Promoting a Child Safe Culture in Institutions

A review on the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and institutional child sexual abuse in Australia

Linda Rós Eðvarðsdóttir

A Master Thesis in Behavioural Science

Utrecht Unvierstity

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First Supervisor: Dr. Rogier van‘t Rood

Second Supervisor: Dr. Paul Baar

Youth, Education and Society

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This research is a final dissertation project towards a master degree in Youth, Education and Society, Department of Behavioural Science, Utrecht. The research was done while undertaking an internship with Our Watch, the national foundation for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia. However, this is an independent research project and the following views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the text belong solely to the author.

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"Dehumanization, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen but also (though in a different way) those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human… This distortion occurs within history; but it is not an historical vocation. Indeed, to admit of dehumanization as an historical vocation would lead either to cynicism or total despair. In order for this struggle to have meaning, the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity (which is a way to create it), become in turn oppressors of the oppressors, but rather restorers of the humanity of both."

-Paulo Freire

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to gain insight into how the prevention of violence against women intersects with prevention of child sexual abuse in institutions, incorporating the prevention framework of violence against women Change the Story and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The underlying assumption of this research is that preventing child sexual abuse in institutions will reduce violence against women long term. A qualitative approach was undertaken using three methods for triangulation: a document analysis, key informant interviews and focus group discussion. The way hegemonic masculinity and feminist institutionalism are manifested in institutional culture is that they both affect conceptions of hierarchy, gender roles, and control, resulting in different power structures. Total institutions, which were a common form of institutions investigated by the Royal Commission, are an example of an old model of institutionalist approaches that are characterised by hegemonic masculine values. Feminist institutionalism on the other hand, has a transformative agenda to break down male dominant institutional hierarchies and promote egalitarian cultures in organisations. The gendered drivers of violence against women outlined in Change the Story provide both the lens and the tools for feminist institutional approaches which in turn help promote child safe cultures in institutions.

Key words: Child safety, child sexual abuse, institutional culture, hegemonic masculinity, feminist institutionalism, total institutions, gender roles, drivers of violence.

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Preamble

I want to use this opportunity to thank Our Watch for providing me the opportunity to participate in such meaningful work. Special thanks go to Cara Gleeson, Erin Gillen and to the department of Practice Leadership in Our Watch.

I have read the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Practice as stipulated by Utrecht University (The Hague, 2004 https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/profile/codes-of-conduct) and have applied them to the best of my ability. I reference all materials that I have used, whether in the form of research, photographs or phrasing. I thank everyone that has assisted me in one way or another and I take full responsibility over any information that may be misleading or wrong.

I confirm this with my signature

Utrecht, _____ 20__

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1 Introduction

Child sexual abuse has been established as a global issue of great weight and to have detrimental consequences for survivors and for society in general (Stoltenborgh, Van IJzendoorn, Euser & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2011). In 2017, the Australian Government released a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Final report, 2017). Australia is one of few countries that has started developing and implementing substantive policy frameworks, including the prevention framework Change the Story, to address and stop violence against women and children before it starts (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015). The prevention of violence against women and preventing child sexual abuse in an institutional context has thus far been addressed as two distinct topics. This research works to better understand the connection between these two issues and how they intersect. The assumption underlying the conceptual framework for this research is that preventing child abuse in institutions will lead to reduction in violence perpetrated against women in the long run. The basis of this assumption is that when children experience violence or are exposed to violence, this can contribute to the normalisation of violence (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015). Early exposure to violence, especially against women, when coupled with other societal norms that support gender inequalities, can lead to a higher risk of perpetration of partner violence for boys and possibly to higher levels of victimisation for girls (Frederick and Goddard, 2007; Humphreys and Houghton, 2008). Although early exposure to violence can lead to more acceptance of violence, for some it has the opposite effect where individuals reject violence in their future (National Crime Prevention, 2001). Creating safe environments for children in institutions where they are free from violence should be a priority for all organisations as it will contribute to reducing violence against women.

Globally, the World Health Organization (2016) estimates that one in five women and

one in thirteen men have reported being sexually abused as a child. Australia remains one of the few developed countries that have not yet conducted a rigorous methodological study on the prevalence of child sexual abuse. However, the Australian Government (2017) has summarised different studies which suggests that child sexual abuse in Australia ranges from 6-19% for males and 18-38% for females. The high prevalence rates of child sexual abuse cross-nationally suggest that countries have failed to fulfil the commitment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In failing to safeguard children's rights Australia compares similarly globally, as explicitly demonstrated in the recent Royal Commission on Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Articles 19 and 34 in the CRC establish the duty of the nation state to safeguard children and young people from all forms of violence and sexual exploitation. The CRC has been ratified by all United Nations member states save the United States of America (UNICEF, 1989).

In 2013, the Australian and Victorian Government established Our Watch, the national foundation to prevent violence against women. As of today, all Australian governments, save New South Wales, have come on board as government members (Our Watch, n.d.). As one of its first actions, Our Watch, in partnership with Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and VicHealth, developed a national framework called *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention on violence against women and their children in Australia* (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015). Change the Story is now used to guide preventative work and interventions across Australia.

Alongside this work and discourse on violence against women, there has been extensive contemporary discussion and work on child sexual abuse in Australia. In 2012 the Australian Commonwealth called for a royal commission, the highest order of inquiry within the Australian government system, on responses to child sexual abuse in institutions. The

final report, *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse,* was released in 2017 and is the most comprehensive and up-to-date document on child sexual abuse in institutions in Australia. Because of the extensive work the Australian governments have done in policy and practice, it puts Australia in an interesting position internationally to lead discussions on prevention of violence against women and on child sexual abuse.

This paper will consider the following question: *How can Our Watch strengthen the alignment with preventing violence against women and the prevention of institutional child abuse?* Based on the drivers of violence against women identified in Change the Story and on a review of *The Role of Organisational Culture in Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Contexts, Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* (Palmer, Feldman and McKibbin, 2016) - the following sub-research questions have been posed:

1. How does hegemonic masculinity and feminist institutionalism manifest itself in institutional culture?
2. What is the relationship between total institutions, hegemonic masculinity and feminist institutionalism?

To answer the research questions this work draws on the report of the Royal Commission and the framework Change the Story – there is to the author´s knowledge, no existing comparable primary prevention framework for the prevention of child sexual abuse. However, the Australian Institute of Family studies has released a report on *Conceptualising the prevention of child sexual abuse* (Quadara, Nagy, Higgins and Siegel, 2015). The report concludes that there seems to be a lack of concurrence in Australia on approaches to prevention of child sexual abuse and recommends the continued development of an integrated and shared prevention framework based on a public health approach.

This qualitative research is limited to the discussion of child sexual abuse in institutional context. The Royal Commission defines child sexual abuse in an institutional

context if it happens in connection to schools, out-of-home care, juvenile detentions or faith institutions and/or is perpetrated by official members of an institution (Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, 2014). It is important to note that although the focus here is on child sexual abuse in institutions most child sexual abuse occurs in the home (Snyder, 2000).

2 Theoretical Framework and Methodology

This research looks specifically towards feminist institutionalism and Connell's theory on hegemonic masculinity to build on the connection between prevention of violence against women and institutional child sexual abuse. Applying Connell's theory on hegemonic masculinity being the most honoured gender performance legitimising the subordination of women (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005), in the context of this research, it is important to understand that the gendered nature of violence against women has parallels with - and helps us understand - violence perpetrated against children, as both women and children are seen as 'less human' than men.

2.1 Research design

Because of the explorative nature of this research a qualitative method was applied. In qualitative research the author brings their own worldview, paradigms and sets of beliefs to the research project which inform the conduct of the writing (Lewis, 2015). Three instruments were used for the design: document analysis, key informant interviews, and focus group discussion. Participants were chosen by careful consideration of their expertise using purposeful sampling method. Six people agreed to be interviewed for the key informant interviews. For the focus group discussion eleven Senior Policy Advisors attended from Our Watch. In Appendix B you can find a list of participant details. Three participants choose to remain anonymous and have their names been coded accordingly.

A constructivist research approach was employed due to the exploratory nature of the research. Specifically, the research population are viewed as *social actors* who shape and rework the ideas which are researched (Matthews and Ross, 2010). Through the respondents, ideas are identified and linked to theory. Knowledge gathered includes people´s interpretations and understandings as these are direct reflections of aspects of culture and social norms in which they live, with the latter being the object of research. A document analysis is conducted with the purpose of giving insight to the research questions. In-depth analysis of the prevention framework Change the Story and volume 2 *Nature and Cause* of the Royal Commission was undertaken. The criteria of choosing Nature and Cause was based on the premise that its content is most comparable with Change the Story. Research from the literature review is also used for supporting arguments.

Key themes were explored through key informant interviews. All the participants are experts in the field of violence prevention. The questions were divided into three themes: observations of the impact of the Royal; intersectionality and gender equality; and the role of masculinity in institutions. Focus group discussion was held with Senior Policy Advisors and Managers of Our Watch, the national foundation for primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia. The author introduced their emerging findings and theoretical basis for the research with reflection questions for the participants. The discussion lasted two and a half hours and was categorised in themes, note only two themes, the connection between violence against women and child sexual abuse in institutions, and giving children agency, are included in the analysis. The themes were chosen based on what participants deemed important and what was interesting for the research**.** The full focus group analysis can be found in Appendix C.

Here, triangulation is used to check and establish validity in research by using multiple perspectives to strengthen outcomes (Patton, 2002). The use of methodological

triangulation is applied through document analysis, key informant interviews, and focus group discussion. These methods were chosen to complement each other and to receive as much data as possible within limited resources. All key documents are robust, and evidence based with strong theoretical basis and all participants have vast pragmatic and theoretical knowledge of the topic.

2.2 Procedure Before the document analysis Change the Story, the final report of the Royal Commission and the Role of Organisational Culture in Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Contexts was read, highlighting information that was thought interesting and relevant. For the Document analysis, Nature and Cause was read twice and then coded using the keywords culture, masculinity, child safety, institutions and prevention. Change the Story and the Role on organisational culture in child sexual abuse in institutional contexts was then cross-referenced with Nature and Cause, noting especially how the documents align and where they perhaps diverge.

For the key informant interviews, based on the document analysis and on the consultation with Our Watch the interview questions were categorised in three themes. Interviewees where selected using purposeful sampling method and then emailed with information on the project and a request for their participation. Before the interviews were conducted, all participants gave their written consent for their participation and were asked whether they would like to remain anonymous in publications. Two out of six participants chose to do so, and they have been assigned random names to code their identity. The same process was done for the focus group interview, where one out of eleven participants chose anonymity.

3 Findings

3.1 Literature Review

3.1.1 Royal Commission. Australia has a federated system of government, where political power is divided between six states and two territories and a central government referred to as the Commonwealth or Federal Government (Hughes, 1991). State governments have their own constitutions and retain power to change laws not controlled by the Commonwealth. The territories fall under land not claimed by the six states and have a constitutional right for self-government which can be revoked by the Parliament. The federal Parliament governs nationally and the Prime Minister, as the Federal Government representative, chairs a coalition comprising representatives from each of the federal, state and territory governments on matters that are of national concern or that need combined action by all Australian governments. This intergovernmental forum is called The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and focusses on improving the well-being of all Australians (Anderson, 2008). COAG has a strong record of driving reforms. It is currently taking extensive measures to implement child safety standards in institutions across Australia based on the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017).

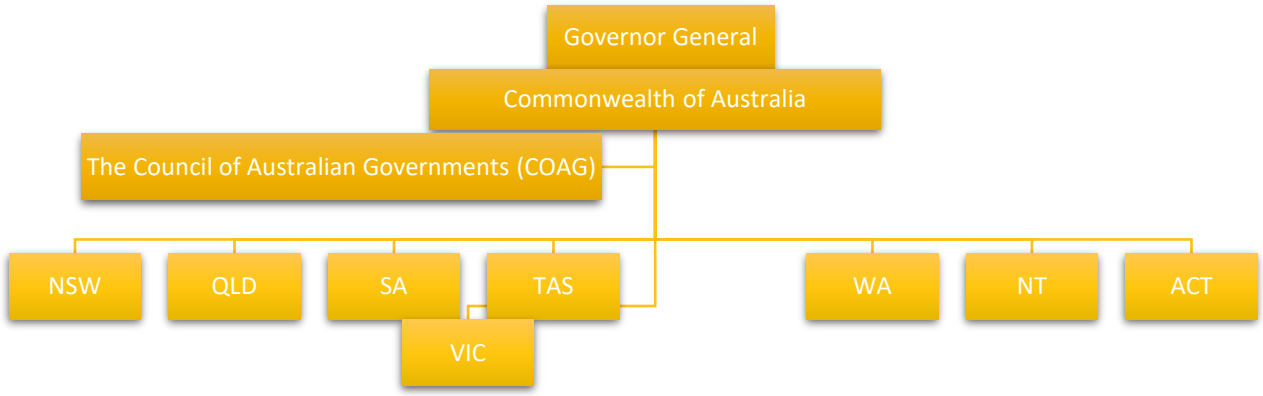

Figure 1 A diagram of the Australian system of governments and territories

Following two major national inquiries into violence against children in 2004 and 2005, it was recommended that the Australian Government establish a Royal Commission looking into institutional responses to sexual abuse against children and young people in institutions (McClellan, Coate, Atkinson, Fitzgerald, Milroy & Murray, 2017). In 2012, the Prime Minister of the day, Julia Gillard, announced a Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse. Since then over 16,000 individuals have come forward to tell their stories. The Royal Commission has in private sessions interviewed 8013 individuals who helped inform the commission, along with over 1000 written accounts. The outcome has resulted in 17 comprehensive volumes describing the scope of the Royal Commission as well as outlining ten Child Safe Standards for all institutions to adopt (Final report, 2017). For the purpose of this research, only volume 2, Nature and Cause, will be explored in depth. Nature and Cause describes in detail what is known about the extent of child sexual abuse and relates it to the institutional context as well as discussing the risk and protective factors of child sexual abuse (Final report (Vol2), 2017).

3.1.2 Our Watch. Our Watch is a non-profit organisation in Australia that was established by the Australian and Victorian governments to drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children. (Our Watch, n.d.). One of the main achievement of Our Watch, in collaboration with Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, was the creation of Change the Story, which outlines the gendered drivers of violence against women. In Appendix B you will find an extensive description on the work and impact of Our Watch.

3.1.3 Change the Story. Change the Story (2015) is a national framework to prevent violence against women through social change. The final framework has been informed by

extensive consultation with the participation of over 400 stakeholders and articulates a broad vision grounded in large-scale collaboration and cooperation. Change the Story presents the evidence for preventing violence against women and their children in Australia. The framework recognises that a broad-based movement for social change needs to occur for lasting transformation of society. It is based on a whole system approach and identifies women and men, communities, organisations and governments as key for the social transformation needed to establish gender equality.

Drivers of violence against women.

To systematically combat violence against women and their children Change the Story outlines on an explanatory model of violence. Based on a review of current national and international evidence the model identifies four main drivers of violence against women in the Australian context. The model also identifies reinforcing factors that interact with the gendered drivers which can increase the probability, frequency, and severity of violence against women (Our Watch, ANROWS and Vichealth, 2015).

The explanatory model of violence uses the definition of violence against women in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Assembly, U.G., 1993). It describes violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm and coercion, in public and private life" (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015, p. 20).

It is important to understand that patterns of violence against women do not occur in a void and are influenced by other social aspects and structural discrimination and inequality, such as aboriginality, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, education, social and economic status, and other social categories (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015.) Not all women will experience violence in the same way as these different factors shape and are

shaped by different responses. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, for example, report three times as many incidents of sexual violence compared to non-Indigenous women (Olsen & Lovett, 2016). This is because violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is shaped by other forces than violence against non-Indigenous women; forces such as ongoing colonisation, intergenerational trauma from genocidal violence and social-economic discrimination and racism (Our Watch, 2018). Likewise, women with disabilities, - that identify as LGBTI and older women can be more vulnerable to violence due to intersecting factors. These societal forces converge with gender inequality and influence responses to violence against women as well as how it is internalized, both by victims of violence and society itself. Intersectionality can increase the prevalence and severity of violence against specific groups of women (Our Watch, ANROWS and Vichealth, 2015). An important emerging literature addressing intersectionality, especially for Aboriginal and Indigenous people, is on cultural safety. Cultural safety is a concept that originates from Maori nurses in New Zealand (Ramsden, 1990) and refers to practices that create an environment which is safe for people from diverse backgrounds; where there is no denial of their identity and there is shared respect, meaning and importantly shared experience by practitioners and their patients. Cultural safe practices require embracing people´s cultural identity and employing staff that share similar background as the children and youth they work with (Eckermann, Dowd and Chong, 2010).

The gendered nature of violence.

It is important to understand gendered patterns of violence in preventing violence against women, especially that violence is largely perpetuated by men. Most men are caring and loving members of society and are not violent (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015). However, 95% of all victims of violence, male and female, experience violence by male perpetrators (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Because most men are not violent,

but almost all that exhibit violent behaviour are men, it is important to understand the structures and norms that underly this social phenomenon (Our Watch, ANROWS and Vichealth, 2015). Although there are some factors at the individual level that correlate with violence against women, such as mental health, those factors cannot predict violent behaviour alone and therefore must be viewed in a socio-ecological context. Values and beliefs are formed and influenced by both formal and informal social structures - such as policies and legislation or family and schooling. When these values are obscured by structures built on faulty premises about gender it increases and normalises violence against women. Figure 2 shows the Socio-ecological model of violence against women.

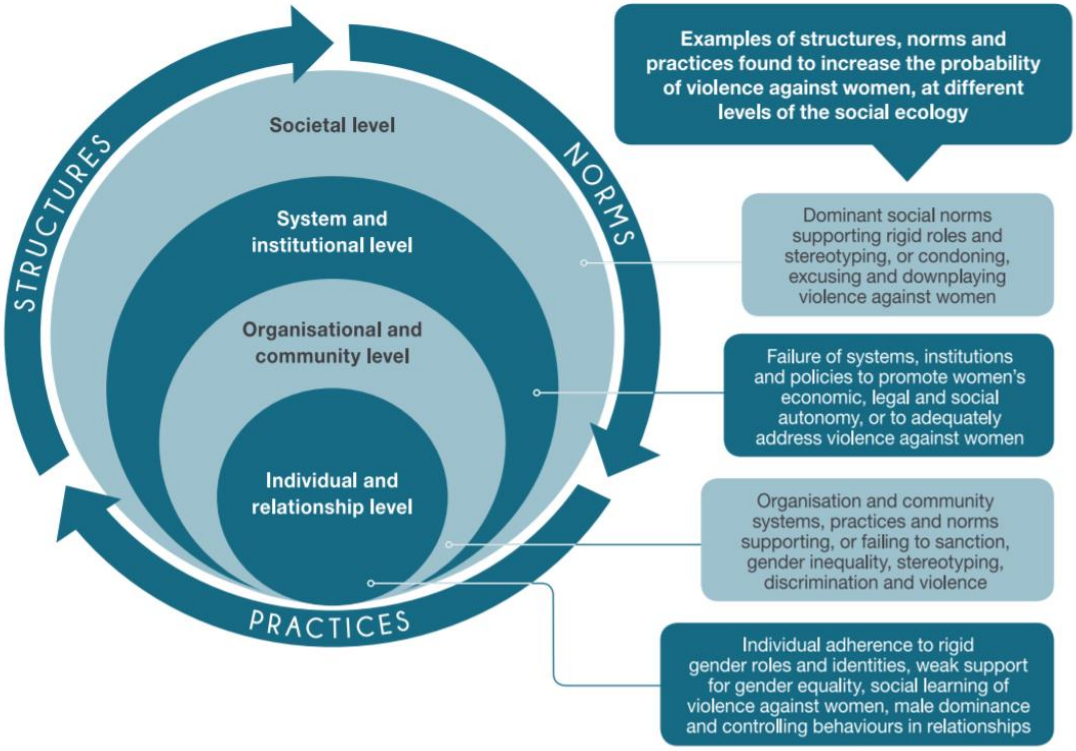

Figure 2 Socio-ecological model of violence against women, (Our Watch, 2015, p. 21).

The normalisation of violence.

When individuals are exposed to or experience any form of violence over a long time, this can lead to the normalisation of violence. Particularly children, when exposed to

violence, are vulnerable to the belief that violence is a natural expression of domestic disputes and discipline (European Commission, 2010; World Health Organization and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 2010; VicHealth, 2007). However, this type of social learning does not occur in isolation from learning about gender roles and gendered power dynamics. For example, children witnessing violence against their mothers by their fathers normalise violence as an expression of masculinity and that men and boys are more likely to perpetrate violence while girls and women are more likely to experience and accept it (Humphrey and Houghton, 2008). This emphasises the need to address structures and norms that surround power relations and gender norms. Change the Story has outlined five key action points as well as five supporting action points to prevent violence against women. Together they address the drivers of violence against women (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015).

3.1.4 Hegemonic masculinity. Connell (1995) describes hegemonic masculinity as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (p. 77). The concept of hegemonic masculinity first emerged in Australia from studies of social inequality in high schools (Kessler et al, 1982) which provided empirical evidence that social hierarchies are interwoven with portrayals of gender construction (Connell et al. 1982). Further studies have confirmed the complexity of gender construction for men and the plurality of masculinities (Willis, 1977; Cockburn, 1983, Herdt 1981 & Hunt 1980).

A gendered analogue emerged in the mid 1980´s in political sociology in research on power structures (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity was then distinguished from other forms of masculinities, especially subordinate masculinity, with hegemonic masculinity being described as the pattern of practice that allows men to dominate

over women "and gave evidence of the active struggle for dominance that is implicit in the Gramscian concept of hegemony" (p. 832). Although only a minority of men might act on this definition of hegemonic masculinity, it has been normative in the sense that it embodied the 'most honoured way of being a man' (p. 832). All men were required to relate themselves to this specific form of masculinity and, more importantly, it ideologically legitimated the subordination of women to men. The concept of hegemony has been most influential in that it did not mean asserting dominance through force and violence, but that hegemonic masculinity achieved ascendancy through persuasion, institutions, and culture (p. 832).

3.1.5 The Role of Organisational Culture in Institutional Child Abuse. Donald Palmer in collaboration with Valerie Feldman and Gemma Mckibbin was commissioned by the Royal Commission to publish a comprehensive analysis on the role of organisational culture in institutional child sexual abuse. Palmer´s, Feldman´s and McKibbin´s research is the only document that looks at the Royal Commission through a comprehensive gender lens. They draw on the work of the sociologist Erving Goffman on total institutions and the connection between patriarchal societal cultures and total institutions. Total institutions, which according to Goffman is the ideal for formal organisation, are institutions defined by a hierarchal structural system with clear structural boundaries and a set of both formal and informal rules (Goffman, 1961). Examples of pure total institutions are prisons, military academies, detention centres and institutions with undiluted power over their 'inmates'. Traditionally, society has valued the total institutional model and most of the institutions investigated by the Royal Commission had at least elements of total institutionalism, if not purely total institutions.

Institutions have played a large part in perpetuating patriarchal structures that allow for child sexual abuse to occur. Gender relations are embedded in institutions where men are given greater leeway, generally hold higher positions and are afforded greater opportunities

than women (Butler, 1993; Grosz, 1990; Gunew, 1990; Lykke, 2010). An extension of this patriarchal societal structure is ‘macho cultures’ which have been historically prevalent in total institutions. Patriarchal culture refers to cultures where men are asked to position themselves within hegemonic masculinity; as powerful rather than being weak, eschew self-concepts that acknowledge susceptibility to weakness and victimisation and perhaps, most importantly, to see themselves as ‘sexually willing and eager’ (Palmer, Feldman and McKibbin, 2016). Macho cultures go beyond this conceptualisation of patriarchal structures and see boys as being inherently aggressive. Furthermore, they are seen as being naturally sexually aggressive. Dominating their peers, and women, is considered an internal drive. As such, sexual aggression among boys becomes valued and normative (Fine, 1987; Hartill, 2009). Perhaps unsurprisingly then, scholars have established a link between child sexual abuse and environments which are characterised by ‘macho cultures’ (Briggs, 1995; Howitt, 1994, Waterhouse, Dobash & Carnie, 1994; Parkin & Green, 1997; Green, 2001; Green & Masson, 2002; Hartill, 2009). Both patriarchal and macho cultures are commonly cultivated within the model of total institutions (Palmer, Feldman and McKibbin, 2016). In postmodern societies emerging literature has started to reject this model of total institutions and instead is moving towards exploring new institutionalist approaches.

3.1.6 New Institutionalism through a gendered lens. The study of structures and cultural norms and rules that shape behaviour of individuals within a given institution has used a new lens in the last decades. Aiken and Hage (1968), Hawley (1968), and Thompson (1967) reason that organisations tend to become isomorphic and that they need to achieve legitimacy with their environments, that is to say the structural and cultural norms of the organisations reflect those of society. In the modern context organisational structures need to be in a constant state of flux where they can adapt to an ever-advancing society. Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that if organisations want to survive in our society which has been

highly institutionalised, and where policies, cultures, techniques and practices are constantly expanding and taking on new social dimension, they need to achieve legitimacy by incorporating societally rationalised principles and thus increase good faith in the organisation both internally and externally. Meyer´s and Rowan´s ideas are the core of neo-institutional perspectives which are essential in today´s discourse on sociology and institutions (Powell and DiMaggio, 2012). New institutionalism (NI) combines a traditional study of institutions that looks at formal rules and structures with the study of behaviourist scholars. New institutionalism has transcended simplistic understandings of what shapes organisational culture and looks at the 'co-constitutive nature of politics', the essential twofold relationship between the institution and the individual. McKay, Kenny and Chappell (2010) discuss new institutionalism in relation to feminist approaches, or lack thereof. In their paper *New Institutionalism through a Gendered Lens: Towards a Feminist Institutionalism* they compare the four schools of new institutionalism - historical institutionalism; rational choice institutionalism; sociological or organisational institutionalism; and discursive or constructive institutionalism - with an emphasis on the main points of concurrence. By describing how these different schools of NI complement each other, McKay, Kenny and Chappell provide an overview through which a gendered lens can be applied and suggest a feminist institutionalist approach to the study of institutional politics.

3.1.7 Feminist Institutionalism. New Institutionalism has often been criticised for downplaying the importance of power relations; relying on distributional models of power and the agency of specific actors rather than the relationship between institutions and actor (Pierson, 2004; Streeck and Thelen, 2005). McKay, Kenny and Chappell (2010) add to this a feminist dimension and offer feminist institutionalism as a solution to dismantle harmful power dynamics and rigid hierarchies in institutions. They argue that gender is a feature of

social structures and institutions as much as it operates at an interpersonal level (McKay, Kenny and Chappell, 2010, p. 580).

> "To say that institution is gendered means that constructions of masculinity and femininity are intertwined in the daily life or logic of political institutions rather than ´existing out in society fixed within individuals which they then bring whole to the institution´ (Kenney, 1996, p. 456)"

Different institutional actors have varied 'access' to power tied to 'rules and worldviews' (Olsen, 2009). Feminist research has shown that access to resources and the power they create has a gender bias. Within and outside of institutions, there are prescribed acceptable forms of gendered behaviour as well as values and rules that differ for men and women and allow men to achieve ascendancy over women within institutional hierarchies (Chappell, 2006). This also means that politics and policy are structured by gendered assumptions (Amnesley and Gains, 2010) with the 'masculine ideal' being the most valued way of behaviour and underpinning institutional structural dynamics (Duerst-Lahti and Kell, 1995). This has historically, as well as in modern times, meant that women are marginalized and disadvantaged in relation to power and power hierarchies in institutional settings (McKay, Kenny and Chappell, 2010).

Feminist political science does not just describe gendered power distributions but has a transformative agenda. Feminist scholars understand that change needs to happen across the ecological framework and that 'gender regimes' (Connell, 2006) are a part of ongoing dynamics and unfolding social constructions; that norms of masculinity and femininity provide for mechanisms that naturalise power asymmetries (McKay, 2009); and 'that changes to the structuring of gender relations (at micro-level or broader societal shifts) are important potential causes of broader institutional change' (McKay, Kenny and Chappell, 2010, p. 582).

3.2 Document Analysis

3.2.1 Change the Story and the Royal Commission. In trying to understand the cause of child sexual abuse in institutional context, previous explanations have centred on understanding individual-level factors, such as victim´s attributes or characteristics of the perpetrator. However, research is moving away from such simplistic explanations and the Royal Commission shows clearly that there are complex socio-ecological factors at hand and that institutional settings play a key role (Final report (Vol2), 2017). The Royal Commission found unwavering evidence on how institutions failed to create environments that prioritize the best interest of children (Final report, 2017). Change the Story explains how drivers of violence against women arise from gender discriminatory practices and structures that together create an environment where women and men are not considered equals. Similar mechanisms can be identified in the Royal Commission that allowed, and still allows, for child sexual abuse to occur. Condoning violence against women and men´s control of decision making and limits to women´s independence is especially important in this regard to understand child sexual abuse in institutional contexts. Where violence is trivialised, downplayed and where blame is shifted towards the victim it reinforces social norms and structures that normalise violence. Where male dominance is valued and represented as normal or inevitable it sends a message where women are less worthy of respect and more legitimate targets of violence. This has striking parallels in the institutions investigated by the Royal Commission; reputations of institutions were valued over the safety of children, organisational leadership protected perpetrators of child sexual abuse and a culture of devaluing voices of children was rampant (Final Report, 2017). Figure 3 shows the gendered

drivers of violence against women.

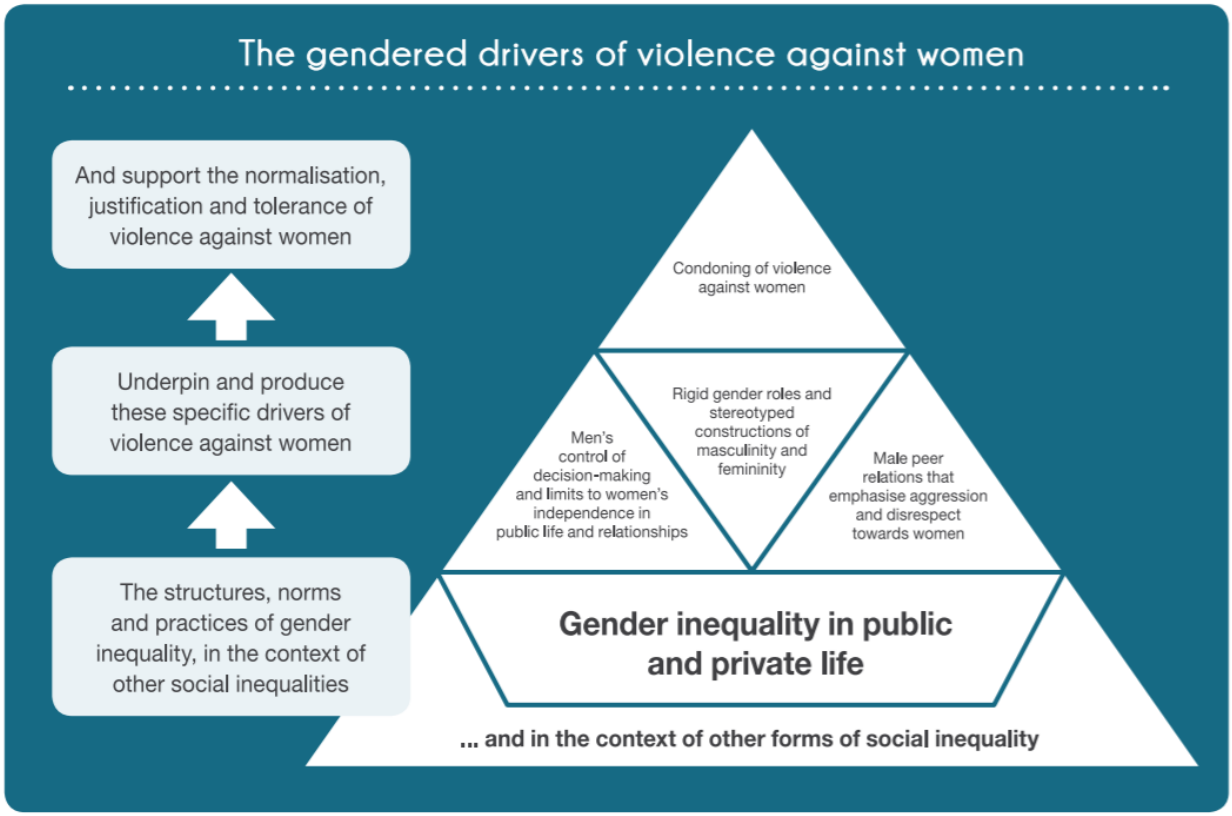

Figure 3 The gendered drivers of violence against women (Our Watch, 2015, p. 24).

3.2.2 Cognitive distortion and the mortification of the self. The phenomenon of cognitive distortion that supports child sexual abuse suggests that 'erroneous' beliefs - that are influenced by broad socio-cultural norms - are formed early in life and reinforced through life events. Distorted beliefs happen where men have inflated sense of entitlement, or have difficulty appreciating the views of others. An example of distorted beliefs is that men are entitled to sexual activity with children because their sexual needs should be prioritised over the needs of children (Final report (Vol2), 2017). For adult perpetrators several risk factors have been identified that can lead to cognitive distortion, such as adverse experiences in childhood and interpersonal and emotional difficulties (Final report (Vol2), 2017). Although these factors do not equal perpetration, they do give context in which we can better

understand child sexual abuse perpetration. From young age male perpetrators assimilate attitudes towards women and children, and towards sexuality, in a biased way. This means that, according to the Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending, there are motivational and cognitive biases that lead individuals to seek basic human needs in ways that are socially unacceptable (Ward and Beech, 2006). This happens in a context where there is a strong culture of male dominance over women and children, and objectification of women is flagrant (Final report, 2017). Men are immersed in cultures where women are under-represented in position of influence and power. For example, in Asia and Australia only 11,8% of all CEO´s are women, in Europe and the Americas this number drops to 7.8% (Hora, 2015). The culture which leads to men holding these distorted beliefs and justify child sexual abuse has clear connections to patriarchal structures of society. Looking at the third and fourth drivers of violence against women 'rigid gender roles and identities', and 'male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women' - serve to explain how these drivers contribute to gender hierarchies that support men´s power over women and a sense of entitlement to sex and control. Men that adhere to rigid ideas of traditional masculinity report greater sense of entitlement (Foran and O'Leary, 2008; Gage, 2005; Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, and Watts, 2006). They are more likely to use violence against women and where there is an emphasis on aggression and sexual conquest in socialisation of men through peer relationship men are more likely to use or support violence (Our watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015).

Research indicates that 90% of children that engage in harmful sexual behaviour are male (Tomison, 2001), this was reflected in the Royal Commission but 86,3% of victims that were sexually abused by other children, reported they were abused by a male child (Final Report, 2017). One potential explanation of this is that males are taught to express trauma through aggression towards others (Final report (Vol2), 2017). In understanding how this get

socialised through institutions it is interesting to look towards Palmer´s, Feldman´s and McKibbin´s delineation of culture in total institutions and assumptions of human nature. Total institutions employ theories of change and subscribe to the medical model, where the 'patient' plays a passive role. The model of total institutions aspires to human transformation through the patient´s submission to hierarchal structures of the organisation and by destroying their members´ identities. Goffman (1961) refers to this as 'mortification of self' and this practice is achieved through denial of past experiences and background, -racial, -cultural, -social etc., and through humiliating activities such as 'hazing'. Although this practice applied more to institutions of the past, it is still relevant today, especially in closed institutions such as youth detention, military bases and off-shore immigration centres in Australia. Further, the process of destroying or lessening the identity of 'patients' leads to objectification of individuals on behalf of staff members, which are in complete control of the youth and children they work with (Palmer, Feldman and McKibbin, 2016). In this way a culture is created that risks heightened perpetration of child sexual abuse. Goffman´s idea of transformation is in direct conflict with the prevention framework Change the Story which uses a strength based model and participatory approaches with a focus on empowerment.

3.3 Interview analysis

3.3.1 Observation of impact. The importance of the scope and influence of the work of the Royal Commission reverberated across the entire group of participants, being described as 'ground-breaking', 'fantastic' and 'institutionally, incredibly important'.

> "The Royal Commission has been a really significant inquiry that's been held in Australia and it has really brought child safety to the fore of discussions publicly and within policy and practice networks."
>
> – (Sarah Rosheni, personal communication, April, 2018)

Scott Holmes, Senior Policy Advisor at Our Watch, described how it brought to the attention of the public the deep systemic issues within institutions and how the patriarchy played out in how institutions view the rights and agency of children and the use of power.

The inquiry did not go without criticism. A common concern was the issue of how the Royal Commission´s recommendations will be translated into the community and in a way that is easily understood by everyone. Daryl Higgins, the Director of the Institute for Child Protection Studies in Australia, voiced concerns that the recommendations will be carried out in a way that reduces them into simplistic messages and that institutions need to look at the culture that needs to be changed. Many participants observed that the Royal Commission lacks a gendered analysis and that there needs to be a clear articulation of what drives child sexual abuse.

> "Our Watch is trying to lead a public conversation about what drives violence against women, but there does not seem to be any sort of similar conversation happening around what drives violence against children…"
>
> – (Sarah Rosheni, personal communication, April, 2018)

> "Is this something that we can tackle at the same time? What's the common denominator between violence against women and abuse of children?"
>
> – (Scott Holmes, personal communication, April, 2018)

Participants emphasised the value of understanding how gender norms and structures drive child sexual abuse and how this is connected to violence against women, in framing interventions and prevention strategies, and that this is something that seems to be missing from the literature.

3.3.2 Intersectionality and gender equality. Participants identified how, by design, current systems allow for child sexual abuse in their institutions. Daryl Higgins spoke of how

the profile of people who engage in sexually abusive behaviour is very gendered and that prevention strategies within institutions need to be unpacking what masculinity means. Gemma McKibbin, who helped write the Role of Organisational Culture in Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Contexts, echoed similar sentiments and discussed how we understand through research that harmful behaviour carried out by children is a gendered phenomenon and that most young people who carry out abuse are male: "…and we think that´s influenced by heteronormative and hyper masculinized, if you like, constructions of masculinity" (Gemma McKibbin, personal communication, April, 2018). In this regard, Respectful Relationship Education (RRE) was identified as a significant contributor. RRE is a primary prevention program for gender-based violence piloted by Our Watch (Kearney, Gleeson, Leung, Ollis and Joyce, 2016). All participants discussed the significance of using RRE and whole-of-organisation approaches to tackle the culture in organisations that allow for child sexual abuse to occur. McKibbin went into how the culture of an organisation enables or disables child sexual abuse and how a culture that models respectful relationship, and that values women´s and girls´ voices, is a much safer environment for a child. Higgins went further into this, saying it is not enough to tell young people how to behave but that institutions need to model organisational power structures and hierarchies that value both male and female leadership.

Discussing the importance of intersectional approaches, it was identified how the impact of violence for children and youth that have been marginalised can and has been greatly exacerbated because of the context in which that violence occurs. Loren Days, a Senior Policy Advisor on intersectionality, discussed how the colonial system intersects with gender inequality.

> "Colonisation was established on a system of power and control. It attempted to destroy Aboriginal people's culture, structure and

> systems, including their approaches to gender and relationships. Today, we can't ignore the impact of colonisation and its impact on gender norms in Aboriginal communities. One does not rank higher than another, they are interlinked."
>
> – (Loren Days, personal communication, April, 2018)

Further, Days explained that because there is ongoing colonisation in Australia with historical ties to genocidal violence, Aboriginal and Indigenous children are being removed from their homes in great numbers and are being institutionalised at much higher rates. This increases their vulnerability to abuse in institutions; both because there are more Aboriginal youth in institutions and because they are being denied cultural safety in many of those institutions.

Similarly, children with disabled needs rely greatly on caretaking and reside in greater numbers within institutions. Daryl Higgins discussed the power dynamics that play out when individuals need to rely on others and how that can increase their vulnerability to abuse. He elaborated on how during infancy and early childhood, children are more reliant on their parents for physical and emotional nurturing. Similar dynamics lead to increased vulnerability for children with disability, many of whom need assistance with daily activities.

3.3.3 Role of masculinity in institutions. Participants made many meaningful contributions to the discourse on understanding how the role of masculinity plays out in institutions.

> "There has been a paradigm that the most proper, normal, presentation of a human is an adult male. Therefore, both women and children are not quite as human, if I can put it that way, as an adult man. For me, that is the common factor that ties it [violence against women and child sexual abuse] together. We can treat women badly and we can treat children badly because they're not actually quite as human as the adult male"

> – (Scott Holmes, personal communication, April, 2018)

Scott Holmes, who is a former Anglican priest, went into depth around toxic masculinity in faith-based institutions. He describes how masculine approaches to faith was this conception that you must punish children to keep them in line: "To me, that is another example of traditional masculine things about power and control." (Scott Holmes, personal communications, April, 2018). Holmes talked about how the privilege that goes with traditional forms of masculinity in faith based institutions means that men have been fairly blind to where there is risk and how to mitigate that risk – because traditional forms of masculinity are not concerned with child safety, as that is something that women look after.

On the role of masculinity in institutions and on current hierarchal structures, Sarah Rosheni goes on to talk about how organisations need to go beyond just accommodating women and need to incorporate transformative practices. Rosheni described transformative change as requiring systems and structures and the culture in institutions to change at the same time. Loren Days elaborated on this further and discussed how child sexual abuse and violence against women is a societal issue and that creating cultural change can be challenging.

> "Cultural change is difficult because it requires people to give up power that they currently have, and people don't want to do that. The same way for gender equality to be achieved – is men have to step aside a lot for women. It is the same thing with intersectionality, it is the same argument."
>
> – (Loren Days, personal communication, April, 2018)

Days goes on to say that organisations need to engage in critical reflection because some of these practices are so embedded in the culture of the institution that they become almost invisible. She goes on to say on how using whole of organisational approaches is an

important way to achieve this; institutions need to deconstruct harmful conceptions with staff and volunteers, to ask questions such as “what is it to be a man?”, “What are gender stereotypes?” and to really interrogate those concepts and what that means.

3.4 Focus group analysis

3.4.1 The connection between violence against women and child sexual abuse.

The importance of understanding how the gendered drivers of child sexual abuse are connected to violence against women was discussed extensively by the focus group participants. All the drivers of violence against women were thought to give meaningful insight into the perpetration of child sexual abuse in institutions. However, specific important drivers identified in this regard from Change the Story were the first driver ‘the condoning of violence against women’ and the reinforcing factors ‘condoning of violence in general’ and ‘children´s exposure to violence’. Participants noted that institutional child abuse is showing that the drivers and reinforcing factors are existing in our society and this provides evidence that violence against women exists in that society.

> “It is because the institutional child abuse is showing that the drivers and the reinforcing factors are existing in our society, which would then mean the other thing, that violence against women would be existing in that society.”
>
> – (Cara Gleeson, personal communication, April, 2018)

The fourth driver from Change the Story ‘male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women’ was also addressed specifically in relation to faith-based institutions. Participants discussed how traditionally, faith-based institutions have perpetuated disrespect and aggression towards women and children through the systematic exclusion and oppression of women and children that has been normalised within church institutions.

In discussing gender equality and structural norms, interviewees spoke about how gendered analysis on child sexual abuse has focused on individual factors such as the sex of perpetrators and specific characteristics of male and female perpetration and victimisation. They contended that there seems to be a lack of an analysis that examines the gendered structures and norms that allow for child sexual abuse to be perpetuated, within or without institutions. However, participants identified how we understand that child perpetration is about power and control, and research supports that in patriarchal societies, men are privileged over women and it is likely that these cultural understandings of gender inform their response to child sexual abuse. As an example of this, participants spoke about how in female dominated industries, the leadership is still mostly comprised of men. Because of structural gender inequalities within institutions, women are often not believed or dismissed, and this becomes a risk factor for institutional child sexual abuse. Conversely, they said, strengthening female leadership becomes a protective factor against institutional child abuse. All focus group participants agreed on how valuable it is to be able to articulate the connection between violence against women and child sexual abuse. “We have a sense that they are connected, but to actually put that into some frameworks is really, really useful.” (Erin Gillen, personal communication, April, 2018).

A risk factor in creating a gendered framework for child sexual abuse that was identified is that there could be backlash from the child protection sector. However, participants also contended that the children´s sector might see it as an opportunity to put gender with the image of child theory. Participants discussed how this research opens up the space to do this and that it is important for Our Watch to make efforts so institutions they work with have access to information on how to protect against child sexual abuse.

3.4.2 Giving children agency. There was significant discussion around children and power. The idea that children are less human than adults and how that affects response to

incidents of child sexual abuse. “Masculinity is defined as a paradigm of proper humanity, so anything that is not adult male is lesser, so both women and children are defined as lesser.” (Scott Holmes, personal communication, April, 2018). Participants asserted that we need to be rephrasing that children are not fully human to that children have agency. Thinking about that in terms of hierarchies and institutions, participants talked about how although women need to be given more control in institutions characterised by male dominance; however, if adults are in charge and not children, there is still a power differential being created that is harmful for children. To be able to respond to this, the interviewees stated: We need to understand how hegemonic masculinity views children on their own without the context of women. One participant described how we are used to viewing childhood only as a pathway to adulthood. Some sectors view children perhaps as more competent beings, but on a larger institutional level there is the basic premise that childhood has no purpose on its own. Further, media portrays children in this duality of both being innocent and evil, and who we need to and should manipulate. They went on to say how these underpinning ideals have not changed since the fifties, only how they are communicated has potentially changed. We do not understand how children can hold power because we need to protect and guide them, and it seems to be difficult to articulate how we can reconcile that with giving children agency. There is no other understanding on how children can be in this world and hold some power in their own right. To change that we need to be asking ourselves what is the meta-narrative? How does the world look like when we´ve decoupled gender from power, and adulthood from childhood?

4 Discussion

The purpose of this research was to gain insight into how the prevention of violence against women intersects with prevention of child sexual abuse in institutions, incorporating

the prevention framework for violence against women, Change the Story, and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. It attempts to answer three research questions: How can Our Watch strengthen the alignment with preventing violence against women and the prevention of institutional child abuse? How does hegemonic masculinity and feminist institutionalism manifest itself in institutional culture? And what is the relationship between total institutions, hegemonic masculinity and feminist institutionalism?

4.1 Institutional culture, hegemonic masculinity and feminist institutionalism

The way hegemonic masculinity and feminist institutionalism are manifested in institutional culture is that they both affect conceptions of hierarchy, gender roles, and control, resulting in different power structures. Hegemonic masculinity and its institutional culture is shaped by historical and societal power dynamics rooted in gender inequality and male dominance, viewing women and children as lesser. The result is traditional male dominated hierarchal structures characterised by unquestioning authority to formal power, perpetuating gender inequalities and endorsing cultures that allow for child sexual abuse. These structures have all four gendered drivers of violence present, namely "men´s control of decision-making, rigid gender roles, condoning of violence by excusing and downplaying it and male peer relations that emphasise disrespect towards women" (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015, p. 23). All these drivers are visible within the institutions investigated by the Royal Commission, and elements can be found reverberating through today´s society in both private and public. The Royal Commission inquiry and Palmer´s, Feldman´s and McKibbin´s analysis on total institutions demonstrated that a large amount of Australia´s institutions still place male dominance above child safety. Feminist Institutionalism is a newer approach that has a transformative agenda aimed at breaking down gendered power

structures and whose institutional culture is characterised by more egalitarian environments that include both women and men at all levels.

The question is, to what extent can feminist institutionalism challenge institutional cultures characterised by the old model of total institutions in which hegemonic masculinity is the most valued way of being. While the influence of hegemonic masculinity on institutional culture remains strong, gender relations - even on a cultural level - are historical in vocation and thus subject to change. Cultural change is a demanding process, but can be achieved, for example, through educational programs, as is the aim of the Respectful Relationship Education. In the long run, the feminist institutionalist agenda can have a strong role in challenging hegemonic masculinity. Through its transformative process of dismantling male dominant hierarchies, it can have positive implications for redefining what it means to be a man, removed from conceptions of asserting dominance over others and contribute to the essential actions to reduce violence against women identified in Change the Story (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015). The Change the Story framework offers ways in which aggressive, entitled and dominant constructions of masculinity can be challenged to prevent violence and allow for healthy emotional expression between and among the sexes. All the essential and reinforcing action points outlined in Change the Story to prevent violence against women support the way in which feminist institutionalism can challenge hegemonic masculinity.

For organisations such as Our Watch to strengthen the alignment with preventing violence against women and the prevention of institutional child abuse, the feminist institutional transformative agenda is useful. While we understand the drivers of violence against women in Australia within the established, substantial policy framework of Change the Story, there is no such framework for understanding the drivers of child sexual abuse. In the institutional context, understanding how the drivers of violence against women can

challenge male dominance and the normalisation of violence as an expression of masculinity, becomes valuable for creating child safe cultures in organisations. This is because children, like women, are positioned against hegemonic masculinity constructions of power which places them as lesser. The drivers of violence against women seem to intersect with the drivers of child sexual abuse. Ultimately those institutions that are made safer for women, and where women will hold more power, will be safer for their children.

A next step in research is to create a framework that connects the drivers of violence against women and what drives child sexual abuse. This requires a gendered analysis of the power structures and norms that drive child sexual abuse. Such a framework can strengthen the transformative feminist agenda to challenge hegemonic masculinity and culture in institutions that endorse sexual violence and create safer environments for women and children alike.

Further, because Our Watch works extensively with institutions that concern children and young people it is in a solid position to offer practice guidance on how to create safe cultural environments for children. This practice guidance should urge every institution to incorporate policies around increasing the number of women in leadership positions as well as incorporating recruitment policies that enable for greater diversity and inclusion, especially hiring Aboriginal and Indigenous people. The practice guidance should further include practices on how to make institutions culturally safe for minorities and children and youth that have been marginalised; emphasising strength based and empowering approaches that celebrate each individuals background, language and experiences. Alongside this practice guidance for child safe cultures in institutions, Our Watch should outline how institutions can create concrete platforms for children and youth to participate in decision making within their organisations. This document should be referred to within the practice guidance for child safe cultures in institutions. Just as increasing the role of women in decision-making decreases

violence against women, increasing agency of children works to challenge dominant structures of hegemonic masculinity and ultimately creates child safe cultures.

4.2 Strengths and Weaknesses

This research relied on heavily substantiated documents and evidence-based frameworks. For the interviews a careful selection of participants was made through consultation with members of Our Watch. All interviewees are experts in their field with vast relevant experience of the topic. Because of limitation on length of this research the document analysis had to be narrowed considerably to focus on existing frameworks, meaning some interesting and relevant information has potentially been missed, especially on prevention.

5 References

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Appendix A

Our Watch is a non-profit organisation in Australia that was established by the Australian and Victorian governments to "drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children." (Our Watch, n.d.). Our Watch uses a *collective impact* approach and functions as a backbone organisation for preventing violence against women and their children; meaning it brings cross-sector organisations, systems, governments and institutions together to bring about large scale social change. The reason for the inclusion of children and young people in Our Watch work is because women who experience violence often have children in their care. Further, research across different countries has established that experiencing abuse during childhood has been linked to future perpetration of violence against women and victimisation (Barker et al., 2011; Fergusson et al., 2006; Fulu et al., 2013; Hagemann-White et al., 2010). Our Watch work addresses the structures, norms and practices across a socio-ecological framework that drive violence against women, namely the gendered drivers. Hence, Our Watch works cross-functionally with a wide variety of institutions, many of which concern young people. The primary aim of Our Watch is to end violence against women. However, Our Watch works extensively with child centred institutions as a means of delivering prevention programs as well as working directly with young people through social media. Young people have been identified as a key demographic for prevention as they are at a critical age where they are forming attitudes and behaviour that will potentially guide them for the rest of their lives (Flood, Fergus & Heenam, 2009; Flood & Kendrick, 2012). One of the main achievement of Our Watch, in collaboration with Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, was the creation of Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children, which outlines the gendered drivers of violence against women.

Appendix B

- **Daryl Higgins**. Higgins is the Director of the Institute of Child Protection Studies, he has a strong focus on public health approaches to child protection and on prevention and responses of sexual abuse in institutions. Higgins is a member of a Consumer Advocacy Advisory Group convened by the National Children´s Commissioner.
- **Gemma McKibbin**. McKibbin is a research fellow at University of Melbourne and works for the Melbourne Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children. She also works for the non-profit MacKillop family services building prevention strategies for child sexual abuse in out-of-home care. McKibbin helped write The Role of Organisational Culture in Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Context.
- **Olivia Taylor** Senior Policy Advisor of Education with a focus on reviewing and evaluating the Respectful Relationship Education initiative by Our Watch
- **Loren Days** Senior Policy Advisor of Intersectionality and Manager of Policy at Our Watch
- **Scott Holmes.** Holmes is the Manager of Practice Development at Our Watch and former Anglican Priest that worked with the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation in prevention of violence against women in faith-based institutions.
- **Sarah Rosheni** Senior Policy Advisor for young people at Our Watch. Rosheni is a member of a Consumer Advocacy Advisory Group convened by the National Children´s Commissioner in Australia and is working on Youth Participation Principles.

For the focus group discussion eleven Senior Policy Advisors attended from Our Watch: Cara Gleeson, Casey Burchell, Cassie Lindsey, Erin Gillen, Jan Earthstar, Loren Days, Lisa Zilberpriver, Genevieve Sheppard, Sona Ising. and Scott Holmes

Appendix C

Focus group analysis

The Royal Commission emphasises male victimisation. Focus group participants discussed the Royal Commission and its focus on male victimisation. There was general

concern that men´s voices overpowered women´s in the discourse around the Royal Commission, as a large proportion of the survivors interviewed were boys. This was not because violence against boys is not considered as important, but because in reality more women experience child sexual abuse than men. According to the participants this did not make it to the public discourse. In trying to understand why that is, the focus group participants speculated whether sexual violence against boys is more upsetting for society because violence against girls has been more normalised. The focus group participants discussed as well why there are more male victims in the Royal Commission inquiry. One reason that was suggested as to why that could be, is because before there has been a culture of educating boys over girls and hence there were more boys in institutions such as boarding schools. Boys have also been more represented in other institutions such as juvenile detention as well as within faith-based institutions (i.e. the catholic church and altar boys).

The victimisation-perpetration myth. One subject that participants found important to address was the myth that victims of child sexual abuse later become perpetrators of sexual violence. We need to resist saying that victimisation causes perpetration but that it is a risk factor. If a man engages in domestic violence, and who was a victim of family violence as a child, it is not the experience of being a victim that causes him to perpetrate violence. It is the experience of living conditions where the four drivers are very present, of a household where there is condoning of violence against women, where there are stronger gender norms, and where women´s independence and decision making is limited. In this regard the importance of the ecological model and whole-of approaches were emphasised by the participants.

The connection between violence against women and child sexual abuse. The importance of understanding how the gendered drivers of child sexual abuse are connected to violence against women was discussed extensively by the focus group participants. All the drivers of violence against women were thought to give meaningful insight into the

perpetration of child sexual abuse in institutions. However, specific important drivers identified in this regard from Change the Story were the first driver *the condoning of violence against women* and the reinforcing factors *condoning of violence in general* and *exposure to violence in children*. Participants noted that institutional child abuse is showing that the drivers and reinforcing factors are existing in our society and that provides evidence that violence against women exists in that society.

> "It's because the institutional child abuse is showing that the drivers and the reinforcing factors are existing in our society, which would then mean the other thing, violence against women would be existing in that society."
>
> – (Cara Gleeson, personal communication, April, 2018)

The fourth driver from Change the *Story male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women* was also addressed specifically in relation to faith-based institutions. Participants discussed how traditionally, faith-based institutions have perpetuated disrespect and aggression towards women and children through the systematic exclusion and oppression of women and children that has been normalised within church institutions.

In discussing gender equality and structural norms, interviewees spoke about how gendered analysis on child sexual abuse has focused on individual factors such as the sex of perpetrators and specific characteristics of male and female perpetration and victimisation. They contended that there seems to be a lack of an analysis that examines the gendered structures and norms that allow for child sexual abuse to be perpetuated, within or outside of institutions. However, participants identified how we understand that child perpetration is about power and control, and research supports that. In patriarchal societies, men are

privileged over women and it is likely that these cultural understandings of gender inform their response to child sexual abuse. As an example of this, participants spoke about how in female dominated industries, the leadership is still mostly comprised of men. Because of structural gender inequalities within institutions, women are often not believed or dismissed, and this becomes a risk factor for institutional child sexual abuse. Conversely, they said, strengthening female leadership becomes a protective factor against institutional child abuse. All focus group participants agreed on how valuable it is to be able to articulate the connection between violence against women and child sexual abuse. “We have a sense that they are connected, but to actually put that into some frameworks is really, really useful.” (Erin, Gillen, personal communication, April, 2018).

A risk factor in creating a gendered framework for child sexual abuse that was identified is that there could be backlash from the child protection sector. However, participants also contended that the children´s sector might see it as an opportunity to put gender with the image of child theory. Participants discussed how this research opens up the space to do that and that it is important for Our Watch to make efforts so institutions they work with have access to information on how to protect against child sexual abuse.

Giving children agency. There was significant discussion around children and power. The idea that children are less human than adults and how that affects response to incidents of child sexual abuse. “Masculinity is defined as a paradigm of proper humanity, so anything that is not adult male is lesser, so both women and children are defined as lesser.” (Scott Holmes, personal communication, April, 2018). Participants asserted that we need to be rephrasing that children are not fully human to that children have agency. Thinking about that in terms of hierarchies and institutions, participants talked about how although women need to be given more control in institutions characterised by male dominance; however, if adults are in charge and not children, there is still a power differential being created that is

harmful for children. To be able to respond to this, the interviewees stated: We need to understand how hegemonic masculinity views children on their own without the context of women. One participant described how we are used to viewing childhood only as a pathway to adulthood. Some sectors view children perhaps as more competent beings, but on a larger institutional level there is the basic premise that childhood has no purpose on its own. Further, media portrays children in this duality of both being innocent and evil, and who we need to and should manipulate. They went on to say how these underpinning ideals have not changed since the fifties, only how they are communicated has potentially changed. We do not understand how children can hold power because we need to protect and guide them, and it seems to be difficult to articulate how we can reconcile that with giving children agency. There is no other understanding on how children can be in this world and hold some power in their own right. To change that we need to be asking ourselves what is the meta-narrative? How does the world look like when we´ve decoupled gender from power, and adulthood from childhood?