.3) In these aspirations is a critique of those who silence together with a deep valuing of experience and a commitment to transformation.

SOCIETY

Poling recognizes society's stake in silencing the victims of abuse. He describes victims finding themselves operated on by "social controls" (Poling, 1991, p.12) which silence them. He goes on to describe the relationship between abuse of power and silence.

Sexual violence has been a taboo subject for a long time. The terrible suffering of victims has been silenced by public attitudes and policies; some victims maintain their silence for decades and many never tell. Without the protection of silence and taboos, sexual violence is unmasked for what it really is - the evil of abuse of power. (p.12)

This is both liberating and challenging. As a victim it is easy to personalise experiences, to say that my silence is my fault. It is an interesting change in the dynamic to say that I have been silenced as a result of being operated on by social control. However, his idea that silence is not protective is simplistic. It does not acknowledge the real losses that may come from breaking silence. To choose to speak about abuse is to take a different place in society, to risk other people seeing you as a damaged person and discounting you because of it. Poling finds hope in the victims of sexual abuse finding the power to speak but this may be optimistic. In the context of the underreporting of rape, the Stern Review considered, "how the response could be improved so that more victims might report what had happened to them" (Stern, 2010). There is a recognition in setting these aims that victims of rape are not finding the public voice that they should. It highlights a divergence between the rules and procedures which society has allowed to exist compared to its underlying thinking. The Stern Review concludes that existing procedures are right but they are not implemented adequately. This is an intriguing conclusion because it highlights the possibility that things can look right on paper but

fall down in practice. It echoes the dualism of the kindly letter from the Bishop encouraging clergy to report bullying and its complete failure to encourage anyone to break their silence about being bullied. This is not to say that Poling's hopes are ultimately misplaced but I suggest that even he has misunderstood society's hold on its protective practices.¹

Poling (1991) gives a credible account of how a community is inclined to silence victims. It may go some way towards accounting for why procedures are not implemented effectively in this area. He describes an avoidance of that which challenges.

[W]hen experience is defined within a narrow range that does not correspond to the rich variety available to individuals, then awareness is restricted and persons are made marginal. ...engaging with experiences that threaten a group's identity and cohesiveness is a constant challenge facing any community. (pp.147,148)

There is a parallel between sexual abuse and society and bullying within the Church. Neither of them is supposed to happen. There is a defensive mechanism being described where society chooses not to be aware because it is too difficult to deal with. In the same way for the Church to have ownership of the experience of bullying within the clergy may well offer a challenge to the group identity of the clergy. If the view of the clergy is narrowed to being people who do not bully and people who are not bullied, then avoidance of this issue may be the natural human response.

Poling accounts for society's response by suggesting it is the concept of family which it is protecting. Amongst the structures of domination, he includes patriarchy, racism, classism and imperialism (29). The relationship between patriarchy and the family is made clear in his use of Nancy Chodorow's work.

The right of men to be dominant over women, a characteristic of patriarchy, is reinforced with signals in the earliest experiences of boys and girls. Gender inequality is a part of family life down to the most intimate interaction between mother and child, between mother and father. (p.136)

¹ The main body of this work was written before the public scandals of Jimmy Saville and Rochdale, however, although these have been a watershed in terms of awareness, I believe society has yet to engage fully with the implications of these events.

It is within the child's earliest experiences of family that the "relational self" is formed, "when a child is abused, the destructive relationship is internalised in the emerging self" (p.96). The idea of the victim is intrinsic to Poling's thinking. For him the victim is created because "[parents] would rather destroy their children than face their own failure and disappointment in life." (p.28) This then leads to an adult who has difficulty with conflict, "self-devaluation results from repetitive experiences in which the child-victim did lose to the omnipotent parent" (p.107). Whereas internet advice would like me to believe that I am a person who has experienced bullying as an accident of place and time, Poling raises for me the possibility that I learnt to be a victim in childhood and when I came across a new "omnipotent parent" the pattern of being was already in place to know that I could not win. If there truly is a relationship between the context of parenting and the curate incumbent relationship then Poling's words can be adapted to the new context, some training incumbents would rather destroy their curate than face their own failure and disappointment in life.

SHAME

Whereas Poling leaps straight into the language of the victim Pattison offers an understanding of what a victim might be. The same features that Poling talks about as abuse are the ingredients of the life of those who Pattison describes as "shamed people" (Pattison, 2000, p.89). Admitting difficulties in defining shame, he works with it as a word which brings together a "metaphorical ecology" of understandings (p.88). Comparing shame to the closely related emotion of guilt he identifies shame as bringing to mind, "defilement", "pollution" and "stain" whereas guilt operates in the realms of "offence", "debt" and "punishment" (p.88).

Reaching back to my childhood experience I have a sense of this difference between shame and guilt. I am quite clear that I felt ashamed that I was abused but felt guilty that the abuse caused my step-father to be violent towards my mother. His metaphor of stain fits closely with my feelings of shame. However, the connection between guilt and offence is more complex. It took a long time to work out that it was not my offence that led to the guilt I carried.

Poling makes use of Wurmser's idea that "the notion of hiding is intrinsic to and inseparable from the concept of shame." (p.40) For me this draws attention to a much deeper sort of silence. It is not just about risk and loss in a logical manner, to be shamed is to have a deep emotional need to hide, to be silent. He also suggests that people behave as if shame is "contagious" (p.41); as much as the victim wants to hide any

observers want to “turn away”. (p.41) This relates back to Poling’s picture of a society which chooses not to see the things it finds threatening.

Pattison primarily relates an idea of “chronic shame” to childhood experience. “Chronic shame ... may be engendered if a child experiences a constant sense of not being wanted, not having its needs met, having to meet the needs of others, having its personal boundaries disregarded, and being treated as an object.” (2000, p.101) Through Pattison’s discussion of “Poisonous Pedagogy” it can be seen that relatively common ideas are identified as potentially shaming. “Obedience makes a child strong...strong feelings are harmful...parents are always right.” (p.242) If these are relatively common features of childhood experience then there are grounds for thinking that a significant proportion of the adult population may be chronically shamed people. However, this not the only route to chronic shame described. Pattison suggests it can arise out of “any experience of powerlessness, failure in one’s vocation, rejection in relationships, and even growing older and so failing to meet social ideals of youthfulness” (2000, p.108). The danger here is to begin to wonder if everybody might be carrying around a chronic sense of shame. I think this is something that must just be held in mind, when there are difficulties in definition there will always be difficulties with boundaries too.

Some sense of how common the occurrence of chronic shame is can be gained from two ways in which people classically avoid addressing their shame. First, they “may attempt to gain a sense of self-worth while anaesthetizing painful self-awareness by identifying with a higher cause and being altruistic” (Pattison, 2000, p.114). Secondly, in the case of the “attack other” strategy they may, “bully, blackmail, slander, putdown, ridicule, disdain...” (p.114) I find both these pictures relatively familiar which for me gives some credence to the prevalence of chronic shame. These are not necessarily descriptions of different people. Pattison describes a “shame rage spiral” (p.115) in which a person avoids their sense of shame in differing but equally unsuccessful ways. This offers the understanding that someone who bullies in one context may well, in another, have almost saintly qualities. Also, there is a connection with Poling’s, socially sanctioned “male rage” (Poling, 1991, p.106). It allows a question as to whether a shame rage spiral is harder to address in men because their behaviour may find acceptance. The concept of shame aligned with the shame-rage spiral offers insight into clergy as bullies as well as clergy silent about bullying.

There is a further development of this as regards the Church that Pattison is able to make a close comparison of how poisonous pedagogy fits in with relatively common

Church practices (2000, p.242). He suggests liturgy and symbolism, “may communicate to some people a sense of rejection, inferiority, unlovableness, powerlessness, worthlessness and defilement” (p.258). He offers a picture of the Church which attracts shamed people but is not able to help with the shame because it prefers to deal with guilt instead (p.245). He hypothesises that ordination may be particularly attractive to shamed people, “being closely identified with God and set apart may be appealing to people who have an inadequate sense of their own worth and value.” (p.281).

The final feature of shame is the habit of shamed people of engendering shame in others. This is can be seen in Pattison’s analysis of scapegoating (p.115), he describes:

- a search for a person with similar shameful traits;
- the projection of shame onto this person;
- the acceptance of shame by the person;
- the attempt to deal with this by projection of shame onto another.

Overall, Pattison offers the picture that: chronic shame is common in the general population; the Church may have more shamed people than the general population; and the church may be ineffective in addressing the spread of shame. Bringing them together builds a strong argument that shame may be a significant factor as both a cause of clergy experiencing bullying and the likelihood of being silent about that experience. It also offers an understanding of why my experience as a curate was so easily matched to childhood experience. My interpretation of my experience has moved from seeming an outrageous assertion to being a predictable experience.

GENDER

Although gender is presented as a separate category here, this is not to say that gender is separate from society and shame, more that it deserves a specific focus. There are parallels between gender inequality and inequality in the workplace.

Male rage is socially sanctioned, anger and abusive behaviours become the means whereby men enforce their control of women and their dominant position. Because women are trapped in subordinate positions, anger is dangerous because it is often used by men to justify violence against them. The vulnerability of women in society and the family often leads to an internalised sense of personal helplessness. (p.106)

My training incumbent's "male rage" was socially sanctioned to the extent that it was public and tolerated; no-one in the hierarchy of the diocese seems to have thought it might disqualify him as a training incumbent. My tolerant subordination was an accepted part of the same picture. Within this description is the idea of women's anger being suppressed because they lose credibility through it. When I was most angry with my training incumbent I had to walk away from him, there was a great sense of helplessness in this retreat. This opens up questions around gender and bullying; my experience does largely fit with male rage and female vulnerability yet I wonder what happens when male rage meets male vulnerability and the potential for potential for female rage. At least I was fitting into a picture society is comfortable with even if it is an ugly picture. To be a younger woman curate, receiving oversight from a male training incumbent approaching the last years of ministry is a risky place to be. There is a convergence of too many power dynamics that theological college and continuing ministerial education do not prepare either party for. As we were, I am certain that I was in some way safer because I was officially silent, this suggests a significant barrier.

Schussler-Fiorenza offers a broader understanding of rage and patriarchy. It can seem that, with an analysis in terms of patriarchy, men hold a privileged position over women. This narrows the field to Poling's view of socially sanctioned male rage meeting silent female subordination. However, Schussler-Fiorenza offers an alternative, taking into account whether someone holds a social position which can dominate over gender. This is captured in her term Kyriarchy combining ideas of station with the inclination to dominate (2001, p.118). A strength of Kyriarchy lies in its ability to identify a "white lady" (p.26) as someone who has accumulated the social power to exercise lordship over others. This is possible because Schussler-Fiorenza describes multiplicative structures of power.

Racism is multiplied by sexism multiplied by ageism, multiplied by classism multiplied by colonial exploitation. Hence, feminist theory and practice need to be (re-) conceptualized as practices of struggle against intersecting oppressions (p.118).

The *white lady* may ultimately have less power than the *western man of reason* (pp. 120-121) but compared to others still holds considerable power. A fluidity of Kyriarchal position is described where, “We inhabit structural positions of race, gender, class, and ethnicity, but that one of them might become privileged so that it constitutes a nodal point.” (p.119) There is a sense here of shifting power structures and therefore shifting vulnerabilities. In the case of bullying in a church context there is a further complication of the intersection of ordination and structural position as well as the curate/training incumbent dynamic. It clarifies that there may well be cases where a woman operates in a primary modality relating to class, for example. She may have enough kyriarchal power that her rage may be socially sanctioned. Likewise, a man may find himself in a subordinate position.

CONCLUSION

An outcome of this exploration of my own silence is the appreciation of a double silencing and partial silencing. This comprises: Poling’s idea that society silences that which it finds threatening; Patterson’s idea that if shame is evoked in a person then their natural response is to hide that shame by self-silencing; and my perception of attempts to speak being closed down. Together these offer a credible account of why bullying might not be reported.

Both Poling and Pattison find patriarchy to be a significant factor. Poling asserts that society silences for the purpose of defending the family; Patterson locates inadequate parenting, amongst other things, as giving rise to chronically shamed adults. However, the argument has been made that patriarchy is perhaps too narrow and loaded a term for exploring the complexities of gender and bullying. Therefore, Schussler-Fiorenza’s concept of Kyriarchy was introduced as a more flexible tool. Her description of the “White Lady” reveals the potential for a woman to bully a man. In light of this I can see two broad groups in those who might experience bullying, those who have a functional level of shame in their lives and those who are chronically shamed. An argument has been put forward to suggest that it is highly likely there will be chronically shamed people within the clergy. I suggest that chronically shamed people as well as bullying, may well be victims of bullying and as such face special difficulties in responding when bullied.

In order to answer the original questions effectively it is therefore necessary to consider that because bullying is something anyone might experience as shameful there will be a reluctance to report it. In addition to this, for the chronically shamed, there will be

motivations toward silence that reside deeply within their being. Not forgetting that these motivations toward being silent may be matched by an unconscious institutional desire to maintain silence. This analysis opens the way to further work on two areas not yet explored, the definition of bullying and the theological influences relating to bullying, shame and the culture of the Church. These will be explored as Part Two of this study.

PART TWO CHAPTER 4 “BULLYING-HOWEVER RARE” A CRITIQUE OF THE DIGNITY AT WORK MODEL POLICY FOUR YEARS ON.

THE DOCUMENT.

Dignity at Work, DaW (Archbishops’ Council, 2008) is an anti-bullying policy document of the Church of England. It consists of a report containing a model anti-bullying policy. This chapter examines the validity of DaW in the light of the literature regarding workplace bullying. Bringing this evaluation together with Lewin’s model of organizational change will allow conclusions to be drawn which address weaknesses within the policy.

The DaW was produced by four writers, committed to addressing the issue of bullying, on behalf of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee (DRCSC) of the Archbishops’ Council. It was received by the DRCSC, amendments were made and a forward was added by the committee’s chair, bishop John Packer. The 2008 General Synod was made aware of this report, not as an agenda item but through a question to the Synod. One thousand copies were distributed to dioceses in an advisory capacity. In the diocese of study this remains a draft policy. A critique of this policy is timely as the final policy is still malleable.

In the forward to DaW Bishop John, quotes a 2001 House of Bishops’ statement:

The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Abuse, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated within the Church of England. All complaints of abuse, harassment and bullying are to be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated. (AC, 2008, p.iv)

DaW begins with a justification for action and a summary of the legal position. These are followed by practical advice to reduce bullying and harassment. The first of these is to “frame a formal policy” (p.5) and to aid this, a model policy is appended (p.15). It is this policy which is a focus although reference will be made to the wider document. The essence of my argument is demonstrated in the following statement of commitment in the model policy: “Abuse, harassment and bullying- however rare- will not be tolerated in this diocese” (p.15). I argue that adding the words, “however rare” to the 2001 statement above is a backward step. It plays into the shame of bullying discussed in the previous chapter, and suggests to pragmatists that if bullying is rare dealing with it is not urgent. This language together with minimal attention from Synod, the document’s

advisory capacity and it still being at a draft stage in my own diocese eight years later, suggests that bullying has been tolerated and will continue to be tolerated for some time to come.

When addressing bullying, one might draw on insights from the counselling profession and from conflict management. As this work is not of a therapeutic nature I have excluded material related to counselling. Writers in the field of work place bullying do draw on conflict management models. I make passing reference to this, but without looking at strategies for addressing conflict as this work is at the level of policy rather than technique. A final delineation is a primary interest in bullying and anti-bullying measures as experienced by Church of England clergy. However, much of this material can have wider application.

DIGNITY AT WORK IN THE CONTEXT OF WORKPLACE BULLYING LITERATURE.

Workplace bullying has roots in school bullying and aggression (Liefvooghe, 2001, p.375). A Scandinavian tradition can be thought of as arising in the 1980s when Professor Heinz Leymann applied insights from family conflict to workplace conflict (Einarsen et al., 2003, p.3). The growth of workplace bullying as a distinctive field throughout the 1990s is highlighted by a 2002 review (Cowie, et al., 2002, p.34). Hoel and Salin identify a specific British trade union link, referring to unions being in a weakened position and realizing that bullying “lends itself well to complaints from individuals, as well as to more collective strategies [making it] an ideal campaigning issue” (2003, p.203). They identify this as stemming from Andrea Adams’ book, *Bullying at Work* (1992). This reflects a pattern where “waves of interest” (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf and Cooper, 2003, p.5) follow a court case, leading to a preliminary study, which then feeds back into public opinion. The presence of emotive issues and mix of stakeholders make workplace bullying a complex field.

There are two definitions of bullying used within DaW. One is provided by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS): “behaving in a way that is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting, with the result that the targeted person feels undermined, humiliated or injured” (AC, p.3). The second definition introduces unacceptable behaviour as the misuse of power with the potential for harm. This becomes bullying when there is “actual harm or distress [over a] prolonged period of time” (p.16). This is clarified by a list of negative acts (p.17). A concern mentioned in the document is that “incisive behaviour” (p.6) might wrongly be interpreted as

bullying. The key elements of this definition are the misuse of power, negative acts and timing considerations.

DEFINITION

A power differential between bully and victim is a core part of the definition (Cowie, 2002, p.36) but there are several possible modifications to this basic feature. Zapf and Gross make the observation that “bullying can *start* with an equal power structure” (2001, p.498) but then go on to lead to unequal power as the bullying behaviour has its effect. Further, there is not only hierarchical power but also social power. This opens up the potential for bullying by colleagues and subordinates (Salin, 2008, p.221). Finally, Einarsen’s observation that the power differential can be “real or perceived” (1999, p.18) highlights that although power is significant it is a complex category with which to work.

The consideration of negative acts in DaW represents a strand within workplace bullying literature of increasing objectivity by researching the occurrence of breaches in behaviour criteria rather than their effect on an individual (Cowie, 2002, p. 36). The 23 behaviours listed relate closely to the 23 behaviours of the Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ-R). This was developed by Einarsen and Raknes from 1991 (Einarsen, Hoel and Notelaers, 2009, p. 26) and is still being used in 2011 (Notelaers, et al., 2011, p.76). By using negative acts in conjunction with their effect on a victim’s feelings, DaW is drawing on both objective and subjective strands.

The period over which negative acts must occur in order to be counted as bullying shows great variation. Cowie et al (2002, p.35) summarize Leymann as holding to the strictest definition that a negative act must have occurred at least weekly for 6 months to be defined as bullying. However, if bullying is regarded as a phased process (Einarsen, 1999, p.19) where subtle aggression shifts to open aggression then a time related boundary is hard to establish. Finally, simple timing ideas do not take in bystander effects. D’Cruz and Norhona make use of Twemlow’s “bully bystanders” and “victim bystanders” (2011, p.270) which demonstrates that there may be more experienced than is carried out by one person; others may join in the bullying or stress may be experienced when a victim of bullying is a bystander to another being bullied. This is reflected in Zapf and Gross who identify “social stressors” as affecting all who work together not just the bully and victim (2001, p.498). This again adds complexity around what might constitute an individual negative act that might be counted.

The difficulty of definition is demonstrated by the work of Tepper and Henle (2011) who advocate the maintenance of a multiplicity of terms to preserve the richness of the field. This can be contrasted with Hershcovis (2011) who argues that bringing terms together gives a useful unity. These are reflective of bullying as “a set of events that can be conceptualized in many ways rather than as an “objective reality”” (Liefvooghe and Olafsson, 1999, p.48). A feature of workplace bullying research is the need to fit together the stance on definition with the framework in which the research is situated. This concept has the potential to be applied to policy documents.

The DaW definition has both subjective and objective approaches with the inclusion of how a person feels and the behaviours associated with bullying. A reader may think that experiencing these behaviours correlates to being bullied. Although it is indeed possible to work with a bullied/not bullied distinction, this is not the only option. Significantly, Notelaers suggests a sub-category of “limited work criticism” (Notelaers et al, 2006, p.291). As these sub-categories are absent from DaW it can be read as an alarming document in which everything becomes bullying. DaW names the concern that work criticism will be wrongly interpreted as bullying and has content which promotes that confusion. This possibility exists because if incisive behaviour is received as offensive and leads to a person feeling “undermined, humiliated or injured” (AC, p.3), then, by their own definition, this is bullying. There is potential for multiple definitions to act as a barrier to engagement because all difficult human interactions begin to look like bullying. Conversely, Einarsen et al., consider multiple definitions as beneficial but these are across different professions (2002, p.14), not in the same document. Concerns around definition are magnified when DaW is considered as a way of addressing bullying and also as grievance policy and a standard for employment tribunal. Difficulties of definition reflect a number of purposes legal, ethical and pastoral. I suggest covering these in one document leads to a dysfunctional document.

THE PREVALENCE OF BULLYING.

DaW makes a minimal attempt to quantify bullying: “such behaviour is rare within the Church” (AC, p.iv) and, from the model policy: “Abuse, harassment and bullying- however rare- will not be tolerated in the diocese” (p.21). These comments invite consideration of the accuracy of the word *rare* in a context lacking published research.

In the workplace a range of quantitative studies have been carried out. Comparison is complicated by different demographics, definition and tools. Zapf et al., give a summary (2003, p.111) which is illustrative of this as it covers five definitions, nine

countries, many employers and sample sizes from 37 to 7,700. From this they suggest “a percentage of between 1 and 4 per cent serious bullying has emerged in Europe.” (p.108). Extremes occur in Finnish prison officers at 20% and British part time students at 53%. There is no indication that the Church was examined in these studies.

A development from this is Notelaers’ comparison of survey methods (Notelaers et al., 2006, p.291). He observes that if objective methods are used with *bullied/not bullied* categories then we see a higher prevalence of bullying compared to subjective methods. However, Notelaers applies an analysis which generates clusters of experience, rather than a *bullied/not bullied* differential. It could be argued that only the *victim* category (Table i) matches to being bullied, in which case the result is consistent with Zapf et al. (2003) However, people in the categories *victim*, *work related bullied* and *sometimes bullied*, can show symptoms of bullying which widens the impact considerably.

TABLE (I). DATA FROM THE USE OF THE NEGATIVE ACTS QUESTIONNAIRE.

*For the 2009 Study similar cluster names have been integrated for comparison.

Clusters	2006 Study 6,000 Belgians across 18 organizations (Notelaers et al., 2006, p.293) %	*2009 Study 5,000 employees across 70 British organizations (Einarsen, Hoel and Notelaers 2009, p.34) %	2011 Study 9,000 Flemish speakers across 86 organizations. (Notelaers et al., 2011, p. 77) %
Not bullied	35	28	30.5
Limited work criticism	28	25	27.2
Limited negative encounters	17	15	20.8
Sometimes bullied	9	13	8.3
Work related bullied	8	10	9.5
Victim	3	8	3.6

Notelaers' 2011 study presents groups which might experience bullying more than others including the following:

- Increased risk to those between 25 and 44 years old who have increasing family needs and diminishing resources (p.80).
- A description of public servants as twice as likely as blue collar workers to be occasionally bullied, suggesting that: “in cultures heavily dependent on the preservation of hierarchy, bullying occurs more often” (p.81).
- Organizational structure leading to “both the perpetrators and victims... trapped in a golden cage” (p.81).

The meaning of *rare* within DaW is subjective. The lower estimate of 1 per cent above could be fairly described as rare. However, the description is harder to justify with the higher ranges of 4-20 per cent. It is notable that the British study above records higher levels of bullying than the other studies. Moreover, the increased risks described have some resonance within the Church:

- Assistant curates in particular may fall into the 24-44 age range with family needs and resource issues such as limited finances and fatigue.
- The hierarchy of bishops, priests and deacons is enshrined in Church of England structures, raising the strong possibility of dependence on hierarchy.
- If a parish priest does not want to move house, then they are dependent on remaining in that post.

The implication of this is that rather than assuming bullying in the Church would be lower than in other fields, there are grounds for expecting it to be higher. These studies were carried out among employees: Church of England clergy are not usually employees. Their position as office holders flags up the possibility that they may be unlike employees. Studies based on employees in Britain may be a useful indication of bullying levels but are not a substitute for research within the clergy.

Notelaers' work also has the potential to address the concern described earlier. The width of definition together with the absence of information regarding clustering left reasonable concerns as to whether appropriate criticism could be misinterpreted. The recognition of limited work criticism as being outside of bullying addresses this.

To summarize, experiencing bullying behaviour at work does not seem to be rare. Notelaers' identification of groups more vulnerable to bullying could be salient, implying that the level of bullying could be higher than has been assumed. To assert that bullying is rare in an anti-bullying policy, and in the absence of clergy based research, is detrimental to the credibility of the document. This, given that an aim of DaW is that readers who are experiencing bullying should seek help, is a serious weakness.

BULLYING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE.

The previously discussed emphasis on bullying as intolerable and rare fits an organization which has a self-understanding that bullying is unacceptable. Bullying is seen as so out of place within the Church that it is necessary to defend introducing an anti-bullying policy. Possessing an anti-bullying policy can be seen as implying the

existence of bullying. This is reflected in an apologetic approach to dealing with the issue: “Recognizing that issues can sometimes arise does not undermine or debase the value of the community; it simply acknowledges human frailty and is a first step in tackling and reducing problems.” (AC, 2008, p.iv). As a justification for action, a call to unspecified Christian values is made: “We are called to create a loving community that models Christian values, and any cases of bullying and harassment are unacceptable” (p.1). These are broad statements which reflect the thought that it is obvious that bullying has no place in the Church, so a great theological justification is not required. However, Raynor and Hoel describe types of bullying behaviour including “threat to professional status... threat to personal standing... isolation... overwork” (Cowie, 2002, p.34). Threat to professional status and personal standing can both be used as tools to win in church conflicts. The Sheldon Report documents isolation and overwork as recognized challenges of clergy life (Horsman and Lee, 2002). There is no substantial reason for assuming that bullying would not arise in a church context.

Justification for addressing bullying is presented through a list of disadvantages which follow from bullying which includes “low morale...loss of respect for those with responsibility for oversight; poor stewardship of ministry resources; loss of confidence; ill health and absence; resignations; and reputation damage for the wider church...” (AC, p.1) These represent the cost of bullying to the organization. This brief section is then followed by three pages outlining the legal position. This draws on discrimination and harassment legislation and ecclesiastical law. However, bringing together the opening and closing paragraphs, I believe it is possible to interpret a driving concern of the Church becoming involved in legal issues.

Both employees and office holders can bring complaints under laws covering discrimination and harassment. (p.2)

Seeking legal remedy can be a protracted, costly and painful process, and is not designed to address the underlying issues. Working to develop a culture that makes it less likely that bullying will take place, and acting swiftly to nip it in the bud if it does, will help reduce the need for legal action. (p.4)

The organizational approach outlined above is illuminated and challenged by two features of current literature. These are a shift away from focussing on bullying as interpersonal aggression to organizational practice and the questionable effectiveness of anti-bullying policies. Liefvooghe and Mackenzie highlight organizational bullying:

Managers are perhaps placed as the scapegoat in interpersonal bullying research, shouldering responsibility for organizational practices that are predominantly out of their control. The pathologizing of both victim and bully may act as a distractor for organizational practices (2001, p.377).

Basing their conclusions on interviews with the employees of a call centre they examine how practices relating to meeting targets lead to bullying behaviour. Their work is useful as an indication that presenting bullying purely as an interpersonal issue is taking too narrow a view. This is supported further by Noronha's assertion that bystanders are a significant but under examined resource in addressing bullying (2011).

An important insight into the failure of anti-bullying policies is raised as early as 2005 in the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) document "Beyond bullying to a culture of respect". This asks the question, "83 per cent of organizations – 90 per cent in the public sector – have anti-bullying policies, so why is it still happening?" (p.3). They do not suggest abandoning anti-bullying policies but shift the balance of activity strongly towards establishing and monitoring cultures of positive behaviour.

The policy oriented nature of DaW fits with a Unison document which DaW references. This strongly supports the role of policy but the starting point for policy formation is: "data collection, both qualitative and quantitative....it gives employers the chance to show they have begun to investigate the problem" (Richards and Daley, p.248). They then suggest a working group draws up a draft policy which should "reflect the culture of the organization" (p.248). In common with the CIPD approach there is mention of culture. However, the contrast is in whether a new culture is to be established or the existing culture reflected.

Beale and Hoel also consider the failure of anti-bullying policy. They suggest a potential error in thinking relating to the cost of bullying. Rather than organizations experiencing bullying as a cost they suggest that employers can sometimes further the aims of their organization through bullying: "Employers attempts to eradicate bullying are fundamentally problematic and to varying degrees contradictory" (2011, p.7). Based on labour process theory they invite bullying to be considered as an endemic feature of the capitalist employment relationship (p.7). On this basis bullying is "a tool of managerial control" (p.9). Managers are there to control labour and can benefit by "condoning or ignoring" (p.10) bullying behaviour. They suggest that modern HR

practices shift anti-bullying procedures towards “individualist managerial initiatives” (p.6). They can also be tied into a management “sub-culture” where to criticise another manager offends against the subculture (p.10) leading to looking the other way or having a “quiet word” (p.10). Beale and Hoel do not discard zero tolerance approaches but suggest they require political change on a massive level which may well eliminate them. This implies that zero tolerance approaches, within weak anti-bullying measures, are intrinsically flawed.

Beale and Hoel reference Edwards’ analysis of employment, describing workplaces which can be categorized as a “high status human resource environment” (p.11). The expectation is that bullying is less likely in these workplaces. The Church may see itself in this way, in contrast to the picture of a call centre bullying employees described by Liefoghe and Mackenzie (2001). Edwards describes the elements of the employment relationship as relating to status and contract. At its simplest level clergy could be seen to be workers that fit his status model, highly trained and hard to replace, whereas the call centre workers could be seen as fitting his contract model of being easily dispensable. However, his key point is subtler than this. Managers in the same workplace can switch between status and contract approaches giving “contradictions in management rhetoric and practice [with] significant impact on worker’s attitudes, on trust and on management credibility, as well as potentially aiding a trade union ‘counter culture’” (Beale and Hoel, 2011, p.12). A further subtlety in understanding which organizations might experience bullying is Hoel and Salin’s identification that *laissez-faire* management rather than authoritarian management can promote a culture of bullying (2003, p.213) and their identification that organizational change is a key factor in the presence of bullying (p.214).

Considering the applicability of Beale and Hoel’s identification that zero tolerance policies are in conflict with the capitalist employment relationship, a case could be made that clergy are a long way from capitalism. They are not paid to work. The stipend they receive is intended to free them from the need to work. However, on a practical level stipendiary clergy receive money and complete tasks that serve the organization, which implies that insights based around capitalism are relevant.

When thinking about the human resource environment Church of England clergy might experience, it relates to the oversight of the Bishop and is therefore strongly based on individuals. Within Boyd- MacMillan and Savage’s work with church leaders (2007) there are pointers towards avoidance or a quiet word being likely tools, opening the

possibility of a managerial subculture tolerant towards bullying within the Church. Other resonances occur when considering the switching between status and contract approaches. Clergy can be categorized as highly trained and valuable but some clergy are in redundant posts. Clergy are not easily dispensable but the move towards considering them dispensable is significant. As an illustration, I received a request for parish share which reminded me that clergy posts were at risk if the share was not met. An indication of changing climate is the existence of the Unite faith worker section. Only a generation ago this would have been unimaginable. Clergy might not be like call centre workers but we are significantly closer than we used to be. This reflects that the Church of England is an organization experiencing considerable change.

DaW does address organizational culture to some extent. However, it partially nullifies this by offering policy framing as its first suggestion and then relying on bishops, clergy and laity to set a good example and undertake training as the way to bring cultural change. There is no more specific detail. Therefore, the thrust of DaW is towards policy not culture. This has the outworking in my diocese of being at the draft policy stage for four years and not reaching the suggestions relating to organizational culture. One further reference to culture is: “strong leadership can sometimes tip over into bullying behaviour.... a culture where clergy are consulted and problems discussed is less likely to encourage bullying and harassment than one where there is an authoritarian leadership style” (AC, p.19).

The church cannot assume that it falls outside the category of bullying organizations. Instead, I suggest it is an organization where people who experience bullying are likely to find it more problematic because as well as the bullying itself they need to cope with the dissonance of being bullied within the Church context. A particular contrast between DaW and the literature comes in the area of management style. The report’s concern that authoritarian behaviour may be interpreted as bullying stands against Hoel and Salin’s observation that laissez faire management gives more room for bullying to occur, demonstrating that one of the few cultural references may be flawed.

Reading DaW in light of the critique of zero tolerance approaches and the risk of the perception of hypocritical behaviour, the overall approach of DaW to bullying comes into question. If we contrast the CIPD position of identifying bullying policies to be prolific but unsuccessful in 2005 with the diocese of study still at draft policy stage in 2012 then the Church of England appears to be behind other organizations. This lack of progress suggests the toleration of bullying. Where other organizations may have tried

but been unsuccessful, the Church has hardly made a start. This invites consideration to be made of the relationship between the image of the organization that DaW offers and a victim of bullying who reads this document. My interpretation is that the organization presents itself as having a history, of at least reasonable practice, in the area of addressing bullying and wishes to build on this. However, I anticipate that a victim of bullying would take a view that the history has been of poor practice and anything built on it will be weak.

A significant omission relates to DaW providing a model policy before carrying out the research suggested by Richards and Daley (2003). Had the research been done first then DaW could have been more closely situated in the culture of the Church. Currently it is neither a reflection of an existing culture or an authoritative attempt to change culture. Use has been made of trade union advice and current research but church has borrowed from these contexts without doing the work to provide its own stamp. Overall this presents a picture of an organization unwilling to examine its own culture, which may be naïve about the potential for bullying and where the experience of bullying could cause additional distress because of perceived hypocrisy. There is a direct conflict between the desire to claim zero tolerance with the need for DaW to be seen as a document with credibility and integrity.

UNDERSTANDING DIGNITY AT WORK AS AN AGENT OF CHANGE.

LEWIN'S FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS.

In order to understand how effective DaW is, or could be, as an anti-bullying measure it is helpful to analyse it in terms of organizational change. Of the models available in this area I have chosen Lewin's Force Field Analysis (Lewin, 1947). This, to some extent, is an antecedent of action research (Hult and Lennung, 1980, p. 241) which has close links with pastoral theology (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.255). It is also an accessible model which is demonstrated by its popular currency (Levasseur, 2001).

For Lewin, we occupy a life space which is a field where driving forces and resistive forces act (1951, L. 7993). He takes a broad view of driving force including "ambition, goals, needs and fears" (L.7662) and anything that hampers them as resistive forces. Lewin applies this theory to individuals and groups (L..7763). The resultant force can then move us to new parts of the life space. Situations where forces are in balance, where there is no "locomotion" (L.7763) to new parts of the life space, are referred to as "quasi-stationary equilibria" (L.7641). He uses the metaphor of a river to justify this as a river itself can be static but there is movement within (L.7426). A property of his

quasi-stationary equilibrium is tension. Achieving a new equilibrium through an increase of driving force is regarded as a high tension approach whereas achieving it through the reduction of resistive forces is seen as lowering tension and being more desirable (L.7646).

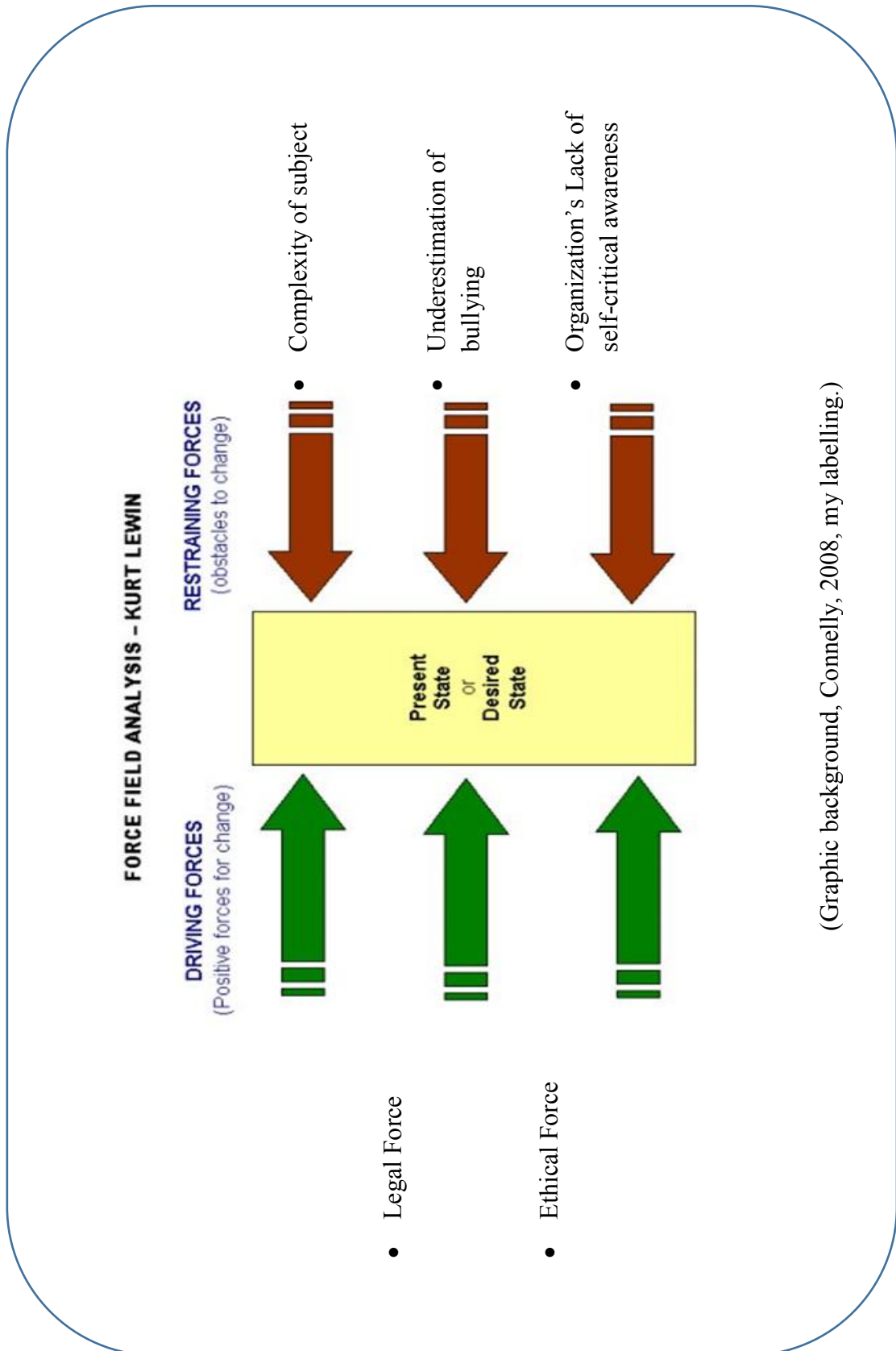
A contributor to the existence of equilibrium is social habit (L.7745). He describes this as a force of “inner resistance” (L.7747) that leads to both there being less change than might have been expected and the possibility of short lived change. Successful change involves unfreezing the current level, moving to a new level, and then freezing at the new level (L.7807).

This model is criticized because there is some suspicion around the idea of organizations being frozen (Burnes, 2004, p.992). Also it is dependent on the practitioner’s ability to analyse the forces within the life space which is subjective (Connelly, 2008). However, the lack of movement and even falling back represented by having an intention to address bullying in 2001 and still being at the draft policy stage at 2012 fits very well with the picture of frozen social habit. The idea of needing to expend more energy than might be expected to overcome social habit and then freezing in place of a new social habit seems to encapsulate the scope of this work well. When considering what the social habit might be, I would resist suggesting that the Church has a social habit of bullying but instead identify the social habit as avoiding dealing with bullying.

I find further support for my choice in the work of Rees and Hall (2013) which is supported by the CIPD. They identify that more recent change management models have Lewin’s model as a root (p. 111). Their comparison of the steps of *initial identification, obtaining data and diagnosis* with Lewin’s initial *unfreezing* stage (p.112) offers a good match with my intention in this thesis. Although they do go on to offer more sophisticated models such as Kotter’s eight stage model (p.113) and Organizational Development (pp.113-114), these models add extra stages outside the scope of the thesis. My use of Lewin’s model for this early stage does not preclude the diocese choosing to implement my work through another model. It is within the scope of this thesis to choose a change management model as a tool but a wider analysis of change management models does not relate to the research questions.

Based on Lewin's model the question for my critique becomes: how does the model policy sit with respect to driving forces and resistive forces in its content and context? From the previous discussion the main driving force I can identify is the need to make an acceptable response in the current legal climate, a legal force. A subsidiary driving force would be the general sense that bullying should not have a place in church life, an ethical force. The resistive forces present can be seen as the complexity of bullying as a subject, the potential underestimation of bullying, and a lack of self-critical awareness by the Church of England as an organization.

Diagram (iv) Force Field Analysis.



A fair question when considering change in the Church is whether theology is a driving force or a resistive force. It has not been discussed in the previous analysis as it is largely missing from DaW so it seems appropriate to consider its place before overall conclusions are drawn.

FINDING THE PLACE OF THEOLOGY.

In parallel to the Church drawing on information provided by trade unions it is Maskell, in her work for Unite, who uses a biblical metaphor based on the parable of the Good Samaritan: “we believe that bishops shouldn’t be crossing the road to the other side” (BBC, 2008). This metaphor only partially reflects the Church’s role in addressing bullying. Exhortations to not follow the priest and the Levite and walk past the person at the roadside are likely to be familiar to those who have heard the passage preached on. Calls to repent of the times we have taken that role and then trying to do better in future are part of a safe and familiar discourse. The challenge of addressing bullying is not only that those holding power might be walking past on the other side. It is that they might be responsible for the initial violence. To look from this point of view is deeply uncomfortable and relates back to my previous discussion of people preferring to turn away from that which is shameful (Chapter Three).

Pattison finds the Church ill equipped theologically for dealing with shame. He draws a picture of a church which has benefitted from shame “Christianity, like other social institutions, engenders and promotes shame, often to enhance order and control.” (2008, p.229). This mirrors Beale and Hoel’s proposal that bullying can have a purpose within a company and their description of the management culture defending itself (2011). As a starting point for addressing shame theologically, Pattison asserts that

it is necessary for theologians to recognize and take some responsibility for the effects that the ideas, images and symbols that they propagate may have on individuals and groups.... At the very least, they need to cease denying that these things may have a harmful or helpful impact on people. (p. 298).

Pattison does not claim to offer a coherent framework for responding to shame theologically but the table below summarizes the moves he would like investigated.

TABLE (II). POSSIBLE THEOLOGICAL MOVES TO ADDRESS SHAME.

Traditional Theological Ideas		Alternative Theological Ideas
Original sin (p.301)	→	Brock's, "Original grace" (p.301)
Atonement through the "saving death and sacrifice of Jesus" (p.301)	→	Jesus as the creator of "a living concrete community of saving relationships" (p.302)
Sin as disobedience and alienation from God (p.302)	→	Sin as damage to people which can be addressed through reconciliation (p.303)
God as "father, king and judge" (p.303)	→	McFague's God as "mother, lover, friend" (p.303)
The all-pervasive presence of God (p.304)	→	God as "discrete, courteous, sensitive and respectful" (p.304)
Jesus as an idealised figure in a one truth model (p.306)	→	The biblical record of Jesus life and teaching as multivalent, interpretations of which can be harmful for some. (p.306)

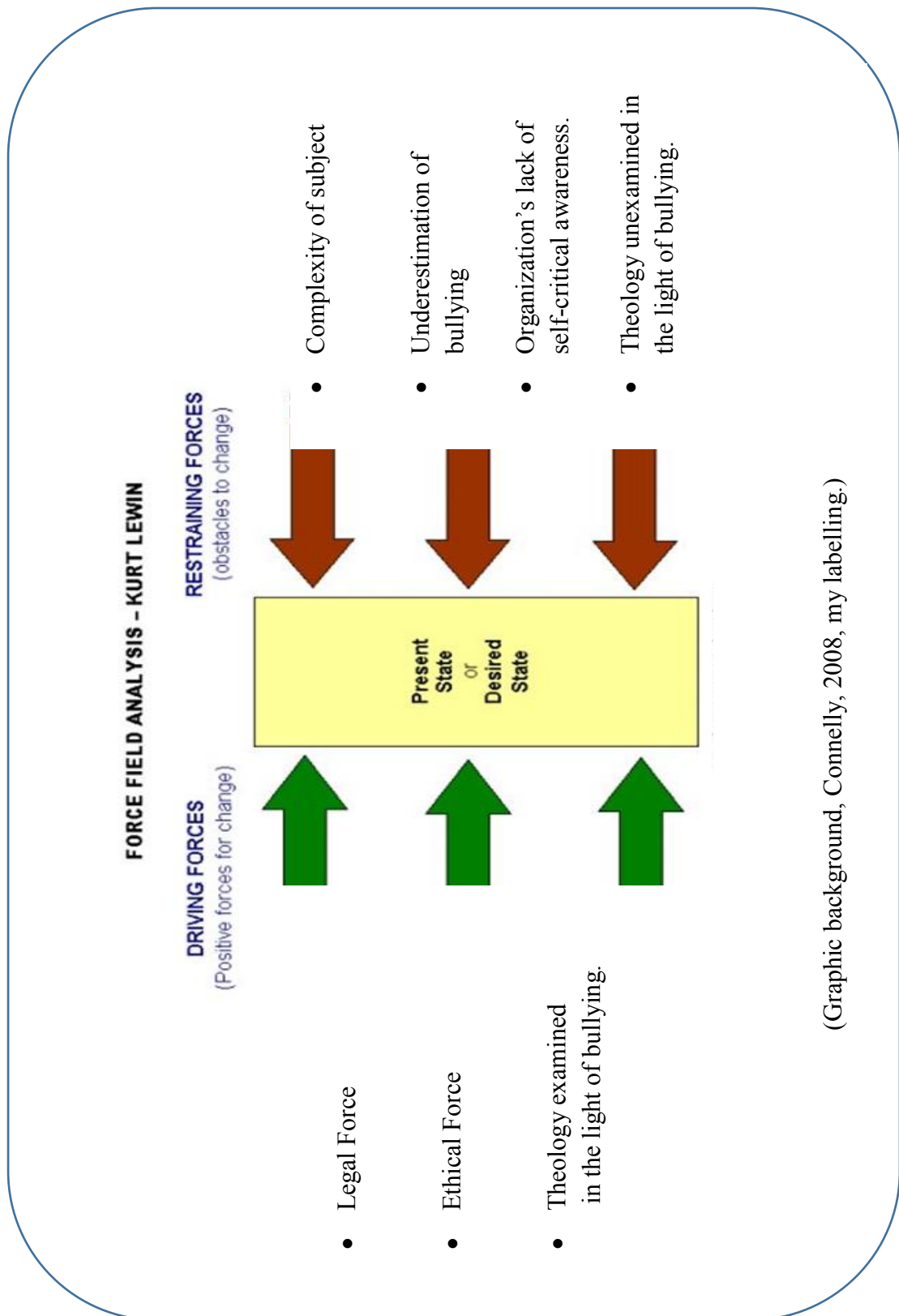
I see these move, overall, as challenges to traditional theology. Connecting them back to my own theological approach (diagram iii). I connect these moves to a more egalitarian experience of God. I suggest that the traditional theology, which has left the Church unable to respond to shame, is the same theology which hampers its response to bullying where both perpetrators and victims risk shame. Pattison lays down the challenge that: "religious communities will need to recognize the ways in which they benefit from the exploitation of shame" (p.308). I suggest that shame has been instrumental in maintaining inactivity around anti-bullying measures. This has enabled the organization to avoid engaging with the area as it should have.

Pattison's critique matches closely with Poling who examines how theology can contribute to abusive relationships. Poling bases his thought around a relational web (1991, p.24ff) which takes in God and all creation. He goes further than Pattison in two ways. First, through his use of Loomer's ideas, by identifying God with creation, in a potentially pantheistic manner: "God is not only the ultimate end for which all things exist; God is also the shape and stuff of existence." (p.174). Poling situates both abusers and victims within the substance of God: "impulses towards evil have been integrated

into God's character" (p.175). Secondly, Poling offers an ambiguous God, acknowledging the criticism of his theology: "most [theologians] are not willing to accept the moral ambiguity of a relational God whose destiny is identified with creation" (p.174). His ambiguous God leads to an ambiguous salvation: "This passion ... risks the fragmentation and eventual destruction of the web." (p.177). He sees the strength of this approach in the "ability to embrace the ambiguity of both justice and injustice in the integrity of God's being while maintaining resilient hope for justice in the midst of this ambiguity" (P.178). However, I argue that an ambiguous God and a doubtful salvation are a barrier to the resilient hope he values.

Theology is both a driving and resistive force. It can perpetuate avoidance of bullying or it can be transformative and offer the impetus to address bullying. The moves that Pattison suggests involve recasting the Church's most valued theology and Poling's ideas are in the realm of paradigmatic change. Those who bully and those who are victims of bullying cannot afford to wait for that level of transformation. However, the more modest of Pattison's desires is that people become aware of the potential for traditional systematic theology to encourage avoidance and the outworking this has regarding bullying. It is within the bounds of traditional theology to realise that bullying is wrong and should be addressed. The distinction I would make is that any theology, unexamined in the light of the phenomena of bullying, can be a resistive force but an examined theology, whatever the stance, should have the capacity to be a driving force.

Diagram (v) Theology's place in force field analysis.



Whatever individual theological positions are adopted the themes of sin and repentance offer a context for the Church to put its own organizational stamp on its approach to anti-bullying measures. If bullying is seen as a sin against God or community or both then a path is opened towards reconciliation and amendment of life. In this I would include the structural sin of the Church slow to engage with bullying as an organization as well the individual sins which make up bullying activity.

In his forward to DaW, bishop John shares that he is encouraged by the opportunity for “mediation and restorative justice” (AC, p.5). Volf, writing in this context is provoking: “What we have come to know we must remember, and what we remember we must tell.” (1996, p.235). This draws attention to a significant absence within the Church’s approach. The Church cannot bring itself to know how deeply it is touched by bullying. I interpret the Bishop’s call for mediation and restorative justice as relating to the area of individual victims and perpetrators of bullying. However, if this the case then I suggest this is misplaced. The need for restorative justice needs to begin with the relationship between those who have experienced bullying and the organization which chooses to assume that bullying is rare. There is a need for the Church to be able to speak accurately and openly about bullying which rests on the Church making a substantial effort to see, and to know, the nature and extent of bullying.

DISCUSSION OF THE LEWIN FORCES.

Having identified forces acting within the field of the Church’s response to bullying, their comparative significance is now considered. If the main driver is legal pressure with only subsidiary support from the sense that the Church should do something about bullying, then this matches well with the current lack of progress. This is because at present the legal pressure is weak. First, it is technically weak because of this country’s lack of anti-bullying legislation. Secondly, a legal measure takes strength from people using it.

This raises the question of how likely clergy are to turn to employment tribunals. Clergy are somewhat dependent on the Church of England in order to pursue their vocation, receive a stipend and have a home. Zapf and Gross describe possible responses to bullying based on Withey and Cooper’s model, “exit, voice, loyalty, neglect” (2001, p.504). An implication of their study is that those who engage in a “fight for justice” (p.497) are unlikely to achieve an outcome equal to their position before bullying

started. It is of note that in the original study, Withey and Cooper (1989) identified shortcomings in the quality of their *voice* data because those who wanted to voice their experiences were hampered in this desire (pp.535-536). For clergy, either exiting to a new parish or loyally tolerating a difficult situation are likely to be more attractive than voicing their experiences through legal means. This implies there would be few bullied clergy prepared to use legal measures. I interpret the trade union input (BBC, 2010) as attempts to strengthen the legal driver. Overall, the legal driver is strong enough for the Church leadership to be seen to do something but not strong enough to do something effective. In essence the strongest driver for change is weak.

In contrast to the weakness of driving forces stands the strength of resistive forces. Previous arguments establish that: bullying is a complex subject; that the Church has chosen to speculate that bullying is rare rather than research the area; and that it may have a naïve view of how bullying relates to the organization. It is by reducing these, according to Lewin's model, that a low tension solution to addressing bullying may lie. Evidence that bullying within the Church is significant could be the source of energy that drives movement to a new social habit of seeing and addressing bullying.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have analysed the Church of England's engagement with bullying based on a single document with respect to the literature of workplace bullying. This has clear limitations but aims to stimulate thought, discussion and further work rather than being definitive. The overall sense, after applying Lewin's model for change, is that DaW is a fair reflection of the extant knowledge but with critical omissions and weaknesses of interpretation. It is not an agent of significant change. DaW's main failing is that it lacks the evidence necessary for making the investment of time and resources necessary to address bullying effectively. It contains a rhetoric which encourages the superficial response it met in this diocese.

This chapter identifies significant weaknesses within the DaW document that mitigate against its implementation. It opens the possibility that a more suitable policy might do the following:

- Avoid the superficial use of the language of zero tolerance;
- Be honest and repentant about the current lack of progress;
- Offer an account both theological and organizational as to why the Church may have particular vulnerabilities towards bullying;

- Shift from a bullied/not bullied approach to recognizing categories of experience which require different levels of response;
- Include content relating to how bystanders could and should respond to bullying.
- Replace the concept of bullying being rare with the best description of bullying available.

The rest of this thesis is aimed at enhancing the points above. Primarily, through the use of Girard's model of mimesis as well as specifically addressing the final point by using numerical and narrative data to offer a detailed description of the nature of bullying as experienced by the clergy of this diocese.

CHAPTER 5: FAR HORIZON THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

Parts one and two shape the foreground of the theoretical framework for Part 3.

However, rather than forming a functional framework themselves, parts one and two delineate areas of need which this framework will address. I consider the strength of these earlier parts is that they begin to articulate surface observations such as silence; the lack of progress in effective response to bullying; and the sense that traditional theology falls short of the needs of the church if it seeks to honour a more egalitarian experience of God (Table 2). The weakness of this critique is its piecemeal nature, the lack of a cohesive model. They suggest the possibility that there is a more fundamental layer of understanding which I identify as Girardian mimesis. I offer a model for understanding bullying in the church context grounded in the experiences of the clergy of this diocese. This model is intended to resource a sense of individual and organizational conviction that has sufficient focus to overcome significant inertia in the face of sin.

The table below grounds the above description in the practical theology of Swinton and Mowat introduced earlier (2006, p.16).

TABLE (III) APPLICATION OF SWINTON AND MOWAT’S MODEL FOR PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Practical Theology Model (Swinton and Mowat) (pp.25-27)	Application in this thesis
Focus on faithful transformative change	Support clergy to transform bullying relationships through Lewin’s model for change.
Mediation between, Christian tradition and a specific problem.	Mediation between, Imitation of Christ, sin, liturgy, ecclesiology and Workplace bullying in the diocesan context
Theory as critique and re-shaper	Girardian Mimesis Transactional analysis Models of workplace bullying

Provider of insight into the Christian Tradition	Insight into ongoing effects of uncritical treatment of imitation in the New Testament and the modern church.
Personal and communal phronesis	Insight into the outworking of mimesis in the context of the diocese. Supporting the living out of the gospel in the working relationships of the diocese.
Missiological	Equipping Christian people for better quality relationships, that communicate more effectively a living out of the gospel message.

MIMESIS AND ITS ROLE IN THE THESIS

The key theory in the theoretical framework is Rene Girard's model of mimesis (mimetic theory). The key concepts of this theory are imitation, rivalry, community tension, release of tension through sacrificing a scapegoat.

TABLE (IV) MIMETIC THEORY: KEY TERMS

Mimesis/mimetic desire	Our ability to learn through imitation (ix).
Model/mediator/ hero/ role model	Those we imitate (x)
Mimetic doubling	A destructive process caused by lack of differentiation between the subject and their model. It involves the mirroring of actions and emotions (Girard, 2001, p.22) and can make both parties seem similar to observers of the conflict.
Scandal/stumbling block/tangle of Stumbling blocks.	The process of obstructed desires leading to tensions building to a breaking point and finding a focus of blame on a victim (p.xii). The atmosphere in which small scandals interact to randomly converge on a focus of blame. (p.23)
Single Victim Mechanism/ Satan	“accusing and lynching a victim” (p.xiii.) (A translators note indicates that the single victim may be a group or an individual (p.35))

Although mimesis simply means imitation and Girard is self-critical regarding his use of the word (Girard, 2000, p.311), I use it as it offers a convenient distinction between imitation specifically connected with Girard’s theory and imitation as a word in its ordinary sense. Mimesis arose as an anthropological model which developed from his early work in literary criticism. A key text for this work is *I see Satan Fall like Lightning (ISSF)* which he describes as “an apology of Christianity rooted in what amounts to a Gospel-inspired breakthrough in the field of social science, not theology” (Girard, 2001, p.3).

This work is of particular benefit as it is relatively late in his corpus of work and offers a useful summary of thinking which has developed over many years. Earlier works have

the disadvantage of a polemic quality and later works are repetitive and do not develop the central model significantly. In ISSF his theory is set out in full in a Christian context which makes it the most relevant text for this thesis.

I use Girard's mimetic theory as an interpretive key for workplace bullying and the experiences of priests in the diocese. This offers the prospect of the generation of a theory by which these experiences can be understood. This will suggest practical steps for reducing the intensity and prevalence of negative acts.

CRITIQUE OF GIRARD'S MIMETIC THEORY

A question I brought to the potential application of mimetic theory was whether it had enough substance to form part of the theoretical framework of this thesis. The following comment from Girard's interpreter, Williams offers a useful understanding of Girard's approach which underpins a substantial body of criticism. As someone immersed in the work and valuing it greatly, he describes its primary weakness, "he is committed to what he understands as his calling, which is to continue the research and writing generated from his conversion and the "idea" of the mimetic theory that came to him like a revelation." (Williams, 2000, p.178)

Girard combines a spiritual passion to pursue his grand idea with the desire to place his work outside of the genre of spiritual writing. It is reflected in his tendency to offer a broad sweep of thought and leave detailed analysis to others. Considering that primarily mimetic theory is a single theory accounting for all human religious behaviour then a critique of reductionism is fair (Keim, 2000, p.159). However, it is possible to avoid being drawn into his revelatory panorama and still emerge with ideas applicable to the area of study. My position is that I identify with his analysis that people engage in mimetic rivalry and scapegoating. I see the wider discussion of whether this accounts for all religion and whether a false religion/true religion demarcation can be made as falling outside of this study. His identification of the significance of mimetic rivalry in human behaviour is relevant whether or not it accounts for all mythology. A criticism which arises out of the anthropological context of his work is the identification of his Christian apologetic stance. (p.161) This is a criticism that works in reverse, for me as a Christian writer, to draw attention to the application of his writing to practical theology. Significant works supporting the application of Girard's ideas in Christian theology

include Hamerton Kelly (1992); Alison (1998); a collection of essays brought together by Swartly (2000); and Collicutt (2015).

A significant critique within Swartley's collection of essays (2000) which stands out from others and reflects Girard's own change of understanding comes from Rebecca Adams. Adams reflects psychoanalytic feminist critique by asserting that "his theory does not consider the desire represented by the psychoanalytic Mother...not only as an object of desire but also a subject in her own right and thus crucially as another potential model for desire." (2000, p.279) From this she articulates a positive mimesis:

If I am the mediator, I will be inclined to desire another's subjectivity...because it enriches both of us to do so. It is both selfless (altruistic) and self-interested (selfish, narcissistic) to desire the subjectivity of the other, since I also desire my own subjectivity in the process (p.294)

Her critique relates to Girard's interest in identifying the problem rather than creating the solution but I value her insight as this thesis also has a stake in solutions and not just identifying the problem.

Overall, if Girard is seen as painting with broad brushstrokes then the detail is now being filled in by these writers. This convinces me that this is a theory with enough substance to provide a sound foundation for this thesis.

MIMESIS IN THE PRACTICAL THEOLOGY CONTEXT

Mimesis is a theory which is suitable for use in the practical theology context because, returning to Swinton and Mowat's terms, it can act as critic and re-shaper. (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p.26) It has already been the focus of significant recent work in practical theology. It may have a lower profile within theology than would otherwise be the case because of Girard's situating of the theory within anthropology. Johnston and Vasey Saunders are two theologians redressing this by demonstrating the relevance of mimetic rivalry to the church. These are both active ministers who have recently completed doctorates. Johnston studied at Fuller Theological Seminary in the US, Vasey-Saunders studied at Durham University. His doctoral thesis led directly to the publication, "The Scandal of Evangelicals and Homosexuality" (Vasey-Saunders, 2015). Johnston (2015) makes a detailed correlation between mimesis and practical theology. This is significant because Johnston situates the work, as I do, at a foundational level.

The “founding presupposition” should be the concern regarding violence. Rather than propositions, hermeneutics should be concerned about violence. The iterative principle is always seeking deeper layers of violence. Girard has simply found the deepest layer. The source of violence is mimetic rivalry. (p.10)

In Johnston’s work there is a breadth of application as he establishes its relevance to resolving the problem of competing but only partially successful theologies. For example, practical theologies stemming from Browning’s practical moral thinking (p.14); Anderson’s *Christopraxis* (22) and Habermas’ communicative action are identified as grounded in compassion for the victim. These are criticised for lack of dependence on classical theology whereas classical theology is criticised for falling short in the light of the experience of victims. (p.23) Johnston finds the solution in Girard’s work. “If the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ were shown to manifest the reality of the victim as a universal truth, then the most ancient Christian theology could be readily integrated into the most current postmodern ethics.” (p.24)

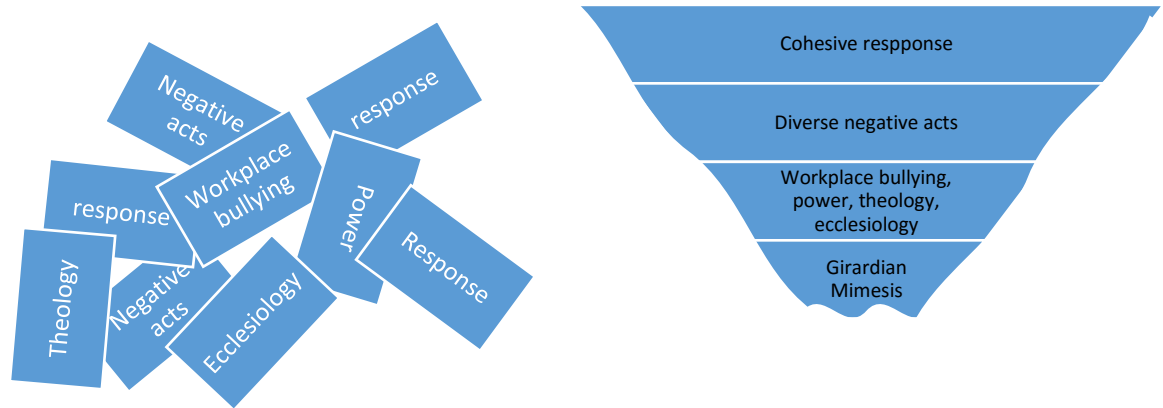
The difference between my work and Johnston’s is that I use this model as the underpinning for both the secular world’s difficulty in coming to grips with workplace bullying and the diocese’s difficulty in understanding the nature of bullying in the church context. The application of Girardian mimesis to the single area of bullying is more specific than Johnston’s work. However, Johnston’s more generalized approach offers an understanding that I find deeply resonant with the process of this research. He describes hermeneutics as:

“Involved in uncovering the violence hidden in every discourse. This effort to expose deeper layers of violence is ultimately a search for a deepest layer – the origin of violence. (p.24)

I found this transformational in my understanding of the area of bullying. Applying this idea to the failure to conceptualize bullying, I am able to root this failure in trying to work with levels of violence too far removed from the foundation. Applying this to the diocese’s inability to come to grips with bullying in the church context, suggests the diocese is trying to work at too high a level. The concern is with the surface incidence of violence rather than investigation of the deeper levels. This thesis addresses this by beginning with the incidence of violence and analysing for deeper levels. The desire to do this is based on my belief that practical response based on a single justifiable foundation can be applied effectively to a multiplicity of specific examples. In contrast

to this a set of rules dealing with specific examples without an integrating model at its heart will lack the cohesion and integrity needed to engage with a difficult problem. In summary, I am suggesting that bullying looks too complicated to deal with because we look at the surface. The apparent complexity of the issue, through lack of foundation and ordering, together with the benefit of a more structured approach is represented in figure (i) below.

FIGURE (I) THE ADVANTAGES OF BRINGING A DEEPER THEORETICAL MODEL WHERE THERE IS SURFACE COMPLEXITY.



A second example of the application of Girardian Mimesis to practical theology is seen in the work of Vasey Saunders. In contrast to Johnston this is an application of mimesis to a specific example. Vasey-Saunders uses mimesis to account for the nature of conflict related to approaches to homosexuality within groups of evangelical Christians. Although he takes a different approach to Johnston there is still a critique of classical theology. This time it is through the work of James Alison and Walter Wink who he describes as regarding, “penal substitutionary theory of the atonement as irredeemably compromised with violence and scandal.” (2015, p.181)

My work is related to Vasey Saunder’s (2015) work through its connection with bullying and conflict. His argument is that evangelical homophobia occurs in the context of a wider mimetic rivalry. My response to this is to press his argument by removing an obscuring layer and naming mimetic rivalry as mutually bullying behaviour. Therefore, the argument becomes that there are examples of homophobic behaviour in the church that falls within a wider context of bullying behaviour. I suggest that in the desire to distance evangelicals from homophobia, he has not perceived the deeper violence of bullying. He is able to make a strong case for mimesis because the behaviours he discusses are rooted in Girard’s identification of the deepest level of violence. The attempt to differentiate between homophobia, mimesis and bullying moves attention from identifying that the actions of the evangelicals Vasey-Saunders is studying amount to bullying. A critique from Johnston (2015) can be applied to Vasey-Saunders work and indeed this thesis itself:

Because [Hermeneutical models of cultural analysis] struggle to allow a culture to guide the interpretation of itself, or to let the text become the source of its own interpretation, hermeneutics can be captured by the culture's own self-deceptions. In other words, if a culture is structured around the denial of something, then an interpretation guided by the culture will tend to participate in that same denial (p.88).

Compared to Vasey Saunders work, my thesis is more general and more challenging. It is more general in that the negative acts indicative of bullying can be related to sexuality as a category amongst many other categories which make a person vulnerable to scapegoating. It is more challenging because I connect the academic terminology of mimesis to the emotive terminology of bullying. There is a two-way aspect to this engagement with Vasey Saunder's work in that I critique it from the perspective of an outsider to the evangelical culture but must also concede there will be aspects of my own work which I imagine would fall under the category of liberal rhetoric.

Overall, I have demonstrated this thesis sits within a well-established body of interest in applying Girard's work. It is distinct from existing work because it brings the interpretation of ministers' experiences to understandings from the model of mimesis and the practical application of understanding workplace bullying.

MIMESIS IN THE WORKPLACE BULLYING CONTEXT.

As this thesis brings together mimesis and workplace bullying there is some value in returning to the earlier description of a secular environment as one where religious ideas were not deliberately articulated (this work, p.21). Flemming (2004) illuminates this by comparing Girard's ideas with Durkheim's position that "religion.... stands as a society's primary expression of order" (p.67). This opens the way to thinking of all secular institutions as places of religious activity. Flemming describes Girard's addition to Durkheim's thought as providing an underlying theory for the generation of religion (p.68). Therefore, workplace bullying might be construed as religious violence in a secular workplace. The step this thesis takes is to apply this understanding in an overtly religious workplace.

Having established the validity of engaging with Girard's theory as theology, a related argument can be made in terms of its contribution to the understanding of workplace bullying. The key features of the workplace bullying context have already been outlined

in chapter four. However, additionally, there has been significant recent work in the form of Branch, Ramsay and Barker (2013). The significance of their paper is fourfold:

- its review of workplace bullying;
- the recognition of lack of progress;
- its development of a new theoretical model for workplace bullying;
- the shift to working with risk of bullying rather than certainty and opening the potential for mitigating that risk.

To begin with the minor point, I notice from their review, that they draw on similar sources to those detailed in Chapter Four. This reassures me that I had made a fair assessment of the field at that time.

Secondly, the lack of progress Branch identifies concerns the inability to reach a definition of bullying. I situate these problems firmly in the absence of Girard's mimetic model from their work. I suggest that the escalating levels of conflict in Girard's work of mimetic rivalry, mimetic doubling, scandal and the single victim mechanism offer a better account of workplace bullying than the workplace bullying field is able to provide. These terms are defined in the table and discussion below. When workplace bullying writers struggle to include the potential of a single act to constitute bullying I believe they are failing to grasp the need to look for a scandalized environment.

Girard describes the fluidity of small scandals in a way which resonates with a scandalized workplace.

Scandals become opportunistic. At this point they are easily drawn to another scandal whose power of mimetic attraction is superior to theirs.... Little scandals have a tendency to dissolve into larger ones, and the larger ones in turn go on to contaminate one another until the strongest of these absorb the weaker ones...until the most polarising scandal remains alone on stage. This is when the whole community is mobilized against one and the same individual. (2001, p.23)

The focus on the scapegoat can be at once both random and devastating. I suggest it is not the case that there was no escalation of conflict but that by the mimetic model the conflict could have arisen elsewhere and then been channelled randomly into the unlucky victim. This also links into the long running struggle to identify bullying with conflict but to recognize that bullying is different to conflict. The lack of predictability is therefore not the absence of a model to predict what will happen but the fundamental

absence of predictability in the system. (Johnston, does in fact give some time to exploring connections between mimesis and chaos theory. He identifies the metaphor of the strange attractor (2015, p.69) as accounting for a group of likely victims but never quite being able to predict where the scapegoating axe will fall.)

Girard suggests the likely victims are those who can be marked as different in some way.

the victims can be those who limp [linguistic reference to Skandalon], the disabled, the poor, the disadvantaged....and also great religious figures who are inspired, like Jesus or the Jewish prophets...All peoples have a tendency to reject, under some pretext or another, the individuals who don't fit their conception of what is normal and acceptable (2001, p.26)

One modification to this random nature of finding a scapegoat is a classical Greek idea of *pharmakos* (2001, p.155). These are vulnerable people kept on hand for situations where a sacrifice is necessary. This suggests some qualities for potential scapegoats. The scapegoat needs to be part of the community because they need to be accessible in order to be made a scapegoat. They need to be *in* so they can be *driven out*.

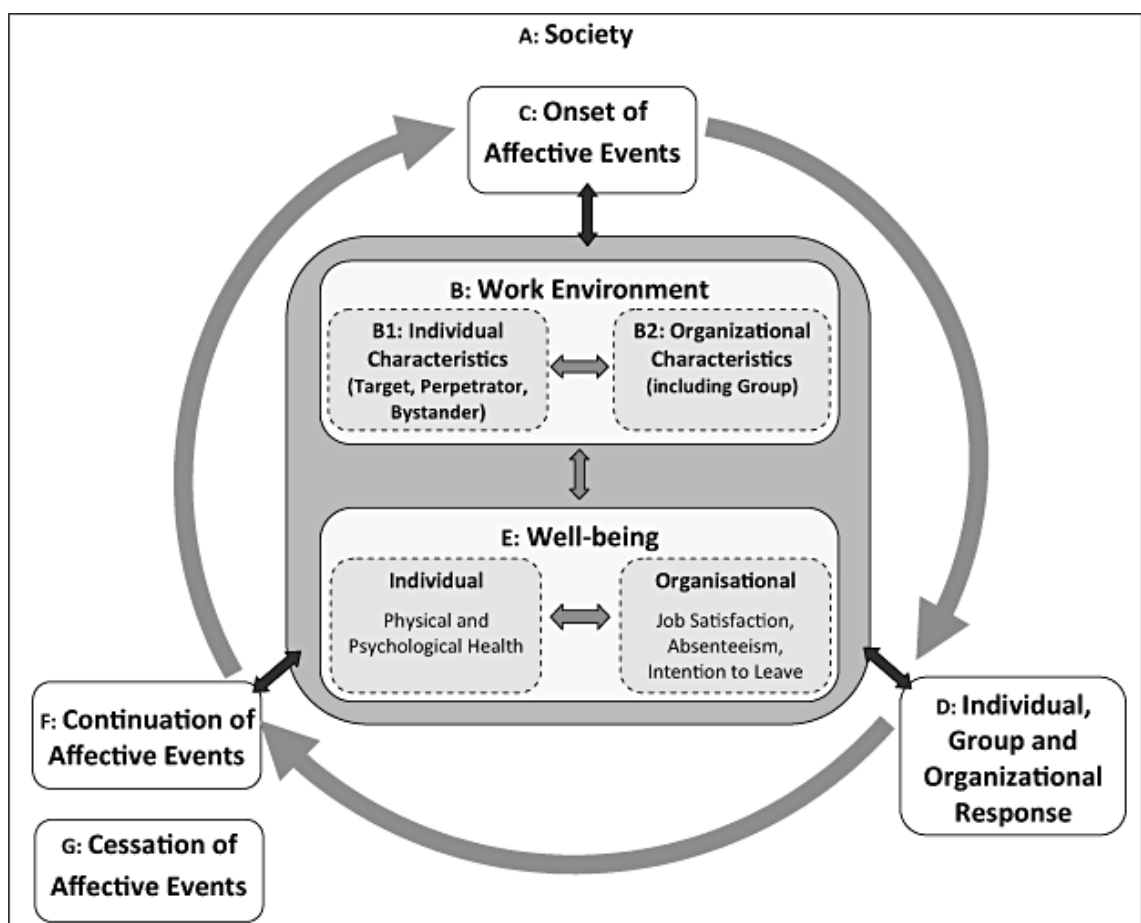
Thirdly, Branch et al, seek to address the problem they describe as the study of workplace bullying being an “atheoretical field” (p.282). They seek to achieve this through synthesizing some partially developed models into a holistic model. They describe their model as a cyclical framework for workplace bullying (p.286). Models identified by Branch et al., that are in development or have only been partially successful in conceptualizing bullying are shown below. They are each successful in identifying particular features of workplace bullying but the number and variety of models points to the inability to generate a holistic understanding.

TABLE (V) MODELS FOR WORKPLACE BULLYING (BRANCH ET AL., 2013, PP.292-283)

Karasek	Job demand control	1979
Glasl	Conflict escalation	1994
Leymann	Conflict/bullying/management/expulsion	1996
Hoel	Psychosocial hazard	2002
Aquino	Relational model of victimization	2004
Lee	Counter aggression	2006
Hutchinson	Circuits of power	2006
Wheeler	Resource competition	2010

Diagram (vi), is the model synthesized from the partial models above.

DIAGRAM (VI) CYCLICAL FRAMEWORK FOR WORKPLACE BULLYING (BRANCH ET AL 2013, P.286).



The strength of the Branch (2013) model is that it highlights the all-encompassing nature of the workplace bullying experience. Further, their categories of individual, group and organizational response are clearly present in my analysis though they lack my identification of the problematic nature of separating these levels. Their categories of *continuation of affective events* and *cessation of affective events* are similarly relevant except that in my work it is clear that there is a degree of ambiguity over the temporal extent of an affective event. Overall it has strength as a theoretical model which brings the areas together but does not reflect the complexity of the context of this study. Also I see it as having a narrative function supporting a full description of how things are but little explicative or predictive power.

Although Girard's model arises separately to the Branch et al (2013) model, I argue that it subsumes the same models of conflict escalation, power and resource competition. This is because within mimesis the process of desiring to be like the role model is all-encompassing. As a direct challenge to those who link intent to bullying, it can also be an unconscious process. Both of these aspects are reflected below:

The borrowing occurs quite often without either the loaner or the borrower being aware of it. It is not only desire that one borrows from those whom one takes for models; it is a mass of behaviours, attitudes, things learned, prejudices, preferences, etc., And at the heart of these things the loan that places us most deeply into debt- the other's desire- occurs often unawares. (Girard, 2001, p.15)

The driving force of mimesis is to desire what your model desires. This opens up the healthy learning process of mimesis to the negative aspects of rivalry and escalating conflict. Further a new person entering a field of existing rivalries is very likely to change the balance of the system by bringing new potential for rivalry. "In imitating my rival's desire I give [him] the impression that he has good reasons to desire what he desires, to possess what he possesses, and so the intensity of his desire keeps increasing" (p.10).

The above quotations bring the competition for what is desired and what is already possessed together with the element of mutual reinforcement. This allows mimesis to subsume the conflict escalation, resource competition and disruption of power models. There is potential for further research examining how each of these models could be reinterpreted through the model of mimesis.

A final significant addition that Girard brings to the understanding of workplace bullying is the identification of the process referred to as mirroring or doubling. This is described as a significant threshold in the level of mimetic conflict.

Beyond a certain threshold of frustration, those in conflict are no longer content themselves with the objects themselves over which they are fighting. Mutually exasperated by the live obstacle, the scandal, that each is henceforth for the other, they become mimetic doubles and forget the object of their quarrel.

(2001, p.22)

The key features of this mirroring process is that to an outsider neither of the people would seem very different. If one of these people were to initiate a grievance procedure related to bullying, then the obvious defence would be for the other to say they were the victim. This occurs within the NAQ-R questions themselves when they interpret having allegations made against you as indicative of being bullied. This links with Vasey Saunder's identification of mirroring of opponents (2015, p.13). He demonstrates this effectively in his analysis of Jeffrey John as a scapegoat. The "monstrous double" (p.13) he describes is between two groups of evangelicals with Jeffrey John emerging as a scapegoat due to his vulnerability. "It was this marginal position theologically- neither insider not outsider- that made him an ideal victim" (p.25).

Finally, there is a model for analysing relationships that is relevant because of its currency within the diocese. Although there are a variety of sociological models exploring conflict in organizations, transactional analysis has a particular relevance to the church context. Specifically, two initiatives in the diocese of study are based around transactional analysis. There is a mentoring programme and a ministerial review programme both of which adopt coaching strategies overtly grounded in transactional analysis. Understanding how transactional analysis relates to mimesis could bring cohesion between tools already in use for specific training needs and the currently unaddressed area of bullying. There is a potential here to build a shared understanding where skills from other contexts can also be applied to bullying.

The particular contribution of transactional analysis to understandings of workplace bullying has its roots in the work of Eric Berne (1964) who described the presence of parent, adult and child ego states (p.25). This was developed in the form of the drama triangle (Karpman, 1968). In the field of workplace bullying Proctor and Tehrani (2001) apply this to understand fluidity in bullying situations. Karpman's drama triangle is

expressed in both a destructive and constructive form. The key feature in this work is the application of persecutor, victim, rescuer roles (p.174) in the destructive triangle together with potency, receptivity and vulnerability in the beneficial triangle (p.177). These are available at all times to each participant in the drama. Each participant has a dominant mode of behaviour at a particular time and may function effectively or ineffectively in that mode. Below are some of the role transitions that Proctor and Tehrani offer as possibilities:

The bully will also know how to take the victim or rescuer role when the persecutor role no longer achieves its goal Supporter's may even encourage their clients to 'play persecutor' rather than helping them find their proper power...It may not be long before the supporter finds him or herself playing persecutor to the bully and feeling victimised by lack of support from the organization.... the victim may be supportive and protective to the persecutor, this ending up in the rescuer role. (pp.175-176)

Transactional analysis highlights the complexity of any bullying situation and attempts at resolution. The role switching quality here reflects both mimesis and mimetic doubling. The advantage of mimesis is again the insight of randomness and the ability to bring multiple dramas together. Transactional analysis alone could lead to an ever more detailed examination of the phenomena of the triad which would miss the dimension of chaos and potential for tangles of stumbling blocks.

The relevance of transactional analysis opens up a question of the relevance of the more general areas of family systems theory to this work. The application of this theory in the area of bullying is demonstrated by Lines (2007)

A family is a 'system' of inter-related parts that give meaning to the whole. Examining the behaviour of one family member is considered to be irrelevant without looking at its effects and context within the family as a unit. This has great significance for bullying behaviour, since whether we are thinking of an individual in class, or a parent in a family, or a worker amongst colleagues, the meaning for a given behaviour has significance within the group context; and without an understanding of the group dynamics, interpreting individual behaviour is rendered meaningless. (pp.87-88)

These ideas are complimentary to this work in that a diocese can very easily be pictured as a family system and there is support from the family systems perspective for addressing the organizational dimension as well as the relationships between individuals. A tentative finding presented by Lines (2007) is the need for a no-blame response to bullying which is also compatible with the conclusions of this thesis. (p.199) The main reason for not pursuing path this in more detail is its lack of theological foundation. To bring change in the church context then then a theological foundation is not the only requirement but I consider it a strong advantage. A similar criticism can also be applied to the work of Friedman (2007) which has indeed grown out of family systems theory. Friedman's context is very different in that he seeks to diagnose decay within America society. His identification of "self-differentiation" (L.159) as a necessary quality in a leader, with problems arising when differentiation is lacking, is resonant with the Girard's treatment of mirroring. However, an additional criticism I would apply to Friedman's work is that it positions the victim negatively. For Friedman, the victim is the lowest common denominator to which society is sinking. To Girard, the proper understanding of the victim is central to society's salvation (2001, p.167). They both hold in common that society's working understanding of the victim is currently dysfunctional, however, I cannot read Friedman's work without feeling his picture of the model leader and their strong internal reference, divorced from the ability to engage with technical knowledge and data is a polemic in favour of demagoguery.

It is also relevant that a third form of this model in use in this diocese is the original parent, adult, child model (Berne, 1964, p.23). This is relevant to this work because first, the parent/child relationship reflects the basis of mimesis as the driver for human development. However, this raises the potential for parent/child relationships between grown-ups in the workplace to be problematic. For me this connects with why mimesis might be particularly problematic in the church. To begin with the traditional term, the church contains a lot of Fathers. For the last 150 years, the term *Father*, has been in use for priests in the High Church tradition. I would also like to assert that even in clergy that did not adopt that usage, there can be a disposition to assume the authoritative position of Father. In the light of the ordination of women priests there are now priests who are referred to as Mother. I suggest that the priesthood is open to adopting an authoritative parental position and is naive about the risks this brings to relationships. In particular I would identify the potential for the adult/adult aspiration of coaching relationships to degenerate into parent/child relationships. Bringing this back to mimesis

in the church context, if a curate/incumbent relationship has a parent child formulation then I suggest there is great scope for negative mimesis whereas the adult/adult formulation could open up the possibility of positive mimesis.

MIMESIS AND TRADITION- ECCLESIOLOGY AND POWER

In the preceding chapters the significance of the organizational environment as necessary for understanding workplace bullying has been established. It is therefore appropriate to consider the way in which mimesis interacts with the church holding power as a hierarchical organization.

THE POWERS

The problem of the church as a power has long been recognized. Girard and Wink make mutual use of each other's ideas, even if there is not full agreement. Wink asks, "How can it [the church] shake off the suffocating weight of institutional self-preservation and make a difference in the world?" (1992, L. 2462). A key part of the answer for Wink is in the rejection of violence. Using Girardian mirroring, he demonstrates that the church, throughout history, has become many of the things it has fought against (L.2859ff). Applying this to the area of bullying suggests that for the church to fight against bullying is the way to enshrine bullying. The task from Wink's overall perspective is to die to the power of bullying. "rebirth is not a private, inward event only. For it includes the necessity of dying to whatever in our social surroundings has shaped us inauthentically" (L.2302). This raises the need for a non-violent response to bullying. It is by the understanding of how bullying comes about and the delegitimizing of bullying that it can be addressed. This is in contrast to the denial of its significance or an aggressive zero tolerance approach.

It might be argued that the solution to the problem of the church as a power is for the church not to be a power. However, there is a position of integrity where the church can best share the good news of the gospel if it is an organization. The disciples needed a treasurer. The Corinthian Church needed somewhere big enough to meet. There are church movements which seek to avoid these issues but if they survive they generally rub up against the same issues eventually. Looking specifically at the context of this work, the idea that the Church of England diocese might dissolve itself into house churches would not be a useful conclusion to draw for how to respond to bullying. Given that dissolving the organization is not a viable solution to the problems of the organization, it is necessary to examine how Girard's understanding of powers and principalities can be useful.

We cannot call the powers simply “diabolical” and we should not, under the pretext that they are “evil,” systematically disobey them. It is the transcendence on which they are based that is diabolical. The powers are never strangers to Satan...Moreover in a world that is alien to the kingdom of God, they are indispensable to the maintenance of order (2001, p.98).

The idea that a diocese is a power and therefore *not a stranger to Satan* is a helpful awareness when considering the potential for bullying within an organization. In this case there is a combination of an evangelical awareness of the significance of Satan with a liberal understanding of what Satan might be. The potential presence of Satan marks the significance of the issue and opens up the potential for being constantly alert. This a position with some biblical support (1 Pet 5.8). It moves bullying from being something which has no place and rarely happens to being a significant threat that the Church of England faces to its mission.

As part of the consideration of powers and dominions, I would like to introduce a brief discussion of kingship. The quotation below outlines a basis for the origin of “sacred monarchy” (Girard, 2001, p.92):

A victim is chosen who is intelligent and commanding. Rather than sacrificing him immediately, the community, for some reason, defers his execution, which allows him to “stew in the soup” of mimetic rivalries. His fate as a future sacrifice confers religious authority on him and enables him, not to “grasp” political power which doesn’t really exist to this point, but literally to forge it. (p.92)

This suggests a view of leadership where a leader is a person with enough standing to achieve a time of influence before they are sacrificed. Earlier the vulnerabilities of the curate as scapegoat were mentioned but this highlights the potential for incumbents and bishops to be the scapegoat. This widening of Kingship is supported by Williams description of a king as “anyone male or female, holding an office of utmost prestige”. (Williams, 2000, p.179) His account of mimetic rivalry between Saul and Samuel (pp.180-181) demonstrates that they both occupy a similar position with respect to this wider idea of kinship. Applying these ideas to the church suggests a vulnerability of people in hierarchical positions of power which might otherwise be missed. Subconsciously, people may think of priests and bishops as future sacrifices. In support of this Keim writes:

Pastors often live and work as marginal persons in the congregations they lead, both by virtue of their office (thereby reflecting the sacrificial king image elucidated by Girard) and by their ambiguous status as both outsiders and insiders...it is striking how often pastoral shake-ups and resignations fulfil the purpose of cathartic sacrifice in church communities facing sacrificial crisis. (2000, p.173)

Returning to more practical dimensions of the response to bullying, if a person trying to respond to a report of bullying is unaware of the mimetic double then the potential for mishandling the situation is greatly increased. The mimetic double has a strong correspondence with the potential for a bully to describe themselves as the victim of bullying. This also connects to *accusations made against you* as one of the negative experiences a victim of bullying may encounter. Returning to Vasey-Saunders application of mimesis to Liberal/ Evangelical conflict he makes use of Girard's ideas as follows:

The aggressor is the one who wants peace, striking pre-emptively in a bid to create it, where the defender wants war, disposing themselves to endure the conflict Thus evangelicals would make clear that the intent of their intervention was to prevent greater division and conflict...Liberals would point to the pre-emptive attack of the evangelicals, seeing their own actions and statements as simply responding to aggression (2015, p.13).

This demonstrates the complete inadequacy of anti-bullying procedures as an extension of a grievance policy. If the mind-set is to define a situation as abnormal and find out whose fault it is then there is already a barrier in place to grasping and responding either to mimetic rivalry or mimetic doubling. Applying mimesis to the church as a power demonstrates: the potential for naïve anti-bullying measures to increase rather than reduce the violence within an organization and the vulnerability of those holding hierarchical power in the organization.

POWER AND EMPOWERMENT

There is a modern tradition of examination of the nature of power in the church. This includes Percy's application of networks of power (1998) and Beasley-Murray's investigation between the relationship between power and abuse (1998). A more recent publication is Sykes examination of the ethical use of power (2006). A sense of fruitlessness in pursuing understandings of power is engendered by Beasley-Murray's

(1998) identification of 16 different types of power categorised within three different systems. (109ff) This links back to the earlier discussion of the different types of power and the way holding more than one type of power has a multiplicative effect rather than an additional effect (this work, chapter 3). The useful point, compatible with both Schussler -Fiorenza and Beasley-Murray is that a power position cannot be assessed by only considering one facet. Considering Beasley-Murray's work further, I find it interesting that this book on abuse of power is not a book about bullying. This is similar to the earlier critique of Harrison and Innes (2016). These writers do not use the word bullying where it might naturally be expected. The interview excerpts to follow will illustrate that the key category for clergy talking about bullying is whether an abuse of power has taken place, yet these writers deal with abuse of power without application to bullying. Beasley-Murray's analysis that "half the battle against the abuse of power in the church may actually lie in self-awareness" (p.169) is in keeping with the preceding discussion of Wink and the later discussion of Collicutt's work. A refreshing contrast to this is Percy (2015) which includes discussion of relationships between training incumbents and curates with overt mention of bullying throughout. There is another insightful critique of power and bullying from the social science perspective in the work of Hooper (2014). Hooper writes from the transactional analysis/psychopathological perspective and considers bullying within a range of pathological behaviours. She uses an unpathologized definition of bullying as a "relationship problem" (p.76) and critiques power as an unhelpful concept because it is dependent on the particular relationship. "Power inevitably varies across relationships, whereas empowerment is a more stable characteristic developed when individuals are in control of their environment, life and resources" (p.76).

Bringing this together with the multiplicity of systems for defining power, I infer that trying to be precise about power in relationships is inherently unproductive but changes to power, expressed as empowerment, may be more productive. This then connects back to the long standing observation from the field of workplace bullying, that bullying leads to disempowerment. In turn this opens up a constructive response of how we might seek to respond to bullying through the empowerment of all the parties involved.

Mimesis and disempowerment come together in the nature of acquisitive desire and mimetic conflict. Where people are desiring the same limited resource and becoming more like each other and more competitive over that resource there is potential for both to experience disempowerment in its fullest sense. If their environment is dominated by

a particular conflict, then this could reasonably be thought to detract from their overall empowerment. Bringing Hooper's analysis together with Girard's theory suggests a bullying incident might be seen as a situation where two similar people with a relationship problem in some way both want the same thing. Responding to this could then be shaped around helping these people to recover their differences and broaden the field over which they are empowered to act. This then connects back with Proctor and Tehrani's (2001) use of the transformation between the constructive and destructive forms of the drama triangle. A participant in a triangle who can bring an understanding of empowerment matches the condition of insight necessary to transform the destructive triangle to the constructive triangle.

A significant quality related to empowerment is resilience. Resilience is discussed by Collicutt (2015, p.236) who grounds her ideas in the work of Allain-Chapman (2012). Collicutt's informal definition of resilience is, "the capacity to bounce back after a knock" (Collicutt, 2015, p. 237). This is connected with empowerment, from my perspective, because the ability to bounce back reflects stability in the level of empowerment. I suggest that to some extent both bullying and becoming a victim of bullying can be seen as related to a lack of resilience. This relationship is only partial due to the scope in what it might mean to be a victim of bullying. The word *victim* may be applied to a person overwhelmed by bullying who has indeed lost their resilience or it might describe a person resiliently marshalling their resources to cope in an ongoing experience of bullying. Relating this to transactional analysis, I identify the adult response as resilient in contrast to the parent and child responses.

A useful application of resilience to bullying in the church context is that it offers an understanding of the source of bullying behaviour. Allain-Chapman (2012) coins the phrase "unhealed wounder" (L. 2076) and identifies it with the fictional character Gregory House who can be fairly described as a bully. Collicutt describes the potential for "pathways through trauma and adversity" (2015, p.238) which resonate with a resilient response to bullying. "Resilience therefore involves that aspect of wisdom that discerns when to withdraw to marshal resources and when to advance; when to fight and when to fly; when to look on the bright side and when to gaze into the darkness" (p.238). This can be seen as an articulation of Exit, Voice, Loyalty, Neglect. (Withey and Cooper, 2001, p.504) as discussed in Chapter Four of this work.

There are two ways in which resilience could interact unhelpfully with bullying. First. Allain-Chapman's potent image brings a strong focus to a pathologized individual. However, I suggest it is more useful to recognize that we all have areas of life experience which are to some extent unhealed, therefore, we all have the potential to bully when these areas are activated. Secondly, there is a risk of an overwhelmed victim of bullying being blamed for their lack of resilience. Given that resilience is sustained by practices that clergy are supposed to be familiar with, including "a disciplined rule of life and a readiness to forgive" (p.237), a superficial application of resilience could lead to blaming the victim and strengthening the probability of scapegoating. This could lead to an organizational interpretation that the victim simply lacks the quality of resilience that it requires in clergy. (This concept will be returned to in the discussion in Chapter 14.)

MIMESIS AND TRADITION THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

For Girard, the safe and perfect model for imitation is Christ. This is a model of non-competitive mimesis. It further supports the idea that positive mimesis may not be well developed in Girard's thought but it is clearly present.

What Jesus invites us to imitate is his own desire, the spirit that directs him towards the goal on which his intention is fixed: to resemble God the Father as much as possible.... he commits all his powers to imitating his father. Inviting us to imitate him, he invites us to imitate his own imitation. (p.13)

Moving from the imitation of Christ to the imitation of other readers or believers, Girard also entertains the potential for a positive role for mimesis. Mimesis does not have to lead to conflict. In particular Girard describes: "Quiet and untroubled possession weakens desire." (p.10) Conflict occurs when "a person or group of persons feel themselves blocked or obstructed as they desire some specific object of power, prestige or property that their model possesses or is imagined to possess" (xi). This means that in situations where resources are abundant or people are isolated from each other conflict is less likely. This is significant in that it accounts how human beings are able to learn from role models without the relationship spiralling into chaos. There may be an abundance of resources or sufficient separation between subject and role model to avoid direct conflict. By reversing the terminology, it is also possible to arrive at a new category of *troubled possession* which will be illustrated in the transcript excerpts. It is a useful term as it brings in ideas of ownership and disruption of that ownership but is

challenging in the sense that being possessive of a ministry, responsibility or geographical area has an element of critique.

Fodor offers a critique to the theological implications of Girard's work in that he does not take sufficient account of the differences between mimesis and kenosis.

His construal of the scapegoat mechanism remains too immanent, to anthropologically centred, he fails to attend to the ways in which imitation, for the Christian at least, presupposes participation in a more determinative, saving economy. (p.258)

The greater part of Girard's work has indeed been about establishing and defending the scapegoat mechanism so this criticism of imminence has validity. However, from Girard's words above, the way is clearly open to participation in the *saving economy* and writers such as Adam's take this forward.

Intersubjective participation through self-reflexive mimetic desire...transforms our understanding....I end up desiring not only myself but others and indeed potentially everything around me as a subject- as something alive within its own irreducible being, yet in dynamic, loving, intersubjective relation to me....Entering into and participating in this dynamic relation could be understood theologically as adopting the same unconditional relation of love that Christ exemplifies in relation to the father, or imitating him (pp.294-295).

Swartley (2000) offers a review of the key aspects of positive mimesis in the New Testament (p.218ff). A criticism he recognizes but dismisses is that there is no genuine *imitatio Christi* within the New Testament and that "Paul's call/command to imitation functions to imprint the hierarchical structure of power on Christian thought and conduct" (p.220). Given this thesis' relationship with power and obedience, this critique attached to imitation is interesting because whether it is right or wrong, it brings obedience and hierarchy close to imitation.

In his support of the case for positive imitation as a teaching of the New Testament, Swartley (2000) traces the direct and indirect uses of imitation. These are summarized in the table below. This list is extensive but not comprehensive. It functions to show the prevalence of imitation in the New Testament as a whole. I read this differently to Swartley in that he finds this wholly positive. For me it resonates with a church whose complacency regarding imitation has its roots in the scripture formed by the earliest

churches. The table demonstrates the priority of imitating Jesus and God in both direct and indirect language. However, from the perspective of this study, it is clear that Paul considered himself to be a useful model for imitation and also the church. For me these are both problematic; if God, in Jesus, has given us a perfect example of positive mimesis then by copying Paul or the Church we open up the possibility of imitating the mistakes of those who imitate Jesus. Paul was a leader operating in an area of bounded resources, imitating Paul imitating Jesus immediately risks negative mimesis. This has resonance with Paul's experience as he urges unity for a church dividing according to the teachers followed. (Romans 16; 1 Cor 1; Galatians 1; Philippians 1). There are further personal conflicts alluded to between Paul and Peter (Gal 2:11) and between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15). These conflicts are only sketched out and lack the detail to argue that they clearly demonstrate mimesis but I see the potential for the presence of mimesis, conflict and imitation in a way that could account for the lack of suspicion the Church of England has towards imitation in the modern church.

A contrasting view to this is offered by Hamerton-Kelly's consideration of St. Paul's understanding of imitation. He suggests that there are different types of model and that Paul is a "model/mediator of Christ" not a "model/obstacle." (1992, p.174). He further draws attention to what is to be imitated,

The apostles and their followers do not imitate moral examples from the life of Jesus, but the summary act of the crucifixion, the crucified Christ in his act of self-sacrifice rather than any specific pattern of ethics drawn from the memories of his life (p.176).

He summarises this position in the term "agapaic mimesis" (p.176) which in turn connects to the previous discussion of positive mimesis. While I do not disagree with the substance of this argument I see his conclusion as contributing to the naivety of the church regarding mimesis. His conclusion that "if we are all scapegoats, then nobody is a scapegoat" (p.179) is not sufficiently critical of the victim position and the potential of a victim to victimize others.

Looking to the modern church, I suggest that mimesis is reflected in the willingness to ascribe parental terms to priests and think of them as examples to copy. A contemporary and poignant example of this is given in the autobiography of the Revd. Richard Coles as he describes the morning before his ordination. "when it was all in place I looked at myself in a mirror and saw, for the first time, what everyone else would now see. I saw

Dazzle looking back at me...” (2014, p.277) (Dazzle is a priest who had a significant role in his journey of faith.) In these words the Girardian potential for imitation and mirroring is powerfully evoked. This is not to say that I advocate the position of abandoning human role models. I do not think that is psychologically achievable. However, I do suggest imitation should be approached with suspicion rather than affection, naivety or complacency.

Table (vi) Direct Imitation Language in the New Testament

Direct Imitation language	NT reference	Reference (Swartley, 2000)
Imitators of us and the Lord	1 Thess 1:6	p.221
Imitators of the churches of God	1 Thess 2:14	p.222
Imitate us	2 Thess 3:6-9	p.222
Be imitators of me	1 Cor 4:16, 1 Cor 11:1	p.223
Join in imitating me	Phil. 3:17	p.225
Be imitators of God	Eph. 4:32	
Imitators of those who...inherit the promise	Heb. 6:12	p.227
Imitate their faith	Heb 13:7	p.228

Table (vii) Indirect Imitation Language in the New Testament

Indirect imitation language	NT reference	Reference (Swartley, 2000)
Let the same mind be in you	Phil. 2:5	p.225
Follow in his steps	1 Pet. 2:21	p.227
Looking to Jesus	Heb. 12:1-3	
I [Jesus] have set you an example	John 13:14-16	p.229
Forgive as God in Christ forgave	Eph 4:32	p.235
Being in Christ	1 John 2:6	p.235
Loving as Christ loved	John 13:34...	p.235
Serving as Christ served	John 13: 1-17...	p.235

A further significant writer who re-appropriates the imitation of Christ is Joanna Collicut writing in the area of Christian character formation. Collicut describes formation as drawing on the metaphors of the fit body and the flourishing plant (2015, p.14) for her these are to be held together. In this framework, the imitation of Christ is an appropriate psychological goal of the fit body metaphor. She expresses this as “growing up into the likeness of Christ.” A risk she identifies is “overemphasis on one virtue, habit or member at the expense of others...our tendency to treat our idiosyncratic approach to life as absolute non-negotiable truth” (p.27). This contributes to a picture of Christian people and especially Christian leaders as at risk of finding it acceptable for others to imitate them and for a community to permit this to happen. Collicutt’s imitation of Christ acknowledges this risk and seeks to address it. Her answer to this risk is that “the connections between who we want to be, the rules we aim to live by, and the stuff we try to do should be well oiled and transparent.” (p.27) The awareness of our susceptibility to both positive and negative mimesis can make a substantial contribution to achieving the transparency Collicut advocates.

My argument is that because the imitation of Christ, and indeed other Christian believers, is present in scripture the church as a whole does not treat imitation with an appropriate level of suspicion.

MIMESIS APPLIED TO SIN AND ATONEMENT IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION.

In offering Girard's mimesis as a suitable theological resource in the Church of England context it is necessary to consider how it sits with respect to sin and atonement.

A focus for mimetic theory is the interpretation of Jesus' understanding that "Satan expels Satan." (Girard, 2001, pp.36-37) For Girard, this opaque comment reflects an end to cyclical violence. In the general cycle of mimetic violence Girard postulates a period of stability which is not a true peace but will lead to a new turn in the cycle of violence. This opens up the contrast between the limited violence of an organization which destroys itself and the unlimited violence of an organization which arises to the point of destruction, arrives at a false peace and is able to start a new cycle of violence. To achieve this false peace there needs to be a common willingness to see the victim as guilty. The organization can then be united in its relief in expelling the guilty and feel good about itself. The effect of the Cross is to bring to an end to the pattern of living with sustainable violence. For Girard, Satan does indeed cast out Satan because Satan's activity in bringing the death of the ultimate sinless victim lays bare the mechanism by which Satan has been perpetuated through time. The beginning of the end, is humanity's ability to understand Satan. A strength of this view of atonement is that it is a useful analytic tool for some aspects of scripture, however, an inadequacy is that it seems to reduce atonement to a lesson in cognitive dissonance where the message of the Cross is that humanity must learn to stop creating scapegoats and then destroying them.

For Girard, humanity is just starting to understand the message of the Cross. It is demonstrated by the awareness of the innocence of victims that has risen in prominence in our era even if it is patchy. This means that any organization will find that the scapegoating mechanism no longer acts like full reset because someone will always realize that the scapegoat was treated unfairly and this will spoil the sense of catharsis for the others. There may be some short term stability achieved but the stresses are already in place that will lead to the next scandal. This then applies even more strongly within Christian contexts because of the direct awareness of Christ as the sinless victim.

Collicut refers to the cyclical violence articulated within Girard's work. She describes the identification of scapegoating as

the means by which communities manage systematic sin in the short term but perpetuate it in the long term.... The scapegoat is then destroyed, expelled or contained, allowing the community to feel that it has dealt with its sin, but masking the fact that sin is something that is distributed throughout it (p.203).

This has deep resonance with the wider church and the diocese's inability to engage effectively with the concept of bullying. However, it does raise consideration of where Girard's work stands with respect to sin.

Girard places more emphasis on Satan than sin. His model suggests that when the church engages in the *lynching* of a victim as part of the single victim mechanism, it becomes an expression of Satan. Although this a powerful, attention grabbing, critique of the church, the repeated use of the concept of Satan could alienate a wider readership. Consideration of sin, which is present in Girard's work through his discussion of the Ten commandments (2001, pp.7-8) is relevant because addressing sin is central to the understanding of what the church does. I do not want to exclude the connection with Satan but I recognize sin is a more accessible category to work with.

Girard's consideration of original sin is worked out in the context of desire in Eden (2001, p.7). Girard is not specific about which desire in the Eden context he connects to mimetic desire. However, Hamerton- Kelly (1992) describes:

desire, nevertheless, freely corrupted itself by choosing the possibility represented by the scapegoat to desire acquisitively the prohibited object and thus enter into a relationship of mimetic rivalry with God. This transgression is rivalry because, to corrupted desire, the prohibition represents the desire of God for the prohibited object, and human desire mimes this misperceived divine desire. (p.92)

This passage may itself generate further questioning by its anthropomorphizing of desire, however, it usefully demonstrates Girardian reading of Genesis and draws attention to the significance of perception in forming desire.

Although Girard uses the term *original sin*, he does not discuss it in detail or connect it to Augustine. This lack of detail is offset by Alison (1998), Boersma (2004) and Palaver (2013). Alison and Boersma are a useful contrast to each other because Alison is writing

from a Roman Catholic standpoint and Boersma is writing from a Reformed standpoint. Of the two, Alison embraces Girard's ideas more fully in developing an alternative to substitutionary atonement. He identifies original sin as being given more significance than it is due.

Palaver is a member of the editorial board of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion who focus on furthering Girard's work. For Palaver, there is a connection between mimesis and Augustine's, "perversa imitatio Dei, a form of vain madness identical to the essence of the devil." (p.91) This brings together imitation and Satanic presence, though lacks the expression of Satan in the destruction of a scapegoat. For Alison, the lack of a doctrine of original sin in Jewish tradition suggests that atonement should draw its meaning from the resurrection. He identifies that this is often reversed with the resurrection presented as the solution to original sin. He corrects this by defining original sin as "a parting glance at a mode of humanity on its way out of being. ...the an-ecclesial hypostasis...of death-related rivalistic desire" (p.237). The truth of the resurrection, illustrated by baptism is the opening up of the possibility of "undistorted desire.... the beginning of the ecclesial hypostasis, already implicitly related to the self-giving of the one foundational victim whose creative desire overcomes all desire locked in futility" (p. 185). Alison's atonement as the opening up of the ecclesial hypostasis provides a sense of atonement of cosmic dimensions and answers the earlier critique of a cognitive atonement.

Applying this understanding of atonement leaves humanity and particularly the church with a great deal of work to do. The presence of bullying in the church context can be seen as a failure to appropriate the change of the world working by distorted desire to working by undistorted desire. It powerfully equates with *the an-ecclesial hypostasis of desire locked in futility*. A helpful comparison is between traditional understandings of original sin which might lead us to blame Adam and Eve for their sin and Alison's reimagined original sin where we love Adam and Eve for their part in offering us a deeper understanding of God's gracious gift to us in the resurrection (1998, pp.241-242). I link this back to the pervious discussion of shame (this work, Chapter 3) to say that the blaming, shaming, bullying church is the church failing to appropriate the potential of the resurrection.

In contrast to Alison, Boersma (2004) has a more ambivalent reaction to Girard although he too seeks new understandings of atonement. He characterizes Girard's portrayal of Christ's victory on the Cross as a combination of atonement by moral influence and medieval Christus Victor theology (p.146). The nature of the rehabilitation is that there is no sense in which God adopts Satan's tools in an act of trickery, simply that Satan tricks himself into misunderstanding the truth of the Cross. Girard's sense that humanity is slowly learning the truth of the Cross through beginning to be able to identify the innocent victims created by society links directly to this moral influence interpretation. A purely *moral influence* based understanding of the atonement would seem to me unsatisfactory as a basis for a theological tool to be used within the Church of England, so Christus Victor usefully begins to reflect the significance of the crucifixion. However, Boersma is unable to accept the foundation of violence within Girard's work. He states, "It is difficult to see how Girard's prioritizing of violence in terms of the origin of human culture fits with his notion of Jesus as the ultimate model of non-violence" (p.145). His critique could be seen to echo Adam's previously discussed critique of the scapegoating of positive mimesis. Therefore, I would accept Boersma's positive use of Girard's work but see his criticisms as addressed by Alison's shift of emphasis from original sin to resurrection and Adam's recovering of positive mimesis.

CONCLUSION

I have demonstrated that mimesis is an appropriate tool for practical theology and positioned this study in the context of current work in the field. Further, I have illustrated the diversity of models brought to understand bullying. These have individual strengths but their multiplicity is a barrier to engagement. My use of mimesis has been supported by theological writers in the key areas of the imitation of Christ, ecclesiology, sin and atonement. This establishes the argument that mimesis, as a model both theological and psychological, offers a way for the diocese to comprehend the complexity of the nature of bullying and formulate an effective response. The detail of this section applied to the theoretical framework (diagram (iii)) forms the foundation for this research.

PART 3 CHAPTER 6 NUMERICAL DATA: METHOD AND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the method for gathering and processing numerical data. It arrives at a numerical description of the extent to which the clergy of the diocese experience bullying in the course of their ministry. This is achieved by surveying the frequency of a range of negative acts experience by clergy. Below is a summary of the data gathering stages.

Key Elements of the Method:

- Meeting Anglia Ruskin's ethics framework (see below).
- Developing instrument (NAQ-R plus Survey Monkey).
- Coordinating with diocesan administrative team.
- Delivery of survey and follow-up to increase response.
- Receiving data from Survey monkey.
- Input to spreadsheet.
- Processing of data.
- Statistical Analysis.

Key Elements of the Ethics Process

- Permission from bishop to carry out survey.
- Formulation of consent and information sheets.
- Ethics approval.

RESEARCH TOOL: THE NEGATIVE ACTS QUESTIONNAIRE

The research tool is closely based on the Negative Acts Questionnaire (Einarsen, Hoel and Notelaers, 2009). It has been made available for use by the Bergen Institute. They gave limitations on use but academic research of this nature was well within the scope of their permission. The questions presented to respondents and supporting ethics material can be seen in appendix (i). I have made some minor changes to reflect clergy sensitivities around describing ministry as work or as a job. I was conscious that I should preserve the meaning of the original statement. A word that falls into this

category, for which I could not find an adequate substitute was *workload*, which I left unchanged. These questions were accompanied by some basic demographic questions to give an indication of the representativeness of the response. The questions are in Appendix (ii).

Within the scope of prior use of this survey was a choice of whether the negative acts questions were to be used alone or with a final question which offered a definition of bullying and asked directly whether the respondent considered that they had been bullied. The advantage of this final question was considered to be a check on the construct validity of the instrument. I took the route of only using negative acts questions, on ethical grounds and as a way of avoiding artificially introducing the concept of bullying to the mind of the respondents. The original paper had already established a sound correlation between analysis of the negative acts questions and the presence of bullying. It was my choice to rely on that rather than to seek further evidence for it. The validity of the instrument had been measured through work beyond the scale of the proposed study so I could not add to its validity. My intention was to use it because of existing validity.

A strength of this tool is that there is self-critique within Einarsen's work and a good body of external critique. The original research contains sound measures of the validity of the instrument. These include correlations with other bullying related measures, "high scores on the NAQ-R were associated with more health complaints, reduced performance, raised sickness absenteeism and higher scores on greater inclination to leave one's job." (2009, p.36) The significance of the original NAQ, was recognized in Cowie's survey of instruments to investigate bullying (2002). Further criticism relates to the number and wording of the questions. Simons et al (2011) suggest reducing the number of questions to four in order to reduce redundant questions and increase ease of use (p.134). This suggestion relates to criticism around whether more questions genuinely provide extra information. It further includes criticism related to statistical arguments linking sample size with the number of categories the researcher is trying to identify. The convenience of a survey with four questions has advantages in the ease of completion and data analysis, however, I do not think it a relevant assumption that a survey intended for clergy could be minimized based on results from other workplaces. Given this is a first look at bullying behaviour in the Church of England workplace I wanted to leave the range of behaviours that respondents could identify as wide as possible. As regards the number of categories, the simplest division of bullied/not

bullied in my view oversimplifies a complex set of behaviours. I favoured solutions with higher numbers of categories as offering a richer picture while accepting that some statistical reliability is lost.

A critique of the cognitive approach of this work has been made by Fevre. (2010, p.81) He raises concerns over whether enough work has been done from a linguistic point of view. He questions whether readers would understand the language of the survey and advocates the benefits of work being subject to cognitive testing. Although I do not object to cognitive testing, I do not think that it eliminates the risk of errors of interpretation. The hermeneutic stance of this study overtly considers double interpretation where the researcher forms their interpretation from the interpretation of the participant. It does not seek to extract an un-interpreted truth from the mind of the participant. Further, the respondents are clergy and have all undergone university level education as part of their professional requirements. This means there should not be any educational difficulty with the language. In summary I agree with Fevre's main points but do not think they outweigh the benefit of being able to use Einarsen's data set for comparative and interpretive purposes.

More recent work by Notelaers and Einarsen (2013) considers the potential for bullying to be identified as a false positive. They offer a secondary layer of coding to avoid false positives. This gives greater correlation between the study and the subjective responses to the question of whether people consider themselves to have been bullied. He recognizes the possibility that this may not be valid as people considered bullied by objective measures might not want to categorize themselves as bullied but still prefers the advantages of this further analysis. I believe that it is his original analysis that carries greater weight. By adjusting an objective tool until it correlates with a subjective tool I think he loses the power of taking two perspectives. I do not consider the presence of false positives to be significant in the diocesan context. A false positive only carries this risk of wondering whether someone would benefit from support and finding out that they do not. In an area where late reporting gives rise to more complex situations, false negatives are more significant than false positives. Also identifying and reducing the occurrence of negative acts would be beneficial for the organizational environment whether or not they amount to bullying. This links back to Branch (2013) who identifies the positive potential of workplace civility programmes.

A notable work examining bullying in a religious context is the self-published master's dissertation of Sheila Martin (2012). The negative acts she uses as a basis for her survey have some correlation with the NAQ-R. This work takes a different approach to mine as she begins with her own definition of bullying and seeks to find out if this has been experienced by respondents (mainly Baptist ministers). Her work usefully highlights the bullying of ministers as relevant across denominational boundaries and might be considered a helpful way in to the topic of bullying in the non-conformist context. However, due to organizational differences and her lack of engagement with bullying as a complex concept, I do not believe her work offers anything more than contextual breadth to the area of the diocese's failure to engage adequately with bullying. Her work does support the understanding that bullying within the church context is not simply an Anglican issue.

The significance of the numerical data reported here, in the light of the thesis as a whole, is that it contributes to establishing the diocese as a mimetic environment. All the questions in this instrument are consistent with behaviours that are associated with rivalry and the escalation of rivalry. It offers some understanding of patterns of experience and the prevalence of bullying experienced by clergy. This information is of use in both arguing the need for anti-bullying activity and making practical decisions during implementation.

SAMPLING

A particular difficulty identified with the measurement of bullying is that bullying is not expected to follow a normal distribution. (Notelaers et al., 2011, p.76). Given the manageable number of clergy in the diocese (about 250) it is a valid choice to survey all of them to maximise the number of returns. This required the support of the diocesan bishop and the use of the diocese mailing list. In practice the support of the diocesan bishop was linked to the use of electronic survey methods in conjunction with the diocesan database. At that time the diocesan database was able to identify 163 active clergy. In total 67 responses were received from clergy giving a nominal response rate of 41 per cent. I discounted one response because it was identical to a response received less than 5 seconds earlier. I interpreted this as a computer error. I discounted two responses because they stopped answering very early in the survey so were substantially incomplete. (They both ended at question 6, registering the experience of being ignored or excluded and did not answer question 7, regarding offensive remarks being made about them.) Sixty-four responses were analysed in total giving an effective response

rate of 39 per cent. Some descriptive details were withheld; I would imagine to preserve confidentiality. In these cases, I still analysed the main body of the response but these details should not be expected to add up to 64.

TABLE (VIII) DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Gender		Age					
Male	Female	Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-65	Over 65
38	26	0	4	10	25	12	12

Nature of Ministry			Years in ministry			
Self-Supporting	Stipendiary	Training post	up to 5	6-14	15-24	25+
20	44	6	15	20	10	18

PROCEDURE

The electronic means chosen for distributing the survey was Survey Monkey. This added an extra layer of complexity as the diocesan communications officer could not share the clergy's email addresses with me and I could not share the data with him due to confidentiality. This was resolvable within the Survey Monkey set up. However, this meant a loss of control over sending out the survey. The digital aspect of the survey may well have increased the response rate but it excluded people who were not properly categorised on the diocesan data base, those who do not use email and those whose email was not working at the time of the survey. The survey was distributed along with the content detailed in the ethics checklist and an invitation to participate further through a face-to-face interview.

DISCUSSION OF ETHICAL ISSUES.

My main ethical concern related to the potential for a person to suffer harm. This might arise if they had not previously considered themselves to be bullied and through this study labelled themselves as bullied. This concern relates to Vie, Glaso and Einarsen's paper (2010) which investigates the impact on a person of seeing themselves as bullied. Their conclusion is that for people who are experiencing significant bullying there is no additional harm from labelling the experience as bullying but that for people experiencing low levels of bullying there may be harm through a shift to seeing

themselves as a bullied person (p.41). For this reason, I did not follow the path of offering a definition of bullying and asking a person to decide if they have been bullied.

Subsidiary to the labelling issue is the potential for people to recall distressing incidents. I believe this is minimised in the survey by not mentioning bullying directly. Also the pain of recalling distressing incidents has the counterbalance of pain being eased when distressing incidents can be voiced and received sensitively (Einarsen, 2010, p.38).

Within the framework of potential responses to bullying discussed in Chapter Four, this diocese can be seen as lacking constructive avenues for the voicing of experience.

Anonymous research offers a safe but limited outlet for voice.

There was also a risk that people may become aware of a need for professional help with a bullying situation. Part of the need for this research is that the diocese has not put in place the appropriate support such as harassment advisors which makes it difficult to cater for this need if it arises. This is unavoidable but was mitigated by putting together a source of resources that are available including: pastoral support within the diocese, trade union contact, bullying advice providers and mental health support services.

A legal concern related to material of an evidentiary nature being disclosed. This is minimised as bullying itself is not illegal under employment law. The most I felt I could do in this area was to make it clear that I am not offering advocacy for participants and that although I could signpost avenues for support overall responsibility remained with them.

Other than the above there is also the need to comply with the university's routine requirements for ethical working. There are practical concerns relating to the confidentiality of written responses and computer files. My work is carried out on a password protected computer in a home study with a locking filing cabinet available for storing written materials. The anonymised version of this data will be preserved by me after the end of this study but only for use in ways consistent with the consent already given.

Clarity regarding anonymity was important. At the level of the survey respondents were normally anonymous to me. One respondent waived this by immediately emailing me after completing her survey and telling me what her answers were. This thesis is anonymized for the reader, however, those wishing to be part of the interviews were not anonymous to me. There is a basic anonymity for the diocese in that I do not name them. However, I make it explicit that anyone looking up Revd. Lorraine Turner would

assume a diocese. Although I have in the past used a pseudonym I consider this an obstacle to promulgating my thesis effectively. A level of added protection is for this to be a confidential thesis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This analysis begins with some simple descriptive statistics before some exploratory inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics have application as a straightforward account of the prevalence of particular negative acts. If all respondents had scored a particular negative act at the maximum level it would give an overall sum of 268 (67x4). The median and mode are either 0 or 1 for all the negative acts. The range is 0-4. This is a useful reminder that this data does not follow a normal distribution. Many zero responses are expected with localised spikes in activity. It can be argued whether responses are ordinal or nominal data but I am not comfortable making use of the *mean* statistic when one of the choices was *now and then*.

TABLE (IX) NEGATIVE ACTS: SUM OF ALL SCORES

Negative Act	Sum of all scores/268
1. Someone withholding information which affects your performance.	70
2. Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your ministry	42
3. Being ordered to do tasks below your level of competence.	37
4. Having key areas of responsibility removed or replaced with more trivial or unpleasant tasks.	19
5. Spreading of gossip or rumours about you.	45
6. Being ignored or excluded	70
7. Having insulting or offensive remarks made about your person, attitudes or your private life.	39
8. Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger	36
9. Intimidating behaviours such as finger-pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking your way.	20
10. Hints or signals from others that you should quit your present post.	21
11. Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes.	38
12. Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach.	31
13. Persistent criticism of your errors or mistakes.	25
14. Having your opinions ignored.	62
15. Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with.	9
16. Being given tasks with unreasonable deadlines.	27
17. Having allegations made against you.	33
18. Excessive monitoring of your ministerial activities.	19

19. Pressure not to claim something to which you are by right entitled (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses).	35
20. Being the subject of excessive teasing or sarcasm.	12
21. Being exposed to an unmanageable workload.	62
22. Threats of violence or actual violence.	15

The table above demonstrates significant accumulations of points for four areas. These points are accumulated either by the combination of many low scores and/or some high scores so it is a crude measurement. However, its simplicity also brings potential clarity.

TABLE (X) HIGH SCORING NEGATIVE ACTS

Someone withholding information	70
Being Ignored or excluded	70
Having your opinions ignored	62
Being exposed to an unmanageable workload	62

The median number for points accumulated across categories is 32. The range is 12 to 70. This suggests that these behaviours can fairly be described as standing out from others.

The aspect I note from table (x) above is that there is a degree of passivity about these behaviours. They are, to some extent, sins of omission. From a liturgical perspective these are examples of people leaving undone what ought to have done (Church of England, 2005, p.96). Necessary information ought to be shared, people ought to be included, people's opinions ought to be acknowledged, care ought to be taken to establish a manageable workload.

Moving on to inferential statistics requires engagement with the results of Einarsen's Latent Cluster Analysis (2009). Latent Cluster Analysis was used to classify data into clusters which were then described in terms of the pattern of bullying observed within the cluster. This was large scale quantitative work and there is no intention to replicate that work which would have no value. Instead I use their results in order to form a

comparison between their sample, across a broad range of contexts, and my sample of clergy within the diocese. The clusters they identified are shown below.

(There is an added dimension to the mixed method nature of this thesis as this section is predominantly numerical but there is a narrative element to the identification of statistical patterns to descriptions of different experiences of bullying. There is also a narrative/interpretive element from the perspective of the respondent as they are responding from memory and asked to differentiate between weekly/monthly/now and then/never. This means that although there is a strong objective component in this approach it is not immune from subjectivity. The subjective elements I became aware of through the interviews were the possibility of the overuse of the *never* category because of a desire to avoid thinking about experiences and conversely, the overuse of the *weekly/daily* category as an angry response to a current bullying situation. One leads to an underestimation of negative acts and the other two an overestimation.)

The table below contains my abbreviations, a description of the key features of the cluster and the number of responses placed in that category.

Table (xi) Narrative Categorization of Responses

	Category	Description	Number of respondents
NB,	No bullying	High probability of responding <i>never</i> .	12
SWC	Some work criticism	Relatively high probability of responding never but with a significant <i>now and then</i> element for work related negative acts.	12
ONE	Occasional negative encounters	Work related and person related acts and a stronger <i>now and then</i> component.	13
OB	Occasional bullying	A higher probability of encountering socially isolating behaviour with other person related acts but still at an infrequent level.	13
WRB	Work related bullying	More frequent exposure to work related acts especially on the weekly basis.	7
S	Severe bullying including physical intimidation	A high frequency of weekly exposure to negative acts in combination with a low frequency of responding never.	7
PI	Physical Intimidation	A significant probability of responding never but pronounced weekly physical intimidation behaviours.	0

(Einarsen et al., 2009, p.35)

As a precaution I did not categorise responses solely on the narrative description but also compared the pattern of probability. The probabilities of responding never, now and then, monthly and weekly including daily are shown below. The authors brought together their weekly and daily choices and I followed this practice for comparison purposes. The authors were willing to align the majority of their categories with related cluster analysis studies. However, they identified an additional category of physical intimidation. This category reflected a higher proportion of physically intimidating acts compared to other acts. I did not place anyone in this category so my work aligns more closely to the previously established categories. It is significant that my physical intimidation category was not empty because of a lack of physical intimidation but because the physical intimidation experienced was present alongside significant work related and person related acts.

The probabilities of response in Table (xii) below demonstrate general support for the choices I had made on a narrative basis. It also illustrates that the categories hardest to distinguish between are *occasional negative experiences* and the *occasional bullying*. This uncertainty is reflected in the following statistical analysis and in the conclusions drawn.

Table (xii) Probabilistic categorization of responses. *My results (Einarsen's results).*

	Probability of responding never (%)	Probability of responding Now and then (%)	Probability of responding Monthly (%)	Probability of responding Weekly/Daily (%)
NB,	96 (94)	4 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)
SWC	81 (74)	19(24)	0(1)	0 (1)
ONE	51 (72)	48(24)	0 (2)	0 (2)
OB	56 (40)	36 (47)	6 (7)	2 (6)
WRB	64 (62)	23 (21)	6 (6)	7 (12)
S	18 (22)	29 (30)	14 (13)	40 (34)
PI*	(51)	(33)	(5)	(12)

*no respondents in this group

For the statistical analysis I used Hawkins guidelines on statistical analysis (2009) applied to frequency data from Einarsen et al (2009). As mentioned bullying data is not

expected to follow a normal distribution so my data is non-parametric. The most appropriate statistic was therefore the chi squared test. I followed Hawkin's suggestion of 5 per cent as a critical significance level. The null hypothesis was that my data followed the same distribution of frequencies as Einarsen's data.

Null Hypothesis: Clergy in the diocese experienced the same pattern of bullying as people employed in 70 organizations (Private, public, voluntary sector) across the UK.

This allowed me to generate an expected frequency of each type of bullying experience that could compare to the observed frequency. As there is only one set of categories it is a one-way classification using the chi squared test.

First, working with the categories generated by Einarsen et al (2009), there are seven categories which gives six degrees of freedom and a corresponding critical value of chi squared as 12.59. As chi squared generated through comparing the samples is $9.46 < 12.59$ the null hypothesis stands. This means that the pattern of bullying in the diocese is not significantly different from what was observed in their sample. The calculation is shown in the table below. In this case even the null hypothesis is a helpful solution in its own right as it qualifies the perception that bullying is rare in the church. There is a possibility that this acceptance of the null hypothesis is false. This would be a type two error and is described by Hawkins as hard to quantify. (91)

Table (x) Chi Squared Calculation (6 degrees of freedom)

Category	Observed frequency O	Expected frequency E	O-E	$(O-E)^2$	$(O-E)^2/E$
NB	12	17.92	-5.92	35.0464	1.96
SWC	12	16.00	-4.00	16	1.00
ONE	13	9.60	3.40	11.56	1.20
OB	13	8.32	4.68	21.9024	2.63
WRB	7	6.40	0.60	0.36	0.06
S	7	5.12	1.88	3.5344	0.69
PI	0	1.92	-1.92	3.6864	1.92
				Sum	9.46

The chi-squared test is described as inaccurate when there are expected frequencies of lower than five or only one degree of freedom. This casts some question on the validity of using the test in this situation as there is one category where the expected frequency is lower than five. The bigger the sample size the greater the power of the test.

Einarsen's work was carried out with 5,288 responses and mine with 67. My survey lacks the discrimination to make statistical comparisons across 7 categories. However, it is possible to make statistically significant comparisons between three categories.

The table below brings the seven categories together into three categories. This allows calculations to be made on higher expected frequencies. These new categories are not an arbitrary statistical device but align to practical categories for responding to bullying. The low frequency of negative acts in the NB and SWC categories are aligned with a workplace where there is no bullying related concern (NC). At the second level there are increasing negative acts that suggest the need for some concern (SC). This suggests to me a gateway stage where clergy should explore support. The third level brings together the categories considered as systematic bullying. Here there is an urgent need for intervention (SB).

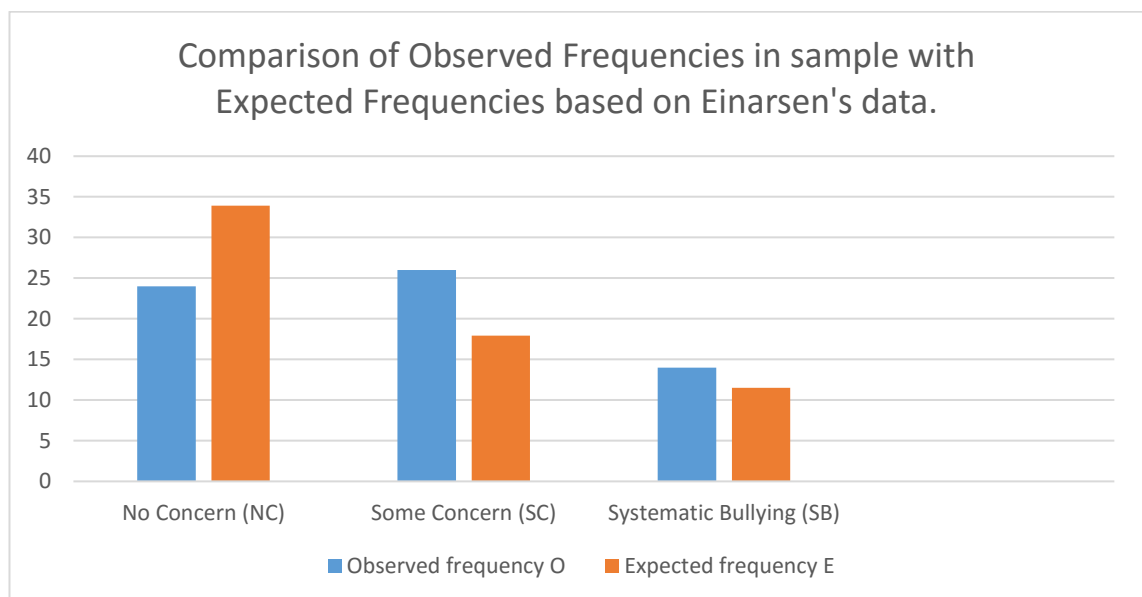
Table (xiv) Chi Squared Calculation (3 degrees of freedom)

Original Category	Renamed Category	Observed frequency O	Expected frequency E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
NB/SWC	No Concern (NC)	24	33.92	-9.92	98.40	2.90
ONE/ONB	Some Concern (SC)	26	17.92	8.08	65.28	3.64
WRB/S/PI	Systematic Bullying (SB)	14	11.52	2.48	6.15	0.53
					Sum	7.07

If the categorization is reduced to three categories of increasing intensity of experience of bullying as above, then the null hypothesis can be disproved. Here there are two degrees of freedom and the critical value for chi squared is 5.99. In contrast to the position above $7.07 > 5.99$ so the null hypothesis is disproved. (It is fair to note that by selecting a critical significance level of 5 per cent there is a one in twenty chance of my rejecting a true null hypothesis. (p.91))

For Einarsen's data as the intensity of negative acts amounting to bullying increases, the frequency of people drops. For the sample of clergy, the intensity peaks at an intensity of negative acts that causes some concern but do not amount to systematic bullying. The frequency of systematic bullying is not significantly different between the sample and the comparison data. In short, the clergy peak at Some Concern whereas the general population peak at No Concern.

Diagram (vii) A Graph Detailing Observed and Comparison Frequencies



I feel there was a purpose in working with all of Einarsen's categories before reducing them to three because it allows my work to draw attention to the variety of ways in which bullying is experienced in the workplace. It is useful for the diocese to have access to the broader characterization and the overall message that the pattern and prevalence of bullying in the church is similar to other workplaces. However, it is also useful for the diocese to know that the No Concern category is lower than expected and the Some Concern category higher than expected. It is relevant here that bullying is associated with accelerating conflict (Zapf and Gross, 2001) which implies a risk that

the clergy in SC today may be in SB in the future. Here is the potential to generate aims for an anti-bullying response and a measure with which to compare the effect of future changes.

My professional instinct is that the diocese does not currently make use of any of these categories appropriately. For a working environment characterised by NC, there should be baseline anti-bullying awareness in place. This is not the case in the diocese. This makes it hard to identify movement into the SC patterns. Through not identifying the risk of this stage clergy can find themselves in SB without knowing the policies/options and therefore without already having support to hand. This has the outcome that those effected directly by bullying, as well as witnesses and helpers, find themselves engaging with anti-bullying measures at the point where they are least likely to lead to a satisfactory resolution for all parties. These thoughts find some support in the narrative data which follows in chapters eight to thirteen. Lastly, there is a possibility that those who are surprised that I have not discovered a higher rate of bullying are experiencing the SC environment and subjectively categorizing it a SB.

A question I asked of this data was whether there were any similarities shared by people experiencing systematic bullying. The fourteen candidates in this group are described in the table below. The table below does not provide definitive answers, especially when the need for people to come in whole numbers is taken into account. However, its notable that the gender patterns in the SB group closely follow the overall sample and, in contrast, ministers aged 50-64 with 6-14 years of experience are over represented. There is some overlap with individuals that heightens this effect. In the SB group 42% of ministers are 50-64 with 6-14 years in ministry compared to this group making up just 19% of the overall sample.

Table (xv) Examining the Systematic Bullying Group

	Gen.		Age ²		
Descriptor	F	M	Under 50	50-65	Over 65
Number	5	9	1	11	2
Percentage of SB group	36	64	7	79	14
Whole sample percentage	41	59	21	57	19

	Nature of post		Time in Ministry			
Descriptor	Self-supporting	Stipendiary	0-5	6-14	15-24	25+
Number	4	10	2	6	1	5
Percentage of SB group	28	71	14	42	7	36
Whole sample percentage	31	69	23	32	16	28

FINDINGS

The descriptive statistics reveal a significant contribution from passive negative acts to the overall picture. This will be discussed further in the light of the narrative data. It is potentially useful in indicating a focus for anti-bullying activity. The finding that ministers aged 50-64 with 6-14 years of ministry disproportionately experienced a higher level of systematic bullying is interesting as it challenges the perception that it is

² The small number of respondents in age groups below 50 made them potentially identifiable so these groups were merged.

new ministers/ministers in training who are most likely to be bullied. The earlier *golden cage* argument Chapter Four (this work, p.34) may have some application here as ministers in this age range, who have spent a significant time in ministry, may have more limited alternatives than others. Below this age range ministers might find new posts more easily and beyond this retirement is currently a natural option.

The inferential statistics above demonstrate that similar levels of systematic bullying occur in the diocese compared to Einarsen's sample. However, there is some evidence that there are fewer clergy who experience no bullying and more clergy who experience a mix of negative behaviours that are undesirable but below the level of systematic bullying. Although this difference does have a statistical significance I would not describe it as a strong significance due to the subjective element of identifying individuals with Einarsen's categories. I therefore would stand strongly by bullying in the diocese being similar to the comparison British work places with the possibility that there are more clergy in environments that could be considered a cause for concern.

WARRANTING OF NUMERICAL FINDINGS.

The NAQ-R survey itself is a well warranted tool for exploring bullying. (Einarsen, 2009) Further in comparing the data obtained to NAQ-R data, I used the appropriate statistical technique for comparison of non-parametric data and for three categories of bullying was able to disprove the null hypothesis. Therefore, the relatively modest claims of this work that bullying is at approximately the same level as is experienced in the comparison professions but that fewer clergy experience no bullying than other professions is warranted.

PART 4 CHAPTER 7 NARRATIVE DATA: METHOD, ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

RESEARCH TOOL: IPA INTERVIEW

When evaluating the choice of IPA, I was guided by Hefferon and Rodriguez (2011) who offer a very useful practical review of this method. They identify examples of good practice and particular pitfalls that students encounter. The was particularly useful in evaluating the pilot interviews. Their examples of good practice led to the work of Chapman et al., (2007) who use this methodology in the area of patients' relationships with ventricular assist devices. This was a good example of this method being appropriate for investigating sensitive issues. The work I most closely identify with is Hutchinson's 2012 account of the impact of witnessing bullying on American school children. This is an example of IPA used in an area very closely related to my work which shares the same element of inviting people to speak about a difficult topic. Both of these papers are short papers where the data and findings are summarized very succinctly. As an illustration of IPA at the doctoral level, Blore's 2011 doctoral thesis usefully illustrates the significant place of extended quotations from participants and a fuller analysis than the preceding papers. All these studies have a psychological setting. I have not encountered the use of IPA in either a theological or work place bullying context.

INTERVIEWS

I offered a face-to-face interview in the location of their choice in order to provide an environment for people to offer sensitive material in a way that was comfortable and safe for them. A concern was to achieve a sample size that would lead to credible conclusions. Consideration had been given to the use of focus groups. However, these have practical disadvantages due to the difficulty of bringing busy people from a large geographical area together. There are also disadvantages regarding the uncertainty of whether participants, who are colleagues, would find themselves able to speak freely in a group and whether participants could be guaranteed to be appropriately sensitive to each other. By not using focus groups the potential for participants to spark off each other in a creative way was lost. However, I felt the potential for creative gain was outweighed by the disadvantages.

The response rate was such that it was feasible to interview all those who expressed an interest in the work. Of these one person moved to another diocese and outside of the support structure intended for participants so they were not offered an interview.

Another changed their mind on being offered an interview which was reassuring as it indicated their feeling that it was acceptable to drop out.

ETHICAL ISSUES

In addition to the previous discussion of ethics, the interviews brought two further dimensions into consideration. First, the need to aim for enough interviews to generate useful material. The potential for useful information needed to balance the risk of some emotional discomfort. Secondly, the need for the ethics committee to be confident that the questions were suitable. These were resolved with agreement to aim for eight interviews and some shifting in the questions, as demonstrated in the table below.

TABLE (XVI) SHIFTS IN SURVEY QUESTIONS

Research proposal questions	Pilot questions after ethics approval.	Suggested questions after pilot and reflection.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think of as bullying in a workplace? 2. Are you aware of any anti-bullying policy or procedures operating in the diocese? 3. In the course of your ministry have there been incidents directed at ministers which brought bullying to mind? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What were your immediate thoughts and feelings when reading the feedback from the survey? 2. Are there aspects of your experience that the behaviours described did not capture? If the answer is yes, then: What would you like to add to the picture? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'd like to start by taking you back to the time when you received the original survey.... (the questions are here on the cards) can you tell me about any immediate thoughts and feelings that came to mind...? 2a. As you look at these behaviours, how do they match up with your ideas of what negative acts might be? 2b. And what are you drawing on here to come to that answer.... can you say a little more about that?

<p>4. How do you make sense of this as a Christian minister?</p>	<p>3. How do you make sense of this as a Christian minister?</p> <p>4. How would you like to see the diocese respond?</p>	<p>2c. These questions relate to behaviours that could happen anywhere, if this blank card is for negative acts that particularly happen in the church context what should I add here to give a fuller picture....</p> <p>3. Now coming to the report...I have made a link between experiencing these behaviours and being bullied, how does that seem to you?</p> <p>And once more can I ask are there any immediate thoughts or feelings.</p> <p>4. How do you make sense of this as a Christian minister?</p> <p>5. Would you like to see a response from the diocese in this area? What would you like that to be.... what leads you to prefer things as they are?</p>
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KEY ELEMENTS OF THE METHOD

- Interview schedule generated
- Pilot interviewees approached
- Two Pilot interviews conducted
- Evaluation of Pilot interviews
- Modification of interview schedule
- Six interviews conducted recorded digitally by two recording devices (Iphone, Ipad)
- Transcription of recordings into word documents.

ANALYSIS

The eight interviewees who have contributed to this work can be seen as windows each offering a perspective of how bullying has touched their lives. Examination of these interviews from an empathic standpoint provides the naming and interpretation of past wrongs, the elucidation of thinking and a sense of what might give rise to a more hopeful future. The empathic phase is then followed by a more analytical stance bringing the transcripts alongside models of bullying and theological reflection. When reading these summaries, it may be contextually helpful to remember that candidates 1,3 and 4 showed a desire to engage very promptly as a result of receiving the negative acts questionnaire. Interviewee 5, had a time of personal struggle and then chose to engage. Interviewees 2 and 6 found that it connected at the level which was nominally within their professional interest and were willing to be interviewed as a result of that. The pilot interviewees had not expressed any interest in being part of the work but I had sufficient professional, personal and academic connection to believe they could be asked to participate at the pilot stage without the risk of trauma.

For orientation purposes the table below indicates significant themes identified from the transcripts.

TABLE (XVII): THEMATIC ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Theme	Subordinate Theme (1)	Subordinate theme (2)
Referencing (Chapter 8)	Formative References	Children's Violence
		Fairness Reasoning
		Niceness
		Public School
	Comparative References to other professions	Obedience and Order
		Witnessing and Responding to bullying across a career.
	Grounding references to extended church experience	Elision of poor hierarchical working relationships over time
		Elision of experiences of gender discrimination over time.
		Geographic elision of experiences.
Activating Experiences (Chapter 9)	Pastoral Crisis	
	Tradition	
	Tradition and gender	
	Hierarchy	
Power (Chapter 10)	Use/misuse of power	
	Servanthood	
	Scapegoating	
	Subjectivity	
Ambivalence (Chapter 11)	Unwillingness	
	Problem with Contemporaneous identification	

	Bullying traded against positive outcomes	
	Lack of biblical support	
	Fallen world	
Help and hindrance (Chapter 12)	Helpful people	
	Vocation	
	Barriers to seeking help	
	The place of self	
Moving Forward (Chapter 13)	Exit	
	Accommodation	
	Strategic Alliances	
	Future hope	

OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWEES

The three interviewees who have ministered as their main profession describe significant negative encounters over a period of decades. Interviewee six also refers to negative encounters over a period of decades, however, these were in his previous profession as well as during his time in ministry. Of the remaining interviewees three have been on the fringe of negative encounters relating to others which have had an impact on their thinking and one only speaks in theoretical terms throughout. Only two interviewees have a strong focus in the present and near past. These accounts are distinctive from definitions of bullying within the measurement school as here the concern is primarily what has happened over the past six months. The interviews generally reflect a concern for what has happened over decades. Further these interviews represent a reaching back into understandings of human nature from whole life experience. The lack of coherence in this material indicates the understanding of bullying as a work in progress even for those most open to engagement with the area. Excerpts from the interviewees' transcripts demonstrate a process of soul searching. There is a sense of emotional reconciliation with their past experiences as an ongoing process, they want the church to learn a lesson from their experiences and imply that it has not been learned yet. The incidents themselves for the most part are no longer active but they have a power that I believe will live on until the church is no longer the institution in which they occurred.

As part of maintaining the anonymity of interviewees I am not clearly distinguishing their quotations as bringing these together with the summaries of lifetimes may lead to identification. For instance, if I used alternative names then such a clear picture of that person may be formed that they are recognisable. Therefore, although I regret the loss of individuality, I feel it is ethically appropriate. The focus is learning from the people in the diocese now with the experiences they bring now. This means it is not always clear in which diocese particular events happened. Again this helps preserve anonymity. For the purposes of this work it is not significant which diocese was involved, simply that it happened and that the relevant member of the clergy is now in the diocese of study. Due to range of experience that interviewees bring they offer a multifaceted window on bullying which has value as a rich resource of perspective. There is no intention to achieve a comprehensive overview of bullying by speaking to eight people. However, this narrative data is strengthened by the numerical data which sets the transcripts of individuals within the broader context of a diocese whose clergy experience significant levels of negative acts indicative of bullying.

There is a movement in the following analysis which reflects the foundation of IPA as double interpretation. I begin with close attention to what the interviewees are speaking about but then move to forming my own interpretation. The following analysis has been arrived at by detailed study of individual interviews aimed at generating themes. However, I have then presented the material selectively and thematically to allow a sharper focus and again defend anonymity. It is characteristic of IPA analysis that more of the interviewees words and story are included than might be expected from other methods of analysis. The words of the interviewees are of intrinsic value as a rich description of their experiences in ministry. This stands irrespective of higher level interpretations and conclusions. Sometimes the process of reading the accounts leads to wondering how other parties in the incidents described would have interpreted the incident. However, this phase is about dwelling in the interpretation offered by the interviewee and moving towards my own interpretation. Sometimes a more distant stance will be taken but the overall position will remain as working out what I can learn from these people in my interpretation of their experiences.

THE WARRANTABILITY OF NARRATIVE FINDINGS.

Within Plowright's FraIM, the warrantability of findings is preferred over discussion of validity (2011, L. 2470). Although the use of IPA in the practical theology context seems to be limited to this work, it is well established in the field of psychology.

Therefore, I assess below the warrantability of my narrative findings based on seven categories generated by Elliott, Fischer and Rennie (1999) for the purpose of evaluating qualitative work in psychology. The following discussion is my assessment of the warrantability of my findings with the intention of demonstrating that this work can reasonably be considered warrantable.

OWNING ONE'S PERSPECTIVE

"The authors describe their theoretical, methodological or personal orientations as those are relevant to the research." (p.221) My theoretical and methodological orientations are introduced in chapter one and detailed in Chapters Two and Five. Chapters Three and Four orientate the reader to significant personal and professional influences. It was a significant structural consideration that these chapters should be included in the main body of the thesis so my perspectives are offered to the reader as integral to the thesis.

A significant aspect of my perspective relates to being an insider researcher. A positive aspect of this was participants' willingness to be interviewed and the frankness of their accounts. A notable phrase that reflected this was *you know*. This had two functions which are hard to disentangle. Interviewees used this phrase as a verbal space filler as well as to indicate shared knowledge. Sometimes my mental response was *yes I do know*, sometimes it was *no, I don't know*. I think some of the more revealing statements were made because interviewees felt I would already know, so they were not speaking out of turn. Negative aspects of the insider perspective are clearly possible in that there will be assumptions in this work that an outsider would not have made. As this thesis has the potential to be a confidential document and I will write a separate report for the diocese, I do not believe that the integrity of the work is impinged significantly by my being part of the hierarchy I am critiquing.

A facet of insider research has been the re-evaluation of my own past experiences. For instance, listening to an account of a conversation in a meeting with a bishop, I felt the presence of my own inhibitions regarding what you can and cannot say to a bishop. Having been at meetings where a tirade has been let loose, I can now identify that I have conspired in judging outbursts as unreasonable rather than wondering what was behind them. This process of re-evaluation is an indication that as an insider I could engage

with the significance of what was being said but was not limited by having preconceptions.

SITUATING THE SAMPLE.

“Authors describe the research participants and their life circumstances to aid the researcher in judging the range and situations to which the findings might be relevant” (p.221). I have not done this to the fullest extent possible as the interviewees would become quickly identifiable. However, it is my hope that through the sample being limited to priests in the Church of England and the information I do provide around career path, length of service and gender would be sufficient to support the reader in their judgement of this area.

GROUNDING IN EXAMPLES

“Authors provide examples of the data to illustrate both the analytic procedures used in the study and the understanding developed in light of them” (p.222). The narrative data presented within this thesis is substantial. The data and my analysis are presented in such a way that it is clear what I am drawing on in the forming of my conclusions. The intermediate stages of data analysis have not been included. However, they are still in existence and an interested reader might, by arrangement, gain access to this material.

PROVIDING CREDIBILITY CHECKS.

“Researchers may use any of several methods for checking the credibility of their categories themes or accounts” (p.222). A method for achieving this which I rejected was going back to the interviewees to offer them a chance for feedback on my analysis. I avoided this for two reasons. First, the interviewees had already risked emotional pain through participating in the interview in the first place. To put them in the situation of returning to painful material seemed unreasonable. This is partially reflected in the explicit words of an interviewee who wanted the response by the diocese to be action not words. This seemed to be putting them through another layer of words. Secondly, the IPA method explicitly recognizes double interpretation so although I stay close to a naturalistic interpretation of their words, there is a sense in which my interpretation may be different to what they were intending to convey. A strand where this can be seen is *ambivalence*. Participants are overtly supporting a response to bullying but are, according to my interpretation, demonstrating resistance to responding to bullying. They may be discomforted by my interpretation. To analyse in such a way as to avoid discomforting the interviewees would be to skew the thesis as a whole. This is avoided through an alternative approach to credibility checking.

The main credibility check I did use was through supervision. In the early stages of analysis, a supervisor carried out a parallel categorizing process to mine so we only saw each other's categories after we had arrived at our own. Although these categories and the arrangement of material was different, the interpretations were compatible. A second credibility check through supervision was through a second supervisor critiquing the inferences I had drawn from quotations. This led to a discussion of whether some of my inferences were too much towards reading the person. There was a degree to which some of this was justifiable and perhaps a consequence of using a primarily psychological methodology, however, there were also examples where the inference was discarded or further justified.

COHERENCE

“The understanding is represented in a way that achieves coherence and integration while preserving the nuances of the data” (p.222). The table of themes (xvii) in Chapter Seven arranges subthemes into intelligible groupings. These are expounded in Chapters Eight to Thirteen, with a clear link between evidence and the subtheme supported. This achieves the connection between theme and the nuance of data. The summary table at the end of these chapters form a link between the subthemes and their practical application. Chapter five introduces a specific theoretical lens which offers a further level of interpretation. This is unusual in IPA although considered to be acceptable (Smith and Flowers, 2009). There is some disjunction as the themes do not neatly match key Girardian concepts. However, I believe there is enough similarity to offer the reader a sense of coherence. This is a methodology where categories develop from the data so I did not want to force the analysis by deriving categories theoretically and fitting the interviewees words to them.

ACCOMPLISHING GENERAL ‘VS’ SPECIFIC RESEARCH TASKS.

“Where a general understanding is intended it is based on an appropriate range of instances (informants or situations)” (p.223). This research is of a general nature as it examines the responses of a wide selection of priests. The sample included a female rector, a male rector, a male priest in charge, a female priest in charge, a female ordained local minister, a male ordained local minister, a female priest taking a break from stipendiary ministry holding permission to officiate and a male priest working in the context of the wider diocese. This was not a deliberate design feature of the study as these were the people who demonstrated an interest in response to the initial survey. In order to achieve a breadth of response these are all the candidates who offered, I did not

select them. Although the balance of gender and diversity of ministry were strengthening features I am conscious that these are all white British, nominally heterosexual clergy. The absence of perspectives on bullying from LGBT clergy is a serious weakness. I attempted to mitigate this to a small degree through reference to the bullying of gay clergy in the press. This could also be addressed more comprehensively by further work where instead of being dependent on people expressing an interest, particular members of clergy could be approached. The lack of ethnic diversity was in keeping with the make-up of the diocese at the time of the data gathering phases. This again points to the benefits of repeating this study across a range of dioceses.

One area in which the interviewees fell short of my aims for achieving a general picture is that ideally eight full interviews would have been analysed. Due to one member of clergy moving out of the diocese and another withdrawing her offer to be interviewed I ended up making use of six full interviews and two pilot interviews. I did make some use of the pilot interviews to improve breadth of response but I did not attach the same weight to them as the full interviews.

This thesis can be situated as indicating the breadth of experience within a single diocese. This is clearly not completely separate from the Church of England as a whole but I do not inappropriately generalise my material for different diocese or different denominations. For instance, some dioceses did adopt anti-bullying policies in 2008 and I would expect these to be significantly different. Again there is the potential for further work in forming a comparison.

RESONATING WITH READERS

“The manuscript stimulates resonance in readers/reviewers, meaning that the material is presented in such a way that readers/reviewers.... judge it to have represented accurately the subject matter or to have clarified or expanded their appreciation and understanding of it” (p.223).

Supervision discussion indicate that this resonance is present. Also aspects of this work presented to an audience of doctoral students was received with great interest. There is a sense in which this material picks up on the notion that people had always thought it might be like this but not seen it represented so fully as a body of evidence. This again relates back to my decision to include extensive quotations from the interviews. The interviewees words have a power of their own in addition to the levels of analysis. Therefore, the bringing together of words and analysis enhances the sense of resonance.

CONCLUSION

This thesis meets all of Elliott's criteria and therefore I consider I have demonstrated the warrantability of this research to the best of my ability.

CHAPTER 8 REFERENCING

INTRODUCTION

This is the first of six chapters of analysis. Each chapter is based around a theme and includes quotations, analysis, conclusions and a summary for the theme. The summary is presented in tables which indicate inferences I draw from this material. These inferences are further weighted as contextual or key. This is an attempt to reflect that some findings relate to understanding the context more fully and some specifically fit with ideas to implement. This material related to inferences is intended to be indicative of the application of this work rather than a detailed account. This relates to the original intention of this thesis of formulating a response to bullying. This chapter begins with the examination of the references interviewees made to ground their answers. I have arranged these starting with more distant influences first in a loosely temporal order. It explores the themes of childhood, experiences inside and outside the church context and the way these experiences combine in their effect.

CHILDHOOD

Childhood and school were contexts that four of the interviewees used as brief examples of bad behaviour. The first two quotations present a picture of childhood bullying as more extreme than adult bullying but easier to deal with. It is more extreme to the extent that it involves violence but easier to deal with in that it was clear to the interviewees that violence is wrong.

The picture when we talk about bullying, that a lot is bullying in the school playground when the kid sneakily punches you when no-ones looking. (1.1)

If someone was hitting someone you can say stop it. (1.2)

This is also supported by less direct references in which the words and behaviours of childhood appear in adult situations. First, an interviewee consciously, looking within her own experience, accounts for the motivation to bully as childishness. Secondly, an interviewee recounting a time of being hard pressed, refers to middle aged people as girls and boys.

It is a childish thing because it's about getting your own way isn't it...because you know we all, me no more than anybody else, likes to get their own way. (1.3)

What you going to do about it boys? (1.4)

I anticipated that my role would be that of backroom girl, making sure that everything was in place that was needed. (1.5)

This presents the possibility that childhood and the playground were the formative places for thinking on bullying and that they have a significant place in adult thought. This may suggest that there has been a lack of adult thinking given to the area.

FAIRNESS REASONING

The motif of childhood is extended into ideas of fairness, various critiques of incidents amount to *it's not fair*. In some ways the adult use of reason reaches back into childhood images of fairness. The candidate below does not use overt language of childhood but if we take views of fairness as formed in childhood then again we have a potentially bullied person reaching back into the foundations of themselves when they talk about bullying related incidents.

Actually at one stage, just abandoned the thought of moving to [new post in same diocese], I thought I may as well stay where I am cause actually it's too big a risk, or it was unreasonable deadlines and I actually didn't have faith in them doing it fairly. The fact they'd gone out to create these hurdles unnecessarily, I felt they wouldn't be fair... Yeah, yeah unfair, unfair and unrealistic. (1.7)

A second pairing of reason and fairness happens in a more extended way:

And I said, I thought not unreasonable, that isn't what they put on the job description, so that isn't the job as advertised, which I had applied for and been accepted for.... "we all make mistakes but within normal limits I'd done what I thought was right and I'd done what... as good a job as I could do, and I'd been treated unfairly. (1.8)

This second quotation is less passionate than the first. This could be due to a personality difference or a difference in intensity of the negative experience. However, the first quotation is some 5 years after the experience and the second some 15 years after the experience. Interviewees bringing these past events in combination with the significance of childhood could be an indication that these are emotional events. These have a currency far beyond a technical six-month period which a typical definition of functional bullying often uses.

I react very strongly if I'm being bullied, that's me and my background but I don't always, it takes me time to see it with other people. (1.9)

This reflects the interviewee drawing on an emotional knowledge which is readily accessed in contrast to an academic knowledge which is less accessible. This can potentially be compared to candidates who identify bullying of others but who find an emotional barrier to seeing themselves as bullied. There is also a connection with the objective and subjective definition of bullying. Above (1.9), the interviewee could be seen as demonstrating the power of subjective definition against the uncertainty of objective definition. The varying skills of individuals to work both subjectively and objectively could account for those interviewees who make an identification with bullying long after the events or not at all.

NICENESS

A concept that might seem to sit oddly in a section relating to childhood is the expectation of *niceness*. There is perhaps a gender bias that leads me to this, drawn from the childhood refrain, sugar and spice and all things nice, that's what little girls are made of. Three of the four female clergy interviewed rejected of the expectation of *niceness*. In contrast male clergy referenced expectation as a concept but only used the word *nice* as an adjective, either straight forwardly or ironically.

The thing is the vicar is supposed to be nice, whatever people throw at them they're not supposed to respond. Like in another job, people come at you with criticism or belittling or trying to force you to do something you didn't want to do and you would say oh clear off on your bike, you know. (1.10)

Being Christian is about following a particular faith pathway but it doesn't make us into nice people and it's one of the understandings that doesn't work really, *Christians are nice people*, God help us that we're not nice people, for better or worse we got to be something stronger than that. (1.11)

I think, *we need to be nice*, comes into this, and I think we overrate niceness in the church. Because I don't know that being nice helps people grow and develop and change. (1.12)

Perhaps women clergy were brought up with the ideal of niceness. The discussions of *niceness* then indicate that they have found the expectation of niceness which they reject. This is not exclusively about women clergy as part of the niceness debate was stimulated by Rowan Williams (2013, p.209). However, it does seem to have a raised

profile among the women clergy interviewed. This leads to an additional layer of complexity where bullying is concerned as it is not just bullying that is a problematic concept but being nice too. Essentially, the reference of *niceness* is being used to work through the visibly difficult concept of bullying but *niceness* itself is a complex concept. This demonstrates the interviewees are trying to work with layers of complexity.

PUBLIC SCHOOL

A slightly different reference to childhood is not about an interviewees own experience but a speculation about the experience of others. This has particular relevance in light of Davies and Guest (2016) who at the time of researching identified 59 per cent of bishop as having attended public school, two thirds of these being Clarendon Schools (a group of which Eton is a member) (p.32).

The Eton culture is that you would have fags who would beat the first years and when the first years became second years they would do exactly the same to somebody else... And that keeps it going on. You have to break that cycle somewhere. (1.13)

Although this direct public school reference is isolated I think it increases in significance in light of the overall use of childhood references. It also connects up to class related similes used by another interviewee and discussed later in terms of servant ministry.

COMPARATIVE REFERENCES TO EXPERIENCES IN OTHER PROFESSIONS

ORDER AND OBEDIENCE

One interviewee had long term experience of a rank based organization where she interpreted practice to be poor.

The discussion was about bullying in the organization and the person picked up the paper that someone had written about it, screwed it up and said we have no bullying in this place. (1.14)

This represents a denial of bullying carried out in a way which would register as a negative act. There is a sense in which the interviewee hoped the church environment would be different.

I've looked at this from a work perspective in a different light, I wasn't, I was surprised but I wasn't totally surprised. I suppose there is this sense that this shouldn't be happening in a ministerial situation somehow because it doesn't

quite fit with the concept you have of how Christian behaviour should locate itself, in a work environment, when it's so driven by the context of what you're doing. I think actually it made me quite sad really that people should be experiencing that in clergy situations. (1.15)

The quotation above has connections with many significant themes. There are shades of denial and ambivalence regarding the nature of her surprise. However, she quickly comes to terms with this referencing a key moment prior to ordination.

I don't see that you can take that oath and not recognize that generally has to be about obedience. It's that oblate obedience, it harkens back historically I should say to something, its well in the past. But maybe it has to be there, maybe it should be there may be its something that goes that people should understand what it means and not interpret it. (1.16)

There seems to be a willingness to negate her own values and simply accept that the church or church tradition does things differently. This is demonstrated for me in her use of the phrase *have to*. A working interpretation might be; *I may not like it but it's how it has to be*. This is an interviewee who uses the word *sad* fifteen times during the interview and in the context of her recognition of obedience, conveys a degree of acceptance of this state.

This can be contrasted with an interviewee who makes a comment related to obedience through the idea of there being other professions where people do receive orders.

You can't order someone, in that sense that we find more subtle ways of getting our own way and some of those more subtle ways involve bullying because it's the only way you can get your own way.... legitimate bullying, in the fact that that persons ordered me to do it and has the power and authority to order me to do it, that's OK. (1.17)

The two together offer a picture of the church which at the same time is compared to a place of ordered authority and contrasted against a place of ordered authority and I do recognize both views as valid. It is very well expressed by a third interviewee:

I know we're not a hierarchy but on the hierarchy that doesn't exist, that's kind of often where the bullying happens. (1.18a)

This final quote is from the same interviewee and offers further insight to their perception of hierarchy. They are surprised to find themselves using the term *food chain*

and closes down discussion of this avenue. Overall, I find a significance in the idea of pressure from above used in conjunction with the idea of the food chain. It brings together the idea of order with a model of consumption in a way which suggests an exploitative dimension to the *hierarchy that doesn't exist*.

What I haven't dealt with because I don't have a great deal of personal experience with it is hierarchical bullying further up the food chain, if I can put it that way, at the level of bishops and archdeacons and rural deans...I do know that my incumbent has been uncomfortable sometimes with their relationships with people further up the food chain, it's an interesting turn of phrase, food chain, it's something I can't comment on except to say that she said to me that sometimes she feels that happens. (1.18b)

WITNESSING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING ACROSS A CAREER.

The second interviewee with significant references to a past profession described early negative experiences which lead to the interviewee taking a deliberate role in pursuing an anti-bullying agenda.

It was bullying and nobody ever did anything about it. At the time we were too frightened because he was too powerful but then these policies weren't in place. You know you'd just have been shot down and your union wouldn't have backed you. (1.19)

She used to have a drink before she started and the [tasks] were always bad, oh yes, and you knew the following day she's be in for a rollicking, and I laugh but it wasn't funny at the time but it was systematic, you knew, she'd do a [task], she'd be kalide, she'd get a rollicking and he's always have her in and it was systematic. Instead of dealing with it in a professional way and saying we have this issue with your performance... it was vicious, it was vicious. [embarrassed laughter]. (1.20)

This offers a picture of witness inaction because of fear. The wider sentiment revolves around the witness being glad it was not them. The laughter accompanying the description of this episode communicated great personal discomfort at their role. Further, there is a strong emphasis on the intent of the bully and on not being a direct victim of the bully.

Indications of the anti-bullying work the interviewee became involved with are represented by a long list of distinguishing features of bullying which came to mind and a description of their own response. The ability to do this marked them as thinking very differently to all the other interviewees.

Whether they are bullying depends on the frequency and the history. It would depend on whether it was isolated, whether it was systematic, whether it was a clear intent, because I think sometimes people can say things without intending something. I think there's some people who deliberately say things because they know they will get that response. The period of time over which it's happened and the frequency and the nature. (1.21)

We had to have a commitment to respect each other and to work as colleagues ... that we didn't spread gossip or malicious rumour or we didn't cajole people, that we didn't humiliate people... One of the phrases we put in it was you should treat people how you want to be treated and that was a fair measure, yeah, but it did work and it did improve it but a few of our, a few, thought it was opportunity to seek further vengeance... but it's interesting that there's nothing like that in the church as I know of anyway. I don't think there is, is there? (1.22)

Overall this gives a picture of someone who has been close enough to experiences of bullying to have acquired a technical understanding which then led to the desire to bring change in their area of influence. They had not, until now, transferred any of this experience into the church context. Nominally, this is because they have not experienced bullying in the church, however, they have a stake in maintaining a subjective definition of bullying which implies they have not been bullied. Their closing words could be a covert reference to what they are doing. In essence gaming their use of the definition of bullying so they come out as a winner.

For example, somebody is spreading gossip about you that can be a grievance but if they kept on doing it and it was deliberately targeting you alone, it could be bullying, but bullying is a word that has many meanings, it depends on how you define it. (1.23)

GROUNDING REFERENCE TO EXTENDED CHURCH EXPERIENCE

There are a variety of ways that experiences within the church are referenced; three interviewees describe complex experiences that unfold over twenty years of ministry; two interviewees are working with people they believe to be bullied; one interviewee has a focus on the vulnerability of her current situation; one interviewee does not reference concrete experiences at all. A prominent feature of the long term examples are the ways that themes flow between them. This leads to the sense that within the envelope of the Church of England negative experiences that might seem separate can be elided into a continuous experience of bullying which rises above individual perpetrators.

ELISION OF POOR HIERARCHICAL WORKING RELATIONSHIPS.

In the following example the quotations illustrate a flow of experience through a poor relationship as a curate with their training incumbent, a negative experience ascribed to the House of Bishops, an incident with a bishop which places a barrier on their work with curates in the diocese and a final reflection set in a cathedral service presided over by a bishop several decades later.

My first curacy was very difficult because the person I went to work with as I later discovered had a long history, he's had about six curates before me and every one of them had not got on with him. (1.24)

I think also I did feel a lot of anger about this and I think it was also that because conversations didn't take place which affected not just me but affected other people and I think particularly that was the case with curates. They were put with people as training incumbents who should never have had curates. (1.25)

The House of Bishops had supposedly [committed to action] and they did absolutely nothing at all, they didn't do tap, [hardship experienced] because nobody did anything about it. I just felt so brassed off at this stage that I thought, I'm not going to have any of this. And having this as the background to this I thought they are not going to get away with this one. (1.26)

You know we got it in the [bishop's sermon], we're all servants, we're all dedicating our lives to service, we don't seek to have power over you.... And I think this servant ideology we have in the church is very difficult to get through like this. It's such a good answer, is there bullying in the church? Oh no because we're all servants. (1.27)

These excerpts may be interpreted as separate incidents which may or may not have been bullying. However, they are joined together by the overarching presence of the Church of England and by the final remark which presents a senior figure still participating in the underlying thought patterns connected through the earlier incidents. This is overtly present, in the third quotation above, as the prior act of the House of Bishops was named as the reason for the interviewee becoming determined to stand up to a new bishop. So even though there is no intention to portray the particular bishop in the last quotation as a bully, the Bishop, as preacher, has become a participant in something which could be seen as institutional bullying. A further quotation brings out the sense of overarching presence, it opens the door to considering how people can experience bullying through interacting with the symbols of an institution. In the passage below the interviewee has a desire to exclude the church in response to his own sense of being excluded and what he has witnessed during the course of his ministry. However, the symbolic presence of the cathedral intrudes on his desire.

I hated the church for quite a while, you know I felt pretty brassed off with it and I didn't go to church for a little while ... So you can kind of distance yourself away from that and say ...we know it behaves badly to people we've seen enough people to whom its behaved badly. I spent most of 5 years in [Diocese] unscrambling curacies that shouldn't have happened in the first place um you know sort of intelligent people in their mid-fifties who break down and cry quite frankly because the vicar is such a pillock frankly. On a personal level it's just so enormously hurtful and I think it was, and what I felt for a very long time was a sort of continuing sense of exclusion and if you live here and if you can see the cathedral [...] is a very powerful image. And you think well, it's [close] but it could be another planet as far as that goes. (1.28)

The interviewee felt excluded from the church, that feeling was renewed every time they saw the building. The pairing of geographical closeness with being *on another planet* suggests social exclusion in that it is a major non-geographic boundary. This is a pointer to me of the existence of institutional bullying with the symptom of the symbols of the institution causing pain. The church is not the only institution to have symbolic buildings but not many compare with the symbolic power of a cathedral situated in the heart of a city.

ELISION OF EXPERIENCES OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Two further examples of experiences over long time scales support the significance of separate events with an integrating factor becoming one. In these cases, they both link into controversy around the ordination of women. In the next example the movement is multi-staged; harassment at theological college, protest action at ordination, discrimination from parishioners, an inappropriate comment from colleague and a response to the women bishops debate.

This first excerpt shares the interviewee's feelings about her gracious acceptance of an apology from a student who had previously organized a petition against women deacons which objectified the interviewee.

Well I said well, gee thanks, I said to myself, well I did write back and graciously accepted his apology, but I thought well too little too late really. Well, I felt called by God and whatever they threw at me, I decided I was going to jump through all the hoops so no one could say that I hadn't... anyway it worked and I did survive... I got students saying to me... women can't be ordained because they are ritually unclean. I said well what do you mean? They said, well, they menstruate... and this is supposed to be a Christian brother [laughter]. Disgusting creature. (1.29)

The passage conveys visceral anger over events thirty years ago in an impassioned manner. The contrast of the language the interviewee uses for her thoughts compared with her outward expression indicate sarcasm, *Gee thanks* and its connotations stand against her formal response, *I graciously accepted*. The association of the words *Christian brother* with *disgusting creature* is something I see as a device to communicate the depth of her anger. I also think that his use of the idea of *uncleanness* has a direct bearing on her use of the word *disgust*. This implies her attribution of a state of uncleanness to him. Although the interviewee is speaking about something historic, my sense was there was real currency in this anger. I believe this has been kept alive by further incidents.

I've come under a lot of bullying from the boys and young men of the parish, who see me again as a sitting duck, who can just be baited and persecuted. (1.30)

And do you know for years I didn't say anything about because I felt like a rape victim I felt ashamed I thought if I'd done something different perhaps it

wouldn't have happened to me. And it's not helped by there's some people in the congregation like now, who say that ... oh, if you'd been a man it would have been different. (1.31)

[X] was [senior clergy] and he was an opponent ...and he used to say all sorts of things to me, like one time I turned up in a jacket with a hood...and he kind of looked me up and down and he says well you're a chav, aren't you, you're a chav. ... I just looked at him and he laughed he said, no you're a chav aren't you. He said that to me. ...And I just stood there aghast why am I being belittled. (1.32)

This last example was very interesting because I was a witness of the comment and completely failed to grasp the impact on the interviewee. Divorced from her experience, I perceived the senior clergy person was someone not really aware of a fashion trend. Although I found the comment inane, it did not occur to me that it was offensive. However, if the feelings generated by the previous experiences with opponents are attached to this incident then the power of feelings illustrated by the word *aghast* can be understood.

The final quotation from this interviewee relates to an objection to women bishops raised as part of a diocesan synod debates:

But our chauvinists they say, ah but it's against my conscience, you wouldn't want me to go against my conscience would you, and I say, well I'd say to myself there must be something damn wrong with your bloody conscience if it allows you to speak and act like this, you know, there's something needs doing to your conscience. (1.33)

The key for interpretation is in the movement of the passage. It starts with "our chauvinists" but ends with "your conscience". I would argue that that the individual opponent to women's ordination had become representative of the many negative acts the interviewee had experienced. Unresolved feelings over an extended period of time had been stoked and refreshed by smaller events.

The previous example alone might have represented a uniquely bad experience, however, similar themes emerged from a second woman interviewee. This example acts to reinforce the relevance of the last example. As in the previous example this woman interviewee was also ordained in the 20th century. This is in contrast with the other two

women in the sample ordained in the 21st century who make no similar references. Here, as well as gender, tradition is a significant feature which further increases the complexity. This first description relates to a post the interviewee eventually left despite the significant personal loss associated with a move.

My colleague turned out to be a fundamentalist evangelical, who taught things that made my hair stand on end! He was also very sexist. He made constant jibes about my tradition, and once said that he would leave me to 'do the religion' while he talked about faith. He made a lot of sexual innuendos and I would have described him as *louche*. Although I never felt physically threatened I did feel uncomfortable when alone with him. Early in our ministry, he suggested that I should not celebrate communion while menstruating. When I pointed out that he would be on his own for a week each month with ten parishes, he reconsidered (1.34).

This provides significant background to understanding her response to a series of interactions with a senior clergy person.

I don't mind a joke on a level playing field but sometimes you get the feeling that someone is trying to belittle me by making fun of what I've said in a way that is not necessary, and there is one particular senior clergy person who I have dealings with who has a tendency to do that. (1.35)

When giving examples that come to mind she describes a sense of intrusion when he visits the vicarage at short notice at night and when he makes a joke containing mild innuendo, with a hint of a knock against tradition.

It's a couple of things that this person has said that have been pastorally unhelpful, and pastorally intrusive, um and I can remember those, but I can't remember the off the cuff, supposedly funny comments...there was something about vestments or clothing we wear and so on, about dressing up, and he said what you and [your husband] do in private is your business... totally unaware that he might be saying stuff that's inappropriate or hurtful because on another occasion he said, "well I don't generally" but with this very patronizing smile, "but I would for you [name][high pitched sound of disgust] you know that was odd, that didn't feel like a mates thing. (1.36)

Although there may indeed be aspects of this specific incident which directly relate to inappropriate behaviour in this senior clergy man I wonder if, in the light of the previous example, whether that is entirely the case. Her description of the forgotten and later remembered incident in her early ministry is evocative of disgust, this time in encountering the uncleanness argument in someone she considered *louche* and then finding this senior clergy person essentially creepy. In comparison to the first woman priest there is much less overt anger but there is a conversation featuring belittling, disgust and a reaction to an individual that seems to be about more than the individual's general social clumsiness. This further indicates affective experiences related to one person which transfer to another person perceived as similar in some way.

GEOGRAPHIC ELISION OF EXPERIENCES.

Whereas the previous example set the context by looking back over time, two examples set the context by considering the wider working environment at the time when their own problems came to a focus.

In the first example, an interviewee suggests a wider field of conflict in his description of working within the diocese.

I discovered the diocese I worked in [...] was a pretty conflicted place, I discovered colleagues I'd worked with had had run ins with people in the diocesan hierarchy in one case or another, including cases where they'd instructed solicitors over a particular incident. So it was a pretty conflicted place. I wouldn't say that was bullying but where you've got that it is very easy to step over the boundary into either abusing vulnerable people or to bullying your peers. (1.37)

Here, he makes a distinction between being in a *conflicted workplace* and bullying. His reference to the potential to cross the boundary into bullying links to individual acts. Secondly, the interviewee, anticipating her honourable retirement describes her colleagues:

You're going to have to get me out of here, it's affecting my health and er... I will say. since all this, I start to get my crisis, there's been 3 other clergy in [place]... [name] became unconscious at [major service] and he's been off on light duties ever since, he's getting better. That was stress. Then [name] was carted off to hospital with, heart attack, massive heart attack. And he was in [hospital] for weeks and weeks while they decided what to do for him, that was

stress. And even more recently than that [name], [ministry] ... His blood pressure went up so high, he was losing his sight periodically, and still he refused to stop working.... [I] started to see that my panic attack [date] as all of a piece with this. So I don't think it's just because I'm a woman I think it's because the church allows the clergy to take on too much stress unsupported and if they say um, if they let on that they are struggling, then somebody is bound to say, why don't you get out. (1.38)

This quotation raises the interviewees perception that there are a number of people in her immediate working environment who are possible scapegoats. Although she may not be right that these particular people's medical symptoms are connected to stress and their working environment, the connection is established in the literature of workplace bullying. (Vie, Glaso and Einarsen, 2010) In the interviewee's description there are at least two major processes at work because she names men that she perceives to be ill through the stress of overwork as evidence that it is not just about gender. This, therefore is describing an environment of both overwork and gender discrimination, where the person leaving is an overworked woman.

CONCLUSION

The childhood theme demonstrates a certain amount of processing on the hoof as clergy reach back into childhood to understand adult behaviour. There is a task of bringing a lifetime of experience, both factual and emotional together which interviewees seemed to do naturally given the opportunity. This contributes to a strong sense of the need for clergy to have conversations like this more widely. I suggest that this reflective process would help clergy respond more effectively in the moment whether they found themselves in the position of bully, target or witness.

When considering interviewees previous work experiences, the two interviewees who speak of substantial professional experience outside the church together demonstrates disappointment. Either the disappointment that the church is as bad as the previous profession or that the church equates to historic conditions in the previous profession before bullying had been addressed. Both of these bring critique to the diocese's current position.

Discussion of elision demonstrated three aspects of the same process. First, relating to working relationships in the Church of England in general but secondly, regarding the normalization of gender discrimination. The Bishop who caused so much difficulty was

elided with the earlier failings of the House of Bishops. The objector to women priests who stood up and spoke about conscience was elided with the objector who said that women were ritually unclean; the intrusive senior clergy person was elided with the louche evangelical. The same process of objectification that happened to them in becoming labelled as “abrasive” or “ritually unclean” was also carried out by them as they attached the past actions of others to people they were currently working with.

For all three candidates who refer to long term church experience there is an indication of bringing the weight of past experiences into current experiences. If significant numbers of clergy, consciously or unconsciously, find each other disgusting or are blaming each other for historic actions of others, it’s hard to see how progress can be made. The implication is that anti-bullying measures should take this into account and respond.

Overall, there does not seem to be any clearly constructive connection between the memories interviewees use as their reference points and an engagement with anti-bullying measures in the church context.

TABLE (XVIII) REFERENCING SUMMARY

Subordinate theme	Finding	Inference drawn	Weight
Children's Violence Fairness Reasoning Niceness Public School	The primal nature of the starting point of thinking in this area. Support for childhood resonance.	The need to have opportunity to talk about this as adults.	Contextual
Obedience and Order	The complexity of working in an area of ambiguous hierarchy.	The need for clarity on the sources of authority being drawn on and a realistic understanding of their impact.	Contextual
Witnessing and Responding to bullying across a career.	Disappointment at the diocese's inability to respond to bullying.	The need for visible engagement	Contextual
Elision of poor hierarchical working relationships	The long memory of clergy when the institution lets them down.	The need to own the power of the institution	Key
Elision of experiences of gender discrimination.	The deep hurt of gender discrimination and its long lasting impact. The need to not expect cheap forgiveness.	The need to put in place significant reconciliation measures	Key
Geographic elision of experiences.	The indications of a wider pressures in the working environment.	The need for both wide and narrow investigation.	Contextual

CHAPTER 9 ACTIVATING EXPERIENCES

INTRODUCTION

I have used the term activating experiences as those which I interpreted as having particular significance in the person's narrative. The experiences described above were relevant due to the picture they contributed to over time. In this section the focus shifts to glimpses provided by individual incidents. Clearly, many of these have already been mentioned as having a long-term impact. This section broadens that picture and offers insights into the situations that came to mind as people considered the negative acts of the survey. There are three senses of the word *activating* that were significant for me in this selection. First, incidents that started a larger incident off; secondly key incidents within the larger story that moved the story on; and thirdly discrete incidents that prompted interviewees to reflection. Together they have a useful application in sharing a picture of what negative acts look like in a church context. Overall if the previous section was the movie then these are the stills.

PASTORAL CRISIS AND NEGATIVE ACTS.

This opening quotation, for me summarises this section.

There is human nature in there, in my wider experience of life people kick out because something is happening to them. (2.1)

There is a sense of acceptance and inevitability to this. The speaker does not particularly exclude clergy from the category people in this case but it is a recognition that when the negative acts are carried out by a person in pastoral crisis it has a different impact. This is essentially a human nature argument with a strong degree of acceptance that there are times when clergy intercept anger that is not really about matters within their control.

You go and visit in hospital 10 days after they've taken ill. And you get an absolute tirade from the partner because you've not visited before... and you can understand it as a reaction, a reaction of anger but also its irrational because nobody knew this person was ill. I can remember visiting someone who wasn't a regular church goer and who subsequently died and being the subject of a great deal of anger and resentment around that death, because I had gone, because they somehow blamed the church for being involved in her death. (2.2)

In this pairing of incidents, the priest contrasts negative acts associated with not visiting enough with negative acts associated with visiting. This conveys the sense that sometimes you just can't win. Further within his description there is the implication of

something more than a one-to-one incident. The blaming of the church, in my interpretation involves the bereaved person sharing their views to family and community contacts. This is supported when he returns to this incident.

The two areas in my mind when that happened and the fact that they are inescapable because it is 24/7 it is your job. You do go to the pub, you go to the shop, you go to the bowls club, you are seen as the minister and when you come across people in role you definitely are the minister and it is inescapable. (2.3)

This number of items on the list reflects the degree of intrusion into daily life and point towards the minister as an objectified version of the church, whether or not they are playing bowls. He goes on to describe the way he connects these experiences with bullying.

And I think to that extent bullying is irrational on those occasional things it's something you must expect in the job because you meet people in circumstances which are not normal. And so they are not behaving normally necessarily and so although it is technically within your ambit of bullying I don't regard it as bullying, I regard it simply as something that happens to people when they are under stress. (2.4)

This quotation reveals a concern significant to an anti-bullying response. His words reflect his concern that I might include something as bullying which he sees a normal part of pastoral work. A complexity within ministry that clergy may see experiencing negative acts, in some contexts, as part of their calling. It's very clear in his distinction between his own position and what he infers is my position. Bearing in mind this is a person who actively initiated this interview and would see themselves as generally supportive of this work, I see a fair indication of an ambivalence to anti-bullying work. From the perspective of diocesan policy, I believe this raises a special obligation as it should take into account that there are ministers who see the risk of being bullied as vocational and are suspicious of measures to protect them from it.

Further references offer support to the experiences and views above. The interviewee refers to the comparative work with other professions:

For these people they go to the park and they're off duty aren't they, you go to the park in one of these [collar] ... I had a dreadful experience a couple of weeks in [place] ... I needed a sandwich so I sat at the top on a bench in [place] just about to bite in my roll and this chap came up, now he was harmless but I wish he's have just let me eat my sandwich in peace. (2.5)

This incident started off being described as *dreadful*. However, the interviewee quickly brings in minimizing language in his description of the man as harmless. Finally, I read weary resignation in the words, *I just wish...* there is the sense that the interviewee is not giving themselves full permission to acknowledge the impact of this event.

Overall, in the consideration of negative pastoral encounters, interviewees ignore negative acts through pastoral encounters completely (five interviewees), give a brief dismissive mention (two interviewees) or a slightly longer dismissive mention (one interviewee). This is an important perspective to take into account because it indicates where the weight of concern for bullying behaviour lies. It offers the implication that clergy are not interested in anti-bullying measures that protect them from bullying arising in connection with pastoral work. On the one hand this is useful because it is hard to have a bullying policy that can deal adequately with this area on the other hand there is a question of whether it is genuinely unimportant or whether this is a demonstration of very significant ambivalence to something that is important.

TRADITION

A starting point for considering tradition and negative acts is that clergy gain information about other clergy when lay people complain about pastoral experiences. In the passage below there is an allusion to a repeated phenomenon of *hearing horror stories* followed by a specific example. It opens up the significance of how clergy form opinions through indirect means.

And we hear horror stories about that, somebody said to me at a baptism recently ... "we were told we had to stand up in the congregation and say why we wanted our child baptised", I said, "what impact did that have on you", she said, "it was a toe curling experience, my child's not been baptised as a result, I just couldn't stand up in front of a group of people I didn't know and tell them why it was that I wanted my child baptised". And I just thought, that to me, is

bullying members of the public really. Why would you want to put somebody through that, just because you want some profession of faith... its unreasonable, perhaps it's that unreasonable insistence, I don't know, could be deemed as bullying really. (2.6)

I am interested in the horror story that turns out to be about a baptism, they are not ideas that would immediately be brought together. Perhaps the nature of the horror is someone of a different tradition imposing their values on others. It points to the problem of things that are normal in a particular tradition looking like bullying to someone outside that tradition. Incidents like this have the potential to reinforce tradition based groupings in clergy.

Two further interviewees draw attention to tradition based behaviour when the clergy gather together for worship. It is the practice of this diocese to have an annual service at the cathedral which all the clergy are strongly encouraged to attend. The invitation contains a formal request from the Bishop to write and give a reason if you are not able to attend. Of itself this is illustrative of how order and hierarchy work in the church and relates back to issues already raised as *legitimate bullying* and *the hierarchy that doesn't exist*.

And there's like the [cathedral] service, big, you know, line up of clergy, there's quite a lot of sort of underneath bitching going on about "ooh what do they think they're wearing" or whatever, and, and I think there's kind of quite a lot of getting caught up in *this is the right way to do things*. (2.7)

This offers a critique of how the clergy look and how they are. The *big line up* comment represents the outward significance of the event, over one hundred of clergy and two choirs in a robed procession. However, in that choice of words there is already the sense of underlying critique and indeed the words that follow illustrate the superficial nature of the outward appearance. The specific use of the term *bitching* might reflect anger but I suspect it is intended to convey a sense of disappointment of the clergy exhibiting unattractive but common human ingroup/outgroup behaviour.

The third interviewee who speaks about this service is again unrelated to the second interviewee but reflects a closely related impression.

So everything that happened out there [wider society] happened within our organization because it's just a piece of society. So if you put a bunch of us together as we did for [cathedral service] there's a whole bunch of us there, there's every aspect of society there as a group. You've got people who are OK, not OK, happy, sad. It's society, so why should it be any different in a way. You would have just hoped that there was more insight and actually that is um, that relates to our faith and our way of being really with people. Um but maybe that goes back to selection, maybe it goes back, you know. I've got to say, you know, I think the diocese is a bully and they do not always see that in themselves they are busy trying to get the work done and they are sometimes they are thoughtless in their ways of doing it and they are bullies. (2.8)

This is a long quotation but I have kept it together because of the train of thought. The candidate is reflecting on the thought that within the church there might be a lack of insight concerning bullying. There is a sense of both realism and disappointment in recognizing that on the one hand you would expect the church to reflect society but on the other hand as all the ordained people have been through a selection process, there is an implication that there should be a discernible difference. I value this in connection with the previous quotation as you hear an earthy description of clergy *bitching* about clothes contrasted with the very reflective chain of thought where an interviewee uses this service to exemplify her disappointment. However, the further move made from this is at the same time a very big leap and also a credible leap, to the diocese as a bully.

Bearing in mind, one interviewee has created the category of legitimate bullying as a label for valid authority and another moves in a space of sixty-four words from experiencing authority to institutional bullying, there is a challenge here to the diocese to consider the way it is perceived. For an institution to have a full understanding of bullying this establishes a key principal of not just thinking about the obvious things that people shouldn't do such as *bitching* but the things that look absolutely right and proper such as a bishop to whom we have given a vow of obedience issuing a strong invitation to attend an annual service at the cathedral. This highlights the need for a non-threatening environment in which people at all levels feel they can safely explore the impact on those who experience them acting authoritatively.

TRADITION AND GENDER

There has already been some sense of the mixing of issues relating to tradition and gender (1.5, 1.29, 1.31, 1.33, 1.34). This develops a sharper focus in the following example which features a gathering of Anglo-Catholic clergy and lay people who were opponents to the ordination of women for a requiem mass at a church which was in the parish of a woman priest.

When we [those who had travelled with the body] got to church for the funeral the next morning, there was a kind of Holy huddle of clergy of a certain churchmanship in the vestry with their um you know, acolytes and so on, and I felt intimidated as I went into my own vestry, I felt the atmosphere you could have cut with a knife, just no one was kind of engaging, ... above kind of the most surface cordiality, it was obvious I was not welcome there. (2.9)

The sense of there being a group present from which interviewee felt excluded comes out in what I read as a pejorative rather than affectionate use of the phrase Holy huddle. The interviewee recognizes that nothing actively offensive was said in the recognition of the *surface cordiality*. However, the underlying presence of exclusion is present in that a priest does not feel welcome in her own vestry. I link the feeling of intimidation she describes with her identification of the huddle which at once conveys that she was both outnumbered and excluded. It is a reminder of the complexity of human behaviour that the *atmosphere you can cut with a knife* is a well-known enough experience to exist as a phrase and yet in terms of specific negative acts is hard to pin down. This is an example of a headline event grounded in emotional response that has little connection with specific negative acts, however, they are present when the experience is explored further.

[The deceased] would like me to deacon for his funeral mass, well that was kind of a compromise and I was happy with that ... another priest not far away who is [tradition based group], who knew him well, kind of took up the organizing of it with [relative] ... Um and he just would not accept that [deceased] had asked me to deacon at his funeral mass. He just would not play ball with me at all. And in the end I said, look, don't worry, I'll just do the practical arrangements and you get on with it in terms of the liturgy. (2.10)

Here we find a professional person offering a high degree of accommodation to differing views of ministry, who is disbelieved by a colleague; I infer that they were misrepresented to the relative and prevented from carrying out their professional role on the basis of their gender. We start to see the wider impact of this, on church life, in the response which I believe to be an expression of passive anger and a mirroring of her own experience.

Um, slight irony, I went and sat in the pews with some of my congregation who themselves also felt aggrieved that they'd been kind of taken over in a sense and were not happy that I was not part of the service, the slight irony was that when it came to the actual communion, there weren't enough clergy to administer communion, and I could see that that was going to happen, and so I went up to the altar and said do you need a hand, and actually ended up administering a chalice, so uh, but it was a bit of a strange situation. (2.11)

There is a powerful use of church symbolism in a priest who feels excluded sitting in the pews with congregation members who participate in the feelings of exclusion. In one sense she was again being accommodating in another sense she was being combative. In reflections on this incident the priest does confirm that the feelings of anger I infer are present. This makes her administration of the chalice one of the angriest acts of service I can imagine. The overall view that it was a bit of a *strange situation* is an extraordinary understatement. Part of the justification for this study is in the mission of the church and you have to wonder what effect a funeral carrying all this baggage has on the participants. One interviewee has already directly introduced the metaphor of the controlling servant as an interpretive tool, this interviewee indirectly offers the metaphor of the angry servant.

The chapter meeting is a significant event for clergy, this quotation shows opposition to the ordination of women slipping into a chapter meeting:

Someone standing up in a chapter meeting to give a report from the recent forward in faith meeting which had nothing to do with chapter and saying this isn't personal to you [name] but... 'no I'm not taking it personally in any way [ironically]. (2.13)

This illustrates a mismatch in what people think is acceptable behaviour. I notice that in more positive relationships with those opposed to women's ordination, the interviewee is prepared to accept that it *isn't personal*. However, when someone else tells her this it

is a trigger for angry feelings. The particular irony from my perspective is that by saying *this isn't personal to you*, the speaker is making it personal.

Tradition and gender also have an impact on clergy/laity interactions especially regarding church officers in a church politics context. Here the interviewee identifies a tradition linked agenda, coming together with gender. The sarcastic use of *gee thanks* is a recurrence of language the interviewee used to describe an earlier acutely painful time.

My own church warden, she's suddenly gone all Anglo-Catholic and I don't know what's in her mind. And you know, yeah, this new [mission initiative]. She's got two of the [local deanery] clergy on side, cause, you know, to go forward with this. And I said... I hope they can help you but you know, we'll see if they come up with anything that I was unable to come up with. I've tried everything I know or can think of for [over ten] years, she says, oh well, when you've got two men on the job I'm sure it's different. I think to myself ah...gee thanks, you know. (sigh). (2.14)

Here the candidate attributes political manipulation to her churchwarden. The words *on side* imply that this is a situation where there are sides distinguishing it from an act of positive collaboration as would have been intended by the mission initiative. This quotation further highlights the complexity of the relationships between clergy and churchwardens. A church warden is an elected official often far removed from the norms of a modern workplace. The only disciplinary framework involves removing them from office which is very complex and only for extreme situations. Further descriptions of churchwarden's activity give an overview:

He's stood all the way through at the side-lines and he's belittled me and um rubbished everything I say and try and do, Still here. ...I decided I wasn't going to let myself be bullied I was the vicar and that was that you know, he wasn't getting anywhere with his bullying, so one Easter day, he just came in flung his keys on the vestry table and marched out again... And he stayed on the PCC and he just opposed and opposed So he came off the PCC and he has just sat there and done nothing and criticised ever since. (2.15)

Above a churchwarden does give up their role on what would be considered a physically intimidating negative act. However, he continues for some time in a position of authority. It's quite a step up from the objective definition of bullying as negative acts over a period of six months to be considering behaviour that has continued for more

than a decade. I suspect that this relationship has deteriorated to the point where the person's simple presence triggers stressful emotions in the interviewee.

HIERARCHY

Here, an interaction between a priest and a bishop casts more light on the controlling servant metaphor. There is an initial short reference but the significance is demonstrated by the interviewee returning to the experience and then interpreting it further in terms of their own practice and interpretation and then generalizing it to wider church experience.

So you have these conversations with [bishop] and they would all be concluded by a prayer and you would have to be very strong minded when he says shall we pray together to say, "no thank you bishop, we are not going to pray together, thank you all the same, I appreciate the thought but I'm not in the mood to pray with you." (2.16)

I don't normally conclude meeting by praying with people unless they ask me to but you know this was the pattern. It was a bit like, I came to feel, having your arm twisting up your back because you couldn't then go away and say that was a pretty unsatisfactory meeting and he didn't listen to me. (2.17)

Or you know, on this occasion when I was accused of [dishonest act] we prayed at the end of that. And I thought ooh yes well, there's something very odd going on here... I think the religious culture offers opportunities to, it's a kind of emotional blackmail really, you mustn't you know you mustn't complain about this because this person is so very spiritual.... and being prayerful and spiritual can give you a means of twisting someone's arms that you wouldn't have had if you were a god fearing secularist. I think there is something in the conversation we have as clergy that's difficult to get through, hard to penetrate with many people because we are so, well maybe that's the image of ourselves that we would like to have and it feels like you're spoiling it for people if you're reminding them no, we're not like that. And you mustn't do that because we don't do that because we're Christian ministers so ... and I suppose we console ourselves, if things go badly, that all part of being a servant...there's one of these 1950s films, *The Servant* with Dirk Bogart, where he is controlled by his manservant. (2.18)

This situation is hard to match to specific negative acts but it bears some connection with being ignored or having your opinions ignored. Again there is a subtlety in applying this as the Bishop is described as asking *shall we pray* but being insufficiently aware of the vulnerability of the participant in that they feel unable to decline. For this priest their opinion is being ignored because through their interpretation of the social rules of the institution they are not able to give their opinion. The power position of being the person who prays for someone else is unique to the church context.

In trying to understand the progression of the above passage I have a sense that there is a link through the underlying dishonesty of his engagement with the Bishop. He was a participant in the dishonesty of keeping to form when your feelings would have you do otherwise. The power position of being the one who prays is linked to the power that being perceived as a spiritual person adds to their authority. The interviewee is describing his sense that the perception that someone is spiritual lifts them above fair critique. The interviewee seems to use the thread of dishonesty to include clergy in a wider net of self-deception through his use of the word *we*. He includes himself among clergy who desire to hold spiritual power and collude in ignoring the negative aspects of this. His fears of *spoiling it for people* suggest that he is describing the emotional pain that would be the consequence of breaking the illusion. The servant metaphor is therefore being co-opted into the illusion of the spiritual person. Although his overt reference is to the controlling servant, I wonder if the chain of thought relates more to a self-deceiving servant.

A quotation from memories much later in the ministry of the same priest shows considerable change in their willingness to participate in what they perceive to be delusion.

[Suffragan Bishop] was sitting in a meeting and said the thing you don't understand about being a bishop is you don't have any power. Well, no [suffragan bishop] that is not the sort of thing to say to me, and I said, "no, I think you are wrong bishop. You have power, you have lots of power, you have power over everybody in this room. So don't start telling me you haven't got power, you may not have the sort of power you fantasized about before becoming a bishop but don't start telling me you haven't got it." And I can see I wasn't getting anywhere there. (2.19)

On hearing this, I initially thought these were words the priest wishes he had said and there is possibly a blending here of paraphrase and quotation but the final phrase does indicate that something was spoken out loud and not received well. Although, this was chosen as an example of an activating experience I do see this as further support for the process of elision. Without knowledge of the background, and from an establishment perspective, the priest's response might be read as extraordinary over reaction to the suffragan's words. Indeed, they might have connected with a prior attribution of abrasiveness. However, knowing the background, the outspoken honesty and component of telling the Bishop what he really thinks makes complete sense.

In the example above the priest ascribes power to the Bishop which the Bishop does not recognize. These next examples illustrate power as an object of contest. An interviewee shares the way they understand the behaviour of clergy and lay officers:

It's not a case that the incumbent has all the power or the PCC has all the power or the churchwarden has all the power or the Bishop has all the power come to that. We have distributed power and pockets of power and people guard that jealousy ... I sometimes wonder whether it's really bullying behaviour on the... well I suppose it is, but the motivation for the bullying is not actually bullying, the motivation is preservation of my own little pocket of power. (2.20)

There is a strong desire here to avoid describing behaviour as bullying but the interviewee seems to lose this battle with themselves. It is an indication of the structural factors which contribute to bullying. Something which might have been positively intended as a democratic, collaborative, feature of the church at the same time opens up considerable potential for conflict over common ground. The parties in the conflict do not have a shared rulebook for the conduct of conflict. In particular, the voluntary aspect of lay officers lessens the influence that formal procedures have compared to stipendiary or paid people.

Below an interviewee describes a more ambiguous situation where there might be manipulation and exclusion or a disempowered person using a valid tactic to strengthen their position:

One of my churchwardens from one of the parishes actually went round every one of the PCC... and basically persuaded them they did not want to have a funding programme and then came to me and said, this really doesn't need to

come up at the PCC, the PCC have decided and you know in that position I had to say a) the PCC hasn't had an open discussion and b) I'm on the PCC. (2.21)

Below we see the interviewee understands this behaviour in terms of the previous incumbent. There is a sense of discomfort in her words, reflected by the laughter at the end connected with the awareness that she is working with the idea that some incumbents need to be bullied.

And you know fair enough, collaborative ministry is about give and take and I'm perfectly happy to, I think things have changed as my ministry has gone on here as people have found that I am prepared to listen and perhaps they haven't needed to bully me. [Laughter] (2.22)

Here a priest was in the position of witnessing a churchwarden bully lay people. This highlights the power position of being the holder of knowledge of how things should be done.

We had a churchwarden who would not tackle clergy but who was a bully and would bully other members of the congregation, many of whom would leave...that in itself is difficult to deal with because you almost have to step in on somebody else's behalf whether or not they say anything to you as a result of what you see happening. And happening, and to be honest I've also seen it in other places, between you know, an ex-churchwarden and a current church warden... [He] would take on the new churchwarden and say you're not doing this right, this is how it should be done, that sort of thing is really undermining. (2.23)

In contrast to this, the interviewee also wants to support a churchwarden who she believes is being bullied by another church officer. This is directly related to irregular structures that are associated with multi-parish benefices. It is clear that the previous experiences have not led to her developing the skills or resources to know what to do.

A churchwarden came to me who was very distressed, said she was being bullied by the chair of [committee]. There is a disjuncture between the [committee] and the PCC and there is a power play there going on...you know, I found myself in the difficult position of not really knowing who I should point her to. She wanted somebody, she wanted somebody to, to fight her corner for her. It's a church in interregnum so there's no priest there. So it's not like there

is somebody there that both groups respect, who can come in and deal with it and I then didn't know where to point her. It didn't feel appropriate to go to the rural dean because he's just not involved. The only person I could point her to is the archdeacon but there wasn't that clarity...She's been bullied she wants to complain who do I point her to, to go to. (2.24)

A final view is provided by another interviewee who is primarily a witness of another member of the clergy being bullied by lay people. This raises the problem of the subtleties of human behaviour.

You can't say to someone don't turn your back on them when they come into the room because they could just be talking to someone else. But you know it isn't like that... she has done some things in the past which have not gone down well with people and their memories are long um and she's not doing those things now but their memories are long and it is difficult to open that up with either the parties as it were without raising back all this stuff which happened before which you don't want to do, which I don't want to do. (2.25)

The interviewee is describing a process of exclusion which lacks an unambiguous negative act, yet has significant social impact. Again the witness is aware of something wrong but does not know what to do.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to exemplify the complexity of bullying within the diocese being studied. It allows an understanding of the diversity of behaviours that anti-bullying work should take into account and the way in which negative acts can take on particular expression in the church context and the way they develop over time. It illustrates the great weight of incidents that impact on clergy as they interact with other clergy. The emphasis here is around negative behaviour arising out of gender and tradition. There is a mid-point of parish politics where gender and tradition are also relevant and then the area of pastoral crisis where they are largely absent. This has a significant practical implication for focussing a response. The interviewees seem to deal successfully with negative acts arising from lay people in pastoral crisis. It is present in a factual sense but attracts comparatively little emotional weight. The emotional weight steps up in parish politics and steps up again when clergy are interacting with clergy. The need for change is therefore greatest in the area where the diocese has most authority to effect change. This suggests that it is valid to begin with a focus in this area

but with the awareness that the relationship between authority and bullying is problematic. Overall the challenge is to effect change through a non-bullying use of authority.

TABLE (XIX) ACTIVATING EXPERIENCES SUMMARY

Subordinate theme (2)	Conclusion	Inference drawn	Weight
Pastoral Crisis	Empathy as something which can mitigate against negative acts offering their full impact.	The need to build empathy between colleagues.	Contextual
Tradition	Tradition as offering a space for negative acts. The need to examine the tensions being expressed.	The need to encourage self-criticism of standards of behaviour	Contextual
Tradition and gender	The intensifying effect of tradition and gender combined. The mirroring of the issues of the clergy in the parish context.	The need to understand disproportionate impact. The need to build commitment to not transmitting clergy behaviour to congregations	Key
Hierarchy	The intensifying effect of negative acts in combination with hierarchy. .	The need for people to adequately assess their power position	Key

CHAPTER 10 POWER.

INTRODUCTION

In many ways power permeates all the other chapters of analysis. However, this chapter brings together the ideas which represent the deliberate discussion of power.

PRIMACY OF POWER

The absolute headline for the interviewees' working definitions of bullying is power. I include a number of short quotations here across all interviewees to indicate a strong theme of power as the foundation of bullying in the interviewees thoughts.

Well I think bullying, bullying is a form of misusing the power you have. (3.1)

This issue for me around bullying and bullying behaviour is always about power and control. (3.2)

What I think of as bullying is um when somebody from a position of perceived power um goes against someone of perceived weakness. (3.3)

I was put in mind of my own relationships in the church um and I the idea of power imbalance resonated very much with me but also the idea that some people powerless in some circumstances but powerful in one circumstance bully as it were because that's when they can. (3.4)

As priest you have the power, those who are less powerful, I think are possibly more inclined to get bullied. (3.5)

Any human institution is based on hierarchical power structures and invariably hierarchical power structures lead to ah, bullying behaviour. (3.6)

The quotations demonstrate that some interviewees recognize that power is not straightforwardly hierarchical. This is present in the language of perceived power and the significance of context.

Some interviewees make less direct references. Below is a more complex reference describing the vulnerability of clergy when their power is not perceived by those to whom they are offering pastoral care.

And it is about power as well isn't it, I find that sometimes and I think actually that may change as because normally when you go to visit a funeral, if they're an oldish family or there's older people there, they know exactly how to behave, don't they? (3.7)

Actually I did two on the same day and the first one I went to the, they turned the telly off and we had a nice sensible conversation and here, they had the telly on ... and it was oh what hymn shall we have, I don't know any hymns ... I felt like saying for goodness sake turn the ... (3.8)

This thought is not presented in connection with a bullying association but it does illustrate power as something which cannot be easily assessed. It might be assumed that a minister in a dog collar organizing a pastoral office might be the one in the position of power. However, the minister is in the home of the parishioner and arranging the service over the sound of the TV indicates where the power lies. In this case disempowerment is part of wider moves in society.

Another interviewee who makes more implicit references to definition describes loss of power as symptomatic of things going wrong. Here the disempowerment is attributed to the congregation as a whole.

Their congregations have done things in spite of them, you know, whatever, completely taken the power off their hands. (3.9)

USE/MISUSE OF POWER

A significant nuance in the material relating to power is that although the misuse of power is present there is significant discomfort relating to superficially appropriate uses of power. In the previous section an interviewee uses the striking phrase of legitimate bullying. (1.17) He goes on to elucidate this by describing its opposite:

But if they don't have the power, the authority, they've found some other way. The *some other way* has somehow subverted my personality, I don't like that, that's almost a corrupt act, they've subverted what I am or what I want to do by unfair means. (3.10)

There is a complex use of the concept of power in the example above. It is revealed by the contrast of the words *power and authority* with *some other way*. I interpret the phrase power and authority to relate to hierarchical/organizational power. However, the *some other way* must, by definition, also be a use of *power and authority* but perhaps one of which the interviewee does not approve. This means the interviewee is making a personal interpretation of the ethics of the source of power in order to work out if bullying is legitimate.

This concept of legitimate bullying connects with the thoughts of an interviewee who spends a great many words struggling over her view of decisive leadership. She recognizes that it is necessary for her to make decisive decisions which impact others but is fearful of an incumbent being appointed who might want to make decisive decisions which impact on her.

We've had to make some decisions about some things and sometimes I've had to say, we're just going to have to do it this way. That's not...I'd like to believe that's not bullying (laughter) that there's actually good and logic[al] reasons for doing it. (3.11)

The qualifying words that introduce the possibility of bullying and the laughter which follows suggest that the interviewee is aware that what she sees as her own decisiveness may be perceived as bullying by the person experiencing her decisiveness. This ambivalence reflects the nature of legitimate bullying as a problematic concept. The interviewee explicitly names her fear; it stems from the pastoral engagement described earlier. (2.6)

A case for me will be if a new rector comes in and says to me categorically, you will not do a baptism unless they come to church, I would find that really difficult. (3.12)

Finally, she is able to reach a theoretical resolution by distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate ways of imposing valid authority. However, it begs the question that if a real incumbent arrived and imposed a baptism policy, would she be able to make the distinction she describes?

If that's the way it's going to go you would have to say, watch this space, I'll do as you say, if however, I was then attacked personally for the fact that I couldn't sign up to that then I would consider that that was trying to intimidate me into a way that was contrary to my own situation. ... it, it might just make me feel intimidated... that would be the problem and that would be the bullying. (3.13)

The inclusion of the personal dynamic again links to the previous elucidation of legitimate bullying (1.17). The problem I see with both of these is they rely on the ability of all parties to deal impersonally with their most deeply held beliefs. A study by De Dreu and van Knippenberg (2005) demonstrates the formation of personal attachment to beliefs in which participants have very little stake. This suggests that

relying on others to deal with conflict in ministry at an impersonal level is an inappropriately optimistic strategy.

The implication is that this interviewee has a theoretical definition for identifying bullying which may be completely unrealistic in practice. This is illustrated by the above description in which an incumbent clearly acts within their authority. There is no mention of an underlying personal component but the interviewee explicitly links this to bullying. It is further illustrated in her discussion of the oath of obedience. On one level there cannot be a more legitimate authority than one rooted in an oath given by a freely consenting adult but in a discussion of bullying it was the first thing the interviewee wanted to talk about. Here the pinch point is in the nature of the consent. The ordinand has spent years in theological education with ordination as a significant goal and would have to set that aside unless they assent to obedience to the Bishop. Bringing this back to the discussion of power, interviewees articulate a theoretical understanding of the misuse of power as key to bullying. However, this breaks down at a functional level where any use of power has the potential to be received as bullying.

SERVANTHOOD

A complexification of power related explicitly to the church context is the powerful act of laying down power. This is reflected in the model of servant. For one candidate, their analysis of a failure in the churches understanding of servanthood supports them through an extended struggle.

In addition to a well rooted self-understanding they have a well rooted theory of the cause of the unreasonable behaviour they received. While recognizing the validity of servant ministry they identify the pitfalls within the line of thinking and see their opponents as people who are unable to engage with this critique and are therefore prey to these pitfalls. The references they make relate to the experience of staying at Claridges, the interaction between Jeeves and Wooster and Dirk Bogart in, *The Servant*. In each of these cases the interviewee identifies the servant as controlling.

We're all servants, we're all dedicating our lives to service, we don't seek to have power over you. Servants have power over you, the most disturbing hotel I've ever stayed in was Claridges, I hated it, hated it because the staff, I got the feeling I was being railroaded by the staff. ... You cannot have dinner without a jacket and a tie sir. And I've never felt so controlled as when I was there. And I think this servant ideology we have in the church is very difficult to get through

like this. It's such a good answer, is there bullying in the church, Oh no because we're all servants. (3.14)

The opening words above carry a degree of anger and irony as the interviewee describes the self-deceiving nature of the church. This is enhanced by the phrase *servant ideology* which I interpret as reflecting a big idea used without sufficient critique in this instance. Also in his references to Jeeves and Wooster, Claridges and Dirk Bogart there are class references within their servant references. More than this, even when humorous these are pictures of struggle. Bearing in mind the earlier mention of bullying at Eton as a model that might shape people's behaviour and a church leadership with working class people as a minority, there is potential for a degree of naivety in a readiness to engage with the concept of servanthood but from a position of social power.

THE SCAPEGOAT

The scapegoat has long been recognized as a blameless sacrifice and bearer of guilt through its biblical origin rather than through Girard's appropriation of the concept. Here, the term scapegoat, as used by the two interviewees, carries the vernacular sense of scapegoat enhanced by knowledge of the biblical context. At its heart, the scapegoat position is one of utter powerlessness. Below, an interviewee's awareness of how closely the position of curate was to the position of scapegoat acted to limit those whom she trusted.

And I think that you know, if you look for the scapegoat really, then maybe you as the curate could become the scapegoat in those situations because nobody else is going to be closer to that understanding than you... I think probably the most difficult thing in any position coming in, being parachuted in a community is finding out who you can trust, where you can trust, who you can talk to about some of these very difficult things. It's something that I've thought about, I think the people we have today who are most troubled by that are perhaps people who don't have a long term relationship, there's probably no person they can let their back hair down to, and that's a dangerous situation. Who is the safe person that you can really tell? (3.15)

Her use of the word parachuted convey the sense in which a curate is made vulnerable through lack of a foundation in the community. In her concern for those without a partner, the emphasis on only being able to trust those very close is communicated.

Another interviewee uses of the word scapegoat directly relating to her understanding of her situation as bullying.

I was just the scapegoat on which everything, all the blame, fell. ... [senior clergy], um at first he didn't believe me when I told him the tale, that it hadn't been my fault. What they did, they heaped all the blame onto me because they wanted to use grants from [grant awarding body] on other churches. So they didn't want them to be put in the wrong. So it was easier to heap all the blame on me and leave me to get on with it. Now that is really serious bullying isn't it? (3.16)

There is an intensity about this experience conveyed by the interviewee through her repeated use of the word blame. Her description of not being believed might at first suggest the senior clergy genuinely believed her to have done something wrong but this is counteracted by the sense that this blaming was a deliberate act on their part in order to produce the outcome they desired.

CONCLUSION

Overall, power is the dominating component in the definition of bullying for clergy. This may be because of the complex power relations clergy find themselves in or simply because power is intrinsically significant to bullying. However, it is a very difficult concept for clergy to work with. Misuse of power has many understandings attached, especially when power is considered in relationship to authority. The perception that acting within the authority of a role sidesteps the potential for bullying is both present and challenged. This is best expressed in the term *legitimate bullying* (1.17). This term is in one way positive, as it coins the nature of the problem of power and authority effectively. However, it is also a negative term in the sense that it is not desirable for clergy within a diocese to be rationalizing experience in this way.

The problems of power and authority are further confused by the theological concept of servant leadership where the servant metaphor may inoculate the powerful against understanding how their exercise of power is received. Powerlessness is expressed through the vulnerability of scapegoat imagery. (Although, not with the full technical understanding that is present in the Girardian aspects of the thesis.) There is a degree to which vulnerability is structural. This connects with both hierarchy generally and in particular the structuring of the training role.

TABLE (XX) POWER SUMMARY

Subordinate theme (2)	Conclusion	Inference drawn	Weight
Primacy of power	This occupies a disproportionate position in definition and amplifies problems that are hierarchy related.	The need for more nuanced understanding.	Key
Use/misuse of power	The superficially appropriate use of power.	Awareness of the shortcomings of relying on hierarchy as a way of negotiating the appropriate use of power.	Key
Servanthood	Naivety about the impact of the servant model on our ability to infer our power position.	To be more self-critical in our use of biblical models. To have this skill to recognize different types of power in play.	Key
Scapegoat	The structural imposition of vulnerability. The need to have someone to blame.	Review of the structure. Skilling of individuals in awareness of vulnerability and self-defence or structural change.	Key

CHAPTER 11 AMBIVALENCE TO ENGAGING WITH BULLYING AS A CONCEPT.

INTRODUCTION

Ambivalence has two main ways of showing itself. First, ambivalence when dealing directly with definition bullying. Secondly, an indirect ambivalence which may disincline people towards engaging with bullying and doing the work of thinking about what bullying is.

UNWILLINGNESS TO RECOGNIZE BULLYING

This has already been present in the discussion of power reflected in the need to develop the working category of legitimate bullying. However, it also come up in references to how hard it is to define bullying; the identification of bullying through hindsight; the subjectivity of bullying; selective definition; admiration for the bully.

The first element in it being hard to identify bullying was reflected in the references made to childhood experiences. It's as if playground bullying with its physical violence element defined real bullying and there is some small level of resentment to the complexity of thought involved in stepping away from physical violence. This can be seen by examining the nature of the wishful thinking demonstrated. To pick up on their example (1.2) If someone in the workplace is hitting you then it is not a simple matter of identifying it as bullying, it has become assault and is a criminal matter.

I read the significance of the lack of physical violence as a way of accommodating yourself to a sense of falling short. I also notice that the interviewees were responding to a card labelled physically intimidating behaviours which they were holding in their hands but only taking the narrowest view of what this might be. The interviewees who spoke of being subject to a *tirade of anger* (2.2) did not make a connection between this and physical intimidation. This is further represented in the connection between subtle behaviour (1.17) and bullying. While I recognize the underlying truth that small social gestures can have a disproportionate impact the use of subtle is linked to reasons for inaction rather than careful measured action. This is again a pointer towards not wanting to define behaviour as bullying.

CONTEMPORANEOUS IDENTIFICATION

Four of the interviewees reflected on experiences which they had not counted as bullying at the time. Broadly one was seen as an employment dispute, two as sexism and one who was only re-categorizing more general behaviours as we spoke. This suggests that before engaging with the negative acts and receiving feedback which

related these to bullying they did not have a functional definition of bullying to which they could relate their experience. The first interviewee describes this non identification in terms of a problem they have got over.

It was a time when I now realise I experienced sort of bullying but the problem was at the time it didn't really seem like that. (4.0)

This implies that although they did not identify bullying at the time, they find it useful to understand their experience in those terms now. There is more palpable relief in the second interviewee:

I was interested because I thought I was alone in this, I thought the treatment I was receiving was because I'm a woman... I thought nobody else was getting treatment like this and pretty well all the questions were giving me a steer to say yes well this is happening to me and it's been happening to me for nearly thirty years. (4.1)

Here the negative acts of the survey were particularly named being key in her re-categorizing her experiences as bullying. (It is an interesting comment because at that stage all the language deliberately avoided introducing the concept of bullying, so the interviewee had read in the concept of bullying into the negative acts questionnaire.) The interviewee describes this as helpful because while she had been thinking in terms of gender she had been lead to think of the experiences as her fault whereas the identification of bullying seems to have broken this link. Literature has been discussed reflecting the difficulty of people adopting a bullying interpretation (Vie, Glaso and Einarsen, 2010) but this illustrates that as hard as this is it is sometimes makes things easier. The implication is that when the interviewee thought in terms of sexism she thought it might be her fault but when she thought in terms of bullying it was someone else's fault and she shouldn't put up with it. Once the leap can be made to bullying then there seems to be a powerful emotive link to something that is wrong. This at once explains the reluctance to make the leap and the benefit of the leap.

The third interviewee again began by examining her reluctance to see my work on bullying as having any relevance to her. There is a more explicit statement of ambivalence.

Yeah, I think my initial response was, looking at the questions and scenarios and thinking no, no, no, no, no I'm fine, no I don't get any of that and then when you think about it a bit more you realise that you do and actually a coping mechanism is to say, this doesn't happen to me ... there's some things I kind of accept because he [personal connection] has quite you know quite negative views of women actually, and I don't think even he recognizes quite how sexist he's being sometimes....I don't want to challenge that always, I do sometimes,a lot of times I don't bother to challenge that so you have to cope with it some other way don't you? By ignoring mainly. (4.2)

This interviewee is very clear about the cost of identifying her experience with bullying, her offering to be interviewed was a very generous act in which she was self-critical about her accommodating behaviour. The non-identification of bullying was linked to accommodation; the identification with bullying is again linked to action, even if at this stage the action is to talk about her experiences. There is almost the sense that in these two cases bullying is seen as a more helpful framework than sexism.

In this final example the interviewee is reflecting on incidents between lay people where she was a witness or where her support was sought.

Yes, I think you know, the instances of bullying that I come across in a sense when you initially said bullying, I didn't think of them and I think it's only as I'm talking through, things that come into my mind where I think that was bullying and again that's maybe a bit of a problem. (4.3)

SUBJECTIVITY

Several references related to struggles concerning the potential subjectivity in the definition of bullying. An interviewee implies this when he talks in terms of my definition and his (2.4). His strong desire to categorise his pastoral experience as not bullying even though he can clearly see a link with the negative acts is an indication of subjectivity. However, it's not a straightforward subjectivity of I think one way and he thinks another. He is recognizing that his situation may well meet an objective definition of bullying but chooses to reject it. I would guess this would be due to an unfounded fear that he would not like the implications but perhaps there is also the

connotation that if behaviour is named as bullying then the subject becomes entangled with victim connotations.

A second male interviewee makes the specific point that their experience was not bullying.

It was yeah, fortunately in the church I don't think I've ever really felt, apart from, I didn't feel bullied in [place] I felt aggrieved, I think over my treatment because it was unreasonable. I've never felt bullied by the church but then I'm perhaps lucky I suspect. (4.4)

This interviewee has a particular concern to differentiate between grievance and bullying returning to it over three comments. This is the end product of their recollection and reasoning process, this quotation ends by the interviewee using subjectivity to close the line of thought:

If for example somebody is spreading gossip about you that can be a grievance but if they kept on doing it and it was deliberately targeting you alone, it could be bullying, but bullying is a word that has many meanings, it depends on how you define it. (4.5)

Here we have two male clergy preferring a definition of bullying which would mean they were not bullied and two female clergy finding the label of bullying more helpful than the alternative. From my own subjective position, I think that three out of four of the male clergy described potentially bullying experiences with only 1 out of four identifying this themselves. Of the women clergy I would think two out of four described interpersonal bullying experiences and one mainly structural bullying and they all identified it. I would not say this is conclusive in any way but indicates some gender significance.

A more straightforward comment on subjectivity is offered by another interviewee who encountered the concept in her previous profession:

I think one of the issues of bullying that's always quite difficult is that ... it's hard to accept that bullying behaviour is the perception of the person being bullied. And it's not actually the person who's doing the bullying can turn around and say, "Well I'm not a bully", and that might possibly be true but the person who's on the other end of receiving that behaviour, feels that they are

actually being bullied then that actually has to be the criteria of whether bullying is taking place in my view. (4.6)

Here she describes her belief in the significance of subjective definition but recognize that they are hard to accept. Although her comments her are abstract, she does talk about bullying as something we are all capable of and from that standpoint her placing of definition with the victim is risky.

In the background of the material above is the way in which the interviewees use intent as a way of deciding if bullying is occurring.

It's our church we must look after it, therefore somebody who wants to do something must be resisted and the incumbent thinks they possess the church, because they're the incumbent they've got responsibility for this church so charitably I think these tensions arise around power but in a sense from good intention almost, from this responsibility view, I can explain it in that way, I'm not sure it's a valid explanation but it is what you charitably think. (4.7)

This reveals a teleological ethic in place as it describes good intent as a reason for negative acts to be excluded from an understanding of bullying. At the next level it's not the presence of good intent that ameliorates bullying but the absence of intent to harm. In the grievance/bullying distinction above, the interviewee expresses intent as the deciding factor when he talks about deliberately targeting an individual. The interviewees who describe pastoral situations as an understandable reason for negative acts and want to exclude them from bullying are also basically arguing a lack of intent to cause harm.

One interviewee completely rejects this intent argument and locates bullying within a lack of personal insight. However, within this there is a degree of contradiction. At one level of description the bully is quite a pathological character:

I think you can't take away the responsibility of somebody who lacks so much inside that they can't see their behaviour impacts on somebody to that damaging degree really. It's that sense of self is so huge that they want it this way and because I am who I am you'll do it this way. (4.8)

And it's almost like they glory in people'[s] ineptness instead of thinking what can we do to make this better for them. They use it against that person really, for

the sake of their power...yes, it's that transference, I want you to feel how I feel so I'll make you feel that way, which is quite hard. (4.9)

On another level she recognizes the potential to bully within all of us including herself. She gives an account of how her own behaviour might be perceived as bullying:

I'm going to have to tell somebody something they don't want to hear, so either I'll avoid it and I won't do it at all, or I'll tell them in a way that's edgy because I'm edgy and that will be all right, so you throw it at them, rather than take that space to say, I'm going to have to listen to reasoned arguments here and defeat all of them. (4.10)

I meant to bring you [name]'s book.... we all have the potential of being the bully and I'm sure I have been and I sometimes still am um and so you can never just sit on the side lines...so you might not be very good at something and they will pick up on that and twist it so it becomes a really big thing. (4.11)

As an indication of the complexity of thinking, although she is making a considerable effort to offer bullying as something we all might do, by the end of the passage the bully is again sounding like a pathological individual rather than an ordinary individual. Perhaps this reflects two contradictory lines of thought held together or ordinary and pathological as the ends of a spectrum rather than discrete entities.

It seems significant here that this interviewee is the only one who mentions having read a book concerning bullying and the only one who realizes the presence of unconscious intent. Further there are drivers here of previous professional experience and friendship with someone who works in the field. There are considerable background factors contributing to her working understanding. In contrast those interviewees working with definitions of conscious intent are placing considerable limits on what they will interpret as bullying. I believe this is essentially a defensive position, used as a way of avoiding the need to respond to others and to avoid challenges to self-image.

BULLYING TRADED AGAINST POSITIVE OUTCOMES

A final and challenging part of ambivalence to defining bullying is the way it interacts with positive qualities. We have already seen an interviewee struggling with whether getting things done is bullying (3.11). She resolves this by hoping that it is not. Another interviewee overrides the idea of being nice with the idea of being stronger (1.11). Another interviewee takes a different but related tack that trying to achieve positive change brings a risk of bullying:

They've got it on there, the wonderful diagram... and if you follow this your path to paradise is blessed... we all like change don't we? Until it puts us out of our comfort zone and I just wonder whether, whether we are all prepared to be agents. We can all be agents of change but whether we'll be able to face the challenges that come from it to make it successful and have we been equipped because that could put you under some of this couldn't it. (4.12)

His use of *that could put you under some of this* is very understated which I interpret as a mark of his personal discomfort and draws attention to the possibility that an anti-bullying stance in the diocese would have implications on the way that change is pursued.

And questions of religion, faith and all the things, that are connected with that particularly in an institutional established church with all the history and background that carries with it, in terms you know, that will make people defend their positions very strongly, coming, clashing with individuals who may have, may take principled stands on various things and that inevitably people are going to bump heads. (4.13)

This interviewee would very much like to see people enabled to make a principled stand without the perception of bullying behaviour so is not condoning negative behaviour. However, there is still an implied perception that negative behaviour has its roots in good qualities and the history of the church and is in some sense normal to the church as an institution.

Further, an interview contains an interesting reference to a person perceived to be a bully:

He was brilliant, I got on with him, but he was a monkey. (4.14)

This could be misread as disregard for bullying but the interviewee did go on to describe this as a period of fear after which he was active in anti-bullying measures. However, it points to the difficulties of being a witness. For this interviewee, because he knew he would get no support if he complained, he simply admired the bully's good points, was glad he was not a victim himself and minimised the person's failings.

A further suggestion towards a struggle with defining bullying is made apparent though the mention of Old Testament understandings of God. This demonstrates an understanding of bullying that if negative acts are about punishment then that is not

bullying. This interviewee seems to want to make the case that God is not a bully but can only achieve this through distinguishing between punishment and bullying. This idea again links to the legitimate bullying described earlier.

If you take the Old Testament God who warned the Israelites of certain behaviour and punished them, is that, that's not the same as bullying somebody because, because the bullying, the bullying isn't about punishment, it's about somehow, some ongoing degradation to the person rather than actually clearly saying, that's right and this is wrong. The bullying is about the power and control from a completely different perspective. Mmm...I can only say that as human behaviour it's not acceptable. Whether God wants to do it or not is entirely up to him. [Laughter] Wait for the bolt of lightning as I leave. (4.15)

COMMON GROUND

Related to the previous section of there being a desire to get things done, the recognition of similar qualities within yourself and the person perceived as a bully has the potential to lead people towards disengagement. Being able to recognize aspects of bullying in their own behaviour or recognizing similar qualities between themselves and people demonstrating negative acts supported people in accommodating themselves to situations which they perceived to be unacceptable in the church context. An interviewee names bloody-mindedness as accounting for both his opponent's behaviour and then his own ability to persist in challenging this behaviour.

I just thought they were being bloody-minded really, and I think, um, well it was very interesting because the difficulty I had was primarily with the diocesan bishop, this started actually before the job began. (4.16)

Well I thought these other people would have won if I'd left and that is a kind of bloody-mindedness, really I was damned if I was going to go. (4.17)

A second interviewee with extensive academic knowledge in in keeping with her previous profession is able to bring a number of psychological interpretations that help her be sympathetic both bully and victim. The connection to action is in terms of standards for her own ethical behaviour. This relates back to recognizing that a situation where she has to *say how it is*, may be difficult for the person receiving this and must be done with care. (3.11) She also brings a deliberate awareness of processes within her thinking that may impact on others, this is reflected in her earlier description of being edgy. (4.10)

It's notable how quickly she switches to thinking about why someone might bully to her own behaviour. Her awareness of the problems of developing self-understanding seem to support her in living with her concerns but potentially act as a barrier to active engagement.

I think, What I've actually seen is people who lack surety of their own abilities really. And that's you know, trying to find yourself in it. You become sharper and brittle and that causes that dissonance with working with people then. (4.18)

So knowing yourself really is a very powerful tool against bullying behaviour from both sides I think. But we don't all have the joy of knowing that. In your 20s and 30s I think, well I certainly didn't in mine. Its [high number] years of doing therapy (Laughter) I'm almost there. Another [number] years I might (4.19)

This interviewee has found an equilibrium position where she is critical of significant aspects of the system such as the oath of obedience and the authority of the rector, but balances this with a pragmatic approach.

So immediately you have said I will obey, it's almost like you lose that voice.... You feel that you haven't got a voice to turn around and say well I don't think that's a good idea or that's not where I want to be. ... it felt like you lose some of the control and authority, especially in that curacy situation where you are the new person on the block. (4.20)

An interviewee with considerable experience and technical expertise in the field of bullying has therefore limited her engagement to providing a listening ear and going along with how things are. This is completely consistent with her describing the experience of loss of voice. It is as if she has switched off this past professional life and is now only switching it back on it because this study, sanctioned by the Bishop, in some sense gives permission to speak.

LACK OF BIBLICAL SUPPORT

I am situating the identification of lack of biblical support within ambivalence to definition because of the nature of the interviewees argument rather than a direct relationship. Here the interviewee is not talking about defining bullying as such. However, she is making an argument that seems to reflect a desire to step away from the engagement with long term relationships where bullying might develop.

The overall style of referees making biblical references is fleeting. I think this is a consequence of priests talking to a priest, they expect to be able make fleeting references from which I would infer a great deal. Here a more extended comment relating to the bible, implies a criticism of the extent to which scripture prepares ministers for the congregational setting.

I don't think you can ignore the fact that you work with a congregation and that's where the discipleship originally worked so much better, because they didn't have a congregation and stuff. They went out and they were missionaries really, without necessarily having congregations. It was only in Paul's time wasn't it that we had congregations who caused difficulties, you know, the Corinthians who went off at their tangent...you got the advice from Paul, was very much about how do you manage yourself in those circumstances and what should you expect as a group of people. (4.21)

This first implies that if the disciples had had congregations we would have more material to guide us. This is an indication of the primacy of the gospel over the epistles in the interviewees thought. This is problematic as she cannot find there the concrete congregational model she is seeking. Secondly, when the New Testament reaches the point where congregations are present the first thing that comes to mind for the interviewee is the problem of leading a congregation who are going off in a different direction. There seems to be a priority given to the gospel model of discipleship over a congregational model in the early church that continues even when the gospels are identified as not providing the material sought whereas the epistles may indeed provide this. A shift to a gospel discipleship model might be a solution implied by this line of thinking. Effectively this amounts to a solution to bullying in the church arrived at by Christians as spending less time together. An alternative may be to consider the disciples as a congregation as the interviewees analysis may be ignoring the wealth of difficulties the gospels do share concerning the disciples. Additionally, there is the material relating to the way established synagogue congregations respond to Jesus. Although this could be seen as a remarkably low expectation for relationships in the church, I see this as a useful insight and will discuss the application of this in following chapters.

THE FALLEN WORLD

A key understanding that interviewees use to support an accommodation to their experience of bullying in the church is the fallen world. This again suggests an indirect ambivalence to defining bullying in that it is a way of living with the presence of bullying that does not lead to active opposition. This shows itself in direct references to fallenness or brokenness. There is an expectation that the church as a place for fallen people is likely to be a place where fallenness is experienced. Here an interviewee brings the idea of realism to understanding attitudes in wider society that are present in the church.

And I think perhaps in our way of being in society today we don't have that patience maybe, or maybe we don't have that insight, I don't know. (4.22)

I suppose, people are people the world over and also clergy tend to work with people in a stressful environment. I think it's the more negative aspects or humanity that come to the fore. (4.23)

We are all fallen creatures and power corrupts which I guess is why one of the gospel messages is to give up as much power as you can. (4.24)

Um I suppose I come back to the sense of we are all broken people in some way and the community reflects the wider community, the church community reflects the wider community but it also draws to it people whose needs are not being met in the wider community who would like their needs to be met in church um... but I do feel, we should be modelling a good community and a good community is not one in which bullying happens so there is a sense that I do feel our toleration of bullying should be less rather than more. (4.25)

Below, there is use made of the fallen humanity interpretation but in contrast to the previous interviewees who perhaps use this to excuse the church, there is the expectation of an active response.

Well, if you look at the Bible, the Old Testament, the chosen people you know, they were equally as bad as the pagans, if not worse in some ways because they should have known better. And I think it's the same with the chosen people of today, you know. They ought to know better but for some reason or another, we're not getting through to them for some reason or another, that this behaviour is not acceptable. (4.26)

CONCLUSION

Ambivalence to engaging with bullying is in no way a moral abdication but a product of many layers of complexity and deep prohibitions. The many sources of ambivalence described above demonstrate the significant task there is of overcoming blocks and arriving at a definition. In the first place, there is the presence of multiple definitions across interviewees. Additionally, individual interviewees are inconsistent in their own definitions with indications that they may arrive at the conclusions that justify their action or lack of action. These features are reflected in the table below where I have selected words from all the interviews that appear close to the word bullying so as to modify or clarify its meaning. This offers a picture of the way interviewees are interacting with their working definition of bullying. This is a picture of active engagement and some interaction with objective definition but with a multiplicity of additions and subtractions that may act to disempower clergy in their response to potentially bullying situations.

TABLE (XXI) PHRASES MODIFYING THE BULLYING CONCEPT

Phrase	Meaning	Comment
Sort of bullying	When there is no physical intimidation present	This relegates many items in the objective definition to less than bullying.
Almost more than bullying	Stripping of someone's ego	This underestimates the seriousness of harm present in any bullying.
Not bullying	When we say, "we are just going to do it this way", for good reasons.	Wishful thinking.
Deemed as bullying	Insistence on parents making a statement of faith during a baptism service.	Less obvious actions identified as bullying.
Not the same as bullying	God punishing people in the Old Testament.	A way of seeing things which dissociates a problematic understanding of God from bullying.

A lot of bullying	Harassment from men and boys of the parish who see the interviewee as a sitting duck.	Understatement of a severe period of harassment.
Really serious bullying.	Church hierarchy allowing blame to fall on individual incumbent.	C.f. previous comment- an indication of the additional pain for a victim when the source is seen as within the church.
Adult bullying	Not very physical	A justification for finding the concept difficult.
Subtle bullying	Jocular references to mistakes where you wonder if it is entirely jocular.	A reason to ignore the behaviour.
Not actually bullying	When the motivation is the preservation of my own little pocket of power.	Justification of Christian people behaving badly.
Bits of bullying	Isolated misbehaviour when there is not enough leadership being exercised.	Uncoordinated bullying being less significant.
Hierarchical bullying	Bullying from further up the food chain	Bullying by church hierarchy as inherently predatory.
Legitimate bullying	When ordered to do something by someone with power and authority in that area.	The disconnect between having authority and being subject to authority
Covert bullying	An atmosphere where if you stick your neck out you would be patronised or mocked.	Bullying through fear of experiencing bullying.
Certainly bullying	Sexual innuendo, jibes about bullying, the suggestion to not preside when menstruating.	Bullying which the interviewee wanted to elevate above other experiences.
Construed as bullying	Tough conversations if your church is not growing or paying its share.	Less obvious actions that might be seen as bullying.

Simple bullying	Giving a rollicking before a holiday to make someone stew.	Behaviour evoking the immediate sense of bullying.
Quite bullying	Out of line behaviour that undermines someone.	Behaviour which upon reflection seems to have aspects in common with bullying.
A bullying parish	A parish where moving someone away does not solve the problem.	Negative acts coming from a number of sources overwhelming other qualities which may be present.

TABLE (XXII) AMBIVALENCE SUMMARY

Subordinate theme (2)	Conclusion	Inference drawn	Weight
Unwillingness	Even the most interested individuals are fundamentally unwilling to address the issue. The level of effort required to change this.	Marker for the level of effort required for change.	Key
Contemporaneous identification	Individuals may not identify bullying soon enough to have a chance of addressing it	Need to raise awareness and help people review active situations.	Key
Subjectivity	The variety of starting positions depending on prior experience.	The need to establish a baseline for effective communication.	Key
Bullying traded against positive outcomes	That to give up bullying represents a potential loss.	Need to be honest about the loss.	Contextual
Common ground	That there is a degree of sympathy with those who bully so dealing with bullying is threatening to the individual.	Need to minimize the level of threat.	Contextual
Lack of biblical support	Tendency not to have dwelt on useful biblical material.	Need a biblical base for response.	Contextual
Fallen world	A Christian way of tolerating bullying.	Need for concrete response to fallen world argument.	Contextual

CHAPTER 12 HELP AND HINDRANCE

Introduction

This category nominally has both an individual and an organizational component as a person's action can't be entirely separated from their place with respect to the organization. This is particularly true of bishops who are included under the later heading of *strategic allies*. Further there is both an external component of the acts experienced as helpful and an internal component of helpful and unhelpful self-understanding. The key feature of helpful human interactions that victims or witnesses of bullying spoke about was their lack. Therefore, this section gives an indication that either there was little help around or interviewees were not interested in talking about that help. Further there were frameworks of understanding that sustained interviewees in difficult situations or led to particular moves on the part of the interviewee. That is to say that there were both active and passive responses.

Helpful People

With respect to situations where there were non-episcopal helpers mentioned, the key feature is listening and sympathy which are valued but even when they are not attached to any positive outcome. The quotations below include a spiritual director and a friend. This again raises the question of whether the spiritual director is an individual or part of the organization? I infer that although the organization is responsible for there being a spiritual director programme, the interviewee counts her useful support as stemming from her place as an individual. This arises out of the value attributed to the comment where the spiritual director treats the diocese as something external to herself.

And I poured everything out to her and waved me arms about and um and she was absolutely appalled, she believed me and she was absolutely appalled. (5.1)

I went down to visit my old school friend...the reputation of the [parish] estate was known even there. (5.2)

More concrete help was provided by the GP and by an unidentified source. These actions all followed the positive interaction with the Bishop. It is worth noting that as doorkeeper to the organization the Bishop had a role in her finding effective help through ending the period of floundering.

And he [GP] was very helpful, he's put me on some tablets which are purely temporary and um they have been helpful, he also sent me off to [treatment for

mild anxiety] so I waited 11 weeks, then I had a half hour session once a fortnight for 5 sessions and I ... had a good time... well she says there's nothing clinically wrong with you... go out and live, you're all right. And another thing that I've done which has been very helpful I got this email out of nowhere asking me if I'd like to take a course in mindfulness... and it was helpful. (5.3)

A further sense that something was helpful occurs with the priest who chose to sit with her congregation for the service (2.11), the description that they "felt aggrieved that they'd been kind of taken over", suggests the comfort in sharing a physical space with people who are cross about the same thing as you. Again, this is a helpful experience for the interviewee but not help that leads to a resolution of the issue, it's more like help that sustains the issue as painful. It also has a potential strategic dynamic which will be mentioned later.

The difference between the sympathetic and concrete help has a resonance with a comment from another interviewee.

We say, you know how terrible the churchwardens are, or how bad the curate is you know or what a monkey the vicar is or whatever it happens to be. But we don't talk about it in a kind of constructive way... I think the vocabulary is important, we don't have a vocabulary for addressing this sort of question. (5.4)

A similar sentiment is reflected in another interviewee whose description of a lack of a system builds on the critique of lack of vocabulary.:

We don't have systems or a system where people can disagree in a cordial way and we're living in a society where we are not taught to give things away or to back down.... they are not enabled to disagree in a manner that doesn't lead to negative acts. And I suppose at what point does bumping heads become bullying? I don't know, guess it will depend to a certain extent to the perceptions of the person you are bumping heads with and one person will see it as bullying and someone else will see it as them just being a difficult individual. (5.5)

Some of the help experienced above was valued but not obviously constructive. There is a salutary list that relates to the category of help, those who tried to help but whose help was not received as such in the long term.

People like the suffragan bishop, who clearly knew what was going on, would not intervene, or the chaplain to the diocesan office... they were all more concerned about not rocking the boat than actually doing anything about it, which I thought was pretty poor (5.6).

The people mentioned here offered sympathetic support but not active support. I notice a difference between receiving helpful and unhelpful sympathy relating to whether the listener is in a position to act. If they do not have authority then the listening is valued, if they have the authority to act but are not seen to be acting then the door is opened to the negative interpretation of *not rocking the boat*.

In this next example there is again indication of the diocese trying to be helpful again this is against a background of inactivity and the help is rejected.

[The diocese] offered me a full time post if I would stay, but they had done nothing to sort out the issues when I had flagged them up during my ministry, and money didn't solve anything. (1.7, 5.7)

Another interviewee conveys the experience of receiving unhelpful support from the diocese.

I rang [archdeacon] and [they] responded by sending a retired clergyman to me. And he gave me one interview and just sort of deserted me ... And I said... "Before you go can you give me your contact details", he said, "Oh I'll be in touch", well that was February... I spit upon it, pa, rubbish, rubbish, rubbish. (5.8)

Listening without follow-up is again seen as unhelpful. However, there may be more going on here. The interviewee did not know the name of the clergyman and in his declining to give contact details I think he added to a sense of rejection. My interpretation is that hearing this interviewees story and her lively manner of presentation could have been very alarming for a retired clergyman. As a listener myself, I had the advantage of knowing the interviewee and being a woman priest, I would not want to judge the listener from appearing to run away but it demonstrates that random clergy might not have the required skills for addressing these issues. A significant issue is brought to light by comparing the spiritual director with the anonymous clergyman. Although the spiritual director has an institutional role it is not a role which includes acting to change the circumstances of the person receiving

direction. There is a very clear set of expectations articulated in the process of setting up a spiritual direction relationship. In the case of the anonymous clergyman, sent by the archdeacon, there were no negotiated or shared expectations. The attachment to the archdeacon, however, had great potential to trigger an expectation of action in the interviewee. In essence random, well intentioned pastoral care can be a hindrance and even harmful.

Vocation

For the two hardest pressed interviewees the framework of vocation was identified as central to their persistence. For the first interviewee there is value attached to this being an externally verified vocation, for the second it relates more to an inner commitment to struggle.

The first interviewee forms interpretations that lead them to confront the issues and persist with considerable tenacity over decades. The concept of validated vocation interacts with their belief in the reasonable nature of their behaviour and the unreasonable nature of their opponents. (p.86) This belief of reasonableness is enhanced by their holding onto a story for their experience which is consistent and has integrity throughout.

Well I think what brought me to that was that a very long time ago now, I'd been ordained. It seemed to me what had happened then was that people had discerned some sense of a vocation and some sort of ability and clearly I've got enough ability to get a couple of jobs doing these sorts of things and I still wanted to do it. (5.9)

Another interviewee speaks of her experience as a battle which has strong vocational elements. Confronting the negative acts, she has faced as a woman priest can be seen as part of her overall vocation.

The Lord led me here and I'm not going to go until he tells me to go. (5.10a)

I've been a brave soldier of Christ long enough you know with no support from hardly anybody. What I've been through, ... most people wouldn't dish out to their dog, let alone a human being and a sister in Christ. (5.10b)

The reference to herself as a sister in Christ indicated a focus on the battles within the church rather than harassment from the general population of her parish which was also substantial. However, she is more than a soldier in a battle, as has already been

discussed she became objectified for those opposed to the ordination of women. However, there is a sense in which all her effort was around staying on the battleground rather than pressing for victory.

It's only because I was a strong woman that I was able to take all that crap that was dished out to me. It's like my life was a battle ground over which they fought. (5.11)

Below there is a sense in which she has maintained a consistent response to negative acts, through at the time she connected this to sexism rather than bullying.

It was the Lord, you know. I kept appealing to him you know and he kept strengthening me, and its only in the last couple years I've said to him, Lord, I can't do it anymore. (5.12)

Even her references to retirement bring to mind a military model of leaving the field.

And it would be all of a piece of the behaviour so far if they said they were going to dishonourably discharge you instead of honourably retire you. It wouldn't surprise me one bit. (5.13)

The interviewee is able to claim successes for her ministry, however, all these are described as outside of her self-defined field of battle. The area of her effort, which related so closely to a stand against bullying, was not a place of victory for her.

I've developed quite a ministry to the bereaved you know with funerals and things like this ... in which I know I've been very helpful and ministry to old people and things, I know have been very, very helpful. Been a school governor for about 16 years and I know I've given a great deal of support, especially to the staff and uh...yep, and I've been involved in community life, the serious stuff, like working along with council and things like this. (5.14)

The impact of this is seen in her hopes for retirement.

I'm just leaving it to the Lord, you know vengeance is yours, take it, take it, all I ask is to forget. (5.15)

I want to get into the real church, the normal church. (5.16)

This should be read in the context of her description of vengeance,

Vengeance is mine says the Lord I will repay, the only trouble is the way the Lord gets his vengeance is by turning his enemies into his friends (ironic laughter). (5.17)

There is a strong sense of the battle lost and an unresolvable anger. Her belief regarding the nature of God's vengeance does not allow her to think that God will resolve her anger. The desire to forget demonstrates disbelief that her experiences will find resolution from the church.

Barriers to seeking help - guilt and shame

The negative impact of ineffective pastoral care on the interviewee brings to mind her earlier statement concerning feeling like a *rape victim* which I believe indicates the shame she attaches to her situation. (1.31) This has resonances with a comment from another interviewee:

There is something in the conversation we have as clergy that's difficult to get through ... maybe that's the image of ourselves that we would like to have and it feels like you're spoiling it for people if you're reminding them no, we're not like that. (5.18)

I draw a connection between perceiving the hierarchy do not want to rock the boat and the feeling of not wanting to spoil people's picture of the church.

They've got the same sort of instincts that and ways of going on as people outside the church, you see that all the same but they like conceal it in a kind of acceptable way. (5.19)

Further illumination is provided by examining the thinking of an interviewee who is probably a long-term witness of bullying but has not discussed it with the person he believes to be bullied.

It's also difficult to know whether the person who is experiencing this behaviour experiences it as bullying or just experiences it as rudeness or just doesn't notice it. You know, and you don't want to raise it with the person who is being bullied because they might not have noticed it. In which case perhaps it's wise to be ignorant.... I've got a good relationship with the incumbent and it is a positive and relatively honest relationship the thing is it might put that relationship under some strain. (5.20)

These passages indicate a battle within the interviewee. The incumbent might not be aware but in stages the interviewee increases the certainty of the incumbent's awareness; their relationship is relatively honest but not enough to feel able to bring this up. The interviewee is behaving as if there is shame attached both to the bullying and experiencing the bullying. I believe the comments above reflect the idea that his relationship with his incumbent is not strong enough to withstand him acknowledging seeing her in a shameful position. There is quite a lot of emphasis on not seeing which goes with this. This is an interviewee who talks about, *not being able to put your finger on it* and yet is able to give a concrete example. Below, the reference, *wise to be ignorant* together with the realization that the incumbent is not ignorant all point towards the desire to negate what is seen. This lack of action is something the interviewee's manner indicated it was very difficult to talk about and the interview moves into easier territory. The interviewee does introduce the concept of shame explicitly although it starts through a discussion about guilt and then secrecy.

And perhaps some people don't really want to label it as bullying because the victim is always guilty in that the victim feels guilty. (5.21)

I would have to go and do some research as to who to see, who to speak to, it's not obvious to me and I rather suspect the whole issue of dealing with it would be done quietly in a corner somewhere and secret. And we're secretive about these things, I don't necessarily think that's a healthy thing, I really don't. Bullying flourishes on secrecy it seems to me. (5.22)

I think there's this shame thing attached to bullying [] and partly because we're church we have it in spades. We shouldn't have bullying so if we have bullying it must be something to be ashamed of so we won't talk about it and victims feel shame I've said that before, so there's a whole shame thing, we do it quietly in corners and its secret and we don't tell other people. (5.23)

The unity between shame and guilt in the interviewee's thinking is made apparent but his sense that he has said that victims feel shame already. Actually, he has said that victims feel guilt. He has brought himself into this indirectly through, *we're the church*. Taken together with his earlier words I think it's fair to interpret his inactivity as relating directly to his perception of the shame of his incumbent.

These experiences offer a picture of actions that witnesses do not want to see or interpret and feelings which victims want to avoid. Together these aspects of shame

represent a significant hindrance in responding effectively to negative acts. Viewing this from the organizational/ individual standpoint once more the interviewee is essentially dealing with the situation as an individual but is drawing the organization into his inaction. His feeling of the need to do research and the sense of secrecy should be understood in the context that the interview is taking place because he has read my report. This is at least sanctioned by the organization and lists who he can talk to. I would guess that I am being perceived as an individual rather than as part of the organization and that a few references at the end of a report is not enough to set aside an idea of secrecy which perhaps has protective value even though the interviewee criticizes it as unhealthy.

A significant hindrance, therefore, to a positive outcome when turning to individual representative of the organization is that the interviewees already felt a sense of shame and the organization response or interpreted response had shame enhancing qualities. In short I believe I am describing self-deception carried out by people either disposed to think well of themselves and the institution or wanting to perpetuate the image that all is well.

The place of self

For some interviewees a sense of self-esteem was critical. In the example below the decisive moment in regard to taking a formal defensive action was brought about by the disjuncture between their own sense of self-esteem and the value the Bishop demonstrated for them.

The Bishop who I had been appointed by retired ... [The new bishop] was very affable but he just said, "Oh well, he said, I think you're perfectly suitable for the job and if you'd applied for the job I'd appoint you," he said, "but its obvious people think you are abrasive" um and the memorable phrase was, "and I can't spare the time to rehabilitate you." So that was it. (5.24)

The phrase *people think you're abrasive* indicates that more than one person has spoken about this interviewee to the new bishop which supports the presence of bullying. The *can't spare the time comment* in connection with a person's professional reputation was extremely provocative for the interviewee. The words *so that was it* reflect the way the Bishop's dismissive behaviour set the interviewee's resolve and led to the Bishop having to spend far more time on the matter than intended.

It was useful for some interviewees to form an opinion that they were being reasonable and others were not. The problem starting so early indicated to the interviewee that it had no basis in his own performance and by his words he is demonstrating the unreasonable nature of the Bishop's behaviour.

Well it was very interesting because the difficulty I had was primarily with the diocesan bishop, this started actually before the job began. (5.25)

Although self-confidence connecting back to believing yourself to be in the right was a supportive concept to a person defending themselves, for witnesses of bullying trying to find a justification for not acting, a lack of self-confidence is supportive as it supplies the witness with a reason for not being critical. I see this as the church context having a harmful impact on this interviewee.

There are work related things that *have to* happen and sometimes you *have to* concede that this is the only way you can work, when you are put down because you can't agree with that but you will go along with it, I think it's bullying. In my woolly way. (5.26)

This is an interviewee who describes behaviour which she perceives to be bullying but then puts herself down for having those thoughts.

Closely allied to this form of self-depreciation is the use of the idea of being lucky. On the one hand it has the potential to be supporting of the self as people gain access to a hidden resource through thinking of themselves as lucky. (Pritchard and Smith, 2004). However, it also has a negative implication that they did not see the situation as dependent on their own skill or that of others. The quotations below illustrate interviewees drawing on luck in situations where it could be hoped that something more substantial than luck was in play.

Luckily I had some supporters, you know, and they told me what he was doing, and I went to my tutors. (5.27)

Having allegations made against you [] it happens. Luckily bishops have always supported me with things like that, in fact, I'm so careful, so diplomatic that there haven't been many, I really work at it because that one-way people do try and get at you by going over your head and trying to make out you've been unreasonable, anyway it's no picnic. (5.28)

This bringing together of being lucky, careful and diplomatic highlights the interviewee's vulnerability. This links back into the discussion of power because the perceived lack of power was foundational to her definition of bullying. It further highlights the complexity of the perception of power because the interviewee perceives herself to be strong while at the same time also perceiving herself to be vulnerable. If she did not see herself as vulnerable she would not need luck.

These further examples demonstrate that being lucky is a significant theme across interviews.

I thought I've been fairly lucky in my ministry; the things I've been talking to you about are not horrific they are quite low level things. I've known of other clergy who have been bullied, either by senior clergy or by congregations they've been ministering too in quite major ways. I think I've been lucky and I'm quite relieved. (5.29)

This shows that an interviewee who has not directly experiencing major bullying is not ascribing this to a skill set, simply to being lucky. However, at the time the candidate said this she had not been recalling the earlier incident which she describes as certainly bullying. Therefore, the interviewee has not been so lucky, rather she had 'blanked' the time when she was unlucky.

It was yeah, fortunately in the church I don't think I've ever really felt, apart from, I didn't feel bullied in [diocese] I felt aggrieved, I think, over my treatment because it was unreasonable. I've never felt bullied by the church but then I'm perhaps lucky I suspect. (5.30)

This interviewee has described a longstanding area of contention with the hierarchy of his diocese. Negative acts associated with bullying feature strongly in his experience. It is, therefore, significant that the interviewee goes on to describe a lack of bullying experience in the church. At face value this suggests the interviewee thinks that bullying is prevalent in the church and that he has avoided this through random chance.

CONCLUSION

For clergy who do find help, this help can be interpreted as coming from the goodness of the individual helper, rather than from the diocese as an organization. Where the diocese is directly involved in organizing help there has been inconsistency. There is no sense of an organized system of support in this area. This could relate to confusion over

whether potential helpers will take an active role in responding to the priest's situation. Vocation can be both positive and negative. It may sustain ministers through difficult times but also may lead to tolerating potentially bullying situations and not seeking help at an early stage. Given that the decision to seek help is a difficult one, the process of arriving at effective help needs to be greatly strengthened. Finally, a key part of seeking help within the subjective area of bullying lays within the individual's ability and willingness to identify a problem to be solved.

TABLE (XXIII) HELP AND HINDRANCE SUMMARY

Subordinate theme (2)	Conclusion	Inference drawn	Weight
Helpful people	The significance of non-active listeners. The need to seek constructive help. The confusion of dual role	Provision of diocesan listeners. Guidance towards/ Provision of effective help. The clarity of provision between listening and intervening help.	Key
Vocation	Vocation as a major validating/sustaining feature.	Awareness that self-sacrificial vocation can lead to not addressing bullying quickly.	Contextual
Barriers to seeking help	To acknowledge bullying is to risk identifying a victim in a way that detracts from their dignity.	Personal and institutional self-awareness of when shame is a driver.	Contextual
The place of self	The need for confidence to tackle bullying.	Increase in the number of priests confident in their skill to engage with bullying so it is the norm rather than the exception.	Key

CHAPTER 13 MOVING FORWARD

Exit

It is of primary significance that some form of exit is a major strategy for responding to situations where bullying has been perceived. In these first two examples interviewees achieve what they want by moving dioceses. This leaves the problem in the original diocese unaddressed.

In the end I couldn't sustain my ministry with him. I loved the parishes, and they were genuinely sorry to see me leave, but I moved post and Diocese, coming to [new diocese]. My long suffering husband gave up a ministry he loved... It was very traumatic at the time. (6.1).

I actually at one stage just abandoned the thought of moving to stipendiary, I thought I may as well stay where I am cause actually it's too big a risk or it was unreasonable deadlines and I actually didn't have faith in them doing it fairly. The fact they'd gone out create these hurdles unnecessarily, I felt they wouldn't be fair.... Yeah, yeah, whereas over here the Bishop at the time [name]...no problem. (6.2)

Here the interviewee leaves stipendiary ministry. Again, there is nothing within her leaving that addresses the issues that brought her to this. It is notable that a male minister is now in place so although unaddressed the potential that the issues continue invisibly.

I think I'm getting out just in time, I think I would have had a full scale breakdown if it hadn't been ...bishop [name]... he heard what I'm saying, you know, yeah right, get this woman out. (6.3)

This interviewee exits a specific post due to the actions of the diocese. He is able to re-establish himself after a considerable time period. Here the nature of review that led to the end of the post is described. The prospect of addressing the underlying problem was a potential given the presence of the review but unlikely to have been successful given the description. The diocese defended their actions and in some sense can be considered to have withdrawn their defence, however, that is different to resolving the underlying issue.

I was on a [fixed term] appointment, when it came towards the end of the [] appointment, the job was reviewed but I was never told who the reviewers were and I was never invited to meet them. (6.4)

In total four of the interviewees describe experiences of exiting posts where negative acts were having considerable impact.

Accommodation

One interviewee is very clear of the high level of accommodation in her behaviour. First, there is reference to another priest in the family:

There's some things I kind of accept because he has quite you know quite negative views of women actually, and I don't think even he recognizes quite how sexist he's being sometimes. So I kind of, just kind of because I don't want to challenge that always, I do sometimes, But um a lot of times I don't bother to challenge that so if you don't challenge something you have to cope with it some other way don't you? By ignoring mainly. (6.5)

This communicates a sense of fatigue and resignation. The interviewee has set up a framework where, unless she is willing to challenge something head on herself, she should simply cope with it. Although this was based in experience from the family setting she makes further references from the direct ministerial context.

I think you know, quite often in the course of my ministry I've come across people who just simply blanked me out. You know, and you just, you have to, for self-preservation, you rather learn to walk away from it. (6.6)

Something which could be seen as accommodation is described by the interviewee in a more positive light

He was very fond of [] and came back several times, and I got on very well with him, it wasn't a personal thing at all.... he asked, he said, he wanted to come back to [] for his funeral well he wanted to be buried at place [] his funeral was at place []. Um and that he would like me to deacon for his funeral mass, well that was kind of a compromise and I was happy with that. (6.7)

Here, there is a pastoral context and an existing relationship. The woman priest willingly accommodates to the last wishes of a person opposing women's ordination with the offer to deacon for a male priest at his funeral mass. Regardless of whether this

decision is seen as right or wrong, a person engaging in this depth of accommodation is very vulnerable.

Other interviewees give indications of accommodation. First, through claiming that the church is simply following wider society. This is very closely related to the earlier fallen world argument (p.116).

And I think perhaps in our way of being in society today we don't have that patience maybe, or maybe we don't have that insight, I don't know. (6.8)

Secondly, linking back to ambivalence (Chapter 11), an interviewee essentially argues with themselves about how they interpret the significance of negative acts.

The sneaking feeling I have, well it's not a sneaking feeling [] the incumbent is aware of some aspects of this bullying and just puts it down to personal dislike and I think there's more to it than that. (6.9)

It is as if the *sneaking feeling* interpretation allows the interviewee not to act due to lack of evidence. However, through giving time to talking about the incidents, they recognize the error of their own thinking.

Strategic Alliances

This connects with the previous heading of *helpful people*. The intention of this section is to draw attention to a difference between encountering someone as helpful such as a spiritual director and encountering them as someone with potential strategic engagement.

A key strategic ally is a bishop. If this is not initially the case, there are a number of ways in which interviewees might achieve this. This includes a change of diocese, the passage of time or the shift of engagement between diocesan and suffragan bishops. I would highlight the significance of potential strategic purpose as the potential is not always met.

A bishop is identified as a key ally by four interviewees. The first interviewee, below, describes the relief that can come through identifying an ally who shows an understanding of their situation and is able to guide him towards further help.

And I remember, uh, he [predecessor] came around one afternoon and said how's everything going, so I told him and he said oh that happened to me, he said, you ought to go and see the Bishop [name] um and I was well, you know,

not sure about that, and he said go and see him because he said I did and.... he'll listen to you; he may not be able to do anything immediately but he'll listen to you. [The Bishop] effectively said to me, you know, what took you so long to come and see me and after that it all worked fine... And I thought that was one of the things I used to have to say to curates I used to say if you've got the problem known we must tackle this and the Bishop isn't going to just throw you over the wall or anything like that. (6.10)

In an area of ambiguous definition, a person with similar experiences is valued in their ability to offer confirmation of the experience. This ally is helpful because they have followed the path they recommended and found it successful. Note the interviewees initial reluctance to involve the Bishop. The end of the passage shows the successful resolution of the difficulty leading to the desire to help others towards active resolution. It is notable that later in this ministry this interviewee is very critical of treatment received from bishops. Being *thrown to the wall* reflects a number of incidents this interviewee describes involving bishops. Perhaps this early faith set the ground for later disappointment.

A further positive response includes the significance in support from a suffragan bishop. Again there is the sense in which the interviewee does not believe their own situation and finds confirmation from an authoritative person very significant.

He said ever since you've been here, um, the diocesan bishop has been persecuting you and I thought ...did he really say that...yes he did. (6.11)

It is also worth considering the final positive act which brought resolution to a time of exclusion which lasted decades.

I had an interview with [new bishop] and very affably he said, I've been reading your file, he said and he said, it says [previous incident] and I said yes that's right, and actually that was a very interesting moment because that was the point when it came out into the open and we could talk about it in a perfectly grown up way. And it was, "Are you difficult to work with?" and I said, "I don't think I am but I'm not the best person to ask", and I said, "well, I always get on with [name]", who fortunately he knew. And I said, "not everybody gets on with [name]" and he said, "well I get on with [name]", and after that the conversation got very positive. (6.12)

A key feature of this conversation valued by the interviewee is its adult nature. The main quality of this is the naming of the issue and the identification of a shared network. In some sense it required this formation of a connection with a new bishop, many generations of bishops removed from the original problem, to bring the sense of exclusion to an end.

A further example of a bishop acting to resolve a long standing situation is described below:

And so they said we'll put you through to the Bishop's chaplain, that seemed to be the default position anyway I told [them] you know, that I was just at the end of my tether with it all, with the whole thing... [s/he] said bishop [name] will see you this afternoon. So I went along and wept and waved me arms about and told him the tale and he was very, very, good. (6.13)

Here there is a valuing of a person who hears her story and makes the concrete response of arranging time with the Bishop. This time seems to have value in the freedom of expression and the Bishop acting in facilitating an end to the situation which was better than the interviewee's worst case scenario.

And I said well frankly I'm relieved as well 'cause I wouldn't have been at all surprised that the diocese would have washed their hands of me and said the situations obviously broken down irretrievable, we're going to get rid of you without an honourable retirement ha-ha... It was slightly a fear, yeah, because the only way you can get rid of a freehold vicar is saying irretrievable breakdown of something or other. And it would be all of a piece of the behaviour so far if they said they were going to dishonourably discharge you instead of honourably retire you. (6.14)

Here because of the long history of negative experience there was little trust in the organization and no trust relating to her parish. Again this situation is ended by a new bishop coming onto the scene. This is in contrast to the previous bishops who through lack of action allowed her situation to continue even though one of them was perceived as sympathetic. The repetition of the word floundering reflects the intensifying nature of long term inaction.

I really blamed bishop [name] and Archdeacon [name] because they didn't know what to do so they just left me to flounder. They left me for years and years just

floundering. And I asked bishop [name], why they just left me like that floundering mmm and he says oh well, I just think they didn't know what to do. (6.15)

The inaction and actions of different bishops in this example invites the unfavourable comparison with the description of a bully as someone who *glories in ineptness* (4.9) and indulges in regular *rollicking* (1.20) rather than tackle a performance issue. Here the Bishop's interpretation of how this came about does not have the implication of *intent* which is important to so many interviewees but it does raise questions about people in positions of authority allowing negative situations to go on for years without resolution.

Finally, in the situation of an interviewee changing their ministerial status described earlier, it is again clear that they attributed a problem to one bishop but had another avenue of pursuing their goal because of a former professional relationship with another bishop. Below the problem and solution are contrasted:

- There was no thought of a personalized approach to dealing with me, it was you have to do... and it was made worse because the Bishop changed and the old bishop, I don't think I would have had the same hassle from but the new one, was new in post. (6.16)
- We'd known each other before, previously, so we'd had historical connections through education... he listened and what, what he did was work out what he's got and where he could put me that would broaden my experience so I could just...and it was all about facilitating it moving forward.... there was nothing insurmountable. (6.17)

The first bishop is new to the role, new to the interviewee. He was following the advice of a senior team member which was reasonable but generic. The second bishop had an established relationship with the interviewee and was established in their role. They used their personal authority to step outside of generic action. The significance of this is reflected in the later comment:

Years ago you would have come in as a young curate full time, probably aged 22 and stayed. Now I think increasingly there's people in their 30s, 40s and 50s that come in who've lived life before and I do wonder if the church actually a) recognizes or b) used the skillset that they bring in to best effect. I'm not convinced they do. (6.18)

Although the interviewee counted himself as aggrieved rather than bullied because of a lack of intent to cause harm, he did equate his generic treatment with being ordered to do tasks below his level of competence which again raises the possibility of work related bullying.

All these examples relate to the role of bishops as gatekeepers. In essence if there is a problem with a bishop then the answer is probably a bishop too. The Bishops act as individuals in their choice of how to handle situations. The interviewees could resolve a problem with one bishop by going to another. However, the organizational aspect of these examples is the Bishop's very powerful role as gatekeeper. In the first example, exclusion both formal and informal was ended by the Bishop bringing someone back into the fold; in the second example the Bishop dismissed a path of resolving the actual problem to offer a quick and honourable exit, in the third case the Bishop made a somewhat irregular appointment.

In an example that relates more to viewpoint than a specific incident the complex boundary between bishop as an individual and part of an organization is demonstrated.

I think the diocese is a bully and they do not always see that in themselves, they are busy trying to get the work done and they are sometimes, they are thoughtless in their ways of doing it and they are bullies. And that is the example from the upper echelons. You know I'm not calling the Bishop a bully by any manner of means but I am saying that those practical areas where we have to get things done, they can sometimes be bullies in that... Well you know, in areas of finance where they, the synodical, you know, laying down the law of the way things will be done. The consultation sometimes is pretty feeble. They think it's pretty good. (6.19)

On the one hand the interviewee wants to be very clear that she does not want to make a personal attribution of bullying to the Bishop, however, bishops are a prominent part of the *upper echelons* that she refers to as bullying and the movement of her thought is from diocese to bishop.

Below there is the sense of the affirming effect of a suffragan bishop acknowledging the reality of the interviewees interpretation of their situation. (There is no reference in the interview to the suffragan intervening on behalf of the interviewee.)

I used to have meetings with the suffragan bishop, who I subsequently realised did not get on with the diocesan, it was real Barchester stuff really. And he knew perfectly well what was going on and he said to me on one occasion, well he said, ever since you've been here, and I thought this was an extraordinary thing to say really, although I think it was actually true, he said ever since you've been here, um, the diocesan bishop has been persecuting you and I thought ...did he really say that...yes he did. (6.20)

These last quotations reflect more general strategic alliances. Here is another attempt to find support by the same interviewee, again not finding an active response.

I then spoke to the person who was a sort of chaplain to the diocesan office...I related this incident to him and he said well yes he knew this person had done this sort of thing to somebody else um but what I thought was really interesting was he said well if he does it again I might mention it to the Bishop and I said well isn't it enough that he's done it twice, why are you not doing now. (6.21)

An example from an interviewee's previous professional experience has some relevance as it demonstrates the way someone who is now a member of the clergy responded when they were in an environment where there was a perception of bullying.

I always felt bad really because he was always very nice to me, I was always very wary but I never had a problem and he was very supportive but I do know if he took a disliking to you he would sort of, he'd go out of his way. (6.22)

Here the coming together of being treated nicely and yet being wary suggests that a person perceived as a bully is maintained as an ally out of fear of what might happen otherwise. The opening comment suggests this position raised issues of conscience for the interviewee.

Finally, the previously discussed act of a priest going to sit with their congregation can be seen as potentially having a strategic as well as a symbolic effect. The priest she is reacting to is based locally so this is perhaps a way of achieving a victory through popular support in the face of having no other way of winning.

Overall this section reflects the isolation of people looking for help and the activity put into finding help. In the cases where this has been unsuccessful the interviewees were left in extremely isolated positions. It also reflects a particular focus on Bishops. Perhaps this fits with the Bishop's role of pastoral care for clergy but perhaps it

represents an undesirable acceleration of problems through the organization. A significant quality of bishops is their power to act but more constructive help at a lower level and earlier in a problem could ameliorate this.

Future Hope

Lastly, in this section a question within the survey overtly solicited responses regarding what the interviewees wanted to see from the diocese. This section although overtly about positive help also highlights hindrances as it demonstrates what interviewees perceive to be missing.

Rather than specific measures this first interviewee describes the framework he would like to see bullying managed within. Here we have two areas that have preceded bullying in being dealt with more overtly in recent years. Safeguarding has a greater degree of taboo in connection with the churches failings but the illegality of safeguarding failures together with the high public profile have forced the church into action. Conflict still bears some weight of historical taboo but I would suggest is easier to cope with than bullying and safeguarding failure in terms of preserving the image of the church.

I've tried to make the connection with safeguarding. The third part of that unholy trinity if you like is conflict...Not all conflict is bullying but some forms are and I would want to get people thinking [about] the fact that issues like safeguarding and conflict and bullying have got to fit together.... I think we're not good on any of those three and there's one way of addressing it that might bracket those together so there are lessons to be learned from safeguarding that applies to the other two. (6.23)

It is significant that although the interviewee sees bullying in the very wide terms of his *unholy trinity*, his focus for how to respond to bullying is very narrow.

So I think there needs to be a vocabulary to talk about it where you will be listened to and that action, appropriate action will be taken, it will be investigated, something will be done about it and it will be done by people who can be relied upon to be as impartial as anyone can be [] it will be dealt with by a complaints procedure, there's a complaints procedure anyway...these would be looked into and there would be [] a structure which was open, and which was understood, people need to know that applies to bullying. (6.24)

In this description being listened to very quickly moves to action. This is in keeping with the criticism of the times when listening did not move to action. The idea of a fair complaints procedure is very much in keeping with the interviewees overall approach of reason and fairness. It is significant that in this description someone else seems to come in and sort things out. There is almost the sense of an umpire here, someone to fix things when the rules are broken. The overall message that he seems to want conveyed is that these are the rules and someone will sort it out if you break them. This is a profound contrast with the complexity of the current position.

Here an interviewee has an idea of outcomes she would want to see and an idea of methods relating to her previous professional background.

I think it's something that needs to be recognized and brought into the open so that people have a better understanding of how their behaviour impacts on others. I think it's the only way, is for people to have...for it not to be hidden away and it needs to be dealt with in a way that says this behaviour isn't acceptable because of the damage it does to people... I think truly experiential group situations where people can understand that and recognize that and come to terms with they can't always have their own way and certainly they need that insight. And they could easily put in mediation ..., I think they are still a little old fashioned in this in so far as if they think it's happening they move people. All that does is put a bully into another situation. It doesn't resolve the problem. It doesn't ask them to look at what going on. It leaves people feeling.... It almost bullies the bully and there's a tendency to that. And we all have a tendency to be bullied and we have all bullied and been bullied at some stage I would guess in most of our lives. The important thing is to recognize that as a behaviour it is not really acceptable. It's not an acceptable way of getting your own way and that's got to be done by people having a better understanding of it really. (6.25)

Although this is not an interviewee who spoke directly about secrecy, part of her answer is to bring things into the open, which suggests a perception of secrecy. There is also a critique here of the practice of moving curates in difficulty which she alluded to but in a way that indicated there were confidences to be respected. I believe the secrecy she is talking about is different to the previous interviewee who felt even the procedures were secret, I interpret that she is talking about the discretion around curates who are moved, which she is demonstrating herself through her own discreet language.

A further comment follows on from the interviewees earlier reference to an Eton culture. (1.13)

The only way you can do that is educating from the top down and teaching from the bottom up and with any luck it reduces it. (6.26)

This draws attention to the need for senior members of the diocese to take an active role in examining their own engagement with the concept of bullying.

Her concept of anti-bullying measures that bully the bully reflect the complexity of work in this area and that it has taken a professional background where dealing with bullying as an issue is already present to bring her to this understanding. The potential to bully the bully becomes immediately obvious in comparison with the previous interviewee's desire to be listened to and for there to be action as one of the negative acts is making allegations and the desire to be listened to has considerable potential to fall into the category of spreading rumours. This becomes evident in the response of an interviewee who is worried that in looking for help you could speak to the wrong person.

It is a big risk and you know there are some gossipy people, inevitably because the diocese is a big family in a way and the tittle tattle and the you know, the stories, oo lets have a bit of a gossip. (6.27)

Here, an interviewee is looking for a concrete outcome and is suspicious of reports that do not lead to action.

Um, yes I would, what I'd probably be less interested in is kind of just another set of another report or another big chunk of words or a document or whatever. What I think needs to be seen is, if you have an issue there is someone you can go to with a real understanding as a result of that something is going to happen.... Not a kind of, I go and talk to someone and the other person gets their knuckles rapped... No, I don't particularly like this person so I can dob them in but actually if there is an issue, there is system that will work for me to be supported. (6.28)

There is a difficult balance here regarding the need for something to happen but the desire of it to be nuanced, this fits with the interviewees who spoke about conflict management and mediation. It lifts anti-bullying approaches out of disciplinary

procedures where they currently rest in the sense that Dignity at Work is presented as an extension of a grievance policy.

The desire for decisive action is supported further by another interviewee, however, it is not clear whether a conflict management or mediation process is what they are looking for. The words below suggest the desire for an authoritative person to step in and stop what is happening.

And I'd want to know a) that I was listened to b) that something was to be done and I'd want to know the timescales over which somebody would follow it through and I'd want to be assured that it was being taken serious... how skilled they are, I don't know, in doing it ... If you feel bullied you need to know there is someone you can go to for it to be dealt with and it will stop, you have to know someone will listen to you. (6.29)

This approach is intimated by the interviewee who locates responding to bullying in terms of grievance. I notice here, his inaction to investigate the area so far also ties in with anger at the diocesan website.

Oh, I'm sure, I know there's a grievance procedure somewhere and I'm sure we could certainly take up bullying under that, but I've never read the document, I understand I can access it on the website you know, probably if I can find the right password and speak three languages or that. But it is a bit like that isn't it. (6.30)

The question naturally led to some discussion of the current suggestion of potentially helpful contacts. The attitudes to one individual showed the value in a range of people.

Go to him about something personal like this, not on your life. (6.31)

Did you say [name], could arrange for you to meet with someone who didn't have a connection wasn't in the diocese that's probably the best. (6.32)

I would never in a million years contact [name] if I had a problem. So that's an issue of what structures does the diocese put in place for if people do have issues and whether it actually needs to be someone outside the diocese that is the first contact, in the same way that you might have... clergy line instead of child line. (6.33)

The idea of being able to speak to someone outside the diocese is not within existing procedures.

An interviewee who did approach a rural dean would like the rural deans to be aware of how to respond when bullying is discussed. This is significant as the archdeacon considered the rural deans to be a valid avenue of support but I think she sees it within the scope of a normal pastoral situation, not something where there is anything they should be expected to know. Whereas, from the interviewee's perspective someone who knows what to do is very important.

And why don't the rural deans know anything about this? You know, the first person I would normally turn to would be my rural dean, he didn't know. (6.34)

This statement reveals the problem with the expectation that rural deans are the *go to* people for all clergy crises. The archdeacon wanted me to include them on the supporting information I sent out but neither they nor any other diocesan contact has had any training in dealing with bullying.

In contrast to the interviewee who was inclined to turn to the rural dean, another interviewee described:

Well I think the big weakness is if you go and see your rural dean, or who was the second one... Archdeacon, I mean they're going to know the other person probably, I mean 99% most likely aren't they, and not only does that put you in a vulnerable position because you don't know what their relationship is with this other person but it could put them in a difficult position, they've got to kind of play referee between two people they know. (6.35)

Here an interviewee who has had past difficulties with both Anglo-Catholic and evangelical clergy gives an idea of the vulnerability of going to a person whose network may not be known. This interviewee revealed her concern for gossip and was the third person to express a desire for an external contact point.

Finally, a rather resigned interviewee simply wants something as opposed to not having anything.

I would like the diocese to put in place clear anti bullying policy for clergy and church officers. We don't have anything clear at the moments and it is difficult. (6.36)

CONCLUSION

This chapter reflects the incredibly difficult situations the clergy of the diocese of study find themselves in. For them, power is the most significant feature of bullying and yet there is a multiplicity of sources of power and power structures that might have been intended as cooperation but could be seen as more oriented around competition. A significant number of barriers to clergy having an operational and consistent approach to defining bullying have been identified and the main outcomes either rely on exit, getting a bishop on your side or a combination of the two. The interviewees' hopes for improvement highlight the absence of knowledge of even minimal Church of England policy guidelines.

TABLE (XXIV)MOVING FORWARD SUMMARY.

Subordinate theme (2)	Conclusion	Inference drawn	Weight
Exit Accommodation Strategic Alliance	The high prevalence of exit	Need for exit interviews to identify underlying problems. Recognition of the cost of exit to the institution.	Key
	The tendency towards accommodation.	Recognition that anti-bullying initiatives really do go against the grain. Significance of hierarchical commitment to cultural change.	Key
	The significance of being able to form alliances. The intense focus on the role of bishops.	The need to identify and counteract isolation ethically. The need for bishops to be aware of the potential for this focus.	Key
Future hope	Bullying should be linked to safeguarding and conflict resolution Improved self-understanding regarding bullying.	Recognition that the effort needed to address bullying will have a much wider impact. Diocese-wide bullying-specific training and policy.	Key

	<p>The need for non-shaming processes that benefit all parties.</p> <p>The willingness to shine light onto bullying.</p> <p>Commitment at all levels.</p> <p>Clearly identifiable skilled people with hierarchical power.</p> <p>Clear policy.</p>	<p>Policy content.</p> <p>Training and use of conflict management and mediation</p> <p>Communication and modelling</p> <p>Matching policy, training and organizational structure.</p> <p>Diocesan Policy – intelligible content, high awareness, easy access.</p>	
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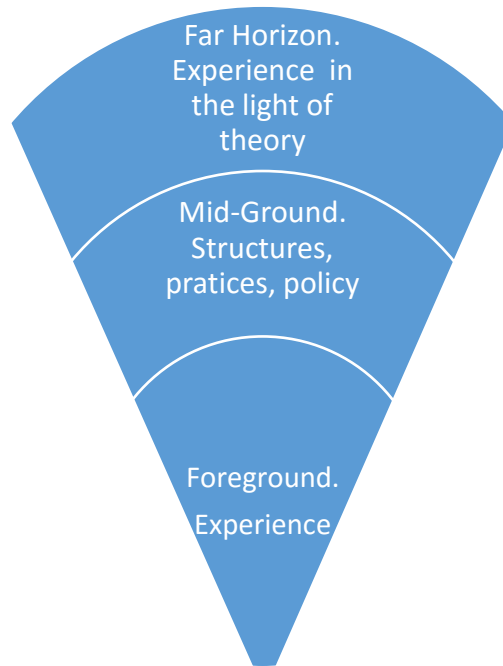
CHAPTER 14 DISCUSSION, THE CONTRIBUTION OF PARTS TO THE WHOLE

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters represent the results of interviewees to speaking relatively freely in response to their own experience. They contain a rich body of data, analysed in terms of themes which emerged naturalistically. A combined approach of the hermeneutics of empathy and suspicion led to a useful understanding of how interviewees could simultaneously hold understandings that both opposed bullying and led to a lack of opposition to bullying. This material will now be considered in the light of the full framework of this thesis. The desire to do this relates to the work of Trafford and Leshem (2008) and is based on their concept of “the magic circle” (p. 170). It brings together the factual, interpretive and conceptual conclusions generated by this work

Returning to Gadamer’s hermeneutics, I began this work with a perspective closely related to experience. Initially my own experience and then the experience of colleagues. This forms the first horizon of this work. An act of distancing which I equate with walking backwards away from a large object limiting the horizon, brought the discussion of policy and the technical understanding of workplace bullying into play. I consider this the mid ground and second horizon. Further distancing brought Girard’s mimesis as a theoretical focus. I consider that this forms the third and farthest horizon. Viewed as a whole the foreground and mid ground are part of the picture as part of the view within the area swept out by the far horizon. This is demonstrated in diagram (viii) below.

DIAGRAM (VIII) EXPANDING HORIZONS



PART ONE

The outcome of Part One was the suggestion that the presence of *partial silencing* or *double silencing* would be significant (p.29). *Partial silencing* being my description of attempts to speak which fail because of poor reception and *double silencing* being Poling's account of shame related institutional and personal barriers. This is borne out by the analysis. First, I do not believe any of these conversations would have happened if I had not opened the door with the survey and invited people to step through it and talk to me. By that standard there is a degree to which all the interviewees were at least partially silent. For two of the partially silent candidates their story is long and complex. In opening conversations around ethics and permission, they had a disregard for anonymity compared to the need to tell their story. Their stories are marked by freedom of language. At 7,800 words and 6,500 words respectively these are amongst the longer interviews; their turn of phrase was often frank. (1.26, 1.28, 1.29, 1.31, 1.33, 5.10); my subjective interpretation is that this was their story in their terms. This relates closely to my concept of partial silence. They were willing to speak but required somebody willing to listen. For both interviewees at significant moments they had tried to share their experiences and found avenues for voicing their experience shut down. (5.24, 6.4). This is further supported by the identification of being listened to at the close of these incidents. (6.12, 6.13)

Two further partially silent interviewees shared a similarity of experience in that they had engaged with bullying as a technical issue in their previous professions. Their silence is related to neither of them having been active in speaking about anti-bullying material to the organization. For one of them this seems to be a matter of obedience which she explicitly equates with loss of voice (1.16, 4.20). For the other interviewee the explicit reason is that he did not know the church had any engagement with the area (1.22). However, I would say that there is some indication of a double silencing as he is working with a definition whereby his own experiences do not count as bullying. This raises the possibility that the second layer of silencing is so strongly in place that he cannot see it. Although I see pointers to this I think it would be presumptive to make too strong an inference based on the material I have.

Double silencing was significant in the case of two further interviewees. The evidence below will indicate why I feel more confident in this inference. In these candidates there was the presence of significant personal inhibition leading to restricted speech. In contrast to the interviewee above I believe they were both aware of this inhibition. Both of these interviews were in the group of shorter interviews at 3,800 and 4,600 words. This had a different appearance in each interviewee. One of these interviewees had immediately responded to the survey by email supporting the significance of the work and taking up the offer to be interviewed. However, he clearly felt very uncomfortable describing his experience of witnessing his colleague being bullied. He was explicit about the presence of shame and inclined to imagine more secrecy than was actually the case (5.23); he requested clarification during the interview that participants would not be identifiable. Key features of his interview were the subtlety of human interaction (1.17) and ambivalence to identifying bullying (2.25). I interpret this as a person experiencing double silencing, finding one barrier addressed but struggling with the remaining barrier.

In the second of these doubly silent interviews the interviewee did not respond to the offer of an interview until we met in an educational setting, when she remembered that she was interested in my work and had not responded. The material she offered during the interview was in itself significant but was headed up by her reluctance to engage with the area (4.2). Even more significantly, afterwards she followed up the email with details of a further incident. She considered this more significant than the incidents she had spoken about and realized she had completely “blanked” it. In her interview, her primary message was that she struggled with the awareness that she accommodated

herself to low level negative behaviour. Her overall sense was that she had been lucky enough not to experience bullying (5.29). However, the further material related a serious incident where she had not been lucky at all (1.34.) The blanked material was in direct conflict with her self-image. The first layer of silencing was in that initial desire to say that she had not experienced negative acts, the second layer of silencing was essentially about packing away negative experiences in a way that was hard to retrieve, even when she had chosen to speak.

In one of the pilot interviews there are indications of a different sort of silence which has significant implications for progress in the anti-bullying domain. This is again a tentative conclusion as it could simply reflect that the pilot questionnaire was an inadequate tool for this interviewee. The interviewee knew at a theoretical level that bullying was wrong and it was appropriate for the church to do something about it but was completely disengaged from the topic. This was the shortest interview at 850 words and had little experiential content. I would not want to draw conclusions from this absence of engagement but it does bring to mind the possibility of a genetic component to the impact of bullying behaviour. A connection between genes, empathy and aggression is examined by the work of Poulin and Buffone (2014). The candidate was very happy to help with the pilot and is supportive of my work but left me feeling he had no connection into the topic of bullying. This was a sharp contrast to the other examples where silence was deeply connected with emotional response. It suggests silence potentially can have a root in *lack* of emotional response as well as emotional response. It points to the need for people lacking in personal connection to be informed about the area to compensate for this. In essence objective anti-bullying measures are vital for those who have no subjective understanding of the impact of bullying behaviour. Further, the objective analysis of data within this study offers a window into subjective experience for those who cannot access it directly.

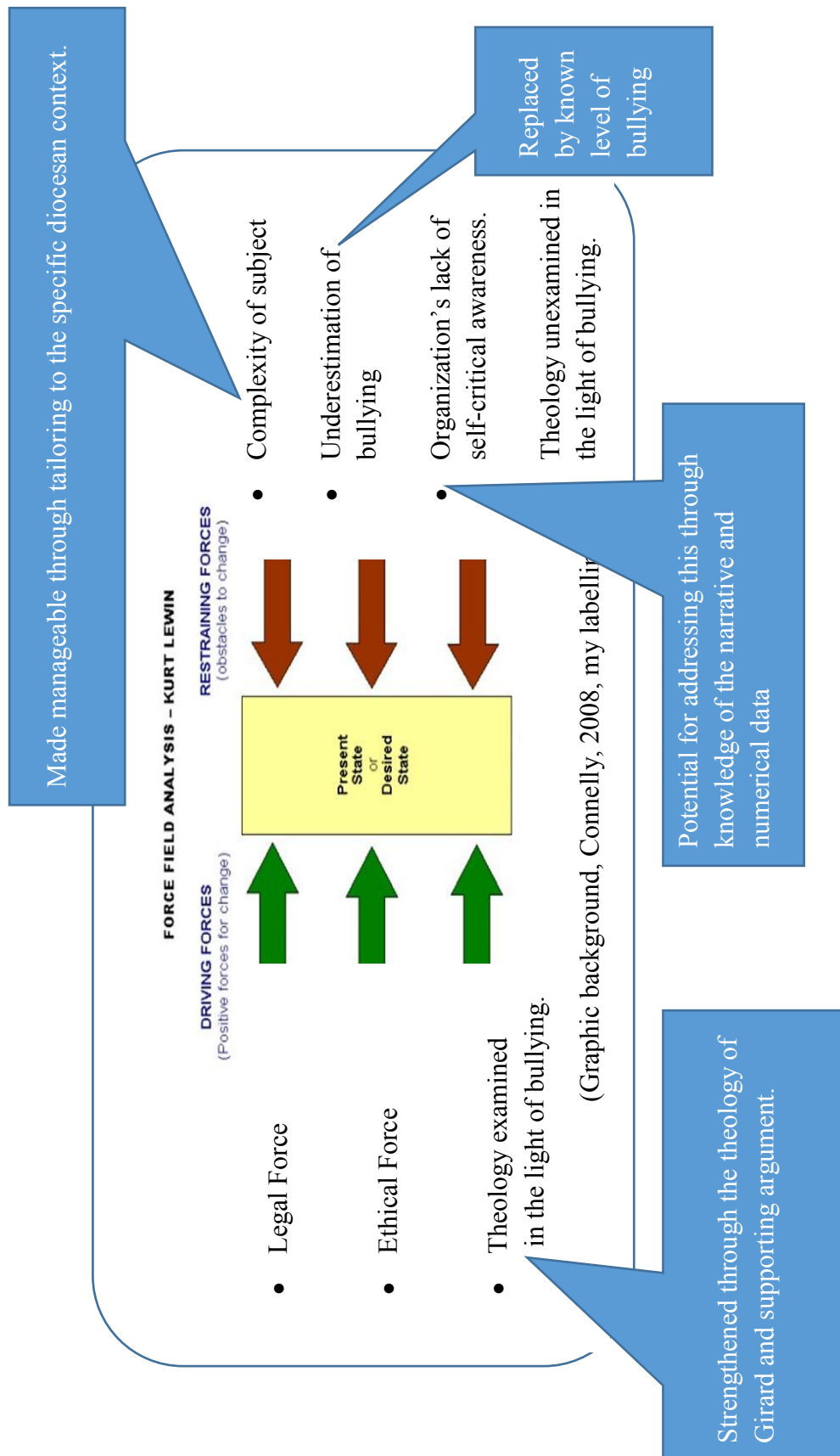
A final dimension for consideration of the foreground ideas from Chapter Three into the overall horizon is the relationship between shame and scapegoating. Pattison himself connects the two concepts in his discussion of how shame is spread to others, as discussed earlier. (p.28) However, Pattison's analysis is structured around individuals; as such, it does not capture the behaviour of groups of people within organizations. Girard's mimesis has a stronger and wider application in that it captures the organizational capacity for a tangle of stumbling blocks and a random aspect to the scapegoating process.

PARTS TWO, THREE AND FOUR

The survey and the interviews together address the missing phase of responding to bullying in the first place, by gathering local data. As a result of this work, instead of relying on the unfounded and vague assertion that bullying is rare in this diocese, there is evidence to assert that there is a prevalence of around 10 per cent of clergy who would be classified as experiencing severe, systematic bullying as assessed by a standardized objective tool. Further there is evidence to support a broadening of this picture to say that fewer clergy experience no negative acts compared to other professions and consequently some clergy experience a number of negative acts but this is below the threshold of the act/frequency/time criteria associated with objective measurement of bullying. The analysis of interviews leads to a picture of the ways ministers of this diocese have experienced bullying in the course of their ministry and the interpretations that have arisen out of these experiences. These have been shown to be extremely subjective: they depart radically from the objective definition focusing primarily on the power position of a person engaging in negative acts and subsidiary to power, the intent of the person engaging in negative acts. However, there is no consensus around intent as one interviewee looks for malicious intent (1.21) but another is torn between lack of self-knowledge and deliberate activity (4.8, 6.25). Overall, the analysis of experience gives a detailed picture of both specifically religious dimensions of bullying such as praying with a person after a negative act and more general negative acts such as undermining self-esteem. The effects of more general behaviours are heightened due to the church maintaining a dual position on gender equality.

As inputs to Lewin's model (this work, p. 55) I believe I have fully justified all the components which were proposed as acting as barriers to change. The main difference I notice as a result of this work was an underestimation of the level of ambivalence to responding to bullying which was present in interviewees disposed to engage with the issue. I believe this thesis acts to reduce the restraining forces that arise from complexity, underestimating the significance of bullying and a lack of awareness. In the area of driving forces, I have opened up the potential of theology to be a more effective driving force. These are represented on the diagram below.

DIAGRAM (IX) FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS REVISITED



In answer to the challenge raised by *Bullying-however rare*, The NAQ-R provided an objective measure of the prevalence of bullying within the diocese. Further it indicated the types of behaviour which were prevalent within that overall experience of bullying. This is useful because it communicates to those who experience bullying that they are not alone in this experience. It is useful as an educational tool which teaches people about the negative acts which contribute to bullying. Its strength lies in four possible readings. Overtly the question is: *Am I experiencing this? Am I witnessing this?* Deeper questions are: *Am I doing this? Might someone be interpreting my activity in this way?* It is useful because for some the act of completing the survey linked directly with approaching me to talk about their experience. It is useful as it gives a rough indication for the capacity required within any anti-bullying measures. However, it is not the last word on the prevalence and nature of bullying in the diocese.

I suggest that the subjective understanding of bullying that must take priority; that the objective work is the servant of the subjective work in this thesis. Where interviewees talk about objective indications of bullying they use them in a way which serves their subjective perceptions. The objective study of bullying has been established as an effective way to start a conversation but the conversation itself must be subjective. Those who want to support people in responding to bullying situations need to be able to enter into that subjectivity but remain discrete from it. This is necessary in order to avoid becoming part of the Girardian tangle or, from the transactional analysis perspective, a perpetrator or victim themselves.

Viewing the NAQ-R from a subjective perspective suggests that it is more helpfully thought of as an indication of the risk of bullying being high, rather than a definitive measure of whether or not bullying is present. Analysis of the NAQ-R reveals a significant contribution from negative acts relating to being ignored, having opinions ignored and excessive workload. Although, those clergy identified as being most likely to be experiencing bullying identified a much wider range of behaviours overall. The first two point towards the need to increase awareness of the role of passive behaviours in bullying. The interviews reflect an instinctive grasp of physical bullying with its connection to the playground but only recognize the passive behaviours in a secondary way when specifically thinking about it. This highlights a training need for passive behaviours to be recognized.

Analysis relating to gender reveals that the proportions of men and women at risk of bullying match the proportions of the sample. Two of the interviews reflect a strong

interaction between gender and the experience of negative acts. The behaviours of gender based conflict within the church have ongoing potential to contribute to bullying. The General Synod was able to resolve legislation relating to women bishops through the use of trained mediators. It is unreasonable to expect this issue will resolve itself at grassroots level without similar interventions.

The survey focussed on behaviours experienced over the last six months as this gives a measure of the scale of immediate response required. It indicates that urgent support needs to be put in place for the capacity to respond to at least the fourteen clergy who registered in the WRB and S groups. This is a minimum recommendation based on the assumption that all clergy needing support for bullying responded to the survey. A higher capacity would be suggested by assuming there was a response proportionate to the sample. This would suggest a capacity for supporting approximately 60 clergy across the diocese. Significant unknowns are:

- whether the bullying risk would still be rated high after a conversation with an appropriately trained person;
- the effect of changing from anonymity to identification.
- the effect of changing from a survey completed for a colleague in a study context to a survey within the official structure of the organization.

A significant concept that to some degree reframes this work is resilience. *Resilient hope in the midst of ambiguity* was introduced by Poling (1992, p.178) though not, as discussed in chapter three, usefully developed. However, this thesis has, throughout, respected the ambiguity of working within the concept of bullying and it offers guidance for a way forward. This helps me to understand that I see this work as providing a resilient response to bullying. Here, I would lift resilience above the earlier discussion around resilient individuals to the level of a resilient organization and resilient structures within the organization. Looking back, I am able apply this to understand that DaW was not a resilient response to bullying. I can now describe it as a brittle document. It portrayed difficulty coming to terms with the significance of bullying and sets the scene for disputes that have no real promise of a healthy resolution for all parties. A resilient approach to bullying is able to look at real experiences, honour their significance and open up ways forward through ambiguity.

In the table below the dimensions added by this thesis are compared to the original position as outlined in DaW. This demonstrates the need for the reframing of the approach to anti-bullying measures within the diocese.

TABLE (XXV) COMPARISON OF RESPONSE TO BULLYING BETWEEN DA W AND THIS THESIS

Bullying...	DaW	This thesis
Level	Based on assumption	Based on evidence
Attitude to zero tolerance	Positive	Negative
Described as	Rare	Experienced as severe by 10% of the sample and at lower levels for the majority.
Definition	Subjective and objective definition named but unreconciled.	Primacy of subjective definition as served by objective definition.
Interpreted as	Exceptional	Normal
Dealt with	By extension of grievance procedure but acknowledging the place for mediation and restorative justice.	Distinct from grievance procedure. Open to any problem solving techniques within a non-blaming framework.
Illustrated though	Generic workplace behaviours.	The experiences of clergy with respect to church politics, hierarchy, tradition, gender, age.
Key theoretical base	Employment Law	Girardian Mimesis
Implementation in the diocese.	Stuck at draft stage	Dependent on response to this thesis.

Elements bringing scandal

Returning to the idea of *troubled possession* introduced in the theoretical framework (p.210), I feel able to interpret the majority of activating experiences as troubled possession. In the examples below, I suggest that there are different objects that stimulate trouble.

At the most basic level and inherent to the Church of England is troubled possession of the Parish. Here I would draw out:

- PCC members acting in defence of their own pockets of power (2.20);
- the female priest standing aside to allow a male priest to conduct a funeral (2.10);
- a priest concerned the rector will limit their freedom to baptize (3.12);
- a priest and churchwarden in conflict over power in a PCC (2.21).

In the following examples I see vocation as particularly coming to the fore although I would not exclude it from the previous examples as a Christian active in the parish it itself vocational. These examples challenge the freedom to pursue vocation through particular roles in the church:

- a student at theological college having to defend her presence (1.29);
- the same person thirty years later being told that men will be able to address the difficulties in the parish (2.14);
- an NSM made to jump hurdles (6.2);
- aggressive job review (6.4);
- the inability to decline prayer (2.16).

The recognition of troubled possession immediately suggests the suitability of applying conflict management skills and the negotiating of boundaries to allow participants to find and express their difference in an untroubled manner.

Scapegoating is hard to determine when only hearing from one participant in a complex context. However, resonance with scapegoating is evoked by the interviewee who was glad she was allowed honourable retirement rather than dishonourably discharged (5.13); She was a person in a tangled situation who particularly mentions a sense of being blamed, naming this blame as the real bullying (3.16). Perhaps, in that first identification of receiving blame, she became the scapegoat, who did indeed leave the organization. Whether there was a cathartic experience of her leaving is outside the

scope of this study. Scapegoating may also be present with the interviewee who experienced a profound sense of exclusion after finding himself in what he described as a 'conflicted environment' and receiving attacks from unexpected quarters (1.37). Again this is marked by tangle and exit. The word *scapegoat* is explicitly, but informally, used in describing the experience of a curate looking around at the community they were part of and realizing they were the scapegoat (3.15). This informal use together with the technical understanding that the Girardian understanding brings makes it a powerful tool in understanding bullying.

When I look at the experiences described, first, because all the interviewees are priests they are in the community of the diocese. Secondly they are a priest under contract; women priests, ordained local ministers, curates. There is an element of vulnerability in each of the ministers involved in episodes that can be interpreted as having a high risk of bullying. Only the male rector in the interview sample had no experience of bullying.

Mimetic Doubling

There are several pointers towards the possibility of the presence of mimetic doubling. However, the design of the study in only seeking an individual's perspective precludes an accurate picture of this area. In these incidents below, there are people who might be considered victims behave in ways that open them up to allegations of being perpetrators. These include:

- the moment where the Bishop's casual disregard for the interviewee fixed them on a confrontational path;
- the attaching of disgust from one set of incidents and colleagues to another person.

The fluid nature of the scapegoating, already described, means that a victim need not have arisen out of a conflict between themselves and their matching rival. Therefore, the doubling could be between other groups in the organization which have become doubles for each other and then happened on a scapegoat. I am writing in partial support of the presence of doubling because sometimes interviewees were responding to activating experiences with behaviours that would qualify as negative acts in their own right. I am not saying that this study identifies a double as I only spoke to one party in the various conflicts. However, there are pointers to this in the interviews. The insight below was offered by an interviewee who had offered listening support to people talking about difficult experiences.

You know often, what often, very amazingly comes out of bullying situations is that those people are very similar. There's not always...it's not always about the person who is down trodden, quite often they have a lot of similar characteristics.

Tangling of Scandals

The consideration of the geographic elision of experiences demonstrated two interviewees as aware of multiple tensions in proximity to their situations. Returning to the work of Vasey-Saunders, he establishes the “tangle of conflicts” present in the Church of England around gender and the evangelical tradition. This study offers further support for his work from a different evidence base regarding gender and the evangelical tradition but also gender and Anglo-Catholic tradition. When this is brought together with the other stressors named in the interviews such as financial pressure (6.19), the potential for a community to reach the tipping point where scandals come together and rest on a random but vulnerable participant is very strong. The words below being together both growth and finance but also questions the skill level of participants.

I suspect there are people when things get tough, and conversations have to be had, that sometimes those could be bullying and could be construed as bullying...I sometimes wonder how as a church we develop our leaders to handle situations, to handle difficult conversation...If you have a church that is low on numbers you know with the best will in the world you could be doing everything couldn't you, and it's not growing, and it's not paying its share, and I can see, *why aren't you paying your share?* It could be handled different ways I suppose.

In addition to this there is the further confusion of organizational structure (1.18a) and the sense that whatever hierarchy is present brings to mind a metaphor of a food chain (1.18b). Altogether, this represents great vulnerability towards tangling of scandals in the diocese of study.

A Girardian framework can be useful in this context as there are individual acts of rivalry but they can also be interpreted within the system of tangled scandals. There is a cohesive framework for understanding the acts of individuals, groups and institutions. This supports the possibility that the field of workplace bullying has consistently had problems with the definition of bullying because it tries to define bullying too narrowly.

This could meet the criticism that from the Girardian perspective everything becomes bullying but that would be consistent with Girard's assertion that he is defining an anthropological norm for humanity (2001, p.15).

In contrast to the two examples above where I believe there is a high probability that scapegoating is present I believe there are two examples where potential scapegoats have sensed their vulnerability and got out while they were still in a strong enough position to make a start elsewhere. There are two situations described as grievance or bullying where the interviewee responded to their situation by leaving the diocese. Reasons for leaving in both cases involved lack of trust in the higher levels of the diocesan hierarchy (5.7).

There is a resonance with the random nature of scapegoating in a tangled system evidenced by the discussion of interviewees perceiving themselves to be lucky. Although this could relate to people taking strength from the perception that they are lucky, it could be a way of describing the random nature of scapegoating, i.e. that they really did, at some time, avoid becoming a scapegoat by luck rather than through judgement or skill.

The exception to this random act introduced earlier was the practice of keeping *pharmakoi* (this work, p.70). In an example from a previous professional context, there is already reference to something which has the potential to be interpreted in this way. The person who withheld disciplinary action because they enjoyed *rollicking* the victim is suggestive of that victim as *pharmakoi*. It resonates with the description by another interviewee who described a bully as someone who *glories in the ineptness of others*. Coming back to the curate who looked around and realized they were the scapegoat, I wonder if a better understanding would be that the curate was in the role of *pharmakoi*. Someone vulnerable kept on hand to be sacrificed if necessary. Awareness of this possibility could be very significant in understanding potential bullying situations as a person maintaining another in a position of incompetence may give a surface impression of Christian charity but may in fact be doing harm.

Catharsis

A particular concern arose from analysis of the interviews in connection with catharsis. There is considerable evidence of interviewees making varying degrees of exit from the organization. (Girard, 2001, p.p. 37-38). The response of those left behind is necessarily absent from this study, however, the Girardian perspective does raise the question of

whether their exit was interpreted in a way that allowed the organization to avoid dealing with the issues that led to their exit. This would suggest the potential for a picture of the wider church and particularly the diocese of study lurching from crisis to crisis never really understanding that individual incidents are related to sin at an organizational level. The vulnerability of the church to bullying at the inter-related levels of the individual, the group and the organization is that it has not correctly identified the nature of sin.

Summary

In applying the mimesis model to interpret the experience of the interviewees, I find resonances with these concepts:

- many of the activating incidents can be interpreted as scandal or stumbling blocks both small and large;
- the interviewees where bullying might be present have factors present which identify them as potential scapegoats;
- some transcripts have elements of mimetic doubling present;
- there is some evidence of the victim emerging from a wide field of conflict which relates to the tangle of stumbling blocks.

In applying this model to understand what the diocese can learn, I am able to identify:

- the failure to understand catharsis as sin, connected with the vulnerability to renewed cycles of bullying;
- naivety regarding the relationship of church structures to *powers and dominions*;
- the potential for misinterpreting a mimetic doubling situation;
- reasoning to support the use of popular leadership tools such as conflict management/transformation and mentoring.

The Girardian perspective offers the church a way to respond to bullying through:

- providing an understanding of the underlying anthropological processes that lead to bullying.
- being able to account for bullying at the level of individual relationships and the organization.
- being a suitable foundation for both workplace bullying insights and theological insights.

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT DURING THE COURSE OF THE THESIS.

From the outset of this study there has been a desire to address a gap in knowledge which is directly expressed in the research questions. In addition to this I believe that the application of Girardian Mimesis has opened up a wider critique of normal Church of England practices as they are expressed in the diocese of study. Girard and Hamerton-Kelly offer a theoretical picture of religion enmeshed with violence, where sacrificial religion channels violence in particular ways rather than freeing people from violence. I believe I add an experiential dimension to this analysis by bringing the accounts from my own experience and the experience of colleagues to offer an understanding of how that violence is expressed in the context of the diocese. Some may receive this as a reason for giving up on the Church of England altogether but I believe there is a more positive interpretation of this thesis.

A more positive interpretation can be derived based on Girard's insight, that in the scope of salvation history humanity has only just started to explore the significance of the victim. I believe that the diocese's willingness to allow these questions to be explored, the theological resources available to me, the willingness of participants to talk about their experiences are all part of a willingness to explore the significance of violence within the church. Therefore, I do not interpret this thesis as pointing to an irredeemable church but to the church as a work in progress.

The current concerns reflected in this thesis include the bullying of clergy; the relationship with women's ministry; gender; and child abuse. The Church has a history of crusades; recurrent persecution of heretics; and patriarchal oppression as a norm. That it has come to be able to consider these areas of this thesis suggests to me a church which is moving forward. This is not because we are close to resolving these issues but because of the increasing willingness towards meaningful engagement with them.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DURING THE COURSE OF THE THESIS.

I began this study as a response to my experiences as a curate with the desire to examine critically those experiences, develop a response and be active in bringing about diocesan engagement with anti-bullying measures. This thesis represents those first two steps. Diocesan engagement with anti-bullying measures has so far continued unchanged. A significant delay ensued when the person who was interested in forwarding this work left. The person covering their duties was very supportive of this work but could not take on the extra commitment of pursuing a change outside of diocesan priorities. Finally, an appointment has been made at a senior level of someone who can decide to give a priority to this work. They have suggested a clergy well-being team of which I would be a member. They have promised that my work will be listened to and taken seriously.

There has been a considerable journey as I set out on this thesis from the starting point outlined in Chapter Three. Some 80,000 words later, I think it is safe to say that I have ceased to be silent or silenced. It has taken a great deal of academic support to achieve this. I have always been cautious of the problem's discussed within this study that victims of bullying who choose the path of voice often have unsatisfactory outcomes. The academic growth during the doctorate has been an exercise in developing my voice. The assessment of intermediate stages of this work has reassured me that what I have to say is expressed in an appropriate and defensible way. By opening myself up to academic challenge I hope I make it harder for my perspective to be diminished or dismissed. I have throughout been tentative in describing my initial experience as bullying. Looking back now, I have the vocabulary to say that I had a strong subjective experience of bullying. I take the theoretical position that an objective answer of whether I was bullied will be forever inaccessible. However, the thrust of this thesis is that inaccessibility of an objective assessment is to be expected and is not a barrier to anti-bullying action. Through the setting out of my thoughts and arriving at these two conclusions, I have done what I wanted to do. I have addressed the ending of my silence to my upmost capacity and hope that the diocese as an organization has the capacity to make use of the challenge and support I offer.

If the impact on the wider diocese is still ahead and likely to be strengthened if this work is recognized as being at doctoral level, then the impact regarding my own work can be considered current and significant. This thesis has influenced my work at the parish, deanery and diocesan level.

The aspect of my work that has greatest influence at parish level is the association of the legitimate use of authority with bullying. As a rector my authority can have considerable impact on people's lives. During the writing of this thesis I did find myself in the position of using my authority in a way which was difficult for someone to accept. It was very helpful that I had a greater understanding of the impact of authority. This meant I was able to identify the risk of my actions being perceived as bullying and invite a third party in to facilitate a process which led to an increase in their level of empowerment in other aspects of their work. This has at least resulted in a degree of medium-term stability. It is my sense that if the risks of the situation had not been identified and my work had not facilitated a sharing of ideas between myself and a facilitator, the situation could have become a deteriorating spiral.

From the transactional analysis perspective, the facilitator was able to identify my susceptibility to the parent role. A potential negative triangle was able to be avoided and a benevolent triangle generated through two of the three people involved having a critical understanding of the situation and working together to empower the minister. From the Girardian perspective, the empowerment could be seen as increasing the differentiation between my role and the ministers. There is a strong potential for seeing mirroring of desires as predictably the ministry desired was part of my ministry. There is a sense in which the field of contention was parishioners receiving appropriately safe pastoral care. A reflection of my potential as a role model was demonstrated in a comment by the facilitator, that I had been put on a pedestal so high I was bound to fall off. Through my exploration of the Girardian perspective, the understandings from transactional analysis have a theological grounding; through exploring the narratives of the interviewees I had a sensitivity to the risk of being perceived as a bully that might otherwise have been absent. Overall, this work has led to a person able to continue and even to grow in their ministry at parish level.

At the deanery level, this thesis most directly influenced a short training session I was able to offer to the deanery synod. It was set in the context of Christian mission related to the workplace being enhanced by engagement with workplace bullying. This was followed with the additional recognition that we could also apply the content to our church relationships. This was received very positively. I noticed that some people were only able to work at the objective level of the negative acts. However, an understanding of the way these negative acts can relate to bullying is vital for those who lack

subjective understanding. I feel this was a significant learning point. It relates back to a strength of this work that it engages objectively and subjectively.

A further impact of this work at the deanery level was due to my seeking to have a position where I could voice my perspectives in a way the organization understands. This resulted in me offering myself as rural dean which was accepted. This is a new post for me and places me well to be able to offer training to rural deans and be in a position to respond to the comment of an interviewee who was exasperated that the rural deans are considered key people for parish clergy to go to yet knew very little about how to respond to bullying related.

Again, by way of raising awareness of the topic in the diocese, I stood for General Synod. Although I was not elected, this achieved two positive outcomes. The archdeacon who was elected is now aware of my work and interested in looking at it once they are settled in their post. Further, I participate in a first incumbent's mentoring scheme and an incumbent was interested in me as a mentor, not because they had any specific concerns with bullying but because the nature of my work indicated that they would be able to talk openly about their experiences as an incumbent with me. This also has a resonance with an interviewee's comment that single clergy did not have someone they could trust to talk to. I now find myself the mentor of a single member of the clergy who was primarily looking for a safe space.

There have been three opportunities for presenting my work to people outside of my immediate peer group. First, to doctoral students at related institutions during summer school. Secondly, to MA students studying research methods within the school of theology. I have been booked for a day long presentation to incoming curates in 2017. This may be the start of a more regular association with postgraduate learning in the diocese. It reflects a suggestion by the diocesan bishop that I should raise my professional profile. Thirdly, I had shared the paper that became Chapter Three with our diocesan safeguarding officer. This led to her recommending me for a bishop's pastoral group responding to the aftermath of safeguarding issues. The particular contribution I was able to bring was an understanding of how feeling shame can lead to not dealing with the cause of shame and also an understanding of how power can be misused. Sadly, one of my principal strengths was that I was prepared for the picture that emerged rather than it challenging my perception of the church.

CHAPTER 15 CONCLUSION

The intention of this thesis was to formulate a response to bullying as experienced and interpreted by Church of England Clergy within the diocese of study. The basis of this response was expressed in the research questions:

- To what extent do the clergy of the diocese experience bullying in the course of their ministry?
- What insights can be generated by analysing the experiences clergy brought to mind as a result of participating in research to establish the extent of bullying?

EXTENT OF BULLYING

The extent of bullying was investigated in terms of the prevalence and pattern of exposure to negative acts. Measurement with a strong objective component indicates that some 10 per cent of clergy experience a pattern of negative acts compatible with the interpretation that a high risk that severe systematic bullying is present.

INSIGHTS

The main insights this thesis offers for the understanding of bullying in the diocese of study are:

1. that the diocese, as an organization which invests heavily in mimetic practices, is especially vulnerable to bullying;
2. that a diocesan response to bullying should be based on bullying as a normal experience for clergy within the diocese;
3. that the clergy of the diocese may be working with partially formed subjective definitions of bullying which mitigate against addressing bullying situations;
4. that the objective understanding of bullying opens up the possibility for examining subjective experiences;
5. that the clergy of the diocese need clarity regarding a pathway to respond to bullying;
6. that bullying may be more successfully addressed with no blame, mutual learning approaches rather than the intention of identifying the bully and attempting to correct their behaviour.

IMPLICATIONS OF THIS WORK

This work has implications at the level of anti-bullying policy. It further offers guidelines to shape the style of intervention and the interaction with training.

The need for an effective anti-bullying policy.

- This policy should take into account clergy's ambivalence towards engagement with the concept of bullying. It should therefore highlight the significant vulnerabilities of gender, tradition, hierarchy and theology.
- It should be a policy which is not dependent on bullying being established, seeking to address situations where there is potential for bullying or the presence of factors associated with bullying. The aim of the policy would not be to identify bullying and deal with it but to identify the potential for bullying and diffuse it.
- The policy should not be an isolated document of which people are unaware until they need to look it up.
- PCC members, deanery and diocesan synod members should be aware of this material and empowered to raise concerns.

Style of intervention

- Intervention should aim to be non-threatening to all parties with a clear dissociation from grievance procedures. The policy should neither be an extension of a grievance policy or a first stage in grievance procedures.
- Third parties brought into a potentially bullying situation should be open to exploring contextual factors over a wide period of time/experience.
- A potential pathway for intervention is the re-establishing of difference between the parties.
- There should be clear differentiation between individuals offering the passive support of the listening ear and actively working to address problem areas.
- Exit interviews should be offered as a matter of course at the end of any post, they should explore the quality of relationships during the post as a guide to potential training needs/skill set for the next appointment.
- Emphasis should be placed on resolving problems and not relying on the potential to exit the post.

Training

- An anti-bullying approach should permeate Initial/Continuing Ministerial Education activity in the diocese.
- There is scope through the diocesan conference to achieve a baseline of awareness which reflects engagement at all levels of church hierarchy.
- Mentors, ministerial reviewers and spiritual directors/companions should have additional training specifically related to responding to people who want to talk about experiences of bullying.
- The ministerial development review process should offer access to objective measures of bullying to open the possibility of accessing anti-bullying support if necessary.
- Conflict management training should have an element specifically related to bullying.

It is my hope that bringing together policy, intervention and training in this way will lead to a resilient response to bullying in the diocese of study.

LIMITATIONS OF THIS WORK

There is a strong element of subjectivity which touches both the numerical and narrative elements of this work. Arriving at a percentage of bullied clergy sounds objective but within this are the elements of the clergy's subjective response to the survey and the interpretive element of categorizing experiences of different levels of bullying.

I believe that listening in depth to the interviewees offered insights that have the potential to shape a more effective anti-bullying response than the diocese currently has. However, this is not on the basis that the views of the interviewees offer comprehensive cover of all views or are generalizable in any way.

FURTHER WORK

There is considerable scope for tracing the impact of this work and evaluating any change of practice which comes out of it. This could particularly contribute to addressing a lack of material relating to the effectiveness of anti-bullying intervention.

This work develops a theoretical framework for anti-bullying activity. It is overall a work that generates theory. This opens up the possibility for the testing of theory. The narrow focus of this work on one diocese could be extended to other diocese with the potential to develop generalizable insights.

This work focussed on clergy due to the need to set boundaries and my professional context as clergy. There is scope for lay exploration.

Gender is significant in this work, so there was the potential that as a female researcher I obtained a narrow picture. Notably no opponents of women's ordination offered to participate in the interviews. It would be interesting for a male researcher to use these resources and a comparison be made.

Some avenues for further work have already been mentioned as they arose. These include: examination of the role of conflicting cultures within the Church of England; the potential to apply mimesis to alternative psychological models for bullying; the potential for similar work based on a different sampling method.

I believe a strength of this work is in opening up avenues for exploration. Therefore, in addition to these I would like to add three further areas. Resilience is an area to which I have made occasional reference. The connection between wisdom and resilience, that they are both windows into learning from experience, has significant potential to be explored in the context of bullying. This could extend into further exploration of what organizational resilience might mean for the Church of England. Additionally, I raised the possibility of coaching relationships degenerating into parent-child relationships. This could also be a promising area for further work. Aside from particular subjects for study I would also suggest that this thesis advances the use of IPA in the context of practical theology.

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APPENDIX (I): ETHICS- INFORMATION/CONSENT/ WITHDRAWAL



Dear Colleague,

Many of you will know me through my ministry in this diocese over the last ten years but whether this is the case or not, I would be very grateful if you would give consideration to helping me in this research project. You can do this by completing the survey linked below by 31st August 2013. Like you I have received a number of requests to complete surveys and have made this as short as possible to respect your time commitments.

The research I am conducting is part of a professional doctorate based with the Cambridge Theological Federation and Anglia Ruskin University. The area I am examining relates to our experiences as we carry out our ministry, thinking of interactions with both lay and ordained people. It is a survey based on the negative acts questionnaire which has been widely used both in Britain and internationally.

My area of interest relates to how the diocese may care for its clergy effectively and by answering these questions you will be contributing to building up a picture of the extent that clergy experience some negative aspects of human nature.

This survey is being offered to all clergy on the diocesan database for as large a sample as possible. As well as including the results of this research in my doctoral thesis I would like to share it as widely as possible in the diocese and especially with those holding the pastoral care of clergy in their concern. This may be achieved through an article in [diocesan Magazine] for example.

If you are willing to participate, please follow this link [link removed] or copy and paste it as a web address).

This is a mainly self-financed study conducted with support from the diocese. If you choose to complete the survey then the information you supply will be reported on anonymously and by groups not by individuals. Completed surveys will be kept securely and read only by me. Additionally, in the final thesis the name of the diocese will not be used though you should be aware that anyone who chooses to look me up could work it out.

Participation is voluntary throughout, you can return later to change survey answers and even if the survey has been completed you can select the 'withdraw' option.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, if you have any queries please feel free to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Revd. Lorraine Turner (rev.lorraine@btinternet.com)

Interview Information Sheet

This interview is a follow up to feedback to clergy from the *negative behaviours experienced in the course of ministry* survey. The depth in which you speak is at your discretion and you may choose to move on in the interview or bring it to an end at any stage. If this does bring to mind any difficult areas for you then we can discuss avenues for support. However, the choice and activity of following these up would remain with you.

This research is part of a professional doctorate based with the Cambridge Theological Federation. My area of interest relates to how the diocese may care for its clergy more effectively and by participating in this interview you will be contributing to enriching the picture offered by the survey results.

This is a mainly self-financed study conducted with support from the diocese. If you choose to complete this consent form the information you supply will be used anonymously. Additionally, in the final thesis the name of the diocese will not be used though you should be aware that anyone who chose to look me up could work it out. Participation is voluntary throughout so you can complete the withdrawal section of the consent form if you change your mind at a later date.

Consent

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.
3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded but that it is possible a reader might identify the diocese.
4. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

Data Protection: I agree to the University (Anglia Ruskin and its partner colleges) processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the research project as outlined previously.

APPENDIX (II) THE SURVEY

Thinking back over the last 6 months, please indicate, by ticking the relevant box, the frequency with which you have experienced the behaviours described below.

Act	Frequency				
	Never	Now and then	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
1. Someone withholding information which affects your performance.					
2. Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your ministry					
3. Being ordered to do tasks below your level of competence.					
4. Having key areas of responsibility removed or replaced with more trivial or unpleasant tasks.					
5. Spreading of gossip or rumours about you.					
6. Being ignored or excluded					
7. Having insulting or offensive remarks made about your person, attitudes or your private life.					

8. Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger					
9. Intimidating behaviours such as finger-pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking your way.					
10. Hints or signals from others that you should quit your present post.					
11. Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes.					
12. Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach.					
13. Persistent criticism of your errors or mistakes.					
14. Having your opinions ignored.					
15. Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with.					
16. Being given tasks with unreasonable deadlines.					
17. Having allegations made against you.					

18. Excessive monitoring of your ministerial activities.					
19. Pressure not to claim something to which you are by right entitled (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses).					
20. Being the subject of excessive teasing or sarcasm.					
21. Being exposed to an unmanageable workload.					
22. Threats of violence or actual violence.					

About you.... (please tick any relevant boxes)

Male ☐ Female ☐

age: up to 29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-65 ☐ above 65 ☐

years of ordained ministry up to 5 ☐ 6-15 ☐ 15-24 ☐ 25+ ☐

self-supporting ☐ stipendiary ☐ house for duty ☐ training post ☐

APPENDIX (III) POST SURVEY FEEDBACK TO CLERGY.

Update: Negative Behaviours in the Course of Ministry Survey

Over the summer 67 members of clergy in this diocese responded to a survey asking about a range of negative experiences that they might be experiencing in the course of their ministry. This is the feedback I promised at the time of sending out the survey. I hope this will be of interest whether or not you completed the survey yourself. (This has not been written as a [diocesan magazine] article as suggested earlier because [diocesan magazine] is currently suspended.) The purpose of this update is to share the results of the survey and give you the chance to respond if you would like to.

Background

In industry and public service there has been a long standing concern about how people's working environment affects their overall wellbeing and the employer's responsibility in this area. As long ago as 1992 Andrea Adams' book and radio documentaries brought public attention to the effect that the experience of being bullied at work could have on a person's life. This opened up many developments including a wide range of behaviours that people experienced labelled as workplace aggression, incivility, bullying, harassment etc. Over the years this has touched on church life with the production of the Archbishops' Council's report on bullying and harassment "Dignity at Work", the commending of its draft policy to dioceses and the union Unite drawing attention to the bullying of clergy as an issue. This together with my own experience as a member of the clergy led me to ask some questions. I focussed these around our experience of "negative behaviours" as they are listed in Dignity at Work as well as having already been used with thousands of people across a wide range of work situations.

Questions.

1. Do clergy experience similar negative behaviours to people working in industry and public service?
2. What is the prevalence of these behaviours?

These questions were a good starting point because Dignity at Work was based on secular research without having asked what clergy were experiencing. Also reading the report, I found myself being drawn to the phrase that bullying was rare in the church. I

wondered what it said about the church as an institution if it held back from finding out what clergy's actual experiences were and worked from assumptions. The overall tone could be summed up as: *bullying is rare because the church is a loving community*; but *occasionally things go wrong so there ought to be a policy*. I see this as a policy that shoots itself in the foot. If it is only rarely going to be useful then people with many urgent calls on their time are unlikely to put in a great deal of effort implementing it.

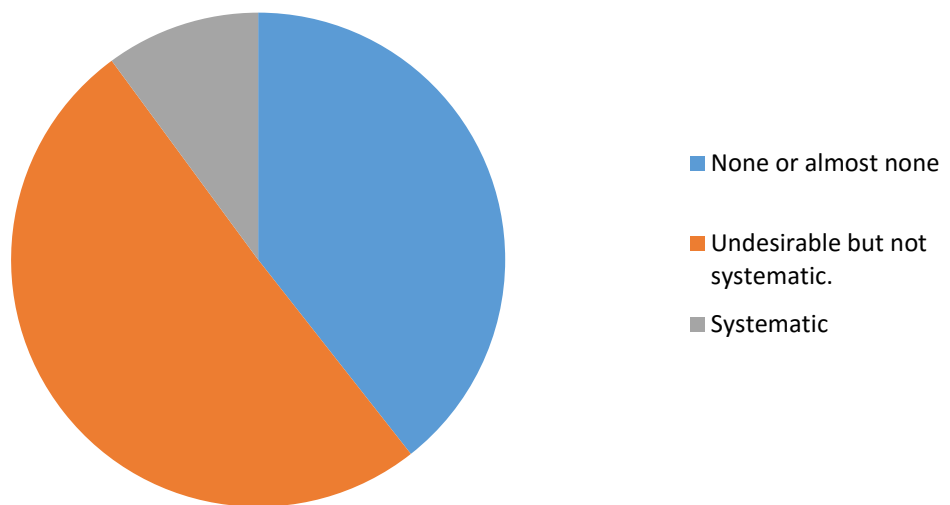
Preliminary Findings

1. Clergy in our diocese do experience a similar range of negative behaviours during the course of their ministry as employees experience in the workplace. These experiences include behaviours directed at a personal level, behaviours impeding clergy in their ministry and physical intimidation.

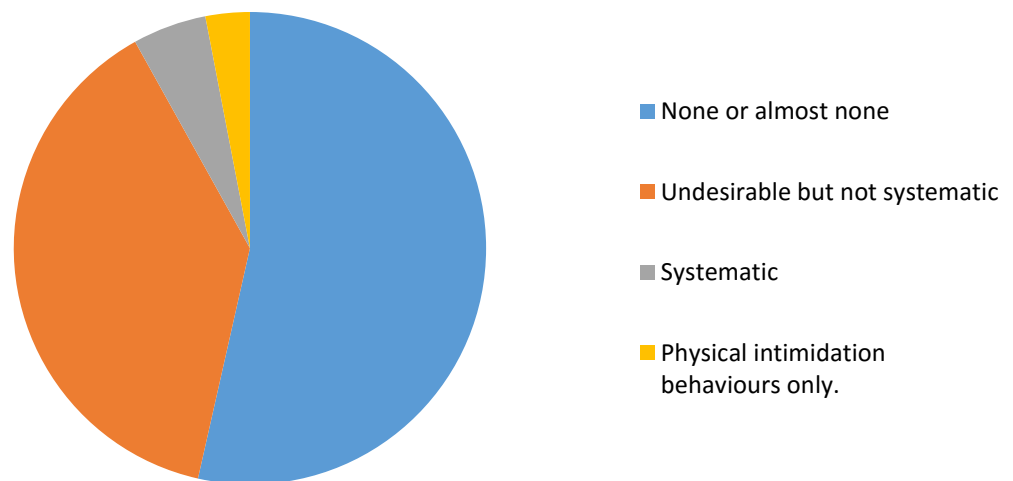
2. Clergy experience a different prevalence of these behaviours to a comparison sample drawn from industry and public service.

- The group of clergy who experienced none or almost none of these behaviours was smaller than the comparison group. 39% compared to 53%
- The group of clergy who were experiencing negative behaviours at a level that was undesirable but lacked a systematic element indicated by weekly or daily occurrences was correspondingly bigger 50 % compared to 38%.
- The group of clergy experiencing negative behaviours on a weekly or daily basis was 10% of the sample compared to 5% in the comparison study.
- This was mainly balanced by 3% of the comparison sample belonging to a group with no match among the clergy where most negative behaviours were infrequent but physical intimidation was present. For the clergy, physical intimidation was encountered alongside the frequent occurrence of the other negative behaviours.

Clergy experience of negative behaviours.



Comparison group from a range of workplace settings.



Discussion.

Interpretation of these results invites consideration of the relationship between experiencing negative behaviours and experiencing bullying. This work is framed within an approach that sees bullying as negative behaviour with a systematic element represented by weekly or daily occurrences and an imbalance of power between

participants over an extended period of time. Power is interpreted in its broadest sense recognizing that there are many different ways in which one person can be powerful with respect to another. Experiencing negative behaviours on a weekly or daily basis is strongly correlated with the presence of bullying. In turn the presence of bullying is correlated with a negative effect on physical and psychological health.

This suggests that instead of thinking of the church as a place where clergy are less likely to experience bullying than employees at work we should at least think of the church as an environment where bullying occurs at a similar magnitude as in workplaces but in addition to this where more clergy are experiencing situations that are at risk of developing into bullying.

There is evidence here that in formulating a response to bullying as an issue our diocese should not follow the assumption of the Dignity at Work report that bullying is rare. Instead it should work based on the principles that there are clergy currently experiencing bullying, there are clergy who have experienced bullying in the past and may still be affected by this; there may be witnesses to bullying trying to reconcile this with what it means to be the Church.

It is encouraging to see recent acknowledgements within the diocese of the importance of clergy well-being. However, our current position with respect to awareness of bullying is behind the ways in which the best employers care for the well-being of their employees. This is particularly significant as common tenure confers many rights and responsibilities of the employer/employee relationship to diocese and their clergy. This has implications not only for the well-being of clergy but regarding the diocese's capacity for mission.

Limitations and Further Work

In this short summary I have focussed on the survey itself rather than wider theological issues which will be part of my final thesis. There is also considerably more statistical analysis ahead before detailed conclusions can be drawn. However, I do feel that offering preliminary findings with a chance for your further input will enhance the quality of the finished work.

There are some of you who feel you have something to express relevant to this area which ticking boxes on a survey did not satisfy, perhaps indicating that there is more to the Church picture than is captured in industrially derived questions. If this is the case

and you have not already done so, please contact me by email [email link] so that I can offer the opportunity for a one to one discussion relating to your experiences, understandings and interpretations in this area.

Thank you

To finish I'd like to thank you for giving time to read this and especially thank those who have already contributed or would like to contribute in the future.

Lorraine

Useful Contacts:

Although the GP is a natural first point of call for health and well-being concerns, the links below offer direct access to more specialized support.

- [Local Healthcare Links]
- <http://www.stlukeshealthcare.org.uk/home>

Within the diocese the primary path to support is through [Name] the assistant diocesan secretary, who is able to offer confidential signposting to support outside of clergy structures. [Phone Number] [email] Within clergy structures your own archdeacon or a neighbouring archdeacon may also be approached. If an individual clergy person is recommended for a course of counselling by their GP, the [archdeacon] is able to arrange confidential professional counselling and would treat the information needed to make the referral confidentially.

A Website relating specifically responding to clergy experiencing bullying is

- <http://www.balmnet.co.uk>

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