Abuse in Families of the Church Community:

A Study of Lutheran and Baptist Clergy and Theological Students in Australia.

Abstract.

A survey of 128 Baptist and Lutheran Clergy, Theological Students and their spouses was conducted to assess the extent of abuse among those in the Clergy and preparing for ministry. A total 12% of men and women reported that they had experienced abused by someone close to them in their adult life, 12.7% reported abuse in childhood and a further 13. 5% reported experiencing abuse both as adults and children. While some of this abuse had occurred in the past, 26% of the abuse was reported to have occurred in the past 12 months, 87. 5% had occurred on more than one occasion and 64% was considered as serious or somewhat serious. Of those identified as adult abuser, 16% were members of the clergy. A further group of former Clergy and their spouses, was also asked to participate. The proportion of former to present clergy who had experienced abuse was significant (X (1) = 35.25, p<.0001). The nature of a link between experience of abuse, anger expression, locus of control and marital adjustment was explored. A discriminant analysis separating abused subjects on the time of abuse, classified 92% of subjects accurately.

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Running Head**:** Clergy and Abuse

The role clergy play in helping victims of domestic violence is now well established, and considered to be part of the pastoral role clergy have in the community (Clinebell 1989: Hurding, 1988). A Milwaukee study by Bowker (1982), found that one third of battered women approached clergy for assistance and that 95 percent of these clergy offered some form of help. While police, social services and counselling agencies were approached more frequently, clergy were most likely to be sought out by women with some religious affiliation. A later survey conducted by Woman's Day and analysed by Bowker (1988), found that wives who sought clergy assistance were highly religious, had more children then average, were more frequently beaten and better educated then other women in the study, contrary to previous research findings (e.g. Kirkby, 1991)

In Australia the Queensland Domestic Violence Task Force (Task Force, 1988) found that seventeen percent of all phone-in respondents had spoken to a minister of religion, and drew attention to the fact that clergy play a critical role in both community attitudes and dealing with troubled marriages. Conrade (1992) in a study of Uniting and Anglican church women, found that 21.9 percent of women had been abused at some time in their lives. Of these 11. 5 percent of women had been abused as adults, a fifth of these on a daily or almost daily basis, 60 percent of the adult abuse reported was perpetrated by spouses, and l4 percent of abusers were identified as being involved in church leadership. Two thirds of the women who reported the abuse spoke with someone about the abuse, and of these 15 percent were members of the clergy.

While in the past it has been anticipated that women in the church would be less likely to experience abuse, the evidence is growing that this is not the case. Rather, as Conrade (1992) found, a considerable amount of abuse exists in families within the church community. In addition there is growing evidence that some clergy are themselves perpetrating abuse. While Conrade identified 14 percent of abusers as involved in church leadership, there was no differentiation between lay leaders and clergy. Since much of the incidence portrayed in the media is at best speculative, the purpose of this study was to assess the extent of the experience of abuse among those in the clergy and preparing for ministry. Also, to examine the nature of the link between the experience of abuse and other psychological measures such as Anger Expression, Locus of Control, Marital Adjustment and Satisfaction.

The Role of the Clergy

The Clergy enjoy a privileged yet unenvied position as professionals in most western societies. Frequently equated with others in the caring professions, such as Social Workers, Counsellors and Child Care Workers, Clergy cite similar reasons for entering their vocation (Freudenberger, 1977), such as love of people and a desire to serve. However the ministry is a vocation where the person must be all things to all people. While a minister is primarily seen as God's representative, and his/her calling to be spiritual, he is frequently judged on organisational rather than spiritual criteria. In addition he is expected to be sociable without forming too close a relationship with church members, lest he is perceived to have favourites or compromise his authority. He is also expected to be unconcerned about money even though salary schedules may be inadequate (Lauer, 1973).

In short, clergy, like doctors are expected to be on call 24 hours a day, to manage their responsibilities like managing directors, yet with little or no staff, and to maintain hospitality on a salary barely adequate for their own needs. "'There is never any time when ministers are free from their duties; their duties are often not clearly defined and criteria for knowing when they have done their duty are often ambiguous" (Daniel & Rogers, 1981). According to Lauer
(1973), these aspects of ministry present the clergy with a case of 'structures punishment', where expectations are unable to be met because of the structural constraints within the organisation.

However, it is perhaps the expectation that clergy will be pure and live exemplary lives, that is most problematic. The notion of clergy being demi-gods is pervasive in our culture. Not only do parishioners trust clergy to model the Christian lifestyle, part of the Biblical injunction of 1 Timothy is to "set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." An almost blind trust of the pastor is common in many churches, because no one believes a pastor would deliberately set out to hurt or take advantage of parishioners. Predominantly the image is one of a shepherd shepherding his flock, parishioners looking to their pastor as a protector who will keep them safe (Moller-Gunderson, 1991).

Such high esteem of clergy has origins well beyond lifestyle issues. Seen as Christ's Representative, clergy are ordained with Christ's authority, intended to be used in serving the people of God for the sake of the gospel. According to Holmes (1978), Protestant clergy are seen to embody God, just as much as Catholic clergy are, though this may be manifested in different ways. Nevertheless, in their humanity many clergy struggle with the unrealistic

expectations placed on them. Many more become so closely identified with their vocation, that they no longer have any identity outside this role. (Steele, 1988).

The Demands on Clergy Marriage

With these many demands placed on the time and person of clergy, it is perhaps not so surprising that few people "take account of the fact that most ministers are married, with responsibilities as husbands and fathers. The guiding image, after the protestant reformation as well as before it, appears to be a celibate priesthood, in which the clergyman gives his undivided loyalty and time to the church. Few meet realistically and constructively the conflicts faced by a minister who seeks to balance the competing demands and responsibilities of his family and congregation" (Douglas, 1961, p260).

In the early church such conflict was little known. Jewish tradition placed the home, rather than the synagogue as the centre of worship life. Since a primary function of marriage has been to raise Godly offspring, this pattern continued in the early church, placing little conflict on family life, since worship was not separated from daily living." With the passing of time however, the home, along with it's family, became overshadowed by a spirituality which placed marriage and the family in a subordinate position" (CASA, 1990, p19).

According to Steele (1988,) the clergyman's marriage is expected to appear to be made in heaven, with many denominations perceiving marital style as part of the 'revealed truth'. Since the minister is considered the bearer of that truth, his own marriage is expected to reflect this in every way. In addition it is not uncommon for churches to consider the pastor's wife as part of the ministry team, with equally high expectations of her involvement. An accurate description portrayed by Hartley is of the protestant wife as 'the most extreme, "ideal-typical example of what has been the traditional female role in our society, with the expectation, that individuals in that role will subordinate their own interests to that of all other, not only husband, children and in-laws, but miscellaneous strangers in need, parishioners, and church administrators as well' (Hartley, 1978,p178).

Irrespective of the wife's ordination, clergy couples face similar problems to those identified in dual career marriages. Advantages identified include employment as an arena for marital intimacy, increased creativity through interaction, more flexibility in parenting roles and the challenge to sex role stereotypes (Deitrick & Deitrick, 1982). In addition there is often a shared commitment and purpose in ministry, a sharing of status and respect in the community, and a sharing of spiritual resources (Mace & Mace, 1980).

Disadvantages include conflict in areas of authority and dominance, especially in gender issues; the marriage being particularly transparent to the congregation; boundary confusion between marriage and ministry, and infringement on family time (Deitrick & Deitrick, 1982). Lack of family privacy, financial stress, communication issues and conflict resolution are other major concerns cited (Mace & Mace, 1980). In addition feelings of competition and/or resentment between partners and bringing problems home (Tribble, 1987), can also add significantly to the stress many experience.

Perhaps the greatest threat to clergy marriage however comes from perceptions clergy have of their call to ministry itself. "In this vocation, a spouse-neglecting preoccupation with success or reputation can be powerfully rationalised in a manner few other careers afford. To the pastor, the work is not only necessary for financial security but also is regarded as dedicated, selfless service to the very centre of the universe, Almighty God. How does a spouse compete with that?" (Noyce, 1983, p93)

Leaving the Ministry

With such major stresses placed on the Clergy couple, there is little wonder that many eventually leave what they thought would be a lifelong vocation. One estimate (Croucher, 1993), assesses the number of former Clergy in Australia as approaching 10,000. While financial hardship, marital stress and family conflicts are frequently cited reasons for leaving, many instances can be attributed to burnout as well.

As early as 1932, Duncan reported that ministers changed churches or positions within their vocation more frequently as a result of role conflicts due to lack of proper training for specific tasks, conflict over church policies or lack of financial support. He noted that ministers who left the vocation, did so with feelings of personal failure and inadequacy, and frequently cited marital stress and family conflicts as reasons for leaving. In addition, he stated that 'it is the best trained rather than the poorly trained who are withdrawing: that it is mainly the mediocre and emotional type of young men who are entering and remaining in the ministry today' (Duncan 1932, p104).

Marital distress and feelings of inadequacy and failure are highly correlated with burnout (Daniel & Rogers, 1981). However these authors cite an additional contributor as, 'the tendency for people helpers to attribute any problem to dispositional rather then situational variables' (p245). This appears to be particularly true in ministry, where a view of human nature as inherently sinful is often emphasised and "the minister by calling is drawn to

look, as God, at the heart" (p245). Since this perspective invites an even greater tendency to attribute problems to personal disposition, the potential for burnout in ministry is increased.

While a number of studies (Dunn, 1965; Nauss, 1973) attribute personality characteristics such as perfectionism, introversion, detachment and instability, to ministers, a review by Daniel and Rogers (1981), suggests that the personality pattern that emerges is consistent with the personality description in burn-out phenomena. Characteristics that emerge are "perfectionistic, introspective, conflicted over the expression of hostility, isolated, detached, and... difficulty in establishing close personal relationships' (p246). Other factors found by Serlin (1989) included abuse, identity problems, loneliness and depression. 'These attributes are shown by Dunn (1965) and Davis (1967) to increase with the amount of time spent in a religious vocation, suggesting that much of the perceived maladjustment is due to job stress (Daniel & Rogers, 1981).

In addition to the traumas experienced as clergy, many former clergy continue to experience a sense of failure and guilt long after they leave. Friesen reports that for many 'the sense of failure has been compounded by feelings of guilt because they were 'forced to leave' the ministry to which they were called' (1980, p320). Noyce, in a study of a cleric's lifespan, suggests that one factor contributing to this guilt is the 'overbearing, lifelong expectation' built into the language used at ordination. A second factor is evident in the prejudice directed against former clergy by many in the church. He suggests that the church needs to recognise that career changes should be expected for clergy, just as much as they are for other professions (1983, p93).

Clergy as Abusers

When a person who has been perceived as representing Christ- like qualities of love and compassion, acts in a manner directly opposite to what they represent, the result is more than a betrayal of trust, or a crossing of professional boundaries. For the victim, what is considered their last sanctuary in an often cruel and unjust world is violated.

One victim described her experience of abuse by a member of the clergy as a trauma that went to the core of identity. She lost her trust in what had been a safe and nurturing community, and most profoundly losing her ease of relationship with a God whose Gender, as described by the church, is the same as her abusers (O'Connell, 1991.) When the abuser not only represents Christ in the church but is also a parent, or spouse, the damage can be even more profound. Frequently it is the dissonance between word and action that is most destructive. When a husband can preach about God's love on Sunday, but abuse his wife at

home, her world no longer makes sense. Anna, a childhood victim of incest, describes feeling that nothing she could do was right. "My father used scripture as a weapon ... I believed he had God on his side so he must have been right. I also knew that I had to respect my father, because the Bible said so, despite what he used to do to me at night. It seemed that the Church gave him permission to do what he did" (CASA, 1990, p9).

While it is often sexual abuse that makes the headlines, the outcome of any abuse can leave victims feeling betrayed, confused and isolated with loss of faith in God and no confidence in church teachings. Blanchard (1991) draws a comparison between abusive clergy and the dynamics of an incestuous relationship since in both situations there are frequently significant age differences. There are also similarities in the intrinsic trust of the clergy's position, the unequal power, the qualities of authority possessed, as well as intellectual and educational differences.

While issues of power, control, personal reassurance, anger and hostility, are often cited dynamics in abusive relationships, Laaser (1990) suggests that abusive clergy may have sought Ordination as a shame reduction strategy, and may be co-dependent, seeking the approval of others, be rigid in their attitudes and beliefs, and use denial as a strategy to escape personal responsibility. A study by Carnes (1991) has found that many sexually abusive people come from profoundly abusive homes, where family members are rigidly disengaged, due to a lack of healthy and loving intimacy, and also where positive emotional bonding has not occurred.

Characteristics of Abuse

The nature of abuse and violence within the family has been readily acknowledged since the 1970's (Pagelow, 1998;), and substantiated in several studies since (e.g. De Mause, 1975; Strauss et al 1980; Browne, 1993). In particular the nature of the abusive relationship in marriage has been explored, in an attempt to understand the dynamics involved. Frequently what emerges is a pattern of relating that is now referred to as the Cycle Theory of Violence which typically has three phases:

1. The tension building phase, in which frequent multiple incidents occur but are stopped before they get out of hand;

2. The crisis phase, resulting in an explosion of anger that frequently involves physical abuse causing serious injury;

3. The aftermath or honeymoon phase, which may involve contrition and an attempt to restore a loving relationship. In relationships where this phase does not occur, there is at least an absence of tension for a time (Walker, 1988).

Physical abuse can involve any number of assaults including hitting, punching and threatening children. For many women staying in physically abusive relationships puts them at risk of repeated injury as well as possible death (Conrade, 1992). Another pattern common to abusive, relationships reported by Walker (1988), is in the report of the abuse by spouses. While the general rule is to believe that truth lies somewhere between two reports, in battering relationships the truth is always much worse then either party is prepared to state. Men frequently deny that they have been abusive, or if they do admit to the abuse, usually blame the woman for what she made him do. Ptacek (1988) identifies the use of excuses and justification by abusers as an escape from the reality of their behaviour. In excusing themselves they may either appeal to a loss of control, thus denying their responsibility, or deny the injury as resulting from their actions. In both instances Ptacek states "it is important to recognise that these rationalisations represent culturally sanctioned strategies for minimising and denying violence against women' (1988, p256).

What is relevant in these situations is the recognition that a great deal of anger is vented over which men feel they have no control. Emotional abuse, intrinsically linked to physical abuse, is often a precursor to physical aggression. Follingstad (1990), in exploring the relationship between these factors, has identified six major sources of emotional abuse. Those identified were, ridicule and verbal harassment; isolation; either social or financial; jealousy and possessiveness; threats to abuse or harm; threats to abandon, divorce or have an affair; and damage to or disposal of property. When rated for impact, ridicule and verbal abuse were rated as most damaging, followed by threats of abuse and isolation. Psychological aggression early in a relationship, has been found by Murphy and O'Leary (1989), to be predictive of physical aggression in later marriage. There results consistent across both sexes, underscore the progression from emotional to physical abuse in many relationships.

Sexual abuse is often another aspect of this cycle and may replace physical abuse in some relationships. For many years sexual abuse was considered impossible, in marriage, since marriage was seen as consent to sexual activity. However, it has been more recently acknowledged as an act of violence, hatred and aggression resulting in physical and

emotional damage (Yllo, 1988). Sexual abuse can vary from unwanted sexual attention, coercion to participate, to rape. Marital rape may also occur, and may involve violence, but can also include force only rapes, where physical and psychological pressure is exerted (Yllo, l988).

Research Questions

The research relating to clergy that has been reviewed above, has mostly been conducted in the U.S.A. There has been little Australian research into the experience of abuse among clergy, particularly as it affects them and their families. While there has been some research in the area of clergy as abuser, the impact and experience of abuse on Australian men has been little explored.

With the incidence of abusers in church leadership found by Conrade (1992) to be 14 percent in an Australian study, it was decided to survey a sample of clergy, theological students and their spouses to investigate the following:

(1)   the extent of abuse experienced by men and women, either in ministry, or preparing to enter it;

(2)   the possibility of forming a baseline measure of the incidence of abuse by Australian clergy;

(3)   assessment of the nature and seriousness of the abuse;

(4)   assessment of the characteristics of abusers and their involvement in the church. Also to:

(5)   assess the nature of a link between the experience of abuse, Anger Expression and Locus of Control.

(6)   compare the relationship between these variables, marital satisfaction and adjustment among clergy couples.

(7)   compare a group of former clergy with those still in the ministry.

Method

Subjects

The subjects in this study were 72 women and 69 men over the age of 18 years from the Baptist and Lutheran Churches. Of these 66, were Theological Students and their spouses, and 62 were Ordained Clergy, 13 were former Baptist Clergy, and approximately 75% of students approached completed questionnaires, and approximately 60% of Clergy did not.

There were a total of 44 married couples in the sample. No questionnaires were excluded from the analysis because of missing data, but only married couples were included in the marital analysis.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of six parts. The questions were either multiple choice or short response, as well as three open ended questions.

The Demographic section included questions relating to ethnic identity and the reasons why Theological Students or Clergy had chosen to enter ministry other than a sense of call. Space was given for two responses.

The next section related to abuse and asked subjects if they believed they had been abused by someone close to them in their adult life. It included questions about the tune period in which the abuse had occurred, their relationship to the abuser, the nature of the abuse, the abuser's religious involvement, the perceived seriousness of the abuse, and frequency of occurrence. Subjects were also asked if the abuse had stopped, what they perceived as the reason for this, whether they had reported the abuse, who they had reported to and types of responses they had received. The remaining questions asked respondents whether they believed they had been abused by someone close to them as a child, who the abuser had been and what kind of abuse it had been. Further questions asked about other family member they knew who had experienced abuse in the home, who had abused them and how serious they considered this.

At the conclusion of this section all subjects were asked to present their ideas of why women stay in abusive relationships and to show their preference for help for any abuse related issue. All respondents were asked to read through this section of the questionnaire and to provide their ideas on why women stay in abusive relationships to ensure firstly, that all questions relating to the types of abuse being considered in this study were answered as fully as possible and secondly, to provide all respondents with an overview of issues involved in abusive relationships.

The Anger expression scale developed by Speilberger (1986) was chosen to assess the way subjects behave when they are angry. The Scale is comprised of 24 items and yields an overall Anger - Expression score. The scale provides an index of how frequently anger is aroused and expressed or suppressed. The total score is composed of three subscales, which assess the way individuals differ in their tendency to: (1) express anger towards other people

or objects in the environment; (2) experience but hold in or suppress feelings of anger; (3) control the experience and expression of anger.

The Nowicki Locus of Control Scale (ANS-IE,), suitable for non-college as well as college adults, was chosen to measure locus of control of reinforcement. This scale has been designed to measure the extent to which an individual believes that positive or negative events of life are the result of their own behaviour, and under their personal control (Internal Locus of Control) or that such events are unrelated to personal behaviour and therefore beyond control (External Locus of Control). Wording of one or two item was altered marginally to make the questions more, relevant to an adult sample. These sections were completed by all subjects.

In addition, married couples were asked to complete:

(1) the Communication Patterns Questionnaire (Christensen & Sullaway, 1984), a self report measure designed to assess the extent to which couples use various interaction strategies during conflict.

(2) the Marital Issues Questionnaire, which assesses couples agreement or disagreement on five key issues.

(3) the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), which is a 32-item measure of marital adjustment frequently used to discriminate between satisfied and dissatisfied couples.

Procedure

Approach was made initially to Theological Colleges through personal acquaintances of the researcher, before a formal request was presented to each principal. Once on to participate had been granted for students, participation of clergy was sought through regional presidents and zone directors. The request was made for the questionnaire to be presented to all students and clergy, in each area. Where possible, the questionnaire was presented personally by the researcher at a prearranged gathering. Where this was not possible, questionnaires were posted out to subjects with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research, and a stamped, addressed, envelope for the separate return of individual responses for both husband and wife.

Instructions to Subjects

Subjects were asked to participate on a voluntary basis, and were assured that they could withdraw at any time. Standard instructions were attached to the questionnaire. Married couples were asked to complete their responses separately without communication

and to write the wife's mothers maiden name at the top of the questionnaire, or a prearranged code name, if they thought this would still identify them, so that their responses could be paired. Subjects were asked to answer the questions truthfully, complete confidentiality being assured. Where possible arrangements were made for pastoral care staff to be available for subjects should they find completing the questionnaire, raised issues for them. Where this was not possible, subjects were encouraged to talk through issues with someone they trusted. The researcher could also be contacted if they had any questions.

Results and Discussion

This sample was composed of 72 women and 69 men from the Baptist and Lutheran Churches in Australia. Of these 62 were in Ministry and a further 66 were attending Theological College. There were 13 former clergy and their spouses as shown in Table 1, making a total of 141 respondents.

Table 1. Subjects in the Sample.

Denomination	Baptist		Lutheran		n	% Total
Group Status	Women	Men	Women	Men		Sample
Ministry	13	12	14	23	62	44.0
Student	18	14	21	13	66	46.8
Ex-Clergy	6	7	0	0	13	9.2
Total	37	33	35	36	141	100

Subjects came from a variety of previous occupations, from professional and service industries to trade and farming. The most frequently cited occupation for men was teaching and for women, nursing. Reasons given for entering ministry, other than a sense of being called by God, included a desire to serve others and the opportunity for spiritual growth and development. While income levels varied incomes were predominantly below $40,000 (97%). Education levels by contrast were high with 55% of women and 84% of men having Tertiary qualifications. Only 10.6% of subjects identified with any ethnic group these being Asian, Dutch, German, Australian and White European.

Experience of Abuse.

Within this group, 55 subjects (38.30%) reported that they had experienced abuse at some time in their lives (Table 2). A total of 32 women and 23 men reported abuse at some time, and of these 9 women and 10 men had experienced abuse both in childhood and adult life. As reported by respondents, 26% of the abuse reported had occurred in the past 12 months and a further 56% had occurred in the past five years.

Table 2 Number of Respondents Who Reported Abuse.

Experience	Baptist		Ex-Clergy		Lutheran		% Total
Of Abuse	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Sample
Adult Abuse	3	2	2	1	6	3	12.06
Child Abuse	6	4	1	0	5	3	12.77
Both Child & Adult Abuse	5	3	1	3	3	4	13.47
% of Gender	19.4	13.0	5.5	5.7	19.4	14.4	38.30
No Abuse	17	17	2	3	21	26	60.99
Total	31	26	6	7	35	36	99.29

 (percentages do not add up to 100 % because of rounding)

Identified experience of abuse included physical emotional and sexual as well as several reports of other abuse. Other abuse reported included, emotional manipulation and domination, being denied the opportunity to minister, and being accused of abuse. Of the adult abuse reported 87.5% occurred on more than one occasion and 64% was considered to be serious or somewhat serious.

Men experienced less emotional and physical abuse than women in adulthood, although the level of emotional abuse was still high (13.30%) (Table 3, Appendix.) Childhood experience of emotional abuse reported by men was 48.9% of all emotional abuse, in contrast to that reported by women (14.9%). A Chi-Square analysis was not performed since this data related to instances rather than number of subjects. Men also reported a high amount of sexual abuse (Total 47%), and in childhood this was the same as that reported by women (31 %), although men did not report rape (Table 4, Appendix). The types of abuse reported by women, was similar to that reported in other studies (Walker, 1988; Conrade, 1992), with

physical, emotional and sexual abuse being higher in adulthood and sexual abuse in childhood (31%) higher than in adulthood (21%) (Table 5, Appendix).

Of abusers reported in childhood, mothers were identified as contributing 23%, equivalent to father. In response to the Question about other family members, subjects knew of who had been abused in their immediate family, 11.3% responded. Other family members abused included parents, siblings, in-laws and children (Table 6, Appendix). At least 88% of these reports were considered serious (Table 8, Appendix).

Characteristics of Abusers.

Of those identified by subjects as their abusers, a large proportion were family members (48%), some had links to the family (28%), some were service and work related (12%) and the remainder associated with the church (12%). Over 27% of the abusers never attended church, and a further 13.8% attended occasionally. However, 25% attended church regularly, 13.8% were involved in lay leadership (n= 5), and 19% were clergy (n = 7). Of clergy identified as perpetrating abuse, over half (n = 4), were family members. Other clergy were identified as supervisors or holding positions of authority.

Former Clergy.

Of those clergy and their wives who had left the ministry 8 out of 13 had experienced abuse, and for 7 of these, this had occurred in their adult life, all on a frequent basis. Abuse reported by men was considered to be more serious and more extensive, than that reported by women. A Chi Square test was performed to test for the difference in proportions of the experience of abuse for clergy and former clergy. The resulting $X (1) = 35.25$ $p<.0001$ was significant and suggests that people who leave ministry are more likely to have experienced abuse. While this is a small sample these results indicate that experience of abuse may be another factor contributing to the breakdown in ministry. This finding needs to be further investigated. What is evident however is that former clergy are hurting people who need the understanding and ministry of the church (Daniel & Rogers, 1981), and that situational and organisational structures contributing to their departure need to be addressed. There is a very real need for understanding them as people, and for a reduction in the overwhelming demands they face.

Abuse and Other Psychological Variables.

In order to investigate the relationship between the Time of Abuse, Anger Expression and Locus of Control subjects who had reported abuse were divided into three groups. This division was made according to the time when abuse was reported to have occurred so that subjects who had not reported a time of abuse made up group 1, subjects who had experienced abuse in the past 12 months made up group 2, and subjects who had experienced abuse during the past 5 years or more formed group 3. A discriminant function analysis was performed using SPSS (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner & Bent, 1975) to assess differences between the groups. The discriminant variables were: Frequency of Abuse, Seriousness of Abuse, No reason given for abuse stopping and A self directed reason given for abuse stopping, Anger expression and Locus of Control. Of the total number of cases, only one had to be dropped from the analysis because of missing data. On the basis of all 6 predictors, there was a reliable association between groups and predictors, X (12) = 355.81 p<.0001. After removal of the first function, reliable association remained, X (5) =45.17 p<.0001. The two discriminant functions squared canonical correlations accounted for 85% and 28% of the between group variability in discriminating among groups.
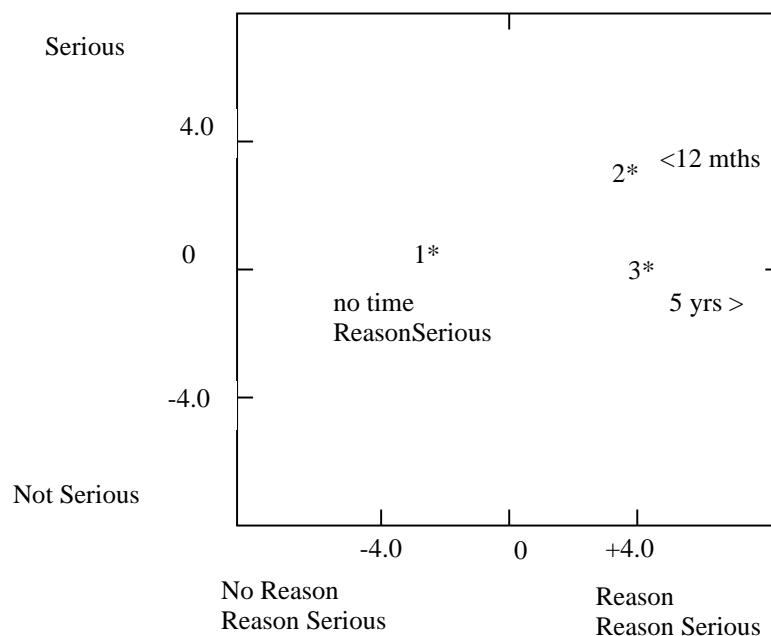

Figure 1.   Centroids of the three Time of Abuse groups on the two discriminant functions derived from the sample.

As shown in Figure 1 the first discriminant function separates subjects who did not report a time of abuse from those who did. The second discriminant function separates subjects who reported

a time of abuse as recent, from those who reported it as in the past. Using these variables 92.14% of cases were correctly classified.

Although Locus of Control means were in the direction expected for frequency and time of abuse, the result did not significantly separate the groups. A possible reason for this is that many subjects expressed confusion with the instrument since it contained ideas, such as luck and chance, that are inconsistent with Christian Faith. Since Christians see God as in control, such concepts are not considered valid by them. This is also noted by Benson and Spilka (1973), who suggest that standard scales for Measuring Locus of Control, may not accurately measure the truly religious person for this reason.

The relationship between Locus of Control and Anger Expression, measured by the pooled groups correlation, was significant (r = 0.39 p<.001). This positive correlation indicates that the more a person believed the events of life were beyond personal control (External Locus of Control), the greater the expression of anger would be. In comparison, subjects with an internal locus of control would be more in control of their anger and less likely to express it. As reported by Hersch and Scheibe (1967), Internals are more likely to feel highly competent and capable of dealing with their environment. In addition Coulson and Johnson's finding (1977) that Spirit filled Christians are more Internal suggests that a deeply personal faith assists them in maintaining a sense of control over environmental factors.

Clergy Marriage

Both men and women reported abuse by spouses with men reporting 43% of all spouse, abuse and women 57%, women reporting more physical and emotional abuse than men. A Chi-Square test was unable to be performed on this relationship due to small cell sizes. While previous research (e.g. Finkelher, 1979) has shown that men are predominantly the perpetrators of abuse on women and children (93%), it is evident from this study that women can also be abusive, and that men also suffer in these relationships.

For the analysis of the married couples data, the 44 couples were separated into groups according to experience of abuse by either member. In group 1, neither partner had experienced abuse, whereas in group 2, at least one of the partners had. A repeated measure analysis of variance with experience of abuse as the between subjects factor and sex of partner as the within subjects factor, was performed using SPSS MANOVA. Seven analyses were performed, one for each of the dependent variables: Anger Expression, Locus of Control, Dyadic Adjustment, Coercion, Mutuality, Post Conflict Distress and Destructive Process, subscales of The Couples Communication Questionnaire.

Four dependent variables Locus of Control, Coercion, Post conflict Distress and Destructive Process, were shown to distinguish between Couples with no abuse experience and couples who had experienced abuse. Figure 2 shows that men and women in the non abuse group were more Internal with males slightly higher than females. In the abuse group women were significantly more External while men had lower Internal scores.
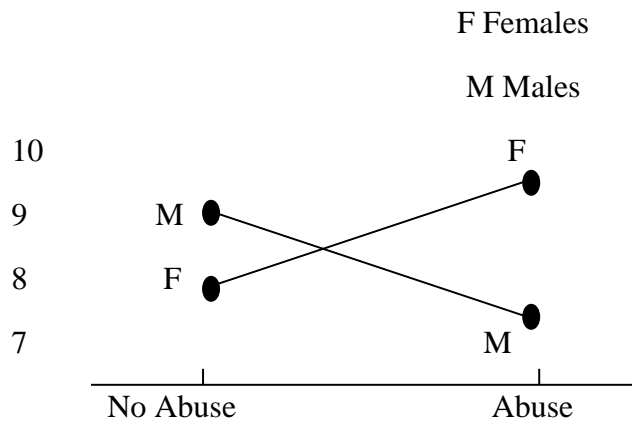
F Females

M Males

Figure 2. Mean Locus of Control for Couples as a function of abuse experience.
(F (1,42)= 4.34, p<.05).

An opposite effect was evident in the Communication subscales with destruction process showing the greatest effect (Figure 3). In couples with no experience of abuse, men scored consistently higher on all subscales than their wives.
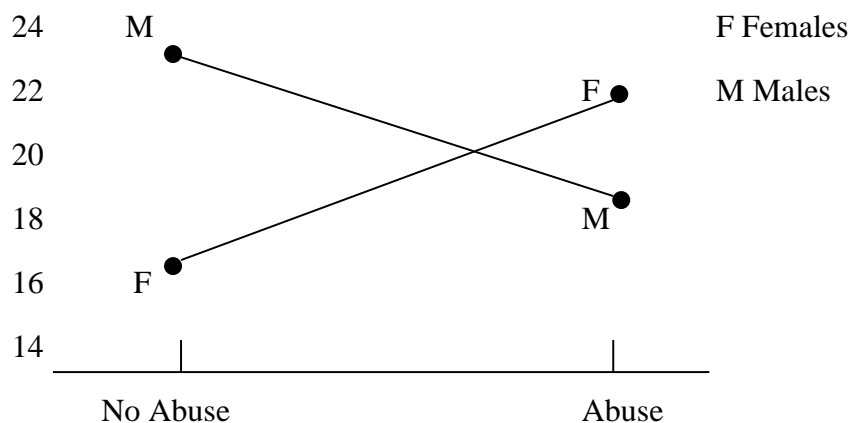

Figure 3. Mean proportion of scores on destructive process as a function of abuse.
(F (1,42) = 7.67, p<.01)

In the abuse experience group however, women scored higher than men as shown in Figure 3. Coercion and Post Conflict Distress produced a similar interaction although they were not as

strong. Men in the non abused group reported more Coercion, $F (1,42) = 4.05$, $p =.051$, and Post Conflict Distress, $F(1,42) = 3.79$, $p<.058$, than any of the other groups. Group means are shown in Table 9. No significant effects were found for either denomination or ethnic group, in relation to marital distress.

Table 9. Cell Means and Standard Deviations.

Coercion.

Women	Group 1	M 13.96	SD 8.3	Men	Group 1	M 20.1	SD 15.1
	Group 2	M 18.7	SD 10.9		Group 2	M 17.4	SD 11.3

Post Conflict Distress

Women	Group 1	M 15.5	SD 5.5	Men	Group 1	M 18.23	SD 6.4
	Group 2	M 16.6	SD 7.8		Group 2	M 15.08	SD 7.8

From this analysis it would appear that couples who have experienced abuse agree closely about the way they experience conflict in marriage and that women experience slightly more distress than men.

Couples in the no abuse groups differ in their perceptions of conflict in their relationship. Men in particular appear to perceive more coercion, post-conflict distress, and destructive process within marriage, than their wives, which may be a function of their view of marital conflict or a result of the high stress experienced in their vocation.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that not only are some members of the clergy perpetrating abuse, but that clergy are themselves experiencing abuse. Much of the abuse reported as occurring in this study, has occurred within the past five years and is considered serious. While a portion of this abuse is occurring in clergy families, it is clear that some clergy are also experiencing abuse at the hands of colleagues and superiors. For many who suffer, the journey to recognition and ultimate healing can take years. Several respondents wrote that only now, sometime after the events, can they recognise their experience as abuse. They used to think that it was normal to be treated this way. Only with an increased awareness in the community have they been able to put the painful events of life in their true perspective.

For the church, a similar increased awareness has to some extent been forced upon it. Laaser (1991) cites a Catholic Bishop who said, "Our solution in the past was to keep such issues

as quiet as possible. Where problems existed we damage controlled and transferred the priest. We can no longer get away with that posture"(p214). In many denominations a similar stance has increasingly been abandoned due to pressure from the media and plaintiff litigation. For many in the church such responses come not from a desire to deceive but from an initial shock, commonly found in a grief reaction.

Pagelow and Johnson (1988) suggest that **a** common response to abuse in church and family life is one of denial and silence. It happens, but not here. The truth is that we prefer to cling to an image of the family as "representing the best of human interaction: nurturance, love, support, protection and comfort" (Pagelow & Johnson, 1988, p2). Similarly, the church clings to its image as **a** sanctuary for humanity and provider of spiritual grace. Frequently there is also an element of pride in the family or church and community that finds the concept of abuse incongruous. For those who move beyond denial the problem of silence can still prevent them from taking an active stance in helping the victims of abuse.

Bussert (1986), a Lutheran pastor, in writing about this says

"It simply hurts to acknowledge suffering - especially meaningless suffering - so close to home. To step beyond the locked door and fully see and hear the reality of abuse down the street, next door, or within one's own church community, is to face the fact that if it could happen to 'her'(them), it could happen to 'me'(us). It is safer to keep the door locked shut, to perpetuate the silence and pretend not to see (1986, p3).

Perhaps the greatest difficulty of all in coming to terms with abuse is that people who abuse, look like anyone else. "There are no physical characteristics, emotional responses, or lifestyle cues that signal 'abuser' "(Snow & Hanni, 1988). As this study shows, offenders can represent any age group and sex. They can also come from a variety of occupations and may be from any socio-economic level. As Snow elaborates, very often "their actions may appear to be the exact opposite of deviancy, often reflecting model behaviour" (1988, p157). Unfortunately, until this reality is accepted, it will be difficult to move on to the recognition that people we know as successful, talented, caring or dependable, can also be perpetrators of abuse. Unfortunately it is the failure of this recognition, and the failure to actively confront abuse that enables the abuse to continue, not only in one generation but to third and fourth generations. Although not everyone who is abused becomes abusive (Browne & Saqui, 1988), the chances of intergenerational transmission are nevertheless real. Abusers are not born, they are made, and if the incidence in the church and the community is to be dealt with effectively, positive action that addresses the needs of both the abuser and the abused needs to be taken.

Father Neil Ormorod, speaking on Compass (A.B.C.), said about his church's response to this issue,

"In seeking to protect itself from scandal the church is in danger of missing the profound implications of abuse within its own ranks ... What they still don't seem to realise is that when priests (clergy) act in this way, that they actually act directly opposite to their ministerial calling. Their calling as ministers is to carry on the ministry of Jesus in the community, and what they are doing is in the exact opposite direction. Jesus was concerned with protecting the vulnerable and healing the wounded. They (clergy) are exploiting the vulnerable and inflicting further harm on people who are already wounded" (Compass, 1993).

Such issues however are not new to the church. Throughout the centuries similar issues have arisen, eventually been exposed and dealt with. The prophet Ezekiel, writing of the church leaders of his day said, "They have seduced my people saying Peace, and there is no peace; and when one builds a flimsy, rotten wall, behold they daub it over with whitewash" (Ezekiel 13). Fortunately several churches are now responding to this issue that is before them. There is evidence that the Uniting, Anglican, and Catholic churches have acknowledged the issue and are establishing policies to deal appropriately with abuse. The participation and support of the Baptist and Lutheran Churches in this research shows that they also are open to respond to an established need. Hopefully others denominations will also respond. For them and the others who follow, the words of Fred Green that end this paper, provide a suitable challenge.

The Church of Christ in every age,
beset by change, but Spirit-led,
must claim and test it's heritage
and keep on rising from the dead.

Across the world, across the street,
the victims of injustice cry
for shelter and for bread to eat,
and never live until they die.

Then let the servant church arise,
a caring Church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice,
and clothed in Christ's humanity.

For he alone, whose blood was shed,
can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread
and feed the starving multitude.

We have no mission but to serve
in full obedience to our Lord;
to care for all, without reserve,
and spread his liberating Word.

Fred Pratt Green

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