

HEADLINES ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE:  
WAS THERE A MORAL PANIC  
IN WINNIPEG  
BETWEEN 1983 AND 1985?

By Carolyn J. Peters

A thesis  
presented to the University of Manitoba  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Social Work

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Winnipeg, Manitoba  
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HEADLINES ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE:  
WAS THERE A MORAL PANIC IN WINNIPEG BETWEEN 1983 AND 1985

BY  
CAROLYN J. PETERS

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

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## ABSTRACT

This exploratory study examined whether there was evidence to suggest that there was a moral panic about child sexual abuse in Winnipeg between 1983 and 1985? Stanely Cohen's (1980)<sup>1</sup> definition of "moral panic" forms the basis for seven criteria which were applied and examined to explore an interactional<sup>2</sup> explanation for child sexual abuse as a social problem. These criteria include an analysis of newspaper articles, organizational response, community<sup>3</sup> leaders' reactions, community values, rates of abuse reporting and substantiated cases, and legislation and social policy changes. The results show that there is evidence to suggest that there was a moral panic according to Cohen's (1980) definition and raises additional issues and questions for study. An interactional analysis is suggested of the history of child sexual abuse as a social problem as it was addressed by the Winnipeg community.

1. Stanely Cohen (1980) Folk Devils and Moral Panics. St. Martin's Press, New York.
2. Interactional Theory examines the definition of issues as social problems in a society and draws from labelling theory.
3. 'Community' in this study is defined as the general public, service providers, experts, government policy makers, and the media.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Introduction to the Study:

Community<sup>1</sup> members develop new awareness about social issues from time to time. Within the community of experts, service providers, government policy makers, the media, and general public there may be reactions of alarm to new information which challenges commonly held beliefs. In 1983, double the newspaper media attention and twice the previous number of allegations of child sexual abuse give some credibility to the possibility that there was a moral panic about child sexual abuse in Winnipeg in the early 1980's. Several interviews with professionals involved designing solutions to the problem of child sexual abuse. Data from these interviews suggested that there was a strong community reaction to the introduction of solutions to child sexual abuse. Those who worked in the child protection field describe that some parents and professionals went from not recognizing the signs of child sexual abuse anywhere to identifying signs of child sexual abuse amongst the majority of child related problems. Was this an over reaction to child sexual abuse? Did the community members panic? Was there social alarm?

1. Note that in this study, "community" refers to the general public, service providers, experts, government policy makers, and the media.

Could there have been a moral panic about child sexual abuse? What is a moral panic? What elements signal that a moral panic is occurring? A moral panic is a strong community reaction where the panic or fear appears to be related to moral values which are challenged or threatened in some way. This study comprises the application of Stanley Cohen's (1980) definition and theory of moral panic to the social problem of child sexual abuse in Manitoba in 1983, 1984, and 1985.

Cohen (1980) defines moral panic in *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* as follows:

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic is passed over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself.<sup>2</sup>

2. S. Cohen, Folk Devils and Moral Panics (St. Martin's Press, NY), 1980, p. 9.

By applying the seven criteria that make up Cohen's (1980) definition of moral panic, this study examines cultural definitions of social problems. It assesses the media attention to child sexual abuse, social policy changes, expert opinions, and moral principles about sexuality and power within an historical context to understand whether there was a moral panic about child sexual abuse between 1983 and 1985 in Winnipeg.

The report of this exploratory study begins with a literature review, followed by a description of the methodology and presentation of data, conclusions based on the findings, and suggestions for future research. The literature review has three parts. In the first part, the historical process of shaping and defining child abuse as a social problem is described. In the second part, the relationship between the labellers and the labelled in social problem definition is explored. In the final part, an examination is made of literature on fear and moral panic about child sexual abuse.

## B. THE EMERGENCE OF STATE INTERVENTION IN CHILD ABUSE

By the end of the nineteenth century, childhood was recognized as a separate stage during which more protection, training, sheltering and education were needed (Aries, 1963; Sutherland, 1985; Wharf, 1993). The state developed a

special relationship with "the child" through legal changes including prohibition of child labour, compulsory education, and legislation defining the rights of children and the responsibilities of the State when parents or guardians are not adequately guiding and protecting children (Bala et al., 1991; Meckel 1985; Stadum, 1995; Thomas, 1972).

The recognition of child physical abuse within the medical profession emerged after Kempe et al. published an article in a medical journal in 1962 entitled "The Battered-Child Syndrome". Subsequently, child physical abuse was recognized as a medical problem and soon legitimized as a serious social problem requiring immediate attention, legal statutes, legal intervention, and social service reorganization (Wharf, 1993).

Child sexual abuse came to the attention of the North American public in the 1970's. First-person accounts of child sexual abuse, increasing coverage by the media, and an increase in the rates of child sexual abuse allegations resulted in wide-spread new information indicating that the effects of child sexual abuse were more serious and prevalent than had been previously thought (Allen, 1980; Butler; 1978; Brady, 1980). Children's rights advocates struggled to demonstrate how widespread sexual abuse was and, as the public came to accept the fact that child sexual abuse exists, there was general agreement that child sexual abuse was morally wrong (Finkelhor, 1984).

In Manitoba, medical and social work professionals started asking children who exhibited behavior problems about their histories of sexual abuse. Many confirmed that they had a history of sexual abuse (Hudeck Interview). The media coverage increased and a government interested in advocating for abused children introduced new legislation in 1986 which granted more power to the child protection agencies to intervene when they suspected child sexual abuse (Smith Interview).

#### C. MORAL PANICS, THE SYMBOLIC MEANING OF MARGINAL BEHAVIOUR, AND THE MEDIA

The study of behavior that is considered morally wrong, outside the margins of social norms, or deviant by mainstream society has typically been split into two approaches. One approach questions the behavior of the person who behaved in a marginal fashion by asking, "Why did they do it?", "What sort of people are they?" and "How can we stop them from doing it again?" (Woolgar & Pawluch, 1985; Pfohl, 1985). Another perspective explores how the social problem came to be labelled and understood as marginal (or outside the norm) and examines the interactional processes that contribute to behaviors and problems being labelled in the fashion that they have been. The focus of such analysis might be, "Who is labelling the behavior as deviant?" and "Who is benefitting from the social problem being defined in this way?" and finally,

"What is the meaning of the social problem in the larger social context?" (Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1951). Such an interactional study to labelled behavior examines who has the power to label deviant behavior and what gives them that power. An interactional perspective also explores the labelled persons' experience of being labelled and the symbolic meaning of the label and the labelling process in the community.

An example of an interactional study was conducted by Hall et al. (1978), who explored the political biases that linked perceptions about youth crime with black youth in the United Kingdom. Hall et al. (1978) analyze the media presentation of black youth and mugging in their study. They argue that threats to traditional beliefs and values like respectability, work, social discipline, and common sense are the foundation of the American social structure. When these values are threatened, social anxiety is generated; a "folk devil" or scapegoat is sought and becomes the bearer of all the anxiety (Hall et al., 1978).

An interactional perspective also influenced Konker's (1992) argument that child sexual abuse represents a symbolic social problem. Although the psychological effects of child sexual abuse can be serious and long-lasting for the child, according to Konker (1992), she questions why North America is willing to scapegoat adults who sexually abuse children with individualized punishment when the prevalence of the problem is symbolic of an abusive society.

Many have argued that the media play an important role in determining the focus of social fear and panic.

According to Ericson (1991), news production involves dramatized depictions of social problems and it is their presentation, not the events themselves, that create news. Therefore, by the media's choice of experts, the community is informed about a select perspective of morality. The news media claims that they select information about the facts in the public interest. This is based on the principle of neutrality. However, Ericson (1991) argues that the news media subtly organize the community by their choice of topics, sources, and frames of reference. The pressures editors experience and the choices journalists make influence and shape the moral margins of the community.

Cohen's (1980) study of youth behavior in Britain in the late 1960's revealed that when intense media coverage portrayed youth behavior as a crime wave of epidemic proportions, that both the youth behaviors and the public reaction became intensified. According to Cohen (1980), when social anxiety and biased moral beliefs are operationalized into behavior changes at a societal level, a social condition exists where a moral panic may have been generated. Cohen's (1980) definition of moral panic consists of seven elements which will be discussed in more detail later in this study. Briefly, he examines how people in positions of community influence have structural power to prescribe and implement changes based on their moral



opinions, while the media is presenting a skewed image of the social problems being defined. The media presents a skewed image of the issues while there is fear and panic in the community about the dynamics of the identified problem. Other elements of Cohen's (1980) moral panic are a high level of media visibility, a high level of identification of the problem by the community, and long-standing legal or social policy changes. Cohen (1980) appears to be the originator of this concept of moral panic about social problems and most researchers who have studied moral panic refer to Cohen's (1980) original definition and conceptualization.

The fashion in which news is reported is as significant as what is reported, according to MacLean (1981). She argues that the printed media incorporate numerous techniques to bias the presentation of information. She recommends exploring the logic and facts of the argument. Her critique of the printed news media's presentation of social issues exposes the techniques used to subtly persuade the reader of a particular point of view. She shows how generalizations, which she refers to as "glittering generalities", can mislead the public. When opinions are presented as facts or the two are presented without clarity about which is fact and which is opinion, MacLean (1981) describes this as misleading the reader. Another example of problematic argument construction that MacLean (1981) criticizes is "attacking the person and not the argument".

This technique is sometimes employed when an individual is singled out and personal issues are raised rather than the opinions and argument that they are creating that are of public interest.

D) IS THERE EVIDENCE IN THE LITERATURE OF ALARM AND MORAL PANIC ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

"Child sexual abuse seemed safe, though. After all, who was for it?" asks Hechler (1988), referring to the puzzle about why child sexual abuse created so much media attention and public anxiety in the early 1980's. He argues that child sexual abuse is an "epidemic". He explores the denial that communities showed when awareness about child sexual abuse was raised. He also reviews how the legal system, the social services system, and the medical system with varying agendas, had to work cooperatively in the best interests of the child. He argues that the public was reluctant to recognize the prevalence and seriousness of child sexual abuse because the new information about prevalence and long lasting effects was so surprising and puzzling. The community seemed to be asking, how could child sexual abuse be occurring everywhere, according to the statistics, and be so disguised?

The recent focus on child sexual abuse as a major social problem cannot be explained in terms of mistreatment of the child itself but must include an analysis of the anxieties and contradictions of the values in American

culture where the punished child abusers function as scapegoats for a sexually confused and abusive society, according to Scheper-Hughes (1987) and Konker (1992).

Not all experts recognize abuse as a symbolic metaphor for the society in which it occurs. Edwards & Lohman (1994) explore the complexity of abuse investigating and media reporting when they analyze two examples of "child sexual abuse epidemics". One case is from England and the other is from the Netherlands. In both cases, the argument is made that the impact of abuse on professionals involved in investigation is profound, resulting in female abuse investigators being scapegoated for the community's fear and in blaming of the child victims. They polarize "real sufferings" and "mass hysteria" in their argument, suggesting that these phenomena do not exist simultaneously in our communities. They also imply that consistent criticism of the investigation process in the media is part of the backlash against believing the destructive effects of abuse on the child victims. They conclude that complex abuse cases can create moral panics. However, Edwards & Lohman (1994) argue that the media scapegoated women in these two case examples because the public's fear, lack of awareness, and attempts to return to the status quo were misinterpreted by the media as over-reaction by the child victim advocates.

Olafson (1994) also examines the media's role in reporting on child sexual abuse and challenges Edwards and

Lohman's (1994) assumption that women were singled out by the media in these examples. She cites a lack of credible empirical evidence for Edwards and Lohman's argument as the problem. Olafson (1994) is also critical of the media's lack of accuracy and lack of sensitivity about child abuse coverage. However, she cautions that not all questions and criticism of the handling of child sexual abuse investigating constitutes a backlash.

Chadwick (1994) echoes this caution and argues that the sides of this debate are polarized because extreme views are conveyed by each side. Given the high level of public anxiety about child abuse and the fact that it is a complex social issue with no simple solution, one side may simply dismiss the whole problem by suggesting that a few professionals are over-reacting and a segment of the public can probably be led to believe this. However, Chadwick (1994) points out that another segment of the public, including both men and women, is unlikely to accept a suggestion that a significant proportion of sexual abuse allegations are false. These people clearly recall their own childhood experiences and a steadily growing group of professionals have listened to these first-person accounts. Intense public debate about child sexual abuse is likely to continue and the media is likely to continue to find this debate exciting and profitable, according to Chadwick (1994).

There appears to be a recognition in the literature that the community reaction to child sexual abuse requires an explanation and that social anxiety or discomfort of some kind underlies the strong community reaction. The helping professions and the media representation of social problems appear to be at odds about the appropriate ways to convey information about this social problem.

A study exploring the possibility of a moral panic about child sexual abuse is incomplete without considering how social values about sexuality were changing in North America in the 1980's. Konker (1992) argues that "incest taboos" are not biological mandates but, rather, culturally constructed rules which vary from culture to culture. Taking a similar point of view, Finkelhor (1984) describes the changing social context within which child sexual abuse has been addressed. North America recently has been in a state of change and confusion about sexuality as a result of significant role changes among men and women. The previously understood sexual norms enforced by the church, parents, and tradition no longer have legitimacy, resulting in confusion about what healthy sexuality is. Finkelhor (1984) is suggesting that this changing social context may have added to the confusion and fear as the community developed awareness about the prevalence of child sexual abuse.

This exploratory study examines whether a moral panic occurred and analyzes the community context as part of a

broader explanation for the apparent focus on child sexual abuse in Winnipeg. Some child victim advocates have become concerned that by examining interactional patterns when studying abuse, one is contributing to a minimization of the responsibility of the individual abusers themselves, thus reverting back to the centuries of denial about the existence of child abuse as a serious social problem (Carter et al, 1986; Woolgar & Pawluch, 1985). Woolgar and Pawluch (1985) argue that by focussing on the community interactional patterns of how a social problem like child abuse becomes defined as a social problem, one is implying that perhaps the problem is not serious or prevalent enough to warrant immediate social action to ameliorate the effects of the problem. What Woolgar and Pawluch (1985) seem to be implying is that some social problems do not require careful consideration regarding the meaning and implications of legal and social norm changes because of the magnitude of the concerns and the obvious community agreement that the problem must be solved, as in the case of child abuse. The problems related to child sexual abuse are serious and can be ameliorated by community action. However how the community response is organized is of utmost significance. This study explores whether there was an over-reaction by the community in the process of defining child sexual abuse as a social problem.

#### E. CONCLUSION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In summary, Hall (1978), Cohen (1980), and MacLean (1981) are not suggesting that the media merely create the news out of conjecture; however, they question the media's choices to exclude certain information and examine what effects this has on public perceptions of social issues. They argue that the media tend to portray the more extreme aspects of social problems and that such biased portrayals of social issues can fuel existing myths, fears, and narrow assumptions in society which further alienate individuals and groups that are outside the mainstream. When solutions to social problems are fueled by fear and social anxiety, the risk is that such solutions will not incorporate a consideration of the interactional patterns involving the labellers of the problem and that solutions will be made in haste without consideration for the complexity of the issues in the community context (Cohen, 1980; Hall, 1978).

This study examines whether there was an over-reaction in the community to child sexual abuse resulting from fear and panic. Cohen's (1980) definition provides a model of the elements that make up a moral panic. The criteria outlined in Cohen's definition became a framework within which to understand the sudden increase in reporting rates and the increase in printed media attention from the Winnipeg Free Press.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Introduction to the Methodology:

The complex interactional patterns within which social problems and solutions develop has already been illustrated. Cohen's (1980) definition of moral panic has multiple criteria. The challenge, then, is to create a research design that analyzes empirical evidence for each aspect of Cohen's definition of moral panic while remaining open to additional information that aids in creating a conceptual framework for understanding how child sexual abuse was defined and how solutions were generated in the early 1980's in Winnipeg.

Empirical data relevant to each of the seven criteria in Cohen's definition of moral panic have been obtained and evaluated. A combination of research techniques has been employed, including interviewing, scrutiny of documents, systematic analysis of printed media, and observation (Ericson 1991; Lofland & Lofland 1994). Each criterion will be examined and discussed separately. An interactional interpretation of the data creates a theoretical framework within which all seven criteria are linked (Becker, 1963; Cohen, 1980; Hall et al, 1978; Lemert, 1951). Cohen's (1980) seven criteria are: 1) a biased media portrayal; 2) "socially accredited experts" speak about solutions; 3) moral opinion makers give directives to the public; 4) social values and interests are threatened; 5) collective behavior changes occur; 6) the rates of actual, perceived



and media reported rates of the condition suggest an overreaction; and 7) there can be long lasting results in the community (See quote on p. 2 of this study for Cohen's, 1980, original definition). What follows is a brief description of each criterion, the source of data and method of analysis for each criterion. Comments about unavailable data and shifts in the research design have also been included.

#### B. CRITERION 1

The media may present a stylized and stereotypical view of a social issue resulting in a biased portrayal of that social condition. According to Cohen (1980) the media frequently incorporate symbolization, distortion, and prediction in covering social issues. While the media and most forms of communication rely on symbols to convey large amounts of information more simply, such choices can present a misleading or one-sided view of social problems to the public (Cohen, 1980; Hall, 1978).

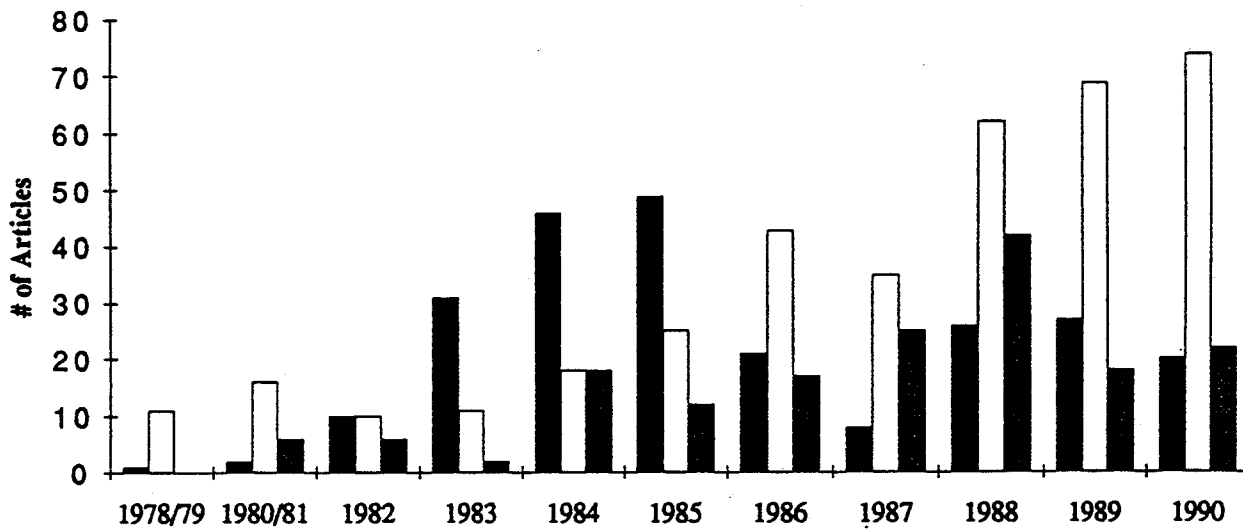
The media may create distorted or extreme images by their choices to include or exclude certain details or by the emotional tone created by the journalist. For example, a prediction can be made in a fear-producing way by speculating about a worsening future and relaying an atmosphere of alarm or that same information can be

presented in a factual and logical fashion leaving the reader to form his or her own opinion and reactions to the information (Herman & Chomsky, 1979; MacLean, 1981; Sawatsky, 1986). For example, one headline read: "Reports of Incest Skyrocketing", leaving the reader alarmed that incidents of incest are suddenly increasing without an explanation. While the article that follows may provide statistical information, the context and meaning of this information may not be detailed enough for the reader to make informed decisions about the significance of this information (Winnipeg Free Press, 1983).

#### SOURCE OF DATA (Criterion 1)

The Winnipeg Free Press printed 126 articles in 1983, 1984, and 1985 specifically about child sexual abuse. The Winnipeg Free Press was chosen for content analysis because it had the largest circulation of newspapers to Winnipeg readers and because the articles were easily accessible by them from the Winnipeg Free Press Library. The time period was chosen because twice as many articles on child sexual abuse were published during these three years as during the previous five or the following five years. (See Figure 1 for the number of articles that were printed on child abuse between 1978 and 1990). A comparison of articles on child sexual abuse and child physical abuse also showed that the 1983 to 1985 time period yielded significantly more articles on child sexual abuse than child physical abuse. This seemed puzzling and could perhaps be related to the way that

**Winnipeg Free Press Articles: Comparison of Child Sexual, Physical, Emotional, and General Abuse**



Child Sexual Abuse
  Child Abuse: Physical, Emotional, and Neglect
  General Child Abuse Themes (Physical and sexual abuse not specifically mentioned. Themes may include general policy or social service delivery issues.)

**ACTUAL FIGURES FOR THE CHART**

	Child Sexual Abuse	Child Abuse: Physical, Emotional, and Neglect	General Child Abuse Themes
1978/79	1	11	0
1980/81	2	16	6
1982	10	10	6
1983	31	11	2
1984	46	18	18
1985	49	25	12
1986	21	43	17
1987	8	35	25
1988	26	62	42
1989	27	69	18
1990	20	74	22

Total number of child sexual abuse articles for 1983, 1984, and 1985 is 126 articles.

child sexual abuse was being defined as a social problem. Such a discrepancy required further study.

The articles were reviewed for examples of bias<sup>3</sup> and a stereotypical view of the problem of child sexual abuse. As Cohen (1980) argued, a biased view of the problem in the printed media can influence community reaction and understanding of a social issue.

#### ANALYSIS (Criterion 1)

Content analysis was the method of choice to analyze the presence of symbols, prediction, and bias in all 126 newspaper articles published between 1983 and 1985 about child sexual abuse. General categories about what to include in the content analysis were derived from Cohen (1980), Sawatsky (1986) and Maclean (1981). The general categories include: Effects of and solutions to child sexual abuse; cause-effect relationships; stated solutions; sources of information; message of the article; form of the article; prediction, patterning, symbols and unsound ways

3. "Bias" refers to information in the articles which was presented in an emotional or speculative way. Each article was evaluated based on the analysis of whether the article had a sound way of creating an argument and examples of emotion, speculation, logic, and facts. Appendix A (Codebook) has more details.

of creating an argument; and finally, bias and neutrality. These categories were chosen to assist in exploring what type of bias, if any, was most evident in the newspaper articles.

The academic literature about child sexual abuse, psychological assessment, and treatment provided more specific categories about cause, effects of abuse, and about solutions (Finkelhor, 1984; Friedrich, 1990; Sgroi, 1982). For example, "stated solutions to child sexual abuse" categories were: incarceration mentioned alone; probation mentioned alone; counselling mentioned alone; fines mentioned alone; incarceration and probation; incarceration, probation, and counselling; incarceration and counselling; probation and counselling; none of the above; and other, specify.

"Unsound ways of creating an argument" had eight categories. They were: bold assertions; pattern and prediction; attacking the person, not the argument; pointing to the enemy; misusing statistics; meshing fact with opinion; band wagon appeal; and glittering generalities. Each category was defined in the codebook so that when the articles were recoded, the category meanings would be understood. These categories were made to be as specific as possible so that they could be collapsed later if they were too specific and detailed. The design also incorporated the opportunity to add categories during the

analysis if certain themes emerged from the data (Lofland & Lofland, 1994). Themes that might have been important during the 1983 to 1985 time period were included in the "message" category. For example, aboriginal child welfare issues regarding child sexual abuse were included to explore how central this theme was at that time. The expectation at the outset of the study was that aboriginal child welfare was a general social issue in Manitoba within which problem definitions and solutions were being generated. Information about how these issues were central in defining child sexual abuse as a general social problem in the community generally would be revealed because this study explores factors from many points of view and sources.

Through an analysis of all 126 articles, a comparison could be made between the number of neutral and biased articles. This provided an overview of the editor's choices to convey information to the public. Cumulatively the content analysis data were then used to come to a final judgement about bias by using four categories: fact, logic, speculation and emotion as central themes in the article. The content analysis codebook and form in Appendix A and B provide more detailed information about the content analysis process.

The first thirty articles were recoded to ensure continuity throughout the coding process. Three articles were randomly chosen and recoded by two individuals who were uninformed about the research focus. These two individuals

were given the codebook, the content analysis forms and a copy of the three articles. This was designed as a test to assess whether the codebook categories were clear and to examine whether the coding process made sense for the type of issues being explored by the content analysis. This recoding procedure adds credibility to the tool and categories that were designed for use in this study. The results of the recoding process were generally consistent with the original coding results. These results are discussed in more detail in the Methodological Post Script at the end of the Methodology chapter.

The codebook guides the coder through a process of decision making regarding the bias and neutrality<sup>4</sup> of the articles. The assumption is that some examples of all four categories will be present. Therefore these examples are listed on the content analysis form and the coder then reviews all the data for that article and makes a judgement about whether the article is primarily factual and logical or falls in one of the other categories. Factual and

4. "Neutrality" for this study is defined as a factual and logical presentation of the information in the article. A context is provided, the themes and the argument flow logically, the facts are referenced, and the tone of the article is not based on an emotional reaction. Appendix A contains examples.

logical articles are defined as neutral and the remaining are defined as biased. The number of biased and neutral articles was compared.

#### C. CRITERION 2

Cohen (1980) argues that the pronouncement of diagnoses and solutions by socially accredited experts is a signal that a moral panic might be occurring. "Socially accredited experts" are individuals who have become spokes-persons for a cause or who the media consistently quotes so that they become identified with being an expert on an issue despite their actual expertise. For example, a school trustee may be credited with being an expert on child abuse when his actual expertise is in another, field leaving the public with a misleading perception. What is being counted here is the newspaper's construction of experts who may not have the credibility necessary to speak to an issue as a community leader, or the newspaper's choice not to have their actual credentials clearly stated, thus leaving the reader to decide whether the information is valid.

On some social issues, the general public may become informed and even alarmed by new information about social problems, but the actual analysis and solution development may still be left to the experts and policy makers.

Therefore, the impression left by the media about socially



accredited expert advice can be very significant. (Cohen, 1980; Hall, 1978; Maclean, 1981).

#### SOURCES OF DATA (Criterion 2)

The 126 Winnipeg Free Press articles published between 1983 and 1985.

#### ANALYSIS (Criterion 2)

Content analysis of all 126 Winnipeg Free Press articles was carried out to determine whether a variety of experts were sought out and whether certain "socially accredited" experts were repeatedly quoted and made to appear credible despite their expertise in a field other than child abuse. Examples from the articles will show how the media used this technique to convey information about child abuse.

Categories were designed to count the number of times certain themes emerged in the "nature of the quotes". Additional categories could be added as needed. Categories for the nature of the quotes came from a brief overview of several articles on physical abuse and categories could be added during the coding (See Appendix A and B for Content Analysis Codebook and Form). Any patterns or themes that emerged were noted.

Cumulatively this data provides a compendium of information about the diagnoses and solutions regarding child sexual abuse offered by socially accredited experts.

#### D. CRITERION 3

According to Cohen (1980), moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, and other right-thinking people. In Britain, when Cohen (1980) studied the moral panic generated in response to youth behaviour, bishops and "right thinking people" may have been the moral opinion-makers who promoted their viewpoints to the general public. However, Cohen's (1980) third criterion has been adapted to the Winnipeg context by asking who the moral opinion-makers were and what they did and said about child sexual abuse. Moral opinion makers are influential experts, government policy makers, service delivery entrepreneurs, or the media decision makers who convey their beliefs and moral directives to the public. They can be politically right-thinking or left-thinking. They publicly announce how serious and prevalent the issue is and perhaps even suggest what the public reaction should be (Cohen, 1980; Ericson, 1991; Hall, et al, 1978).

#### SOURCES OF DATA (Criterion 3)

While the socially accredited experts mentioned in the newspaper might actually be the community leaders who conveyed moral opinions and suggestions for solutions to the public, there might also be some discrepancies between the newspaper's version of who is expert and what actually occurred in the community. The interviews with community leaders provide opinions from several points of view. This

criterion is distinguished from the previous one by Cohen (1980) to develop an understanding of who the moral opinion leaders actually were in the community in addressing child sexual abuse.

The Winnipeg Free Press articles provide information about who the editors saw as influential moral opinion makers. Both the list of experts and the solutions that were put forth provide one perspective about the moral opinion makers.

Key individuals and representatives from key organizations were interviewed to develop a retrospective understanding of the milieu within which explanations and solutions to child sexual abuse developed (See Appendix C for a list of all individuals interviewed). The interviews provide another perspective on the extent to which moral opinion makers shaped the community response to child sexual abuse. The choice of which organizations to contact came out of the newspaper articles' most frequently mentioned agencies and institutions. The individuals who were chosen for retrospective conversations came from both the newspaper articles and persons who were recommended for consultation when contacting the organizations.

Local radio call-in shows (CBC & CJOB) were contacted for a list of their guests and topics between 1983 and 1985 to explore whether other media were also covering child sexual abuse stories and, more specifically, to discover

whether a public discussion occurred. Only the themes of call-in shows for 1983 at CJOB were available.

#### ANALYSIS (Criterion 3)

The combination of data from the Winnipeg Free Press, information from the interviews with key individuals and organizations, and the Radio call-in shows provides a multidimensional perspective on who the moral opinion makers were and what they said and did to convey moral opinions about child sexual abuse (Ericson, 1991; Lofland & Lofland, 1994). If the interview information points in a similar direction, that is, general agreement on who the moral leaders were and what they did, than this criterion will have been met.

#### E. CRITERION 4

From time to time, a social condition comes to the public attention which appears to threaten societal values and interests. A social condition develops a name and certain dynamics that are definable in the literature, media, or by persons that are directly involved or affected. "Societal values and interests" are threatened when commonly held beliefs or norms in the general public are challenged in some way by unfamiliar information (Cohen, 1980). Although each society is made up of many different groups holding a variety of beliefs, attitude surveys and opinion polls regularly provide the public with information about their beliefs and attitudes. Cohen (1980) studied moral

panic in the present as it was occurring. However, this study attempts to study moral panic in retrospectively and therefore, it is not possible to conduct a community attitude survey to assess attitude changes.

Two questions flow out of Cohen's (1980) criterion about threat to values. First, in what ways might child sexual abuse threaten social interests and values? Second, was the community alarmed in some way about child sexual abuse? Evidence that suggests that there was community alarm about child sexual abuse has been gathered. However, it is difficult to measure and compare the community alarm and over reaction with calm and proactive planning which will also have occurred because of the difficulty in empirically defining "community alarm".

#### SOURCES OF DATA (Criterion 4)

To answer the first question about the reasons for increased awareness about child sexual abuse resulting in a perceived threat to societal interests and values, the academic literature has already been reviewed and shows that experts in the field recognized a perceived threat or even perpetuated a sense of social alarm about child sexual abuse.

This framework provides a backdrop within which to explore the answer to the second question. Was the community alarmed in some way about child sexual abuse? The Winnipeg Free Press articles and the interviews with key

individuals and organizations can provide examples of alarm about child sexual abuse in the community.

One additional source of data is a previously conducted survey. The Winnipeg Area Survey is located in the department of Sociology at the University of Manitoba. It was conducted in 1981, 1983, 1984, and in 1986 became an annual survey. The 1984 and 1988 surveys asked some questions relating to family values and attitudes about child sexual abuse. Between 400 and 600 Winnipeg Residents were randomly interviewed by telephone. Responses to questions which appeared to be related to family values were selected to understand community attitudes about family relationships, abuse in relationships, and traditional family values (although this term is loosely used in this study).

#### ANALYSIS (Criterion 4)

Three sources - the Winnipeg Free Press, interviews, and survey results provide an overview of community beliefs and attitudes about family values and child sexual abuse in the early 1980's. The interpretation of this data creates a context within which to understand the dynamics that influenced alarm in the community about child sexual abuse.

#### F. CRITERION 5

When Cohen (1980) states that "ways of coping" evolve or are resorted to, he is referring to changes in collective

behavior that could result from a community's alarm and focus on a particular social problem. The most likely empirical signs of such collective behavior changes are at an organizational level (Blumer, 1971; Smelser, 1962). Social Agencies and institutions which had children in their care or were in some other way involved either in raising awareness about or responding to child sexual abuse are the most likely to have changed their operational guidelines or developed new policies during the 1980's.

#### SOURCES OF DATA (Criterion 5)

Inquiries were made to six organizations regarding any policy and guideline changes that were made about child sexual abuse in the 1980's. These were: The School System ( the Manitoba Teachers' Society and the Fort Gary School Division); Winnipeg Child and Family Services (formerly Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg and Eastern Manitoba); the Child Protection Centre; the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre; the Winnipeg Police Department; and Klinik. (See Appendix D for descriptions of the role of each organization in the community). These six organizations were chosen because they were most frequently referred to in the Winnipeg Free Press articles and, therefore, were thought to be influential and involved in addressing the issues of child sexual abuse, at least in the eyes of the editors (Lofland & Lofland, 1994).

The interviews with key individuals are another source of data. The key individuals who were interviewed for this

study were asked about numerous issues and any information that specifically relates to organizational policy changes was used to assess this criterion.

#### ANALYSIS (Criterion 5)

Phone interviews began by asking each organization's receptionist for the best person to speak to the issue of policy and guideline changes in the early 1980's. In a few instances, the person that had been suggested referred the question to another organizational representative. The person that was identified was then told that the study was about the history of child sexual abuse in Manitoba and they were asked to comment about any guideline or policy changes that may have been carried out by their organizations between 1983 and 1985 related to child sexual abuse.

During the phone interviews, this information was documented by the interviewer. Additional questions about the reasons for the changes and any recollections about the dilemmas faced by the organization were explored if the interviewee was willing to engage in a conversation. The individual was also asked for written documentation to substantiate their comments. Finally, the person was asked whether their organization's name and their name and title could be used in the final report of this study.

The summarized descriptions from each organization and key individuals about the changes in collective behavior that employee groups made creates a synopsis for this criterion. If the data point in the same direction, that



organizations faced new dilemmas and developed policies and guidelines about child sexual abuse in the 1980's, then this criterion will have been met (Lofland & Lofland, 1994). It is difficult to determine whether these changes would have occurred despite panic and moral fear regarding child sexual abuse, however exploring these issues in more depth is beyond the scope of this study and requires further research.

#### G. CRITERION 6

According to Cohen (1980), a social condition appears and may disappear or deteriorate but may continue to be visible in the media. In essence, this means that there is something about the perceived and actual rates of a social problem and the media reporting about the rates of the problem that create the suggestion that there was alarm or overreaction by the community. To measure this variable, rates of reported allegations of child sexual abuse and rates of substantiated cases of child sexual abuse were compared to the level of media visibility of the issue (here referring to coverage by the Winnipeg Free Press and any relevant data from the radio call-in shows). The assumption is that the level of media visibility, reporting rates and substantiation rates would remain relatively steady if there was not a moral panic.

#### SOURCES OF DATA (Criterion 6)

Rates of reported and substantiated cases of child sexual abuse were obtained from the Winnipeg Child and Family Services Annual Reports and Statistics Canada Criminal Court records. The time period for these statistical comparisons included the 1970's, 1980's, and the 1990's.

#### ANALYSIS (Criterion 6)

Substantiation rates, reporting rates, and media visibility were summarized and compared. Definitions and interpretations of these categories will be discussed in more depth in the "Presentation of Data" Section.

#### H. CRITERION 7

"Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic is passed over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself".<sup>5</sup>

5. Cohen (1980), p. 9.

Such changes in legislation, social norms, or folklore are empirical signs of a moral panic, according to Cohen (1980). Blumer (1971), Hall (1991), and Smelser (1962) echo this premise.

#### SOURCES OF DATA (Criterion 7)

The changes in legislation, social norms, or folklore regarding child sexual abuse will be summarized. The 1983 to 1990 time period will be examined because if there was a moral panic between 1983 and 1985 then that period and the next 5 years are a reasonable time period in which to expect these changes to have occurred. Expected findings include the changes to the Child and Family Services Act (1986), the development of the Children's Advocate office, the Teacher's Guidelines, and other social norm changes that might be referred to by key individuals and representatives from organizations that were interviewed for this study.

#### ANALYSIS (Criterion 7)

The information collected from these sources was summarized and interpreted to provide a time line and a conceptual framework to understand the legislative and normative changes that occurred relating to child sexual abuse. If the data point to long-lasting changes in legislation, social norms or public perceptions, then this criterion was considered to have been met.

## I. CONCLUSION OF METHODOLOGY

The seven criteria that make up Cohen's (1980) definition of moral panic form a conceptual framework for understanding the interactional processes that contributed to social problem and solution development about child sexual abuse in the early 1980's in Winnipeg. This framework then provides a basis from which to answer the question of whether there was a moral panic about child sexual abuse according to Cohen's (1980) definition.

## J. Methodological Post Script: Discoveries During Data Collection

### a) Introduction

Several noteworthy discoveries were made during the data collection process. They include observations about the process of interviewing key individuals, research decisions during the content analysis of the Winnipeg Free Press articles, and the results of the recoding process (Lofland & Lofland, 1994).

### b) Interviewing observations:

Three issues were noted about the interviews. First, when more preparation was done with interviewees in advance of the interview, the person tended to be well prepared and provide a more comprehensive overview of their ideas. Both John Chudzik and Muriel Smith were spoken to by phone, and were sent a brief outline of the interview questions, a one page review of the Winnipeg Free Press article themes, as

well as the informed consent form (See Appendix E for copy of Audio Consent Form). Because these interviews resulted in such comprehensive frameworks for understanding the Provincial changes regarding child sexual abuse in a way that was not documented anywhere, a summary of each of these interviews has been included in this Report (See Appendix F for a summary of Muriel Smith's interview and Appendix G for a summary of John Chudzik's interview).

Second, when phone interviews were attempted, people were unprepared but quite willing to take time to discuss this issue. The responses tended to be more spontaneous and more focussed on one or two things that stood out in people's memory at that moment. Each interview approach had merit in accessing a unique type of information in this retrospective study.

Third, in an attempt to present an unbiased version of the interviews with community leaders and members, copies of the summaries of interviews were presented to the individuals for comments and suggested changes to ensure accuracy. Although the facts of the summaries were not changed, the context and wording were changed in most summaries by the individuals who had been interviewed to more clearly represent their ideas.

c) Content Analysis Changes: During the content analysis process, several discoveries were made that led to omitting a large portion of the content analysis form (See Appendix B for a sample of which pages were omitted). It

was evident early in the analysis that size of the article and information about the form of the article were not as useful as information about symbols, themes, and problematic argument construction. Form refers to the size and location of the article and headline in the newspaper. Information about form was not as readily available and there appeared to be little variation in form and also in newspaper circulation rates which might be an indicator of the effects of Form changes. Therefore information about form was eliminated from the study.

The category "Nature of the Quote" required several codes when there were five or six quotes in an article. This category did not prove to be as useful or significant in addressing the criteria as originally thought. This may have been because the categories were too broad. When the results were tabulated, most of the quotes in a single article were about the same theme. Therefore, in the Tabulation of the Content Analysis results, the "Nature of the Quote" category has a single code for each article instead of separate one for each quote for each article. Because this information was tabulated in this fashion, the results were not used to strengthen the argument in the results section of this study.

d) Results of Recoding: The coders were given the coding book with no explanation other than to code the articles according to the instructions. The two coders were given three randomly chosen articles and the codebook.

Of particular interest were the results for bias and neutrality which resulted from the decisions about whether the article as a whole was factual, logical, speculative, and/or emotional. One coder had the same results as the investigator. The other coder commented that the categories were inadequate for one of the articles and she would have preferred to add a category that did not previously exist. However, she was able to make a choice that reflected the same code as the original, which was "bias" for that particular article. For the final analysis of whether the article was considered biased or neutral, the recoding had 100% of the same results as the investigator's coding.

The "message of the article" category was assessed to have categories that were too broad and overlapping. However, this category was not considered to be a primary measure of criteria one or two. Therefore, the coding format designed for this study can be considered generally credible for use in this study.

### III. PRESENTATION OF DATA

#### A. Introduction

The information relevant to each criterion will be reviewed and interpreted separately. Changes that resulted from the availability of data will be noted.

#### B. Criterion 1

A review of the themes of the articles generally pointed to numerous articles during 1983 and early 1984 documenting incidents of abuse, court case stories, and examples from the community. In 1984, the newspaper reported on the Badgley Report<sup>6</sup> and began to report some of the problems with professional coordination of services.

During 1985, the school system's response to child sexual abuse and further coordination problems between the systems responding to the issue were identified.

6. The Badgley Report: In 1984 the results of a three-year Federally funded Canadian study were released. The study explored the prevalence of child sexual abuse, the community and relationship dynamics and treatment issues. This report is frequently referenced for evidence about the prevalence of child sexual abuse in Canada. It showed that one in two girls and one in three boys had experienced unwanted sexual advances before age eighteen. Further details of this study are presented elsewhere in this study.



A case that occurred in April, 1984 drew international attention to several issues, including child sexual abuse and aboriginal child welfare issues. Cameron Kerley was convicted of murdering his adoptive father after years of sexual abuse. Cross-cultural adoptions, international placements of children, and the community deception in child sexual abuse cases were debated in the media as a result of this case. Manitoba aboriginal communities raised the issue that aboriginal children like Cameron were being placed in white homes in the United States because of community bias about aboriginal family values and capabilities to raise displaced children.

Content analysis of the 126 Winnipeg Free Press articles counted the number of predictions in each article as well as the number of misleading symbols. The predictions and symbols together with the unsound ways of creating an argument were part of the information coders used in the final decision about bias and neutrality of the article. Predictions, according to Cohen (1980), can present a misleading suggestion to the reader about the impending future of a social condition when evidence is not available for such a prediction. These indicators of bias, together with the unsound ways of creating an argument were considered in coming to a final qualitative judgement about whether the article was biased or neutral.

Analysis of the prediction category showed that the most frequent prediction was that "incidents of child sexual abuse will increase or the situation will get worse". Sixteen percent of the articles made such predictions in 1983 while 9% made this prediction in 1984, and less than half of that number in 1985 (4%) (See Appendix H for more details of the Results of Content Analysis). According to the interactional perspective, this would suggest that the number of concerns being expressed about a worsening social condition were higher in the early stages of the increasing media attention. The number of predictions seemed quite low compared to what Cohen (1980) found.

Unanticipated categories of prediction that emerged from the content analysis are: Children won't feel safe to disclose abuse without changes in policy (in 1983, 10% of the articles made this prediction, other years 0%); expecting the community to lose confidence in social service response to child sexual abuse (10% average for all three years, which is 13/126 articles) made this prediction.

Symbols were defined as images that had a misleading message, leaving the reader to guess about their actual meaning. For example, one headline read: "Sexual abuse of infants, preschoolers 'tremendous problem'". This indicates that a significant problem exists. However, the article was not specific about what the facts actually were and did not create a credible argument about the theme of the headline.

Seventy-eight percent of the articles contained 2 to 5 symbols per article.

Broad generalizations were quoted in about one-third of the articles which seemed to both mislead the public and fuel misunderstandings between public officials. The printed press seemed to seek out opposing points of view, not with an eye toward presenting a balanced perspective, but with the result of reporting personal attacks between public officials. This technique was more noticeable in the 1983 and early 1984 articles. For example, a lawyer was quoted as saying that "CAS routinely ignored complaints of abuse by children" but gives no evidence. A CAS board member was quoted as saying that a public controversy over an abuse allegation in another CAS region would not have occurred in his region. In another article he explained that he was misquoted. The printing of these personal attacks seems to have exacerbated misunderstandings between groups that were attempting to design solutions to child sexual abuse.

Other examples of the fashion in which the printed press contributed to a biased view of child sexual abuse were seen in its reprinting of stories when little new information was available and occasional sensationalizing of extreme details of a case. One child sexual abuse case was reported as involving cannibalism and murder, according to the prosecution of that court case. This detail was listed in five different articles even when little new information

was available about the court case to warrant another article. In another example, fifteen articles were printed on a case where the judge reprimanded a social worker for poor investigative work. There did not appear to be enough new information to print more than three articles.

Of the 126 articles for all three years, 69% of the articles were coded to be biased and 31% of the articles were coded as neutral (factual and logical). This is a significant portion of written, detailed information that was being conveyed to the public in a misleading and anxiety provoking fashion. This criterion of Cohen's (1980) definition of moral panic has been met.

#### C. CRITERION 2

A wide variety of socially accredited experts were consulted and quoted in the Winnipeg Free Press articles. In all three years, the content analysis showed that 147 experts and public figures were quoted by the newspaper; more than one per article on average. This suggests that a wide variety of perspectives and voices spoke to the issue of child sexual abuse in the printed press.

Of the experts and public figures that were quoted on child sexual abuse issues, 68% were quoted by the newspaper and presented as having expertise about child sexual abuse when their title and background were not in the field of

abuse. Four examples of this phenomenon follow. First, defense lawyers' comments about the details of their cases were presented as information about child sexual abuse issues without question or alternative perspectives. Second, school board members and social agency board members were given a status similar or greater than professional experts in the field of child abuse. Third, Opposition Members of Parliament who were commenting about clinical child abuse issues were seldom questioned or countered with alternative perspectives in the articles. And finally, an artistic director and her actors became the spokespeople for awareness raising about child sexual abuse in the printed media in 1983 and early 1984. In a similarly puzzling fashion, out-of-province experts were frequently given credibility by the newspaper primarily due to their out-of-province status since their professional credentials were seldom described.

This evidence shows that the media did not distinguish clearly between socially accredited experts and credible experts in the field of child sexual abuse creating a greater possibility that the community was being misinformed about abuse.

#### D. CRITERION 3

Three sources of data provide a summary of who the moral opinion-makers were and what they did. These are the Winnipeg Free Press articles, the interviews, and the radio

call-in shows. The information about moral opinion makers that came from the radio call-in shows was not detailed information because CBC radio had no records dating back to 1985 about topics and guests. CJOB had deposited their records for the Peter Warren call-in show at the University of Manitoba Archives. However, only partial records for 1983 were available. In September of 1983, shortly after the Winnipeg Free Press had started their run of 15 articles about a Social Worker who was reprimanded by a judge for not being more responsive to the signals of child sexual abuse, CJOB's Peter Warren, who has a daily morning call-in show, had guests on September 11, 12, and 13 which consisted of panels of experts who spoke to the issue of child sexual abuse. The list of names of experts for these topics is incomplete. However, the information does confirm that there was some community conversation and debate about the issue of child sexual abuse in 1983. Unfortunately there is no evidence to show whether these were the only conversations of this type that occurred. It is unlikely, however this is merely speculative.

As already shown, the Winnipeg Free Press relied on a variety of experts and public figures as sources of information. The most frequently quoted individuals were: Muriel Smith (Community Services Minister for the governing New Democratic Party quoted in 11 articles); John Chudzik (The Provincial Coordinator for Child Sexual Abuse quoted in 8 articles); Brian Dixon (School Trustee in Fort Garry

School Division quoted in 6 articles); Leslee Silverman (Actor's Showcase Director and producers of "Feeling Yes, Feeling No" providing public education for the School System quoted in five articles - the Feeling Yes, Feeling No program is described in more detail later in this section); Dr. Charlie Ferguson (Child Protection Centre Director in four articles); Crown Attorney Janine LeMere in four articles and Bud Sherman (Opposition Critic for the Conservative Party 1983 and 1984 quoted in three articles). Klinik was also mentioned as being the organizing group for many of the local conferences that raised awareness about child sexual abuse between 1983 and 1985 (See Appendix D for a description of Klinik's service role in the community).

In my interview with Muriel Smith, she referred to John Chudzik, Dr. Charlie Ferguson, and Norma McCormick (Therapist with the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre and Manitoba Representative to the Badgley Commission) as some of the key individuals who influenced a community response to child sexual abuse. Smith also referred to the aboriginal community and the Child and Family Services Community Boards as having had significant influence on the rate of reporting and the evolution of service provision. Smith explained that the reorganization of the Children's Aid Society occurred more rapidly than originally planned in response to growing pressure from the aboriginal community, who were concerned about the lack of cultural sensitivity and community representation in the child protection agency,

which had high numbers of aboriginal children in foster care.

The "Feeling Yes, Feeling No" school program was designed by a drama group to raise awareness and prevent child sexual abuse. The group negotiated with the schools to perform plays which informed children about ways that adults might touch them that is wrong, uncomfortable, and to which they could say no. There were adults available at the end of each performance to talk with children who had been sexually abused so that they could disclose to someone and arrangements could be made for an investigation to occur. This program was mentioned in all interviews as a significant factor in awareness raising and increases in reporting of abuse by children. One-fifth of the newspaper articles printed in 1983 were about this program. Although it was promoted as a prevention program, it appears to have been an identification tool since several interviewees described how referrals for abuse services increased immediately following each school presentation (Chudzik and Hudeck interviews).

These four individuals, Muriel Smith, John Chudzik, Dr. Charlie Ferguson, and Norma McCormick, were most frequently mentioned to in all the interviews as the key individuals who both influenced solution development and affected community perceptions about child sexual abuse. These moral opinion makers each said and did specific things that kept the child sexual abuse issue in the forefront of social



service delivery in Manitoba and raised awareness in the community about its seriousness and prevalence. Muriel Smith is credited with "having her heart in the right place" and being responsive with policy changes and financial backing agencies designing solutions.

In 1985 five infants died in a four month period. These situations were investigated to explore whether parental negligence was present and whether the deaths, therefore, could have been avoided if child protection agencies had been involved in a more central way. Chudzik described how there were many political and personal attacks made on Smith when these deaths occurred. "Government initiated a major Systems Review, not just of the child protection system but of all the other systems involved in the coordination of service for child abuse. The review looked at funding, staffing, training, and treatment plans," (Chudzik Interview).

John Chudzik is credited with having worked behind the scenes by negotiating with the legal system, the school system, the medical system, and the social services system to encourage and promote a coordinated response to child sexual abuse despite varying mandates. He is also seen as having taken a public stance to raise awareness about the prevalence of child sexual abuse. He was described by at least half of those interviewed as having advocated for solutions that coordinated the numerous systems involved and were permanently funded. The protocols to coordinate

the professional systems in response to child abuse were later incorporated into the 1986 changes to the Child and Family Services Act. This meant that any professionals were required by law to report suspected child abuse.

Norma McCormick represented Manitoba on the Badgley Commission (Federal study involving 3 years of data collection, published in 1984). The Badgley Commission was mentioned by all interviewees as drawing the community's attention to the National Statistics that 1 in 2 girls and 1 in 3 boys had been victims of unwanted sexual acts before the age of 18. The Badgley Report defined "unwanted sexual acts" as being exposed to, being touched on a sexual part of the body, and attempts to assault or being sexually assaulted.<sup>7</sup> Therefore this definition included one-time sexual approaches by strangers. The Report then goes on to clearly distinguish between sexual assaults that involve direct contact and rape. "Four in 100 young females have been raped".<sup>8</sup> The newspaper coverage of the Badgley Report did not accurately distinguish between these different definitions of sexual abuse, nor did it report any actual statistics from the report. However, it was mentioned in two articles that the Badgley Report was 1,300 pages in length. This suggests that the

7. Badgley, 1984, p. 1.

8. Ibid., p. 2.

newspaper did not recognize the facts to be as significant as the magnitude of the report. This is odd, considering that the headlines rely information about the pervasive abuse statistics that were released. When McCormick was questioned about how these statistics distinguished between ongoing child sexual abuse over a period of years in a family and a single unexpected, unwanted sexual advance by a stranger in a public place, McCormick stated that the media highlighted the prevalence statistic without differentiating between different types of abuse and that all these unwanted experiences were lumped together in the media publicized statistics. This created a very misleading context for understanding the prevalence of abuse in families. It seems significant that the moral opinion makers at the time did not publicly challenge the misleading perception created by the media, but appear to have recognized this as an opportunity to challenge centuries of denial, lack of awareness, and secrecy about abuse by highlighting this "prevalence" statistic.

Dr. Charlie Ferguson is also seen as having been a strong child advocate who raised awareness about both the prevalence of sexual abuse and the complexity of designing effective solutions, arguing for permanent funding for services to address the effects of abuse at his organization (the Child Protection Centre) and elsewhere (For a review of

the complete list of all individuals interviewed, see Appendix C).

These moral opinion makers, when interviewed, said they saw it as their role and social responsibility to raise community awareness about the prevalence of child sexual abuse because of the secrecy, threats to children not to tell, and the negative effects that abuse and deception can have on children. They appear to have had a significant role both in the printed press and elsewhere in conveying a moral concern and need for immediate solutions to the newly identified problem of child sexual abuse. There is some evidence to support this criteria, however because this criterion is difficult to measure, it difficult to determine whether it has been entirely met.

#### E. Criterion 4

The literature review has already described that child abuse experts perceived social alarm in the community about child sexual abuse. Three additional sources of data yielded information about social alarm and perceived threats to societal values and interests. The first is a review of relevant information in the Winnipeg Free Press Articles, the second is the interviews with key individuals, and the third is data from the Winnipeg Area Survey in 1984 and 1988. These three sources of data provide evidence about

the existence of alarm and also an understanding of the dynamics that influenced a sense of social alarm in the community about child sexual abuse.

i) The Winnipeg Free Press articles:

The Winnipeg Free Press presents an atmosphere of urgency and alarm about child sexual abuse between 1983 and 1985 by the increased number of articles and the biased coverage that had the potential to mislead the public as already demonstrated. In 1983 and early 1984, more than half of the reports were about incidents of abuse or front page articles about the dramatic increase in reporting. By 1985, the stories in the articles were shifting from stories about incidents of abuse to policy changes and social service delivery issues identified by experts, the community, and government opposition members.

The Badgley Report was mentioned by all those interviewed as having had a significant effect on the community perception about the prevalence of child sexual abuse. Both the professional community and parents seem to have taken note of the new information about the secrecy and denial about child sexual abuse, but also about the prevalence.

Half of the persons interviewed for this study referred in some form to the statistics that the Badgley Report listed: one in two female and one in three male children have experienced unwanted sexual advances before age

eighteen (Badgley Report Summary). What the Winnipeg Free Press articles never clearly described were the actual statistics or the meaning of the definition. However during 1984, 18 articles and 9 editorials discussed the new information about the prevalence of child sexual abuse in Canadian society misleading the public by omission. The reaction by many professionals was reported as "shock" in the interviews conducted for this study. This seemed to be in response to the statistics in the Badgley Report which were not clearly defined in the printed press. Attitude surveys would have had to be conducted to show whether the community generally experienced shock, and how that affected decisions that were made regarding social policy about child sexual abuse.

ii) Interviews with Key individuals and organizations: The interviews conducted for this study revealed that the social service delivery system was in a state of anxiety and crisis between 1983 and 1985. John Chudzik, the Provincial Abuse Coordinator from 1981 to the present, described the systems which responded to child sexual abuse as being in crisis. The community alarm appears to have been a combination of organizational crisis and a crisis of the coordination of these systems creating alarm in the professional community.

The systems were in crisis and the reporting rates were increasing quickly. The initial stage was shock, because the increase in reports was overwhelming. Initially, there was some minimization that the prevalence of abuse does not

exist. Some school systems seemed the most concerned about false allegations against teachers. However gradually, government has continued to emphasize a coordinated inter-disciplinary and inter-departmental systems approach. The protocols for each system became an essential part of the framework (Chudzik Interview).

Several key individuals also mentioned that the timing of the decentralization of Children's Aid Society in 1984 could not have been worse (Appendix 10 contains a Time Line of Significant Events). During a time when awareness was being raised in the schools resulting in more disclosures, the child protection workers were starting to ask whether a history of child sexual abuse accompanied behaviors like running, aggression, and delinquency, all resulting in increased disclosures.

Aboriginal children were represented in disproportionately high numbers in the child welfare system. Department social workers were encouraging them to become more assertive in seeking their rights and in finding a voice. Several hundred signed up for the 1983 Annual General Meeting of Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.....The Department of Community Services had been operating an extended participative planning exercise designed to organize Winnipeg's Children's Aid Services into six regional areas, each with its own community based board. The intention was to root awareness of what was happening to children as broadly as possible in the community....This process was accelerated and the six agencies established two years ahead of the original timetable (Smith Interview).

All sources who commented on the effects of organizing into the community boards agreed that the increased community connection resulting from a more community based service also increased the number of disclosures and referrals to the child protection agency because the service

was more accessible and seen as more trustworthy (Hudeck, Smith Interviews).

One of the results of the decentralization process within the Children's Aid Society was that there was great fear and crisis among social workers themselves because of the way the decentralization process was introduced and implemented in some regions. Hudeck recalls, "The reorganization process was very difficult for direct service providers. There was little planning prior to decentralization about how to maintain the service through the transition. All areas of specialization were disbanded and workers became generic again. This meant initial confusion and fear for many workers who were in new circumstances doing unfamiliar investigations that they were not trained for" (Hudeck Interview). The result was confusion and lack of clear direction for both social work employees and clients who were in a most vulnerable position of going through an investigation process. It has been shown that family members, child victims, and adult abusers all experience the process of abuse investigations as stressful and potentially damaging (Konker, 1992; Sgroi, 1982; Trute, Adkins, and MacDonald, 1994). "Social workers who were trained in adoptions were suddenly doing sexual abuse investigations without any training, for example. This left the agency and the social workers at risk for making mistakes and also left clients of the agency at risk for poor service coordination" according to Hudeck (Hudeck



Interview). John Chudzik, the Provincial Coordinator of Child Abuse echoed this opinion.

The school system experienced its own crisis as teachers and administrators attempted to determine how best to respond to increased awareness about child sexual abuse. Smith recalls that in some regions the school system seemed concerned that teachers were at risk for being falsely accused of sexually abusing children.

Concern was expressed about whether children's testimony could be relied on. The child psychologists claimed that a child seldom lied about abuse. Over against that was some growing evidence that the plethora of sexually explicit television, videos, books and magazines often available in children's homes, plus their active imaginations, were producing a precocious awareness and vocabulary that might contaminate the evidence (Smith interview).

The general community seemed to be affected by the new awareness about child sexual abuse. The present Associate Director of the Child Protection Centre, Margot Buck, was working in social services in British Columbia between 1983 and 1985, however she reflected on the changes she recalled across Canada. "Everyone was interested in sexual abuse, but few people were interested in physical abuse", she recalls. "All the emphasis on sexual abuse raised a panic in the general community. There was something about sex and sex with children that was so appalling to people...many parents were fearful that their child was being abused" (Buck Interview). According to Buck, some adults who had been abused in childhood were attempting to guide and protect their own children but were looking for signs of

abuse that sometimes were not there. She says, "The media paid a great deal of attention to sexual abuse, far greater than they had to physical abuse. But media emphasis on sexual abuse also raised a panic in the general community. Some people feared that there were molesters everywhere. Sex with children was, and is, appalling to the general public in a way that physical abuse is not." (Buck Interview). More than one-half of those interviewed echoed this view.

In several interviews, comments about social panic, community fear, and crisis about child sexual abuse were stated very carefully. Several people wanted to declare themselves clearly in the child victim advocate camp despite their comments about the trend of increased reporting rates and the existence of some false allegations. There was a sense of concern that their comments could be misconstrued to indicate that child sexual abuse was less of a phenomenon than had been credited during the awareness-raising process that occurred in the early 1980's. A possible explanation is the myth that any implication that is made that this social problem is less prevalent than previously reported will somehow invalidate the awareness that has developed about the effects of abuse after centuries of denial or that the experience of those who were personally victimized will somehow be minimized by carefully examining all the facts. There is also the possibility that in this time of economic restraint, service providers are concerned that funders will

misinterpret the actual need for extensive services and therefore cut back on services to children. Another explanation is that the public debate on child sexual abuse has become so polarized that any statement or question is immediately categorized into one of the extreme views without paying enough attention to the actual context and larger argument that the speaker is making.

In summary, the social service delivery system and the general public had several sources of fear and panic resulting in an increased rate of reporting of child sexual abuse allegations, increased demand for abuse services in an already over-burdened social service delivery system that was being reorganized. There were some poorly investigated cases that the media highlighted together with other biased coverage of abuse issues which may have fueled an already polarized debate in the community. The answer to the questions, did the community of professionals and the public appear to be alarmed about child sexual abuse as a social problem is yes. It is clear that the community was alarmed and there seemed to be a source of threat about the values that people had come to expect in the community; that is that child sexual abuse was a minimal or nonexistent social problem. However, it is beyond the scope of this study to show how traditional family values, for example, were threatened by the information that was publicized by the media about the prevalence of abuse described in the Badgley Report. It could be speculated that the the general public

was threatened by the awareness-raising about the prevalence of child abuse. It could also be speculated that the helping professions were threatened by the awareness that greater numbers of abused children existed than had been speculated and that the process of assimilating this information, together with the organizational crises, resulted in the confusion and panic already described. However, no causal relationships about community values can be categorically made without further study on this issue. In the following section, the only quantitative information that was available about community values during the period of this study is presented. Data that were considered to be generally related to child abuse and family violence were noted.

iii) Winnipeg Area Survey results:

These results suggest some general community attitudes about family violence and what could be considered traditional family values, although this had not been a central focus of this study. In 1984, in response to questions regarding police laying charges without a spouse's permission when the police recognize that wife abuse had occurred, ten percent did not see wife abuse as a family problem and were opposed to state intervention in the family. This could mean that these respondents did not see wife abuse as a problem at all. (See Appendix J for more detailed results of the survey information).

In 1988, the survey results point to a strong commitment to family relationships in the community. A high proportion of respondents agreed with these statements: family commitment to gathering together even though that is not the person's desire ( 73%), sticking together despite not liking each other (57%), and doing what's best for family members even when they do not agree (81%). Seventy seven percent of those surveyed believe that, ideally, mothers should stay home until the last child is in kindergarten. Eighteen percent said they would go to jail for the person they loved. Two explanations might be a distrust of the legal system's justice or a romanticized meaning for the word "love". Together these responses about family values suggest traditional family values where people belong together in prescribed ways despite clear indications that enjoyment and support is not available in these relationships.

Loyalty to family despite a desire to distance is often a significant dynamic for adults who were sexually abused over long periods of time by family members during childhood. The assumption in the family is that people will belong and be happy continuing to meet with family members in adulthood and that childhood difficulties will be forgotten or forgiven. However there is some evidence in the literature showing that the adult who was abused in childhood can harbour unresolved anger and resentment and

will agree to continue to be in abusive relationships at their own emotional expense (Bass 1994).

By 1989, 44% of the respondents identified child abuse, family violence, or sexual assault as their primary concern for the Winnipeg Police. This suggests that there was considerable awareness and concern in the community for child abuse and family violence (Appendix J contains more details about the questions and results). Despite awareness and a sense of priority for police to address abuse in the community, traditional family values were also identified in 1988. One possible explanation is that part of the community's fear about child sexual abuse may have been connected to the unexpected information about the prevalence of child sexual abuse in the family, suggesting that the traditional family might be at greater risk for dissolution. This would be an interesting area of further study.

It is difficult to define traditional family values. The data that was available regarding community attitudes about family values is limited and speaks more to the dynamics surrounding child sexual abuse than to the issue of moral panic. However they have been included because of their interesting results and to show the difficulty in adequately assessing this criterion with quantitative data.

iy) Summary of Criterion 4

Cumulatively this data creates an image of a community where professionals were in crisis about statistics that seemed to show that almost half the children were being sexually abused. Parents and other community members may have also experienced an atmosphere of fear and threat about child sexual abuse. Perhaps the community experienced a threat to commonly held family values. Research that showed a higher prevalence of child sexual abuse than previously thought was highlighted by the media in a biased way not clearly distinguishing between ongoing secretive abuse in families and one-time unwanted approaches by a stranger in a public place. Organizational crises within a social service system in the face of expectations that it continue to work collaboratively with other systems in transition, contributed to an atmosphere of fear, confusion, and panic among local professionals. Parents, professionals, and community leaders seem to have been caught unexpectedly in a crisis response to addressing child sexual abuse. More research is required to substantiate which community values were threatened by the increased information about child sexual abuse.

F. Criterion 5

"Ways of coping evolve or are resorted to" when there is a moral panic, according to Cohen (1980). When ways of coping which suggests behavior changes evolve, Cohen (1980)

is not referring only to panicked behavior changes but changes that could be resulting from the moral panic process. In this study, organizational behavior changes were surveyed to examine the policy and procedure changes that took place in those earlier stages of defining child sexual abuse as a social problem. The six organizations that were contacted regarding the child sexual abuse guideline changes that were made in the 1980 to 1990 decade are: The school system, Winnipeg Child and Family Services, The Child Protection Centre, the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre, The Winnipeg Police Department, and Klinik. Other data collection pointed to the fact that this was a thorough cross section of organizations involved in the development of solutions to child sexual abuse between 1983 and 1985.

Each organization was involved in making significant changes to their collective response to child sexual abuse, as evidenced by guideline and policy changes. For the School System, Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre and Klinik, some of the changes involved articulating more clearly how direct service providers would respond to situations of risk for child sexual abuse. The police spokesperson indicated that "there were organizational changes in response to Criminal Code changes. When the provincial guidelines were changed in 1986, the result was that the police and the child welfare system worked in closer collaboration in abuse investigation and evidence



gathering. This shift resulted in protocol changes for both organizations" (anonymous Police interview).

The Child and Family Services organization likely experienced the most significant protocol changes with both a reorganization of the abuse registry and a reorganization of the structure of the agency. According to Smith, the agency reorganization resulted from pressure by the aboriginal community for more direct involvement in child welfare decision making. After the reorganization, the increased accessibility of the child welfare professionals in the community may have increased the trust and the reporting rates of child sexual abuse in the community. The social workers were in crisis themselves about the reorganization process and there were high expectations of the child protection agency's ability to respond to increasing demands for abuse services. "The direct service workers have always had differences in how they operationalize the Child and Family Services Act and protocols about child abuse," according to Gelmon, the Area Director in the South West region of Winnipeg Child and Family Services. "Together, these circumstances made the Children's Aid Society a prime target for media attention," according to Gelmon (Gelmon Interview).

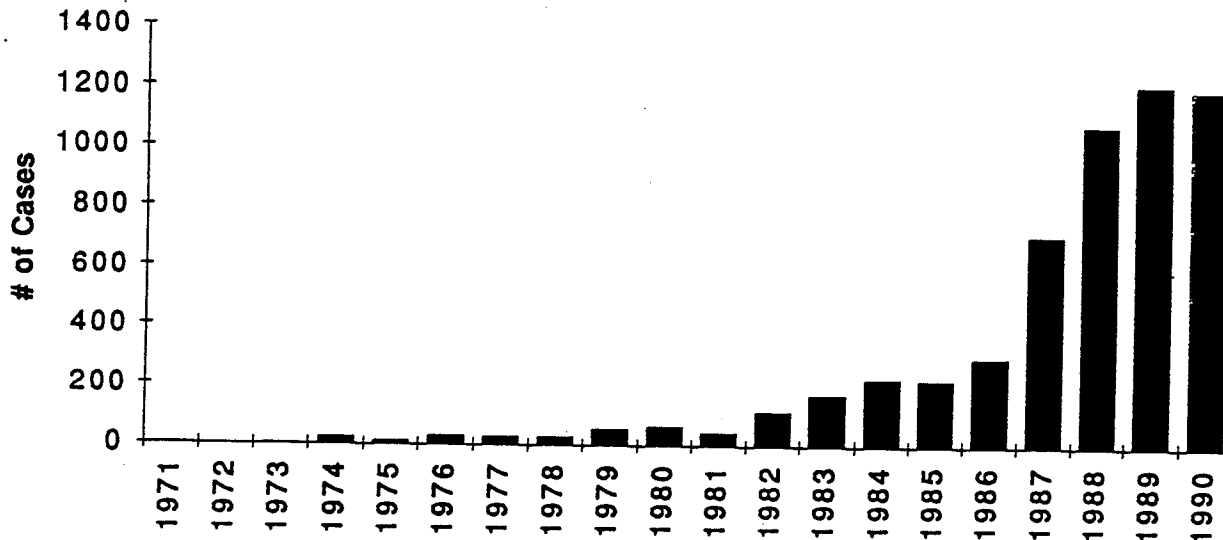
The Provincial Coordinator of Child Abuse during the 1980's in Manitoba described his department's strategy in implementing a more coordinated provincial protocol for child sexual abuse in the school system, the judicial

system, the social services system, and the police. An early recognition that these services would all need to work in collaboration to develop solutions to child sexual abuse influenced the abuse coordinator's decision to meet with and negotiate a protocol for abuse identification, reporting and intervention with the medical system, the education system, the child welfare system, and the justice system.

Several of the persons interviewed explained the phenomenon of possible over-reporting or false allegations of abuse by describing the effects of a high media profile of child sexual abuse which often stated that if parents were more aware of the signs of abuse then they could be more responsive to their children's efforts to disclose abuse even in indirect ways (See Figure 2 for "Investigation Only" Statistics). "Investigation only" means that the abuse charge was never substantiated in court. However this does not mean that these were false allegations. These types of cases, where abuse was suspected but never substantiated doubled between 1982 and 1984. Although this is a significant increase, figure 2 shows that there was a much more dramatic increase between 1985 and 1988 which requires further study.

Parents who had a history of child sexual abuse that no one had acknowledged wanted to be more attentive to their children's needs and preventative in not repeating the cycle of violence in the next generation. These parents sometimes came forward with concerns about possible signs of abuse

**Investigation Only\* Number of Child Sexual and Physical Abuse Cases in Manitoba**



**ACTUAL FIGURES FOR THE CHART**

1971	1
1972	0
1973	2
1974	23
1975	12
1976	30
1977	27
1978	27
1979	55
1980	64
1981	44
1982	112
1983	169
1984	224
1985	220
1986	295
1987	707
1988	1,079
1989	1,215
1990	1,198

\* "Investigation Only" denotes instances where no further action was taken following the investigation by agency or police (e.g. due to inconclusive evidence) Source: Child and Family Services Annual Reports

without clear disclosures from the children or evidence to warrant an investigation (Buck, Smith Interviews). The Child Protection Centre has redesigned their brochures to no longer include "signs of abuse" because these signs are not specific to abuse and have been misinterpreted and used in misdiagnoses too often, according to Buck. Some of these cases where signs of abuse were misinterpreted are part of the "investigation only" statistics, however the proportion of such cases is unknown. (See Appendix L for complete summaries of the interviews with representatives from organizations).

Another "way of coping" in the community can be seen in the way the government and the Provincial Child Abuse Coordinator organized protocols for each profession involved with children to anticipate signs of child abuse as a way of preventing and stopping child abuse. This meant that all professionals who work with children had to become very familiar with the signals of child abuse, some of which can be very subtle and not necessarily isolated to child abuse cases. It is not surprising that there was some confusion, frustration, and a period of adjustment to such a protocol which became law in 1986.

Coping strategies are often resorted to during times of crisis. The "ways of coping" with the media visibility and community response to child sexual abuse suggest that organizations were addressing the issues that resulted from increased awareness about abuse and also internal crises

that resulted from increased referrals, confusion about professional responsibilities, and interpretation of the Child Welfare Act. There is some evidence from the organizations' "ways of coping" in their changes to policies and procedures. The issues and questions raised in each organization appear to be related to its unique service delivery mandate. A general theme seemed to be that of clarifying the meaning of legislated changes to report all suspected child abuse. More study in this area would reveal whether those ways of coping occurred in a panicked or calm fashion. Whenever there was panic in this process, it would also be interesting to explore whether the panic was related to fear of threat to commonly held social values.

#### G. Criterion 6

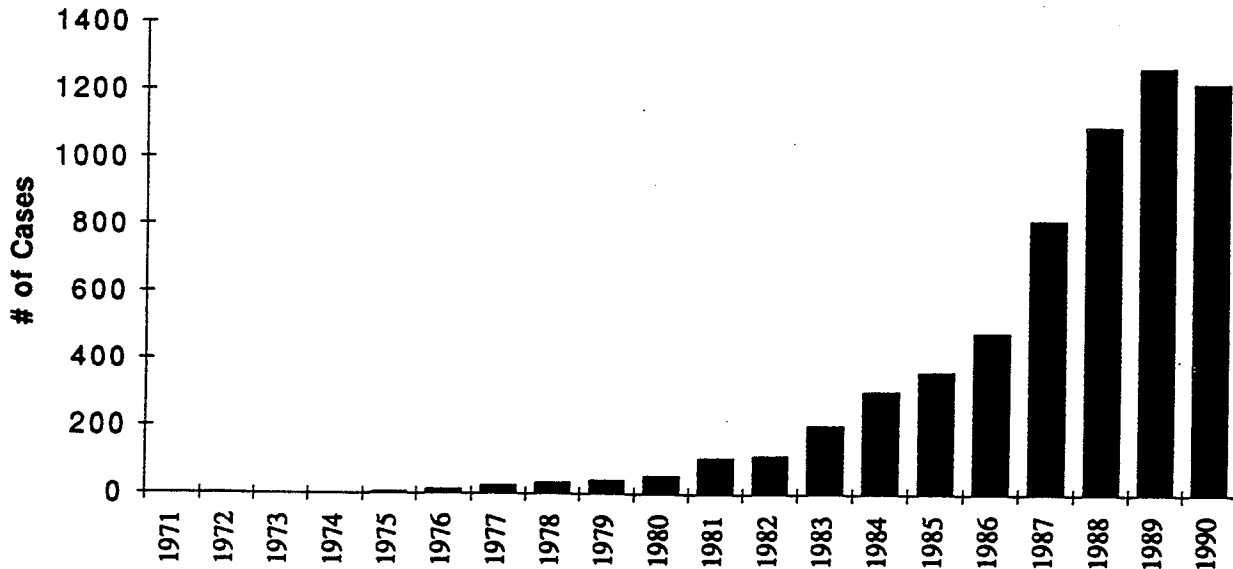
A comparison of statistics of rates of reporting, substantiated cases of abuse, and level of visibility in the media follows. The assumption is that the level of media visibility, reporting rates and substantiation rates would remain relatively steady if there were not a moral panic.

As already shown, the Winnipeg Free Press printed more than twice the number of articles about child sexual abuse between 1983 and 1985 than before and after that time period. This suggests that the level of printed media visibility increased significantly during the 1983 to 1985 time period.

Reporting of child sexual abuse allegations have been recorded for the province of Manitoba. Between 1980 and 1981 the number of reported allegations doubled from 56 to 110. Between 1982 and 1983 the total number of reported allegations doubled from 117 to 205 and increased by 56% to 364 in 1985. Figure 3 shows that the number of allegations of child sexual abuse for the province of Manitoba continued to increase at such a high rate until 1990. Allegations of other types of child abuse increased gradually during the same period, dropping somewhat in 1985 (See Figure 4), indicating that the community was paying particular attention to child sexual abuse.

A comparison between the total number of reported child abuse cases in Manitoba and the total number of child sexual abuse cases in Manitoba suggests that between 1983 and 1986, almost half of the abuse reports were for child sexual abuse (See Figure 4). The 1994 Fact Sheet from the American Humane Association (Children's Division) reported that, on average, 11% of the total number of child abuse reports are reports of child sexual abuse (Appendix K). This suggests that in 1983 in Winnipeg, reports of child sexual abuse were disproportionate to the total reports of child abuse. Several organizational representatives expressed their concern that the focus placed on child sexual abuse between 1983 to 1985 by both the media and the social service system was so great that serious cases of physical abuse may have been unintentionally overlooked (Buck Interview).

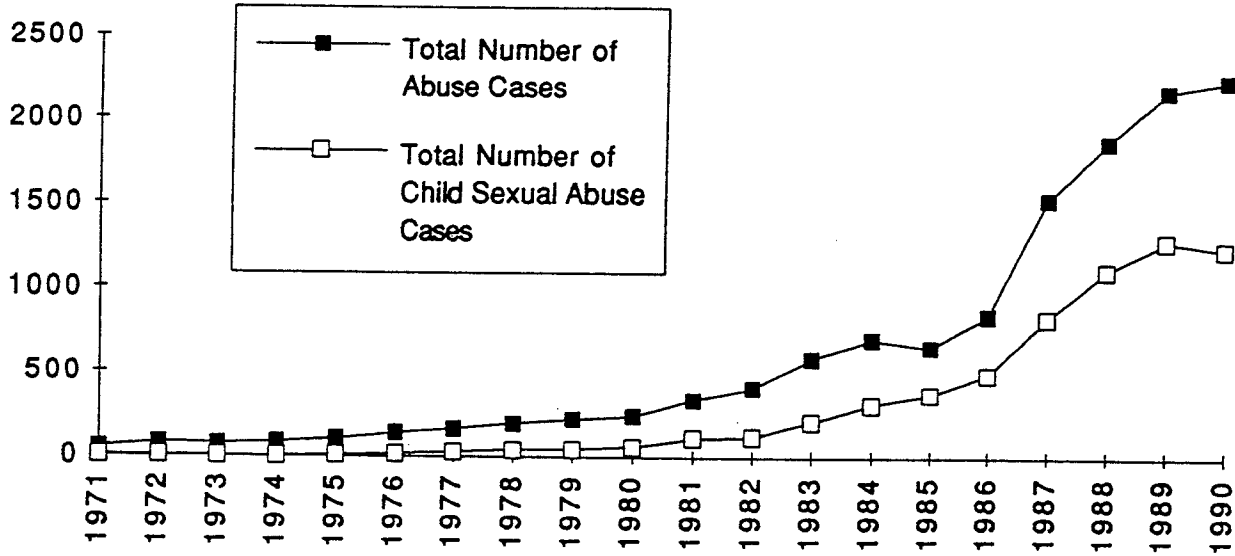
**Reported Child Sexual Abuse Cases for the Province of Manitoba**



Year	Actual Figures for the Chart
1971	0
1972	2
1973	0
1974	0
1975	6
1976	15
1977	26
1978	35
1979	42
1980	56
1981	110
1982	117
1983	205
1984	306
1985	364
1986	482
1987	819
1988	1102
1989	1277
1990	1229

Source: Child and Family Services Annual Reports

**Comparison of Total Abuse Cases and Child Sexual Abuse Cases Reported for Province of Manitoba**



**ACTUAL FIGURES FOR TOTAL NUMBER OF ABUSE CASES**

1971	49
1972	81
1973	70
1974	82
1975	103
1976	135
1977	158
1978	188
1979	215
1980	236
1981	330
1982	402
1983	578
1984	693
1985	646
1986	836
1987	1526
1988	1964
1989	2484
1990	2311

SOURCE: Child and Family Services Annual Reports

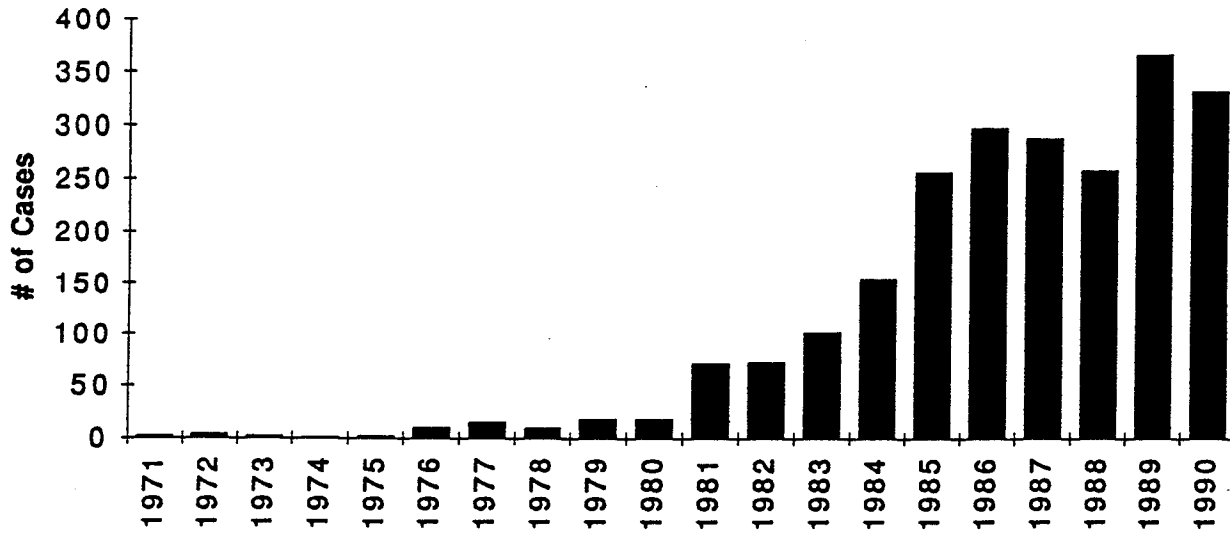


The "investigation only" category denotes instances where no further criminal action was taken following the investigation by agency and or police. For example, this might be due to inconclusive evidence. Figure 2 shows that the number of cases that fall in this category increased by a factor of five between 1981 and 1984 (from 44 to 224 cases). Between 1985 and 1988, the number of such cases increased again by a factor of five (from 220 to 1079 cases). By the late 1980's the number of "investigation only" cases appears to have levelled off. Although the statistics from Child and Family Services were not available for the years following 1990, the Child Protection Centre confirmed that their child sexual abuse cases have been steady or decreasing since 1990 (Dr. Charlie Ferguson). It should be noted that in some cases of disclosed child sexual abuse, secrecy, denial, and strong family loyalties may have made investigation and prosecution difficult; therefore labelling of a case as "investigation only" does not necessarily indicate that the alleged abuse did not occur (Finkelhor, 1984; Maddock, 1988; Sgroi, 1982).

Substantiation rates involving the "disposition of abusers" are available for the total number of abuse cases (i.e., physical and sexual abuse). Figure 5 shows that the number of abusers who were convicted in criminal court increased by a factor of 5 between 1980 to 1983 (from 19 to 102).

FIGURE 5

**Substantiation Rates: Criminal Court for Sexual and Physical Abusers  
for Province of Manitoba**



ACTUAL FIGURES FOR THE CHART

1971	2
1972	4
1973	2
1974	1
1975	2
1976	10
1977	16
1978	10
1979	19
1980	19
1981	72
1982	73
1983	102
1984	155
1985	257
1986	299
1987	290
1988	259
1989	369
1990	334

Substantiation rates, as defined here, do not necessarily reflect the total number of incidents of child abuse in the province. However, they do reflect the total number of cases in which a person is convicted of child sexual abuse. The legal system has been identified as less than responsive to the issues of child sexual abuse in terms of doubts regarding the credibility of young children as witnesses, the consideration of the physical evidence or the use of the defense argument that alcohol and ignorance skewed the defendant's judgement at the time of the abuse (Bala, et al, 1991; Maddock, 1988; Sgroi, 1982).

In summary, the Winnipeg Free Press increased its coverage of child abuse starting 1983. Coverage of child sexual abuse saw the most significant increase between 1983 and 1985. During this time nearly half of the number of child abuse cases in Manitoba were sexual abuse - a higher proportion than the 11% reported by the American Humane Association general average. "Reporting Rates" and "Investigation Only" rates for all child abuse cases run almost parallel between 1971 and 1990 while substantiation rates are significantly lower and steadier. The most significant increases in substantiation rates occurred in 1981, 1985, and 1989. Clearly, far fewer cases are leading to convictions than are reported and investigated each year. Finally, the media visibility, reporting, and substantiation rates did not remain steady between 1983 and 1985 rather the appearance of the social problem has continued to increase

until 1989 and the media visibility for child abuse has remained high. Further research might explain the levelling off of reporting of child sexual abuse rates following 1989.

#### H. CRITERION 7

Sometimes the social condition which is the focal point of the moral panic is novel and sometimes it has been in existence for a long time, but suddenly comes to public attention. Sometimes the panic disappears and is forgotten and sometimes there are more significant and lasting results like legislation changes, social norm or folklore changes or even changes in how a society conceives itself (Cohen, 1980). The Badgley Report, the changes to the CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES Act and protocol changes throughout the systems involved with services to children are reviewed in relation to this criterion.

In 1984, the Badgley Report was released which appears to have had a significant effect on how social service professionals conceptualized the problem of sexual abuse in Canadian society. As already described, the definition in the report which the media used to portray the "epidemic" of child sexual abuse was not the number of people who had been repeatedly abused over a period of years, but rather the number of people who had experienced unwanted sexual advances before the age of 18. Key individuals interviewed for this study described how parents in the community came to recognize the potential risk to

their children in day cares, schools, camps and other organizations where adults in positions of trust had previously been relied on without question.

Half of the people interviewed for this study referred to the Badgley Report statistics about one in two females and one in three males having been sexually abused before age 18 as shocking and as having resulted in awareness-raising in the community. After exploring the actual definition of this statistic for sexual abuse and discovering that it included exposure in public places and being approached in an unwanted sexual way, it was surprising that none of the key interviewees had made this distinction or clarified the implications of the definition either during the interviews for this study or when the media reported the results of the Badgley Report information in 1984.

During the early 1980's, the legal, medical, educational, and social service systems developed protocols requiring professionals in these fields to report suspected abuse and to work cooperatively with other systems to design solutions to child sexual abuse (Chudzick Interview, Smith Interview). In 1985, the Children's Aid Society reorganized into regional agencies and boards which required protocol, role, and coordination changes. Although this reorganization seems to have developed somewhat apart from the community concern about child sexual abuse, there could be some connection between Smith's identification of the

aboriginal discontent with child protection services in general and the larger community concern about child abuse. The combination of a government attempting to be more responsive to disadvantaged populations together with the media reporting of personalized attacks and extreme court examples may have fuelled a community response that was etched with crisis and panic.

In 1986, the Child and Family Services Act was altered to provide more authority to child protection services to intervene in situations when they suspected child sexual abuse. Also, the child protection agencies were immediately involved in all investigations, whereas investigations previously had been initiated by police. Videotaping of children's disclosures created the possibility for both evidence gathering by the police for court purposes and sensitive investigation by the social workers with the purpose of designing a protection plan for the child.

Professional protocol changes introduced in the medical, educational, legal and social services systems requiring professionals to report suspected abuse and to be directly accountable to their professional associations were incorporated into the the new Act in 1986. This signalled a new emphasis requiring reporting of any suspicions of abuse and requiring professionals to be informed about the possible indirect signs of abuse (A Guide to The Child and Family Services Act).

Long-standing legislative changes appear to have resulted from the community's definition of child sexual abuse as a social problem. The coordinated professional effort to protect and report suspected child abuse is quite extensive. The implications for professionals who are not trained in identifying signs and signals of child abuse are at risk of losing their professional designation. This suggests a significant social shift in emphasis and the changes appear to have been long-standing.

#### I. Summary of Presentation of Data:

The evidence presented here suggests that a moral panic was generated about child sexual abuse in Winnipeg between 1983 and 1985, according to Cohen's (1980) definition of moral panic. Figure 6 reviews Cohen's criteria and the findings. Some evidence was available to support each aspect of Cohen's definition of moral panic. However, the degree to which linkages can be made between these elements regarding how they influenced each other and generated a moral panic is not addressed by this study. Several questions emerge from this study which would address Cohen's (1980) criteria in more depth and also draw conclusions about the relationships between criteria studied here. Figure 7 summarizes these issues in the form of questions for future research. Aspects of these questions are discussed further in the Discussion Section.

FIGURE 6

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

COHEN'S CRITERIA	FINDING	EVIDENCE OF CRITERIA? Y/N
1. Biased Media Presentation	69% articles coded biased	Y
2. Media presents "socially accredited experts"	68% coded non-accredited	Y
3. Moral Opinion Makers define and implement solutions	4 Moral Opinion Makers conveyed need for solutions and took action; Feeling Yes, Feeling No prog.	Y role in media & community
4. Atmosphere of social alarm	-Badgley Report -Reorg. at CAS (Org. crisis) -Fear - parents, teachers & social workers -systems protocols -infant deaths	Y fear, crisis, some sort of panic
5. Ways of coping evolved	6 organizations developed procedures to cope with confusion and questions	Y Organiz. beh. ways of coping evolved
6. Appearance/ Disappearance of panic condition	-Media visibility doubled -Reported cases 56% increase/level in '89 -near 50% of abuse cases are sexual (11% usual) -Investigation only: 5x higher -Subst. rates: 5x higher then leveled in '86	Y dramatic increases in all areas
7. Long standing repercussion	-Badgley Report - changes in conceptualization of child sexual abuse problem -CFS Act - more power to intervene -Protocol Changes for Helping professions	Y



## FIGURE 7

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES THAT RESULT AND FUTURE QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

Criterion 1: Does biased media presentation actually affect community perception and resulting behavior?

Criterion 2: Does media presentation of misleading information about the credibility and accreditation of its quoted experts affect community perception and resulting behavior?

Criterion 3: What was the source of the Moral Opinion Makers' power? Were they moral gatekeepers? In what way? How was this significant in the development of social policy?

Criterion 4: What were the sources of fear and alarm? Was the alarm directly related to a threat of commonly held values (as Cohen suggests)?

Criterion 5: Would these procedural changes have evolved regardless of whether there was a moral panic? Did the presence of a panic affect the type or magnitude of the procedures?

Criterion 6: Are the dramatic increases significant enough and linked to each other in a causal fashion to confidently attribute them to a moral panic? Or could this be merely an example of awareness raising of a large proportions?

Criterion 7: Would these long-standing changes have occurred despite the condition of a moral panic? Did the presence of a moral panic affect the speed, shape or significance of the changes?

"Another new provision (Section 20) allows an agency to apply for a court order to remove the alleged abuser rather than the child from the home, and to prevent the abuser from contacting the child. This replaces automatic removal of the child from the home for protection. An application to remove the abuser is subject to due process"<sup>9</sup>.

These changes in legislation and social policy provide significantly more power to the state in relation to protecting children. On the one hand, there appears to be more power to intervene in family life by applying for removal of the alleged offender. However, in other parts of the Act there is also a clear commitment to balancing the needs of the child with more consideration of the family and cultural context within which the child is being raised. It isn't entirely clear what this will mean in practise, however it could be a response to criticism in the past that the child welfare system has taken a child victim advocacy position without sufficient consideration of the connection or provisions that were available in the family and community context.

9. A Guide to the Child and Family Services Act, A Comparison with the Child Welfare Act, Manitoba Community Services, no date.

#### IV. DISCUSSION AND AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

##### A) Further Discussion of the Findings:

Cohen's (1980) definition of moral panic and this research design do not fully explore or explain the direction of influence between the elements that make up a moral panic. Thus, despite the fact that evidence exists to support each aspect of Cohen's (1980) definition, the argument that there was a moral panic would carry more weight if there was a measurement of the linkages between the criteria. However, for the purpose of this study the establishment of the existence of the elements of a moral panic was the first step in developing other questions and directions to pursue.

It is merely speculative to imagine how the problem of child sexual abuse would have unfolded if there had been more neutral media reporting, little or no social alarm, and community leaders who did not appear to be moral gatekeepers in any way. Would the definitional process of child sexual abuse as a social problem have evolved in a similar fashion? It is unlikely that the situation would have developed in the same way. However, even if it had been less alarming and the media reporting had been neutral, no one will know whether the results would have been better or worse for children, families, and the community.

B) Critique of Cohen's Model:

Cohen (1980) argues that he is not attempting to make simple causal linkages in his study, but rather that he recognizes multiple causes and multiple effects that appear to occur simultaneously. When numerous elements appear to have occurred simultaneously and appear to have a relationship to one another, Cohen (1980) argues that the depth to which they have affected each other or the causal relationship is not as significant as the fact that together they have generated a moral panic which has changed the way a society conceptualizes its problems and implements its solutions.

Despite this explanation, five aspects of Cohen's (1980) definition were difficult to establish with empirical evidence. They were: to show that there was community alarm, to show that this alarm was fear-based, to establish what the commonly held values were, to show that commonly held beliefs were being threatened, and to show that fear was a result of threat to commonly held values. However despite the challenge, some evidence of each criterion was sought out. Several design issues arise. Cohen (1980) studied a moral panic that was being generated in the present. This allowed him to design attitude surveys that could be implemented at different time intervals to produce longitudinal data. Can moral panics be studied retrospectively? This study has shown that historic moral panics can be analyzed retrospectively. However sufficient

written records, opportunity to interview participants, or a reliable oral history must be accessible.

Several adaptations were made to Cohen's (1980) theory of moral panic to study the Winnipeg situation. The moral opinion makers, for example, were not editors, bishops and other right-thinking people, but rather politicians and experts in the professional field of child abuse. This might vary for each social problem which is studied in this fashion. The most significant implication of this adaptation is that the professional experts who work with the social problem being defined are more likely to be more accurate and informed in addressing the dynamics of social problems. However it may be these professionals who participate in generating the dynamics of moral panic.

Another adaptation which was made for the Winnipeg situation resulted from the child sexual abuse issues in the community. In Cohen's model the media visibility remained high while the social problem decreased. In the Winnipeg situation, the media visibility for child abuse remained generally high while the social problem as measured by reporting rates continued climbing until 1989. These facts have already been examined as they relate to the theory of moral panic, however they could also have alternative explanations as well. Such alternative explanations will be explored in another section.

A third adaptation resulted from the preliminary review of the Winnipeg Free Press articles to examine the data for

prediction and symbols. These forms of biased media presentation were present in Cohen's (1980) study. However, the Winnipeg Free Press coverage presented information on child sexual abuse in an emotional and speculative fashion resulting in misleading information to the reader. Therefore for this study, symbolism and predictions were counted in each article, along with problematic argument construction. This meant the facts about child sexual abuse were missing and the information was presented in a biased fashion (emotionally and speculatively).

Do these adaptations imply that there was not a moral panic in Winnipeg, or do they suggest that a different type of moral panic occurred? This question will be examined in more detail later. Another question that results from these adaptations is whether the changes to the model change its validity as a measure of moral panic. The model does appear to be effective as an interesting and comprehensive method of studying the dynamics of moral panic even when quantitative evidence is difficult to obtain. The data available for each social problem studied in this fashion will be unique and adaptations to the model will likely have to be made. The qualitative evidence is certainly compelling and whenever quantitative evidence was available, it was sought out.

The most significant limitation of the model is the difficulty in defining and finding empirical data to support three of the criteria of moral panic. These are community

alarm, coping behavior, and the disappearance/appearance of the condition. In the Winnipeg situation, these three dynamics were difficult to define quantitatively. It was also difficult to show whether these dynamics were directly connected to a moral panic condition or whether there were other explanations for the data which were collected.

C) Alternative Explanations for the Data:

Is a moral panic the only explanation for the findings in this study or are there other ways of interpreting the data? Four ideas that provide alternative interpretations for select parts of the findings follow in this section.

First, despite the fact that dramatic increases occurred in media reporting, reporting of abuse allegations, and "investigation only" cases, the number of reported cases remained the same after 1989. One possible explanation is that this was the end of the moral panic condition. Another explanation is that large number of abusive situations came to the attention of authorities through the social awareness raising and that this took from 1983 until 1989 to address all the historic unresolved situations. Perhaps the level of disclosures seen after 1989 is a reflection of the more recent disclosures of abuse that do not have a long standing history. (This idea evolved from a discussion with Dr. Charlie Ferguson at the Child Protection Centre in relation to this study).

Second, some of the anecdotal evidence pointed to the fact that helping professionals had started asking children

with problems like delinquency, running, and truancy whether they had a history of sexual abuse. In many cases, this may have become a way of explaining a context for the behavior that was identified as socially unacceptable. In some cases, it appears that the history of sexual abuse may have then also become a focus of treatment to address other behavior concerns, according to Gelmon (interview for this study). Gelmon suggests that:

another dynamic is the process that the profession had gone through where social workers went through a period of identifying abuse histories in the majority of child welfare cases . Each specialty recognizes its own 'diagnosis' or assessment in social problems. For example, surgeons may see surgery as the only course of treatment for a particular ailment. In the case of awareness raising about child abuse, the helping professions are in danger of concluding that the central issue is abuse when other alternative explanations may be more appropriate and more amenable to successful changes for the client population (Gelmon Interview).

Is Gelmon's conceptualization the same as a moral panic? Not entirely, as it does not appear to be fear-based as much as it appears to be a narrow conceptualization of the context and the most pragmatic, beneficial ways to intervene successfully in difficult, complex child welfare situations.

A third way of interpreting the data is to conceptualize some of the elements of a moral panic as not entirely fear-based, but as more ideological or political in origin as a strategic revolution. This term suggests that there was some intent on the moral opinion makers' part to create a social change based on an ideological or political stance. The change was difficult to initiate and implement



because beliefs and practises as they had been known before had to be changed radically and the process could be compared to a social revolution.

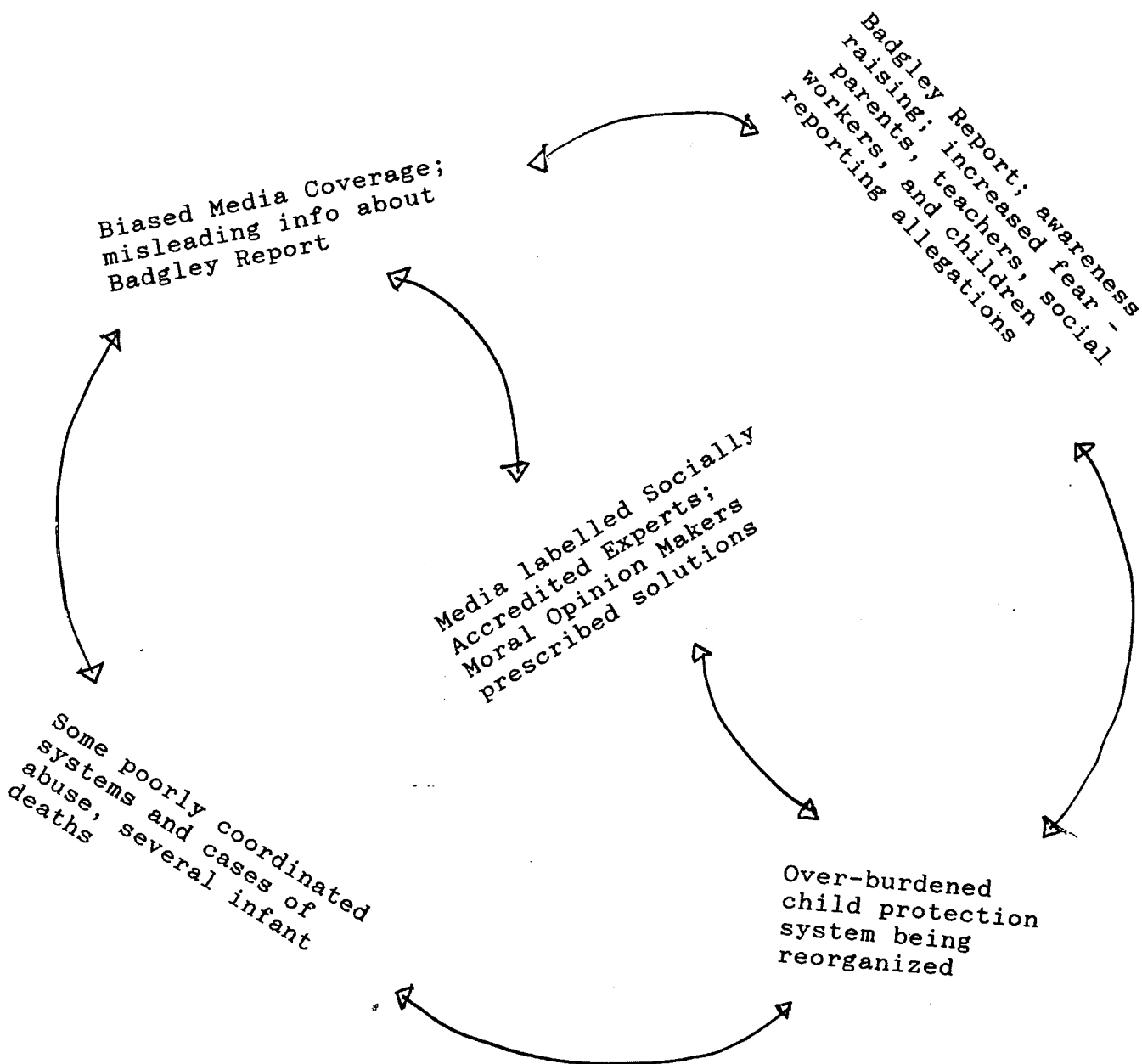
Helping professionals and the organizations that address child problems did change their protocols, questions of clients, and approach to child welfare issues. The moral opinion makers identified in this study stated that they felt a moral obligation to raise awareness about child sexual abuse after the Badgley Report findings were released. There is evidence to suggest that these findings were presented in a misleading way by the media, suggesting that there was a much higher percentage of incidence of abuse than the report's definition of sexual abuse was intended to convey. More research is required to explore whether a strategic revolution is merely another form of moral panic or whether there is a difference in the deliberateness of the actions.

A fourth way of interpreting the data is to explore an interaction explanation for increased reporting rates and media visibility. Cohen's (1980) theory of moral panic provides a broad contextual and interactional framework within which to understand puzzling phenomena regarding social problem definitions and solutions. By including an analysis of the roles of those who have influence over social problem definitions and solutions, the labellers as well as the labelled have been considered as significant in the assessment of social problems. By examining the media's

role in conveying information about social problems and the community's response to new information, the interactional process of perpetuating social values has been included in the analysis of social problem and solution development. And finally by reviewing the statistical reality of social problem definitions and solutions within the context of how the problem of child sexual abuse came to be understood and addressed by the community, an attempt has been made to objectively and sympathetically understand the complex and challenging reality of effective social solution development.

An interactional model of problem definition and solution development has emerged from the data specific to child sexual abuse in Winnipeg between 1983 and 1985 (See Figure 8 for a diagram of the interactional explanation). This study has shown how central the socially accredited experts and moral opinion makers are in the social problem definition process, as illustrated in the diagram. The Badgley Report's coverage by the media together with the "Feeling Yes, Feeling No" program in the schools and local awareness raising may have increased social anxiety, increased parents' fear about risks to their children, and contributed to a rapid increase in the number of disclosures of child sexual abuse. The unexpected and rapid increase in reporting, together with a reorganization of an already overburdened child protection system affected further systems' crises and fragmented services to children and

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families. Biased media coverage of some poorly coordinated cases, the fragmentation of services, and some accidental child deaths appear to have exacerbated an atmosphere of confusion, misunderstanding and reactivity about how to best define and resolve the problem of child sexual abuse.

Centuries of under-recognition of children's rights and needs has resulted in an awareness-raising campaign by child victim advocates in the 1980's about the damaging effects and prevalence of child sexual abuse. Perhaps the pendulum has swung to another extreme where child sexual abuse may have been over-diagnosed, as suggested by some key individuals interviewed for this study.

This interactional explanation, which raises several new themes and questions, requires further study to explore evidence of directional influences between the elements of the findings.

D) Does this study suggest a revised version of Cohen's moral panic?

The strength of this study and Cohen's (1980) definition of moral panic as a model for examining the history of defining a social problem is the map it provides for a unique and thought-provoking way to conceptualize how the community addresses social problems. By employing an exploratory, qualitative approach, the story of the history of child sexual abuse in Winnipeg has been told in a new way. Cohen's (1980) criteria have incorporated elements

into his theory that include an examination of the labellers and solution design. Therefore, questions have been incorporated into the study that might have been overlooked. For example, who were the moral opinion makers? What was the role of the media? How did organizations respond with protocol changes? And what were the long-standing legislative and policy changes?

By examining the media's role, together with that of the political and professional moral opinion makers, this study has gone beyond discovering ways to solve social problems by examining how social problems become defined. It is difficult to determine from the findings in this study whether fear and panic were the primary reactions that influenced the definition of child sexual abuse in this fashion. Perhaps the type of moral panic described in this study contains elements of a strategic revolution.

Conclusive evidence was not obtained for the positive and negative implications for the community for defining child sexual abuse in this way. However, the question has been raised about whether there was an over-reaction to child sexual abuse. The evidence suggesting that there was a moral panic of some sort in Winnipeg between 1983 and 1985 opens the way for further study to explore what the implications of such a moral panic has been.

## V. Conclusion

This exploratory study set out to examine whether there

was a moral panic in Winnipeg about child sexual abuse between 1983 and 1985. The newspaper reporting doubled, the rate of reporting allegations more than doubled, the "investigation only" cases continued to rise until 1989, and some community leaders at the time indicated that there might have been an over-reaction or an "over-diagnosis" of child sexual abuse. The findings of this study show that the newspaper reports about child sexual abuse were biased in 69% of the articles. The newspaper misrepresented the credentials of the experts that were quoted. Several community leaders became the moral opinion makers for this social issue developing new protocols, implementing legislation changes, and raising awareness about the dynamics of child sexual abuse. An atmosphere of alarm appears to have existed as a response to the misleading media coverage of the Badgley Report findings which shocked the public with new information about the prevalence of child sexual abuse. No evidence was identified which shows that the public or the professionals were informed correctly about the actual definition of abuse in the Badgley Report. The organizations that were addressing the issue of abuse were in organizational crises, and there were several infant deaths which resulted in political finger pointing. Statistics for reporting abuse continued to rise. Nearly 50% of the abuse cases between 1983 and 1985 involved sexual abuse while the national average in the United States is 11%. These findings suggest that there was some sort of

moral panic about child sexual abuse in Winnipeg between 1983 and 1985. The implications of such an over-reaction has not been tested in this study.

State intervention in child problems has been a priority in Canada for several decades and all those interviewed for this study would agree that state intervention in child sexual abuse cases is necessary due to the secrecy, fear, and denial in these cases. Changes were made to the Child Welfare Act in 1986 to correspond with this new information about the dynamics of child sexual abuse and the helping professions developed protocols to coordinate efforts and ensure more ease for children to disclose their concerns about abuse to someone. What is unclear is whether these changes which resulted from child sexual abuse becoming defined as a social problem were useful changes to children and families who have experienced abuse. A study exploring the implications of the moral panic that was generated about child sexual abuse would address this issue more directly.

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Gelmon, Elaine.

Hoffman, Diane.

Hudek, Cathy.

McCormick, Norma.

Mitchell, Catherine.

Smith, Muriel.

Wall, Tim.

APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

CONTENT ANALYSIS  
CODEBOOK

This codebook is to be used together with the content analysis checklist to clarify terms and categories.

## 1. Content of the article:

a) WHO: if the article is about more than one person, list the people or organization they represent, eg. three psychologists from the Child Guidance Clinic, or a mother, father and child who was severely abused by an uncle. If names are given, be as specific as possible.

b) WHAT: describe the event in enough detail to distinguish it in some way, eg. the conference organized by Klinik to address the effects of child sexual abuse on adult women.

A phrase or sentence is sufficient.

c) WHERE: can refer a specific event covered in the article or may be more general and refer to Winnipeg, or Alberta if the story is about people who happen to reside there.

d) WHEN: refers to any time frame offered in the article about the theme, event, issue of article or information about time lines, for example the abusive incident occurred in November 1983, however charges were not laid until November 1984. This provides the time frame

information of the article. Sometimes the information may be vague: Abuse occurred in the past, court case is being heard this week.

e) WHY:

i) the causes of abuse will usually be explicitly stated, eg "society has not grappled with the sexual abuse caused by fathers". Even though a family member is described as the cause, the context of this statement suggest that the social milieu is the cause of sexual abuse. Social milieu would be marked.

Social milieu refers to larger social causes like social values, patriarchy, poverty, tolerance for violence and pornography. Family milieu includes family history of abuse, family disorganization, rigid family structure, and any family oriented theme. Individual psychological state refers to anything that suggests that there is a character flaw or something about the psychology of the person who abuses children that causes abuse.

When alcohol is stated as the cause of abuse, listen for how it is linked to the abuse. It may be linked to individual causes as in a defense case where the lawyer makes a statement about the defendant. It may also be that experts refute the link between alcohol and abuse and suggest that such societal beliefs are problematic and cause

misunderstandings about responsibility for abuse. This is an example of societal causes.

The causes of sexual abuse could also be alluded to, eg. "conference..(for) people who help pick up the pieces after the occurrence of child sexual abuse a chance to turn a critical eye on the myth that the victim provokes the abuse...." This would fit under the category "other" because it suggests what is not the cause: victims provoking abuse, but talks about the "occurrence" more as if it is just a fact the child sexual abuse occurs.

If more than one cause is stated or alluded to, mark one as the primary cause that is highlighted by the article and another as secondary. If possible avoid the "other" category and attempt to choose the other three categories if there is a stated cause.

ii) THE CAUSES OF THE EVENT OR ISSUE refers to the reason that this story appears to be covered at this time by the paper. What is newsworthy about this story. If the reason is not explicitly stated, it can usually be extracted from the first paragraph or headline.

## 2. a) INFORMATION ABOUT EFFECTS:

Example of EMOTIONAL EFFECTS on children who have been abused: "She said prostitution is a step taken by some abuse victims". What this implies is that one of the



emotional effects is to turn to risk taking behavior like prostitution. Another example is "...it is difficult to measure the damage to the children, but said there's little chance of them growing into socially well-adjusted adults". There may also be references to the children being angry, acting out their aggression, running away, or being depressed.

Example that could be marked both as EMOTIONAL EFFECTS on child's family members who were not abused, and NEGATIVE EFFECTS of social intervention on adults how abuse children: "Child sex abusers should never be given treatment as a substitute for punishment....We're risking innocent women and children every time a decision is made to allow an offender to stay in the community...treatment should be a privilege not available to all offenders".

"Social intervention" refers to any action to address abusive situations by social service agencies, police, government or policies that have been developed.

b) CAUSE - EFFECT

i) Any comment or idea that implies that one thing or event or person influenced another to occur can be marked "yes".

Eg. "Mercer blamed provincial policies for the deaths of five children in the past two years".

ii) SIMPLICITY of the cause effect relationship?

This is a judgement call. Examine whether there is a credible context for the argument, whether sufficient evidence has been provided, and whether enough information has been given to explore the causal statement for the reader. Sometimes insufficient contextual information is given for the reader to develop a broader understanding of the cause effect relationship being described. This is an example of simplicity.

c) i) STATED SOLUTIONS:

MARK ONLY ONE

"should simply be punished"... "three or four months in prison is symbolic at best". These are examples of INCARCERATION ALONE. The rest of the article must be scrutinized to identify any combination of solutions. The word counselling or Incarceration may not be mentioned. Treatment, therapy, case management, or psychiatry may be referred to and marked as COUNSELLING. Similarly anything that implies incarceration as a solution by anyone in the article, this can be marked.

For OTHER give a brief phrase to describe the solution that is being described, like community education to describe a school program to teach children about their choices when being abused.

ii) TOO SIMPLISTIC? Use judgement. Examine whether there is any explanation about how this will address the problem of abuse, and whether any contextual information is

given about how this solution fits with the larger picture of the solution plan for abuse.

### 3. SOURCES OF INFO

a) Name of reporter. If editorial, list editor's names but state that writer's name is not available.

b) HOW WAS INFO OBTAINED?

MARK AS MANY AS APPLY.

"self as observer" refers to the reporter observing a conference, court, or a public event like a protest, accident or fire.

"written expert information" refers to documents or reports that the journalist has obtained some of the information from.

c) WHO IS QUOTED

Note that for articles that are quoting people from court or a conference only where the journalist did not interview the person for the quote, this section can be omitted.

List all persons directly interviewed and quoted in the article. Use the back to complete the list if necessary. Position and title may be the same for most quotes.

Example: Dr Doe Psychologist (position) and clinical director at Children's Hospital (title).

d) NATURE OF THE QUOTE: (Mark only one).

For the quote: " A division policy statement on the topic, while not causing any harm, would be redundant". This quote conveys or confirms information about solutions.

Where several people are quoted and the quotes seem to have different purposes or themes, mark the initials of the person quoted next to the theme in their particular quote.

e) COMPLETENESS OF THE QUOTE

When the reporter has added their own words in parentheses or added "... " periods to imply the quote was longer but they shortened it to convey the meaning without all the words, then the quotation is incomplete.

Example of possible meaning change: "The family is automatically angry, ...sometimes violent against the teacher." One is left wondering what else was said in that sentence because the information is not factual but emotional.

Example of no apparent change to the meaning: "We would submit that Cameron has been a victim of unfortunate circumstances most of his early formative years and while that does not condone the act...some consideration should be given to ... reclamation and mercy with a reduced sentence and rehabilitation." This sentence was quoted from a letter so there is physical evidence somewhere to substantiate the information, and the information also appears rather coherent and factual. Therefore I was not left wondering what else was omitted.

f) an example of information added to a quote that enhances the speaker, but perhaps detracts from the community in which he lives: " Donald L Tillman, who the city council recently chose as mayor over three others who had answered an advertisement in the Independent, recounted a recent experience." The information about having been chosen mayor after responding to an ad is unnecessary information that partly enhances by highlighting that he was the mayor of choice compared to three others and partly detracts from the speaker by suggesting that he lives in a small community that has people respond to an ad to become mayor.

g) There may not be many of these attempt to contact people for quotations however mark them accordingly.

#### 4. MESSAGE

a) By examining the headline and the first paragraph, one obtains a good sense of the article's message. However, by now one has read the entire article several times to examine other content and has a good overview of the whole article. Choose only one of the choices.

Be as precise and clear as possible when marking "other".

b) Provide a subjective impression and explain why.

#### 5. FORM

- a) If the headline is available, mark the one that best describes the theme of the headline only.
  
- b) involves taking measurements. Where the article is not four sides but more because of the shape of the article, draw a small picture of the shape and mark the dimensions. Use the reverse of the page for more space.
- c) as is
- d) again draw a small diagram of the shape if it is not simply four sides.
  - iii) comment on your impression of what is depicted and explain why if possible.
  - iv) Comment again on your impression. Use the themes from 4 a) as a guide.
- e) Provide a subjective impression and explain why.

## 6. PREDICTION AND PATTERNING:

- a) YES/NO

This refers to whether there is a prediction about the future of child abuse, eg getting better, getting worse. This can be directly stated or implied by the comments in a quote or journalist's impressions: "society's disgust for men who sexually assault kids is shared by those who defend, treat, analyze, and sentence, says ...." . This statement implies that there is an expectation that problems with the solutions to child abuse will continue. ("other" category).

b) There must be a link to other stories previously published.

## 7. SYMBOLS

a) Any descriptions, images or symbols that are used that suggest more information about the persons or events than would typically be conveyed by a word or phrase are to be listed in this sections.

Note all symbols from the article. The word or phrase is sufficient. Additional space on the reverse of paper.

An example of a symbol is:

"the increase in sexual abuse cases is an explosion." This suggests almost unimaginable dimensions, implications and impact. The intent is to convey an intense and symbolic image of great proportions however instead of using statistics or facts, an image linked frequently to humanly created disasters is used. Although it is effective, the reader is left to make sense for themselves about the actual meaning and proportion that is described. This is quite misleading. Other examples are "Halloween hell" , "skinner", "tip of their tongue" , "free ride on services", "prominent citizens". These are all phrases that convey a vague, confusing, or vivid image that could have been more objectively described to convey an accurate meaning to the reader. However without further information, facts or evidence the reader is left to their own assumptions about the meaning.

ii) Explain your subjective impressions about what the

word or phrase suggests.

#### 8. LOGIC AND FACTUAL PRESENTATION:

Note: One example could fit for several of the following problems with logic and factual presentation in an article. The following are designed more to aid in the decision of whether an article is factual and logical or speculative and emotional. These categories are to stimulate thinking about the logic and emotionality of the articles. Certain examples may fit in several categories. However, choose only one category for each example (and if the word was given as an example of a symbol, do not mark it as again in this section as a glittering generality). When a word has been marked as a symbol and that symbol is also part of a bold statement, mark both because the bold statement refers to more than the word or phrase that was marked as a symbol.

Omit the pattern and prediction in this section.

a) UNSOUND WAYS OF CREATING AN ARGUMENT (these categories are borrowed from Maclean, 1981):

i) BOLD ASSERTIONS: Sometimes people give no reason at all for their views. When asked why he will not do something, a child may retort with "Because!". When people make bold assertions they praise or condemn public figures, friends, or enemies without sufficient evidence to do so. Or they may make pronouncements that require explanation or evidence because they are moral judgements or assumptions which require further explanation for the reader not to be



left wondering or questioning what was behind such a strong assertion. Words like "unquestionably, indisputably" or expressions like "But the truth is" or "the fact remains" may precede such statements.

Example: "The announcement of Family Life Education brought strong reactions...those with deeply held beliefs say 'don't'".

Example: "Sexually abused children tend to become abusers as adults."

Introductory paragraphs may provide the theme of the article in the form of a bold assertion.

ii) omit this one here

iii) ATTACKING THE PERSON NOT THE ARGUMENT: "When you're a little older, you'll get a little less idealistic and a little more realistic," or "He's a trouble maker" are examples of attacking the person rather than the arguments s/he represents. Personal shortcomings of an author, scientist, or political opponent to discredit a position or research entirely unrelated to the argument.

iv) POINTING TO THE ENEMY: This is when there is some reference or implicit suggestion that someone is personally disqualified for their comment, work, their role or their activities. Sometimes there are symbols and bold assertions that are used to over emphasize something about the person or group but the implicit suggestion is there that this person was wrong, bad, or evil. An example comes from a short article that criticizes the report done by the

government criticizing it for being called the "definitive" report and also criticized for the results being inaccurate. However no comment is given about what or how the results were inaccurate and because of the annoyance of the person being quoted about the work being "definitive", without reference to why it is not, one can come to the conclusion that the person quoted was pointing to the person who did the report as "the enemy" in this situation.

(Again there is some overlap between this category and the previous one, but mark only one or the other).

v) MISUSING STATISTICS: People use statistics to "prove" statements. But sometimes the source of the statistics may not be given or the stats may be given without clear reference to the context or meaning they create. This may result from carelessness, simple inaccuracy, or trying to get away with dishonesty. Surveys and statistical data must be examined closely for accuracy and how they are used to describe reality. When statistics are used to persuade an audience, but no information is given about the process of gathering these statistics or the qualifiers that apply to the meaning of the categories, then statistics have been misused.

vi) MESHING FACT WITH OPINION: Sometimes facts are presented with the same emphasis as opinion or an individual's impression. For example, "reports of abuse are skyrocketing". Here the fact is that reports of abuse are

increasing, however to say they are skyrocketing is opinion . By linking the fact with opinion statements it is difficult to challenge the way it is said without challenging the fact as well. Also the reader is left with a misleading impression. Other times statements are made as fact but are based in a larger set of assumptions. For example, "Some child care workers drive adolescent sex-abuse victims to the streets by failing to be sensitive to their problems". There are several underlying larger assumptions that inform this statement. One is that, IF child care workers are more sensitive to victims, they will not go to the streets. Another is that the only reason victims go to the streets is because child care workers are insensitive. We are also unclear about the number of child care workers and victims that are being talked about in this statement.

vii) BAND WAGON APPEAL: Statements or arguments that suggest that "everyone" is of a certain opinion, or there is an implicit invitation to "jump on the band wagon" without thinking about the implications or meaning of that decision, then this technique has been used. An example is: "The hair raising evidence at the recent criminal trial of a sexually abusive stepfather shows that Manitoba children have not been adequately protected against abuse." This statement implicitly suggests that everyone in Manitoba agree with such evidence as the results of this trial.

However the reasons and facts to support this statement are not given.

viii) GLITTERING GENERALITIES: Abstract words like "happiness" or "brotherhood" or "forgiveness" can be used and the reader can forget what exactly the person is referring to because the image created is not concrete in meaning. Although it is difficult to disagree with images like "fairness" and "cooperation", we might not all agree with what that means or how to attain it. However we might more easily agree on the meaning of "laundromat". When an abstract general state of things is referred to rather than a thing itself, it is more difficult to clarify specifics of the meaning and therefore more difficult to clearly agree or disagree. Other examples of glittering generalities are: terrorists, subversives, do-gooders, far-reaching reform, abusers, justice, society's disgust, manipulative parents.

b) FACTUALLY BASED

The assumption here is that most articles will have examples of fact, logic, emotionality, and speculation.

An example from each article about facts that the argument is based on will assist in the final decision of whether the article is generally factually based. While this example is being sought, notice whether this is the primary way that evidence and information is presented in the article.

c) EMOTIONS, INTUITION, EXPERIENCE

An example of an article that is not factual but rather emotionally based is: "A nine-year-old girl wanted the abuser tied to a bed, gasoline poured on him and burned, she said. Treatment should be a privilege not available to all offenders, Berliner said. She said therapists shouldn't waste their time on abusers who don't admit their problem.." Although this information may be accurate, the way the facts and opinions are stated in a way that may evoke an emotional reaction from the reader and also presents an emotional and experiential perspective about that incident. No contextual information is provided and no comment is made by the journalist about the reason that the child and the speaker spoke so intensely about their experiences.

While seeking out an example of emotional presentation of information, note whether more examples exist or whether the entire article presents information in this fashion.

d) LOGICAL ARGUMENT

An example of a logical argument: "A man who indecently assaulted the nine-year-old daughter of his former common law wife has been sentenced to three months in jail. ...allowed the accused to serve the sentence on weekends so he will not lose his job." The entire article is a list of facts that appear to be easily checked for accuracy. When the article is examined from beginning to end for the logical flow of the argument, the theme development makes

sense and flows well. If insufficient contextual information is given the article will not flow logically. It will appear that information is missing.

e) SPECULATIVE: to contemplate ideas mentally, to ponder a subject from different angles, to make a statement based on conjecture (Websters dictionary).

An example of a speculative argument is: "A high school principal told the meeting that public perceptions of school discipline are based on outdated beliefs favoring strong punishment". This statement is used in an argument about why physical abuse statistics are decreasing and sexual abuse statistics are increasing and the overall article is about getting tougher abuse reporting laws. The statements used the support the argument and the entire argument is speculative. No facts of valid statistics are provided, and the reader is left guessing about the evidence for these statements. A speculative article may be one where only one side of an argument is provided and the reader is left wondering "what is the other side of this story" or "there must be another part to this story".

f) OVERALL ARTICLE

Each article must now be labelled as factual and logical, factual and speculative, logical and emotional, or emotional and speculative. Briefly review #6, 7, and 8 and remember

the tone of the article, the headline (where available), and length, the number of symbols and predictions, and make a judgement about whether the article was primarily i, ii, iii, or iv.

G) Also briefly explain why.

9. Public reaction: In the above example (# 8, e) the implication is that the public favors harsher child punishment than the schools are and that these harsher punishments might be considered abuse.

10. Values:

These subjective opinions are judgements based on the preceding questions and answers. The primary message and context within other articles may give some substance to the reason that the article was considered to be newsworthy.

## APPENDIX B

CONTENT ANALYSIS  
CHECKLIST FORM

1. The Content of the Article (who, what, where, when, why):

a) Who is the article about?

b) What is the article about?

c) Where does the event, issue take place?

d) When does the event or issue take place?

e) Why:

i) Are the causes of child sexual abuse stated?  
yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_ (if no, go on to ii).

If yes, mark which of the following are stated causes?

\_\_\_ social milieu (patriarchy, tolerance for violence)

\_\_\_ family milieu (disorganization, family history)

\_\_\_ psychological state of adult who abuses children

\_\_\_ other specify \_\_\_\_\_

ii) Are the causes of the event or issue that is covered in this article stated? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no  
(if no, go on to 2)

List stated causes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



2. Effects of and Solutions to child sexual abuse:

a) Is there any information about the effects of child sexual abuse? yes no (if no go on to b)

Mark any and all of the stated effects:

- emotional effects on children who are abused
- physical effects on children who are abused
- emotional effects of parents' reaction on children at disclosure
- emotional effects for child's family members who were not abused
- emotional results for adults who did abuse children at time of disclosure
- the long term effects of child sexual abuse on adults in later years of adulthood
- the positive effects of social intervention or counselling on children who have been abused
- the negative effects of social intervention or counselling on children who have been abused
- the positive effects of social intervention or counselling on adults who have abused children
- the negative effects of social intervention or counselling on adults who have abused children
- the differences between incest and child sexual abuse by non-family members
- other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

b) Cause - Effect:

i) is there any comment in the article about cause - effect relationships? yes no

ii) Write the sentence that suggests cause-effect:

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iii) Is there something about the cause-effect relationship that appears too simplistic or without explanation or evidence?

no explain \_\_\_\_\_

yes explain \_\_\_\_\_

c) Stated solutions to the problem of child sexual abuse:

i) Mark which of the following are stated solutions:

- incarceration mentioned alone
- probation mentioned alone
- counselling mentioned alone
- fines mentioned alone
- incarceration & probation
- incarceration, probation, and counselling
- incarceration and counselling
- probation and counselling
- none of the above
- other specify \_\_\_\_\_

ii) Is there something about the stated solutions that appears too simplistic or without explanation or evidence?

no explain \_\_\_\_\_

yes explain \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Sources of Information

a) Who wrote the article? \_\_\_\_\_

b) How was the information obtained? Mark the following:

- interviews with experts
- interviews with participants in the event
- self as observer/participant
- written expert information
- other specify \_\_\_\_\_

the article does not address how the information was obtained

c) Who is quoted? (if the article contains no quotes, go on to 4).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

d) Nature of the quote - Mark only the one that best suggests the nature of the quote.

- The quote is used to:
- convey or confirm information about causation
  - convey or confirm information about effects on children or their families
  - convey or confirm information about solutions
  - convey or confirm the seriousness of child sexual abuse
  - convey or confirm the prevalence of child sexual abuse
  - convey or confirm concern about the government proposed solutions
  - other specify \_\_\_\_\_

e) Completeness of the quotation  
i) Is the quotation incomplete?

- no (if no, go on to f)
- yes

ii) If yes, does that appear to change the meaning?  
---yes ---no

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

f) Are there any qualifiers attached to the quote to detract from or enhance the source or speaker?

- no
- yes explain possible implications \_\_\_\_\_

g) Quotations or sources the reporter attempted to contact but was unable to obtain:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Reason stated for attempting to contact them: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason state for inability to obtain: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Message

a) Mark one for the primary angle or message of the article:

- a particular incident of abuse that raises concerns
- follow up on an incident of abuse
- a group or person or conference where the goal is awareness raising about a child sexual abuse
- a program need or client need that is seen as important to address (usually identified by the service providers)
- a program or service inadequacy including social service, schools and daycare (identified by consumers of service or other service providers)
- request for policy changes in government
- information about people who abuse children
- solutions proposed by government
- solutions proposed by other than government
- false allegations of abuse
- cultural differences in handling issues of abuse (other than aboriginal)
- aboriginal culture and child sexual abuse
- other specify

b) Does the message suggest anything about the values of the newspaper? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Form

a) Mark one that best describes the angle conveyed by the  
Headline:

- a particular incident of abuse that raises concerns
- follow up on an incident of abuse
- a group or person or conference where the goal is  
awareness raising about child sexual abuse
- a program need or client need that is seen as important  
to address
- a program or service inadequacy including social  
services, schools and daycare
- request for policy changes in government or other  
organization
- information about people who abuse children
- solutions proposed by government
- false allegations of abuse
- cultural differences in addressing issues of abuse  
(other than aboriginal)
- aboriginal culture and child sexual abuse
- other specify \_\_\_\_\_

b) Prominence of the article and headline:

- i) size of the headline \_\_\_\_\_ cm
- ii) size of the article \_\_\_\_\_ cm x \_\_\_\_\_ cm  
- if continued on another page \_\_\_\_\_ cm x \_\_\_\_\_ cm
- iii) how does the article size compare with other  
articles on the same page? \_\_\_\_\_ larger than others  
\_\_\_\_\_ smaller than others  
\_\_\_\_\_ about the same as others  
\_\_\_\_\_ other comments \_\_\_\_\_

c) print size of the story as compared to other articles on the same page:  larger than other  
 smaller than others  
 about the same as others  
 other comments \_\_\_\_\_

v) Number of articles printed this day about child sexual abuse \_\_\_\_\_.

c) Location of the article

Is the article :

on the front page  
 in the front section but not on the front page  
 on the front page of a section other than the front section  
 near the back  
 other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

d) Are there Photos?  yes  no (if not then go on to 6)

i) Photo size \_\_\_\_\_ cm x \_\_\_\_\_ cm

ii) Photo size compared to article size:

photo size is  larger  smaller  about the same  
 comments \_\_\_\_\_

iii) What does the photo tend to depict?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

iv) What do the captions seem to convey?

Choose an angle from the message themes listed in 4 a):  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

e) Does the form suggest anything about the values of the newspaper? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### 6 Prediction and patterning:

a) Was there any prediction in this article about the future of child sexual abuse? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no (if no go on to b).

- i) if yes, did the prediction involve
- \_\_\_ expecting the incidents to increase
  - \_\_\_ expecting the effects on children to be worse than society had realized
  - \_\_\_ expecting those who abuse children to abuse again after the solution has been attempted
  - \_\_\_ expecting problems related to child sexual abuse to get out of hand if something is not done now
  - \_\_\_ other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

b) Did any patterning occur where this story's theme is linked to other similar stories to suggest a trend?  
 \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no (if no, go on to 7).

i) if yes, write the sentence that suggests a pattern or trend: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### 7. Symbols

a) Are there any descriptions, objects, or images that suggest more information about the persons or events involved than typically be conveyed by a word or phrase?  
 \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no (if no go on to 8)

i) if yes, write out the sentence that suggests the symbol: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

ii) what might the word or phrase suggest aside from the dictionary meaning?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

iii) what is that judgement based on? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. The logic and factual presentation in the article:

a) Unsound ways of creating an argument:

Are there examples of these problems in the article?  
(Mark all that apply; if it occurs more than once per article, mark the number of examples)

i) \_\_\_\_\_ bold assertions  
eg \_\_\_\_\_

ii) \_\_\_\_\_ Pattern and Prediction  
eg \_\_\_\_\_

iii) \_\_\_\_\_ Attacking the person not the argument  
eg \_\_\_\_\_

iv) \_\_\_\_\_ pointing to the enemy (often in quotes)  
eg \_\_\_\_\_

v) \_\_\_\_\_ misusing statistics  
eg \_\_\_\_\_

vi) \_\_\_\_\_ Meshing fact with opinion  
eg \_\_\_\_\_

vii) \_\_\_\_\_ Band wagon appeal  
eg \_\_\_\_\_

viii) \_\_\_\_\_ Glittering generalities (cooperation,  
justice, democracy, law and order, peace, well-being).  
eg \_\_\_\_\_

For each item marked above, comment on the meaning or  
impression created with the problematic techniques \_\_\_\_\_

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b) Give an example of how the article was factually based:

\_\_\_\_\_

c) Give an example of how the article was not factual, but based more on emotions, intuition, or someone's experience:

\_\_\_\_\_

d) Give an example of how the article was logical in its argument; \_\_\_\_\_

e) Give an example of how the article was speculative in its argument: \_\_\_\_\_

f) When considering the overall article, choose one of the following that best represents the general logic and factual presentation of the article:

- i) factual and logical \_\_\_\_\_
- ii) factual and speculative \_\_\_\_\_
- iii) logical and emotional \_\_\_\_\_
- iv) emotional and speculative \_\_\_\_\_

g) Explain your choice in e) above

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Public reaction:

Is there anything in this article to suggest what the public reaction is/ was/ might be to child sexual abuse?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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10. Values

a) What seems to be the reason this story was considered newsworthy?

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Dec. 1995  
coeters  
moral panic thesis

## APPENDIX C

## LIST OF ALL PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED AND INTERVIEWED FOR THIS STUDY

1. Anonymous: Interviews regarding policy changes between 1980 and 1990 at several organizations resulted in a request by the interviewee to be anonymous. These were: The Fort Garry School Division, The Manitoba Teacher's Society, and The City of Winnipeg Police Department - Youth Division.
2. Buck, Margot. Assistant Director of the Child Protection Centre, located in the Health Sciences Centre, Winnipeg. Buck was interviewed initially for her knowledge of the policy and guideline changes at the Child Protection Centre and her knowledge about Canadian trends regarding child abuse led to a longer telephone interview.
3. Chudzik, John. Provincial Child Abuse Coordinator for Manitoba from the beginning of this program in 1981 to the present (1996). Most people that were interviewed referred to Chudzik or recommended speaking to him. A more in depth audio taped interview took place. (See Appendix G for notes about this interview.)
4. Ferguson, Dr. Charlie. Medical Director at the Child Protection Centre, Health Sciences Centre, Manitoba. Dr. Ferguson was also referred to in several previous interviews and thus he was contacted for contextual information and his point of view on changes at the Child Protection Centre.
5. Gellman, Elaine. Area Director for Winnipeg Child and Family Services. Gellman was recommended by the Executive Director of Winnipeg Child and Family Services after a brief description of the request to understand guideline changes during the 1980's. Gellman described the agency's dilemmas and also referred me to Kathy Hudeck, an regional supervisor.
6. Hoffman, Diane. Administrator at the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba. She was contacted about policy and guideline changes at this organization.
7. Hudeck, Cathy. Regional Supervisor for Winnipeg Child and Family Services. She was recommended by Gellman for more detailed information about the changes in the agency in the early 1980's.
8. McCormick, Norma. Formerly with the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre and the Manitoba representative on the

Badgley Commission (A federal research study about child abuse).

9. Mitchell, Catherine. Reporter with the Winnipeg Free Press. She had written many of the 1985 articles and I had the opportunity to meet her and speak briefly during my library research at the Winnipeg Free Press. Later I contacted her in follow up with more contextual questions.

10. Smith, Muriel. Former Community Services Minister between 1983 and 1987 with the New Democratic Party. She was interviewed for her conceptual framework about the policy and social changes regarding child sexual abuse in the 1983 to 1985 time period. This was an audio taped interview and a summary can be found in Appendix F.

11. Wall, Tim. Executive Director of Klinik. He was contacted because Klinik was one of the organizations most frequently mentioned in the Winnipeg Free Press as actively involved in awareness raising about sexual abuse in the community. He was questioned about guideline changes in the organization and about contextual information.

## APPENDIX D

## ORGANIZATION ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

## CHILD PROTECTION CENTRE:

Permanently funded in 1982 and designed to assess children and family dynamics when risk of child abuse was evident. Medical examination and treatment as well as psychological and social assessments and treatment is offered.

## CITY POLICE - YOUTH DIVISION:

Since the early 1970's the Police have been part of the investigation process in Manitoba when child abuse risk has been alleged. Their role changed when criminal code changes were made in 1983, 1987, and 1988 (See Appendix 6 for further details).

## KLINIC:

A community medical and psychological counselling and treatment centre for adults. With a feminist philosophy, Klinik has lead the community in providing counselling to abused women and abused men receive nearly 25% of its services.

## MANITOBA ADOLESCENT TREATMENT CENTRE:

A community mental health facility for children including psychiatric and psychological assessments and treatment in a hospital, out patient, and several community based settings.

## MANITOBA TEACHER'S SOCIETY and THE FORT GARRY SCHOOL DIVISION:

These two organizations were contacted as part of the education system's involvement in guideline and policy changes. The Manitoba Teacher's Society is the professional association for teachers and the school division is the one that was most frequently referred to in the Winnipeg Free Press.

## WINNIPEG CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES:

Formerly known as Children's Aid Society, this is the primary child protection agency in the City of Winnipeg. Investigative Social Workers work in collaboration with the police department when investigating allegations of child abuse or neglect.

## APPENDIX E

## AUDIO CONSENT FORM

1. Description of interview process: this interview takes place because the interviewee participated in a public debate about the policies and solutions that were designed in the early 1980's to address child sexual abuse. Several questions have been developed to explore the interviewee's involvement, experience, and knowledge of decision making processes during the 1983 - 1985 time period. Because the nature of the information is directly related to the interviewee's participation in a public role, their comments will be on the record. The potential benefits to the person being interviewed are to revisit a time period during his/her involvement in public office, through the eyes of an interested, curious researcher who is piecing together an understanding of the public interest in child sexual abuse during the 1983 - 1985 time period. There are few risks to the person being interviewed, and she/he may indicate at any time that they do not wish to pursue a line of questioning, or withdraw from the interview entirely. Time commitment approximately 1 hour.

2. Name and phone number of researcher: Carolyn Peters, work number is

3. Withdrawal from interview: There is no penalty for withdrawal from this project at any time.

4. Confidentiality: As noted above these interviews will take place on the record and a request has been made by the researcher to audio tape the interview. These audio tapes will be destroyed immediately following the completion of the research project (expected date of completion: October, 1996). Information provided in the interview will be interpreted and recorded in the research report.

5. A summary of the results of this study are available from the researcher (name and phone number above) upon request.

## 6. Consent for audio taping:

I \_\_\_\_\_ give Carolyn Peters, a Graduate Social Work Student and Researcher, permission to record on audio tape our conversation on this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_. This audio recording will be used by the Student Researcher to complete her study and then will be destroyed.

Signature of interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

cpeters  
1996  
audconsent

Conversation with Muriel Smith  
June 8, 1996

In the 1970's the physical abuse of child, known as the Battered Child Syndrome, was first identified by the medical profession who noticed repeat admissions of the same children for physical injuries. This phenomenon was well covered by the media. In the late '70's and early '80's, a conference was organized by professionals in the field on child sexual abuse. This helped to generate bottom up pressure on the government to do something. Fortunately there was a responsive government.

During the '70's, there had been an expansion of Family Life education in the schools. The media and society at large were becoming less secretive and more open about sexual matters. Secrecy around all matters relating to the family was giving way to concepts of social responsibility for healthier attitudes to sexuality, and to the need to protect children from sexual exploitation by adults, particularly those in a position of trust within the family, child care centres and schools. The federally funded Badgley Commission Report produced alarming statistics showing just how widespread and prevalent child sexual abuse was throughout Canada. Previously trusting parents became increasingly suspicious of leaving their children in the care of any other adult without there being adequate safeguards. Unfortunately, this tide of openness and concern started to flow back towards secrecy and the protection of family privacy during the latter part of the '80's.

There were professionals within the Department of Community Services who were researching a new Child and Family Services Act, passed in 1985. One of the topics they studied for inclusion in the Act was child sexual abuse. John Chudzik, Provincial Child Abuse Coordinator, took the lead, supported by social workers both in the department and in the field. The political leadership was not afraid of having further state intervention in the family if it was in the best interests of the child, and supportive of the family, the culture of origin and the community, to the extent that they promoted the wellbeing of the child. Overall, they preferred a preventive and supportive approach to child welfare over a highly interventionist and treatment oriented one. The issue of child sexual abuse presented a particular challenge to this approach because, as the Attorney General's Department became involved, a strongly legalistic and punitive approach was introduced. Spurred by advocates from the Women's Movement who wanted all violence in the family to be recognized and criminalized, The AG's Department criminalized child sexual abuse and mandated compulsory reporting of actual or suspected cases.

Throughout this period, there was a strong growth in Winnipeg's aboriginal community. Population on the reserves was burgeoning, and, driven by the conflicting pulls of the excitement and promise of employment in the city and the pulls of more tightly knit community life on the reserve, many aboriginal people were in constant movement in and out of the city. Their children were represented in disproportionately high numbers in the child welfare system. Encouraged by Department social workers who were encouraging them to become more assertive in seeking their rights and in finding a voice, several hundred attended the 1983 AGM of Children's Aid Winnipeg. They signed up as members with a view to helping to elect some of their own representatives to the CAS Board. They were frustrated by the invocation of an unwritten rule that members had to belong for one year before they were entitled to vote. Faced by such intransigence, coupled to their concern over the disproportionately large number of children taken into care by CAS Winnipeg (run by a private Board) relative to what was happening in the other Winnipeg agencies (namely, Children's Aid Eastern - run by a community based Board, and Children's Aid Western - government run), the Government moved to revoke their mandate. A temporary government appointed board of five persons was appointed.

The Department of Community Services had been operating an extended broadly participative planning exercise designed to organize Winnipeg's children's aid services into six regional areas, each with its own community based board. The intention was to root awareness of what was happening to children as broadly as possible in the community so that support services could be developed among the full range of community groupings, not just in an agency of last resort like the traditional children's aid society. It was hoped that this type of organization would be more oriented to preventive and supportive services, and that this approach would be both less expensive and more effective in the long run.

This process was accelerated and the six agencies established two years ahead of the original timetable. There followed a period of turmoil as the new agencies took hold and established the pattern of service they considered most appropriate to their area. The board members became articulate and passionate spokespeople for children, a practice not always comfortable for the Government of the day, but definitely an advantage for the city's children. Being closer to where the children and families lived led to significant increases in reports of abuse and neglect. In spite of the funding for more supportive and preventive services, the costs for treatment of children taken into care also went up. A major reason for this was the parallel move to deal with child sexual abuse.

In 1983, protocols for mandatory reporting of suspected cases were introduced. Workers in the field started asking their current cases as well as their new ones whether there had been a history of sexual abuse. The results were overwhelming and surprising. No one had anticipated the extent of the problem. Within one year of the new procedures being introduced, 46% of all child welfare cases were found to have a sexual abuse component. Prior to that, a wide variety of interpretations had been given to runaways, living on the street, and a wide range of other acting out behaviours. As these cases now required criminal investigation, many more children were taken into care and costly investigations conducted. The net impact on the reformed system was that a fuller range of services was offered to more children; more advocates were actively supporting the wellbeing of children throughout the community and putting pressure on the Government to meet the needs of these children; but the total cost



Aboriginal children continued to be particularly vulnerable. Their families experienced poverty, unemployment, continuing in-out migration, and family and cultural breakdown as urban lifestyles impinged on people accustomed to rural, extended family and community based lifestyles with which they had been familiar. Misunderstandings arose between agencies as the regional boards were not able to track family members who were frequently on the move. Significantly different practice developed in each of the six regions, appropriate to the needs of the local communities but still requiring better coordination and provincially consistent standards. Specific disputes broke out pertaining to child sexual abuse because of the multidisciplinary approach. Medical people at the Child protection Centre accused the government of falsifying child abuse numbers. When the dust settled, it was discovered that while the hospitals counted each child admitted to hospital, the social workers who provided the government statistics only counted the cases where there was sufficient evidence to stand up in court. The government then put extra effort and resources into developing teamwork and mutual understanding among all the disciplines involved: legal, police, social work, medical, education, child care etc.

Two sub-issues of child sexual abuse emerged during the '80s: ritual abuse and false memory syndrome. There was a spate of publicity on ritual abuse which became defined very broadly to include any activity with children that wasn't politically mainstream and fundamentally Christian. This broad interpretation of the term led to increased resistance to measures to deal with all forms of child abuse. Men in positions of authority vis a vis children, such as teachers, child care workers, recreational leaders, became increasingly defensive and fearful of being falsely accused. They were suspicious of having their names on the child abuse register. Concern was expressed as to whether children's testimony could be relied on. The professional psychologists claimed that child seldom lied about abuse. Gone was the Freudian belief that children naturally had sexual fantasies. Over against that was some growing evidence that the plethora of sexually explicit television, videos, books and magazines, often available in children's homes, plus their active imaginations, were producing a precocious awareness and vocabulary that might contaminate the evidence. Publicity about False Memory Syndrome only served to aggravate the situation.

Polarization increased. Concern appeared to shift from protection of the more vulnerable person, the child, to concern for the reputation or access to employment. On the other hand, the women's movement and others were concerned about the wellbeing of children and their own economic independence. They protested the mounting volume of pornographic advertising and the linking of sex and violence in so much advertising. Many men added to their fear of being falsely accused by children their resentment of women's drive for equality which they perceived as "anti-men". The Government's job was to find the appropriate balance, leaning if necessary towards protection of children and the prevention of abuse.

Social change rarely proceeds in straight lines. Changes seem to proceed by a zigging/zagging motion. Many women victims of violence who have lived with apathy and ignorance often become very angry, punitive and separatist when they first become aware of their rights. Some remain there, victims of the hurt they and their sisters have experienced. Most, however, acquire self-acceptance and confidence and move on as full and equal partners in more integrated settings. Child sexual abuse was and is a very complicated issue. Bringing it out of the closet and into public awareness was bound to arouse powerful opposition and it did. Building the capacity of multidisciplinary teams and culturally appropriate services to deal with the issue is not accomplished overnight. Much learning is required. Some children inevitably fell through the cracks during the organizational transitions. The gain was that previously, their plight was scarcely named or recognized, and there were no advocates to speak out on their behalf.

I think the Government of the day worked conscientiously and persistently to build the most effective response system that knowledge and experience could achieve. The ongoing shortage of resources handicapped the process, but that was as much because of the volume generated by the increased ability to detect and reach children in need as from reluctance to tackle an important emerging social issue. I was proud to have played a part in the development of that response capacity.

## APPENDIX G

Summary of Interview with John Chudzik on June 13, 1996  
Chudzik is the Provincial Coordinator of Child Abuse in  
Manitoba.

In the early 1970's, Manitoba was one of the first provinces/territories to pioneer a multi-disciplinary approach to child abuse. Inter-departmental guidelines were implemented. The child abuse movement had its roots with Helfer/Kempe's describing the "battered child syndrome" in the States. A multi-disciplinary team meant coordination among police, child protection agencies and the medical system. There was a "special" provincial Task Force of 20 - 30 people who were leading experts on child abuse in the province including judges, executive directors, prosecution's department and involved in recommending major revisions to the provincial guidelines. The results were released in 1984.

In the late 1970's sexual abuse became publicly identified. Until then, systems had been preoccupied with physical abuse. Sexual abuse disclosures increased dramatically. Manitoba already had an infra structure to deal with both physical and sexual abuse. For the criminal justice system, however, evidence took on a new importance in attempting to prove sexual abuse cases. Especially with small children in trying to establish credibility as witnesses. Confronted with significant gaps in time between the abuse itself, the investigation and actually going to court, and because of an adversarial system, it was difficult for the justice system to ensure accuracy and continuity in their testimony.

The position of a Provincial Coordinator for Abuse was established in 1981 during the Conservative government. The role of the coordinator initially focussed on three parts: policy and legislation development, professional and public awareness, and direct consultation on difficult cases. Workshops presented on child sexual abuse in the early 1980's public awareness increased reporting of abuse. Often there were people in the audience who were themselves survivors of abuse.

The federal Badgley Report entitled Sexual Offences Against Children in Canada (1984) was a historic Canadian study because the results paralleled a previous American study by Diana Russel. The findings were shocking. One in four women and one in ten men were found to be victims of child sexual abuse before age 18. No one was ready for that information. Professionals directly involved in the field were perhaps not as surprised because they knew that more and more cases

of child sexual abuse. In many cases there was a long history of intergenerational abuse. The Badgley report was a catalyst for bringing cases "out of the woodwork". There was a very dramatic increase in child sexual abuse cases across Canada. Because physical abuse statistics remained steady, concerns were expressed as to whether physical abuse was not being adequately addressed.

As part of regionalization in Winnipeg, the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg was dissolved and six new Child and Family Services agencies were created in 1985. Every government over the past two decades has seen child abuse as a priority. It has involved a growing attention to the community's concern about the investigation, treatment and prevention of child abuse. Government strategy involved public education in the schools and coordination of services for abused children and families. In Montreal at an International Congress on Child Abuse in 1985, people were astounded by Manitoba's advanced services for abuse. The Badgley Report had recognized Manitoba as a leader in organizing services for child abuse.

The challenge with child sexual abuse in Manitoba and elsewhere in North America has been a major systems issue: the Criminal Justice system must deal with the alleged offender; the social service system providing protection and treatment to the victim and family; the Education and Medical systems are providing early identification of child abuse. All these systems have faced the increasing need for more training, staffing and steadily increasing reports of family violence and child abuse.

The systems were in crisis and the reporting rates were increasing quickly. The initial stage was shock, because the increase in reports was overwhelming. There was some minimization that the prevalence of abuse does not exist. Some school systems seemed the most concerned about false allegations of teachers. However gradually, government has continued to emphasize a coordinated inter-disciplinary and inter-departmental systems approach. The protocols for each system became an essential part of the framework.

Media has often viewed and defined child abuse as primarily a child welfare issue. When there was a major abuse story or a child death, people would question whom to blame, and child welfare was often singled out. However, a cluster of five infant deaths in 1985 showed that child abuse had become a major systems issue for the police, health, education and related areas. The five infant deaths in 1985 in a short period of time were a catalyst for change. The regionalization of Child and Family Services was viewed as a

contributing factor: individuals experienced identity crises, the new organizations took time to adjust, outreach in the community meant more connection with the community, and the agencies were flooded with cases. Some disagreements and tensions among the 6 regional agencies also developed. The original plan for a strong centralized intake and coordination process failed to be implemented.

The five infant death reviews showed that the children were all under 1 year old. The parents were all immature and inexperienced. Most had a history of being clients of many systems including child protection and they didn't know how to cope with the stress of life and the demands of caring for an infant. Government initiated a major Systems Review, not just of the child protection system but of all the other systems involved in the coordination of service for child abuse. The review looked at funding, staffing, training, and treatment plans.

Initially media often sensationalized the issue of child abuse. It has been argued that the constant focus on child abuse by the media may also have had the result that people are desensitized and society's tolerance level for violence has gone up. For instance, the violent images involving women and children in music and advertising is very concerning.

## APPENDIX H

CONTENT ANALYSIS INFORMATION FROM WINNIPEG FREE PRESS ARTICLES (Themes by year, followed by tabulations by question).

1983 - 1985

## THEMES BY YEAR

1983 (31 articles)

Judge reprimands Children's Aid Society social worker in court for not being responsive to the signals of child sexual abuse in a high profile case. (15/31 articles). Drama group promotes awareness of sexual abuse in schools. (6/31 articles). The remaining are specific incidents and miscellaneous stories.

1984 (46 articles)

Information from court cases of incidents of child sexual abuse that raise concerns. Requests for more and better service coordination, Badgley report responses, and concern regarding how to handle the significant increase in reporting of abuse allegations.

(During 1984 and 1985 there were 18 articles and 9 editorials about the Badgley Report).

1985 January - September (25 articles)

Focus on Education system's response to pressure from certain school trustees to articulate a policy clarifying teachers' responsibility to report suspected abuse. Several incidents involving school employees charged with child sexual abuse and fear by some school officials of false allegations in the future. US experts speak at local conferences to raise awareness.

1985 October - December (24 articles)

Social Service delivery problems identified by experts, community, and government opposition members. Physical abuse issues also prominent because of 5 baby deaths within several months attributed by some to inadequate government policy while medical evidence seemed to contradict this allegation. Provincial Commission recommends development of Child Protector role.

\*\*\*Note: The following tabulated results are best understood by reviewing simultaneously with a copy of the Content Analysis Form in Appendix 3 and the Code Book for definitions of terms in Appendix 4.

\*\*\*Note the calculations for Bias and Neutrality are on P.

TABULATION OF RESULTS BY QUESTION AND YEAR

Question: 1 e) Are the causes of child sexual abuse stated?

Answer:

NO	1983	21/31	(68%)
	1984	26/46	(56%)
	1985	21/49	(43%)

YES	1983	9/31	(29%)
	1984	21/46	(46%)
	1985	30/49	(61%)

IF YES, MARK which of the following are stated causes.

A) SOCIAL MILIEU	1983	0/31	(0%)
	1984	7/46	(15%)
	1985	6/49	(12%)

B) FAMILY MILIEU	1983	3/31	(10%)
	1984	6/46	(13%)
	1985	16/49	(37%)

C) PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE OF THE ADULT WHO ABUSES	1983	7/31	(23%)
	1984	8/46	(17%)
	1985	7/49	(14%)

QUESTION 2 A) Is there any information about the effects of child sexual abuse?

ANSWER 2 A)

NO	1983	20/31	(65%)
	1984	24/46	(52%)
	1985	25/49	(51%)
YES	1983	11/31	(35%)
	1984	22/46	(48%)
	1985	27/49	(55%)

IF YES, MARK ANY AND ALL OF THE STATED EFFECTS;

i) Emotional effects on children who are abused (only)

1983	3/11
1984	5/22
1985	12/27

ii) Emotional effects and one or two additional effects

1983	3/11
1984	7/22
1985	11/27

iii) Emotional effects and more than three additional effects

1983	2/11
1984	2/22
1985	4/27

iv) One effect (other than emotional effects on children)

1983	1/11
1984	7/22
1985	1/27

## 3. C) STATED SOLUTIONS:

i) Mark which of the following are stated solutions:

- a incarceration
- |      |      |       |
|------|------|-------|
| 1983 | 3/31 | (10%) |
| 1984 | 5/46 | (8%)  |
| 1985 | 3/49 | (6%)  |
- b Probation alone
- |      |      |           |
|------|------|-----------|
| 1983 | zero | all years |
| 1984 |      |           |
| 1985 |      |           |
- c counselling alone
- |      |      |       |
|------|------|-------|
| 1983 | 2/31 | (6%)  |
| 1984 | 6/46 | (13%) |
| 1985 | 5/49 | (10%) |
- d fines alone
- |      |      |           |
|------|------|-----------|
| 1983 | zero | all years |
| 1984 |      |           |
| 1985 |      |           |
- e incarceration & probation
- |      |      |           |
|------|------|-----------|
| 1983 | zero | all years |
| 1984 |      |           |
| 1985 |      |           |
| 1985 |      |           |
- f incarceration, prob. & counsel.
- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1983 | 2/31 | (6%) |
| 1984 | 2/46 | (4%) |
| 1985 | 4/49 | (8%) |
- g incarceration and counsel.
- |      |      |       |
|------|------|-------|
| 1983 | 1/31 | (3%)  |
| 1984 | 7/46 | (15%) |
| 1985 | 8/49 | (16%) |
- h probation and counselling
- |      |      |           |
|------|------|-----------|
| 1983 | zero | all years |
| 1984 |      |           |
| 1985 |      |           |



i none of the above  
 1983 9/31 29%  
 1984 14/46 30%  
 1985 9/49 18%

j other specify\_\_\_\_\_

i) community education  
 1983 6/31 (19%)  
 1984 4/46 (9%)  
 1985 6/49 (12%)

ii) improved interagency coordination  
 1983 1/31 (3%)  
 1984 3/46 (7%)  
 1985 9/49 (18%)

iii) other general  
 1983 4/31 13%  
 1984 3/46 7%  
 1985 5/49 10%

### 3. QUOTES

QUESTION; Nature of the quote - Mark only the one that best suggests the nature of the quote.

ANSWER;

a) convey or confirm information about causation  
 1983 0/31  
 1984 5/46 11%  
 1985 0/49

b) convey or confirm information about effects on children or their families  
 1983 1/31 3%  
 1984 1/46 2%  
 1985 1/49 2%

- c) convey or confirm information about solutions
- |      |       |     |
|------|-------|-----|
| 1983 | 6/31  | 19% |
| 1984 | 6/46  | 13% |
| 1985 | 19/49 | 39% |
- d) convey or confirm the seriousness of child sexual abuse
- |      |      |    |
|------|------|----|
| 1983 | 0/31 |    |
| 1984 | 1/46 | 2% |
| 1985 | 1/49 | 2% |
- e) convey or confirm the prevalence of child sexual abuse
- |      |      |     |
|------|------|-----|
| 1983 | 4/31 | 13% |
| 1984 | 6/46 | 13% |
| 1985 | 2/49 | 4%  |
- f) convey or confirm concern about the government proposed solutions
- |      |      |    |
|------|------|----|
| 1983 | 2/31 | 6% |
| 1984 | 4/46 | 9% |
| 1985 | 4/49 | 8% |
- g) other specify:
- (The following additional categories were added from the data gathered).
- h) convey information about a specific incident of abuse
- |      |       |     |
|------|-------|-----|
| 1983 | 10/31 | 32% |
| 1984 | 7/46  | 15% |
| 1985 | 3/49  | 6%  |
- i) convey information about community education
- |      |      |    |
|------|------|----|
| 1983 | 2/31 | 2% |
| 1984 | 1/46 | 2% |
| 1985 | 0/49 |    |
- j) convey information about adults who abuse children
- |      |      |    |
|------|------|----|
| 1983 | 1/31 | 3% |
| 1984 | 2/46 | 5% |
| 1985 | 2/49 | 4% |
- k) other
- |      |      |     |
|------|------|-----|
| 1983 | 0/31 |     |
| 1984 | 5/46 | 11% |
| 1985 | 3/49 | 6%  |

## 4. MESSAGE

QUESTION: Mark one for the primary angle or message of the article:

ANSWER:

a) a particular incident of abuse that raises concerns

1983	5/31	16%
1984	12/46	26%
1985	8/49	16%

b) follow up on an incident of abuse

1983	9/31	29%
1984	2/46	4%
1985	9/49	18%

c) a group or person or conference where the goal is awareness raising about child sexual abuse

1983	10/31	32%
1984	5/46	11%
1985	10/49	2%

d) a program need or client need that is seen as important to address (usually identified by the service providers)

1983	1/31	3%
1984	4/46	9%
1985	3/49	6%

e) a program or service inadequacy including social service, schools and daycare (identified by consumers of service or other service providers)

1983	2/31	6%
1984	0/46	
1985	5/49	10%

f) request for policy changes in government

1983	0/31	
1984	2/46	4%
1985	2/49	4%

g) information about people who abuse

1983	1/31	3%
1984	3/46	7%
1985	3/49	13%

- h) solutions proposed by government
- |      |      |     |
|------|------|-----|
| 1983 | 3/31 | 10% |
| 1984 | 7/46 | 15% |
| 1985 | 3/49 | 6%  |
- i) solutions proposed by other than government
- |      |      |     |
|------|------|-----|
| 1983 | 0/31 |     |
| 1984 | 6/46 | 12% |
| 1985 | 6/49 | 12% |
- j) false allegations of abuse  
(all years 0)
- k) cultural differences in handling issues of abuse  
(all years 0)
- l) aboriginal culture and child sexual abuse  
1984 only 1/46 2%
- m) other
- |      |      |     |
|------|------|-----|
| 1983 | 0/31 |     |
| 1984 | 5/46 | 10% |
| 1985 | 2/49 | 4%  |

## 6. Prediction and Patterning:

QUESTION: Was there any prediction in this article about the future of child sexual abuse?

ANSWER: No

1983	17/31	55%
1984	28/46	61%
1985	23/49	47%

Yes

1983	14/31	45%
1984	18/46	39%
1985	26/49	53%

If yes, did the prediction involve:

a) expecting the incidents or reporting of incidents to increase

1983	5/31	16%
1984	4/46	9%
1985	2/49	4%

b) expecting the effects on children to be worse than society had realized

1983	2/31	6%
1984	2/46	4%
1985	0/49	

c) expecting those who abuse children to abuse again after the solution has been attempted

1983	1/31	3%
1984	0/46	
1985	3/49	6%

d) expecting problems related to child sexual abuse to get out of hand if something is not done now

1983	0/31	
1984	0/46	
1985	3/25	6%

e) other:

(the following categories were added from the data collection)

f) children won't feel safe to disclose without changes in policy

1983	3/31	10%
other years		0

g) expecting community to lose confidence in social service response to child sexual abuse, while social services are struggling and ineffective

1983	4/31	13%
1984	3/46	7%
1985	6/49	12%

h) expecting decrease in abuse reporting due to better investigations and coordination of services

1983	0/31	
1984	2/46	4%
1985	3/49	6%

i) expecting child sexual abuse issues to become trendy

1985	2/49	only
------	------	------

j) other

1983	1/31	3%
1984	9/46	20%
1985	5/49	10%

## 7. SYMBOLS

QUESTION; Are there any descriptions, objects, or images that suggest more information about the persons or events involved than would be typically conveyed by a word or phrase?

ANSWER; No (# of articles / year that had misleading images about child sexual abuse or other related issues)

1983	12/31	39%
1984	9/46	20%
1985	3/49	6%

Yes		
1983	19/31	61%
1984	37/46	80%
1985	46/49	94%

Average # of symbols per article:

1983  
1984  
1985

## 8. Unsound ways of creating an argument:

Are there examples of these problems in the article (Mark all that apply; if it occurs more than once per article, mark the number of examples):

i) bold assertions (# of total examples / year)

1983	22#/31 articles
1984	25#/46 articles
1985	10#/49 articles

ii) Pattern and prediction repeated

iii) Attacking the person not the argument

1983	8#/31
1984	3#/46
1985	3#/49

iv) pointing to the enemy

1983	10#/31
1984	7#/46
1985	8#/49

v) misusing statistics

1983 6#/31  
 1984 6#/46  
 1985 6#/49

vi) meshing fact with opinion  
 1983 13#/31  
 1984 19#/46  
 1985 19#/49

vii) Band wagon appeal  
 1983 5#/31  
 1984 6#/46  
 1985 5#/49

viii) Glittering generalities  
 1983 11#/31  
 1984 18#/46  
 1985 18#/49

8 f) Question: When considering the overall article choose one of the following that best represents the general logic and factual presentation of the article:

i) Factual and Logical:  
 1983 10/31 32%  
 1984 15/46 33%  
 1985 21/49 43%

ii) Factual and speculative:  
 1983 7/31 23%  
 1984 3/46 7%  
 1985 2/49 8%

iii) Logical and emotional:  
 1983 4/31 13%  
 1984 16/46 35%  
 1985 14/49 29%

iv) Emotional and speculative:  
 1983 10/31 32%  
 1984 12/46 26%  
 1985 13/49 27%

## SUMMARY OF BIAS IN ARTICLES

1983	4/31	13%	of articles were logical and factual
	27/31	87%	of articles were biased
1984	14/46	30%	of articles were logical and factual
	32/46	70%	of articles were biased
1985	21/49	43%	of articles were logical and factual
	28/49	57%	of articles were biased

PERCENTAGE OF NEUTRAL ARTICLES FOR ALL THREE YEARS: 31%

PERCENTAGE OF BIASED ARTICLES FOR ALL THREE YEARS: 69%

cpeters  
5/25/96  
catab



## APPENDIX I

Time Line for  
The History of Child Sexual Abuse  
In Manitoba

- 1979      Revisions to the Child Welfare Act (Manitoba) resulting in  
-legal definition of child abuse  
-reporting requirements for professionals
- 1981      Provincial Coordinator for Child Abuse Program established by the Conservative Government under Sterling Lyon. John Chudzik has been the Director of this program since 1981 (to the present, 1996).
- 1981      November. Conservatives defeated by the New Democratic Party majority under Howard Pawley. NDP in government until 1988.
- 1982      Special Provincial Task force established to review child abuse guidelines and examine Child Protection Advocate concept.
- 1982      The Provincial Advisory Committee for Child Abuse (PACCA) expanded to be multi-disciplinary and advisory to the Ministers' offices.
- 1982      Child Protection Centre at Health Sciences Centre established.
- 1982      November. Major Conference on Sexual abuse of Children co-sponsored by four government departments: Community Services, Attorney General, Health, and Education. 600 participants.
- 1983      Muriel Smith appointed Community Services Minister. (She was in that role from 1983 - 1987).
- 1983      August. Winnipeg Free Press begins a 15 article run on a Children's Aid Society case where a judge reprimanded a Social Worker for not being responsive enough to the signs of child sexual abuse, according to the articles.
- 1983      Feeling Yes, Feeling No program established in the schools to raise awareness about child sexual abuse.

- 1984 April. Manitoba Guidelines on Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse released by four departments: Community Services, Education, Health, and Attorney General. A public campaign was launched promoting a collaborative inter-disciplinary approach to child abuse.
- 1984 August. Badgley Report released. Federal Study with research showing 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 4 boys have unwanted sexual experiences before age 18.
- 1985 April. Reorganization of Children's Aid Society resulting in 6 regional organizations run by 6 community boards.
- 1985 The public school system involved in guideline changes that articulate teachers' requirement to report suspected abuse (documented in the Winnipeg Free Press).
- 1985 October and November. Five Infant deaths investigated by the Medical Examiner and the Community Services Department.
- 1985 December. Provincial Commission recommends development of Child Protector role.
- 1986 Changes to the Child and Family Services Act resulting in a more central role for child protection agencies and more power for investigative social workers to intervene in families when child abuse is suspected.
- 1987 Sigurdson-Reid Report (Manitoba).  
 -Recommended Risk Assessment Scale which was introduced.  
 -Recommended relationship between Provincial Child Abuse Coordinator and the Medical Examiner to provide a report on each child death.
- 1988 NDP government defeated by the Conservatives under Gary Filmon.
- 1991 Children's Advocate Program established.
- 1992 Child and Family Services (Formerly Children's Aid Society) reorganized into on centralized organization.

The Winnipeg Area Survey Results:

The 1984, 1988 and 1989 survey results will be reviewed separately.

1. 1984 RESULTS

The 1984 results contain attitude questions about crime and wife abuse and suggests attitudes about abuse in general. The assumption is that this provides both a community profile about attitudes that are related to child sexual abuse and that family values are also implicit in the respondents answers.

a) Crime: The following item suggests that generally people were more afraid of someone breaking into their home than that someone would sexually assault them.

On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 representing "never worry" and 10 representing worry a great deal, for the question about people's concern about whether a thief will break into their home, the mean was 3.124 (S. D. 3.085). The mean for the concern about whether someone would sexually assault them was 2.663 ( S. D. 3.257).

When asked if the respondent was aware of any crimes that were committed in their neighbourhood in the past year, the majority said yes. One hundred sixty five out of five hundred seventy three (165/573 or 29%) said they were aware of break and enter in a residence with under \$200 stolen. For murder or attempted murder, 24/573 (4%) said yes, for assault, 10/573 (2%) said yes, while rape had 6/573 (1%)

answer yes. This suggests that generally people feel safe in their neighbourhoods.

B) Wife Abuse: When asked about their best estimate of the number of women who are married or have common-law relationships who have been abused by their husbands, the scaled used was: 1 most, 2 many, 3 some, 4 few, 5 very few, and 6 none. The mean was 2.984 suggesting "some" (S. D. 1.005). When these same people were asked to name a percentage, a wide range of results appeared:

5%	=	20/573	50%	=	32/573
10%	=	57/573	60%	=	25/573
15%	=	30/573	65%	=	9/573
20%	=	51/573	75%	=	18/573
25%	=	34/573	80%	=	6/573
30%	=	42/573	88%	=	63/573
35%	=	17/573	90%	=	60/573
40%	=	37/573	this does not include all percentages given, rather it is a summary		

In answer to the question, how often do you think this abuse occurs, the responses were: 220 frequently, 243 occasionally, 43 rarely. (The mean was 1.650 and the S. D. was .631.)

In answer to the question "in the past, police would usually charge the offender with assault only if the wife requested it. Under the new directive, police now charge the offender if there is sufficient evidence of wife abuse

regardless of the wife's wishes. Do you agree with this new directive?" The response:

1. strongly agree 288/573
2. agree 193/573
3. undecided 42/573
4. disagree 29/573
5. strongly disagree 8/573

Those who answered undecided, disagree or strongly disagree were asked about their views about the following statements. Wife abuse is a family problem and should be handled only by the family. Of the 83 who answered, 2 said they strongly agree, 16 said they agree, 9 said they were undecided, 43 said they disagree, 13 said they strongly disagree.

Another statement was: Involving the police makes the problem worse than it really is. The response was: 4 answered strongly agree, 27 answered agree, 21 were undecided, 27 answered disagree, and 5 answered strongly disagree.

The final statement was: Professional counselling should be encouraged in all cases of wife abuse. The responses were: 29/83 said strongly agree, 39/83 said agree, 10 said they were undecided, 2 said they disagree, and 2 said they strongly disagree.

In response to a question about whether they knew of situations where women had experienced wife abuse, the

respondent was asked what the most important reasons were that the incident was not reported to the police: Of the 38 who knew of incidents not reported to police, 12 indicated "fear of reprisal by offender", 4 indicated "too much embarrassment", 1 indicated they were told in confidence, and 1 indicated they did not want to the time to get involved (11 indicated "other" and 2 indicated that it was OK that the police were not contacted.)

c) Summary of 1984 Results

What these results suggest is that few adults in Winnipeg in 1984 felt a personal fear about being sexually assaulted themselves. Awareness of the number of rapes in the neighbourhood was quite low (1%), which makes sense considering this is often an embarrassing or secret crime for the victim.

The information about wife abuse points to a wide range of values, attitudes and information about prevalence of wife abuse. Of those who didn't agree with the new directive to automatically charge adults who assault their partners, 56/573 respondents felt that wife abuse is not a family problem. That means that 56/573 or nearly 10% of the respondents believe wife abuse is not a family problem which suggests that they might consider it an individual problem, a societal problem but most likely means they thought it is not a problem at all. This together with the results about police intervention and counselling as solutions to wife

abuse suggests that in 1984, perhaps 10 % of the population was not convinced that state intervention in family concerns was appropriate.

## 2. 1988 Results:

The first seven statements provide a profile on family values. These statements are rated by the respondent on a Likert-like scale as follows: strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, and strongly agree. The first statement is: "Sometimes we just have to do what is best for the ones we love, even if they don't like it much at the time". 429/526 (81%) said agree or strongly agree. 38/526 disagreed (7%).

The second statement read: "I never miss a family get together, even if there are other things that I would rather be doing". 376/515 (73%) said agree or strongly agree. 91/515 disagreed (18%).

The third statement read: "In decisions on family matters, the person whose money pays the bills should always have the most say". The responses were: 386/525 (73%) said disagree or strongly disagree, while 107/525 said agree or strongly agree (This is 20%).

The fourth statement read: "If I love somebody I would do anything for them, even at the risk of going to jail". 337/524 (64%) said strongly disagree or disagree while 98/525 said they agree or strongly agree (This is 18 %).

The fifth statement is: "We all have to make our own choices and stand on our own feet, even if that sometimes means upsetting those who love us." 448/527 (85%) answered agree or strongly agree while 36/527 (7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The sixth statement is: "The only people worth helping are those who go out of their way to help me". 442/525 (84%) said the disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 55/525 agreed (10%) in some fashion.

The final statement in this family values section is: "Family members should always stick together, even if they dislike each other". The response was: 150/525 (29%) disagree or strongly disagreed, while 299/525 (57%) agreed or strongly agreed.

The only other significant question that speaks to family values in the 1988 survey is summarized as follows: "Ideally, at what age of an only child or last child should a mother feel that it is no longer necessary to stay home full-time? Then 9 categories were read. These are the results:

4-6 weeks	8/525	(2%)
1 year	46/525	(9%)
2 years	27/525	(5%)
starting kindergarten	97/525	(18%)
starting grade 1	122/525	(23%)
starting grade 3	41/525	(8%)
starting junior high	70/525	(13%)



starting high school 28/525 (5%)  
finishing high school 53/525 (10%)  
don't know or no response 36/525 (7%)

#### 1988 Summary of Results

In summary, the seven family values items provide a cumulative profile of family relationship attitudes in Winnipeg in 1988. Generally, there is a trend in these answers toward a responsibility of commitment to "family members" even though this is not clearly defined. Family commitment to gathering even though that is not the person's desire, sticking together despite not liking each other, and doing what's best for family members even when they do not agree suggest a traditional set of values where people belong no matter what but are also expected to behave in prescribed ways in relation to each other.

77% of those surveyed believe that, ideally, mothers should stay home until the last child is in kindergarten. The responses to these eight questions suggests that, at least on several items, a strong sense of family connectedness or responsibility to kinship ties existed in Winnipeg in 1988. There is also a suggestion by the mother staying home item, families sticking together, and never miss a family get together that a strong commitment to traditional family values existed at that time. Its difficult to know what 18% of those surveyed were thinking when they answered they would go to jail for the person they

loved, however it suggests either a distrust of the legal system or a distorted or romanticized meaning for the word "love".

### 3. 1989 SURVEY RESULTS

There is one question that will be reviewed from these results. It speaks to public attitude about issues of concern that the local police respond to.

The question reads: "There are a variety of issues in Winnipeg which may be of concern to the local police department. What are the three most important issues of concern to you? (Rank first, second, and third).

Of the 13 items, six that are most linked to a profile of attitudes about family issues will be reviewed here:

SIX ITEMS	NO RANK	1st RANK	2nd RANK	3rd RANK
Break & enters	301	82	54	78
Sexual assault	284	60	110	61
Family Violence	420	13	50	32
Child abuse (sexual physical mental)	213	157	69	76
Street violence	432	16	34	32
Impaired Driv.	293	70	76	76

(Note that 6/521 gave no response)

In summary this means that 230/521 or 44% of the respondents identified child abuse, family violence or sexual assault as their primary concern for the Winnipeg Police, while only 70/521 or 13% identified impaired driving as a primary concern for the police, which is an issues that

every driver is at risk for, not knowing when an impaired driver might unexpectedly lose judgement and cause an accident. This suggests since nearly half the respondents by 1989 identified child abuse and related issues as their primary concern for Winnipeg police, that the awareness raising campaign identified in this study regarding child abuse and related social issues has been relatively successful.

**FACT SHEET**

AMERICAN<sup>163</sup>  
 HUMAN  
 ASSOCIATION  
 Children's Division

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT DATA  
 AHA Fact Sheet #1

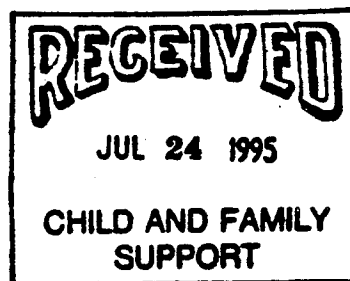
The National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse (NCPCA), in its April 1995 report, estimated that 3,140,000 children were reported for abuse and/or neglect to public social service/child protective services (CPS) agencies throughout the U.S. in 1994. The rate of reporting was 47 children out of every 1,000 children in the U.S. Forty-two states provided data for the survey. Overall, the increase in reporting has gone up nearly 63% since 1985.

Based on data from 40 states, it is estimated that approximately 1,036,000 children, or 33% of child abuse reports, were confirmed (substantiated) for abuse and/or neglect. Unsubstantiated (unconfirmed) reports should not be considered false reports. The primary reason why reports are not substantiated is lack of important information about the child, family, and the suspected abuse.

Of those cases where abuse and/or neglect were substantiated, services were provided in approximately 72% of these cases.

In breaking down all cases by type of abuse, the percentages for 1994 were as follows:

	<u>Reported</u>	<u>Substantiated</u>
Physical Abuse	26%	21%
Sexual Abuse	11%	11%
Neglect	45%	49%
Emotional Abuse	3%	3%
Other	15%	16%



The "other" category includes cases such as abandonment, educational neglect, dependency, and other situations which are not specified in the initial report to child protective services.

From 1976 to 1987, the American Humane Association collected the reporting data from the states under a federal grant. In 1976, an estimated 669,000 children were reported to child protective services, and in 1987, the figure had increased to 2,178,000 children. The numbers since 1987 were collected by NCPCA and are as follows:

1988	2,265,000	
1989	2,435,000	
1990	2,557,000	
1991	2,723,000*	
1992	2,916,000*	*(Figures represent adjustments made in NCPCA's 1993, 1994, 1995 reports.)
1993	3,005,000*	

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) project, funded by the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN), at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, collects more detailed national data from the states.

In **Child Maltreatment 1993: Reports from the States to the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect**, released in April 1995 by NCANDS, the estimated number of children reported for child abuse and/or neglect was 2.9 million, with approximately 1,018,692 of these cases substantiated (confirmed) for abuse after investigation. (Because this report contains detailed data that requires more time to analyze, 1993 is the latest year for which these types of statistics are available.)

## APPENDIX L

## Organizations contacted for

## Phone Interviews

Child Protection Centre Margot Buck  
 City Police Youth Division Anonymous  
 Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre Diane Hoffman  
 Manitoba Teachers Society & Fort Garry S. D. (anonymous)  
 Klinik Tim Wall  
 Winnipeg Child and Family Services Elaine Gelmon/Cathy  
 Hudek

(Note: See Appendix D for brief descriptions of the role of these organizations in the social service community).

The above organizations were contacted and after introductions the receptionist was asked who the best person would be to discuss information on policies and procedures on child sexual abuse during the 1980's. Introductions were then made to that person and a brief description of the project and interest in these policies. A conversation then occurred involving these questions: Does your organization have policies or guidelines that have been developed specifically about child sexual abuse? When were they developed and changed? What were the reasons for developing them and changing them? Could you send me copies of the guidelines or changes?

After the respondent was thanked, they were told they could access a summary of the results if they were interested when the project was completed.

The following summarizes the results from each organization:

#### A. CHILD PROTECTION CENTRE (CPC)

During the 1980's, staff from the CPC sat on the provincial advisory committee (now known as P.A.C.C.A.) and were involved in some policy decisions. In addition, CPC developed brochures which provided information regarding the services offered by the CPC abuse unit, protocols for diagnosing abuse, and suggestions to parents and professionals re how to talk to abused children.

Some of the CPC brochures developed in the 1980's have been or are in the process of being revised. The most

controversial material in the 1980's brochures related to 1) the characteristics or indicators of abused children and 2) the philosophical position developed regarding sexually abused children - that is, that the child should always be believed. Experience has shown that non-specific indicators of sexual abuse should not be automatically considered abuse. For example, a red vagina may be an indicator of abuse but it could indicate many other things. Likewise psychological indicators of nightmares, excessive clinging etc are not necessarily indicators of abuse but of anxiety - the task now is to explore whether or not the anxiety comes from sexual abuse.

The philosophical position developed in the 1980's was based on two factors. Most adult survivors of sexual abuse said that they had not been believed as children. Child protection staff wanted to change this image, i.e. that children were not to be believed about sexual abuse. But the underlying premise in the 1980's was that a young child could not know details of sexual behavior unless they had experienced it. Thus the premise of "believe the child" remains, it is no longer sacrosanct. Today, considerably more exploration of statements made by the child and the parents would be part of regular practise.

With experience we have learned:

1) that when children make a comment about a touch to the genital area, the public/parents who are overly alerted to sexual abuse often do not explore the meaning of the comment. With explorations, it becomes clear, that some children are being touched in the context of normal toileting procedures. Occasionally parents who have themselves been victims of sexual abuse feel that it is inevitable that children get abused and interpret a child's vague statement as abuse.

2) that while it remains valid that very young children couldn't have adult sexual knowledge without involvement, there has been a vast change in children's sexual knowledge from the 1980's to the 1990's. Children as young as 12 years old are now sexually active, they talk to younger siblings about "doing it" and describe sexual intercourse to young children. Children also watch pornographic videos or other adult movies. In other words sexual intercourse is now known in detail by many younger children, and some preschoolers live where the conversation, the songs, the videos are often related to adult sexual experience.

3) that it is important to note that small children do not lie about sexual matters - that they tell their story in a manner that is meaningful to them. It is up to the professionals to explore the story - to understand its meaning and where and how the child got their information.

The media paid a great deal of attention to sexual abuse, far greater than they had to physical abuse. But media emphasis on sexual abuse also raised a panic in the general community. Some people feared that there were molesters everywhere. Sex with children was, and is, appalling to the general public in a way that physical abuse is not. Most people can imagine that they could hit a child, therefore physical abuse was and remains more understandable to the general public and professionals alike. Few professionals wanted to work in the area of physical abuse in the 1970's. It was a very isolated profession with very limited support from other professionals or the community. In the 1980's sexual abuse with its large referral rate, caused physical abuse to receive minimal attention. And it is only in the 1990's that physical abuse has again become a focus of attention.

Over the years the medical profession has researched the physical signs of sexual abuse and there is now much more international interest and consensus as to what scarred, marks on the genitalia mean. The initial difficulty for the medical profession was that no studies of normal genitalia were available when services to sexually abused children started. Whether sexual abuse was over diagnosed is difficult to say. At the present time there is a three year decline in CPC sexual abuse statistics. Physical abuse now represents 50% of the CPC abuse statistics.

#### B. CITY POLICE

A sargent on duty in the Youth Division explained that the police department follows the Criminal Code and also the Provincial Guidelines for reporting and investigation. There have been 2 changes in the Criminal Code that have affected how people who abuse children are charged. The provincial guidelines now require that CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES does the initial investigation with small children and then when they can determine that an offense has occurred, then CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES refers back to the Police for Video interviews. The police department uses its discretion to determine whether a video is made of the interview for evidence for court.

See documentation attached.

#### C. MANITOBA ADOLESCENT TREATMENT CENTRE

The organization started accepting referrals in October 1984 even though the planning had occurred for more than a decade

before that time. The provincial guidelines that were developed in 1986 were followed, however it soon became clear that the organization needed its own guidelines because there was confusion for staff about when to report suspected abuse. Because the organization encompasses psychiatry, medical services, and counselling treatment services, the issues of confidentiality, when to report abuse, and when consent of the client was required all needed to be clarified for employees at the centre.

In 1989 the organization developed guidelines about how to enact the provincial guidelines. This included guidelines about what circumstances employees were required to report to authorities. In 1991 provincial legislation changed (PACCA-Provincial Advisory Council on Child Abuse). Reporting venues were changed (abuse was to be reported to Children's Aid directly and previously had to be reported to the Police). A clause had also been included that any person in a position of trust has the responsibility to report disclosures of abuse. These changes were then reflected in the organization's policies as well. The organization has Accreditation Reviews every 2 years and all policies are reviewed at that time and updated for clarification.

#### D. MANITOBA TEACHER'S SOCIETY & FORT GARRY SCHOOL DIVISION

The Manitoba Teacher's Society is short staffed and were not able to provide a telephone interview however they were able to send copies of their child sexual abuse guidelines and updates.

Because minimal contextual information about the guideline development was available from THE MANITOBA TEACHER'S SOCIETY, the Fort Garry S. D. was also contacted. This was the Educational Institution most frequently mentioned in the Winnipeg Free Press Articles.

The Fort Garry S. D. also was unwilling to comment about the context of the guidelines, however provided documentation about the guidelines and policies developed in the early 1980's and indicated that they have not been revised but are still effective as originally implemented.

See attached documentation.

#### E. KLINIC

This organization does not counsel children but counsels adults. In the early 1980's they began to ask adults who presented with a wide variety of issues whether they had a history of child sexual abuse and many of them said yes.



Earlier on 98% of the adults who had a history of sexual abuse were women. More recently about 25% of the adults who have a history of child sexual abuse that is still negatively affecting their present life are men.

One issue that the organization struggled with and clarified about 14 years ago (1984), was that when the adults who were addressing their own childhood history of sexual abuse described that the adult who had abused them was still involved with children in a relationship of trust, the counsellors were in a dilemma. They were torn between maintaining the confidentiality of the adult client, who often did not want the information to be reported to authorities, and the other issue was that there were still children at risk and the information did need to be reported (legally). There was one memorable meeting in the organization where volunteer counsellors were polarized on what to do and the decision was made that the organization did have an obligation to protect children who were at risk and that every effort would be made to do so by maintaining the therapeutic relationship with the adult client and hopefully encouraging her/him to call themselves. (This guideline only hold true when there is detailed information available about both the adult person who has a history of abusing children and also the children who are at risk). This set a precedent and clarified an issue that staff had polarized views about. Several volunteers resigned their involvement about this decision, however this protocol is still followed today.

I was unable to obtain written documentation about this organizational protocol.

#### F. WINNIPEG CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES (formerly Children's Aid Society).

This organization is the child protection investigation and case planning agency in Winnipeg. Keith Cooper is the Executive Director.

After speaking to Keith Cooper who was not with the agency in the 1980's, he suggested I speak with Elaine Gelmon who is presently an Area Director in the southwest region of Winnipeg and formerly supervised one of the Abuse Units. She described how the agency went through organizational changes during the 1980's. In April 1985 the different regions were created with separate organizational structures. In June 1991 six agencies were recentralized into Winnipeg Child and Family Services.

One of the central struggles that Elaine Gelmon recalls was the reorganization of the Abuse Registry. In the mid 1980's there was a court challenge in Winnipeg that resulted in

changes to the existing abuse registry. Prior to the challenge, the registry was maintained by the director of child welfare. Individual workers with their supervisors concluded whether or not abuse occurred. Based on their conclusions the names of alleged victims and alleged offenders were entered on to the registry. Neither had to be notified. Neither had the right to an appeal. Following the court decision to change the registry, the existing names on the registry were purged, unless they were the result of a conviction. New legislation and regulations required the establishment of child abuse committees within each child welfare agency comprised of abuse coordinators, police representatives, education professionals, and medical professionals. A further requirement was that the suspected cases of child abuse be brought to these committees. There are three ways names go forward to the registry: the result of a criminal conviction, the results of a child protection court hearing, and the findings of an agency abuse committee. After due deliberation these committees take a formal vote and based on a quorum and a majority vote, alleged victims and offender names go forward to the agency director who signs the required forms which are forwarded to the director. The director then notifies the alleged offender and victim that their names have come forward and advises them of their right to appeal. If they wish to appeal, the case is heard by a provincial review panel.

There has long been a debate as to the wisdom of placing the names of alleged victims on the abuse registry. The debate is two-fold. From a pragmatic point of view, the registry's main purpose is to assist in the protection of children. Therefore one opinion is that there is no use to having the child's name on a registry. If the child experiences being on the registry as false, then the appeal process could be lengthy, involving months of testimony, perhaps even in the presence of the offender. This point of view is opposed to a registry for victims. From another viewpoint, the registry could assist professionals involved in protecting children because there is a central list containing the history of a child's experiences with abuse. This could result in more coordinated and accurate case planning.

Gelmon pointed out that reporting rates have gone from 21 cases in 1977 to many, many more today. When asked why, she stated professionals were not comfortable accepting that it could happen and so did not open the possibility for children to disclose. It was in this context that there was a training session planned for professionals in the field of child welfare. This session was secretively organized. Gelmon believes that the secretiveness was necessary at that time because professionals were so uncomfortable with the idea that children were being sexually abused. As professionals became more acquainted with the dynamics and

effects of child sexual abuse, it became acceptable to ask about the history of abuse and children were given permission to say it was happening to them. This is not specific to child welfare workers but includes helping professionals as a whole. Reports in the media, television, and the movies made it more acceptable to talk openly about child sexual abuse and more possible for people to report alleged abuse.

The pendulum has swung back and forth. Abuse reporting and abuse workers sometimes take on a life of their own. An example of this is evident in child physical abuse where some people believe that a bruise in itself a sign of abuse. Another viewpoint holds that the context in which the bruise occurred must be assessed to examine intent. Abuse committees are struggling with the meaning of this word "intent" as many professionals believe there must be intent as well as injury to constitute abuse.

Another dynamic in the process that the profession had gone through where social workers went through a period of identifying abuse histories in the majority of child welfare cases is connected to specialization, according to Gelmon. Each specialty recognizes its own "diagnosis" or assessment in social problems. For example, surgeons may see surgery as the only course of treatment for a particular ailment. In the case of awareness raising about child abuse, the helping professions are in danger of concluding that the central issue is abuse when other alternative explanations may be more appropriate and more amenable to successful changes for the client population.

Cathy Hudek, a regional supervisor in the northwest region of the Winnipeg Child and Family Services Agency remembers that reporting rates began increasing just before the decentralization in the Agency. The reorganization process was very difficult for direct service providers. There was little planning prior to decentralization about how to maintain the service. There was no forewarning that the changes would affect direct service providers' jobs so directly. The specialization process that had begun in some areas was disbanded and workers became generic again. This meant initial confusion and fear for many workers who were in new circumstances doing unfamiliar investigations that they were not trained for.

Whenever the Feeling Yes, Feeling No presentation occurred in the schools, there was an immediate new set of disclosures. Her explanation for this is that speaking openly about abuse broke down the usual barriers to disclosing for young children, isolation, shame and guilt, not being believed and kids had words to describe the abuse

they were experiencing. There was a forum in which it was safe to tell someone who could help the abuse to stop. She has not experienced the school programs as leading to false disclosures. However there are some unfounded allegations due to misunderstandings about what the child has said or the context of a child's comments were misunderstood. Also indicators of abuse in the past may no longer be clear indicators of abuse. For example, when a child says, daddy touched me, that this is not referring to a bathing process where parents would inevitably touch their children which would not necessarily constitute abuse. These situations must be carefully investigated and distinguished by investigative workers.

5/15/96

c. peters