

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Lynn A. Fontana for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling presented on April 30, 2001. Title: The Experience of Sibling Relationships in the Voices of Children: Systemic Interviews of Dyads Following the Trauma of Sibling Incest and Its Recovery.

Abstract approved:

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James Firth

This qualitative study investigated the sibling relationship as it was described through the voices of the children. Ten sibling dyads (brother-sister or brother-brother) involved in family treatment following the discovery of sibling incest were interviewed. Participants in this study were participants in an outpatient clinic in the Northwest during the years 1994 to 2000.

The focus of the study was to explore how children describe the relationship with their sibling following a traumatic intrusion into the relationship. For this reason, the interview did not highlight or specifically inquire about the nature, memories, or trauma arising from the incest. The research and treatment site consisted of a recovery program for families and children experiencing disruption due to sexual abuse. The theoretical orientation and methodology of this study was systemic theory and narrative practice.

As an exploratory study, a qualitative research design and methodology was developed based upon constant comparative methodology. The interview design and analysis was also situated in the systemic and narrative approach.

The findings were organized through an emergent research design and on going inductive analysis. The conversations with the investigator were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using systemic and emergent constructs.

The results depicted few positive interactions throughout their life together. Power and aggression were continually woven into the stories. Separating offenders from families, the intervention of (1) mental health treatment, (2) legal services, and (3) spiritual influences were depicted as helpful in changing perceptions. All children desired a positive relationship with their sibling in the future.

The project's key contribution resides in its progress toward 1) evaluating the sibling relationship, 2) establishing that the key importance in treatment is for the development of a better relationship after clarification and resolution, and 3) considering individual needs of different sibling dyads.

**The Experience of Sibling Relationships in the Voices of Children:
Systemic Interviews of Dyads
Following the Trauma of Sibling Incest and Its Recovery**

Completed April 30, 2001

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by

Lynn A. Fontana

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Lynn A. Fontana

A THESIS

submitted to
Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

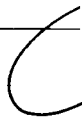
Doctor of Philosophy

Completed April 30, 2001
Commencement June 2001

Doctor of Philosophy thesis of Lynn A. Fontana presented on April 30, 2001.

APPROVED:

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Director of School of Education

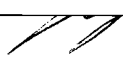
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Lynn A. Fontana, Author

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the following people. Without their assistance and support, this project would not have been possible.

First, I would like to thank the many children and their families with whom I worked. Their willingness to share their story with me has been painful and rewarding. Second, to the research site and the therapists there. They generously allowed me to work in their site and gave me their full support and help to this endeavor.

My thanks to the members of my dissertation committee (James Firth, chairperson, Dale Pehrsson, Ruth Harmelink, Alan Sugawara, Sam Vuchinich and Jim Wallace). We all stand on the shoulders of others greater than ourselves and my list of generous mentors and friends is long. I would particularly like to recognize Len Borsari, Mavis Conlee, Cornelia Cerf, Sister Lucy Hutchinson, Sally Kassner, Jim MacPherson, Linda Teri and Dick Whiting for their generosity and belief in me.

I also want to acknowledge, Steve Huke and Isabel Deaver who continually reviewed this work, processed ideas with me, and helped with organizational suggestions, and to Jim Wallace who edited and reviewed this work. Thank you to Alisa Doebler for her consultation on ideas.

I am blessed to have a husband who has not only been supportive and loving husband but who is a peer whom I could go to for feedback and focus about complicated and difficult aspects of this project. To my son Joshua and his wife Sandra who have been patient and supportive of this long endeavor and my dear daughter Manamaya Rayanalyn who has cheered me on and brought me such joy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (Continued)

I owe a special thanks to the people with whom I've shared a friendship while they have assisted me with typing and organizing data. Ginny, Wendy, Karla and Bill.

Lastly let me not forget the friendships that have sustained me all these years, Meg Bethune, Kevin Wright, Barbara Christopherson, Linda Keller, Utako Dwyer, Ellen Selover, Pat Cook, Selene Mussel, Del Rhodes, Ronni Simmons, Denise Beard, Anita and Jerry Lindsay, Bill and Dianne Barkheimer and especially to Leo Remington, Michael Schilmoeller, and Robert Wellenstien. Their belief in me has inspired me to persevere and to complete the full scope of this project.

I most warmly thank my own family and especially my siblings who continue to teach me some of life's most precious lessons.

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**The Experience of Sibling Relationships in the Voices of Children:
Systemic Interviews of Dyads
Following the Trauma of Sibling Incest and Its Recovery**

INTRODUCTION

I didn't know it then, but I could have lost a sister. The day she said that she didn't have a brother was the first time I knew how much I had hurt her. I couldn't pretend anymore. (Heiman, 1988, p.165)

Siblings provide one another with the potential for support, to influence their feelings about themselves and their future relationships. It can be the most important relationship of a lifetime. In turn, traumatizing events such as sibling incest can have a dramatic and traumatic impact on the individual's future. Research into many of the facets of incest including the impact of sibling incest on the offender, and the impact of incest upon the individual victim, has been addressed in the literature. However, there is no research that directly asks such children to describe in their own words how they have perceived or experienced changes in their sibling relationships after being subjected to the impact of incest. The literature is clear that incest relationships have the potential to exercise devastating effects upon the siblings (Russell & Finkelhor, 1983). What is not clear is whether the relationship can recover. Nor do we understand the process of the recovering relationship from a child's perspective. A preliminary study is needed that investigates children's own impressions of the sibling relationship through direct interviews.

Researchers have come to believe that how children behave socially is related to sibling relationships (Adler & Furman, 1988; Dunn, 1988c; Hartup, 1979; Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 1982). It has been determined that sibling relation-

ships exercise a major impact upon the socialization of children (Furman & Buhrmester, 1982a). However, little has been learned regarding how sibling relationships evolve and are influenced following the crisis of incest. This consideration includes whether children can then renegotiate relationships with one another and whether sibling pairs describe their relationships apart from the past incest.

The present investigation has been undertaken to broaden professional understanding of how siblings describe their relationship with one another, how they understand their relationship between themselves, and how they gain understanding of themselves from their relationship. The significance and primary focus of the study has been to elucidate the children's own understanding and personal impressions about their relationship. The secondary focus of the study is to gain an understanding of how to facilitate children's descriptions of their relationship experiences. While the content of children's descriptions includes the effect of the traumatizing incest on self and on the dyad (Hinde, 1979, 1987; Stevenson-Hinde, 1988), the content of incest was not the focus of the present investigation.

Even though sibling incest has the potential to effect individual children and the relationships between them and others through their entire life, research efforts are needed that address the development of the over all relationship between the siblings apart from the crisis of incest. A theory and approach is needed by which to organize the study, to facilitate the children's self-report and to analyze the interviews.

NARRATIVE AND FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY

This investigation has been grounded in family systems theory. Narrative theory integrates well with family systems. The narrative approach with circular questions from systems theory has been utilized as a primary source of interview procedure and structure (Zimmerman, 19). Both are considered to be deconstructionist theories, meaning that they break down and re-describe situations with respect to beliefs, behaviors, and relationships. Systems theory approaches the family system, the subsystems, the patterns of interaction, and meaning made by the individuals. The narrative approach encompasses the “story” and the larger systems’ influence and context. Though the narrative and systems approaches can be very different operationally within a therapeutic context, they remain compatible in theory (Chang, 1998). Both focus upon strengths and solutions that empower the interviewed subject. Rather than considering each individual in isolation, both theories place stress upon relationship meaning and interaction between individuals in their families and in the larger social systems and cultures in which they are found (Bertalanffy, 1968; Hoffman, 1985; Haley, 1988; Minuchin, 1974)

For purposes of the present study, based upon our larger social and historical-cultural contexts, the family may be described as a social system with unequal powers distributed between men and women (Carter, Pap, Silverstein, & Walters, 1984; Hare-Mustin, 1978). From Weingarten (1991), the family is “where the experience of the self exists in the ongoing interchange with others . . . the self continually creates itself through narratives that include other people who are reciprocally woven into the narratives” (p. 89). The family, to Goldenberg and Goldenberg (1991), is where individuals are related biologically, emo-

tionally and legally, and which encompasses elaborate ways of negotiating and problem solving. It is within this varied and fluctuating culture that families are established and thus operated. The experiences and the stories described in children's narratives express the nature of their family and sibling relationships. They reveal how children perceive relationship and the process of change through time. Systems and narrative practices provide both theoretical and practical approaches for obtaining children's own reports in the present investigation.

FAMILY SYSTEMS AND NARRATIVE THEORY VARIABLES

Family systems and narrative practices provide a practical means to elicit and organize information from individual siblings with regard to relationship interactions and differences within time and meanings. The changes that may be experienced, as well as the influences that society and culture may exercise upon their relationships, have been discussed in the systems literature (Selvini, Boscolo, Cecchin, & Prata, 1980). In the narrative literature, particularly interesting are the ways in which people explain significant life experiences (White, 1998). The past and future as well as the present will be of interest. The therapeutic approaches of systemic and narrative theory use specific interview techniques. These techniques help to draw out patterns of interaction, highlight differences at different times in life, and draw out what the situation means to the individual. They also demonstrate how the family system and larger social systems may exercise influence upon the subjects (Berg, 1991; DeShazer, 1991; Boscolo, Cecchin, Hoffman, & Penn, 1987; DeShazer, 1991; Selvini-Pazzoli, Boscolo, Cecchin & Prata, 1980; White, 1991). These variables change in patterns of interaction and meaning and the influence of family system, and larger social sys-

tems are important to an understanding of relationships, specifically sibling relationships.

Circular questioning is a technique of systems family therapy. It has been used as a means to gather research data outside the family therapy interview (Miller, 1983; Pirrotta, 1987). Circular questions provide information from which relationship maps of the family system can be formed (Tomm, 1985, 1987). Analyzing stories for symbolic meaning has been used as a tool for the recovery of relationships issues (Horney, 1945; Moses & Seltzer, 1988). Narrative questions ask the individual to elaborate on the story that is revealed in the narrative to assist the interviewer and participant to understand its meanings that have been made, and the power dynamics, influences, beliefs and contradictions. For the present investigation, circular and narrative questions were used specifically to help understand the relationship.

Patterns of interaction are sets of repetitive responses exchanged or reiterated between the sibling dyad or within the larger family system. Systemic theory presupposes that family members are connected in ongoing relationships through a recursive process wherein individual actions affect everyone else within the family. How family members are inner-connected addresses how they rely upon one another, their sense of caring or being cared for, the bond that has been established or not established between them, and the style of their communication.

In systemic theory, patterns of meaning focus upon identification of the meaning of significant moments in a sibling relationship, as defined by the person being interviewed. Because it is difficult to draw out relationship descriptions, circular questioning was developed by the Milan team, Boscolo, Cecchin,

Hoffman, and Penn, (1987); Tomm, (1985) to elucidate differences between family members with respect to their beliefs, behaviors. This style of questioning also helps to draw out relationship differences within a time frame – past, present and future. Through circular questioning the therapist focuses the individual's attention upon the relationship and helps to provide the individual with a working terminology for the description of how that individual has experienced the relationship (DeShazer, 1991). The meaning placed upon the individual's speech and actions is co-authored – the course and the meaning of the conversation at the moment it is brought out in the interview is jointly determined. It is ascertained through questions and metaphors, which invite the individual to reflect and gain added perspective and meaning (Hoffman, 1991, White & Epston, 1990). The narrative technique of inviting the individuals' stories and metaphors within the interview process helps the individual to explain his or her place in the relationship, the family, culture and society, as well as the effect or meaning it has at the time.

The larger social system can be a significant influence for the explanation of relationships; that is, the perceptions and lenses provided by parents, siblings, neighborhood and culture. These social realities may define or influence the sibling relationship, influences related to intergenerational family expectations, styles of relating and giving, structures, boundaries, affections, expectations, and the social, historical-cultural context; that is, customs, values, beliefs, laws, division of labor, political, financial, and "moral" power. The treatment community also creates a social influence (Carter, Papp, Silverstein, & Walters, 1984; Hare-Mustin, 1978). These multiple levels influence the child's own perceptions, perceptions that in addition to the recovery from trauma and the intrusion of outside resources place a heavy burden on the definition of development of a further sib-

ling relationship. A review of relevant literature reveals that little has been determined about how sibling pairs describe their relationship regarding the influence of the larger social context through time after one of the children has abused the other. Further research is needed that explores how children describe the course of their relationship regarding their patterns of interaction, its meaning and social systems influence.

SIBLING RELATIONSHIP PATTERNS AS SELF-DESCRIPTION

The present investigation was organized specifically around the exploration of sibling pairs describing their individual perspectives and differences in their relationships and the patterns or styles they utilized continuously. Siblings with opposing needs simultaneously struggle to cope with the major trauma of the abusive situations and with the emotional need to maintain the sibling relationship. At the time of discovery, families may need to be split apart for the safety of the children, at least until helping services deem that life within the family is safe for the victim sibling.

The children interviewed for the present study were at various stages within the process of intervention; that is, some were at the beginning and some children had been returned home by the time of the interview. In any event, this was at a trying time for the family and for individuals pulling together in the attempt to create new relationships. This was the juncture at which this investigative project asked them to draw attention to their sibling relationship and to consider now and then differences and contradictions.

Previous research has focused upon siblings, but only recently has an interest been expressed in determining how these relationships are experienced and

how events influence the future course of the relationship. Interviews are needed that are neutral toward the traumatic event but which elicit detail about the nature of the relationship. In order to seek specific information about how these siblings describe the changes in their relationship following a traumatic situation without putting attention on the situation, an interview schedule of questions and materials should be designed that focuses solely on the relationship. This approach would avoid weighing the interview toward trauma-related content. The present study designed an interview process that did not address specific traumatic events in the children's lives, but was directed at inquiring about other relationship experiences and the sibling relationship as a whole. This approach would allow for the children to discuss their relationships without being confined or emphasizing the dramatic event while allowing for such information as it is important to the child.

Most investigative data collected on siblings in a recovery process following reunification has been addressed by treatment providers only to determine treatment outcome or whether there has been a recurrence of abuse. To date, no material has been published that would indicate the nature of the pre and post discovery relationship, or what the nature of the relationship is apart from the abuse. Considering the interconnectedness of families, this seems to pose a significant gap in the literature as well as in developing better methods for improving the lives of the children as a whole and on a long term basis.

In the literature study, a more detailed presentation of the literature of family systems theory is provided, highlighting and further developing the three variables used in this research project. To further distinguish and understand sibling relationships and sibling incest, the literature review has also been organized around the same three variables.

The Methods section presents a summary of the investigative methodology, the instruments selected, the interview structure, and methods data analysis. For this study, the interview process consisted of a structured-unstructured approach based upon systemic theory and utilization of the concept of narrative and circular questioning. Circular and solution-based questioning was focused upon the children's relationships and their strengths. These approaches provided the children with the opportunity to tell their stories in their own words, making use of pictures and metaphors. This is an interview style from the position of discovery and neutrality, using open-ended questions to evoke children's perceptions and descriptions of their relationship.

The Results section presents qualitative analysis, results that are further discussed in the Discussion section in the context of the implications of the investigation and recommended directions for future research.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Empirical research conducted over more than two decades has supported the common belief that sibling relationships are a significant and integral part of the life experience (Bedford, 1989a). Specific studies have relied on observations and the assessments of individual children and adults in the effort to understand sibling experiences and difficulties, including the stresses of incest within the sibling relationship. Research that addresses these issues from the viewpoint of the two children has not been investigated in detail. Moreover, the record reveals that nothing has been undertaken in the context of interviews with the children who compose an incestuous sibling dyad and their views of the relationship and of any changes taking place through time. The therapeutic processes of

treatment for sibling incest as presently practiced focus attention on halting overt physical, verbal, and emotional abuse, without the effort to seek to understand and develop the siblings' relationship apart from the abuse. While one child receives help to understand and change abusive behaviors, the other experiences safety and receives help to recover from the abuse. It is unclear how the siblings as a relationship unit, apart from the history of abuse, would describe their overall relationship from their perspective, while in the process of receiving treatment and intensely, consciously engaging around their relationship.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In consideration of the problem as stated above, there is a primary need for investigation of the nature of children's experience of the sibling relationship in the children's own words. There is also a secondary need for a primary investigation on how children experience and understand sibling relationships before, during and following a traumatic event such as an incestuous relationship in order to understand how the relationship may recover after abuse.

This project was directed at further understanding how children and adolescents express their perception of their sibling relationships, through an interview approach that utilizes systemic and narrative practices. The essential contributions of the investigation were as follows:

1. Subjects were asked directly for their own understanding and personal impressions of their relationship;
2. Subjects were asked to address their relationship by considering it in the past, in the present, and in the future;
3. Subject interviews occurred following the discovery of incest and the institution of legal and mental health intervention; and

4. Both members of the pair were interviewed.

A conversational interview format was developed that encouraged the subjects to respond comfortably and candidly. These interviews did not specifically address traumatic events in the children's lives, but were directed at inquiry about other relationship experiences with the sibling and the relationship with the sibling as a whole.

This research has provided a means to understand the needs of siblings. Prior research findings showed that sibling relationships have an impact on the socialization of children (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985b) and are generally a source of support contributing to personal development. However, sibling relationships may also be a source of stress and lead to difficulties in development (Adler & Furman, 1988). The present investigation embellishes our understanding of sibling perceptions of the nature of their relationship. Understanding gained from this study was directed at the following purposes:

1. To assist professionals in aiding the continuation of healthy sibling relationships;
2. To provide professionals with direction to support and guide the siblings with reunification process;
3. To support and guide further research on sibling relationships through the evidence provided by their own reports; and
4. To help in the guidance of further research on the effectiveness of intervention in the case of incest between siblings.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literature from three primary areas contributes to the following discussion: the sibling relationship, sibling incest, and narrative and system theories in the context of relationships. Exploration of perspectives on sibling relationships following the cessation of incestuous abuse between siblings, and following the intervention of social and legal services, must take into account these areas of knowledge.

First, we consider the literature that defines the categories and philosophy of the sibling relationship within the systemic perspective. Though sibling relationships have often been studied over the past two decades, this is less apparent with respect to the experience of siblings from the systems perspective. Material is cited that complements aspects of the systemic categories of this research. Finally, information cited from the sexual abuse field highlights some of the common effects of sibling sexual abuse on children and relates general feelings expressed by individuals who have been abused. It also serves to address the experience of an abusive sibling relationship and the recovery process of the relationship (in the context of the research categories considered in this investigation). It is not surprising that this has been a neglected area of study in the literature in view of the profound effects of incest on all family members. All family members must struggle with the shame and secrecy of the situation, the further traumatic experience of the legal and helping systems intruding in their lives, the financial crisis this sometimes causes, as well as the length of time it sometimes takes in treatment.

The study of sibling relationships can be extended throughout any number of theories in the related fields of social work, counseling, and psychology. This is also true of the study of incestuous relationships and their treatment. The current investigation has been confined only to that portion of the literature that addresses the experiences of individual children who are either abused or are abusers in relation to the sibling subsystem.

Therefore, the factors this study has addressed are (1) the influence of larger social-cultural systems upon sibling relationships and (2) patterns of interaction within sibling relationships and (3) their meaning from the perspective of the involved individual children. Individual characteristics and experiences are included insofar as individual experiences impact the relationship dyad. Individuals are thus considered as part of the sibling dyad.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEM INFLUENCES UPON THE SIBLING RELATIONSHIP

Social-cultural system influences were selected as a factor of interest in that they are considered to be basic to both systems and narrative theories. In theory, the sibling relationship is a part of a larger mechanism, the family, and then part of the extended family and the larger support system, or society and culture. General systems theory is based upon relationship influences upon one another (Bowen, 1966; Bertalanffy, 1968; Munuchin, 1974). Thus, individual psychopathologies are attributed less emphasis, whereas relationship functions and dysfunction are given increased consideration (Adler, Furman, 1988; Segal, 1982). Based on this model, the sibling dyad is considered to be a family subsystem. In turn, narrative theory highlights the impact of larger systems on subsystem thinking and responses, to the extent of addressing how to influence

changes within the society that exercises influence on the family system (White, & Epston, 1990).

The larger social system can be a significant influence for the explanation of relationships; that is, the perceptions and lenses provided by parents, siblings, neighborhood culture, and how history responded to the sibling relationship and sibling incest. These social realities may define or influence the sibling relationship, influences related to intergenerational family expectations, styles of relating and giving, structures, boundaries, affections, expectations, and the social, historical-cultural context; that is, customs, values, beliefs, laws, division of labor, political, financial, and “moral” power. The treatment community also creates a social influence (Carter, Papp, Silverstein, & Walters, 1984; Hare-Mustin, 1978). These multiple levels influence the child’s own perceptions that in addition to the recovery from trauma and the intrusion of outside resources place a heavy burden on the development of a further sibling relationship.

The focus of socio-cultural and larger system influences is on understanding the messages the sibling dyad might have received directly or indirectly from the family and from society. Consistent with family systems and narrative theories, understanding the world in which the sibling relationship exists is a first step in the therapeutic interviews.

SIBLINGS CONSIDERED AS A FAMILY SUBSYSTEM

Notable therapists representing different schools of family therapy have focused on the sibling system as a part of their approach with families. Noted in their work with constructing a theory is that siblings are a powerful sub-system with its’ own communication (Ackerman, 1970; Munuchin, 1974; Boszormenyi-

Nagy, 1984; Bowen, 1978; Satir, 1982), further family therapists struggle with the importance of sibling perception and ability to report clear information (Schavaneveldt, & Inger, 1979).

Family theorists contend that families consist of relationship subsystems, each of which operates semi-independently, that are embedded within the family. Siblings function through their subsystem as identification models for each other. Their own informal rules and roles determine how these children relate. The function of the “story” in narrative and systems theories is to organize and express our constructs of the world and the meaning we thus share with others. To understand societal messages that are offered directly and indirectly, it is important to understand the nature of messages given to subsystems.

IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF THE SIBLING RELATIONSHIP

Interest in sibling relationships is relatively recent. Anthropologists initially expressed interest in adults with relationships in original family systems. Early studies provided assumptions on sibling relationships based on psychoanalytic theory, using such constructs as jealousy, rivalry, and envy (Pollock, 1978). Parsons, (1943), researched kinship bonds from the perspective of success in industrial societies. In the 1960s and 1970s sociologists and gerontologists became interested in sibling relationships in the context of relationships among the elderly and the degree to which families provided care for their own parents. Lowenthal and Haven (1968) changed our view of family relationships by highlighting the importance of interpersonal connectedness to the well being of individuals. The early patterns can serve as predictors of optimal marital satis-

faction in accordance with how closely the husband and wife duplicate the childhood sibling constellation (Tolman, 1988).

Subsequently, sibling research was legitimized as researchers began to acknowledge the importance of the sibling relationship. It was established that sibling relationships did not terminate when the offspring left home (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Lamb, 1982; Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 1982), and were important in old age (Avioli, 1987; Bedford, 1989, Suggs, 1986). Based on clinical experience, Watanabe-Hammond (1988) suggested that the role siblings have shapes personality as well as expectations and patterns of intimacy.

In a computer search of abstracts conducted for the present study in the spring of 1998, siblings were of concern in 1338 articles, two of which dealt with narrative technique, and two of which were concerned, respectively, with systemic and systems approaches. There were 32 articles that could be identified as sibling/incest related, two of which addressed the relationship, one the system, and one the subject of family therapy. Of this number, three were specific to brother-sister relationships. None of the articles identified incest as related to social constructionism. In contrast, 6,703 articles were identified on the subject of family therapy, including 1,617 on systems theory, one on siblings, 64 on narrative practices and theory, and none on sibling relationships or incest.

Anthropologists, sociologists, and social workers, among others, have criticized this neglect of sibling research (Lamb, & Sutton-Smith, 1982; Rosner, 1985; Schwaneveldt, & Inger, 1979). In 1986, Moss and Moss included in their description of the sibling relationship a learning component of socialization and family context of family solidarity. Pfouts, (1976) wrote:

It is ironic that laymen more than family experts acknowledge the

importance of the sibling bond, and that artists more than researchers have succeeded in capturing its essence. Since the beginning of history, the popular interest in sibling interaction has been reflected in fables, fairy tales, biblical accounts, plays and novels that vividly portray the characteristic sibling themes of power struggles, rivalry, solidarity and ambivalence. (p. 200)

The most striking summation of recent research on siblings reflects the importance of siblings to older people (Avioli, 1987; Bedford, 1987; Brody, Stoneman, McCoy, Forehand, 1992; Gold, 1989). It is clear that a sibling relationship provides a positive contribution to the well being of older persons (Gold, 1989).

An important research issue that remains unanswered is the life course of the relationship (Gold, 1989). According to Brody (1992), siblings continue to be connected throughout their lifetime as they contend with the developmental tasks of adulthood. Siblings must consider the care of their parents in old age and events surrounding the death of parents, including funeral and estate arrangements. They mourn together and face their own mortality together (Altschuler, Jacobs, Schiode, 1985; Brody, 1985; Goetting, 1986). Siblings also connect around family rituals of marriages, baptisms, Thanksgivings and graduations. Sharing family rituals continues to be a sibling connector (Imber-Black, Roberts, 1992). Siblings who have a positive childhood relationship and desire to maintain future relationships have an easier time relating to their siblings during the crisis years of the older parents (Matthews, 1987; Ross & Milgram, 1982).

Relationships among or between children may be influenced by family dynamics or family circumstances (Buhrmester, 1992; Dunn, 1984), and by envi-

ronmental situations (Carter, Pepler, Abramovich, 1981). The quality may change dramatically through time if the parents divorce or a significant crisis affects the family constellation (Dunn, 1988a; Jenkins, 1992b). Differential parenting may also influence the interpersonal relationship qualities of the siblings (Brody & Stoneman, 1994). Sibling relationships may also be influenced by the individual development of children, their social relationships, and/or their individual social competence (Buhrmester, 1992; Gottman & Parker, 1986; Shantz & Hartup, 1992; Wohlwill, 1973).

Findings by Buhrmester (1992) noted that same gender siblings were closer in their relationships with each other of middle childhood and adolescence. Socioeconomic circumstances seem also to be related to the quality of relationships. Children from lower economic backgrounds displayed less warmth and intimacy and greater rivalry between siblings (Dunn, Slomkowski, & Beardsall, 1994). In the last decade research has considered the social worlds of siblings and their relationships to one another (Adler & Furman, 1988; Dunn, 1988a; Hartup, 1979; Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 1982).

HISTORY OF THE STUDY OF SIBLING INCEST

Incest was developed as a subject of interest from the 1930s through the early 1950s, but nearly exclusively as a father-daughter issue. Historically, incest was regarded as a moral problem. However, Freud considered incest to be a psychological problem (Rosenfeld, 1979; Gelles, Steinmetz, 1979; Strauss, 1974), a view that was a negative influence on treatment for a number of decades. In the 1960s through the 1970s, child abuse was explored by the women's movement as new views were developed on rape, violence against women, civil rights and

violence against children (Herman, 1981; Herman & Hirschman, 1977). During virtually the same period the family therapy movement also emerged, drawn in part to relationships as viewed in general systems theory. Therapists began to expand to work on incest issues with the whole family, as well as the larger society in which families existed. At the same time family therapists began to seriously address issues of child abuse (Eist & Mandel, 1968; Raphling, Carpenter, & Davis, 1967).

FEMINIST CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY OF SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

At nearly the same juncture, feminists were considering a new ideology of relationships, and since the 1980s family theorists and feminists have struggled with differences in how incestuous relationships should be framed. The family model emphasizes “circular causality,” meaning that everyone within the unit is a part of the problem. In contrast, feminists believe that focusing upon the family unit serves to exonerate the offender and place blame upon the victim (Finkelhor, 1984; Hoffman, 1991; Madanes, 1995; Walters, Carter, Pappi, Werstein, 1989). At present, family therapists generally involve family members in educating the family, focusing on how to protect the child, break the code of secrets, and respond to alerts (Madasnes, 1995). This approach provides support to both children and helps the child victim understand that he/she is not to blame for being victimized by someone more powerful (Laviola, 1992; McGoldrick, 1988; Madanes, 1995). Thus, feminist theory has contributed to better defining relationship issues within the family system as well as providing effective means to treat both the family and individuals.

IMPACT OF SIBLING INCEST

In recent years, sibling incest is often considered to be a family-based phenomenon, receiving attention in the areas of prevalence, dynamics, and treatment (Canavan, Meyer & Higgs, 1992). It is estimated that sibling incest is five times greater than parent-child incest (Cole, 1982; Finkelhor, 1979; Smith & Israel, 1987). Finkelhor (1980) surveyed college students and found that 15% of all females and 10% of all males had had a sexual experience with a sibling. Moreover, 12% of these students had never told anyone. Of 211 college students who noted that they had been molested, only 8 were father-daughter or grandfather-daughter cases. Most of these cases involved siblings or cousins and they were considered to be child-child events.

Historically, there has been disagreement about the risks of sibling incest (Canavan, Meyer, & Higgs, 1992). Some researchers have considered brother-sister incest as exploratory, non-traumatic, and not unusual before and at puberty, if the children were near the same age (Pittman, 1987). Sibling incest was considered improbable except for common experimentation (Vander Mey & Neff, 1982). It was commonly held that if coercion was not involved, and it occurred between near age-mates in normal experimentation, it was “just another part of growing up” (Forward & Buck, 1978, p. 86). However, there is less agreement on either the causes or variables of family or sibling dysfunction. The harm of incest between children has been difficult to comprehend and incest has been so stigmatizing for both offender and victims that people went to great efforts to hide its existence. In recent decades the children have received more attention. The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse estimates that one million children are victims of sexual abuse each year in the United States (Clark & Clark, 1989). Although most cultures react with shock, Courtois (1988) notes

that incest exists throughout the world and is so pervasive that the taboo against it is fictional.

After discovery of the abuse, the entire family undergoes dramatic changes that may then influence the sibling relationship further. Panic, shock, shame, denial, and anger are not unusual experiences. The parents may become preoccupied with their own discomfort and financial considerations with the separation of the children into two households. For the children, there are new factors of treatment, legal issues, and any number of new people suddenly placed in their lives. Thus, the impact of disclosure on non-offending family members can be devastating (Dobler, 1997; Courtois, 1988). The family can have difficulty coping or making sense of the survivor behavior or the offender treatment or coping with the learning involved in helping their children (Deaver, 1991; Dobler, 1997). This can additionally influence the dyad's self-concept and the dyad relationship.

ETIOLOGY OF SIBLING INCEST

Among professionals there is disagreement on whether incest may be a form of family dysfunction (Faller, 1981; Sgroi, 1988; Trepper & Barrett, 1986). Reports by victims and from clinical experience suggest that there may be some predictable family dynamics and patterns of interaction in families (Alexander, 1992; Finkelhor, 1984; Gelinas, 1988b; Russell, 1986;); that is, frequently cited "boundary problems" (Gelinas, 1988; Larson & Maddock, 1986). Family professionals have also cited collusion, enmeshment, and even disengagement as common.

Features of dysfunction are distinctive of the family in which there is incest. Incest families are often described as closed systems, where contact with people outside the family is limited and members rely solely upon each other for meeting personal needs. In such families, the father is mostly absent with little daily involvement with the children, leaving the mother as a sole parent to her children. While upholding rigid values, parents are often emotionally inaccessible and unable to provide for their children's emotional needs. Sex education is most often absent in these homes since such matters cannot be comfortably discussed. In this setting, a son is often given surrogate authority over younger siblings. In the vacuum of parenting and communication of sexual matters, the sibling relationship is expressed in a sexual way with one or more sisters (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Russell, 1986; Smith & Israel, 1987; Witztum & Eleff, 1989). In reality, many families demonstrate similar characteristics without the incestuous symptomology. It may be important to avoid generalizing structural dynamics to a cultural defect within the home where there is incest, but to address those patterns in the individual family and to consider the relationships of the subsystems and total family.

Finkelhor (1984) identified motivation to abuse as lack of internal inhibitions, lack of external impediments, and factors that undermine a child's possible resistance as preconditions for incest. At the same time, it was questioned whether the pornographic exploitation of children, video games, inhabiting a neighborhood with high levels of violence, isolation, patriarchy and access to pornography were important factors in incest (Ney, Moore, McPhee, Trought, 1986; Gottman & Katz, 1997, Garbarino, 1978, 1980, 1985).

Children also observe violence in the media, family and neighborhoods. The messages given to children may be that it is acceptable for people to control and punish others who are less strong (Frazier & Hayes, 1994).

ISOLATION/PATRIARCHY

If a child has greater exposure to alternative viewpoints, resources, and ways that a family can relate, and is not dependent on the aggressive family member, the child may be able to challenge the threats. In more egalitarian systems where power is somewhat evenly distributed, mothers have more power, and girls are less vulnerable, it seems there is less incest than in male-dominated, patriarchal family systems (Scanzoni, 1979; Walters, Carter, Pappi, & Silverstein, 1989). Egalitarian families that tend to be higher on the socioeconomic scale, families with greater resources, may experience less family violence (Goode, 1971; McGoldrick, 1988, Madanes, 1995). Egalitarian families are also less likely to be socially isolated (Goode, 1971). However, it should be noted that families that are higher on the socioeconomic scale also have greater resources for private therapy and more ability to withstand social isolation. From a different perspective, Gelles (1980) noted that family stressors such as absence of neighborhood support networks, lack of resources for coping, self-esteem issues, social isolation, recent relocation, and parental perceptions about a certain child may also influence sibling violence. These are considered risk factors or frequent coincidences that may signal the likelihood of incest and have not been considered as contributors to abuse (Vander Mey & Neff, 1982).

SIBLING PATTERNS OF INTERACTION

Patterns of relationship are important factors from both the systems and narrative perspectives. By patterns, in this sense, it is meant the ways in which individuals respond and communicate. Patterns of interaction between individuals can continue uninterrupted for years. Adding to the story or “re-storying” a situation, a narrative intervention, may highlight changes in a pattern of communication and in the individual and/or sibling relationship. A story is a unit of meaning that allows persons to provide links between experiences across time. Systems theory similarly considers repetitive patterns of interaction as an aspect of established functions within a family. It utilizes this information to help the family change small aspects of the pattern. When families describe changing patterns, therapists accept that as information that the family may be changing (Anderson & Goolishian, 1990; Becvar & Becvar, 1988; Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967).

Based on this approach, circular questions are used to stimulate family members to think beyond conventional modes of circular causation and to consider the family process and alternative futures (Boscolo et al., 1987). The interviewer encourages the family to adopt an attitude of curiosity and to discover new understandings of systemic interactions (Cecchin, 1987; Tomm, 1985). Conversations are organized into the types of stories that we use commonly to understand our experiences (Anderson & Golishman, 1990; White & Epston, 1990). The purpose of combining systems with stories is to consider interactional patterns through the stories. Analyzing the children’s individual perceptions invariably includes the co-constructed experiences of the family as well as the dyad.

Repetition of the patterns of bonding and relationship gained during the early sibling experience in patterns of adult relationships and roles can be expected. While it is apparent that this is a commonly held perspective in the counseling field, little empirical support can be found in the literature (Kemper, 1966). However, the assertion that the sibling relationship bears an influence upon future relationships is supported in other respects. It does appear to have a great deal to do with mate selection (Abend, 1984), whether siblings marry and mate (Bossard & Boll, 1956), and marital satisfaction (Sieman, 1980). Moreover, though it has not been possible to cite systems or narrative research with respect to sibling patterns of the interaction process, research from related fields provides a helpful means of understanding established patterns in individual sibling relationships.

Patterns of interaction are sets of repetitive responses exchanged between the sibling dyad. Systemic theory presupposes that family members are connected in ongoing relationships through a recursive process where individual actions affect everyone else in the family. How family members are interconnected addresses how they rely on one another, their sense of being cared for and their established connection to each other. In previous research (non-systemic) important classifications of interactions have been described that could be utilized systemically as a means to understand and describe the sibling relationship. Watanabe-Hammond (1988) suggested the dimensions of love and hate, care and abuse, loyalty and betrayal. Furman and Buhrmester (1985b) questioned fifth- and sixth-grade children with open-ended questions, then analyzed the data empirically. They listed the following aspects of sibling relationships: intimacy, companionship, similarity, nurturance, admiration, pro-social behavior, affection, dominance, quarreling, antagonism, competition, and paren-

tal partiality. Mosatche, Brody, Noberini (1983, 1984) utilized interviews of 62 working class people ages 18 to 80 years to create a similar list. Bedford (1989b, & 1990) considered the frequencies that interpersonal communication tended “toward” (affiliation), “against” (conflict), and “away from” (separation). Gold (1989), interviewing 60 mid-western urbanites averaging 74 years of age, identified the behaviors of closeness, psychological involvement, number of contacts, support, acceptance, resentment, and envy.

In these surveys, more positive aspects than negative ones were highlighted and sisters seemed to express the closest relationships (Circirelli, 1982a; Gold, 1989). Dominance did not emerge as a clear category for older siblings. In contrast, conflict categories were more prevalent in the study of children (Adams, 1987; Leigh, 1982), but even then conflict was not rated highly (Circirelli, 1980, 1985a; Gold, 1989). Equality in power and status decreased between ages 4 to 11 and with the decrease there was more positive as well as negative effect (Vandell, Minnett, & Santrock, 1987). Separation categories that could have encompassed emotional and physical distance were excluded from much of the research (Bedford, 1989b). Noberini, Mosatche, Brady, 1984a, 1984b, in two studies of close siblings, highlighted both emotional and physical distance related to separation in their data. As stated by Watanabe-Hammond (1988), “sibling couples participate in their own private world, bounded by unmonitored, complex, emotional life” (p. 356).

The sibling relationship is considered to be where individuals learn about themselves. The influence exercised by this relationship may shape future relationships and more importantly, lifelong patterns of relationship and intimacy (Watanabe-Hammond, 1988). Researchers have observed that sibling-sibling interactions differ seriously from parent-child interactions (Vissing, Strauss, Gelles,

& Harrop, 1991; Harder, Kokes, Fisher, Strauss, 1980; Lamb, 1982). Attachments to other siblings can be more intense than to parents (Meyendorf, 1971) and time spent with siblings greater than that with parents (Bank & Kahn, 1982a). Interaction with family was more disapproving than with non-family members (Stoneman, Brody, & MacKinnon, 1984). Identifying these qualities or patterns of interaction still leaves in question the continuity-discontinuity of these qualities and whether they change or stay relatively the same over time (Bedford, 1989).

Although Gelinas (1988) cites only cases of father-daughter incest, it is relevant to note that she suggests that families in which there has been incest set rigid boundaries to the outside world and blurred boundaries at home. The family systems are characterized by communication rules centered around secrets and structured about special relationships. The younger, powerlessness can lead to self-negation, guilt, and depression. According to Laviola (1989 & 1992), where incest is ongoing it is maintained only through coercive means such as physical force, verbal threats, or bribery.

Finkelhor and Browne (1986) conceptualized that in their the how and why of sexual abuse was that trauma was based on four factors that caused trauma that they call “traumatic dynamics” (180) the list includes powerlessness, traumatic sexualization, stigmatization, and betrayal. They suggest that these dynamics are experienced during and following sexual abuse.

It is estimated that three children out of 100 are dangerously violent toward a sibling (Gelles, Strauss, 1988). One of the factors contributing to the abusive relationship may be how parents view the sibling relationship and accept the

use of violence, rivalry, and control as normal issues between children (Frazier, Hayes, 1994).

SELF-INTERPRETATIONS OF THE MEANING OF SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

Understanding how a child makes sense of the relationship is most clearly found in the children's stories (Adler & Furman, 1988; Dunn, 1988c; Hartup, 1979; Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 1982).

Using narrative theory for analyzing data leads to the inherent contradiction that any research involving human subjects must acknowledge, that is that the research has been influenced by how the question is asked. Narrative theory addresses the reciprocal meaning-making process. In a narrative metaphor the therapist looks for experiences that are not currently being storied, which do not fit into the dominant (i.e., problem) narrative. By inviting clients to derive meaning from other aspects of their experience, the interviewer creates a context whereby the subjects themselves can share their personal experience and what it has meant to them (Madigan, 1990).

The individual's internal story, expressed through language, metaphorical images, internal dialogue, and the making of social meaning is the primary mode of organizing personal experience (Hoffman, 1981; Epston, 1991). Using this approach, it is commonly accepted that we cannot access direct knowledge of the world in objective descriptions of reality. Rather, our awareness is acquired through our experience of the world, knowledge that can then be shared through constructs, metaphors, and stories. Through the interpretation they provide of personal experience, stories in this sense shape our lives. Consequently, how our

experiences are constructed, remembered, and expressed in stories serves to shape our relationships. White (1988), a principal developer of narrative practice, has stated that “it is the stories in which we situate our lives that determine the meaning that we give to lived experience”(p.19).

In systemic theory, meaning making is the perspective given (by the individual) to the context that invites then certain responses or behaviors. Because it is difficult to draw out relationship descriptions, circular questioning was developed by the Milan team to elucidate differences in perceptions by different family members in beliefs, behaviors, and differences. Circular questioning is an interviewing technique aimed at perception differences and a way to understand coalitions in the family and shifts in perception or adaption needs (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1990).

This style of questioning also helps to draw out relationship differences within a time frame. Circular questions focus attention upon the relationship and help to provide the individual with a working terminology for the description of how that individual has experienced the relationship (deShazer, 1991). The meaning placed upon the actions is how the material is considered at the moment it is brought out in the interview (Hoffman, 1991; White & Epston, 1990). The narrative technique of co-authoring the stories and metaphors within the interview process is how an individual explains his or her place in the relationship, family, culture, and society, as well as the effect or meaning it has at the time.

HOW SIBLINGS UNDERSTAND THEIR RELATIONSHIP

Historically, siblings have been noted for the intense feelings they generate in one another and the meaning made. The concept of meaning of relation-

ships is controversial. Siblings help each other and are depended upon for the developmental tasks of dependent parents or funeral arrangements (Brody, 1984). Circirelli talks of the social and family support a sister can be in a family. Sister relationships seem to be very intense and full of conflict and misunderstandings (Circirelli, 1989). Studies have noted that sisters create challenges and support throughout the lifetime of other sisters and brothers (Circirelli, 1977; Irish, 1964). Gold (1989) found implications in the meaning of late-life sibling relationships, noting that closeness, psychological involvement, acceptance, and approval form a close sibling bond (pp. 37-51). This contributes to the idea that the sibling relationship is unique and that it remains intense and consistent throughout old age if the meaning made by the sibling is that it is close.

How siblings understand the relationship between themselves, or their understanding of themselves through the relationship, in contrast to efforts to examine the problem issues or characteristics of siblings as individuals, was investigated by Hinde (1979, 1987) and Stevenson-Hinde (1988). Betrayal was noted as an experience or as the meaning placed on the recognition that someone the child trusted has manipulated and/or abused h/her at a point where the child feels unable to protect h/herself, or powerless.

The meaning that is most striking in the sibling relationship research is how significant siblings are to each other as older people (Avioli, 1987; Bedford, 1987; Brody & Noberini, 1987; Gold, 1987a). Investigators believe that the sibling is psychologically more happy and content in old age if they have a positive relationship with a sibling (Gold, 1987b) and that relationships grow closer as siblings grow older (e.g. Circirelli, 1982; Gold 1987c).

Bedford, (1989a); Gold, (1989); Kahn, (1985) found that the older siblings included: a sense of ones history, sharing of life stories, psychological involvement, closeness, acceptance and a connections through history as some of the important aspects of the relationship. No research considers the changes of the relationship through the younger years.

MEANINGS DERIVED FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF INCESTUOUS SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

Childhood victims also feel stigmatized as they come to understand themselves and what has happened to them (Finkelhor & Brown, 1986; Heiman, 1988). Brown and Finkelhor (1986), reviewed studies and found empirical evidence of both short- and long-term effects from child sexual abuse: "Child sexual abuse needs to be recognized as a serious problem of childhood" (p. 76). The long-term effects on adult women who were childhood victims noted depression, self-destructive behavior, anxiety, feelings of isolation and stigma, poor self-esteem, a tendency for re-victimization, and substance abuse.

Sexual abuse creates confusion and misunderstanding around the child's sexual self-concept. Finkelhor (1987) defined trauma as "an experience that alters a child's cognitive or emotional orientation to the world and causes trauma by distorting the child's self concept, world-view or affective capacities" (p. 354). The model developed by Finkelhor and Brown (1986) includes four trauma-causing factors: sexualization, betrayal, powerlessness, and stigmatization.

Nevertheless, few studies of family incest have been reported and the effects of family intervention on family functioning have been rarely examined

(Daro, 1988; Finkehor, 1984; Sgroi, 1988; Trepper & Barret, 1986). Only a single study could be found that presented descriptive data on the evaluation of the relationship following disclosure of incest. Matthews, et.al. (1991) analyzed the effects of reunification upon individuals in the family for the treatment of sexually abusive families (confined only to instances of father-daughter incest) following the reunification. Specifically, how each family member perceived and experienced the family after reunification was considered. What was important in this study, in reference to the present investigation, were the experiences of the perpetrators and the victims that may have demonstrated some similarity or themes that can be generalized in cases of unequal aggressive incestuous relationships. For example, all of the perpetrators included in the study accepted full responsibility for the sexual abuse and all of the victims acknowledged that the abuse was not their fault, yet four out of five victims stated that they suffered continued emotional pain after reunification.

A recent study by Cole (1990) compared brother-sister sexual abuse to father-daughter sexual abuse within the experiences and after effects among adult women. Of 122 brother-sister survivors and 148 father-daughter survivors, the study found that the sibling survivors reported feeling more responsible for the abuse and did not know who to tell about it. Daughters reported more problems relating to others, mental health issues, and higher frequency in sexually abusive activities. There were no differences in the frequency of reported self-abusive behaviors, physical, and sexual problems, or on the level of guilt or shame. It is of interest to note that the incestuous relationship began at younger ages among daughter survivors (mean 5.2) than among sibling survivors (mean 8.2). One third of both groups experienced sexual abuse from 4 to 10 years and did not disclose for 20 or more years. "Sibling incest is not a generation boundary as is

adult-child incest. However, it can be a significant interpersonal boundary violation with potentially devastating long-term effects. Both partners experience isolation, secrecy, shame, anger, and poor communication” (Canavan, Meyer & Higgs, 1992, p.138).

In a qualitative study of the effects of brother-sister incest, untreated sibling incest relationships were described by four female incest survivors, each of whom had been molested by an older brother (Laviola, 1989). In these four cases the relationships with brothers before the incest were characterized as distant yet conflictual (except in case two in which the relationship was characterized as very close). After incest stopped, the siblings avoided each other. The relationships to this day continue to be fraught with tension and conflict. (p. 271)

The younger sibling can be quite indebted, dependent, and obligated to her older sibling, especially if both parents work or are gone a great deal and she is dependent on the sibling like a parent. It will be especially important for her to be exposed to many alternative viewpoints in order to feel she can ask for help from others.

Generally, common features in the dynamics of the sibling relationships are that the incest was both initiated and maintained by the brother, and the sister did not resist because she wanted to be accepted by or pleasing to the brothers. It is apparent that both were looking for positive attention and affection. Sometimes the incest occurs in situations where the parents are unavailable and the victims find they enjoy the attention of an admired sibling even though it is contaminated by abuse. Conversely, they feel guilty for not stopping it while at the same time guilty for disclosing it and getting the sibling in trouble (Gelinas, 1983). Most young children do not understand what is occurring and are literally

ignorant at the beginning of sexual contact. They do not understand sexual contact and lack the maturity to talk about it (Maltz & Holman, 1987). Sadly, the more severe the abuse and the closer the family tie, the less likely it is that disclosure will provide support to the victim (Russell, 1986). Untreated incest leads to a legacy of guilt and leaves the victim vulnerable to exploitation of subsequent relationships.

To conclude this presentation, it would be an oversight not to address individual needs of children who have been abused. They need to work through the pain, anger and grief of the trauma; replace roles with relationships; try to remember; and put balance in life. A young person who has experienced sexual abuse may have a high level of anxiety and may have a variety of methods of concealing pain or coping in various situations. These victims need warmth and time to build trusting relationships and help in sorting out what happened to them and why they did not stop it (Gelinas, 1983).

Yochelson and Samenow (1978) and Berenson, (1987) have each depicted some of the characteristics of an offender, including chronic anger, desire for power, lack of consideration for other people, no sense of obligation, and no belief in interdependence as a necessary tool for living. The offender believes everything must go his way, thinks he can do anything he wants, and portrays himself as a victim.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology chapter will describe the development and implementation of a qualitative study to obtain preliminary information regarding the sibling relationship. The chapter will describe an investigation of the legal and professional context that the siblings have experienced at the point the abuse was discovered. It will also address the process of developing a research site, the selection and preparation of the participants for interview, and the participants related demographics. Addressed also will be the data collecting instruments for the qualitative design, the interview process, data analysis and categories and the investigator as the instrument.

In the sibling Interview Study, participants were recruited from Morrison Center Counterpoint Outpatient, a non-profit mental health agency providing specialized treatment for youthful offenders. This site has a continual ongoing research module in which all clients participate.

Prior to the participant interviews, the investigator completed a series of interviews with legal and social service professionals in Portland, Oregon who assist with children in matters of sibling sexual abuse. These individuals included district attorneys, judges, referees, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) workers, social workers, court counselors, and probation officers. This portion of the preliminary study helped to develop an understanding of the legal system, the therapeutic system, and what the children had experienced before their interviews. These interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed. This helped to obtain clear understanding of all that was entailed in the reporting of sexual abuse, evaluating it, receiving treatment, and helping the family. This larger social system has a crucial role in terminating the abuse cycle, in assuring

the end to further abuse, and in supporting the recovery of the sibling relationship. This issue will be subject to further consideration in the discussion section.

SITE DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE SELECTED THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM

Developing a depth of understanding of the situation of the participants, site development, and the approval of the University to do the study required intertwined effort and took about 24 months of preparation. The Center's staff had to trust the investigator's understanding of the program, treatment issues and to not complicate the participant's therapeutic work. The investigator needed to develop the study around the current therapeutic programs.

After applying to the Human Subjects Committee for approval of this research project the addition of a clerical person was added to the request. After reviewing the estimates of time required to transcribe the tapes the investigator also requested approval of a clerical person who would transcribe the audio tapes (Appendices A & B). The Center's Human Subjects committee agreed with the total research proposal 9/3/97 (Appendix C) and gave final approval 10/21/1997 (Appendix D).

Participating in the development and facilitation of a program for families and siblings offered the investigator a chance to:

1. understand the established treatment package
2. gain understanding of where the participants were in the development of a safer sibling relationship
3. have staff assess the investigator's ability to interview and support treatment goals

4. be a part of the therapeutic culture of terminologies and metaphors used in treatment
5. develop a proposal of interest to the Center, and
6. develop the site and the Center's Human Subjects Committee's approval at the time of offering the proposal to The University for approval. (Appendix E)

RECOVERING RELATIONS PROGRAM

The program the investigator participated in was called the Recovering Relations Program. This program gave families and siblings an 8-12 week group that addressed the abuse situation and addressed the management of a safe home for the siblings. The Recovering group augmented the individual and family therapy they were already receiving. The sessions addressed the impact of the abuse, trauma resolution, goals for the family, safety, boundaries, and parenting skills.

The investigator met for the first time with the clinician, in Oct., 1995. The time was spent discussing the approach and curriculum. The first groups started Feb. 12, 1996. The investigator participated in three separate 8-12 week groups.

SUBJECT RECRUITMENT AND ORIENTATION

Participants were recruited through therapists as they deemed them therapeutically appropriate and met the criteria.

After the clinical director and the Human Subjects Committee of the treatment center accepted the research proposal and proposed plan of interviews, a formal meeting was set up with the clinicians at the site. Clinicians were able to ask questions and provide input to the investigator about the study. At that time, the subject ages were modified to a slight degree on the recommendation of the staff and approval was given for these changes with the Human Subjects Committee at Oregon State University and The Human Subjects Committee at The Morrison Center (Appendix F). This change extended the age groups to include other appropriate participants. Clinicians were asked to identify potential subjects on their caseload, discuss their ideas with the clinical director and, if agreeable, talk with the parents and children to see if they would participate. If the families approved, the investigator was given their phone numbers to make contact and to arrange meeting interviews at times/places convenient for the parents (i.e., home or treatment office) with parent present and/or the therapist. The clinician reviewed the consent letter with the parents and siblings and then the investigator reviewed the consent letter with each family member. Upon agreement, each letter was signed by the participant and a parent or guardian (Appendix G).

The children interviewed for the present study were at various stages within the legal and treatment intervention process; that is, some were at the beginning and some had been returned home by the time of the interview. This was a time for the family and for individuals to pull together in the attempt to change situations and establish new ways of communicating with each other. At this juncture this investigative project asked them to draw attention to their sibling relationship and to consider now and then differences, contradictions, and future hopes and desires.

PARTICIPANT INTERACTION

All participants were members of a girl/boy or boy/boy sibling pair in which a sister or brother was an incest victim and their older brother is the offender. The younger siblings were between the ages of 8 to 15; the older siblings were between the ages of 13 to 18.

The siblings were members of families admitted to and actively participating in a family treatment program for sexual abuse, at Morrison Center, Portland, OR. The brothers (offenders) were in both family and individual treatment at the Morrison Center. Counselors knew of the appointment times when the interviews were to take place and checked on their clients afterward. The siblings had been in individual treatment or were in individual treatment at the time of the interviews. Each participant was set up before the interview with on-going counselor support in case the interviews caused any distress.

The investigator met with four participants, an additional time (members of two pairs), for a total of three times in order to further develop ideas that may have emerged from later interviews. The investigator audio taped each session, transcribed the tapes, reviewed them for accuracy and then erased them.

A set of general, demographic information was included in the interview to allow for description of participants, and their circumstances (Appendix H). This provides some degree of comparison between participants and informed speculation about the generalized nature of the findings. Demographic data was kept to a minimum to maintain privacy and anonymity.

Demographic information was collected through the therapists for this project from a questionnaire (Appendix I), siblings were biologically related, and the offenders were all in treatment. All offenders were males and the victims were mixed, male and female. All victims were younger than their offenders, with one exception.

The basic, necessary criterion for the subsystem (sibling dyad) to be included in this study was that the siblings had been living together in an organized family at the time of and prior to the abuse.

Information collected from the offenders was compared to information from the victims and information from the dyads was compared to that from other dyads. In two families two sibling dyads were utilized for this study and in one family three sibling dyads were utilized. In the three other families one sibling dyad was interviewed in each.

This project is a case study of seven families with abusive relationship between or among one or more siblings. It is not a random sample but a "sample of convenience". Since this project was based on a qualitative research approach, data collection continued until saturation was achieved, with no new major themes emerging in the process of interviewing. Reaching saturation indicated that the phenomena were adequately represented by the information gathered. According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994), saturation may be reached with as few as 12 subjects. This project presented data from 20 subjects who met the subject criteria, thus achieving saturation. To qualify as a participant, the following criteria were met:

1. The individual must have been part of a sibling dyad in which incest had occurred;

2. Disclosure (discovery) must have occurred within the past five years;
3. The victims should currently be from ages 8 to 15 years;
4. The offenders should currently be from ages 13 to 19 years;
5. The parent(s) must agree that the children (participants) could be interviewed;
6. The children (participants) must both agree to be interviewed;
7. The children (participants) must have access to clinical support during the interview process (family therapy or ongoing individual treatment);
8. The adolescent participant must be in ongoing treatment;
9. The abuse must have been reported to the appropriate authorities (law enforcement, child protective service system);
10. The referring clinician must have judged the individual children and family as sufficiently emotionally stable to participate without undue distress and have referred the dyad to the investigator.

Those who elected to participate were given a code designation and names were not recorded in the collection of data. Access to identifying data was limited to the interviewer directly involved with the project in setting appointments and interviewing. Names and appointment dates were kept separate from the data. Participants' anonymity and privacy were protected at all times. Participants were repeatedly informed of the voluntary nature of this project and their freedom to withdraw at any point without penalty.

When this project started, Oregon's ballot initiative Measure 11, which mandated minimum mandatory incarceration for most juvenile sex offenders greater than 15 years of age, had just passed into law. As a result fewer adolescent offenders were being referred to this outpatient treatment center at the time of participant recruitment.

The investigator interviewed all available participants at the Counterpoint Outpatient Clinic. Since this study was based theoretically on subsystems in family systems, it became clear early on that a second or third pair of dyads could be interviewed in the same family. This provided more participants as well as the data to compare different dyads. Treatment staff suggested some dyads comprised of cousins as other possible participants but the study was kept limited to sibling pairs. In the demographic data, victims outside the home were noted as matter of interest.

To minimize participants risk of trauma from the interview the investigator took the following precautions:

1. Both individuals had access to a therapist during the interview process.
2. The investigator stayed in close contact with the family therapists at counterpoint and had a plan to talk with them if anything the child was saying seemed to show alerts or stress.
3. To minimize any stress and support the needs of the child the participants were reminded that they had a choice in whether or not to answer the questions and that they could talk to anyone they trusted about what was said and what they thought.

4. The therapists and parents also checked with the children to see if they were comfortable.
5. In fact, one of the younger siblings disclosed that she was still afraid of her older brother and thought it was too soon to re-unite in the same home. The investigator shared with the participant that she would relay that message to the therapist.

In that case, the date of reunification was delayed and the individual and family counseling was increased.

DEFINING THE LABELS

The phenomenology was sibling relation after sexual abuse (incest) was the catalyst that challenged the dyad (sub-system of the family). The individual factors were studied in the sibling experience across time following the involvement of legal and social services. The sibling perceptions of the sibling experience throughout their life and future at a time after discovery of the abuse were sought out by the study. Sibling relationships were explored assuming damage had occurred in the sibling relationship from the sexual abuse. Since this was an exploratory, qualitative project, it was important that the research design remain sufficiently flexible in identification to collect a range of information and tolerant enough of ambiguity to accept information provided by the subject (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), and broad enough to allow for unexpected information to be included.

“Sexual Abuse (Incest)” is an interfamilial abuse. This is a significant traumatic event as it happens in the primary support and protective system of the family. According to Russell (1986): “Child sexual abuse was defined as any

kind of exploitative sexual contact that occurred between relatives, no matter how distant the relationship, before the victim turned eighteen years old” (p. 135). In the present investigation, the abuse was between siblings. This activity requires a report to local child protective authorities. Russell’s definition of sexual abuse assures that the behavior is defined as the magnitude that is required for reporting. One of the criteria for subject inclusion was that it had been reported to authorities.

“Offender” is the term used to refer to the offending sibling, having regular contact before the discovery of abuse, consistent contact with the victim sibling, and living in the home with parents (stepparents, biological parents, or custodial adults) who were engaged in parenting the children. Data is now surfacing that offenders also feel angry, guilty, confused and isolated over the incident.

“Victim” is the term used to define the younger or less powerful individual of the sibling dyad who has been sexually abused by the offender. The literature on sexual abuse suggests that sexual abuse can injure the victim in many ways and is also harmful to the offenders and victims personally in their relationship with each other. The data available on victims and offenders involved in incest describes the multitude of distresses within the violent relationship and the long list of physical and mental health issues that can be the outcome of this relationship, if not treated. Women who have been interviewed talk about the unrecovered losses, the unfinished process and “feeling without a voice” or without the ability to say all they think. Clearly, victims feel angry, guilty, confused, and isolated after the abuse.

In family systems theory, siblings are typically considered a subsystem of the family system. The family consists of one or two adult caretakers, a biological mother or biological father, and two or more children residing together having stable and continuous relationships. For this project, the sibling subsystem was intended to refer to two biologically related children (one older and one younger), who lived together and had experienced a sexually abusive relationship. The basic, necessary criterion for the subsystem was that a sexually abusive relationship had occurred and had been stopped, authorities had been alerted, and treatment had been obtained.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions were developed from the input of the professional interviews, interviews with therapists on what they would like to understand better, from the literature study and the therapists' experiences professionally and the experience from the recovering relations program.

Family systems theory states that the sub-system of siblings is impacted by the larger systems it is involved with (family, school, friends, neighborhood, society, culture). Narrative theory and feminist theory highlight that the culture and power dynamics are strong factors in how the family system gets along in the world.

Including these ideas it was expected that:

1. The sibling dyad would have many perceptions as siblings together, but might have very different perceptions about the sibling relationship experience.

2. It was expected that the children had had a varied relationship and would be able to recall happy times.
3. It was expected from systems theory they might have stories about family experiences and power dynamics would be elucidated from those stories
4. It was expected that power was unevenly distributed and that the victimized siblings might express themselves less.

DESCRIPTION OF DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

A guide schedule was developed for the interview process (Appendix J) to aid the investigator in keeping the interviews on track and to remind the interviewer of material to be covered. The approach was structured-unstructured interview and was not rigid, nor identical for each subject. The reason for this was to take advantage of the ability to collect unexpected information that the participants had to offer. Questions were developed in the guide based on information provided from the literature review, the recovering relations program, and from family systems theory. Its general face validity is seemingly apparent in comparison to the findings discussed in the literature review. New questions were added to this interview schedule as new ideas emerged from the interviews. Each child was asked questions from the original interview and as new ones were developed, they were added to the schedule.

An interview schedule was developed for the second round of interviews and was based on the information that emerged from the first interview (Appendix K) and questions not covered in detail in the first interview.

INVESTIGATOR AS HUMAN INSTRUMENT

In qualitative investigation an important element of the data collection process is recognition of the investigator as the human data collection instrument. It is important to address the theoretical orientation, professional experiences, and personal values of the investigator insofar as they have influenced the organization of categories and interpretation of data.

The investigator has been a therapist for more than a decade, practicing with individuals and families. She is well practiced at developing trusting relationships when individuals and families share intimate details of their feelings and ideas. In their relationship she asks for clarification, more details, even questions like what another family member might say or think. This interview process utilizes strategic and narrative techniques of circular questioning and storying.

This was definitely an asset for the present investigation. Personal skills developed in examining patterns meaning and influences and being comfortable asking participants for metaphors and stories (and their meanings) helped to clearly define the data collected. The investigator's personal philosophy of valuing both of the children's perceptions, feelings and stories clearly colored the responses of the participants and prompted the participants to want to tell more. The investigator did endeavor to give each child a positive experience around their story and their feelings.

Throughout the years, the investigator has been employed in several clinical positions that involve constant interaction with other therapists and the immense variety of other helping services. Training has included treatment for

adolescent offenders and children who are victims of sexual abuse. Professional experience has included work with families with sibling sexual abuse issues.

Professionally the investigator is a marriage and family therapist who espouses a family systems theory philosophy. This philosophy includes the belief that; the larger systems of family, society and culture can influence the individual and subsystems in their patterns of interaction and communication; that non-judgmental, fair and equal treatment should be extended to each individual.

Moreover, the investigator has been influenced by the feminist movement and its' impact on systems and narrative theory. As feminist influences have highlighted, the investigator agrees that abuse is not a pattern of equal responsibility on the part of individual family members, nor that each individual family member is equal in power within the communication dynamics. Therefore, she is in agreement that abuse and violence are to be considered as linear interactions that are unacceptable and must be stopped before any further work is addressed in treatment. Ultimately, the investigator accepts her responsibility as a mandated reporter and that any unreported abuse must be reported directly and immediately to appropriate authorities.

LIMITATIONS

The investigator has the potential for pre-conceived notions and biases that could have influenced the interviews and analysis. Although, the investigator invited feedback and review from several expert resources, this included members of the Recovering Relations team. In as much as they were participants in designing the intervention program and shared a complementary philosophy and culture of therapy, they do not constitute outside, disinterested and randomly

selected reviewers. Therefore, bias must be assumed to exist. As a preliminary study, the direction and the parameters of bias have not been defined nor were they a focus of exploration. The professional peer debriefing may also have a similar bias that influenced the analysis. This entire study acknowledges components of subjective analysis including the labeling of themes, organizing the data, choosing the samples to be included and the interpretation of the findings.

INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

After identifying potential participants through the therapists, the clinicians spoke to the parents of the children and the children/participants, informing them of the purpose of the study and how the children would participate. If the parents and children agreed, the investigator then contacted the family by telephone, once again discussed the purpose of the study, and then detailed how their children would participate. If the parents agreed to the participation of their children, the clinician then spoke to the children informing them of the purpose of the study and asked them if they would like to participate. It was made clear that it was completely their choice to participate and not part of treatment, and that they could drop out at any time. Scheduled interviews planned either at the home or at the treatment site (the family's choice), were initiated if it proved agreeable to both the parents and their children (the sibling dyads). An adult member of the family or the treatment counselor was asked to be present at the interview. If the parents and children agreed, they were given a written consent that again highlighted the expectations and that they could choose not to participate at any time. The consent forms were signed by the child participants and then by their parents.

The interview process was devoted to open-ended questions from the interview schedule addressing the children's unique experiences and creative projects to aid the children in discussing those experiences. Participants were interviewed separately and as close in time to each other as possible. Because of the sensitive nature of this study interviews were scheduled with participants according to individual situations and the needs of the participant and the family as much as possible. Because of these individual situations interviews could be days apart or weeks apart, at the same site or two different sites. The interviews were held at home, at a foster home, at the home of a relative, at the treatment center, or even in one case at a lock-down treatment facility.

After initial interviews the investigator analyzed the data for emergent themes or ideas to be followed up on during the second interview. After two dyads were individually interviewed twice, data was compared and contrasted; themes and categories noted; and questions added to the interview guide when appropriate.

For this study, the interview process consisted of a structured-unstructured approach based upon systemic theory and utilization of the concept of narrative and open-ended questioning. Open-ended questioning was focused on the children's relationships and their strengths. These approaches provided the children with the opportunity to tell their stories in their own words, making use of pictures and metaphors. This is an interview style from the position of discovery and neutrality, using open-ended questions to evoke the children's perceptions and descriptions of their relationship.

The interview consisted of asking the open-ended questions with picture cards, Mexican tarot cards suggested as helpful for elucidating storying by a

teacher who helps people learn to express themselves. Cards with descriptors, paper, pencil, and crayons were available for aides in addressing the unique relational experiences between them and their sibling. Metaphoric – descriptor card names were taken directly from the group material at the Center (Appendix L). Two interviews took place per individual in the dyad. The second interviews were created as follow-up after first addressing the relationship to check how the sibling was doing and to continue with the interview guide questions. The second interview continued to invite material from the interview questions as well as to elicit more individual themes after the participant was able to think about the first interview. As noted, questions in the interview process emerged from the preliminary analysis of the initial interviews. After the second interview the investigator asked if the individual was willing to meet again if necessary. All participants readily agreed to meet again if asked.

After all participants were interviewed, the investigator invited the first two dyads interviewed to participate in follow-up interviews. All participants who were asked agreed. The purpose of these interviews was to follow up on any emergent material that was addressed from the data and address it with the first interviewees.

Each of the interviews was tape-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. In two interviews, recording stopped in the interview process periodically. In these cases, notes were made immediately following the interview and in conjunction with the material captured on tape, this method was considered sufficient. The investigator conducted all of the interviews and hired a qualified secretarial aide to transcribe all the tapes. The secretarial assistance was subject to approval by the investigator's dissertation committee, the OSU and the Morrison Center human subjects committees. The transcripts were then reviewed, and thorough fa-

miliarity with the data was achieved by the investigator as an important component to a qualitative comparative method of analysis.

The interviews with each participant were conducted in face-to-face meetings with the individual from the sibling dyad. At the first of these meetings, consents were presented and signed and appointment times were set. Discussions concerning which adults would be present (i.e., parent or therapist) and where the interviews would take place (i.e., home or treatment center) were held. Appointments were set for the participant and parent/therapist and the investigator met with them at the appointed times. The interview schedule was followed for each participant. Space was given for participants to feel comfortable and the interview schedule was flexible around the child's needs of comfort and in an effort to provide a place for expected or novel material.

During the interview process participants continued to relax and share more comfortably as they were assured by the experience of the interview that it was about relationship experiences other than the incest. Very early in the interview process saturation was achieved (no new themes emerged). Children were sharing very similar experiences both within the two individual categories (victim and abusers, big brothers and siblings) and within the dyads. Each participant reported unique if not incredible stories of their personal experiences. But common themes emerged within the first three interviews and continued throughout the 20 participants and over 40 separate interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes, with the shortest at 45 minutes and the longest at approximately 90 minutes.

The times between the first and second interviews varied. For some, the first interview was six weeks prior to the second interview. For others, the sec-

ond interview was within 6-15 days. The dates of the interviews were based on the availability of the participants. The interview schedule for the second interview was based on themes and ideas commonly addressed in the first interviews and material from the interview schedule.

Clinicians suggested 14 sets of participants as possible subjects to the researcher. Three of the 14 did not meet the participant criteria and one family refused to participate. There were multiple sibling subsystems in treatment at the same time from the same family. Since this study was based theoretically on highlighting the individual experiences between a specific dyad (subsystem), clinicians recommended more than one sub-system from four or the families in treatment. Thus, the participants numbered 10 dyads from seven different families, with a sum of 17 participants. There were nine big brothers and nine siblings. Three younger siblings were male and seven were female (two of the females were interviewed twice) so there were five females. Two big brothers were interviewed with two different siblings, one younger sibling was interviewed with two different older brothers, and one boy was interviewed as a big brother with one sibling and also as a younger (victim) sibling with an (offender) big brother. These combinations and comparisons will be addressed as well as can be in keeping with the need for protection and confidentiality.

Within the participant group were 10 male offenders, seven female victims, and three male victims interviewed. All were biologically related sibling dyads. All 17 participants were Caucasian. Social economically the figures were dramatic. Four of poverty level and three affluent and involved in community issues.

Data presented has been carefully selected with no identifiers to the individual child or the family. This has limited the specific contributions but it does not take away from the themes discovered and the contributions made by the participants.

Because of the need for complete confidentiality and because of the vast amount of material, whole interviews cannot be contributed to this project. Instead, a number of lengthy responses to specific questions have been presented in the discussion section to help the reader acquire a clear perspective of the interview process. Children's picture depictions of the past, present and future have been reproduced by the investigator and are offered. The originals could not be used because they did not copy well and contained identifying information.

The major categories with their rules of inclusion, and a list of quotes from the data that are demonstrative of the category, are given. To protect privacy, the subjects' names are not used. Closely aligned minor subcategories, each with rules of inclusion and illustrative quotes, are included as appropriate. Where fitting, results from the interviews are subcategorized by reflecting on what part of the time continuum the subject was referring to in their description of their relationship.

First and second interviews were completed with all individuals within the dyads. Two interviews were completed with each individual with respect to the other sibling within the dyad. Two dyads were interviewed a third time to provide additional clarification. These interviews were developed based on themes and emergent ideas that came from the first interviews. Questions were added to address the emergent themes.

In keeping with Systems Theory participants in this study are not labeled according to symptomatic behavior. Offender siblings are noted as big brothers and the boy and girl sibling victims are referred to as siblings.

At the close of these interviews, participants were asked what had been left out that they would add and how did they experience the interviews. All participants spoke of liking the interviews and spoke of being pleased to have a chance to talk about their relationship.

RESEARCH DESIGN

From a family systems perspective, there is a lack of empirical literature on the subject of incestuous sibling relationships. For this reason, the present investigation is an exploratory, qualitative study, addressing the sibling relationship during the treatment process and highlighting experiences from the perspective of the involved children. It was designed to provide descriptive information through face-to-face interviews that included a set of open-ended questions about the participants' experiences. The interviews were emergent because as important ideas or themes became apparent during interviews, the interview structure was adapted to include these additional themes in the preceding interviews.

DATA ANALYSIS

The "constant comparative method" described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p. 126) was used to analyze information gathered from the participant responses to the open-ended questions. This method is an inductive method of coding categories as they occur. Thus, as new data are collected and information is first compared to existing categories, like or related information is added to

existing categories or new categories are formed as new themes or meanings emerge. In the constant comparative method, categories continue to be added to or changed over the entire interview process. This is the same as the interview structure changes during data collection. Initial categories can shift during this process.

The constant comparative method requires the investigator to maintain research notes about the process of discovery and decision making, the process for preparing the data for analysis, review of the data as it is collected, and then utilizing the data. This involves reviewing the narrative from the interview and then examining the individual parts. All interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber (as approved by the Human Subjects Committee), and these transcriptions served as the narrative that was analyzed.

An important part of qualitative research is recognition of the “human as instrument” because the interviewer, in this case the investigator, by the very nature of engaging in a dialogue becomes an instrument for data collection (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). The implications are that issues of reliability and bias are relevant.

Only the investigator performed the interviews, drawing upon personal skills as a therapist and from the theory systems base when dialoguing with the participants. The flexibility of the human instrument is that the interview format allowed for questions of clarification and new themes and ideas. The interview method and the skills of the interviewer provided details and depth from the subjects and their experiences.

MINIMIZING PARTICIPANT RISK

In order to minimize any risk of negative experiences, the team of therapists took the following precautions:

1. Made sure that every child had access to a therapist.
2. Made sure therapists were aware of dates and times of scheduled interviews.
3. Material from the interviews that raised any concerns was promptly shared with the therapist.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VALIDITY

The qualitative data was analyzed according to the Constant Comparative Method (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). Information collected from the victims was compared to information collected from the offenders and information from the dyads was compared with other dyads. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) specify several provisions that the researcher can make to the research design to increase the “trustworthiness” of a qualitative design.

1. In their description of methodology for establishing “provisions for trustworthiness” (p.45), the first suggestion is to use several methods of data collection. In the present study this was assured by several different interview styles: a. participants were interviewed in conversation style with open-ended circular questions; b. children were asked to draw pictures of their relationship at three different time periods and then to explain them; c. children were asked to story out their relationship together through time using their own art, picture

cards, paper and pencil, word cards, color pencil/crayon and paper and then asked to explain their responses; d. children were asked to quantify two sets of conversations about the brother's actions toward the sibling. Both hand-written notes and audio recordings of the interviews were utilized.

2. The use of several sources of information was recommended. Sources of information included: the children's therapists who gave general background information and demographics of the group of participants. To understand the children's treatment, I also participated in the team meetings and the Recovering Relations family group meetings. To understand the larger system, through which the children and families passed, I interviewed key professionals from the legal and therapeutic community for their perceptions. Observation notes of the children's reaction to the experience, the setting and the materials and a logging of the investigator's experience through field notes was recorded. The interviews were audio recorded and completely transcribed.
3. For research designs that permit, collecting data over a six-month period would strengthen the trustworthiness. In the present study, there was a one to three week span between interviews due to the limited availability of the participants.
4. In the case of an emergent research design, it is important to allow for "understanding to be discovered along the way" (p. 32). In the present study the first two dyads provided the basis for an initial understanding and additions to the interview questions were made.

5. To further strengthen trustworthiness provisions, attention to the issue of single researcher bias is recommended by the authors. This was addressed along the lines that were suggested by the authors. Peer debriefing was conducted regularly. The present study utilized an offender therapist and a victim therapy researcher. After analyzing a unit of data and identifying the themes, the information was also reviewed by the peer debriefers. In addition, the outcomes were presented to the peer debriefers individually who were then asked for their feed back as to how accurately I had captured the nature of the sibling relationship. It should be reiterated that the confidentiality of specific participant information and identity was maintained in all discussions.

Upon review, the present research design aligns well with the recommendations made by Maykut and Morehouse for increasing trustworthiness of qualitative research.

DATA ANALYSIS AND CATEGORY DEVELOPMENT

The data was carefully reviewed a number of times. Themes were developed based on the number of times each appeared in the data. The themes were collected as they described the experiences of the children in relationship to one other. Themes were also collected as they described experiences that the children highlighted as important influences around their relationship with their sibling.

These themes were developed and supported through a process of considering the metaphor, story lines and clear explanations told by the children. Data

was sorted and matched throughout the interview process, assessing the fit between theme names and developed as the data was determined to support the inclusion of the theme. This led to the development of “rules of inclusion” for the themes, also known as statements that convey the meaning that is contained in the data cards gathered together under a category name (Maycot & Morehouse, 1994, p. 139). The development of the categories and the rules for inclusion is the first step in learning what is being reviewed within the research. Data was analyzed using the constant comparative method and sorted by using deductive processes, comparing it with other individual statements and matching it with what “looked alike or felt alike.”

Specifically, the interviews during the first analysis were large pieces of the conversations considered and divided into the first theme ideas. Descriptions, stories, and metaphors contributed by the children were considered to check if the process was supporting the development of the child’s experience.

During the second analysis emerging themes were noted on separate paper again matching it to the first set of themes and themes were added. Themes were compared for similarities and differences. By the third analysis similar themes were emerging and newer themes were found less. In all the above analyses the outcomes were presented to the peer debriefers individually who were then asked for their feedback as to how accurately I had interpreted the data.

Themes were labeled initially by the investigator based on her interpretation of the children’s dialogues. Peer debriefers were asked to look at parts of dialogues and provide their interpretations from the dialogues which investigator incorporated into her interpretations. As more data was analyzed themes were changed or replaced and solidified into the present descriptors. The objective

was to consolidate similar material from the individual children into a theme that best represented what the investigator experienced in the interview process compared to the data transcripts. These comparisons shaped the labels applied to item groups.

Sibling data typed on color-coded paper (two sets for each interview) were divided up by themes and cut out, compiling envelopes of examples of similar themes described by the siblings. After the themes were compiled into colors of cut paper, they were typed so they could be considered further.

These themes were then organized using system and narrative variables as a way to further decipher the material in a meaningful way. The categories presented in the results were not expected but clearly emerged from the data.

A fourth systemic variable was developed with the emerging data labeled in systemic theory as News of Difference (Bateson, 1979). This is defined as depicting a new behavior or meaning between family members that is spoken of as a change (Selvino, Palazzoli, Boscalo, Cecchin, 1980).

After five data examples were collected in a single category, a rule of inclusion was prepared to provide a more consistent grouping process. The information in these categories was considered for its appropriateness. If material did not meet the rules for inclusion, it was removed and reconsidered for inclusion in another category. The data was considered and placed in categories or it was placed in a miscellaneous group of data that didn't fit the existing categories or did not have the necessary contribution to make it a category in its own right. In order to compose a category, five participants had to have offered similar material. Thus, for a total of 20 participants interviewed, a similar response by 5 participants constituted 25 percent of the sample size. As material was developed

into categories, greater than a 25 percent response was required to support representation of a category in the results. It was not uncommon for some participants to offer comments on the same category a number of times. Despite this duplication, each individual was counted only once in the samples or in the making of the category.

This research was based theoretically on strong systemic constructs: qualitative methodology requires research flexibility to permit new ideas and issues to emerge from the data. This is what occurred in this research undertaking. Questions were added to the interview guide as they appeared significant throughout the interview process to enhance learning about the children's own perspective of their sibling relationship.

CIRCULAR QUESTIONING AND NARRATIVE STORYTELLING

Circular questions were introduced through the Milan team (Boscolo, Cicchin, Hoffman & Penn, 1987; Tomm, 1985) as a means of understanding family relationships and patterns of interaction, a way to understand how the individual or family viewed itself. This assumed a relatedness of relationships and behavior (Palazzoli, Selvini, Boscolo, Cicchin & Prata, 1980). The circular interview allows the therapist to conduct an investigation that solicits information about relationships and about differences and change (Palazzoli, Selvini et. al, 1980, p. 8).

Circular questions are questions about differences. They compare two or more entities that are external to the perceiver (Benson, Schindler-Zimmerman, & Martin, 1991, p. 365). These questions stimulate the member of a family to think beyond a linear causation to a systemic process. The questions addressed

reciprocal interactions, alternative futures and created new understanding or curiosity. This study utilizes three of the four types of circular questions; relationship differences, hypothetical/future differences and now/then differences. A fifth type of circular question created by Tom (1988) and Penn (1982) of behavioral sequences is also used. This is an ideal way for exploring children's perceptions with circular questions and aids such as paper, pencils, and props, (in this case words and pictures), (Benson, Schindler-Zimmerman & Martin, 1991).

One interview activity developed by Palazzoli, Selvini, Boscolo, Cecchin & Prata, 1980, using a circular question was to ask the participants to draw a picture of themselves and their relationships in the past, present, and future. In utilizing this technique it was clear by the exercise that the participants had more segments in which they divided up their history. (The narrative question of drawing and explaining the relationship in the past, present, and future is in data chapter IV. So during the second interview participants were asked to story their life with their sibling through time. This proved to give greater depth to the development and explanation of their sibling relationship (see next section).

The circular question asking the participants to share a picture of the sibling relationship in the past, present and future was received well as a way for the participants to communicate their complicated histories but lacked the opportunity for more depth. A second question from Narrative theory helped the participants expand their stories. This question was to have the children tell the story of their relationship through time. They were told they could choose from any of the investigator's materials that they wanted to help tell their story if they desired.

This became more precisely divided into clearer sub-categories as the children shared a metaphorically woven narrative of their life story with their sibling. One sample depicts how the participants would lie out the variety of materials in order to depict their story (Appendix M). Time blocks were created from the children's stories and included: the past before abuse, past during abuse, discovery of abuse, present and future. Therefore, the descriptions of the sibling relationship patterns and the descriptions by the siblings of what they felt and how they explained what happened (meaning made), was divided up according to what period of time the child was talking about.

The verbal stories were recorded and used in the data collection, depicting it by the divisions of time; past, past before discovery, discovery, present or present at clarification, and future. This data is presented in Chapter 4 as a chart comparing the individual dyad through the time continuum. The data is also presented under the two constructs: patterns of interaction and meaning made by the participants. Some data from the story has also been extracted from the narratives to highlight themes under the construct, social cultural influences.

RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATIVE DATA

To better understand the participant's experience at the time of the interview and to better understand what happens after the incest is discovered (labeled throughout this thesis as Discovery), professionals in the legal and clinical system were interviewed. A judge, referees, four court counselors, a district attorney, two offender protection counselors, a volunteer CASA worker, and two social workers each spoke of their responsibility and action when children were found to have been sexually abusing one another. The following is information

compiled from the interviews explaining what happens as the system intervenes in the family at the time of sibling incest.

Reporting

Children enter the legal and social system when the child victim reports to a parent, a school counselor, or to a peer, any of which then act upon the disclosed information. Each is considered to be a mandated reporter who must report abuse, either by means of a hotline or a 911 call. This often will invoke the attention of the Child Protection Services (CPS), representatives of which determine if the allegations are true. They will also evaluate how the family is handling the experience and what safeguards need to be put in place so the child won't be hurt again. As necessary, SOSCF (State of Oregon Services for Children and Families) meets the child, usually at school and without notification to the parents (if the parents were not those who reported the abuse). In this way, parents cannot influence the child's story. It is also a preventative measure in cases where the child may have been offended by a parent or other adult in the family. If SOSCF doesn't go to the school, visitation could be conducted by the police or social workers trained in a special unit to deal with sex abuse.

Following the investigation, the offender may or may not be charged as a delinquent, depending on the age of the offending child. In the state of Oregon, children who have come to the attention of the courts because of abuse or neglect are divided between children and juveniles. Juveniles (13 years and older) are usually handled by the juvenile department and social services usually handles the children (12 years old or younger). If a child younger than 12 years of age comes to the attention of the courts for sexually abusing another child, the of-

fender is unlikely to be charged legally. When the child is 12 years or older, the issue of a legal charge is dependent on the facts of the investigation. If the offense was committed at 15 years of age or older, then for the purposes of the law, offenders are considered to be adults only if the offenses they are charged with are on the Measure 11 list. A 12 year-old or younger is generally handled through a special committee made up of a court counselor, a social worker and an offender therapist who determines what is needed case by case.

The court judge, or the referee, usually is involved with the child after he/she has been arrested and charged. If the child is 12 years of age or younger, social services takes the bulk of the case management and the child is not charged criminally. If the offender is 15 years of age or older, the judge sees them briefly in juvenile court, then they are indicted by a grand jury and remanded to an adult court as warranted by the facts.

Removal of the offender from the home

At the point at which the offender sees the judge or referee it will be determined whether the youth will remain in custody pending a trial or be released into some kind of safe setting. This is dependent upon the offender's background, how aggravated the allegations are, and whether there is a safety plan that could be put into place to keep the children from having contact with one another. Usually, if the offender is released it is because there is another family member who is in a position to take the child home.

In both cases the immediate safety of the victim is foremost, and every effort is made to avoid removing the victim from home. Removal of the offender from the home is usually chosen, whether they are delinquent or a dependency

case. They are usually taken out of the home until a safety plan is in place, an assessment has been completed, the child is judged safe, and the victim has had a chance to disclose what has happened.

Court counselor role begins

In Multnomah County, Oregon, the police report comes in, either through the district attorney or the adjudication counselor. When the prosecution has been completed the probation counselor assumes control of the case until the child is out of the system either by completing probation or by being committed to a secure setting such as MacLaren. The juvenile court counselor gets the case after it has gone through adjudication. In the state of Oregon, the court counselor and the probation officer are often the same person. They are required to monitor, enforce, and report to the court regarding the conditions of probation. These conditions relate to safety, personal development, and treatment. Family relations are part of treatment in the center of study.

In most small counties a court counselor gets the case by way of a police report, and the case may or may not be prosecuted by the district attorney. In these cases it is dependent on the level of severity of the crime: A-felony, B-felony, or a misdemeanor. An investigation will be completed, recommendations will be given to the court at the time of the hearing, and if they're found within the jurisdiction, the same court counselor takes control of the child and works with the offender on probation.

Legal process for 15 year-olds

The legal process is extremely traumatic for the whole family. The judges try to negotiate some sort of resolution within the families. At that time a negotiated plea may be worked out with the youth. The case will be continued for 30 days to allow the juvenile department and the sex offender therapist to complete an evaluation and then make recommendations to the court. Occasionally, offenders are committed to a secure setting, such as MacLaren, when they are deemed to be unsafe to the community. If the issue is not presented for trial, a judge is not involved in negotiations. The judge will be involved only when the youth offers a plea and admits to it. Then a judge or referee will be involved. The judge will actually order the disposition and the sentence. Generally, the youth involved is placed on probation, subject to certain conditions.

Much of the process is in the hands of attorneys, who will order psychological evaluations completed on their clients. An offender evaluation will be obtained by an offender therapist or an evaluation by a qualified evaluator will be completed to determine the sort of treatment that might be effective for their clients. In theory, court trials are supposed to occur 28 days after the youth is in custody, otherwise within 56 days. This can take longer if the youth is in denial or has a hard time acknowledging that the abuse has been committed.

Typically, any contact with the victim will be coordinated with the victim's therapist. There will be a sex-offender treatment program for the offending youth. Victim therapists are recommended to the family by the judge, district Attorney, court counselor and offender therapist, but therapy for the victim is purely voluntary. As a result, fewer victims than offenders get therapy. Usually the offender therapist will offer family meetings throughout treatment and family

meetings including the victim when the offender is ready to do clarification (take ownership publicly for his crime and show sympathy to his victim). If the offender has successfully completed treatment, the judge will never see either victim or offender again.

The referee does have some jurisdiction in dependency cases. The referee decides when the children get to see each other again and whether the offender moves out of the home or the victim child moves out of the home. The referee decides when the child has successfully completed offender treatment and if the family can be reunited. He/she decides on visitation, placement of the children, on what services the parents will be ordered to complete. In delinquency cases, the referee is more like a criminal judge, finding the offender guilty, sentencing him, deciding his probation violations, and incarcerating him.

There are certain dependency cases that will be heard by a judge rather than a referee, such as trials for the termination of parental rights, homicides, and Class A felonies. This is true in all of the State of Oregon. Juvenile court judges are also divorce court judges, so they do probate court, family court, and juvenile court. The referees are solely confined to dependency cases, juvenile court, mental commitment, and adult restraining order issues. The difference is that referees are hired and judges are elected.

After the legal system has determined what crimes the offender has committed, issued sentence, determined on conditions of probation and where the offender can reside, sex-offender treatment and individual and family counseling is usually mandated.

Dependency cases

When a report has been made on a case of child abuse and the SOSCF has become involved, a petition is drawn up and a preliminary hearing is held during the ensuing 24-hours. Frequently, a SOSCF worker, a foster parent, or a judge asks for a special appointed advocate. This advocate is mandated by the legislature for every child involved within a dependency case and is called a CASA worker. These volunteers report to the court what they believe to be in the best interest of the child, family members, and concerned therapists. In about 50 percent of the cases, SOSCF sends the offended child to a family sexual abuse treatment (FSAT) group. They are thus placed with other children who have been offended, to help them understand that they have done nothing wrong. SOSCF sends the offender to the agency for counseling and the parents are sent to a parenting class that deals with recognition of the signs of sexual abuse. Typically the treatments continue to be separated until the end of the respective treatment programs.

Clarification

In preparation for the offending child's return home, some treatment programs hold family therapy sessions to reunite the family and undergo a clarification process. The clarification process is described by one offender therapist as follows:

The clarification is divided into two parts. One is the situation where the most typical approach to clarification is that the victim is in treatment working through his or her own issues of victimization and realizing that at some point in time none of this was their responsibilities, and working with ideas of being a victim

and how to protect themselves and how to set up their boundaries. With the offenders, we normally practice letters of responsibility. We practice letters of accountability and that's generally gone over during the group process. When the victim's therapist feels it's time, we have the offender then write up a letter and send it to the victim. If the victim feels the letter is appropriate, then at some point we would have a meeting (transcribed from interview).

Clarification is more than the offender taking full responsibility for the offending behavior and the victim being ready to hear the offender speak about the offense in an apology session (Madanes, 1990). It is the reorganizing of the family structure to protect family members from further abuse. Boundaries between parents need to be reinforced and alliances need to be tolerated between each parent and child (Heiman, 1988). There needs to be an assumption that the whole organization of the family is addressed (Minuchin and Fishman, 1981).

The offender should have a good understanding of how the abuse impacted the victim and have developed empathy for him or her. The apology could be by letter, video- tape or face to face. But the apology is only one aspect of the clarification process. It's best if the family can fully support the victim and that everyone understands the etiology of the offending behavior. Other siblings may have thoughts, feelings and questions to be answered. The victim should be encouraged to express questions and feelings as well as opinions and concerns if the offender is planned to reintegrate into the family. Trial visits, then trial overnight visits, a safety plan and follow-up family meetings are all part of the clarification process.

One offender therapist also spoke of having a multi-family group, so that the issues can be hashed out in the family, including birth parents, the therapeutic

foster parents, and the offender meeting jointly. The offender is not given a time when he meets just with the victim. Rather, the victim's issues are taken care of in the therapeutic process with the victim therapist. The victim and offender meet with their therapist and ideally the family at the time of clarification meetings.

Treatment and whether to reunite the children

Family therapists try to assess the situation in the families and to consider whether the parents are ready to supervise the children, whether the children can verbalize their needs, and the offender can maintain him/herself in control. This may be a contradictory question for the younger sibling who most likely loves and misses the older sibling, but may still fear this person. The older child has been subjected to intense treatment and the therapists watch closely to see if the child can take ownership and responsibility for his/her actions and prevent acting out. If they are, then the clarification process is attempted. If that also goes well, visitation may begin and a date may be set for the child to return home. In many cases the child will continue to live outside the home and visit the victim and family members on planned occasions. In the program the participants that were interviewed for the present study had some follow-up treatment meetings and also had follow-up visits to support everyone during the first few months of return. A year after treatment, client families are called by phone and youth and family are asked follow-up questions. Arrest records are also checked in hopes of finding that the legal and treatment interventions were successful in preventing any further abuse between siblings.

Unquestionably, the family system is placed in a crisis. While in crisis with the incest between their children, their child is being accused of abusing a sibling and families are being evaluated, considering placement of one of their children, hundreds of meetings, financing treatment and, reckoning with things beyond their control. When a separation occurs within the family, one parent will often go with the offender and move into an apartment, or the offender will live with another family member. There is no question that this places a financial burden on the family, as well as taking an emotional toll. Later, the concerns arise whether treatment has worked, and whether the children can confront safely the issues between them and can live together safely again. It is important to note that the family is disrupted for a few months to a few years. Many times these families end up with children living in separate homes, perhaps with other family members, which may cause additional economic and extended family concerns.

There is no special attention in the legal system given to incest cases separate from what is asked of other offenders and victims who are not related as family. The fact that the parties involved in incest are related by family ties and will be for the remainder of their lives no extra relationship work is considered before returning to society no longer being on probation. Consistently, the judges, referees, probation officers, counselors and district attorneys noted that the way they recognize this as an incest case as opposed to other kinds of child sexual abuse is that the report identifies the victim as a sibling.

There are no identifiers in the paper work noting that a case is incest or sexual abuse. Treatment for the victims is usually not mandated by the legal system and many families cannot afford professional treatment. This presents difficulty at the time of clarification, as untreated victims are not ready for the clarification process due to unresolved issues. It is believed that both siblings

need to go through individual treatment, then treatment together, if they are to undergo the clarification process successfully. As one official has stated, “they’re going to be looking at each other over the Thanksgiving table 20 years from now.”(transcribed from interview)

Concerns shared by the participants interviewed

It is important to note that the system in general has changed since passage of Measure 11 in 1997. People in the system are alert to the ramifications of measure 11 for what it means with respect to treatment and reporting. The juvenile court counselors or probation officers note two concerns: that a child aged 15 years or older is tried as an adult and goes to a juvenile prison without family treatment, and that within this effect of Measure 11, there will be greater reluctance to report the offense. So offenders and victims will be less likely to receive treatment.

One probation officer noted that “the climate now with Measure 11 in Multnomah County and Oregon is such that if you turn yourself in or a family member turns you in, you’re likely to spend prison time.” (transcribed from interview) Another noted concern was that motivation for treatment and recovery has a great deal to do with being reunified with your family. If this is not a possibility in the treatment process or in the change process, then it may not support the change needed in these families.

Further, there is a concern from the legal and clinical professionals that the prison system and clinical treatment in the prison system may be less intense and less concerned about the family reunification process. Another notable alert has occurred because of these changes. In some cases parents may now choose

the offender over the victim because they may decide the consequences are too great for the offender child. These parents may decide not to report the abuse or seek help or may put pressure on the victim to recant her statements of what has happened. Since the offender may go to prison, the parents may decide the consequences are too great and may put pressure on the victim to recant.

Of the participants for the present investigation, all of the offender big brothers, were charged and had begun treatment before the law was changed. Had they come into the legal system after Measure 11 was passed into law, then they would not have been in treatment at Counterpoint and would not have had access to family therapy. They would have had little hope of reunification with their families and they would not have been able to participate in this study.

RESULTS

Results suggested the interview statements could be organized in four major categories. Subcategories are arranged by themes that support each of the major categories. These are themes that emerged in the interviews from five or more individuals. The four major categories, discussed in the following section, are:

1. Larger system influences upon the sibling dyad;
2. Interaction patterns between siblings found in the dialogues and supported in pictures and explanations by the children in response to the request: Draw your relationship in the past, present and future (circular question);
3. Meaning of the relationship to each sibling found in the dialogues and supported with metaphoric and narrative quotes that the investigator organized by time blocks comparing both participants; and
4. News of difference.

All themes and materials were examined and utilized in this study. Although it would be interesting to share the complete dialogue intact it is not possible to do so and continue to provide confidentiality. Thus, 3,010 responses were counted. A response could be a one-word answer or a paragraph response (371 pages of dialogue). Many times a theme was offered more than once but each theme is represented only once per child per category. In total all responses were divided into the themes and categories. Eighteen themes were offered that were not used because they were referred to by only one individual and did not

meet the requirement of being referred to by five individual members of the 10 dyads. (These eighteen themes are listed in Appendix N).

The participants highlighted a number of similar themes during the interview process. The siblings had connections to their larger family system and the legal and social systems. This enormous amount of data was then structured and categorized under constructs used in systems theory. This included the new construct of 'News of Difference' (a term for when the relationship changes). The following four sections offer the data organized by the investigator.

LARGER SYSTEM INFLUENCES ON THE SIBLING DYAD

The four categories are based on systems theory constructs and constructs also in narrative theory. Data was divided into themes and then themes were organized under systemic constructs. The fourth construct category, "news of difference" was also added as a systemic construct to organize some of the emergent data.

In looking at social and cultural influences, the larger family system, the neighborhood, the culture and how each influenced the sibling relationship, the participants introduced a host of material that could be organized in themes. Among others, these included violence in the marital relationship, fathers not present for the children, children feeling alone, the impossibility of asking for help, violence against the children, parents showing conditional attention, hierarchical issues, and younger treated as issues.

Larger social and cultural influences seem to have been video games, pornography, parental attention, abuse, violence in the home, drugs and alcohol

in the home, peer relationships, neighborhood, movies, absence of the father, and inequity of parental attention to siblings.

Legal and mental health system influences

The intervention of the legal and mental health systems at the time of discovery of incest influenced the sibling relationship and the participant's perception of themselves. No specific question was asked on how the systems impacted them, but material did emerge as they shared the story of their sibling relationship. All 10 big brothers offered statements on the subject.

All of the following text, denoted by italic font, are the direct quotes of children.

I know that I was [hurting her] but I wouldn't let myself accept it consciously. Afterwards when I got adjudicated and went through treatment, for treatment all the stuff I had to become conscious of so that I could get through treatment and understand what had been going on and so I became aware of that and it changed the way I look at myself.

I guess she's okay... I don't hate her like I used to.

Interviewer: How come? Can you explain?

Probably because I went to this program and I realize she hasn't done anything wrong for me to hate her.

Interviewer: What did you think she had done before?

Nothing, just that she was there.

And then the ladder [metaphor in path] is like the help that I got, and like after I got so much help and got trusting I did ownership

and everything. [Talking about counseling "help"]

Tomorrow I could be thrown into Juvenile Court Center... if I screw up or do something completely stupid. [This threatens him so he's working on his counseling and not hurting anyone]

It's kind of hard to take ownership on this. Like first when it was asked of me from my mom I denied it. I said "I didn't do this." And then I finally admitted to it and the police had to come to take my statement... [the police helped begin change]. Then I went to [treatment center] and did my ownership and started to work on my clarification. I've done counseling and I know how to handle myself in situations. And that I did work to complete counseling to show that I want to someday try to build back a relationship with her.

One time in a group session at [therapy center]...another kid who was the quietest person in the group volunteered to do a stand in for sib. When he did that it really showed me that I was screwing up.

I was avoiding this path because I knew it was the hardest path...I said, All right.

Without [treatment] and the juvenile system coming in, I don't think I would have changed. [Talking about facing what he did in counseling]

I'm just now discovering in counseling ways that he never told why [sib] why he never told, or reasons he never told. Because I'm bigger and because I'm a violent person. [Realizing the threat he had over a younger sibling]

I suspect that without treatment our relationship would have slowly deteriorated. Maybe not slowly. Just died. Without treat-

ment I don't think I would be as healthy or as strong. The bridge is like counseling. It helped me get across the bad problems and stuff.

Myself, I feel like I'm a changed person by coming here [to residential treatment]. You really have to grow up faster than a normal kid. And you realize exactly what you were doing, why you were doing it and that you shouldn't have done it. What it's done to that person.

You're at the center.... You can either do treatment, or you can go to jail...you don't do good there you go to MacLaren where they can't help you at all.... With the ownership I had admitted to all the things I had done. I was like "All right, I want to get on with my life."

It was a surprise how positively the children spoke of the legal and mental health systems. Although they may have felt them as intruding or frustrating, they did not express this to the investigator. This may have been for more reasons than currently explored, but one reason may have been the investigator's affiliation with the mental health treatment team. Thus, they might be expected to speak positively just in case something was revealed to the counselor. Another reason may be because in the context of the topic of their sibling relationship they were actually developing positive insights into how the relationship was changing. In the end, the atmosphere of the interview was such that they could give these authorities credit for some of their learning.

Influence of separation on the big brother

All big brothers were separated from their siblings at some point during the process of the legal and mental health interventions. The big brothers talk

about the void of relationship during that time period. They are talking about the time after the discovery. They speak about it as a time when they had to face the loss of family and some emphasize how it changed them.

I think I really...after we got separated and I was in Salem for two years, like a year without seeing her, a little less than a year. But after six months I missed her a lot. I don't know.

[Our relationship is] probably a lot different [than my friends'], because they get to see their sister and talk to her. I don't get to see my sister and talk to [my sibling], I just get to hear [my siblings'] voice once in a while. Right now I have no phone time with [my sibling].

[Separation] made me more aware. It stopped me from taking [my sibling] for granted. Because before I had always taken for granted that she was there, that she'd always be there. And suddenly she's not and it's hard to deal with.

Since I haven't been at home, I never knew anything about the subjects at school. I've learned so much about life since I haven't lived at home. It's good, but it's not good because I want to go back home and be a part of my family.

You're at the Center." ...You can either do treatment, or you can go to jail....You don't do good there you go to MacLaren where they can't help you at all...With the ownership I had admitted to all the things I had done. I was like "All right, I want to get on with my life."

There was no relationship. I guess there was a point when I could call...and ask to talk to mom...that was when the relationship started to develop again and it started to get back...Then I did my

ownership. I did clarification.

Being separated for two years had a lot to do with it. I love my sister. I hurt her a lot but I still loved [my sibling]...I missed them. I missed [my sibling]...It made me more aware. It stopped me from taking [my sibling] for granted

I couldn't see my sib unless I had permission from my probation officer and my counselors. It was kind of hard.

It's like the relationship now is like ships in motion, but no one's on board. It's like, I want to talk to them, but I can't.

Influence of separation on the sibling

Contributions of the siblings speak of the void and how the loss may have changed them and one contribution from a big brother who can acknowledge the longing his sibling has.

There's no relationship but my sibling kind of wished there was one. And then other times she probably wished she'd never see me.

Because he hadn't got counseling and knew what it was like not to have a family. And now that he knows what it's like he treats us better.

I don't have any contact whatsoever, so there's no connection.

There is no relationship.

Video games, aggression, media and pornography

Here are samples from eight of the big brothers experience with violence that they felt influenced their choices. They shared that they thought that violence within, the games they played, the way other children were treating them at school, the anger acted out by their fathers, and the access to pornography influenced their behavior with their sibling.

And then I started getting into games like Mortal Combat which are very violent, and it started reflecting on my attitude.

When I was into the Mortal Combat all I thought about was Mortal Combat and I would like basically push everybody away so I could look at my magazine.

A lot of it had to do with pornography and stuff.

Our father used to show us pornography and we accumulated pornography.

I think it's just the movies he watches, the kung fu, or something that makes him want to feel bigger. I've done it.

My stepdad always had pornography hanging on the wall, so I lived with that, so I always looked at that. Or I'd go to a friend's house and see pornography. Or just always being left out.

Angry feelings leading up to it. Pornography. Physical abuse that I saw happen to my mom.

My Dad had a lot of problems himself. He used to lose his temper and throw us boys against the wall.

Dad has been having an affair for years, he used to walk around the house naked.

This data highlights this period of time as a time of no relationship. Siblings and big brothers are not allowed to have any contact. At this time no new skills of positive relationship building are happening yet, no memories or history were developed. Five of the big brothers highlight that this loss was necessary for them to be motivated to do the difficult work of treatment and change.

Investigator's note: Also, with the big brothers in a program that also worked with the family and the clarification process, these big brothers had the hope of regaining their family and a positive sibling relationship.

Eight out of nine younger siblings also noted that pornography, aggressive games or violence in the home influenced the abuse from their brothers. The interviewer asked, "What do you think influenced your brothers behavior?"

Probably Playboy.

And our dad had pornography in the house and they'd look at it.

Kung fu. Kung fu gots to do with killing.

My brother punched on me from watching karate or watching boxing.

Dad was always yelling at Mom. One time he threw all the plates full of spaghetti at her. We all hid in the bedroom.

Our Dad was pretty angry and would yell at us a lot.

My Dad was always getting mad at us, has put his hands around my throat.

All the big brothers noted that in their home life their relationship with their sibling had been influenced by violence in their world, including pornography. Two brothers spoke specifically about games such as Mortal Combat. The siblings also thought that these were influences in their big brothers' acts of violence on them.

Alcohol and drugs

Six children included alcohol and drugs as a factor that influenced the abuse in the relationship. When asked what influenced the children's abusive behavior six out of ten of the dyads noted either that the siblings or that the big brother was being influenced by the alcohol and drug situation in the family.

Like I said, it is the parents, because, like with my parents, alcohol and drug addicts ... look what I've learned to do. I learned it's okay to abuse people.

I learned it's okay to hate. But I didn't have anyone to go to deal with my problems, so I took them out on the little girl. I just can't blame it on them all the time, because what I did was wrong, but it's got to be experience too.

With my dad, because my dad was an alcoholic. My real father. So his drinking was more important than me.

My mom and stepdad had problems. When they first got together my dad was drinking a lot. We moved in with him, we were living in [one town] and we moved to [another city], that's when I started going to [another school]. He was hitting mom.

Because I think after a couple of years my dad and my mom split up. My mom finally got wise and said, "Well, I'm going to rehab." So he didn't want any part of that so she got rid of him.

Like they used to grow marijuana in the basement and make chemicals and you know . . .

[My dad] was controlling. He always beat my mom, so I was around a lot of abuse, physical and emotional. And around drugs and alcohol.

Alcohol and drugs were addressed by six of the participants. Each of these participants was from a different sibling dyad. This means that 12 children had had this experience and six revealed it in the interviews.

Parents, family and neighborhood

Nine big brothers and six siblings indicated problematical surroundings in their formative years with parents, other family, and peers that influenced their relationship. Big brothers provided the following:

We'd get into fights and stuff because we were blond and stuff but they'd play basketball with us and pass us the ball actually.

My parents never really talked to me.

My parents played a big role in my self-esteem. They've done a

lot of good things for me, but they've also done a lot of things without intending that were very detrimental to my self-esteem.

My brother and I always played at home. The parents were gone a lot.

That's my cousin, tryin' to act like a gangster. I don't like them but they protect you. [in a drawing]

Just remember that what you do is going to influence your kids. When they grow up they're going to do the same thing. And it is my belief that it's the parents' fault, how the kid turns out.

I was sexually abused in my past and that's one of the factors in my abuse and also one of the factors ... it affected the way my personality formed.

Mom used to hit my sister when she was younger she'd get so mad at her.

My mom and dad were always fighting and throwing things at each other

The following were quotes from siblings:

My brother was always laughing at me.

My brothers didn't like me.

I had no friends for some reason. I kept doing something wrong.

I don't think it came from our parents so much. I think it mostly came from outside the family and also from my big brother. I guess my big brother didn't know what to do with his sexual feelings and stuff so he acted out in harmful ways.

Our cousin would come over and she would spend the night. Sometimes we'd go into the room and we'd say we were going to play Monopoly and they'd start playing Spin the Bottle instead

and if somebody came into the room we'd put the bottle away and we'd take out the Monopoly game and our mom would ask how it's going and we'd say it was going fine. But they'd tell me not to tell Mom and they'd threaten me, and then if I didn't want to play they'd sometimes say, Oh come on, just one game." I'd play one game and then I'd stop. [It was] more than kissing.

I was angry at my parents because they didn't protect me from all that. They weren't aware of it and they didn't protect me and I felt like they didn't do their jobs.

Although there was a category for the individual mom and dad, a second Category was provided to include the parents together, extended family, and the neighborhood including school peers. This provided an opportunity to sketch some of the data the participants provided to further explain the influences on their sibling relationship.

Participants shared that parents, as a couple, were less supportive than the participants said they needed. The children talked about their parents as more distant relationships during the time of abuse. In all fairness, parents were trying to keep work and family life going, but were tired, stressed, and unrealistic in what the children were expected to do without more assistance from the parents. Participants shared having been traumatized before, danger with other peers, and non-supportive sexualized relationships with other extended family.

They offered that cousins weren't a great deal of support toward positive self-esteem either. Participants shared feeling alienated from school, peers, other siblings, and parents or did not feel good about themselves in relationship to their siblings.

Commentary on the fathers

The father was not a presence as an active fathering figure for most of the children interviewed. The children referred to the loss of the father (i.e., by death, preoccupation, divorce, inattention, or violence.) Thirteen of the children noted the absence of the father.

I didn't want to tell my dad because I knew he wouldn't really care. That's what I thought, because when I was younger he had tried to get me to drink alcohol and look at pornography – like when I was five.

That depends, because for a while [my dad] was drunk. Then for another while he was recovering from alcoholism.

Sometimes I don't think he realizes things or how they are. Well, sometimes I think he does, but I find it very nice that he don't treat me different since he knows what happened. Because it would be very different if I told my real dad. A lot different.

Well, I have to say that he doesn't know shit (sic) about our relationship. But he'd probably say that it was pretty good, just between me and my sister. In his own words he'd probably say, "It's pretty good but it needs some improvement."

Nothing. He ain't got nothin' to say 'cause he doesn't know us.

Other quotes about dads included the following:

And our father used to show us pornography and so we accumulated pornography.

I think I might have gotten my dad's abusiveness but I can't really blame it on that. I got it from the genes, I don't think that's right, I think the sexual abuse was from the people that abused me. My step dad and my real dad. Because his dad beat him, and

my grandpa probably got beat by his dad, so it's kind of like a family curse. I'm not gonna get it.

Illustrative quotes from siblings including the following:

[My father died] while the abuse was going on. It pushed me farther from reality, but [that] was already pretty far away, so it didn't do much except perhaps somewhat.

My dad. Let's see. I guess my dad would probably say that we have a fairly good relationship but sometimes we get into pretty bad fights. Sometimes we get into little fights about nothing. I guess he'd say that we usually solve them pretty quick, within a day at the most.

I used to think he's a bad person. He used to be really hard on me when I was a kid and now I realize that it's just for the better. Because I see the way he is and the things he did when he was a kid because he said he went to boys' school and I realize that he didn't want the same things for me.

He'd speak different now because he knows what happened. But before I think he just would have said that there's a lot of disagreements, a lot of fighting that happened in the house. My dad would never have let us go to counseling and that's bad.

Two big brothers spoke of a connected relationship with the father.

My dad has always been a very open person about what he's feeling and what he's thinking, what he's doing and what's happening to him.

My dad's a nice man.

Sadly, the participants in this study had mixed feelings about their fathers. They were angry with them or had been at some point for not helping them more. The loss of the fathers as a support in the participants' lives was dramatic. Three fathers, (one fathering two sets of dyads) had shown interest in attending regular family treatment, exhibited acceptance of their sons after the incest was discovered, and showed interest in helping their sons and siblings get through the therapeutic process.

In two dyads stepfathers had changed that perspective by their support of mental health treatment and acceptance of the participants.

When asked about fathers, children of two dyads shared the feeling that their fathers were understanding and supportive to them now. These two fathers had changed perspective by their experiences in the mental health treatment process and their children were pleased. This is a serious alert to the risks and to the process of change and the sons' future. The father that the brother offender speaks of in this example was also a stepfather. He did not feel he could talk to his biological father about this, and he did not experience support from him.

Commentary on the mothers

The children who made comments about their mothers described them as having no power and as being supportive. Some talk about them using drugs or pornography. At the very least, they were unavailable and unable to understand what was going on. The children did not feel they could access their mothers, either because they were afraid to upset the mothers or because they felt they would not understand what they had to say. During and after treatment most children spoke more positively about their mothers when they perceived them

being more supportive. Eight younger siblings and five big brothers contributed to this category. Quotes from big brothers include the following:

I could not begin to know where she's at. Because I don't live with her. I mean, I know her, but you know.

I can't say that it was helpful but she tried to be helpful by getting us to solve our own problems. But she was probably most helpful just being a good mom and sometimes staying out when she needed so stay out and butting in when she needed to butt in.

I think the most helpful was being there to suggest and ask questions of us.

I don't remember how my mom found out, but that's when my mom started paying more attention and started getting more angry. And then the trauma like how she was trying to get us into treatment.

Our mom really looks out for us more. She usually sits us both down and says, "Okay, so you did this and said this and she did this and said this and you've got to say sorry. Because what you did was not right." Like if I hit her she'll say, "Well, you can't hit her again, it's not okay." So you've got to say sorry and it has to mean that you'll do everything in your power to keep it from happening again.

I don't really remember any of the good times. Well, I remember some good times, but I don't remember what it was. I remember my mom going, "Oh, you were really nice to your sister today," and I was like, "yeah." I only remember that happening once. Well, I can't say that.

My mom and step-dad always had pornography hanging on the wall, so I lived with that, so I always looked at that.

[I was living] at first with my mom, then with my dad, back and forth.

My mother was an alcoholic and a drug addict, so her drugs were more important than me. I didn't really like my mom for the things she did when she was on drugs and alcoholic.

And from siblings:

[At the discovery] she would have just cried.

Because she's really ... she's kind of ...she really knows what kind of questions to ask because she's outside of our relationship and she can see it from a third person point of view. She really sees it from both sides.

In the past I think she would have said she wished she could have sent us both to bed, or to a monastery, because they'd probably throw us both off a cliff after we started talking, started yelling or something.

My mom has done a lot. She has taken us to and from hundreds of counseling sessions. She's been there for nearly all of our meetings with both of our therapists. She has done her best to work out all of our conflicts and stuff. She's been amazing.

She'd say it was pretty darn good, in her own words.

Mothers were also depicted as a negative influence on the relationship before the discovery of the abuse. Many of the mothers didn't seem attentive to the issues between the siblings. Some mothers had dramatic problems of their own, such as abusive relationships, drugs, and alcohol issues.

There was a difference after discovery: Mothers were recognized for the support they gave both participants to get to treatment and change their relationship.

One big brother who lived far away from his mother before the incest had been discovered felt further abandoned.

The participants did not feel they'd gotten the same support from their dads. Except for two participants, the children shared that after discovery their mothers changed dramatically and were trying to be there for them, worked to attend and get them to treatment, was working at making new household rules and protective measures for them for the present or future.

Peer influences

The subjects were asked directly about their friends' sibling relationships. Out of the 13 responses, 7 responses felt good about their own relationships and thought it better than children around them. Four felt their friends were rougher on their siblings and two spoke of it being about the same. Contributions from 11 big brothers and siblings are included in response to the question: How does your relationship now compare to your friends' sibling relationships?

I actually think, with some of my friends, like it's just basically the same as with some of my friends. With some of the people I know it's a little bit better, but hardly.

With one of my friends, mine was a little bit better. Her brother always picks on her and hurts her and stuff like that.

The same.

I don't really know because one of my friends had a really abusive sister that beat my friend.

One time my brother was getting picked on by this girl and I said, "Don't hurt my brother." I went out there and said, "Hey, leave my brother alone." And she said, "Make me." And she stepped on his hand again. Then I sort of punched her.

My best friend at the time, his brothers treated him like garbage.

After struggling to understand what he was saying the interviewer asked "Because you actually liked your sister better?"

He said, "Yeah."

Some of my friends and their brothers get along and sometimes they don't.

The one friend...there's always a kind of animosity between them. They get along but they fight. It's kind of the way that they are.

I had some friends that were very forceful with their siblings.

I think I have a better relationship.

Interviewer: "Why do you think that?"

Because I see other kids at school.

I guess it's kind of equalled out a bit. Like our two friends' relationship has gotten a lot better.

My best friend is the only one who has a brother. It's really good compared to her relationship with her brother. It's actually better than theirs but not much.

During the abuse, I think my friends' relationships were a lot better.

When considering the larger influential systems on a child, peers come first to mind. They can be a good reality check on what a child is feeling and whether it is a normal place to be. Out of 20 individual interviews only two children spoke of having friendships with other children who were not being mistreated or mistreating a sibling.

Expressions of loneliness from sibling girls

Three out of six of the sibling girls all noted feeling alone and separate from other siblings because their gender of being the only girl. Further data can be found on their alone feelings throughout other categories.

I was always having to play by myself. Then when the other people found out, our family was not being together that much anymore, and my mom was always talking on the phone instead of playing Barbies with me, and my other brother would just ignore me and play baseball games or whatever with the neighbors, which he almost always did. My older brother was always in his room, because he got punished, but I didn't know why.

I'm very different and I'm a girl so my brother didn't want to play with me.

I'm lonely because I was the only girl and all my brothers didn't like me because I was a girl. I don't have a lot of friends.

Two of the girl siblings, in contrast, note having each other to support them.

One said, "We stay together to help each other."

Another girl sibling from another dyad felt she had a lot of friends and that her brother was jealous of her.

Sibling girls referred to being outside the circle of their brothers and alone. Five out of the seven girls described feelings of deep loneliness and the inability to participate with their brothers because they were girls. These feelings were supported by the brothers who shared leaving a sister out of much of the interactions and play because they were girls. They shared that there wasn't the same familiarity. The girls shared that family members didn't seem sensitive to their experience. A family constellation with more boys than girls may be an alert to further non-equity and the desire these girls have to be included may up their chances of being manipulated. The only siblings that did not express feeling alone were two girls who had each other as sisters.

Impossibility of asking for help

The participants had mixed feelings about their support network during the period of abuse. What seems to be the general message is how alone they were psychologically. Most of the time they were considering how they were going to cope and didn't think of asking for help or stated that they couldn't ask for help or didn't feel they could say what was happening. The first quotes are taken from the responses of big brothers.

Well, because I just felt like if I did I would get in trouble because a lot of it had to do with pornography and stuff and I thought

they'd think, "Well, he's looking at it so much it's his fault." And that's the reason I didn't tell my mom.

At that age you don't really think of anything, or think of asking for help from people. You just stuff your feelings.

I hadn't let myself realize how much I was hurting them and after I did let myself realize that I felt horrible and I wanted to build a good relationship. I told no one.

I was hurting inside and I had no way of expressing that.

He wouldn't have said anything because he was frightened of me.

Sibling responses included the following:

Well, I had like mixed feelings. Because I was glad that I could see them again, and that they were coming back, but I was also not so glad because I wasn't sure if it was going to be safe.

Investigator note: This sibling still does not feel she can ask for help or support from her family or community.

When I was trapped I didn't know what to think and what to do, because everything was happening so suddenly and everything. And when we went to counseling I got to know more and then as we moved on to other [treatment] places....that's when I discovered what was going on.

I couldn't fight back because I was the weak part.

One sibling noted that they still would not count on others to keep them safe.

I never told that I had two different feelings. No one ever asked me. I wouldn't have told them if they did. [Talking about the brother returning home]

This category is significant because it accompanies prevention and the ability to stop a situation before it gets worse. These quotes go side by side with the loneliness of the other category. Brother offenders expressed that they didn't even consider asking for help. They shared denying or not understanding themselves what was going on with themselves and if they did they felt too guilty to ask for help. They shared feeling no real opportunity to figure this out with someone.

Eleven of the participants referred to feeling like they had no way to get help during the situation with their sibling. The big brothers feared getting in trouble and the younger siblings talk about being confused and not knowing what to do. An example from the mother category was if I had told her,

I never told that I had two different feelings. No one ever asked me. I wouldn't have told them if I did.

The sibling still felt that she couldn't express her concerns about the big brother returning home. In this case the therapists were alerted and more therapy was planned for everyone before there was a consideration of a plan to reunify.

Ambivalence about reuniting

Children were still addressing some ambivalence about the reunification process that they weren't sharing with others. These siblings represent five of the six dyads that were not ready for reuniting at the time of the interviews.

Sibling: Well, first I was really happy and he was really nice to me, then I was mad and then I was guilty and now I'm sad, because my brother has to...I'm sad because I'm afraid my brother's gonna do it again. It's a big flower that's blossoming. But it happened and it's gonna turn into a twister again. And then when it gets better it'll turn into a heart and then blossom into a flower and it will rot...I'm afraid that when my brother comes home, he'll try to kill us again.

Big Brother: There was times when we got along, but that wasn't many because we're close, but then we weren't, because he knew what was going on but he didn't. I don't know how to explain that. I don't know if we're past it. I don't know if he's past scared because he told my mother one time, "Geez, he's so big and this and that." It seems like he's scared and he thinks he should be but he shouldn't be. Nobody should be.

Sibling: [I don't miss playing together] because I'm better and I'm glad he don't beat me any more. I like playing games by myself.

Sibling: Right now sometimes I hide my feelings. I feel pretty bad right now. When I think about my brother, Mom say it's my nerves...but I don't...I'll write my feelings, okay?

Sibling: In the future it will be very much like now [by phone].

Brother-brother bond

One interesting theme that kept reappearing was the difference between brother-brother relationships and the brother-sister relationships. The brother-brother relationship seemed to have more of a connection, more in common, to be more playful, and in recovery there was an assumption of a very close relationship. In the brother-sister relationship there was a very difficult relationship, with little sisters trying to get big brothers' attention, brothers being frustrated with little sisters. After treatment, the themes about the brother/sister relationship spoke of respect and appreciating, but there wasn't that same connection in their responses as the brother/brother relationships. The brother-sister relationships seemed to be developing in these cases because of treatment. The boys may have recovered their relationship even without treatment, because of their common bonds, ideas, and connections. Big brothers responded as follows:

I think it's changed, but there's a little bit of exclusion even though we aren't supposed to, there are things that he and I share with each other that we don't share with anybody else, including my sister. I think that gets in the way of me and my sister's relationship.

In the past I think the deterioration of our relationship, like us fighting and stuff, I think in a way it strengthened our friendship because we would always be together against her, which wasn't good, but it was true.

Like he saw me as that and he looks up to me and he wants to sort of be like me.

I don't know, but I know that he's somewhat denying the abuse. Somewhat, because I don't think he understands what really happened. But there's not...I don't...I don't know how he feels because, like my mom says, I don't know him anymore. He's

different. We're both different. So when I go home we'll just have to learn about each other, 'cause things change a lot in a year...[He] makes me feel good. He looks up to me, he used to and he still does. I feel like I have a positive influence on him.

I think because of our closeness. I would probably be afraid that if we were that close before and something happened...I would want to be that close again but I would be afraid that something might happen. So by being really hard on me in the clarification it was ensuring that that wouldn't happen. Then the separation ended and we started having visits and stuff. It was like our relationship had been put on pause and we're coming back and it's back to normal again. We're friends and siblings at the same time.

I've learned that it's really...it's natural. We can have a relationship. If we have the opportunity to have a good relationship between the two of us, we will. That's just the way it works for us. My relationship with my brother was very exclusive, excluding my sister a lot. I guess because of that whenever one of us got mad at her we would gang up on her. That was really quite bad for our relationship. I don't think there were any positive influences from me and my brother's relationship on my sister's and mine. It's amazing, it's just kind of interesting that in a way there is a good side, although I'd rather not have had any of this happen and be as close to my brother as I was before. Because it did happen, that's not going to change, I think, that's kind of a good thing that's come out of it.

Brother-sibling responses included the following:

We were just brothers. We played with our neighbors. We'd go play basketball all the time.

I cared about him, I liked him a lot, even though he was offending me.

He got taken out of the home so then every other week or sometimes every week he'd come over for a home visit. I saw him because nobody knew that he'd offended me. We'd have fun and I'd have fun with him and I couldn't wait for him to come home every Friday.

Looking for the brother-sister relationship

The little sisters still, after the abuse, desired relationships with their big brothers. The little sisters spoke of a clearer division in their relationship after the abuse than the sibling boys or big brothers. When the brothers have been taken from the home, the little sisters felt a lack of resolution and a yearning, when they talked about their separation. The first quotes from siblings are with respect to relationship descriptions at discovery.

After about a year we started counseling. But I was confused as to why he had to leave, and I was really sad.

Mostly I was sad that the family was split up.

Sad.

Just alone.

I can't get to the end of it until we come back together.

I don't know, but I miss him.

He still has that hateful voice, sometimes when I talk to him he only wants to talk to my mom.

The following quotes are from siblings speaking of brother-sister relationships after clarification. These quotes illustrate the sibling girls talking about the relationship with their big brothers indicating their positive feelings about their brother. As depicted in the first illustrative quote, these quotes talk about how the relationship is different, and a little unresolved.

What happened was, every time it came my mom's birthday or Christmas, or anything special like that, they would pitch in all three together to get my mom a

good gift and to get the family a good gift. But one year I asked if I could pitch in and they said no, because I'm a girl. [I'm] lonely because I was the only girl and all my brothers didn't like me because I was a girl.

I think he'd say, well, I don't think he'd say anything unless you asked him, but I think he'd say that he liked it a lot better now and that he think's it's good now, I guess.

I mean, unless he's like giving me advice or something, he doesn't really affect my feelings very much. He's nice most of the time. Most of the time he knows how to deal with his anger.

It was okay before. He was nice to me and I was nice to him, we were both nice together. We had fun together. We'd go to the store, go to the movies. Stuff like that.

He'd usually let me play his Super Nintendo, but I had to ask to go into his room, but sometimes when he was not even home or at football practice I snuck up there and played it anyways.

But what's different about him is that I can trust him.

Here, big brothers talked about their relationship with their sisters.

We get along, sometimes we play together and we have fun. Other times we get along very well. We very rarely fight. I guess she's, I hate to say it this way, she's very much my little sister. I feel very protective of her. It's scary to me that she's getting as old as she is. She's intelligent. Most of our family is. She's a great person although we don't relate to each other the same ways as my brother and I do because of the difference in sex and age. Plus, there's a difference in personality that also doesn't facilitate that, but we get along very well.

I talked to her. I mean we had a normal relationship kind of. I mean I was abusing her but like around my mom, because I hardly ever saw her except when I was around my mom, I would like have a normal relationship. Like older brother to younger sister.

I guess I learned a bit more than it's a bit harder for her to believe stuff if you just say it than if you do something to show it. I don't know if she still thinks I don't appreciate her, but she's always trying to give me hugs and I just don't feel comfortable giving her hugs, I don't know why. I think she really does that because it's not enough for her to hear me say, "I appreciate you and you're great." She really needs me to say, "Okay, I accept you." She needs to be shown stuff and not only hear it.

We'll talk at dinner. We'll have discussions and we won't be yelling at each other and interrupting each other. The other night we were messing around and throwing erasers at her and she got kind of mad because I wouldn't stop and she never said anything. And I said, "Oh, you want me to stop," and she said, "Yes." So when I heard her say she wanted me to stop I said okay and I stopped. She still thought I'd do it but I didn't.

I think she paid extra attention to me just because she had a big brother, until the abuse and stuff. She was always bothering me and part of it was because I didn't pay any attention to her. She wanted my attention because I was her big brother and I wouldn't give that to her so I think she reacted to that by getting my attention in negative ways.

I wasn't mean to her and stuff because she was so little. But then as she got older I let her get on my nerves. There was really no emotion between us, except for conflict. I can't say always, but more than not there was nothing. Sad rather. We're always fighting.

That no matter what I do, whether she likes it or not, she's still always going to be my sister and she'll love me and like that even though she doesn't like me or like what I do.

I think treatment was very helpful. My therapist helped me. We talked about what kinds of things I liked about her and what I liked to do with her. What things we shared, what interests we shared. And I kind of figured out that she's not really that bad a person.

Well, I feel like I can really be like a normal big brother and just play with her and do fun things with her and stuff.

I think a year ago I probably would have been a lot more nit picky and irritating, like I would have needled her a lot more. I don't a lot now. I still kind of mother her and I feel protective of her in a way.

I feel like she's an interesting person and sometimes she can get on my nerves, I don't know if she gets on other people's nerves. Overall she's pretty great. I'm proud of her. [Little sisters] are just there. They're always there, like tagging along.

She was pretty much nice to me all the time. I don't know [what she did], but she never treated me bad. She didn't do anything bad. She wouldn't get away from me. I was loved because she loves me.

The brother-sister relationship was dynamically different. In the interview process the investigator experienced the brother/brother dyad as a very connected friendship. Even during the time of discovery or when the two were

separated, the brothers assumed they would always be close. In the brother/brother dyads the data matched that there is a security in the relationship that has not been lost.

In brother/sister relationships it was evident in the big brother statements throughout the data that they were more secure in the feeling that their little sisters would renew a relationship with them. After or close to clarification they had the ability to express and to appreciate their sister's talents and styles. The girls were not as secure. They spoke more about a yearning for the relationship and a more tentative positive relationship.

The big brothers spoke of having denied that their sister had been hurt until they had been in treatment. They talked about doing things in the future, attending movies and trips with the family. The big brothers generally did not feel as connected to sisters as they were about brothers. They would refer to their sister relationship as different than a brother, if they had a brother relationship to compare it to.

The young females, in contrast, seemed to pine over the loss of the relationship. The sister often talked of guilt that she sent him away, she felt grief, loss, shame and trauma. She seemed to stay in a non-recovery place. One noted that she "couldn't be happy till the family can be reunited." The girls seem to assume responsibility for the relationship, though the big brother seemed to also recognize their responsibility and to talk about wanting to fix things: buy her some gifts. Another sister drew an empty space between her face and her brother and reiterated a desire for wholeness.

Effect on other sibling relationships

It seems noteworthy to understand how other siblings were reacting through this time. Many participants offered how their relationships with their other siblings in the family were affected or not affected.

One time I was in [my brothers'] room looking at their tapes and posters on the wall and stuff, and I was sitting on the bed, and one of them came over and sat down next to me and started looking at the tapes too, and [my other brother] heard them laugh and my other brother ran back there as soon as he could to make sure I was safe.

Even though he didn't really care, there was somewhere he really cared about what [my sister] and I went through. So when I was doing all that it made him angry, but he still couldn't do anything because I didn't care if he came up and tried to say, "Stop it. Knock it off." What was he? My mom? My dad? I don't think so. I just pushed him away. Cold shouldered him. Leave me alone.

Well, I'd probably say what my big brother does and I hear about in turn affects me and I think it also affects my older brother, although he's not big on emotion.

[My oldest brother] isn't really so much involved anymore, but when he is here he's kind of like, "Well, I'm not part of your normal family dynamics and stuff." But he's pretty nice, he does his best to help [our sister] and me and our big brother solve conflicts with each other. He came to a couple of family sessions, but he wasn't very involved. But he's now established. He's more involved than he was in some ways.

It doesn't seem to be like my relationship with her affects my relationship with [my older brother].

It doesn't affect my relationship with my little brother, because I'm always with my little brother.

In response to a series of questions, beginning with: "How do you think your relationship with your sister has affected your other siblings?"

They hate me practically.

It didn't affect. Not to me, because we stayed together.

Yeah, it changed it. I feel protected because I have my dog, we stay together, and I have my mom.

It wasn't my responsibility, but it was my responsibility to take care of my sister. Because when my brother was...I don't know that word...not illegal, but...something where they're not good enough to take care of the child, that's when I knew. Like when he was doing that to my sister I knew I had to take charge of her.

Basically they were both there at the same time, so I just took it out on both of them at the same time.

Usually [my sister's] protective because I'm smaller.

I think she was upset because every week she'd have to go spend the night at somebody else's house and every week for church she couldn't go to our church, she'd have to go to our cousin's or our great grandpa's. She'd have to go to church with one of them and she didn't like them and that was just for [our big brother] to come to our church and I don't think she liked that very much.

It affected [my little sister] because she had to live through it and it was the same relationship with her and she didn't want to get pushed around either. And she was just in a one-track mode, she really ignored it so that she could speak with our mom, or she could go to our cousins' or our cousins could come over here. Trying to ignore it. So you could really notice that.

And for [my other brother] I don't think it really affected him because he was doing it too and it was like we were a team.

It was not harmful to my relationship with [my brother]. It was pretty harmful to [my sister] because it scared her too. But for [my brother], in some sick way it drew us closer together. But that's for people who have one-tracks minds about me and my brother.

With [my little sister], she's more willing to get into conversations now.

I think it scared her, thinking, "If this is what he's doing to him, what will he do to me?"

I think in some ways it brought us closer. The same thing happened with him that happened with me with her, and so we could relate about that. If [my little sister] was bugging us we could team up and be on the same side.

I don't think it affected my relationship with [my older brother]. It was almost like he was aloof. He was always out with friends and he had his own life. Me and my brother were the team of the family. We were always playing together, having fun, up to some kind of mischief. I think it affected my relationship with [my younger sister] because he saw the same things that I did, about how my parents saw her. So we felt like she was getting more than she deserved and we'd team up to take her down a bit. So we teamed up in our negativity as well as our positive.

I couldn't talk to my younger brother or my younger sister. Me and [my older brother] got a lot closer because I couldn't talk to the others.

It really hasn't. They've stayed really neutral through this thing. My stepbrother and I have always done things together when he's at home, and my stepsister and I go roller-blading. We go differ-

ent places on roller-blades or bikes. They were on neutral ground. They didn't really take a side in it.

As a part of the social cultural influences this concern of the other siblings was added from the interview of one family where the brother seemed very powerful in the family but was referred to as a brother that was claiming to be completely out of the issue. This seemed highly irregular in a family system and could be unsupportive to the sibling dyad. It turned out that he was not completely disengaged when I asked later how the crisis affected him.

It was interesting how the participants responded. Some participants shared that it was difficult between them and other siblings, others spoke of the sibling seeming to not care or not be involved with the issue. Thirteen participants spoke of wanting to protect other siblings. Four participants didn't think it affected their siblings, one felt rejected, two felt it brought them closer.

INTERACTION PATTERNS BETWEEN SIBLINGS

In this section the participants discuss the kinds of interactions they had with each other. There was little difference sited between big brothers and the siblings' perceptions.

Power and control issues

The power and control issues were evident throughout the interviews. All of the big brothers addressed how they were bigger and controlling, creating fear and lack of empathy in their interactions together with their siblings. Because of prominence of this theme, it is highlighted here in the interaction section.

Because I'm bigger and I'm a violent person. I don't know if I want to say that, but I was in a behavior class from the sixth to the eighth grade in school.

I have a lot of influence over both of my younger siblings.

Right. In the beginning I would like call her names and stuff, but I mean it wasn't real bad. I don't mean to minimize that but it was just like every kid and brother and stuff.

But when I was into the Mortal Combat all I thought about was Mortal Combat and I would like basically push everybody away so I could look at my magazine.

It's mostly that I kind of, well, I don't know where I got the idea in the first place, but I got the idea that I was a jerk and I kind of turned it into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

[I would] physically abuse her. Hit her, trip her, step on her, I tried to suffocate my sister once that I remember. I don't even know why. Mostly when I was in a bad mood. She was always looking up to me. Probably depended on my mood but most of the time I was pretty angry. I was pretty much disobedient.

Well, I think that after the abuse they started growing a fear of me, and they started getting scared of me, because I could do what I wanted to do. I was in control. I couldn't really rough house with her in the same way, so it was like I would only really get physical with her when I was mad at her.

One of the things we have here, I'm sure you've heard it, is a lack of empathy, and I really had that. It means you really don't take time to think about what the other person's thinking or feeling. When that fails you just become a complete psycho. Literally.

I would laugh at her and make fun of her. And some of the times it was like I would be mean to her but some of the times not so mean.

Throughout the entire interview process the issues of power and control were spoke of a great deal. It was referred to by the stories of interactions, in their explanations of fear, and talking about how mean or nice their brother sibling was or had changed.

Quotes divided chronologically

The following quotes from participants have been divided and presented according to what time period the participants were describing. Sections were sub-divided as the past before abuse, time of discovery, present and future. The time of discovery is the time that incest was discovered and was intervened on. The present at the time of the interviews was for some a time after clarification when the big brother had begun to take ownership and apologize for the abuse. For others, it was a time where the siblings were still separated.

The quotes represented in this section were collected as they depict interaction between siblings.

Past before abuse

The participants spoke very little of a time where there was not aggressive behavior from the big brothers directed on a sibling. Five out of ten big brothers noted some early positive interaction. Most of the participants desired to depict a pleasant time in the early years of the siblings' life but ended up acknowledging struggles even then.

I did all the chores. He used to want to help me all the time and when I wouldn't let him help he used to be broken-hearted.

Then we're inseparable, like this rubber band and paper clip.

We'd played with our neighbors, we'd go play basketball all the time.

We were inseparable.

I wouldn't say I played with her, but the relationship was good, (through the next years). We have our little squabs every now and then, it's not exactly perfect. I mean it wasn't real bad. I don't mean to minimize-I called her names like "you brat."

Four dyads reported a pattern of interaction that was always abusive:

In the beginning I would like call her names and stuff.

In the beginning I was hitting her and hurting her.

I was very physical, to show people that I could hurt them if I wanted to.

[After sister was three years old-in the picture drawn] I've got her saying "blah,blah,blah" and I'm saying "shut up."

All the younger siblings but one noted a time when the interaction wasn't abusive, as indicated in the following responses.

At first I put discovery...of the English language everything was a discovery, later we were constantly yelling and pushing each other.

We fought and played.

I was born and everyone was happy.

Before the abuse we were nice to each other.

We were having fun and stuff.

We were inseparable because he really liked me.

I'd say we were pretty much like two talking heads. We just kind of talked about anything. Every once in a while we would get mad at each other.

We had a lot of rocky roads. I had a lot of friends and he couldn't figure out why.

The exception was from a younger sibling in one dyad

He was always mean to me, hitting me and hurting me.

Past during abuse

For the “past during abuse” period, big brothers generally talked about control, control of the sibling so that their actions on the siblings were not found out by parents. They threaten their siblings and practice aggressive behavior.

The siblings talked about getting hit and yelled at. They feel cut off from opportunities to tell their parents.

The following are responses from the big brothers.

It seems big brothers verbalize more aggression on sisters.

We have had times where we've gone for a couple of months without even getting into a small disagreement. And before the abuse was discovered we were fighting every day.

In the past it was a lot worse. Everybody was like, "Yeah, I want to kill my sister most of the time, every once in a while she's okay" and I was like, "God, I hate my sister. I want to kill my sister. I want to light her hair on fire and kick her in the head until she dies." [I would] physically abuse her. Hit her, trip her, step on her, I tried to suffocate my sister once that I remember. I don't even know why. [She did] nothing, just that she was there. [She was] a punching bag. A sponge, actually to take abuse.

It's just like the same things. Nothing really changed. We still did the same things before and after. I don't think nothing really changed in what we did. But there was that fact that we both knew what was going on.

Past is like in a dark room and all you can see is her, she's real little, and me. I'm real big. She's scared of me.

Violence first, so I could make sure she wouldn't tell.

I felt power and control. A part of my life I had control over. I was taking care of my needs but all the time I was worried that I'd get caught, that they'd tell mom. I was worried and saying this was my last time and I wouldn't do it again.

It was aggressive versus passive, and he was the passive one.

[He was] kind of aggressive and passive. To a certain extent he was assertive, he would...like if I said, "Could you do this?" and he'll say, "No," which is pretty brave for the relationship we have because I was just like, "Oh yeah, well I'll make you."

I started hitting and being abusive and stuff. I started physically and verbally abusing and stuff. At that time I didn't think of nobody but myself...I was hitting him and stuff, because I didn't care what he thought.

Everybody was fighting with my parents. My parents were fighting with each other. Then there was stuff between specific kids. Then during that time was when the offenses happened. I felt like everything's going crazy and I don't have any control over it, it's gone off on its own. That's when I got sent to jail.

Sibling sisters speak more of violence, sibling brothers more of power as well as the mixed experience of the relationship.

And then while the abuse was happening he was really nice to me, but only if I did what he wanted.

I got beat up a lot and stuff and it was not fun at that point.

We fought and played Nintendo. It was a roller coaster.

[My brother acted nice] when he didn't want me to tell.

He was okay at first. But after that he started getting mean and he turned into the devil. Then he started abusing us. He yelled at us and hit us, and then he abused us.

He's insulting me like all my other brothers and I'm crying about it to my mommy.

The rocky road was in a valley. That was when my relationship with brother wasn't very good but it wasn't horrible because I did see him.

This is him when he hurt me [the star broke apart].

My brother made me do his chores or he threatened to beat me up.

Arrow through the heart. Breaking a heart through emotional abuse and physical abuse. They're good times, good times turn into bad times, bad times into good times, like a storm's coming in.

Following discovery

Big brothers were all separated from their siblings, and they talked about the void of relationships.

This is the first time, I mean, I've never thought about killing myself. This is the first and only time that I ever thought of running away. And I was like, well, I could pack my bags and leave right now and they would never know until morning. I could be out of the state by the time they wake up. And thankfully I just never had the right mind to do it.

[Our relationship is] probably a lot different [than my friends'] because they get to see their sisters and talk to them. I don't get to see my sisters and talk to them, I just get to hear their voice once in a while. Right now I have no phone time with them.

There's nothing to say, I haven't seen her.

It's like the relationship now is like ships in motion, but no one's on board. It's like, I could hear their voices so bad and I want to talk to them, but I can't.

There's no relationship but she kind of wished there was one. And then other times she probably wished she'd never see me.

There is no relationship.

[The clarification letters] were very hard letters to write at first, and think, to go back, and that took a while, because it's not the easiest thing to sit there and relive what happened when you don't want to think about it, something to try to avoid.

Right now [my sister] and I don't have any contact whatsoever, so there's no connection.

I think she knows the abuse is there, but I think she tried to put it in the back of her and tried to think it never happened, tried to make it a relationship more, tried to make it better.

Quotes from siblings included the following:

I didn't see him for a long time.

I don't get to do a lot of stuff with him no more.

It's a long time since I've seen him.

Just alone.

I'm better and I'm glad he don't beat me anymore. I like playing games by myself.

Then my brother got taken away. Then my mom and me and my sister were a family [my heart] got joined back together. And that's all.

And we all broke apart but then we decided to put our lives together.

He still has a hateful voice if I answer the phone.

I wanted to play with him and stuff.

I don't see him anymore.

Present before clarification

Those who had not undergone clarification talked more about trust, and how it might be in the future. Participants who were not that far in treatment have mixed thoughts about the interaction. Some participants who have not gone through clarification haven't had interactions to talk of and speak more similar to the time of discovery (no interaction) or similar to comments about the future interaction (positive hope). Among selected examples, first from big brothers who are in the process and either aren't ready to complete clarification or their sibling is not ready.

Well, partially I claimed ownership because I didn't want them to suffer anymore. If I didn't take full ownership I might get in trouble [with the law and with the treatment staff]. But I wanted to have everything else so they had to know I wasn't lying.

I did a clarification letter to her, saying why I did it, and how I am gonna keep from doing it again, what resources I have, what exercises I would use to keep from that. I will talk to her.

[Now I} don't let my temper get the best of me. Because I remember about a year ago, because he used to yell and stuff all the time, I remember I would always yell back. If I would just talk to him when he is more calm, don't yell back, he'll listen more.

I think I've learned that the more that I'm open to talk and to listen then the more I'm going to get out of somebody. I used to just sit back and do the listening and I never did much talking. But I noticed that the more you talk and listen, because if you talk too much people don't want to be around you.

The following quotes represent the present prior to clarification among the sibling responses.

I want to see him and I want him to come home.

I want to know him but I'm afraid.

I'm not ready to see him and talk.

I don't want to see him ever.

Present after clarification

Clarification changed the abuse patterns of interaction to positive patterns. The siblings now had an opportunity to be in a relationship with one another. Both big brothers and siblings talked positively about their relationship. The participants who had already undergone clarification talk more specifically about their better relationships.

The following big brothers had begun to develop a new relationship with their sibling, with one exception. One big brother has just finished clarification but had not had visits yet.

I guess we have a pretty good relationship most of the time. Every now and then we have little spats and we get in fights, but we usually work them out.

I have set the boundaries that I won't touch him, and I try to yell at him as little as possible, but you always yell at somebody at least once. Because I always yell at my friends at least once, but I try to keep that down to a bare minimum. I realize that the boundaries are no touch, physical. I'll sit there and be yelling and stop in the middle of a sentence and say, "Wait a minute".

Well, it depends on what kind of attention because she can tell when I'm not the way I'm supposed to be, like in my cycle, she can tell and she doesn't necessarily pay attention to me, but my actions, and then goes and says something to someone in authority.

There are some things about her that I don't really like, but there are a lot of things about her that can really be appreciated. Pretty much every day when I come home. I ask her how her day went and stuff. She's usually really nice to me.

We get along great. We go to the park and I help him with homework. I forget all the time that I abused him.

Then the present is just me and my sister standing by each other. She's probably pretty comfortable around me but I'm not quite to that point, so I'm just okay. I'm not really comfortable. It's just like okay to be in the same room with an adult and everything else.

Sibling responses for the present following clarification were as follows:

On our visit he followed the rules.

I think actually my life was a lot better after he came back. There's a little bit of sibling rivalry, there are little quarrels over music a lot. Mostly, just little quarrels over everything. Those simple little things that we get into fights about.

One time around Easter I came home and I got a bunch of candy from them and I got a little stuffed animal that had a rattle in it and then I got this little porcelain rabbit and a basket of eggs. When [he] came home everything was settled because we had the set rules and everyone was going by the set rules.

He doesn't beat me up every day. We do a lot more fun things and a lot less annoying things. We are basically a lot nicer to each other.

He'd say that [our relationship] it was better, that we do more stuff together. I'm nicer and so's he. Most of the time we're happy and sometimes we fight.

We're in counseling, I'd be scared if he were coming home now.

Views of the future

Most of the children had a positive outlook about how their relationship would be in the future. The siblings, with a single exception, had hope. Three of the offenders were tenuous but hoped to have a good relationship in the future. Those who were less sure were at earlier stages in the therapeutic process and further from clarification. First, from the big brothers:

Just like getting along, doing things, playing games, doing recreational activities. Teaching him things that I've learned that he should know about. Things would be better so that he under-

stands that I'm better now, that I don't want to do that. They're not things that should be done. And I think I still frighten him, and I don't want to do that because that isn't right.

Then there's a picture of me and my sister standing together again, pretty much both comfortable with each other. I'll treat her better, I don't have the imagination or know what we'll do together yet, but I'll treat her better.

I don't think [our relationship] will look normal, but it will be to a point that she understands that I've done counseling and I know how to handle myself in situations. And that I did work to complete counseling to show that I want to some day try to build back a relationship with her. Life should be better in the future. Hopefully the future will be happy. There'll be some stairs to climb in the process but hopefully we'll all get something done.

I got in my car and we're all in there. My brothers and all, four of us, we're in there and we're just cool with each other. No attitude, nothing, just sitting there listening to music. I think that the relationship is the most significant thing because the past is gone, but my relationship with him will still be there. I'll be 55 and the relationship will still be there, the past will just be a memory. Everything else will just be a memory.

Then in the future that is intended to continue [caring], and there's a picture of us hugging and I'm asking how she's been and maybe I haven't seen her for a while.

And then in the future we're laughing. It's like we're laughing together at a joke.

I hope we will be friends. In the year 2000 I might start seeing her again. I'll be 17 or 18, kind of like the line of possibilities.

We're all together because everyone's close and everyone's talking to each other and getting along.

I'll probably treat her better.

I'd like to be able to just enjoy each other and talk.

As expressed by the siblings:

In the future everyone's going to smile.

Probably like he was just like an old friend. I'm happy, like when my big brother graduates from high school, if he ever does, then I'll talk to everybody. I'll be like hugging him and hugging mom.

I want us to play fight. 'Cause we always used to fight....

We're gonna get a house, we're live in it, we're gonna get the bills paid, have a swing set. Go to Disneyland, go to the the Bahamas. Cha cha cha!

[To regain my trust] he has to show me that he will never do that again. My mom could go out for a while and he could watch us and there could be cameras to watch us. He'll have to do things with us for a while. I have to gain his trust back so I can trust him.

[We'll be] going to the carnival, go to the movies, go to the store and stuff like that.

We leave home and I'm skateboarding away. Somewhat nice and safe.

In the future, him and [his girlfriend] and wedding rings and me and [my future husband]. We're just as close and we're basically the same relationship, except he's living in a different house and I'm living Hollywood, married to a movie star.

We talk about more intelligent stuff. We talk a bit more... we don't

see each other as much.

Things will be like they are now. I won't see him.

Children's pictures and explanations

Participants were asked to depict their sibling relationship in three different periods of time: past, present and future. They then explained the pictures to the investigator. The following pictures have been copied by hand and explanations added from the interview manuscript. The only changes made from the original pictures are the removal of any identifiers the participants may have included.

These pictures have been added to the Patterns of Interaction section as they highlight the dramatic interactions between the siblings and represent a compact version of the sibling relationship through time. (Appendix O Illustrations 1a – 10b)

Throughout the interview process recurring relationship patterns were disrupted dramatically on at least three to four occasions in most of the cases. Children, in all cases, spoke of a comfortable time with their sibling during the early years. Then a dramatic shift (generally explained by environmental factors) enabled the children to enter an abusive cycle. After that another dramatic shift, highlighted by being “found out or discovered” by a higher authority (environmental) helped to put a stop to the relationship as it was. A third shift was incorporated by the therapeutic/legal environments implemented for the individual and the whole family. This seemed to begin to change beliefs (meaning) as well as the patterns of interaction. A fourth shift was experienced by some of the chil-

dren who had (at the time of the interviews) shifted into a relationship with one another after clarification. This relationship addressed new patterns of relating, new beliefs and meaning made of the past and the present within the relationship.

These disruptions had dramatic implications for prevention of sexual abuse, choices included the separation of siblings following sexual abuse, choices of incarceration of young offenders and the need to incorporate offender treatment, and family therapy.

MEANING OF THE RELATIONSHIP TO EACH SIBLING

The meaning variable was two-fold, insofar as meaning was both some specific sentences that the offenders and victims offered about how they derived meaning from the relationship, and also meaning in the storying derived from their stories and metaphors that also expressed similar meanings.

The big brothers spoke of the difficult struggle to derive meaning from the whole situation. They acknowledged that it was a process, with nicer days and worse days that evolved into a negative experience between the siblings. Siblings addressed being fooled. They felt happy and felt the relationship was very positive, when in fact they were feeling manipulated and mistreated, or fooled, during the times before and during the abuse.

Much of the meaning portion can be seemingly divided into the different time period of the lives of the siblings: past before abuse, during the abuse, following the abuse, and at the present. Much of this sense of stages resided in the metaphors and narratives used. Thus, the siblings generally spoke about the good nature of their relationship at the beginning. Eighty percent of the siblings talked about being happy when they were born and in the early times of their lives. One

of the siblings was non-descriptive, she talks about just a picture of herself without any affect, without any information. One also shared that it was ‘rocky roads’ from the beginning.

Younger as object

The bigger brothers spoke little of any affection toward their siblings during the time of abuse. They shared that they had not been concerned how it affected their siblings. Even after leaving home it took time for them to miss their siblings or to feel empathy. This theme has been added to the meaning section to highlight the changes of meaning after the clarification data. At a point in time I was just like she didn't exist. There was a point in time where she was there, and I would acknowledge her, but it was like she wasn't there.

He wouldn't have said anything because he was frightened of me.

I haven't really thought about her that much, but I don't hate her like I used to. I realize that she hasn't done anything wrong for me to hate her, just that she was there.

I think that after the abuse she started growing a fear of me, and she started getting scared of me, because I could do what I wanted to do, I was in control.

I was jealous of my sister because she got all the attention from my parents and she could get whatever she wanted and she was their little baby and I was angry at her about that and I was angry at them about that.

During this time when it was going on, the feeling was hopeful that she wouldn't have told anybody about this. Before that it was anger, because I'd take stuff from school and bring it home and

let it out on her.

And since I'm the older one it was more of just I didn't get my way so I would hit her, and since I was bigger than her also, same thing because she didn't know what to do. Because I'm bigger and I'm a violent person. I don't know if I want to say that, but I was in a behavior class from the sixth to the eighth grade in school.

I have very little memory of her personality and who she actually was so it's difficult for me to really say. I had to get to know her after all the abuse and we got back together.

And then the abuse happened. That's when I started going downhill, not caring about anything or anyone. I was focusing my time on that video game. So I just started lacking care of everything. That's my own insight.

I didn't care about anything, I hated everyone.

Past Before Abuse

Of the big brothers, 80 percent (8 of 10) said that when their sibling was born the relationship between them was good, if not happy. (As depicted in the simple statements and metaphors shown in the charts of comparing dyads). One stated that it wasn't good from the beginning, one didn't really give it a meaning at this stage. The individual big brothers description expressed feelings very close to the same as those of his sibling. This changed very soon for some of the dyads to feelings of anger and jealousy by the big brothers and fear in some of the siblings. The first stories of being happy and life being good may be less of a memory and more of the family story. This may have been more influenced by the family story of the early years.

Considering the dyads and the description of the meaning of their relationship, how they described their relationship before the abuse took place, 8 of the 10 believed that it was a good relationship, or positive or happy in the beginning years. This feeling of a good relationship changed very early on and some of the participants express that. Some of these quotes that depict other feelings in the beginning part of the relationship were shared in the first interview before they told their relationship story form. First, responses from the big brothers:

We were like a normal family.

It was good between me and her, it was just other things with the family going on.

I think she paid extra attention to me just because she had a big brother, until the abuse and stuff.

In the beginning everything's all happy. I'm happy, she's happy.

Everything was cool. There weren't really any problems then.

I was jealous of my sister because she got all the attention from my parents and she could get whatever she wanted and she was their little baby and I was angry at her about that and I was angry at them about that.

We became friends and I felt protective of him and we were inseparable.

A lot of anger and it was also part of protecting myself from being hurt again. I became very withdrawn and intellectual. I basically put on a façade of being emotionless, like cold, dangerous so no one would either get close enough to hurt me or because they're afraid what I'd do.

It's mostly that I kind of, well I don't know where I got the idea in the first place, but I got the idea that I was a jerk and I kind of turned it into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

And from the younger siblings:

I put personal rights. I put protection because I had protection then from my mom and dad and everybody else.

[In the past] I was happy because I didn't know better. I was not too smart.

Sometimes he hurt me and played that it didn't. I thought it was a good life but it wasn't.

The sunshine is me when I was born, because I was happy. Every time I would wake up I would have a smile on my face.

Sometimes I would say that it was fun, sometimes I would say it wasn't.

He was nice at first.

I was loved because they all loved me.

It was a very happy time.

He was always jealous of me. A horror film because I was really abusive. If you think about it, it's like a movie rated R.

It was mostly rocky roads in the beginning because my parents were into drugs.

Past during abuse

For the time period during which the relationship was considered changed from the initial relationship, big brothers described it as a time of not caring, of not being aware of their actions, of being angry. One big brother talked about a time during which he seemed to be aware of what he had done and tried to stop it, but didn't. The siblings described this time as a time of self-loathing, no power, and great fear. They also talked about great extremes, such as the offender killing the family. Another sibling talked about wanting to kill herself.

In general, from the data it seems that the big brothers were generally numb, not consciously aware of their feelings, whereas the siblings were hyper-aware of their own danger and their own terrible situation, feeling that they had no power to change it. One interesting dyad seemed to be different than the others. In the change in their relationship the big brother seemed to be very clear that he was hurting her and "messing with her mind...stabbing her through the heart," and was glad that she told. The sibling stated that she was very sad and felt very upset about the abuse, had a broken heart and then told. Again, she seemed to be the only sibling noted that seems to have some sense of her own power and was able to tell, and the big brother was glad that she told. First, from the big brothers:

Nothing really changed. We still did the same things before and after, but there was the fact that we both knew what was going on.

I was focusing on my video game. I just started lacking care of everything. That's my own insight...Mortal Combat and how it reflected my attitude.

There were times when we went to the park and stuff, but there really wasn't anything good. At that time I didn't think of nobody but myself.

At that age you don't really think of anything, think of asking for help from people. You just stuff your feelings.

I used to torture her. And messing with her mind, saying it was all right and like that. I was sort of like stabbing her through the heart. Then the bird sort of symbolized her speaking out on the subject and telling. Just telling on me, I guess. I sort of thank her for that. If I didn't get any help I wouldn't be here. I'd probably be in jail, juvenile hall or something like that. You know in spring when the birds sing? Discovery is sort of like that.

Yeah, it was kind of like after the first time I did it, it was like after that I'll stop, I won't do it anymore. Because it's hurting him and it's hurting me. And it's kind of hard to face after knowing you did it and looking him in the face the next day. Like he knows, is he going to say anything?

Well, I guess, when it happened I really didn't know consciously that it was wrong. Now I know that and I don't really...it just seems like something that's not normal. It's not the correct way to live.

I found now that I would let her get on my nerves so that I had justification, in my mind, to be physical in a negative way.

We were not connected. Not really. There were times when we went to the park and stuff but there wasn't really anything good. At that time I didn't think of nobody but myself.

And from the younger siblings:

And then the abuse happened. That's when I started going downhill, not caring about anything anymore.

I was stuck and I didn't know what to do and what to think because everything happened so suddenly.

[L: Okay, should we put this here? Abuse happened here?] Yeah. [L: So abuse happened, and this is after the abuse.] Umm...bees. We used to do that a lot. [L: Did they sting you?] No, we had gloves. We would put a sack over our heads and we could breathe and where we could talk...and spiders. I know what a bee looks like; I can draw one, that's no problem. I gotta look at a spider. What am I drawing a picture of? [Bees.]"

He started abusing us, he turned into poison.

Me and my sister were, like, killing ourselves because of what he'd done. My sister said she wanted to kill herself. Oh yeah, right here I had a broken heart. Then my brother got taken away. Then my mom and me and my sister were a family.

He hurt me (the star broke apart). Ours is probably a roller coaster [relationship]. Sometimes it's okay going up, and sometimes it goes down. Up is good, and down is bad.

It was kind of like I started feeling horrible inside. That's part of why now my self-esteem is low some of the time, a lot of the time actually. When the abuse happened I didn't feel good about myself from that point on.

He would have said that he absolutely despised me and there was no way on earth he was going to live with me.

My conscience told me to [tell]. I had bad dreams and I think I figured it out. My dreams were trying to tell me to tell. That's why I kept having bad dreams. That _____ was killing the family. And he was going to. And in my dreams he said, "You tell the whole family."

Sometimes he was my friend, sometimes he just ignored me.

He and I still connected when he wasn't abusing me. We acted like it wasn't happening.

Following discovery

Another subcategory of meaning was the time following discovery to the present. Some of the sibling dyads were further along in this process and some were just beginning this process. The cycle had been stopped at this point and there was a treatment process going on. At this stage, the siblings were processing in different places, depending on how far along they were in treatment and who they were individually. Participants, both big brothers and siblings, spoke of being happy, of being sad, unsure, scared, or hopeful. Siblings who were further along spoke more about feeling different in the relationship. Big brothers were feeling hope of a better relationship in the future with their siblings if they could change—A time for learning and insight. The first responses are from the latter group.

I don't want him to feel [afraid], but I guess that's the way he feels.

Now, since he has so high expectation of me, since my mom said. I don't know that we had a good relationship, but I know and he knows deep down inside that it wasn't a great relationship.

I've learned so much about life since I haven't lived at home. It's good but it's not good because I want to go back home and be a part of my family.

I don't know, but I know that he's somewhat denying the abuse. Somewhat, because I don't think he understands what really happened. But there's not...I don't...I don't know how he feels 'cause like my mom says I don't know him anymore. He's different.

We're both different. So when I go home we'll just have to learn about each other, 'cause things change a lot in a year.

I've had experience, counseling, about anger and stuff, I just know I've got to do it if I'm going to do, make it happen. If I didn't care [about my sister], I would be here right now. Right now I'm on probation. I could walk out of here, I could be done with counseling, but I still care.

I would do my best in counseling but at the time my best was just worth nothing. I tried to do my best all the time. Then I started getting better toward the end, but for a long while I was fronting to get back a relationship but it wasn't really helping.

Before I knew it was bad because I kept it a secret, but I didn't really know how bad until I was living out of the house.

I've got to take time and look at things. I need to think things through and I need to realize the consequences of my actions upon other people and upon myself. [My relationship with my sister] wasn't good. It was very dominating on my part. It really wasn't good.

I hope someday that I can see them but I'm not sure if it will happen. I want to.

I never see her. I feel bad about what happened but I can't change it.

Second, the responses of the younger siblings: When I was trapped I didn't know what to think and what to do, because everything was happening so suddenly and everything. And when we went to counseling I got to know more and then as we moved on to other [treatment] places...that's when I discovered what was going on.

Mostly I was sad that the family was split up.

I can't get to the end of it until we come back together.

Happy.

He would have said he really didn't like me. I don't know if he likes me now.

I don't want to see him.

Sometimes I miss him and sometimes I feel like my life has gone on. Sometimes I forget he exists. I forget I have a brother.

I hope we get back to the heart, but I have to gain trust before I do.

I felt worse, because he went away and I didn't want him to. I miss him. I don't understand why he can't stay. I always ask myself one question before I go to sleep: I always ask, "Why did I do this to _____? Why couldn't I have just been quiet like he said?"

I miss him.

Present prior to clarification

The children in the process of clarification had mixed feelings. Those through with the process were positive about the relationship. Before clarification the dyad may begin to interact. They are not as far in treatment as those who have had the big brother write an ownership letter and take verbal ownership in front of the family and sibling. First, from the bigger brothers:

I hope someday they'll trust me again.

I don't know if she'll ever be ready to have a relationship with me. I think not.

I would hope to do clarification and have her trust me again, but I

don't know if it will happen.

He's not ready I think he's still in denial of what happened.

Since there has been little or no interaction the siblings have no present relationship to talk about. They are left in the past.

I don't know how I feel about him.

He's my brother, we'll be friends forever.

I don't like him.

I don't know him anymore.

Present after clarification

These participants had begun to interface with each other and, in this case, had all begun living together in the same home, with the exception of one dyad (last example).

I like that even though I've done something that nobody deserves to have happen to them, she still wants to be around me, wants me to be safe. Still has trust that I'm going to do all I can not to re-offend her. And if I do, she has the courage to tell someone.

I like my sister's boldness. She likes that I'm her brother. She's always thought highly of me, but was really confused when I abused her.

Well one thing, I guess one of the biggest things, is even though

I've done some thing that is so horrible, not even the creator down below deserves what I did, and she's like, "You know, that's in the past. I can forgive you, but I can't forget it. But for what I forgive you I will forgive you." And she's still my sister. And she's cool. We'll play around. She knows the boundaries.

This is about how big communication was (indicates one inch). Now, here, you can't measure it. It's too big. We get along and I think that she feels a lot more safe in my presence now.

We're friends and siblings at the same time.

I don't really know her. She's like really confused. For my clarification letter she goes, "He's a nice person." And I'm like, "I don't think so, not in your mind yet." Because she still doesn't even know me.

And from the younger siblings for the same time period:

It's also good that he was back...happiness, because I'm happy. Present and future it's full grown like a tall tree.

Our relationship has been kinda good, then kinda worse and then it got better.

I like that he's a good person now and that he's changed. It made me feel safe because it made me feel that he knew what he'd done and he wouldn't do it again or is less likely to.

He's funny. I don't know him. He's cool. He's cool but he sucks. Cause he's my brother. He acts stupid.

I'm nicer and so's he. Most of the time we're happy and sometimes we fight.

We're in counseling, I'd be scared if he were coming home now.

Views of the future

In looking at the future, all the children who have gone through a clarification process, feel that their relationship will be safe and they will have a relationship with their sibling. Two other dyads have the feeling that they are also going to be safe, even though they haven't gone through clarification. The clarification process seems to lead to a feeling of more safety, but two dyads have that desire even before that process. First, from the bigger brothers:

We're both living like happy first-class lives.

There's so many things I dream of. Like how I want life to be and how I hope things will be better. I just hope that when I come home I can just make things to where nothing never happened, but we both know that it happened, but to where he doesn't have to be worried with me ever doing that again, or that ever happening.

Honestly, they'll never be able to trust me again. They'll always have hatred toward me. There will be days when they probably won't want to see me or talk to me. There might be days when they just explode and try to attack me or yell at me. There might be days when they just talk to me, or they might not want a relationship.

The future, everybody's happy and safe, as safe as possible.

I think she'll be an interesting person. Even more interesting than she is now.

We're just cool with each other. No attitude, nothing.

During our clarification, if I missed something he would point it out. I was almost expecting things to be different between us after clarification. And we started having visits, it was like there was no gap there. So things should be great.

It will be a good relationship with warmth and kindness.

We're together and will be close and get along.

Maybe we can be close again some day after a long, long time.

And then from the younger siblings:

Everyone's going to smile. Nice, safe.

And everything's gonna be fine.

It's a big flower that's blossoming. But it happened and it's gonna turn into a twister again. And then when it gets better it'll turn into a heart and then blossom into a flower and it will rot...I'm afraid that when my brother comes home, he'll try to kill us again.

Probably be back in that heart if I gain all the trust and stuff like that. If I don't gain the trust I'll be in that mean, nasty dog. Safe and not very safe.

Happy. Because I'm happy, this is how I want it to be, happy because it's finally...we put back our lives. But our lives are put back together now, too.

We leave home and do great and are friends.

We're just as close and we're basically the same relationship except he's living in a different house.

We talk a bit more. We don't see each other as much. Nice, safe.

It's going to be the same between Mom and my brother. I'll just be the person in between.

Nothing's going to change.

We get along and we can talk now and play games together and we don't hang out all the time. We're very close.

Again, acquiring what they thought of their sibling relationships was difficult at first for the subjects to express. Seemingly, it was a new experience for them to be asked what were their thoughts and feelings were and descriptions of their relationships with their sibling.

The younger siblings energetically provided time to talk about the relationship. Many of their parents said the children seemed pleased to discuss the issue of the sibling relationship. Only one victim acted ambivalently about her brother, and that may have been because they were holding back around the parent. All the other siblings expressed a desire to talk about their relationship and a desire to continue some kind of relationship with their brother. All offender-brothers talked of a desire to heal the relationship and to develop and maintain a positive relationship. All offenders talked about the guilt and shame of what they had done and the desire that their sibling be safe and happy.

Comparing Single Sibling Dyad Stories

Metaphoric and samples of narrative quotes presented in time bites are compared between the two participants in one sibling dyad. The data compares perceptions during different times during the history of their relationship.

During the interviews the children designed the story of themselves and their sibling in a story path and then explained it to the interviewer. The demonstrations were quite elaborate. Only the verbal explanations are part of the original data.

The uniqueness of this project is its focus on the sibling relationship. A time chart was created in order to study the single dyad and their relationship. To protect confidentiality this study could not highlight a specific case-by-case, case-study analysis. The fear was that too much data describing the individual dyad would forfeit confidentiality. General data highlights from each dyad depicting stories, metaphors and comments through the time continuum. In this set of data some material may be a repeat from the categories of data under the variables. Sometimes a child only had one usable quote for a theme so it was used twice to demonstrate the dyad (Appendix P).

NEWS OF DIFFERENCE

For the siblings, the theme seems to have been better, safer, stronger, but only for 4 of 10 participants. The siblings who provide this testimony all graduated from their individual treatments and also had big brothers who were advanced in their programs.

The big brothers all provided themes that they cared about their siblings, they perceived themselves as changed, and they regarded the other sibling as a person. They all spoke of news of difference and all were in treatment. They have had interventions that have broken the abuse cycle and have had time to consider what has happened. They have had an intervention sanctioned by society and they have received messages that they must change from both the standpoints of the legal system and the treatment programs in which they were enrolled. At least verbally, they had accepted these messages. This was true of all the older brothers, with one exception, an older brother who was at the time of interventions still in an early treatment process. More than one quote is offered

Feeling Different

More quotes are representing the content in this category depicting a relationship picture. All big brothers are quoted. Different levels of change and insight are depicted.

Because before it was like there was no person, and now it's like there is.

Since I came home, my relationship has been, I'm gonna respect you whether you respect me or not.

I learned that a year ago I cared, but the majority of the care was like a treatment sense. Now I don't go to treatment as much, but a year ago they were still needing to watch me and I was doing meetings with [my probation officer]. Now I'm not. I go once a week. The care comes from inside now. I've seen past the treatment part.

Well, I feel like I can really be like a normal big brother and just

play with her and do fun things with her and stuff.

We'll talk at dinner. We'll have discussions and we won't be yelling at each other and interrupting each other. The other night we were messing around and throwing erasers at her and she got kind of mad because I wouldn't stop and she never said anything. And I said, "Oh, you want me to stop," and she said "Yes." So when I heard her say she wanted me to stop I said okay and stopped. She still thought I'd do it but I didn't.

So now I do my best to be a lot more conscious of how I'm acting towards her and everything. So I don't end up needling her and stuff.

I don't know, I guess she's different and I like that. I love weird people. She's really her own person, she doesn't fall into the whims of other people.

[I'm able to start a new story about myself.] I'm really happy about that.

Feel all right [about myself]. Sometimes I feel pretty horrible about myself. Sometimes I do pretty stupid things and go "Wow, why am I such an idiot?" And sometimes I feel pretty great.

And then I got out last year in high school and it's changed because they taught me that fighting's not everything. I won't fight unless I have to...kinda got soft through the years. Don't like to.

I've learned so much about life since I haven't lived at home. It's good, but it's not good because I want to go back home and be a part of my family.

There's so many things I dream of. Like how I want life to be and how I hope things will be better. I just hope that when I come home I can just make things to where nothing never happened, but we both know that it happened, but to where he doesn't have to be worried with me ever doing that again, or that ever happening.

[Now] I guess she's okay. I haven't really thought about her that much, but I don't hate her like I used to. Probably because I went to this program. And I realize that she hasn't done anything wrong for me to hate her.

Think about it, if I didn't have a sister I wouldn't get any of the help I needed.

But it was after doing all the bad things to her. So I'm just thankful that she was there...told on me. If I was still in that state of mind I would be really messed up. [It was good that my sister existed and that she spoke up]...not the part that I did to her, but like, how she told, because I don't remember. But she told my mom, I remember that, and she told my dad and that's when they found out, because my mom believed me. My dad didn't.

I did a clarification letter to her, saying why I did it, and how am I gonna keep from doing it again, what resources I have, what exercises I would use to keep from that. I will talk to her. I will talk to her.

Well, partially I claimed ownership because I didn't want them to suffer anymore. If I didn't take full ownership I might get in trouble [with the law in the treatment center.] But I wanted to have everything else so they had to know I wasn't lying so they could trust you in the future.

I don't think in the past I would have even invited him. I don't think in the past I would have ever gone to the mall. I used to just stay around here and play Nintendo.

[The turning point in my own counseling was] to me, it wasn't so much counseling as it was spiritual. When I was at the home, I was moved from five different places, and the last home was a youth pastor. It had a lot to do with counseling, but once I became a Christian I had to do what's right, not fronting it.

And I mean, and it's hard, because he does stuff sometimes that really ticks me off and I yell, but most of the time I really try to

hold my anger, and so with [my little sister] she sees that and knows I can hold my anger.

It's becoming a good relationship. I don't know exactly what, but I think he'd say it's already started to make the 180-degree turn in being better.

We felt a new relationship. One that was based on respect and trust.

I've learned that we're very alike in a lot of ways and we really can get along very well, if we both want to.

Myself, I feel like I'm a changed person by coming here [to residential treatment]. You really have to grow up faster than a normal kid. And you realize exactly what you were doing, why you were doing it and that you shouldn't have done it. What it's done to that person.

Without [treatment] and the juvenile system coming in, I don't think I would have changed.

Because it's helped me to think about things a lot more clearly without her being around. It's made me realized different things I probably wouldn't have if she was still around.

The following expresses feeling different among the siblings. Six of the ten siblings are represented in the following responses. Those siblings who are not represented were not as far along in the treatment process.

But what's different about him is that I can trust him.

We usually all talk as a family.

I talk more. I know what I'm saying.

[Now] I'm stronger. I know more.

[Now] I'm proud of myself.

We've gotten closer and I can trust him more. It's changed.

He talks to me more. On his CD player, if I ask him to record a tape for me or something, he'll record it for me.

Relieved. It's almost like having another...like as stranger coming in that we didn't even know, that we were just getting, that we were just meeting.

We're not exactly friends at all. We're brother and sister and we don't fight that much, but then again we don't get along that much and we don't really pay that much attention to each other.

I say what I want.

Now we're together and we're able to go our different ways. So my brother's going one way, my big brother's going another way, my other big brother's going another way, my other big brother's going another way, Mom's going another way, Dad's going another way, but we're still able to be together. Sort of. Kind of. You know. There's this circle of paths. We'll start from the middle and start walking out on our paths but any time we want to we can go over to each other's paths.

That really depends, because if I'm around him, like just around him, and I'm not getting advice from him, like if we're watching TV together I'm actually paying attention to the show. I don't know. He doesn't really...it's not like when I walk into a room and he's in there he doesn't make me feel any different.

I mean, unless he's like giving me advice or something, he doesn't really affect my feelings very much.

He's nice most of the time. Most of the time he knows how to deal with his anger.

We have a better relationship. I feel that it's changed a lot since he first came home and since he first left home. He's changed a lot since he left the home and when he came home it's changed a little bit and it's changed for the good.

I can trust him now.

I'm crawling out of...the abuse happened and I'm crawling out of it.

Investigator Note: This sibling is talking metaphorically comparing her own changes to those of a caterpillar's metamorphosis to a butterfly.

Happy. Because I'm happy, this is how I want it to be, happy because it's finally...we put back our lives. But our lives are put back together now, too.

Discovery, is like we discovered that we can be a family again.

And we broke apart but then we decided to put our lives together.

Well, I've learned that I'm lucky to have my brothers defending me, because most kids their brothers don't help defend them, they'll laugh at them and tease them and pick on them. But whenever there's kids picking on me or kids start on me my brothers will protect me. That's about it. I've learned that we're friends and like friends that have known each other a long time. He doesn't turn his back on me and he doesn't get in a fight with me. We have our disagreements but he doesn't get in fights with me or hurt me.

He protects me and he's always the first one there for me. Whenever I yell or yell at Mom or anything like that, he calms me down and talks to me. Whenever I'm doing bad in school, before he wouldn't help me with my schoolwork. Now even if I don't have a problem he'll just help me.

I like that he protects me and that he does stuff with me and I like that he treats me with respect and talks to me. He jokes with me and I like that.

I've gotten over the fact that he abused me, that's old news. It's really having pride in myself that I have trouble with.

Spiritual influence

Children also spoke of spiritual resources (a church, a support person who turned them toward a church, Christian rap music, prayer) as attributing to their ability to change and their dependence on their spirituality to help maintain them through time. Five of the siblings acknowledged that they were spiritual (Christian). Four big brothers highlighted that their Christianity had given them strength to change.

In this sample the spirituality the children gained strength from was Christianity. Probably the choice of spiritual direction had to do with the spirituality they had access to. In these neighborhoods Christianity seemed to be the religious direction these children had access to.

And I've been trying to live the Christian life that I never really had the chance to live in the first place. Like, I mean I had the chance, I just never committed to it. Now I've committed to it, for the reason of my family, and friends that, you know if they see if I go around with this attitude of "I'm a Christian." I may look like

someone that's not a Christian. But looks aren't what matter, it's what's inside.

[The turning point in my own counseling was] to me, it wasn't so much counseling as it was spiritual. When I was at the home, I was moved from five different places, and the last home was a youth pastor. It had to do with counseling, but once I became a Christian I had to do what's right, not fronting it.

When I started to get into stuff, like gangster rap, secular gangster rap. I'm still into gangster rap but [now] it's Christian rap. So after a while, I was just like, I had gone from Christian boy who had made a mistake to a person. You'd never think that I would be a Christian. An that's when I began to turn my life around again. I gave my heart to God. I mean, I still struggled with things, basically my feelings and my honesty.

Actually that was a realizing of a changing of my heart, when I got saved. That's something the Lord did.

I put the star there, because the star actually reminded me of my religion. Since I am a Christian, you know, star over Bethlehem...actually that's inspired my religion again, because basically they had killed him...because the abuse is like a death.

As a sub-category, spiritual strengths that seemed noteworthy in the new variable news of difference were noted. Four big brothers expressed that they had changed at least partly because of their feelings towards themselves through a new or renewed Christian identity . Four younger siblings (three girls, one boy) related in the interview to the strengths they felt their religion had influenced. One younger sister told the story of her life using symbols with reference to the New Testament and Christ's life. In this way she paralleled her own life experiences treating her sexual abuse as the Crucifixion and her healed relationship with her brother as the Resurrection.

Church was a less verbal issue within the interviews, but was present within their lives for one other big brother and three other younger siblings. In conversations with them, they related going to church but did not relate it to a strength or weakness in their relationship with their sibling.

It was interesting to note that of the four dyads with brothers that noted no spiritual connection were the dyads doing less well in treatment. Three of these brothers had been in treatment long enough to be at the place to do clarification, but weren't ready and one was too early in treatment for clarification.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this project was to further understanding of how children and adolescents perceive their sibling relationships, especially before, during and after a crisis, such as at discovery, the time when adults learned of the incestuous sexual relationship and put a stop to it. The essential contributions of this study will be that: (1) children and adolescents are asked directly for their own understanding and personal impressions of their relationships; (2) subjects addressed their relationships through time (past, present, future); (3) interviews occurred after the abuse had stopped and the subjects had entered the legal and mental health systems; and (4) both members of the pair, the victim and the offender, were interviewed.

A review of narrative and systemic literature provided three concepts through which the children's description of key influences on their relationship at the time of discovery (of incest) and the involvement of the legal and mental health systems could be organized: larger system influences, patterns of interaction, meanings attached by the subjects to their relationships). A fourth concept, news of difference, emerged from the interview process. These four concepts were expected to capture the primary content of the children's descriptions of their relationship.

In keeping with an emergent research design, the original interview schedule and protocol was developed with the expectation that it would further evolve as information from subsequent interviews provided additional procedural improvements and informational categories and themes. In the early interviews, some creativity and flexibility on the part of the interviewer is desirable in administering the questions and materials in order to elicit a range of possibilities.

Therefore, the interviews were regarded from a position of discovery and used open-ended questions and materials that would both evoke participants' perceptions and creative descriptions and provide procedural input.

This study was an exploratory investigation, using human participants as the instrument and intended to uncover and increase understanding of evolving human relationships, rather than to establish empirical facts. Thus, a qualitative research method was selected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Following an emergent research design, the qualitative data collected yielded data for early and ongoing inductive analysis which indicated a need to refine the focus of inquiry and repeat the cycle, collecting and analyzing additional data, until the desired outcome of a robust saturation of data was achieved. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

The investigator interviewed each participant alone at two sessions from 60 to 90 minutes each, according to the child's needs, at one- to two-week intervals. In addition, the investigator met with four participants (members of two pairs) for a total of four times. The investigator audio-taped each session, transcribed the tapes, reviewed them for accuracy, and then erased them. A written record of the investigator's experiences, understanding, and insights, without interpretation, was maintained as part of the data collection and analytical process.

Data was analyzed with a non-mathematical, emergent technique and the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Beginning with a randomly selected sub-sample of transcripts, the investigator systematically sorted through the data, comparing and coding it for thematic content, emerging themes, and dominant patterns. This process was repeated for each subgroup until an understanding of the similarities and differ-

ences between them emerged, providing a basis for understanding the internal processes of sibling relationships subject to conditions of stress.

The interview schedule was sufficient to access the desired information. The theoretical focus, the investigator as instrument, the time limited to collect data, and the number of participants that could be obtained provided the parameters of data collection. However, the experiences reflected by the siblings cannot be assumed to reflect all child dyads that have been in an incestuous relationship and then processed through a treatment process.

Structured and unstructured interview protocols utilizing narrative and systemic/circular questioning approaches were used that focused on the strengths and positive features of the relationship and on enriching the interview. Focusing on the children's relationship and on their strengths provided the children with opportunities to tell their stories in their own words, pictures, and metaphors. It is an interview style from a position of discovery, using open-ended questions to evoke their perception and descriptions of the relationship. During the first interview, the question was asked, "What else do you suggest I ask?" This question proved to be most helpful for both purposes. It allowed the participants an opportunity to elaborate and bring out details that were important to them and to offer suggestions about the interview. This also added validity to the content of the information, the procedure and the richness of the questions.

For example, in subsequent interviews it became clear from the children what other questions were important to them regarding other siblings in the family, what the participants liked about each other, clarification of their use of "nice VS mean," safe VS dangerous," and distinctions of different times and phases in their developing relationship. As the interviews progressed, the participants pre-

sented fewer questions or subjects to be added until it appeared that the interview schedule was sufficient for accessing the participant's experiences and achieving saturation.

The continuing problem with open-ended questions is that the data derived cannot be easily quantified. However, by allowing each participant to tell his/her own story, the participants were able to provide a clear picture of their perceptions of the relationship. The mixture of narrative stories, metaphors, and circular questioning provided a clear sense of relationship mapping, both through time and in relation to the dyad. It seemed to stimulate the children to talk and think about their siblings in a way that was neither as painful or traumatic. The technique encouraged them to be curious and to consider the larger picture (Boscolo, Cecchin, Hoffman & Penn, 1987).

As interviews progressed, it became clear that questions about the father, mother, the brother-brother relationship, the brother-sister relationship, and influences that had helped support them in changing were important and should be added. In addition, it became clear that the children wanted to process and talk about the sibling relationship in general, and the different aspects of their hope and disappointments as they continued to manage and cope, grieve and heal from the situations. As the interviews continued, fewer and fewer questions were added and it seemed the interview schedule was sufficient to access the desired information when no new questions emerged. The total experience of the sibling dyad is not reflected in this investigation, although saturation in the early stages of the data and the overwhelming similarities of the siblings' experiences suggest that some of the sibling experience was captured.

Moreover, it is suggested that the multitude and depth of the quotes provided in each of the factors supports the relevance of family systems constructs as a means to understand the experience of children in their relationships. It also supported the individual experiences of the children. This suggests that family systems techniques, based upon use of family systems theory and narrative storytelling interventions, constitute a useful framework in which the experiences of relationships between children following the trauma of sexual abuse can be accessed and described.

The dialogues provide considerable insight into the lives of the children who volunteered as subjects. Apart from creation of the theoretical framework for the investigation, it was of interest to note how the systemic narrative factors of social, cultural and larger systems such as family, neighborhood, therapeutic and legal system influenced the individual children and their relationships. The considerable amount of data that emerged describing their patterns of interaction through a time continuum helped to address the noteworthy changes the children had experienced. The meaning of their relationships emerged dramatically through the storytelling metaphors and the process of the interview seemed to give words to the enormous amount of feelings experienced again through the continuum of time. The surprising fourth emergent systemic factor, “news of difference,” established the ever-changing nature of relationships between siblings after the clarification process as well as their potential for healing and developing a new relationship. In the future 9 out of the 10 dyads believed there would be a positive relationship.

Metaphorical terms such as the bridge, the valley, and home that are used in treatment to guide the offender client to make different choices in the future are words to add to the collection of materials for participants to use if they

choose to help communicate their story. All the participants used the pictures of the cards for symbols and metaphors on their path

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The conclusion derived from the findings of the present study, as well as the design of the study, are a preliminary approach to an important problem. The design did not permit the evaluation of a general population of siblings who have had an incestuous relationship. Specifically, the study precluded the basis for either a sibling relationship or a sibling incestuous relationship since equivalent samples of two populations were not compared. In addition, the sample population was not sufficiently large nor socially balanced to the degree to permit generalization. The study design precluded a complete study across time since the participants were not interviewed pre- and post-treatment but were interviewed twice during the same time period. The participants were not interviewed together. The limitations of this study also included the following considerations:

1. A one-time sampling interview process rather than multi-occasion sampling over the course of treatment and beyond;
2. The sampling number of participants was restricted to 10 pairs because of the legal instituted by passage of a state measure; and
3. Lack of a cross section of population (only one race was represented).

Moreover, only a single method of data recording and collection was used. A method such as interview videotaping would have allowed analysis by independent raters. This data would have composed a most interesting case

study, but to respect confidentiality it was not possible to expand the database or method of recording and collection.

Since this study examined the relationship between sibling dyads, it also would have been interesting to be able to interview the two siblings jointly. Together, the two children may have produced interesting information from their interactions as well as greater understanding of the subsystem experiences of each. The principal reason for rejecting the use of conjoint interviews resided in the situation of the participants themselves. Some of the participants had not met for clarification by the time of scheduled interviews, nor were both present at the same time for the therapeutic meetings or visitation. For these reasons, interviewing the children together was not proposed as a part of the present investigation.

In systemic theory there is little difference between interviewing an individual and interviewing a family. For the present study, it is probable that the use of separate interviews obtained more information about the children's separate perspectives without being influenced by sibling views as each monitored the other's responses. This process encouraged the children to be curious and discover new understandings of their interactions individually (Cecchin, 1987; Tomm, 1985). It was clear that after the initial stress of the unknown aspect of the interview process, the children were seemingly happy and willing to talk about their relationship. They seemed to want to try to make sense of their experiences and the relationship. Parents reported to me that children looked forward to the second interview.

Considering the two bodies of literature reviewed for this project, the data fit readily into the three most prevalent systemic family constructs that were

identified to guide the interpretation and experiences of the sibling relationship with the other sibling. The three constructs were larger system influences, patterns of interaction, and the meaning derived by the siblings from their experiences. The sibling experience, as told by the sibling through the uses of metaphor and circular questioning, was the primary content. It was expected that the individual qualities and the role that each individual had within the sibling dyad (i.e., victim or offender) would influence and contribute to the explanation and what they offered as experiences with each other.

The interview schedule of questions was developed in the expectation that it would evolve with each interview. How the questions were asked was an aspect of the interviewing method. At the second interview, one of the questions was; "Is there something I should add to the questions?" "Is something missing or left out?" This allowed the participants the opportunity to state any details they thought were important and had not been addressed. The inclusion of this question adds to the validity of the results of this project. No examples were found that suggested that any of the siblings engaged in exploratory sexual encounters or that the relationships were based on equality of power and choice of a peer sibling.

The present study has generated many questions and implies a need for more research in this area. If the purpose of research is to develop new knowledge and to begin to define new categories for research, education and the practitioner, then the findings of the present study, even if limited in extent, represents a successful research effort. Specifically, the construct of this study has answered the research needs of a particular setting, The Morrison Center outpatient program. A study was needed to address questions regarding issues including key sibling relationship patterns within dyads, the changing meaning of the rela-

tionship due to experience, the influence of the environment on the relationship, the course of the relationship through a time continuum, and the evolution of the relationship. The present study was designed as a preliminary study that addressed these questions through investigating dyads.

The results of the present investigation cannot be generalized broadly but offer counselors a model for further research and practical assessment with the individual sibling dyads. By demonstrating the relationship between general systems theory and the sibling relationship and by introducing the interview questions of circular narrative questioning through a time continuum, a resource has been added to both the practice, the counseling profession and the existing state of research knowledge.

This study was not based upon the assumption that it would reflect the total experience of the sibling relationship under incestuous/intervened on conditions. As a preliminary study, relying on the children to guide the process and content, the redundancy of the themes the participants expressed suggests that the interviews were enabling participants to express experiences that were central to their relationships. Additionally, the early saturation noted in the participant's expressions also points to the suggestion that the process has fostered expressions about experiences that are common to the sibling relationship.

ASSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURE

Several methods of data collection were included to increase the "trustworthiness" of the qualitative design.

1. In the interview process, children were interviewed with open-ended circular questions; children were asked to draw pictures depicting their relationship through their art and then asked to explain the pictures; children were asked to detail their relationship together through time (stories) using picture cards, work cards, paper and pencil, paper and color pencil/crayons, and then asked to explain them. Hand-written notes and transcriptions of audio recordings of each of the interviews were utilized.
2. Several sources of information were used by the investigator: the brothers' therapists; participating in the recovering relations therapy group for both children and their families; interviews conducted with key professionals from the legal and therapeutic community to obtain their perceptions and for clarification of the nature of their interactions with the children.
3. Two interviews were conducted for each dyad, with a one- to three-week span of time between interviews.
4. Information that was obtained from the early dyads was utilized in the style of emergent procedure modification to improve the procedure by adding additional questions and also new categories of interest.
5. Regular professional peer debriefing of the research in progress was obtained from consultations with two specialists: an offender therapist and a victim therapist. The two specialists also regularly reviewed the results of the interviews as they progressed, helping to validate themes and interpretations. Additionally, the children's therapists were interviewed for their feedback on how accurately the general

nature of the relationships had been captured by the responses. It should be noted that the specific identity of the clients was kept confidential through out.

FAMILY SYSTEMS FACTORS

The three primary concepts that were selected from family systems theory and narrative practice were shown to usefully serve as factors for the organization and analysis of the data. These included factor 1, larger system influences on the sibling relationship; factor 2, patterns of interaction within the relationship; and factor 3, meaning making, or sibling interpretations of the meanings of various aspects of the relationship and changes within it. With the addition of an emergent factor 4, news of difference (also a concept found prominently in systemic theory) encompassed the pervasive subject in the interviews of continuous changes to the relationship.

The bulk of the data was accounted for by these categories. Additionally, the multitude and depth of the quotes in all four categories provided evidence for the pertinence of these systemic concepts as a means to understand the experience of children in their relationships. It also proved useful in highlighting the areas of important meanings that the children were attempting to articulate. Thus, it appears that family systems theory and narrative practice serve as useful frameworks from which to describe the experience of relationships between children following recovery from an incestuous relationship and the trauma of sexual abuse. This lends support to the relevance of these and potentially other concepts from this literature for further work in this area of much needed study.

It should be noted that the dialogues are not included in their entirety as it would be too revealing to maintain subject anonymity. In addition, some of the subjects' responses fitted more than one category, for example, social-cultural influences blended into issues the participants had with their fathers and mothers; legal and counseling influences relate to both changes in news of difference and spiritual influences.

Spirituality could be added to the influences in the larger system. They've been added as a sub-category under news of differences as in most cases the children offered it when they were talking about their own changes. A couple of quotes on how the mental health and legal system helped have also been added to this category to demonstrate again the participants offering that this had to do with the influence of a changed state.

TIME FRAMES

Initial efforts to design the interview methodology focused on a narrative of a past, present and future time frame and circular questioning. However, the children in the first three interviews quickly demonstrated a more complicated time frame and finer distinctions of positive and negative experiences. Although the original circular questions, drawings, picture cards and narrative evoking activities were maintained, it was found that in the narratives of their lives the children readily, without prompting or direct questioning, divided their lives into a five-phase time frame (the past prior to abuse, past during abuse, past following discovery, present and future). This happened in the context of the question: Using any of these materials create a story of the life path of you and your

(brother or sister) sibling. This question evoked narratives framed in the five-phase time frame.

FINDINGS

One emergent finding was that the abusive aspects of the children's experience with one another permeated the dialogues of the children. While lacking specific direction from the investigator, these descriptions were self-initiated and dominated their discussion.

To understand the whole relationship of the sibling dyad, it should be emphasized that the interview protocol was designed to initiate specific references to interactions other than abusive experiences in the memory of the participants. Specifically, the children were told that the interviewer was not interested in the details of the abuse. The investigator interest was directed toward positive aspects of the relationship through time. The protocol offered materials and circular questions that would facilitate natural and comfortable disclosure of whatever nature of the relationship consisted.

The participants provided extended responses and more detail than was requested. There are several possible reasons that this occurred. It may have been that they still had strong emotions and a need to talk about their lives together. They felt that the interviewer was a safe person with whom they could process. It may be that they still could not access positive times that may have occurred during the abuse. Further, the abusive behaviors may have triggered such traumatic emotional patterns that they permeated their relationship together and it was not possible to assess the sibling relationship, that is, this feature was the overriding effect of post traumatic-stress disorder.

Another view noted is how the intervention of taking the brother away from the home benefited him by supporting a change process. Among all 10 brothers, this loss was needed to begin the process of change. After they were separated from their families and placed in treatment, the brothers began to regret what they had done, feel badly about it, feel empathy for their siblings, wanted forgiveness, and desired rebuilding the relationships. At first they seemed to have no sense of the sibling as a feeling person and maintained a denial of what they could be feeling. In discussing the results with Steve Huke and Barbara Christoferson they added this:

“In our experience, separation is necessary, first and foremost to ensure that the younger sibling will be safe from further physical or emotional harm. Separation may also be needed before the younger child will feel safe enough to disclose additional information about the abuse.

In addition, separation often exposes latent treatment needs that might otherwise remain hidden, and may provide family members with incentive for recovery. For example, the younger sibling may experience a tremendous sense of guilt in responses to the older sibling’s removal from the home. The younger sibling will be motivated to free him or herself from those feelings of guilt, and can be helped to do so by learning to place the responsibility for the abuse and its consequences on the older sibling, where it belongs. The older brother may experience feelings of loss, as well as a sense of shame or frustration over the lack of trust in him. The older sibling will be motivated to seek reunification with the family in order to alleviate his or her feelings of loss and/or shame, and can help him or herself regain that contact and trust by demonstrating progress in treatment. In both cases, discomfort is transformed into motivation for change.

On the other hand, separation is harmful to the degree that it disrupts the ability of the siblings to have a safe and positive relationship. Every effort should be made to ensure that the system of professionals involved provides timely support for every step of the re-contact process whenever the family has demonstrated readiness to proceed.”

The present (the time of the interview) divided into two groups of dyads. The five dyads that had done the clarification portion of treatment started building the relationship. Those described the present as positive and described themselves as safe and nice toward their sibling. These siblings and their brothers both reported positive changes occurring in the relationship and in their projections of their future together. The group of those who had not done clarification (and the dyad that had done part of the clarification) described their intentions to be safe and nice and their siblings as hoping they will be safe and nice, but remained somewhat fearful. The difference may not be in the clarification process, but in the ability to begin to practice a different relationship (i.e. contact with the sibling). One sibling pair had had clarification that may have been too early. She still had great fear of her brother and responded like those siblings who had not gone through clarification, so it was not in the clarification ritual itself, but in the readiness. The present relationship of children who had gone through therapy to the point of a positive clarification and had begun to rebuild the relationship was presented as positive. The dyads that had not done clarification yet were less positive. The siblings who were not as far in treatment were not sure of their safety. Their brothers were not as sure of themselves and their abilities to be safe.

This is an interesting point. Treatment for these siblings usually hopes to achieve their recovery of the past relationship before the abuse. This data ex-

pressed the idea that there had not been a positive set of interactive patterns to return to. Nor does it demonstrate that the skills were there. This is a notable alert and it is necessary to emphasize that a careful assessment process is needed when treating children in similar situations.

After this kind of interaction pattern, children may need help to build the positive relationship they desire. A systemic view of assessing the patterns in the family would need to check the duration and intensity to begin to address the building of the relationship after the immediate crisis and long-term changes to stop the abuse.

The only point on the time continuum that varied from sibling group to brother group is at the “discovery of abuse.” The siblings report they yearn for the positive times in the relationship, but in sharp contrast the brothers did not express any concern about the sibling or the relationship until later in time.

COMPARING DYADS

When comparing the dyads by metaphor and stories it is significant how another category begins to appear in the data so that there is not only past, past during abuse, discovery, and future. Added between discovery and the future is clarification. In one case, clarification had happened but the sibling was still very fearful of the relationship and that her situation could keep her completely safe from further aggression. In this case as noted previously her therapists were alerted.

The division of dyads who were considering their relationships after the clarification process was 50/50. Clearly, they were more comfortable in the interview process discussing the positive aspects of their relationship as well as the

negative aspects. Participants who were earlier in the process were less specific and less hopeful about the future.

Comparing individual statements to their sibling counterpart, the perceptions were very similar. There were no cases in which the siblings expressed dramatic differences in what they were stating in the interactions, the meaning they were placing on the other, and social supports or the lack thereof. Even the hopes and their ideas of the future were matched.

The one place of contradiction was at the time of discovery. There, the big brothers spoke of being self-occupied and angry and the younger siblings talked about confusion, regret they said something, and a longing for their brother although they feared further violence.

When the sibling roles of older sibling offender and younger sibling victim were compared there was a match.

LARGER SYSTEMS INFLUENCE ON THE SIBLING RELATIONSHIP

The dyadic relationship was significantly influenced by the family, peers, society, and by the legal and therapeutic communities. The participants spoke of their parents' divorce, of the loss of a parent; of parents who were not as involved as participants needed them to be. They also spoke of violence between parents and/or alcohol and drug addictions; of access to pornography, violent videos and violent electronic games in the home; and to a lesser extent, of their inability to make friends outside the home. What was also apparent were the despair of mothers, frequent instances of aggression between parents, unequal treatment of family members, lack of a strong parental dyad, problems with other children

and/or extended family, and unequal treatment and aggression. They spoke of tough neighborhoods where they felt little or no protection against gangs, or cruel peer relationships. They talked about knowing no one with whom they could talk, of being alone. Only one big brother was known to have been abused outside the home and he suggested this was an influence on his violation of his sibling. The female siblings noted that they felt alone, were the only girls (in some cases) and had no peers in the neighborhood. This may have influenced the dynamics.

Clearly, the legal, clinical systems, social services, spiritual and other supports were an influence upon the dyad. What seemed noteworthy within the research findings is that these influences were noted by the participants as aiding them in a process of positive change. The treatment process and the legal system offered a structure that permitted participants to understand what happened and to change their sibling relationship. In treatment, the participants talked, shared, and processed their feelings (in some cases, for the first time). If the treatment process is found to be supportive, then the educational aspect of treatment helps them to understand "what happened."

In treatment, the offenders are asked to stop a variety of possibly harmful activities: viewing pornography, the use of drugs, and involvement with violent games. This change in environment is likely to be a positive influence upon the ability of children to note social influences on their relationships with their siblings. In treatment, families begin to talk. From the present investigation, the big brothers discussed positive changes in self-esteem and in feelings toward their siblings and families. In contrast, the younger siblings (victims) spoke of being relieved when the abuse stopped and they had hope for a future positive relationship with their big brother. (It is noteworthy that of the subjects of the

present investigation, the big brothers were in the middle of an intense, long-term treatment process and had probation officers overseeing their progress. Few of the younger siblings received long-term individual treatment. They did receive family reunification treatment and individual treatment to help them understand what happened, put the responsibility of the violence back on the offender, and rebuild self-esteem.)

Another larger systems experience factored into the sibling relationship of the subjects was “loss of time.” Time seemed to stop, sometimes for three or four years during the treatment process. Subjects spoke of not knowing their siblings and remembering them only before discovery. Younger siblings referred to things as unfinished until the sibling returned. They ached to see them while at the same time they feared it. It seemed by what they said that clarification was an important ritual for resolving and reclaiming time after treatment of the offender had reached a place where he had developed empathy for the offended sibling. Though clarification may not in all cases mean that the big brother would return home, the ritual of the clarification process would end unfinished situations that sharing the secret and the brother leaving home produced. The material expressed by the siblings may depict this state of timelessness while treatment progresses for the big brother. For example, consider the following exchange:

How do you describe your relationship after discovery? During that time?

“There wasn’t really much of a relationship until I actually came home or started in the process. That was pretty much how it was. I didn’t have a relationship.”

Understanding the developmental path of treatment both influenced the investigator's questions and helped the investigator interpret what the participants were communicating. Clearly, the treatment culture has terminology that is spoken among the therapist and the offender clients (big brothers) and has a generalized meaning such as discovery or clarification. Being part of the therapeutic community at the center was helpful in understanding these assumptive themes. It was of interest to note that the siblings were less familiar with the cultural terminology and used these terms differently, although the general meaning seemed the same. Such as the siblings used the card "Discovery" as a time of re-discovering their family after clarification.

Brother–Brother/Brother–Sister

Buhrmerter (1992) reported same-sex siblings as closer in relationship than opposite sex siblings. This area in the relationship in the present investigation demonstrated some gender differences within the brother-sister vs. brother-brother relationship, and some surprising similarities. All of the dyads communicated a desire for a relationship. There were no obvious differences in the desire to be friends. The difference seemed to be more in the simplicity of the relationship between brothers, insofar as it was striking that the abuse seemed to affect the overall relationship less. Little sisters addressed being excluded when there were two brothers in the relationship. (This may also be true of two sisters with a brother, though it was not evident from the relationships in the present investigation.)

When the big brother spoke of the sister it seemed more incidental and there seems to have been more distance. The brothers spoke of the connection with a younger brother as being significant before, during and after the period of abuse. The brother-brother dyads were significantly closer and they felt different with their brothers through the continuum of time. They were more in denial during the time of abuse and seemed to have more opportunities to play with their brother and defend him from others outside the family.

The sibling girls seem to pine more for the big brothers than did similar feelings expressed by sibling boys. The boys seemed more secure in the return of their "friendship," the girls were sad. The girls expressed feeling isolated because they were girls and they also seemed to need more reassurance in a relationship.

The brother-brother relationship seemed to be more established throughout the entire history compared to that of brother-sister, based upon more positive experiences brother to brother. There was more context to relate to during the recovery. This may be culturally influenced as there are more cultural opportunities for same gender experiences and there is more modeling in our society of brother-brother and sister-sister experiences, that is, brothers going to games, starting businesses. Or, sister-sister going shopping and sharing the care and birthing of children.

When the investigator began interviewing this big brother about his younger brother victim it surprised him. His work had been completely on his offending his sister. He commented that he was surprised to remember that he had also offended his brother.

Relationship Differences with Different Siblings

Within this project, there were opportunities to consider the individualized sibling relationships within the same family. As noted in the literature, there can be different profiles of offending behavior. In this research, this can be noted within different dyads within the same family, within the gender differences, and within individual roles, either offender or victim.

One big brother was interviewed twice, having two younger-victim sisters. It was noteworthy from his discussion that he felt very differently toward each of his sisters. For one sister, he perceived himself as her caregiver and protector. Toward the other sister, as he indicated in his conversation, he depicted a more hostile stance, competing for meager resources of parental attention and affection. He notes that his aggression and abuse of the second (frail) sibling was [instigated by the fact] that she was in the same vicinity, and accessible during the time of aggression toward the other siblings. This example highlights the different dynamic and profile of an individual's sibling abuse.

Differences in the Nature of the Offending Relationship

As noted in the literature, offenders use many different tactics to coerce or manipulate victims into sexual activity, as well as to maintain secrecy (Kaufman et al., 1998). In the present study, the same offender often had a different kind of offending relationship with different victims within the same family. For example, as noted above, one big brother behaved very differently toward each of the sisters. Hall, Matthews, and Pearce (1998) have noted that differences in the way sexual abuse is experienced by victims often leads to different treatment needs. For example, children who experienced sexual arousal during abuse were more

likely to develop sexual behavior problems of their own. This study underscored the need for differential assessment and individualized treatment objectives for victims of sexual abuse. Similarly, one could hypothesize that differences in the quality of the incest relationship would lead to different treatment needs for different dyads.

PATTERNS OF INTERACTION

Accessing the action in the relationship was difficult for the children. Many of them did better with the metaphors for action rather than sharing what had actually occurred at different time periods in their relationship. It was difficult to find patterns of interaction that weren't violent. There were few stories of enjoyable times that the children could access at the time of the interview and those were weak accounts of good times. Most of the children hoped to have a future of activities and positive interaction together.

Conceptualizing the relationship through time represented the way the children could communicate their relationship. Both narrative and circular questions provided a means that highlighted the change in patterns through the different phases of their experience with their sibling.

Past before abuse

When the participants were asked about their very early relationships with their siblings, all but one dyad depicted times when the victim sibling felt loved and adored. It was a time when they felt like they were played with, protected and given gifts. They shared that this dramatically changed after a couple of years together to a time where the brother sibling began to tease and manipulate

the relationship more and more. Both the younger and older siblings would talk about deceit, hurt, violence, anger, failures and manipulation. These patterns of connection reflected the day-to-day relationship. Although the interview specifically sought for the relationship outside the aspects of the abuse, it was not possible to stay completely apart from this issue. As in the general systems model, all action influences all other action and the children highlighted the past as also a time of arguing, name calling, and physical hitting.

At that period of time there was no memory of getting along unless it related to the abuse. Big brothers would bribe their siblings in order to abuse them or to prevent them from telling others what was occurring. Big brothers talked about controlling and spoke of their power. The younger siblings talked of their fear, feeling unprotected and confusion.

With respect to these issues of power and control, it was difficult to detect positive patterns of interaction between the siblings during the history they shared. The relationship seemed very shallow and depicted power and control on an objectified sibling. Clearly until after discovery and the future transitions, the power and control dynamics were the most communicated and prevalent.

"I had a lot of influence over both of my younger siblings."

Finkelhor and Browne (1986) suggest that these dynamics are experienced during and following sexual abuse. They outlined four "trauma causing factors" (p. 180) that they termed "traumatic dynamics," the list including powerlessness and betrayal. It was suggested that these dynamics are experienced

during and following sexual abuse and would have to do with a victim sibling having trouble speaking about what she needs.

Discovery of abuse

After the abuse is discovered (discovery) and the children are separated, there are a number of non-interactions. There is no relationship, no trust, no interaction, only old struggles with confusion, fear and regret that they said anything. Prior to the clarification process, during the period of separation from one another after discovery, siblings defined their relationships as “no relationship.” There were no overt interaction patterns. Some of the children were wordless, and their relationship stories seemed to be frozen in time. With no interaction, the time away was one of reflection and changing the meaning in their relationship.

In the dilemma of these facts of the relationship, the older brothers commonly underwent a transition. It seems noteworthy that the big brother talked about how the time away from their families changed their feelings toward their siblings.

Further support to how angry and emotionally distant the big brothers has become is depicted in the quote, “At this point she didn’t exist.” The younger sibling expressed a more sustained longing and often spoke of missing the older sibling. Many of the victims blamed themselves and regretted that people found out about the abuse.

During the time of the separation as the older brothers undertook treatment, the older brothers acknowledged some of their own transformation process.

They discussed the little interest they had in their younger siblings and how they had been treated more like objects than siblings.

To the contrary, the younger sibling seemed to miss the older sibling significantly, even as they also felt relieved.

Present before and following clarification

Those children who had not gone through the next stage of clarification still had little interaction. They were able to talk about designing rules in counseling about how to be together, the act of forgiveness, the acts of asking for forgiveness, the “no fights” between them. The beginning of interaction without violence, the interaction of getting to know each other in the presence of their families, was established.

Following clarification and the rebuilding of relationships, there were differences in perception that were communicated. Dyads in the reunification process had begun to speak about differences of opinion, enjoying movies, board games, the family, or family pets. They again spoke of their relationships as friends with hopes and dreams, complaints, things they liked and things they didn't like about their siblings.

Big brothers committed to giving up exercise of their previous power in return for milder forms of influence.

And as expressed by the younger sibling:

“When my brother came home everything was settled because we had set rules and everyone was going by the set rules.”

Children who had begun the reunification process talked in terms of ideals or with fear. They addressed that they would experience abusive patterns of connection similar to those prior to discovery when reunited.

The unfolding of experience and perception are very different when addressing the future, and all the children but one closely matched. The largest clear portion of interactional data was offered in two places within the story of their lives with their siblings. They told stories of violence in past relationships before discovery and they highlighted play and interaction in the future. All had a desire for positive relationships in the future. Fifteen of the children idealized relationships in the future with positive activities and interactions (driving their car, going to restaurants, visiting with their spouse).

Many examples of change within the dyad addressed structural changes in the family home (for example, no access alone with victim, other family members protecting the sibling, someone around to access as needed). Parents were described as being more attentive and setting more limits. Big brothers spoke about the loss of family (while away from home during treatment) as significant to their learning how much they wanted a family and their desire to undergo treatment to reacquire that family. Children talked about listening to positive music, not watching violence on TV or playing combat games, and the diminishment of access to pornography.

The children talk about experiencing a relationship with their sibling that was based on respect and clear boundaries. They seemed proud of themselves and note liking their siblings.

These shifts demonstrate the dramatic changes within these relationships and how interrupting the relationship patterns helped to support a positive out-

come. Figure 1 presents a chart of the children's experiences after discovery through a time continuum. It is useful to begin to understand the complicated experience of the children. Comparisons can be made across time and across the constructs.

Time	Patterns	Meaning	Environment
Past	Supportive very early, Aggressive, Defensive	Loving Very Early, Anger, Fear	Supportive, then non-supportive
Discovery	Aggressive, Defensive	Anger, Fear	Non-supportive
Present	Interactive on in waiting	Hope, Safety	Supportive
Future	Desire for interactive	Hope, Safety	Supportive

Figure of time with factors

MEANING OF THE RELATIONSHIP

The beginning of the relationship may be the time in history from which the most contradictory memories originate.

So at the beginning of the relationship most of the younger siblings and big brothers talked about loving their sibling, but most said there were problems even then. As soon as the siblings began to interact, many of the big brothers talked about the unequal relationship, jealousy, and rage against the other sibling. The younger siblings generally remembered it as a good time, though some noted

that it was good only some of the time. The participants elaborated and the good times begin to change rapidly, even though it was still early times.

During the time of abuse, big brothers spoke of their lack of feelings toward their siblings other than anger and rage. They looked back and expressed it as a time when they were alone and really had little empathy for their siblings. They spoke of being out of control and not caring about anything. Siblings spoke of this time frame as one of confusion, a time when they didn't understand what was going on, of fear for their life, having no protection, and/or a time when their brother hated them. They felt tricked and betrayed. They hated themselves.

After the interventions of the legal system, separation from the family and treatment, the big brothers began to reckon with their actions and denial. Some felt relieved to be stopped. Some denied the abuse for a long time. Generally, they spoke about treatment as something that had saved them. They framed their relationship in concern for their sibling and having a strong desire to make amends. Those who had begun to develop a new relationship spoke of the positive aspects of their relationship with their sibling and how positive they felt about them.

Younger siblings (victims) were apt to talk about the trap, the betrayal, and trickery. They spoke of the great sadness of the family being split apart, the relief of being out of danger, the losses of the family, and hope for a safe, happy, loving relationship. The time lost was best expressed as, "I can't get to the end of it until we come back together." Within this time some of the big brothers had taken ownership (clarification) in front of the siblings and the family. They spoke of the hope they felt and how they had learned about errors in their think-

ing and talked of empathy with the pain of their younger sibling. Victims talk of mixed feelings, relief, hope and fear.

Common to the time following discovery of abuse, when authorities intervened, victim siblings talked of the great loss of their sibling, the grief and guilt. The big brothers talk of being oblivious to the loss of the sibling or the shame of their actions for a long time period. Then they shared that they were then lonely and began to realize the sibling was a person, not an object, and that they wanted a relationship with them. The empathy the big brother began to show in their new interactions with the sibling seemed to help change the meaning for both siblings in the dyad.

Before clarification, siblings shared that there was no relationship or that there was only the longing to see each other and begin anew. Two victim siblings and one offender brother spoke of the present as the same as the time of discovery and explained that the future would also be the same. The big brothers began feeling a sense of blame, shame, and responsibility as well as a profound sense of separation.

Following clarification, the siblings' reflections changed. Only the participants, who had gone through the treatment process, and only following or close to clarification, spoke of a positive relationship. The participants interviewed early in treatment and those who had not experienced treatment voiced only a hope of a happier relationship.

There is a clear hope in the future for choices of connections with their sibling and good times with appropriate sibling roles between them. There is no talk of yearning of finishing the issues and of confusion. There is a resolution of

the distress and a beginning of a positive relationship. One sibling said, "The future is a star and a sun."

In the future the big brothers spoke of their hope of becoming close again, some for the first time. They spoke of treating their siblings better, of caring and feeling good. Siblings spoke of their hope that there would be good times together. They talked of their desire to be safe and to put their lives together. Some were cautious and feared the worst and one talked of being sad, as she did not believe there could be a relationship in the future.

NEWS OF DIFFERENCE

The therapeutic community assumes recovery of the loss of a relationship during a time of abuse. The data from children report a relationship of aggression, loss, betrayal and abuse, "a desire for relationship," or no relationship at all. So it may be that treatment must also assist in building a positive sibling relationship. Yet the news of difference data displays the hope of having a relationship and shows the beginnings of a positive relationship at the time of clarification after treatment.

According to the findings of this study, a sibling relationship has a great influence and impact on a sibling, especially upon a younger sibling. It seems by this report to be a deficit instead of a loss, leading one to question whether the process of treatment and clarification is important or if it isn't important to achieve any kind of reconciliation. What the children seemed to be reporting is that the treatment and clarification between the siblings warrants the risk and pain. It may be that building a positive relationship is more the term than recovering it. It was the unplanned surprise of this research, with the legal system

stopping the abuse and with clinical and legal professional help, that a new relationship could be generated. Thus, the individual discovered an opportunity to story his or her life differently, and this provided greater chances for positive future relationships. That fact that they considered that their futures would be positive helps to obtain a positive prognosis.

ANALYSIS

The following reviews and analyzes the preceding material. Conclusions are presented in the subsequent section.

Comparing sub-groups

Notably, the dyads expressed similar views about their relationships, at all of the five points along the four-point time continuum created by the investigator. A review of the narratives showed a striking level of agreement between the reports of the offended siblings and their brothers. In general, the siblings' descriptions of the brother agreed as to the degree of both positive and negative perceptions with the brothers' self-descriptions. Further, the brothers' description of the siblings coincided with the siblings' self-descriptions, subject to some expected differences of perception in keeping with the multi-levels of this trauma.

The dyad responses made clear and explicit distinctions between the positive nature of their early relationship in the narratives and the negative time that followed in the past and at the time of discovery. In response to beginning their story of their path with their sibling they all used the card available in the materials designated as "In the beginning." All but one dyad testified to a short

time in life which both remembered as happy and safe. Then, the same subjects (in nearly all dyads) expressed a sudden and dramatic shift in their relationship that was expressed in the narratives and pictures as well as throughout the interview process. These expressions revealed a bad time. Then the dyads referred to a very violent time before and during the sexual abuse, until the discovery of the sexual abuse and subsequent separation and treatment.

Eight of twenty individual interviews provided a clear demarcation along the time continuum very early in the victim sibling's life at the start of the violent relationship, the point during which the positive relationship was lost. Prior to this, for a very short time period (i.e. infancy and early childhood) it was described by both as a positive time in which, for example, they liked each other, when the older took care of the younger, and it was a happy time.

In the interviews, the children talked about violence, being treated "mean" and feeling in "danger." This was highlighted for the past by both victim and the big brothers. The big brothers highlighted their danger to their siblings as well. This agreement in perception within the sibling dyad is also noteworthy because of the 10 sampled, only a single dyad was inconsistent with the other 9 dyads on this point.

Comparison of Storytelling/Metaphors During Relationship Phases

Another example of saturation of data may be seen in the analysis of the children's use of metaphor and storytelling to portray their relationship experiences during the different phases of their relationship. In various ways, the children portrayed their lives together as a longitudinal experience with not only a past, present, and future, but initiated finer distinctions with an early past, a past,

a time of discovery, a present before clarification, a present after clarification and a future. Evidence of saturation of data was found when comparing the individuals in each dyad to each other using the phases of the time frame established by the subjects. This analysis found that the within-dyad comparison and between all dyads, comparisons revealed that the subjects shared the same impressions of their relationship experience at each phase.

The only divergence from this pattern was during the discovery phase, a time when the brothers expressed anger or no remorse or understanding of their losses, whereas the siblings expressed relief from fear of harm, sadness of loss of brothers leaving home, and regret for having revealed the situation. However, through time and treatment experience, the brothers' expressions turned to regret, feelings of pain for loss of their families and siblings. The siblings continued to feel as if in a holding pattern while wanting the return of their brothers, developing a desire for a relationship and yet, fearing that they would be hurt again. Through joint interactions, during clarification in the present time frame, the two children, again, shared the same perceptions of each other and their relationship. That is, they both expressed optimism toward a future together and expressed positive (with a few negative) feelings about the other.

Overall, the individual children matched one another's responses in the dyad, with only two dyads that failed to match the others. Comparisons between the siblings showed that they generally matched the other siblings and between the brothers showed that they matched the other brothers.

The dyads differed on one condition. Half of the group had completed the clarification and were rebuilding their relationships, while the other half were still hoping to accomplish clarification in the future. Each group described simi-

lar experiences to the others in the group. That is, participants who had not begun to rebuild their patterns of interaction attached little meaning to their relationship. The participants who had gone through a successful clarification process expressed success in the present and a positive experience of rebuilding their relationship.

The evidence of saturation of data and similarity of responses within comparisons of similar groupings suggests that the interview schedule and process was able to assess common and cohesive elements of the children's experience of sibling relationships.

Comparison Storytelling/Pictures During Relationship Phases

The lead interview question asked, "Can you draw three pictures showing me your relationship in the past, in the present and in the future?" The subjects had no problem using the blank paper to share the past, present and future of their relationships and were able to explain their pictures readily. There was a surprising number of references to power and control issues shown in the brother offenders depictions, while the sibling victims referred to significant trauma in their pictures.

The present was evenly divided. Half of the dyads had already participated in the clarification process. Interestingly, their pictures and stories were happy and depicted a positive relationship being built in the present. The other half of the dyads were still caught in the pain and confusion of the phases of the past before and just following discovery and their pictures and descriptions reflected this state. It would appear that without new information, interactions, and healing influences that children's states of mind remain confined to the past.

The uniformity of responses for each of the two groups is noteworthy as it suggests that the pictures were effective in tapping into central themes of each group. Additionally, this lends support to the assertion that responses made through these expressive materials were consistent with the level of saturation of data that was found through the use of other interview practices.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The project's greatest clinical significance is the illumination of the nature of the relationship of the sibling dyad. The findings of the present study support a concern that current treatment efforts may neglect sibling needs, especially those of the victim. While whole family research is important, the utilization of interactive conversational interactions with the sibling sub-system is an equally important methodological addition to family therapy research. This approach permits researchers a more in depth understanding of the actual interactive processes between siblings. It provides access to the particular meaning of the shared experiences for a specific sibling dyad.

Identifying patterns in the relationship, their meaning and the relationship to the environment (larger social system) has practical significance for clinical programs, including specifying needs of the sibling dyads that can be addressed in treatment and more effective techniques for facilitating communication, trust-building and disclosure.

Identifying the specific needs of the sibling victim in the context of the dyad relationship is essential so that clinical programs will advocate for the victim (the high risk family member). These include the need

1. to continue the relationship with the offender sibling,

2. to facilitate the sibling offender toward an empathetic relationship with the sibling, and
3. to develop a friendly and safe relationship that is not a relationship based on power and control.

In addition, developing standards for assessing the sibling dyad's needs for continued functioning in a family and individually can serve as a basis for designing policies to aid decisions such as sentencing and treatment guidelines for sibling offenders, funding priorities that give victim siblings access to treatment, and treatment for the clarification process and reunification of siblings and their families.

This project also addressed the clinical significance of combining the theories of offender treatment with family therapy. More importantly, it sought to determine how the voice of the child might be enhanced in family interviews utilizing circular, narrative/metaphoric approaches to evaluate further the needs of the child/children. Of even greater significance is the hope signified in the dialogue of the children later in the treatment process. These findings support a need to have families participate in a clarification process and some kind of reunification process that helps the individuals develop healthy peer interactive skills and positive feelings about themselves in relationships.

Practical Implications

From its inception, the primary goal of the present study was to be of practical use to professionals who provide services to offenders, victims, and

families with sibling incestuous relationships. The fields of psychology, family therapy and mental health show a serious gap in such research. A large portion of the therapy applied must be carried out in the absence of a desirable level of empirical research. The initial vision of the present project contained the assumption that if we could just give voice to children then we could learn much more from how siblings experience relationship. If they were given the means to express what their experience of relationship was like when adults try to help them, then adults could decipher what children really need and how to better help them.

The hope behind the present project is that children would not only be able to disclose enough information by which to better understand sibling relationship, but that the role of sibling relationship in the work of this field would be better understood by helping professionals. The first implication for the field from the voices of the children comes from the unanimous impression given by the children as to the overwhelming significance of the sibling relationship. Further, that sibling experiences, especially traumatic encounters, do have dramatic and traumatic impacts on each other and on the sibling relationship.

The results of this project have implications for professionals in mental health, child protective, and related medical, legal and law enforcement services. One is that the family should maintain its connection with the offender and should engage in a supportive treatment process that acknowledges the imminent role of the sibling relationship (regardless whether the offender returns home).

Professionals who are interested in improving their services to children would do well to consider the kinds of needs and requirements that are represented in these findings about the sibling relationship. Particularly, in the field of

family treatment with the incestuous sibling relationship, where integrating a deeper and empirically based understanding of the sibling experience is essential if this area of the field is to advance. It is clear from the children's responses that mental health professionals are doing well when they include the families in sibling work and to work with the siblings together as in the example of the Recovering Relations Program. This program gives the parents, sibling pair and other siblings a chance to process further and, most critical to recovery, to begin to develop a new relationship and a sense of a positive future together.

Major among the findings is the essential role of clarification and sibling relationship recovery. Following incarceration and treatment of the offender the remaining priority of the work should be toward the recovery of the relationship. It was clear from the children's dialogue regarding the present and the time after clarification as well as the news of difference discussions that treatment was positive for the individuals and the sibling relationship. Indeed, in the context of this program, the children were uniformly affirmative of the helpfulness and importance of the influence of the groups, counselors, family and relatives, and even the legal system that were coordinated by the program.

It should be noted that the effort and prerogatives of the legal and law enforcement systems have the potential to serve as a unique source of structure and force to enable the rebuilding of the sibling relationship when the effort is a coordinated one as was the case in the Recovering Relations Program. The legal system can sustain and enforce the requirement that both children and their families receive supportive treatment, complete clarification and recovery processes and stay with the professional effort long enough to assure a safe relationship with each other (regardless of whether they return home together).

This project found that the families that were interviewed became easily engaged in the project and the children were eager to process their sibling relationship and their conflicts and contradictory loyalties and needs. It underscored the critical importance that the victims and the family get substantial support and services in a system that currently provides predominantly more effort toward the offender. It may be that families who find themselves in this kind of situation in the future will also benefit from the information from these findings and the subsequent studies that may be stimulated by it.

The final implication is that the professionals in the system must conscientiously pursue ways to adequately determine what both parties in the sibling relationship need and want regarding the building of their relationship. The importance of developing creative ways to assure that the children will express, voice and dialogue about the nature of the relationship and about their needs and hopes for the future is clear. Such implications also direct our attention to the importance of methodological research that expands the tools and knowledge of professionals for assuring that children have a voice in healing and enhancing the sibling relationship.

Social Cultural Implications

The social cultural implications of the study are that the participants of this study cite the violence in the media and electronic games may have an effect on the choice of resorting to aggression in relationships. They say that they need more parental time, attention and guidance so that they are less vulnerable to negative peer influence. The effect of separating the brother offender from the sibling victim at home was to help the offender brothers rethink issues and en-

gage in treatment. The participants said that the intervention of legal and social services helped them to understand each others' situation and helped to restructure relationships.

Patterns of Interaction

According to the patterns of interaction, this participant group shared very aggressive interactional patterns. According to the data there were very few memories recalled that were not manipulative or violent with the sisters. The brothers recalled more time socially where they were together playing or with other children.

Meaning of the Relationship

During examination of past memories girl siblings in particular recalled not understanding the things that had happened to them. They presented a contradiction between desiring a relationship with their brother sibling while feeling relief from the danger of more violence and wanting to be safe. The brother siblings talked in a manner that assumed a close relationship before and after disruption of the relationship. The big brothers also made this manner of assumption about their younger brother. The brothers were less clear about their sisters, highlighting that they had been cruel to them yet wanting to learn to understand them and wanting to learn how to have a positive relationship with them.

Change and News of Difference

The participants who had begun or completed clarification spoke differently about their present relationship than before the clarification process. These conversations included stories about positive changes in their interactions and in the meaning they gave for the interaction.

All the participants except one dyad assumed that the future would be positive. In systemic theory this information would be a positive predictor of the future relationship.

Change Through-out Their Life with Sibling

The participants in this interview study spoke of five to six different time periods in their life story of their sibling relationship. They each started with the time when their sibling was a baby, a time when the brother was caring and protecting them. Then they spoke of a time when the brother began being aggravated with the sibling, when he had began to treat him/her badly. The next time spanned the period from the point of sexual abuse to it's discovery, when the brother was separated from the sibling victim, by being placed out of the home. While separated, the participants had different experiences. The sibling victims felt safe but longed for the brothers return. In contrast, the brother offender felt angry about being forced to leave his home but in hind sight stated that it was necessary to be away from home and to have the hope of a reunification process in order to engage in treatment. All the participants described their relationship as no relationship during this time period.

Those participants who then participated in a clarification process spoke of their sibling relationship that had begun to change and rebuild. These participants spoke of how their sibling was changing and spoke of situations of positive interactions and meaning in the sibling relationship. All but two participants anticipated a future where they and their sibling would have positive experiences together as children for the rest of their childhood. They were also looking forward to a positive life together as adults.

Nice and Mean

Definitive times when brothers were nice (in a non-manipulative way) at the very early beginnings and late (in the present) after clarification. Until then the brother and sibling considered the brother as mean. This correlated with the power and control issues noted in the dialogues. Nice could be being kind, sharing and giving gifts with the secondary cost of being manipulated or abused.

Safe and Dangerous

Definitive times were noted when the relationship was dangerous (the relationship until intervention), opposed to the time when the relationship was safe after intervention when the brother was not manipulative in the use of power and control.

Dyads

The following is a summary of sibling dyad relationship experiences through time (Appendix Q). The individuals in the dyad had similar realities to

those of their siblings. The group of siblings had a similar reality as the other siblings. The group of brothers had a similar reality as the other brothers.

These findings may be significant for the development of future legal concepts and the treatment of juvenile crime offenders. The positive outcome of long, expensive treatment may be a significant benefit to society, as well as to the individual and families. Below are two brothers' statements about their relationships. These are a nice summation of the development of a positive relationship after the legal and mental health intervention.

This is in one's awareness and our acceptance of the past that that's in our relationship now. The abuse happened and no one denies that. It's not like hush hush. If it gets mentioned it gets mentioned and nobody bothers a second about it. It's like it happened and now we're trying to make things different, trying to change things. It's an acceptance of what happened, an acceptance of the new relationship that's being built. That's now.

There are so many things I dream of like how I want life to be and how I hope things will be better. I just hope that when I come home I can just make things to where nothing ever happened, but we both know that it happened, but to where he doesn't have to be worried with me ever doing that again, or that ever happening. Like he put this in the letter, he said never, because he doesn't know for sure, but I know for sure that it will never happen again.

Recommendations for future research

This study is a beginning study encompassing systemic theory and the study of sibling relationships. The following recommendations were derived from the findings of the present study. The present study should be replicated, including studies which encompass the several variations suggested for the re-

search design. A replication variation should include a same age group of non-incestuous siblings dyads and a same age group of incestuous sibling dyads near completion of treatment to compare samples. A replication variation should include a balance of inter-racial dyads in both groups for a comparison or matching of relationship issues. A replication variation should include a larger sample of incestuous dyads similar to the ones in this study. A replication variation should include a paper/pencil response that compares and analyzes the family system in depth (e.g. FACES). Such a study would include an evaluation of relationship functioning using a multi-method approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data gathering procedures. A research project that includes video observation of the interviews would increase the information that could emerge. A research project that includes interviewing the sibling dyads together would also elicit new information and potentially more categories. A research project that includes interviewing the entire family, as well as the individuals in the incestuous subsystem to further understand the interactive process and unique meanings from the children. A research project that includes a multi-occasion sampling over the course of treatment and beyond. A study should be designed that includes an interview of parents and significant parenting figures by which to compare their perceptions with the reports of the children.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Sinny Glaspey



◆ **OBJECTIVE**

Use my organizational, creative and technical skills to help people in a positive environment.

◆ **QUALIFICATIONS**

Well organized, flexible, excellent trouble shooter, personable, confidential, quick and detail oriented. Wide range of computer literacy. Team player. Great people skills. Resourceful, tenacious and capable.

◆ **WORK HISTORY**

July 1996 - present

Freelance transcription and database management service

Provide administrative support for independent sources. Services include transcription, database management, billing, and mailing lists. High degree of confidentiality due to sensitive nature of many client's business needs.

1990 - July, 1996

Corporate Forms Analyst, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oregon

Responsible for all aspects of a large forms catalog (5000+). Managed inventory, coordinated with both in-house printshop and outside vendor for a variety of needs, including checks, laser (digital) forms, ID cards, claims processing reports, etc. Programmed high-speed, mainframe laser printers. Provided technical analysis, design, program coding. Supervise Forms Technician.

Worked with all levels of management. Served on project teams as consultant. Provided workflow analysis, guidance and support to entire corporation. Managed difficult situations and personalities to accomplish corporate directives, often in short time frames and with limited resources.

1984-1990

Administrative Support Specialist, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oregon

Provided specialized support for all administration of mainframe and PC software, hardware and peripherals for a large I/S shop. Worked in a team environment with four others. Supported technical and user community staff. Reported directly to Vice President, Information Services and also provided for his personal administrative support needs.

1979-1984

Administrative Assistant, Century Theatres

Assisted the president in all aspects of running small unique movie theatre company. Responsible for staffing, supplies, scheduling, correspondence, bookkeeping. We also pioneered the "Big Dipper" chocolate frozen banana and successfully marketed the product city wide.

◆ **EDUCATION**

A.S. Social Sciences, Portland Community College, 1977

B.S. Psychology, Portland State University, 1990

APPENDIX B

Lynn A. Fontana
768 Fern Place, Hood River, OR 97031
(541) 387-2382 lafrwp@aol.com

DATE: August 31, 1997

TO: Professor Warren Suzuki, Chairman, and Other Committee Members
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Oregon State State University
Corvallis, OR 97330

FROM: Lynn Fontana, Ph.D. Candidate
Oregon State University

In reviewing the estimates of the time that will be required to transcribe all of the tapes, I now believe it will be most efficacious if I were to use a trained clerical person who is skilled at audio transcription and, more importantly, who is also familiar with the handling of confidential files.

I have discussed this with the staff at the Morrison Center and they are supportive of this change. Furthermore, I have the approval of my dissertation research committee. If this is not possible, please let me know.

APPENDIX C



MORRISON CENTER
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

*Celebrating 50 years
of service: 1947-1997*

September 3, 1997

Lynn Fontana
768 Fern Place
Hood River, OR 97031

Dear Ms. Fontana

Thank you for coming by today to discuss your research proposal. I enjoyed meeting you, and think the study is most interesting.

As we discussed, I am impressed by the overall quality of your thought and preparation regarding the protection of your subjects, and only minor modifications appear needed:

- We clarified that it will be important to formally identify one Morrison Center staff member as your liaison for the project, and my understanding is that this will be Steve Huke.
- Regarding subject confidentiality, we discussed the possible future implications of retaining a "key" to the subject coding system, and you indicated that you would delete this component of your plan.
- We discussed the informed consent section on risks, and agreed that given the context and setting of the research the interview procedures might indeed cause subjects to experience some possible upset or distress.

Joy C. Bloom, President/CEO

I look forward to reviewing the final research proposal as approved by your University's Human Subjects Committee, and to having you work with us at the Morrison Center.

▼
OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH

3355 S.E. Powell Blvd.
Portland, OR 97202
503-232-0191

11456 N.E. Knappa
Portland, OR 97220
503-256-3040

10209 S.E. Division, Bldg. 110
Portland, OR 97266
503-252-2392

135 N.W. Mill St.
Gresham, OR 97030
503-667-2226
▲

Sincerely,

Gary Dombroff, Ph.D.
Director of Clinical Training & Research

APPENDIX D



OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

COPY

Report of Review

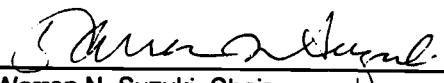
TO: James Firth, Counselor Education

COPY: Lynn Fontana

RE: Narrative and systemic interviews: Dyadic relationships following the experience of sibling incest.

The referenced project was reviewed under the guidelines of Oregon State University's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The committee has **approved** your application. The informed consent form obtained from each subject should be retained in program/project's files for three years beyond the end date of the project.

Any proposed change to the protocol or informed consent form that is not included in the approved application must be submitted to the IRB for review and must be approved by the committee before it can be implemented.



Warren N. Suzuki, Chair
Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects
(Education, 7-6393, suzukiw@ccmail.orst.edu)

Date: 10/21/97

APPENDIX E

**For more information
or to make a referral, please call
(503) 252-2392.**

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

...Josh, age 14, sexually abused his younger sister and cousin on several occasions. Josh was removed from the home to keep the children safe. Josh and his family have been involved in abuse-specific treatment. The family and professionals involved are wondering how to safely structure visits for the upcoming holiday. In addition, the family is interested in exploring how Josh might return home safely. Where do they begin?

Morrison Center Counterpoint
10209 SE Division, #110
Portland, OR 97266



MORRISON CENTER
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

for families disrupted
by sexual abuse

A program offered by
Morrison Center
Child & Family Services
Counterpoint Outpatient Program
10209 SE Division, Bldg 110
Portland, OR 97266

(503) 252-2392

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

How can this family have a future together?

The Recovering Relations program is designed for families who are struggling to build a safe, respectful environment after sexual abuse has disrupted their lives. These families often need support, education, and special skills to succeed in designing and implementing a blueprint for responding to the needs of all family members.

The Recovering Relations program is designed for families who are struggling to build a safe, respectful environment after sexual abuse has disrupted their lives.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

Who will benefit from this program?

- Families disrupted by sexual abuse who are open to exploring options for healthy future relationships
- Families needing to design action plans for safe recontact
- Families ready to implement and evaluate existing recontact plans
- Other professionals needing specialists for family recovery treatment.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

What services does Recovering Relations provide?

- Screenings for families exploring recontact options
- Specialized group therapy

Phase I: Design and planning for safe recontact

Phase II: Implementing and practicing the recontact plan

- Individual and family therapy
- Consultation/Case coordination to enhance effective service delivery
- Community Education
- Free phone consultation to determine options

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

Who are the program staff?

The Recovering Relations program utilizes specialists trained in the field of sexual abuse and family relationships. Staff have advanced degrees in social work and counseling psychology; many are licensed or certified by recognized licensing organizations. Staff have experience specific to both offending and victimization issues.



▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

What if I am interested in scheduling services or need more information?

Inquiries and referrals to Recovering Relations are made by parents, physicians, clergy, school counselors, other mental health professionals, law enforcement offices, the State Office for Services to Children and Families (SOSCF), the Department of Community and Family Services (DCFS), and Juvenile Rights Advocates. A variety of payment options are available.

Recovering Relations is offered by Morrison Center Child & Family Services' Counterpoint Outpatient program. The program is located 15 minutes east of downtown Portland and 10 minutes south of the Glen Jackson bridge on Interstate 205.

APPENDIX F

Lynn Fontana
768 Fern Place, Hood River, Or 97031
(541)387-2382 lafrwp@aol.com

Date; Nov. 30, 1997

To: Professor Warren Suzuki, Chairman, and Other Committee
Members
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Oregon State University
Corvallis, Or 97330

From: Lynn Fontana, PhD. candidate
Oregon State University

I am writing to request a change in the proposed age criteria for the subjects.

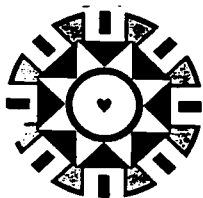
In reviewing case loads with the staff at the Morrison Center, they have suggested that I extend the age range for subjects so that a wider range of their clients are in the study. Additionally, within the current case loads this would increase the availability of subjects at this time for our study.

Sufficient numbers would be available by increasing the age of the victims to include 13 and 14 year olds and the age of the incest offenders to include 17 and 18 year olds. This would enhance my numbers and enhance the usefulness of the data to be shared with the sponsoring center. This will not change any of the interview protocol or procedure that is already in place nor the content of the consent form.

It would be helpful if I could hear back from you as soon as possible as Christmas break is immanent. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lynn Fontana



November 18, 1997

MORRISON CENTER
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

*Celebrating 50 years
 of service: 1947-1997*

Lynn Fontana
 768 Fern Place
 Hood River, Or 97031

Dear Lynn,

This letter is in response to your update to our staff on your research project. In reviewing the pool of existing clients and potential referrals currently in the process of being authorized for services, concern rests with the limited number of subjects available under your age criteria. Increasing the age of incest victims from 13-14 and the age of the incest offender from 17-18 would likely expand this pool and enhance your project.

Great presentation on your project. We look forward to this phase of your work.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Strother, LCSW

Rhonda Strother, LCSW
 Clinical Supervisor

▼
COUNTERPOINT
OUTPATIENT PROGRAM
 1718 N.E. 82nd Avenue
 Portland, OR 97220
 503/252.2392
 503/252.6234 FAX
 ▲



OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

242

Report of Review

TO: James Firth, Counselor Education

COPY: Lynn Fontana, Counselor Education

RE: Narrative and systemic interviews: Dyadic relationships following the experience of sibling incest (modification to application initially approved on 10/21/97).

The referenced proposed modification to a previously approved project was reviewed under the guidelines of Oregon State University's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The committee has **approved** the modification.

Any additional change to the protocol or informed consent form that is not included in the approved application as modified must be submitted to the IRB for review and must be approved by the committee before it can be implemented.

Warren N. Suzuki, Chair
Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects
(Education, 7-6393, suzukiw@ccmail.orst.edu)

Date: 12/11/97

APPENDIX G



OREGON
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UNIVERSITY

Education Hall 108
Corvallis, Oregon
97331-3502

Fax
503-737-2848

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT
FOR PARENT OR GUARDIAN
OF CHILD OR ADOLESCENT SUBJECT

- A. Title of Research Project. Narrative and Systemic Interviews: Dyadic Relationships of Siblings Following the Experience of Sibling Incest.
- B. Investigator. Lynn A. Fontana, Ph.D. candidate in Counseling Education at Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon. Ms Fontana has been working with children and families in different contexts since 1973. She has been a volunteer consultant for the Recovering Relations Program at the Morrison Center since January, 1996.
- C. Purpose of the Research Project. This study involves research into the sibling relationship from the child's point of view. The purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of how children (including adolescents) view and understand their relationship to a sibling.
- This research will be conducted through interviews with the children themselves. The interviews will be conversational, encouraging the child to respond comfortably and candidly. The study will focus on how children view their relationship before, during and after a crisis. The crisis in this study is the discovery that one sibling, a boy or a girl, is an incest victim and the other, an older boy, is the offender. The subject of incest is not the focus of this study.
- D. Procedures. I have received an oral and a written explanation of this study and, as the parent (or guardian) of the subject, I understand that the following things will happen:
1. What participants will do during the study. Participants will be interviewed individually with a parent or therapist present in a therapy room at the Morrison Center. Each of them will select and be known by a code number during the study. They will converse with an interviewer about how they view their relationship to their sibling. Although each participant will be a member of a sibling pair involved in incest with the other, the conversations will be directed at other relationship experiences and at the relationship as a whole.

During an interview, the individual child or adolescent will sit at a desk, on the floor, or wherever he or she is comfortable. Art materials will be available both to help them communicate and for them to enjoy. Each will choose what to say and how to say it, using spoken or written words, drawings, actions, play props, or other ways to illustrate experiences. They may choose to ask their own questions, choose not to answer a question or choose to end an interview. Interviews will be scheduled for 60-90 minutes. Each subject will be interviewed two to four times, about two weeks apart. The interviewer will audio-tape each session for research purposes.

2. **Pre-study Screening.** Therapists and the Clinical Director of the Morrison Center will pre-screen families for certain characteristics. The families are admitted to or actively participating in the "Recovering Relations" program at the Morrison Center. Each family includes a girl/boy or a boy/boy sibling pair. Within each pair the younger sister or brother is an incest victim, age 8 to 13 and the older brother is an incest offender, age 13 to 17. The last known offense occurred within three years prior to the interviews. Both siblings speak fluent English. The Clinical Director and the subject's therapist will approve the subject's participation.
3. **Foreseeable risks or discomforts.** There is a slight risk that subjects will feel discomfort with some of the questions, even though the questions will not be directed at the sibling incest. The questions and the interview exercise to be used are well established in child and family therapy as a positive and beneficial experience. There are no questions in the interviewing procedure that are seen as causing any discomfort.
4. **Benefits to be expected from the research.** This research is expected to contribute to a better understanding of the sibling relationship, especially before, during, and after crisis and change, such as the discovery of incest.

Understanding gained from this study may incite further research, for example:

- (a) to create an assessment tool which for therapists and other professionals to use in deciding when a family is ready to re-unite or needs to separate,
- (b) to highlight the importance of helping the sibling pair to develop a healthy sibling relationship,
- (c) to provide parents, teachers, and others with guidelines for telling when a sibling pair needs additional support and
- (d) to help guide further research on the effectiveness of treatment and on assessing when to complete treatment.
- (e) The results will also be of interest in more general ways to those in helping services: judges, lawyers, counselors, family therapists, social workers, child care workers, foster parents.

The conclusions drawn from this research will provide therapists at the Morrison Center with more information about what they need to do in the Recovery Relations Program.

The interviews may benefit the subjects of this study even more directly and immediately. The conversational approach selected for this study is well known in the practice of family therapy. Therapists, including the investigator, observe that children interviewed in this way have a positive and beneficial experience. They benefit simply by describing experiences in their own words and from their own point of view and by receiving attention from someone who accepts and hears without editing or judging. Also, talking about other aspects of their relationship besides the abuse and crisis can show subjects that there are good and important aspects of themselves, their lives and the relationship with the sibling. 246

5. Alternative procedures or course of treatment. There is no alternative procedure for this study. Children and adolescents will either participate fully or not at all. Participation is voluntary. Not participating will not jeopardize treatment at the Morrison Center.
- E. Confidentiality. All information received for this study will be kept confidential. The subject will use a code number during interviews. Tapes, transcripts, and all other materials collected about each subject will identify the subject by this code number. Ms Fontana will listen to the tapes and erase any identifying information. A professional will transcribe the tapes. Ms. Fontana will check the transcripts for accuracy and then erase the tapes. Whenever presenting the results of this study, only the code number will be used. Only the investigator will know the subject's code number.
- F. Mandated Reporter. While this study does not intend to ask the subject to describe acts of incest, any unreported incidents of incest or abuse which may be revealed must be reported by the investigator to the appropriate authorities. For the purposes of this study, such a report will remain confidential, as described in Section E. Confidentiality.
- G. Compensation for Injury. I understand that Oregon State University does not provide a research subject with compensation or medical treatment in the event the subject is injured as a result of participation in the research project.
- H. Voluntary Consent. I understand that my consent for the subject to participate in this study is completely voluntary. I understand that I can withdraw this consent at any time without jeopardizing treatment.
- I. If You Have Questions. I understand that any questions I have about the research study and/or specific procedures should be directed to Lynn Fontana, (541) 223-7719, or Steve Huke at the Morrison Center, (503) 252-2392. Any other questions that I have should be directed to Mary Nunn, Sponsored Programs Officer, OSU Research Office, (541) 737-0670.
- J. Understanding and Compliance. I acknowledge by my signature below that I have read and that I understand the procedures described above and give my informed and

voluntary consent for the subject named below to participate in this study.
I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

247

Name of Subject

Relationship of Signer to Subject

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date Signed

Name in Print

Phone Number

Present Address

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date Signed

9/13/97



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Education Hall 108
Corvallis, Oregon
97331-3502

Fax
503-737-2040

INFORMED ASSENT DOCUMENT FOR CHILD SUBJECT

248

Research Project: How Brothers and Sisters Describe and Understand Their Relationship

Interviewer and Investigator: Lynn A. Fontana, volunteer therapist at Morrison Center and Ph.D. Candidate, Counseling Education, Oregon State University.

Purpose: (to be read out loud)

I am interested in sibling relationships. I want to understand what you have to say about your brother or sister. I want to hear what you say in your own words. I am looking for you to be my teacher. I want to learn from you. This is an opportunity for you to teach me. Hopefully that will teach other people about how brothers and sisters and brothers and brothers get along with each other.

Procedures:

You're here because there have been some problems in the relationship between you and your brother or sister. In this study, I am looking at the rest of your relationship. How you describe and remember or understand your relationship. I am more interested in what you think of your brother/brother or brother/sister relationship. What was good about it? What did you do that was fun? What was difficult?

When we talk, I want to tape your voice. Then someone, either me or another person that I trust, will type it up so I can read it and think about it. No one else will read it. I am going to change your name so that no one will know who it is. Would that be OK with you? For me to sit down with you and tape record you?

Later, when I have collected all of the statements from all of the kids and studied them, I will report what I find, in general, to other therapists so they will understand better how to be more helpful to kids.

Confidentiality:

What you say to me is confidential. The tape will be destroyed and I am not going to tell anyone what you say. I won't even tell your therapist what you say to me specifically. I might say to your therapist that you are working very hard or that you seem upset that



OREGON
STATE
UNIVERSITY

Education Hall 108
Corvallis, Oregon
97331-3502

Fax
503-737-2040

INFORMED ASSENT DOCUMENT FOR ADOLESCENT SUBJECT

Research Project: How Siblings Describe and Understand Their Relationship

Interviewer and Investigator: Lynn A. Fontana, volunteer therapist at Morrison Center and Ph.D. Candidate, Counseling Education, Oregon State University.

Purpose: (-to be read out loud)

I am interested in sibling relationships. I want to understand what you have to say about your brother or sister. I want to hear what you say in your own words. I am looking for you to be my teacher. I want to learn from you. This is an opportunity for you to teach me. Hopefully that will teach other people about how brothers and sisters and brothers and brothers get along with each other.

Procedures:

You're here because there have been some problems in the relationship between you and your brother or sister. In this study, I am looking at the rest of your relationship. How you describe and remember or understand your relationship. I am more interested in what you think of your brother/brother or brother/sister relationship. What was good about it? What did you do that was fun? What was difficult?

When we talk, I want to tape your voice. Then someone, either me or another person that I trust, will type it up so I can read it and think about it. No one else will read it. I am going to change your name so that no one will know who it is. Would that be OK with you? For me to sit down with you and tape record you?

Later, when I have collected all of the statements from all of the kids and studied them, I will report what I find, in general, to other therapists so they will understand better how to be more helpful to kids.

Confidentiality:

What you say to me is confidential. The tape will be destroyed and I am not going to tell anyone what you say. I won't even tell your therapist what you say to me specifically. I might say to your therapist that you are working very hard or that you seem upset that

day, or something on that level. However, you can talk to anyone you want to about what you say to me.

And, you understand, I do have a rule that, if you are going to hurt yourself or someone else, or are very upset, I would have to report that to your therapist.

Mandated Reporter:

You understand, however, that I am a mandated reporter. Should you mention another victim, I would have to report that to your therapist.

Voluntary Consent:

And so, if you sign this, it means you are giving me permission to learn from you. And, you can always tell me that you don't want to do this or that you don't want to answer certain questions, or you want to stop, or you need a break.

Do you have any questions for me? Does this make sense to you? Can I explain it in a different way? Would that be helpful?

Understanding and Compliance:

I agree to be part of this project and to let Lynn interview me. I understand that I have full choice in this and that it will not affect the rest of my treatment.

Signature of Subject

Date Signed

Name in Print

Phone Number

Present Address

Signature of Witness

Date Signed

Name in Print

Relationship to Subject

Signature of Investigator

Date Signed

9/13/97

APPENDIX H

Demographic Information on Participant Big brothers collected from the therapist by Questionnaire (Attachment # 11)

	Bb1	Bb2	Bb3	Bb4	Bb5	Bb6	Bb7	Bb8	Bb9	Bb10
Discovery	5/93 or 6/93	Once earlier And 3/95	8/26/97	10/1/95	12/2/94	12/2/94	5/93 of 6/93	3/95	3/95	1/13/97
Treatment Started	2/16/94	7/1/95	9/15/96	3/21/96	1/30/96	1/30/96	2/16/94	10/14/93	10/14/93	10/14/97
Time in Treatment	4 yr. 2 mos.	2 years	1 yr. 3 mos.	1 yr. 9 mos.	2 yrs. Inconsistent	2 yrs. Inconsistent	3 yrs.6 mos.	1 yr. 9 mos.	1 yr. 9 mos.	4 months
Sibling Treatment	3-4 yrs.	Yes	1 yr. 1 mo.	9 weeks	1/30/96 (2 years)	1/30/96 (2 years)	3-4 yrs.	Yes	Yes	0
Victims Outside home	1 cousin	0	0	2 girls, 1 boy	0	0	2 other females 1 other male cousin	Sexually abusive to same age females	Sexually abusive to same age females	0
Victims At Home	2 siblings	1 sibling	1 sibling	1 sib physically abused another	2 siblings	2 siblings	2 siblings	2 siblings	2 siblings	1 sibling
Date of Clarification	3/29/95 began	11/13/95 began	12/17/97 N	10/23/97 N	When sibs are ready N	When sibs are ready N	3/29/95 began	12/3/96	5/20/97	No date yet N
Date for Graduation	4/27/98	6/3/97	6 months	4 months	2 months	2 months	8/6/97	7/8/97 met minimal requirements	7/8/97 met minimal requirements	No date yet
Plan to return home	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Bb1 = Big brother #1
Bb2 = Big brother #2
Bb3 = Big brother #3

Bb4 = Big brother #4
Bb5 = Big brother #5
Bb6 = Big brother #6

Bb7 = Big brother #7
Bb8 = Big brother #8
Bb9 = Big brother #9

Bb10 = Big brother #10
(This data represents Big brothers of all 10 dyads
one Big brother was represented twice)

APPENDIX I

Questionnaire for therapist on brother
(Given to therapists to collect demographic information)

Name _____

1. How long ago was the discovery of abuse?
2. When did treatment begin?
3. How long in treatment?
4. Did the sibling get treatment?
5. How long in treatment?
6. Number of victims outside home.
7. Number of family members.
8. Date of clarification.
9. Date of graduation.
10. Is he planned to return home?

APPENDIX J

Questions – Initial Set

1. How would your sibling say the family would describe your relationship?
2. How would your sibling say the abuse was learned?
3. When you're around him/her how would your other sibling describe how you feel?
4. When would your sibling say you'd say that he/she pays attention to you?
5. How would your sibling say your friends' sibling relationships compare to yours?
6. Do you think your relationship is better in the past or now?
7. How has the relationship changed?
8. What do you think your sibling would say about your relationship? Now? Before?
9. How would you describe your relationship in a metaphor? Before? Now?

APPENDIX K

Questions – Second Set

1. What would your sibling say your Dad would say about your relationship now? Before? Mom?
2. When you think of your story with your sib, the story of your life together, how would you map your path? You can use any of these materials that you like or create your own.
3. What kinds of things do you like about your sibling? What do you like to do with your sibling?
4. How would your sibling say that you know if she/he is okay? (for big brothers)
5. How do you think your other sibling would say the relationship with your sibling effected their relationship with you?
6. What do you think your relationship will be like when you are 35 years old?
7. Thinking back over what all we've talked about, what stands out for you?
8. When you compare how you would have handled this problem a year ago with what you are now doing, what have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about your relationship?
9. What do you think the most significant thing is that we've talked about?
10. How would you say your sibling would say you feel about them now? What would your sibling say that you'd say about how your sibling feels now?

APPENDIX L

**Cards with Metaphorical Words on them
(Taken from the Recovering Relations Materials)**

260

These terms were used in the Recovering Relations Program with the Big Brothers and parents. The big brothers used these in a maze experience to aid in sharing with their parents what had been going on in the home from a time before discovery to the present time. The big brothers were already familiar with the metaphors from their individual treatment processes.

The bridge

Rocky roads

Discovery

Paths

The cliff

Separation

Ownership

Abuse happened

Half built bridge

The valley

Paths

A resting place

Home

The drama

In the beginning

Protection

APPENDIX M

APPENDIX N

Themes Not Used

1. Brother kidnapped by a parent
2. Relationship with father issues
3. Theme of abuse in generation
4. Taking care of sibling because parent can't
5. About self – I'm not normal
About telling, coping and hitting
6. Distinctions between friends and family
7. On certain brother's personality
8. Death in family
9. Sister disabled
10. Brother disabled
11. Other sib stories
12. Didn't follow what parents said
13. Denied and blocked out
14. Self
15. Vigilance
16. About abuse
17. Mom talks about daughter anger
18. Boundaries theme unused on daily life

APPENDIX O

1a



266

Past

Okay, in the past it shows me a picture of me pushing my sister down the stairs and her crying, which was what I did sometimes. Abusive behavior. And then 'pow' means like everything blew up.

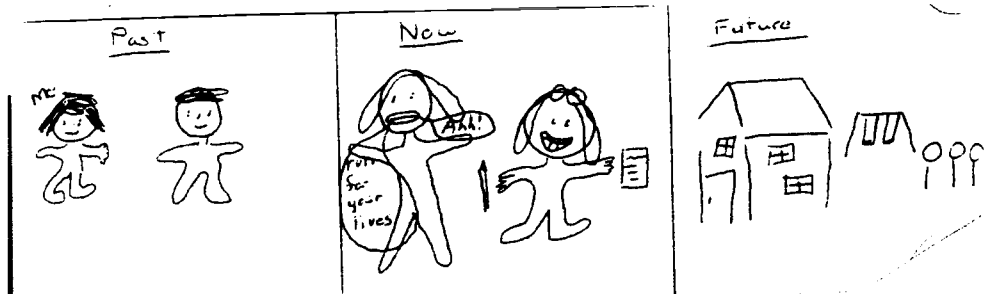
Present

And then the present is just me and my sister standing by each other. She's probably pretty comfortable around me but I'm not quite to that point, so I'm just okay. I'm not really uncomfortable, but I'm not really comfortable. It's just like okay to be in the same room with an adult and everything else. So that's pretty good. And then there's a picture of me and my sister standing together again, pretty much both comfortable with each other.

Future

I'll probably treat her better.

1b



Past

He used to take stuff from me. And I didn't say anything. I just went along with it and acted like there was nothing wrong.

Present

Big brother's not here. Big brother's right here. And I'm way over here. [There's] just lots of stuff in the middle. Mars [is between me and Big Brother. A very large space].

Future

We're gonna get a house, we're gonna live in it, we're gonna get the bills paid, have a swing set. Go to Disneyland, go to the Bahamas. Cha cha cha! [Together as a family.]

Past	Present	Future
Happy Fun Exciting Joyful Bugged me Annoying	Scared Mad Upset At times happy Shame Shameful Lonely Missing	Exciting Fun to be around Nice Warm relationship Exciting fun Campouts

Past

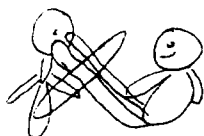
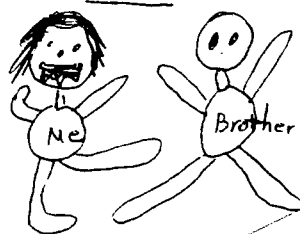
Happy times, fun times, exciting and joyful to be around. I never pictured myself sexually abusing my little brother. He was annoying. Just a couple of words...he was scared. That we were both mad, upset. At times happy. Shame and shameful. I would put mostly shameful for knowing what was going on and not bringing it out and getting help earlier.

Present

I don't know if we're past it. I don't know if he's past scared because he told my mom one time, "Geez, he's so big and this and that." It seems like he's scared and he thinks he should be but he shouldn't be. Nobody should be. It's not that I'm scared of him. That would be kind of stupid, but in ways it's kind of different. It's kind of hard to explain. I wasn't necessarily scared but I was mad at myself.

Future

Exciting. Fun to be around. Nice. Warm relationship. Exciting and campouts.

PastPresentFuture**Past**

The Sony Playstation is right here. This is the screen TV and that's power, "EJ" is for eject. There's me and there's Big Brother. [We're playing a game]. You can't see our heads. That's our heads, back far. [We're getting along]. Okay, let's draw them fighting. The guys fighting on [game1]. Yeah, he would cheat [and I'd get mad at him]. All you have to do is push the secret buttons like other people don't know how to do. Fatality.

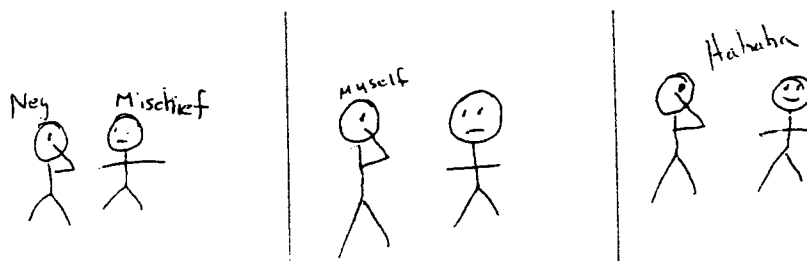
Present

Draw a roller coaster. We're in the rollercoaster on the Fourth of July. Happy.

Future

I want us to play fight. 'Cause we always used to fight, ahh, what would you call it if you were in a ring and you really fight? Killer fight. Kung fu. Took Taekwondo. Yeah, martial arts. Yeah, I know as much as Bruce Lee. You know nobody in the whole world could catch me? Because I can jump over a lot of stuff. I know a way to jump over that fence. That fence right there. It's fast, it wouldn't even take a minute to jump over that fence.

This is the ring. We always play fight sometimes. [I] want [my] brother to have long hair? But this is just for pretends. [I don't kill him], I'm gonna be dead. Lookit! I'm doing the splits. I don't want this to really happen. But, umm, I'll draw another picture of...here's the ring of where Big Brother's gonna kill me. Okay, there's gonna be two rings. This is a practice and this is a killer. I got Nintendo, Big Brother's got Nintendo and my mom got Nintendo. Okay, and here's the killer fight. Don't look this time. He jumped on my ribs. You can't see him because he's all messed up. His feet on his ribs. I'm dead on the ground. Those are my two ribs right there. That's pretends. What I want to happen in the future is to have a Sony Playstation again and have [game 1] again. Live together. Going places.

**Past**

We played, got in trouble with the parents. Really we got along.

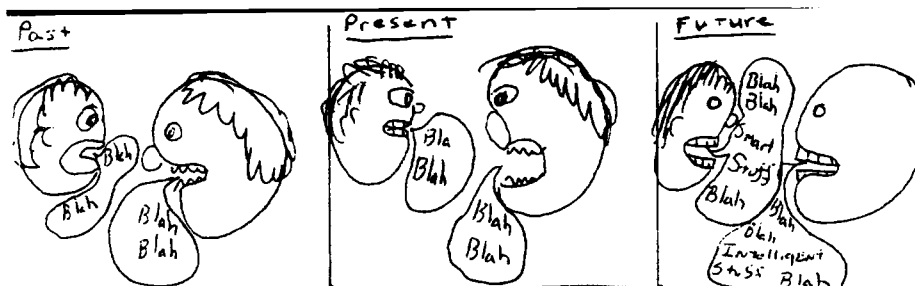
Present

By myself. We still talk all the time.

Future

Good friends laughing and talking

3b

**Past**

We just kind of talked about anything. Every once in a while we would get mad at each other. Not really yelling, just talking. I don't know why we look angry, but we aren't supposed to be angry.

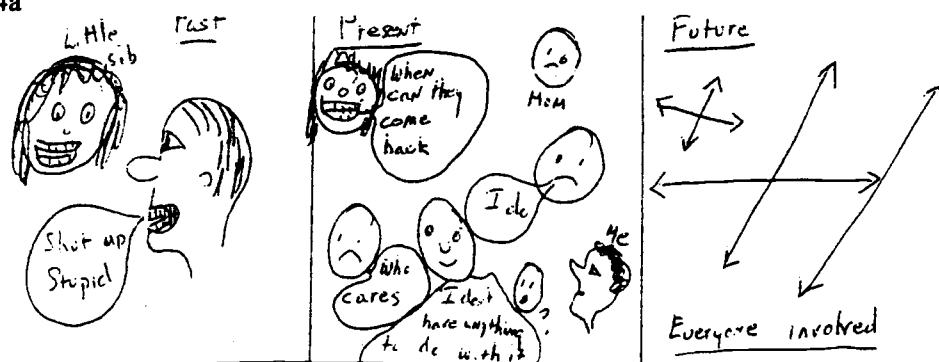
Present

We're just kind of sitting there. We look angry in all of them. [We say] blah,blah,blah. Just talking about whatever.

Future

I was going to put intelligent stuff in there too, we talk about more intelligent stuff. I guess I should have put 'intelligent, blah, intelligent, blah.' We talk a bit more. I guess I should have pushed us a bit further apart because we don't see each other as much.

4a



270

Past

Before abuse, I've got her saying, "Blah, blah, blah." And I'm saying, "Shut up." And [our older brother] is saying, "Yeah, shut up." And [our oldest brother] is saying, "I'm not involved." And we fought all the time and we were always angry at each other and we hated each other.

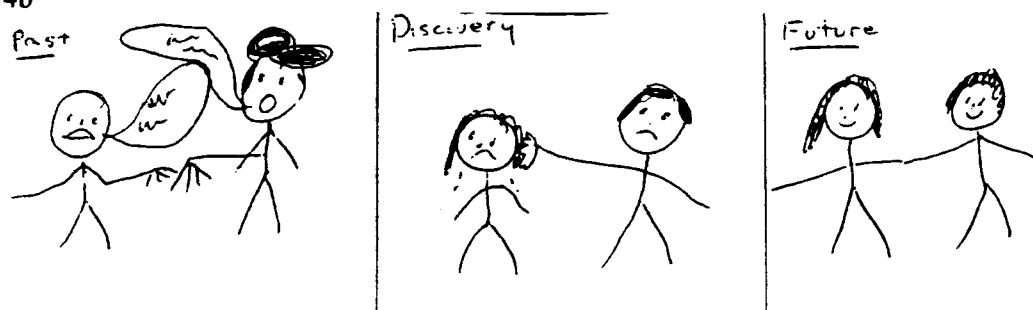
At Discovery

Mom is with younger sibling and she's saying, "When can they come back, Mom?" And [our older brother] is saying, "Who cares?" And Dad's saying, "I do, dammit." And [our oldest brother] is saying "I don't have anything to do with this." And I'm just sad and I'm looking at the family and just feeling really sad and confused.

Future

We're all together and I crossed arrows going in all different directions because everyone's close and everyone's talking to each other and getting along.

4b

**Past**

Before we were constantly yelling at each other and pushing each other and hitting each other and we were fighting all the time.

At Discovery

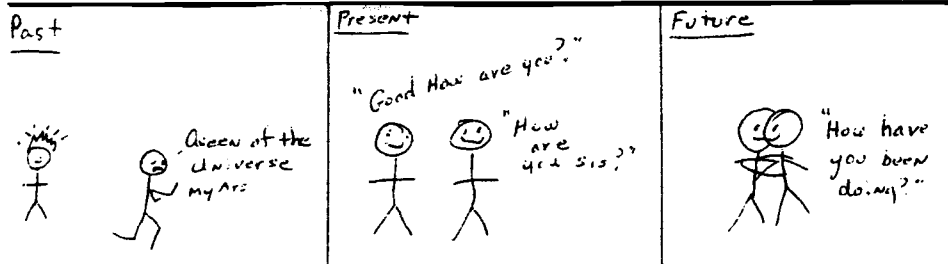
I was crying and I missed him and he was saying goodbye and waving goodbye.

Present**Future**

In the future now we just get along and we can talk now and play games together and we don't hang out all the time together but in the picture I show us holding hands, which is almost kind of true, but we're very close.

5a

271



Past

We sort of got along. She was a problem to me. She was always doing something I didn't like. I was pretty negative about her then it just got worse and worse.

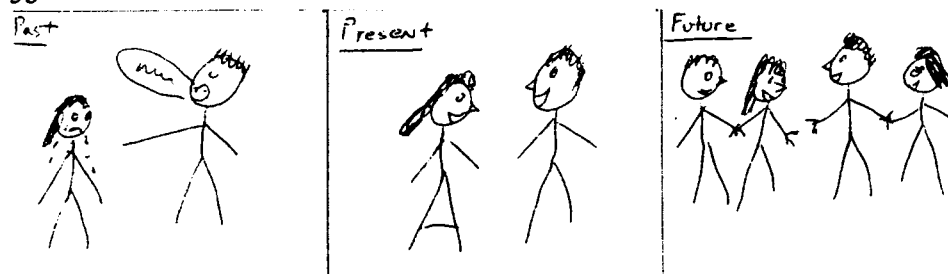
Present

Stable, we're both trying to get to know each other. It could easily be destroyed with a simple action but no one wants to do that and it's not likely that it's going to happen.

Future

We get along and laugh and enjoy each other.

5b



Past

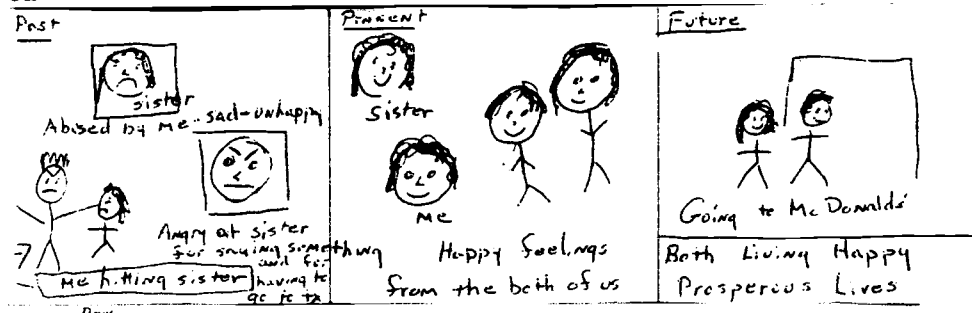
The past is he's insulting me like all my other brothers and I'm crying about it to my mommy.

Present

In the present we're holding hands which means close and we're all happy.

Future

In the future, him and [his girlfriend] and wedding rings and me and [a movie star]. We're just as close and we're basically the same relationship except he's living in a different house and I'm living in Hollywood. Married to [a movie star]. I don't know [what I'll do] yet. I'm not sure. Actress, sing, something like that.

**Past**

Okay, this is at discovery. We're holding boxes and she's sad, I'm angry. She's sad because she was being abused and I was taken out of the family. But I'm angry because she said something, and also I have to go to counseling, for something I don't think is wrong. Down here I've got "I was abusive to her. Hitting and yelling."

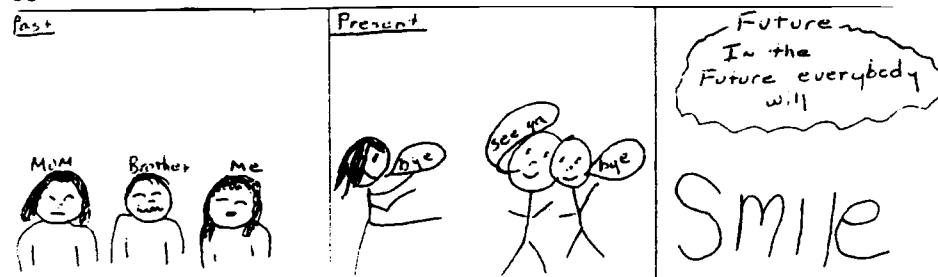
Present

Then in the present, it's going all right. I'm not necessarily buddy buddy, but we do things together and we're happy friends for the both of us. And this is me, we're no longer in the boxes. We're living at home. I'm just kicking it.

Future

And this is the future. Of course, when I did this I wasn't thinking, because I'm this big, and she's this big, I think we're bigger than that now, and we're talking about in the future...and then the car's like humongous. And plus there'd be more people in the car. We're just going, doing things, I guess we're like going to McDonald's. We're both living like happy first class lives.

6b

**Past**

That's me and my mom and Big brother and we're sitting on the couch. Me and my mom were on the couch and Big Brother was on the floor and my mom was asking us what was going on and we were telling her [about the discovery].

Present

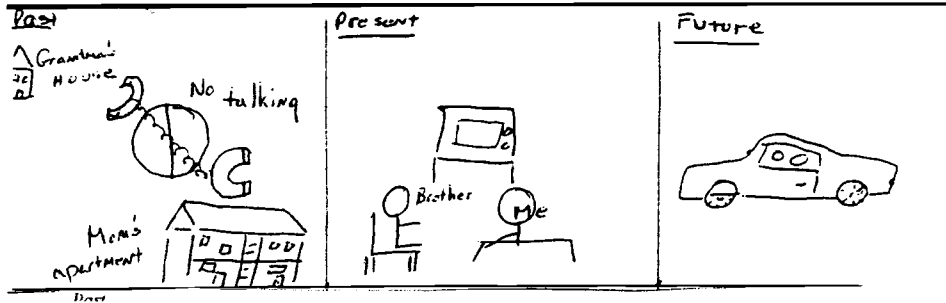
I drew a picture of me kicking my brothers out the door. My mom said when they turn 18 they might go to a different house and if they do that I get my mom's room and my mom gets [my brothers'] room and [my brother] gets my mom's room and I have the smallest room so I can't wait.

Future

In the future everyone's going to smile.

7a

273

**Past**

This was when they first found out that I had abused younger sibling, I was at [treatment center], and the only person I could call and talk to was Mom, so I put here Grandma's house, but I wasn't at Grandma's house, but when I was at Grandma's house I could always call and talk to Mom anyway. So I put a house, an apartment building where younger sibling was visiting, I put a phone with a spiral cord down to another phone with a big circle cross on it which meant no talking because I couldn't really talk to younger sibling.

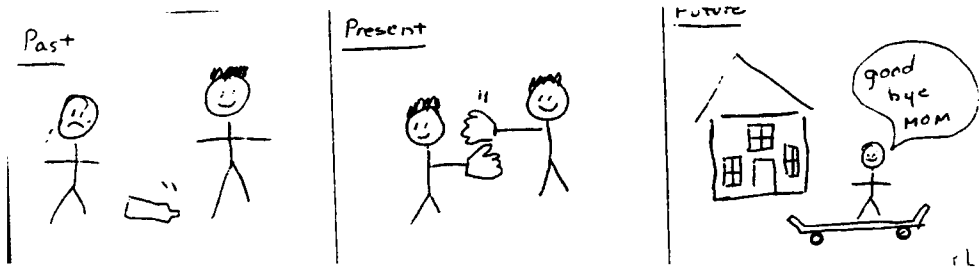
Present

That's my brother and I playing video games.

Future

I got in my car and we're all in there. My brothers and all, four of us, we're in there and we're just cool with each other. No attitude, nothing, just sitting there listening to music, going to McDonald's.

7b

**Past**

I'm sad and hurt. Always being hit and stuff thrown at me.

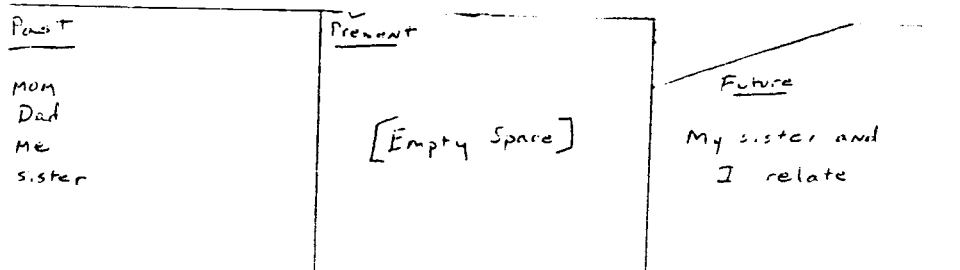
Present

Now we're close, we wrestle and fight but we're close.

Future

We leave home and here I'm skate boarding away.

8a (this child chose not to draw a picture)



274

Past

1982 through 1986. In 1982 I was born. The line depicts the relationship, how it went. Smooth.

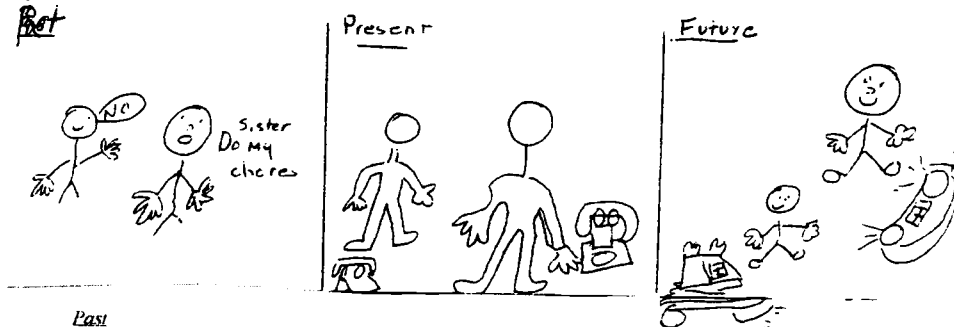
Present

1988. Kids started getting mean. Really getting weird. Because in 1987 my mom and dad got divorced. Then we moved into a new house, of course. Then in 1989 it started getting real rough. Then, in 1990 she started dating and she was body building. So I was home doing stuff and I was kind of the man of the house. In 1992 we moved to [city]. Then it got really messy. Then in 1993 Mom and [stepdad] got married. Then we started moving a lot and stuff really started to suck. In 1992 one of my teachers was worried I was going to get stabbed. I was a clean-cut white boy from [small town]. I had no street smarts whatsoever. There were drug deals, people getting beat up, other crazy stuff that I wasn't used to. I had a mouth like you wouldn't believe, and I still do. [I got my mouth from] my dad. My teacher told my dad when he went to talk to her that she was worried that I was going to get killed. I didn't learn that until later when I moved back out to [another town].

Future

In the year 2000 I might start seeing her again. I'll be seventeen or eighteen. Kind of like the line of possibilities.

8b



Past

My brother made me do his chores or he threatened to beat me up.

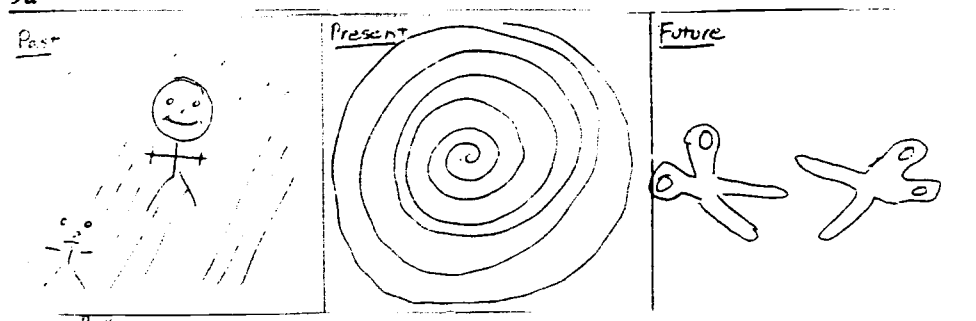
Present

Now my mom keeps in touch with him on the phone. That's me...when she's not home I'll just say a few words about where she is.

Future

[...in the future it will be very much like it is now.]

9a



275

Past

Past is like in a dark room and all you can see is her, she's real little, and me, I'm real big. She's scared of me.

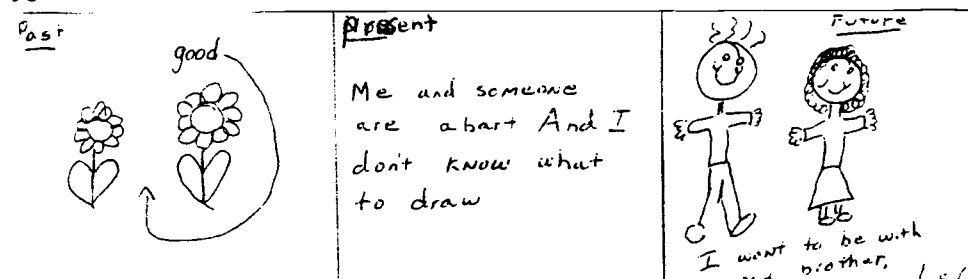
Present

The present is just a circle that goes on and on and on, it unwinds. [The circle means] that I'm going through things right now. I'm going through counseling, she's going through counseling. It's just a period of time.

Future

A couple of scissors. Little difficult times for us, think we'll be cut up. It will be difficult for us, we'll have to go through things we don't want to do. Go through steps.

9b

**Past**

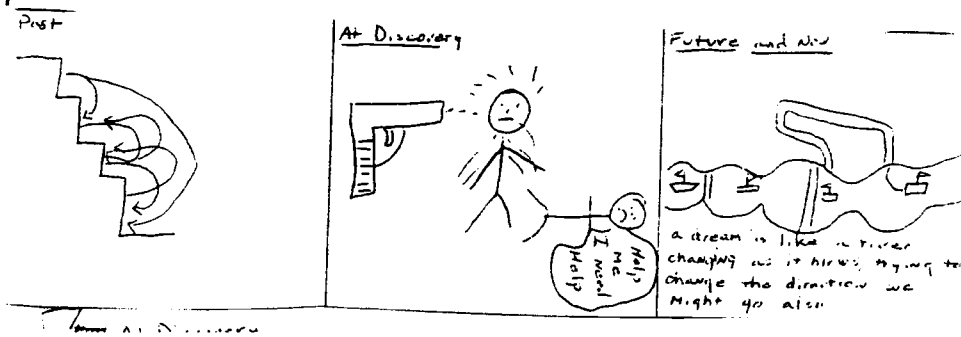
I put good things. This is when we were having fun and he didn't do it to me. And we're having fun and stuff. [Two purple flowers], that's me and that's him.

Present

Now, I don't know what to draw so I said 'me and someone or apart and I don't know what to draw.' [So the picture of now is an empty space because that's what's happening for me and my brother. It's empty.] Just blue and words.

Future

Me and Big Brother again. I say, 'I want to be with my blank.' I want to be with my brother. Going to the carnival, go to movies, go to the store and stuff like that.

**Past**

Falling and pushing.

At Discovery

There's a gun. Someone shot me. I'm on the ground saying I need help. Younger sibling would be getting shot too. In the present I've got a staircase. Going up the stairs, up the stairs to the top. Then I've got to go up the stairs again, got to climb the hill again. I've got to go back a couple of times, trying to reach the top. She's doing the same thing, on her own.

Future

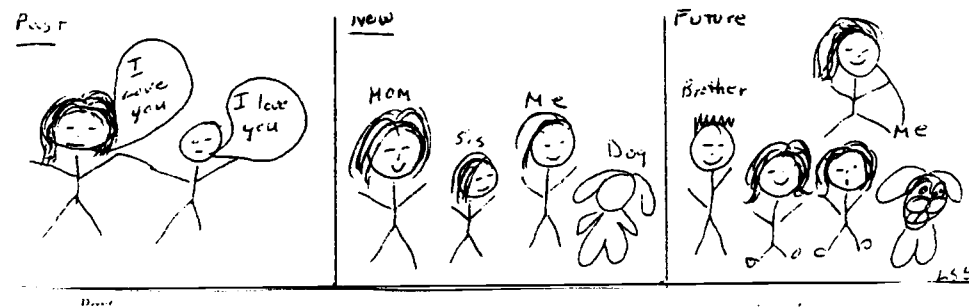
Present, a poem.

You know a dream is like a river, changing as it flows.

Trying a chance direction, we might all go.

I have a dream of trying to be with my sister, so I've got to change some directions and some things. Then this is a boat down the river, takes a couple of detours. She's back here somewhere. [Taking her own boat. I'm up ahead.]

10b

**Past**

My past. It's the grass, me, my brother and my brother saying, 'I love you,' and I'm saying 'I love you too.' We're at the park.

Present

Now, with my mom, my sister and me and [my dog]. We're just standing there in the grass because somebody's taking a picture of us. My brother's not here. Not in the picture.

Future

This is my future, Big Brother, my mom, my sister and my dog. Happy. Smiley face. We're at dinner.

APPENDIX P

Big Brothers – Past/In the Beginning

Story – in the beginning I would like call her names and stuff, but I mean it wasn't real bad. I don't mean to minimize that but it was just like every kid and brother and stuff. It was just like, "You brat" da-da-da...I was more nice to her. And some of the times it was like I would be mean to her but some of the times not so mean. Depending on what I was feeling like. Because if I was tired it would be more mean but if I was up and excited it was all, "Let's go do something. I need to go and do something."

Big brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – Then before the abuse I was back to being mean to her. Then the abuse happened. I talked to her. I mean we had a normal relationship kind of. I mean I was abusing her but like around my mom, because I hardly ever saw her except when I was around my mom, I would like have a normal relationship. Like older brother to younger sister. It was like I would talk to her but if I got mad at her it was like, "You brat" and da-da-da-da-da. And the names got worse and worse. Like, "You butt head" and all kinds of things...and then I started getting into games like Mortal Combat which are very violent. And it started reflecting on my attitude.

Metaphor – Like a dirt plow. As it goes along it destroys, and it's good for one, but for the other it's not.

Picture – Okay, this is at discovery. We're holding boxes and she's sad, I'm angry. She's sad because she was being abused and I was taken out of the family. But I'm angry because she said something, and also I have to go to counseling for something I don't think is wrong. Down here I've got, "I was abusive to her. Hitting and yelling."

Siblings – Past/In the Beginning

Story – In the beginning, it was like, we were all family and we went to church and everything, and we were like a normal family. In the beginning it was like we were a regular family and like we didn't have any problems, you know? Which we did, but...us kids didn't know anything about it.

Metaphor – Kind of sunny and a little bit of sprinkle. Bear before, because he was not wanting and not giving.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – And then before the abuse Big Brother started being really nice to me and when the abuse happened...[he shared] his things with me and stuff. And then while the abuse was happening they were still really nice to me, but only if I did what they wanted. When I was trapped I didn't know what to think and what to do, because everything was happening so suddenly and everything. My brothers would bribe me. When the boys left I was sad because I didn't get to see them, so I put 'unhappy.'

Picture – That's me and my mom and Big Brother and we're sitting on the couch. Me and my mom were on the couch and Big Brother was on the floor and my mom was asking us what was going on and we were telling her [about the discovery].

Metaphor – It was stormy. [He was] a bear before, because he was wanting and not giving. [I was] a mouse. Calm and not running from trouble, and trying not to get into the mouse traps. [The mousetraps were] fights with my brother.

Big Brother – Present

Story – Then the counselor got through to me – and I knew that if I didn't do my treatment I didn't get to go home...so it's changed. I don't even know the word. Incredibly. That's not the word...you can't describe it. This is how big communication was. You can't measure it. It's too big. I like that even though I've done something that nobody deserves to have happen to them, she still wants to be around me, wants me to be safe. Still has trust that I'm going to do all I can not to offend her. And when I do, she has the courage to tell someone.

Picture – Then in the present, it's going all right. I'm not necessarily buddy buddy, but we do things together and we're happy friends for the both of us. And this is me; we're no longer in the boxes. We're living at home. I'm just kicking it.

Metaphor – Well, like a star. Because it's both good use because it's a moon of something or it's like part of a galaxy, and if it wasn't there it wouldn't be a galaxy. And also, if you look at stars the beauty is like a romantic evening you'd be sitting out with someone you love, gazing at the stars.

Big Brother – Future

Picture – And this is the future. Of course, when I did this I wasn't thinking because I'm this big now and she's this big. I think we're bigger than that now, and we're talking about in the future...and then the car's like humongous. And plus there's be more people in the car. We're just going, doing things, I guess we're like going to McDonald's. We're both living like happy first class lives.

Sibling – Present

Story – Then they started having home visits and they started getting better. And then home safety is when they came home. Now everyone's happy.

Picture – I drew a picture of me kicking my brothers out the door. My mom said when they turn eighteen they might go to a different house and if they do that I get my mom's room and my mom gets [my brothers'] room and [my other brother] gets my mom's room and I have the smallest room so I can't wait.

Metaphor – Sunny. Big Brother is probably a lion, because he is more calm, because he has his girlfriend and he's more sophisticated and he's more calm. [I'm a] horse. Protecting the people, the children and protecting its friends and doing what its master and not following in the wrong tracks. My mom [is the master].

Sibling – Future

Picture – Everyone's going to smile.

Big Brother – Past/In the Beginning

Story – Well, in the beginning there was my other brother and after came my sister. And then there was my dad and my mom. And so life is kind of that way, it's life for a while. Well, I guess in the beginning we were pretty good, we got along fairly well...until she started talking. It was pretty good for a while and then things got kind of bad.

Picture – Before abuse Little Sister, I've got her saying, "Blah, blah, blah." And I'm saying, "Shut up", and [our older brother] is saying, "Yeah, shut up." And [our oldest brother] is saying, "I'm not involved." And we fought all the time and we were always angry at each other and we hated each other.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – And then abuse happens and I fall off the cliff. And there's paths, there's always paths, tons of paths. Like a big path...five more paths and so on. And then the abuse happens, then there's horrible life...I get the boot. And then there's a ladder. Gotta climb up the ladder. Climbing the ladder. Then we got the bridge built after personal rights are established for everybody. And then get home safely. Safety.

Metaphor – In the past it was one big deep valley for a while. Like a canyon. Then it was like a big mountain and then you got down into the foothills.

Picture – Mom is with Little Sister and she's saying, "When can they come back, Mom?" And [our older brother]'s saying, "Who cares?" And Dad's saying, "I do, dammit." And [Our oldest brother]'s saying, "I don't have anything to do with this." And I'm just sad and I'm looking at the family and just feeling really sad and confused.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – I started with in the beginning that was from when I was born until I was about three. And I put discovery under that, that was like the discovery of the English language, everything a baby discovers. I put personal rights, that meant basically that I had them. And I put protection because I had protection then from my mom and dad and everybody else.

Metaphor – Well, there's an apple and we started out like a worm. We started out eating through it. We came to the core and the core was like the bad times and basically now we couldn't figure out a way to get past the core and finally at discovery we figured a way and we both went around in different ways, that's separation. [Big brother] was probably a lion. Because they're nice most of the time but they hunt for food or when they are being taunted or annoyed. Basically, they will kill. That's not exactly Big Brother, but, uh, they will, basically they will get physical. [I was] probably a dog. Because dogs are, I know, always nice, except if they are being taunted. Again, it's basically the same thing except dogs are less physical. [I was]...probably a chimp. Basically a chimpanzee is basically, mostly like a human, except a little more taken aback and a little...they travel in groups. Actually, I wasn't aiming for that. I was aiming for something that travels alone but couldn't find it. And basically when chimps are just cute and ah, I don't know, most of the time they're pretty taken aback to themselves. They do travel in packs but they're not really that much of a together type. Guess you'd say. More like alone chimp. An alone chimp.

Picture – Before we were constantly yelling at each other and pushing each other and hitting each other and we were fighting all the time.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – I got beat up a lot and stuff and it was not fun at that point. The valley was basically like I'm walking through this valley and I can't get to the end of it until we come back together. Then rocky road again is the same thing except it's more like the rocky road of sadness because I didn't have my brothers or my dad.

I was crying and I missed him and he was saying good bye and waving good bye.

Big Brother – Present

Story – I'm home and I'm safe and everybody's safe and then there's a resting-place. I guess this is a resting-place now because we're kind of like...we're just kind of doing our own thing and really having a normal life. And then we had sort of a rocky road time when we weren't getting along so well. And so we went back and we worked on our relationship a bit more. Since then we've kept working on it. I think personally it was mostly on my part. I just stopped thinking about it so much and so I wasn't really conscious of what I was doing. So now I do my best to be a lot more conscious of how I'm acting towards her and everything. So I don't end up needing her and stuff.

Metaphor – Right at this point it's kind of like your life is foothills, the ups and downs of life. It's kind of around the peak of a hill. It's pretty good right now.

Big Brother – Future

Picture – We're all together and I crossed arrows going in all different directions because everyone's close and everyone's talking to each other and getting along.

Sibling – Present

Story – Then the resting-place again, which was actually a resting place where you didn't just like sit down, but you could really rest and sleep. Then I had home safety which would be...it had two meanings. One was I was safe at home, and the other one was like on a baseball field – you hit the ball and then run to first base, then second base, then third base and people are yelling. "Home safe." "Go home" and you're safe. Then I had the full bridge. We had built the bridge and we had gone over it. Then we're here. And then I had personal rights again because I regained those.

Metaphor – Well the worm went into the apple and around the core. And now it's on the other side of the core and going out. And once it gets out of the apple it dies, which is pretty bad but...

[Big Brother is]...guess you could say a jaguar, dog mutant or jaguar, cat mutant thing. Because jaguars move really fast and cats are...cats will hiss but they won't claw or anything like that. They won't use their domestic resources, which is lucky for us. It's more like they won't use their domestic defense. Which is clawing or fighting. Most of the time they won't. [I'm] probably the same thing [jaguar, cat-mutant], for the exact same reason. Except not because jaguars move really fast because jaguars can get really mad. But most of the time, unless they are really, really, mad they don't show it. And cats are good problem solvers. [They're about the same age, equal, not equal in strength, equal in power. Big brother has more strength than the other. He's older and he has a much faster metabolism.

Sibling – Future

Picture – In the future now we just get along and we can talk now and play games together and we don't hang out all the time together but in the picture I show us holding hands, which is almost kind of true, but we're very close.

Big Brother – Past/In the Beginning

Story – I did all the chores around the house. Me and younger sibling, we were real close. He used to want to help me all the time, and when I wouldn't let him help he used to be broken hearted and go in the bedroom and say, "You don't love me." So it was mostly rocky roads in the beginning because my parents were into drugs.

Metaphor – Well, the old one is kind of hard to explain. I know, it's just something beautiful. It was and something tragic happened.

Picture – Happy times, fun times, exciting and joyful to be around. I never pictured myself sexually abusing my little brother. He was annoying. Just a couple of words...he was scared. That we were both mad, upset. At times happy. Shame and shameful. I would put mostly shameful for knowing what was going on and not bringing it out and getting help earlier.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – ...just like while it was happening I just and frightened that something was gonna happen. That my parents would disown me. [La Muerte] stands for that.

Metaphor – Like a hurricane. Like it's there and then it's gone.

Big Brother – Present

Story – And these are just pictures that to get together that things would be more cheerful and bright. [So the future is a star and a sun and create a new beginning.

Picture – I don't know if we're past it. I don't know if he's past scared because he told my mom one time, "Geez, he's so big and this and that." It seems like he's scared and he thinks he should be but he shouldn't be. Nobody should be. It's not that I'm scared of him. That would be kind of stupid, but in ways it's kind of different. It's kind of hard to explain. I wasn't necessarily scared but I was mad at myself.

Big Brother – Future

Picture – Exciting. Fun to be around. Nice. Warm relationship. Exciting and campouts.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – This is my house that I was in. What I liked to do when I was little...here's our front yard. That's our grass. Here's me. [L: Are you happy?] I don't know. [L: What about your brother and you? What was he doing when you were a baby and you were on your tricycle?] Well, being at his friend's house. Well, most of the time. Lots of fun. Play house and that. I would be the son and he would be the dad. [L: So all that happened when you were really little. So in this, the abuse wasn't happening?] No.

Picture – The Sony Playstation is right here. This is the screen TV and that's power, "EJ" is for eject. There's me and there's Big Brother. [We're playing a game]. You can't see our heads. That's our heads, back far. [We're getting along.] Okay, let's draw them fighting. The guys fighting on [game 1]. Yeah, he would cheat [and I'd get mad at him]. All you have to do is push the secret buttons like other people don't know how to do. Like fatality.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – [L: Okay, so should we put this here? Abuse happened here?] Yeah. [L: So abuse happened, and this is after the abuse.] Umm...bees. We used to do that a lot. [L: did they sting you?] No, we had gloves. We would put a sack over our heads and we could breathe and where we could talk...and spiders. I know what a bee looks like; I can draw one, that's no problem. I gotta look at a spider. What am I drawing a picture of? [Bees.]

Metaphor – (whole story is a metaphor) We fought and played Nintendo.

Sibling – Present

Picture – Draw a roller coaster. We're in the roller coaster on the Fourth of July. Happy.

Sibling – Future

Pictures – I want us to play fight. 'Cause we always used to fight, ah, what would you call it if you were in a ring and you really fight? Killer fight. Kung fu. Kung fu gots to do with killing. That's why not very many people know Kung fu. I know Kung fu. Took Taekwondo. Yeah, martial arts. Yeah, I know as much as Bruce Lee. You know nobody in the whole world could catch me? Because I can jump over a lot of stuff. I know a way to jump over that fence. That fence right there. It's fast; it wouldn't even take a minute to jump over that fence.

This is the ring. We always play fight sometimes. [I] want [my] brother to have long hair? But this is just for pretends. [I don't kill him], I'm gonna be dead. Lookit! I'm doing the splits. I don't want this to really happen. But, umm, I'll draw another picture of...here's the ring ow where Big Brother's gonna kill me. Okay there's gonna be two rings. This is a practice and this is a killer. I got Nintendo, Big Brother's got Nintendo and my mom gots Nintendo. Okay, and here's the killer fight. Don't look this time. He jumped on my ribs. You can't see him because he's all messed up. His feet on his ribs. I'm dead on the ground. Those are my two ribs right there. That's pretends. What I want to happen in the future is to have a Sony Playstation again and have [game 1] again. Live together. Going places.

Big Brother – Past/In the Beginning

Story – In the beginning it was just me. Then the star means my birth or something.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – And then the arrow through the heart was like the betrayal I used to torture her. Like the sexual abuse. And messing with her mind, saying it was all right and like that. I was sort of like stabbing her through the heart. Then the bird sort of symbolizes her speaking out on the subject and telling. Just telling on me, I guess. I sort of thank her for that. If I didn't get any help I wouldn't be here. I'd probably be in jail, juvenile hall or something like that. [So the bird is the discovery.] You know in spring when the birds sing? Discovery is sort of like that.

Metaphor – An explosion. A horror film.

Picture – Okay, in the past it shows me a picture of me pushing my sister down the stairs and her crying, which was what I did sometimes. Abusive behavior. And then 'pow' means like everything blew up.

Big Brother – Present

Story – [That's] the rocky road. And the rain and the tree sort of like says something like just opportunities like the foster home I got into, the group home actually, it's a pretty good group home and it got me back to God. [Rain means it was sad.] And the tree is like growth. And the path is like I didn't choose to act out again; I'm not going to choose to act out again. I'm going to try being better to my little brother and my little sister. And then the sun is sort of like the state I'm at now. Plus the home safety is like the safety plan that I made.

Big Brother – Future

Picture – I'll probably treat her better.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – I'm starting when I was just, you know, a picture of me.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – Well, it all started and I felt sad. And Big Brother did that to me and I told. After the abuse happened I felt pretty bad. See the heart right there? That's how I felt. [A broken heart.] [L: Did you feel like a cactus?] yeah. Spikey, like I was really dumb. Then I felt really happy because I have a counselor.

Metaphor – A twister. Have you ever seen The Night of the Twister? I would be running for my life, Big Brother would be stirring around in the twister.

Picture – He used to take stuff from me. And I didn't say anything. I just went along with it and acted like there was nothing wrong.

Sibling – Present

Story – [Well, now. You're safe at home now.] Right.

Metaphor – I'm like responsibility. It's a big heart, and it's cut in half.

Picture – [Big Brother's] not here. [Big Brother is right here.] And I'm way over here. [There's] just lots of stuff in the middle. Mars [is between me and Big Brother. A very large space.]

Sibling – Future

Metaphor – It's a big flower that's blossoming. But it happened to rot and it's gonna turn into a twister again. And then when it gets better it'll turn into a heart and then blossom into a flower and it will rot. But you figured that if it rots, then it goes back to a twister and then it goes back to a flower again. I'm afraid that when Big Brother comes home, and try to kill us again.

Picture – We're gonna get a house, we're gonna live in it, we're gonna get the bills paid, have a swing set. Go to Disneyland, go to the Bahamas. Cha cha cha! [Together as a family.]

Big Brother – Past/In the Beginning

Story – At first everything was happy, lovely. That's what the flowers represent. Then we were inseparable, that's what the two crosses are for, we're tied together, we can't come off.

Metaphor – Driving a convertible down the highway.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – Then hit a long valley of climbing up and down the ladder, going through rainstorms. Then the rocky road came...basically just terrible things happening. Well, it looks like someone's dead but it just symbolizes that something bad happened. Taking the path of the devil. Then the spear through the heart. Separation is that she feels that I'm the devil and fears me and doesn't think of me as a brother no more. Then the abuse happened. It just tore her apart. Hurt her really bad, emotional, physical, something that will never be fixed again.

Metaphor – Basically, just like a stormy night, thunder and stuff, you're scared. But then another storm hits, and you're scared.

Picture – Okay, in the past there's a gun. Someone shot me. I'm on the ground saying I need help. Younger sibling would be getting shot too. In the present I've got a staircase. Going up the stairs, up the stairs to the top. Then I've got to go up the stairs again, got to climb the hill again. I've got to go back a couple of times, trying to reach the top. She's doing the same thing, on her own.

Big Brother- Present

Story – The future will be hard. I don't know what kind of future's in store. I know we'll be going through counseling for a while. I know there's a path of clarification to do. It's up to my sister to see if she wants to see me and her mom and counselor. Whatever takes place takes place. I can't change it; it's my fault. I have a hope [for the future], but I also have a doubt. But I really do hope. But I'm sort of scared too, of reuniting with her, because I don't know how she's going to react and how I'm going to react. What do you say after you offend someone? I'm sorry?

Picture – Present

A poem.

*You know a dream is like a river, changing as it flows.
Trying a chance direction, we might all go.*

I have a dream of trying to be with my sister, so I've got to change some directions and some things. Then this is a boat down the river, takes a couple of detours. She's back here somewhere, [taking her own boat. I'm up ahead.]

Big Brother – Future

Metaphor – A long, silent, winding road.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – The sunshine is me when I was born, because I was happy. Every time I would wake up I would have a smile on my face. There's my mom because she was in the hospital with me. There's my dad, he was with me when I was a child. He's smoking. And my brother. Was Big Brother a hard worker? Did he do his chores and stuff? Okay. Here's my sister. We're having fun. Going places together.

Metaphor – We crawled in. Kind of like metamorphosing out, but we crawled in. I don't know how to explain it, but before the abuse happened we were nice to each other...[we crawled in] the heart. Love. Because we went places together, we had fun and all that.

Picture – My past, it's the grass, me my brother saying, "I love you," and I'm saying, "I love you too." We're at the park.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – And in April my mom went to the coast and Big Brother watched me. He was okay at first. My mom called. But after that he started getting mean and he turned into the devil. He started abusing us. He yelled at us and hit us, and then he abused us. My mom called and we told her that my brother was abusing us and she thought it was just physical so she told him to stop hitting us. I told her, 'Big Brother's abusing us.' Then he turned into poison. And me and my sister were like, killing ourselves because of what he'd done. My sister said she wanted to kill herself. Oh yeah, right here I had a broken heart.

Metaphor – We crawled out of the heart to a big, mean, nasty dog. Inside the dog.

Sibling – Present

Story – Then my brother got taken away. Then my mom and me and my sister were a family. [My heart] joined back together. And that's all.

Metaphor – I hope we get back into the heart, but I have to gain trust before we do.

Picture – Now, with my mom, my sister and [my dog]. We're just standing there in the grass because somebody's taking a picture of us. My brother's not here. Not in the picture.

Sibling – Future

Metaphor – Probably be back in that heart if I gain all the trust and stuff like that. If I don't gain the trust I'll be in that mean, nasty dog. If I gain half of it I'll be right in the middle.

Like a shiny star.

Picture – This is my future, Big Brother, my mom, my sister and my dog. Happy. Smiley face. We're at dinner together.

Big Brother – Past/In the Beginning

Story – In the beginning everything's all happy. I'm happy, she's happy. And then we're inseparable, like this rubber band and paper clip.

Metaphor – Surfing.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – And then the rocky road comes, arrow through the heart. Breaking her heart, through emotional abuse and physical abuse. There's good times [during the valley and the rocky road]. Good times turn into bad times, bad times turn into good times. [There's an umbrella for the rain.] Like a storm's coming in. [Sadness.] And then the path gets forceful, bribes and lying. And then the offense happens. [The path is the choices I made with her. The separation is a piece of paper.] It's one piece of paper and it's separated. And then the abuse happens and there's a picture of me hitting her and she goes, "Why are you hurting me?" This was hit, abuse, everything.

Metaphor – It's like trying to ride without training wheels, and you fall and crash. You get up, and you fall and crash. It's like, I offend, then I tell you I'm not going to offend, get on the bike and I crash. She's watching. She's watching me crash. Every time I crash she knows she's going to get offended.

Picture – Past is like in a dark room and all you can see is her, she's real little, and me, I'm real big. She's scared of me.

Big Brother – Present

Story – Well, partially I claimed ownership because I didn't want them to suffer anymore. If I didn't take full ownership I might get in trouble [with the law in the treatment center]. Hopefully the future will be happy. There'll be some stairs to climb in the process but hopefully we'll get something done. [The stairs are the process.]

Metaphor – Doing the stair stepper. Ship's in motion, but no one's on board.

Picture – A couple of scissors. Little difficult times for us, think we'll be cut up. It will be difficult for us; we'll have to go through things we don't want to do. Go through the steps. [L: So this means there's a lot of loss going on in the future and cutting things apart and fixing things in a kind of a pretty dramatic way.]

Big Brother – Future

Metaphor – When you're on a plane ride and the plane hits turbulence and you're thrown around.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – The star is me, the rose is [my sister]. These are sort of like a mixture of all of us as a family. Me and then Mom and then [my sister] in the boat. And then the sun [in the beginning].

Metaphor – Sometimes I would say it was fun, sometimes I would say it wasn't.

Picture – I put good things. This is when we were having fun and he didn't do it to me. And we're having fun and stuff. [Two purple flowers], that's me and that's him.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – ...this is him when he hurt me...[the star broke apart]. I was upset. I haven't been thinking about it that much and it's like in the past and you can't do anything about it, so we should just get on with our lives. Enjoy the life while we still can.

Metaphor – Ours is probably a roller coaster. Sometimes it's okay going up, and sometimes it goes down. Up is good, and down is bad.

Sibling – Present

Story – Discovery is like we discovered that we can be a family again. And past, we had to go through tough times but we stuck with it and we had to go to the right path to get where we are right now. The moon means sort of like peace. The sun means like joyful, the boat means that we can always be a family. This is my brother the musician, this is my sister, the flowers in the pot is my mother, and the star shining is me. Happy. Because I'm happy, this is how I want it to be, happy because it's finally...we put back our lives. But our lives are put back together now, too.

Picture – Now, I don't know what to draw so I said "me and someone or apart and I don't know what to draw." [So the picture of now is an empty space because that's what's happening for me and my brother. It's empty.] Just blue and words.

Sibling – Future

Picture – me and Big Brother together again. I say, "I want to be with my blank." I want to be with my brother. Going to the carnival, go to movies, go to the store and stuff like that.

Big Brother – past/In the Beginning

Story – Everything was cool. There weren't really any problems then. We played with our neighbors, we'd go play basketball all the time. No one really cared what we looked like. We'd get in fights because we were blond and stuff but they'd play basketball with us and pass us the ball actually.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – Then the abuse happened and I put the cliff because it started going downhill from there. Then discovery and I started hitting and being abusive and stuff. I started physically and verbally abusing and stuff. There were times when we went to the park and stuff but there wasn't really anything good. At that time I didn't think of nobody but myself...I was hitting him and stuff, because I didn't care what he thought.

Metaphor – Like a tornado, I guess. It was where the one's doing more destruction to the other, and the other one is just passively accepting it. They can try to resist but it's not working well.

Picture – This was when they first found out that I had abused younger sibling. I was at [treatment center], and the only person I could call and talk to was Mom, so I put here Grandma's house, but I wasn't at Grandma's house, but when I was at Grandma's house I could always call and talk to Mom anyway. So I put a house, an apartment building where younger sibling was visiting. I put a phone with a spiral cord down to another phone with a big circle cross on it which meant no talking because I couldn't really talk to him.

Big Brother – Present

Story – Then I've got the valley which is where I wasn't given the ownership, but it was a long process getting the ownership out and doing the paperwork for it and all that. Then I've got my half-built bridge where I started coming home. I made the choice to come home, getting all my letters done, all my counseling. Then the bridge was built and I walked over the bridge and I came home and there was home safety and protection and everyone's happy.

Metaphor – Like all the weather. Because you'll always have the rain and the sun, and there's times when it's cool, it could be better, it could be worse. There's always going to rain, like in the fall when things are just starting to be cool, and then there's winter where everything's cold and you don't talk and you get mad, and then there's spring where everything's cool, and there's summer where everything's hot. Sometimes you go and get mad at everybody whether you need to or not, there's no such thing as a perfect relationship, whether you're friends with them or not.

Picture – That's me and my brother playing video games.

Big Brother – Future

Picture – I got in my car and we're all in there. My brothers and all, four of us, we're in there and we're just cool with each other. No attitude, nothing, just sitting there listening to music, going to McDonald's.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – When we were little we would play together in the park and at home.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Metaphor – A rainstorm. No, not really a rainstorm. I don't really know how to explain it like that.

But I always have an attitude that he wouldn't be able to take me. I'd step up to him and he'd hit me, no, I'd actually step up to [my brother] and then [my brothers] would hit me back, and then Big Brother would hit him. I remember one time there was a fight. At first I hit [my brother] and Big Brother got mad and pushed [my brother]. Sometimes he was my friend; sometimes he just ignored me.

Picture – I'm sad and hurt. Always being hit and stuff thrown at me.

Sibling – Present

Well my brother had to leave home because my sister was at home. But she'd leave to the aunt's house and he'd come for a visit.

We'd play video games and stuff. We got along just fine.

Sibling – Future

Picture – Now we're close, we wrestle and fight but we're close.

Picture – We leave home and here I'm skate boarding away.

Big Brother – Past/In the Beginning

Story – In the beginning she was born, 1986. I was five years old. I remember the day because my mom was at the hospital and they had me and my brothers go to my grandparents' house. We had to stay there all day until her labor was all over, then we went and saw her. It was kind of weird, actually. A baby sister. My parents had always wanted a boy and a girl, and they ended up getting three boys. That was one of the things that gave them some problems...but eventually they got their girl and they were happy. I was too. It was exciting. I felt protective of her.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – She was a cute little...but eventually she learned to talk and she learned that my parents treated her like the sweetest thing on earth and she could get whatever she wanted, and she did. It made me mad. We had problems. We would argue a lot and she still looked up to me but, I mean, when we weren't fighting we got along and we had fun together but most of the time we were fighting. Then we started to become more aware of my parents' problems. I was becoming a teenager. [My parents] weren't getting along. We started becoming aware of that and that affected us. I was becoming a teenager, wanting to have more freedom and I had a lot of conflicts with my parents. It wasn't exactly the best time of my life. During that time, during that time when all the drama was going on, I committed all the offenses with younger sibling. The drama kept going on, then the offenses came out and my life went nuts. Then I got put on probation for three years and sent to outpatient treatment. I felt like everyone else was in control of my life.

Metaphor – probably a hurricane. Because there's one calm spot in the middle, but all the rest is really chaotic.

Metaphor – Something like a dog chasing its tail and getting going faster and faster until it just collapsed from exhaustion.

Picture – In the past she's sitting there with a crown on her head and I'm walking away, angry, and sitting, "Queen of the universe, my arse." That's the way I felt about her. I felt that my parents treated her as queen of the universe and that's how she was.

Big Brother – Present

Story – [After two years of treatment and separation] I think we both put more effort into our relationship. The separation ends and we had full contact at that point and I had full contact with [my younger brother] too so we didn't have to make special arrangements and stuff became a lot easier. We were friends and siblings and we get along and I think that she feels a lot more safe in my presence now. When I would stay at my mom's before she would go to bed she would always come and say, "Good night," or when she was staying at my dad's and she'd give me a hug before I left and when I got there. It felt real good. We felt a new relationship. One that was based on respect and trust.

Metaphor – I'd probably say like a rock climber and their belay, because they each have to trust each other. Because that's what the relationship is built on, if they don't trust each other and their belay, then you can't climb the rock.

Picture – Then in the present we're on equal ground and we're asking how the other is and being aware of the other person as a feeling individual. Caring how they are.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – First in the beginning was like when I was one until I learned to talk, and then I was protected because Mom protected me and my brothers liked me because I hadn't learned to talk yet. I believe this is inseparable, we were inseparable because they *really* liked me. They wouldn't get away from me. I was loved because they all loved me. We have a rose because a rose is like on Valentine's Day you're supposed to give your valentine a rose; it's some kind of love or something. And there's a star because it was really good and stars are good.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – Before the abuse we hated each other. We despised each other. Just kind of tied with the other one before the abuse. Then the abuse happened. Before the abuse we had rocky roads because we hated each other, all of us, and so we got in fights a lot. I've tied between in the beginning and before the abuse a skeleton like the grim reaper and a heart with an arrow through it because it was kind of like they loved me in the beginning but they hated me here and shot an arrow through my heart and it killed that love relationship I was running and crying to Mom. I was crying all the time. It was crazy. And then the devil and fear. The devil is because it was bad and the fear is because I was afraid of everybody. And unhappy is because I was unhappy. Unsafe is because I was unsafe. We're talking about discovery now. I put the hand there because it's kind of like saying stop. The abuse stopped. Okay, the separation is next and it has La Boote because it's booting them out. And the sun because the sun can be good because it's hot but it can get too hot and you're sitting around sweating all day. And I've got the valley because it's like there are hills on either side of the valley so I had a hard part behind me and I had a hard part ahead of me and it was another resting place. Lonely. Lonely because my brothers are gone.

Metaphor – The devil and the devil's daughter. I guess because the devil's supposed to be evil he'd fight with his daughter a lot. Picture – The past is he's insulting me like all my other brothers and I'm crying about it to my mommy.

Sibling – Present

Story – And then tied between separation and one comes back is a half-built bridge because we're moving along and there's another sun for the same reason. It was good but it was bad because he was annoying. It's also good that he was back. And ownership because we had ownership. And then second comes back. That was when Big Brother came back. It's like a queen's crown because it's lower but it's so good. There's home safety because that's the end of it and all we have ahead of us is flat terrain. And it's the bridge because we built the bridge already. And the present and the future we've got a king's crown because kings are cool and that's the highest. And we've got stars because stars are cool. A lot of roses because it's like a lot of love. Paths because we go our separate ways. We go our separate ways but we stay connected. And then happiness because I'm happy. And then these two are tied between all three of these. Tied between [my other brother] comes back, Big Brother comes back and present and future. That's because of the weight I was carrying. And then I have the tree...it's actually discovery through present and future, because it's kind of discovery you plant the seed and separation it starts to grow, one comes back it grows more and so on. Now present and future it's full-grown like a tall tree.

Metaphor – Two peas in a pod.

Big Brother – Future

Metaphor – Probably be the same one, just further along.

Picture – Then in the future that is intended to continue (caring) and there's a picture of us hugging and I'm asking how she's been and maybe I haven't seen her for a while.

Sibling – Future

Picture – In the future, him and [his girlfriend] and wedding rings and me and [a movie star]. We're just as close and we're basically the same relationship except he's living in a different house and I'm living in Hollywood. Married to [a movie star]. I don't know [what I'll do] yet. I'm not sure. Actress, sing, something like that.

Big Brother – Past/In the Beginning

Story – In the beginning he was born, and I don't remember. I was two years old. I had just turned two the day before. We became friends and I felt protective of him and we were inseparable. We were really close, really good friends. We used to look a lot alike too. It was great. People in my family have gotten us mixed up.

Metaphor – I think it was the same as during the abuse. It was like you never know when a hold will fall out on you. We would just get into arguments like that. They'd be forgotten but it would happen sometimes.

Picture – In the past it's me whispering in his ear about mischief about making mischief together. I'll make it negative mischief.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – Then there's the drama between my parents, between them and me, between them and Younger sibling, between them and [my older brother]. We each had our own conflicts with them. There were family conflicts and there were personal conflicts. Everybody was fighting with my parents; my parents were fighting with each other. Then there was stuff between specific kids. I think normally that happens in families but not the same amount. Not constant, but frequent. Then during that time was when the offenses happened. I felt like everything's going crazy and I don't have any control over it, it's gone off on its own. That's when I got sent to jail. So there's the whirlwind and I feel like I'm not in control of my life anymore. We didn't have contact. There was no relationship.

Metaphor – Maybe a cliff face that has false holds. Because you could be climbing and out of nowhere you could grab onto a false hold and be falling.

Big Brother – Present

Story – We're friends and siblings at the same time.

Metaphor – Probably like a lake. The surface is pretty much smooth and once in a while there's a ripple.

Present – And then the present is kind of the same thing, but it's more positive, a different kind of mischief.

Big Brother – Future

Story – I see us being close. We've actually talked about [living in the same community, building a business together].

Metaphor – Same as it is now.

Picture – And then in the future we're laughing. It's like we're laughing together at a joke.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – In the beginning, before the abuse, I was born, and I grew up for a while. It was a very happy time. And then, actually it was mostly happy because I didn't know anything.

Metaphor – I've got mixed metaphors. I'd say we were pretty much like two talking heads. I guess you could also say we were two peas in a pod.

Picture – We just kind of talked about anything. Every once in a while we would get mad at each other. Not really yelling, just talking. I don't know why we look angry, but we aren't supposed to be angry.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – When people say a lot that life is ups and downs, my life was pretty much up for a while, then it had a big cliff when the abuse happened. It didn't show because I'm amazingly good at hiding my feelings. It was kind of like I started feeling horrible inside. That's part of why now my self-esteem is low some of the time, a lot of the time actually. When the abuse happened I didn't feel good about myself from that point on. I didn't think about it [relationship with brother] so I thought it was whatever, it didn't matter and stuff, but it still affected my self-esteem. The rocky road was in a valley. That was when my relationship with Big Brother wasn't very good but it wasn't horrible because I did see him. After that we were separated and I was protected from him.

Sibling – Present

Story – ...it made me feel safer because it made me feel that he knew what he'd done and he wouldn't do it again, or he was a lot less likely to. I guess you could say if it's a landscape the rocky road was in a valley. The starting ownership was like he was building steps and stuff. It's kind of like I went from a thousand feet above sea level to negative 400 feet and then I came up to 200 feet above sea level.

Metaphor – Now it's about the same, we're bigger peas though. We're smarter peas too!

Picture – I don't know why we look angry, but we aren't supposed to be angry. We're just kind of sitting there. [We say] blah, blah, blah. Just talking about whatever.

Sibling – Future

Picture – I was going to put intelligent stuff in there too, we talk about more intelligent stuff. I guess I should have put 'intelligent, blah, intelligent, blah.' We talk a bit more. I guess I should have pushed us a bit further apart because we don't see each other as much.

Big Brother – past/In the Beginning

Story – Ages one through five just kind of flew along—the birds. I wouldn't say I played with her, but the relationship was good. Age six, kinda hazy. Meaning the relationship started having its little ups and downs, bumps. Seven, a little bit more shaded, a little bit more friction between us. Age eight, you've got quite a bit of shading, quite a bit of friction, nothing really happening yet. More friction. We don't get along real well but there's nothing really happening between us. Age nine, cactus. Prickly. We have our little squabs every now and then; it's not exactly perfect.

Picture – 1982 through 1986. In 1982 I was born. The line depicts the relationship, how it went. Smooth.

Big Brother – At Discovery in Relationship

Story – Age ten is a storm. We're always fighting. Well, we're not really hitting each other, just yelling. Every now and then there's a little bit of physical thrown in there. It's not always bad, but it's not always good either. My parents had been divorced for about five years at this point and I'm living with my mom. Now back to age eleven. Skeleton with a sheet. A lot of fighting, a lot of anxiety. Pretty much on different sides of a double-edged sword trying to fight each other. Emotionally. It's just like age ten, ups and downs. It's not always bad. Twelve and thirteen, skull and crossbones. We are pretty much at odds all the time – not all the time, there's still good times, but more often than not, we're at odds. At this point I was in eighth grade, we'd moved around about four times now so I didn't really have any friends. No, the kids aren't nice at school. It was one of my worst years, I think. Not being accepted a lot, kind of being outcast, getting in trouble to get attention and everything. Age thirteen's pretty much the same. Still at odds, moving around a lot. At age fourteen the abuse happens with my sister and the police step in and I'm taken away. [It happened] nine times in three months, during the summer of 1996. [We didn't] talk things out. We've never been able to do that.

Metaphor – Being around Younger Sibling made me feel like I was on fire. It made me upset because I'd start thinking about what happened earlier in the day. I got really angry. [She was] a punching bag. A sponge, actually, to take abuse. To soak up the abuse.

Big Brother – Present

Story – At age fifteen it kind of feels like I'm carrying the weight of the world on my shoulders. Moved to a new house with new people and not exactly sure how to do things because someone's telling you something that you're not supposed to do and the other kids are doing it and life is just one big conflict now. Strange is it not?

Metaphor – Like a brick wall. There's no interaction, that you don't even see each other.

Big Brother – Future

Picture – In the year 2000 I might start seeing her again. I'll be seventeen or eighteen. Kind of like the line of possibilities.

Note: He recognizes no relationship but wants one.

Sibling – Past/In the Beginning

Story – In the beginning we had some rocky roads, before the abuse. So in the beginning when we were kids, we had a lot of rocky roads. I had a lot of friends and he couldn't figure out why I had all of these friends and then he figured it out.

Sibling – At Discovery in Relationship

I used to go in his room and play with his toys. He'd get mad at me. He used to be mean to me and laugh at me.

Metaphor – A cat chasing a dog. It would be like the cat chasing the dog around the yard.

Picture – My brother made me do his chores or he threatened to beat me up.

Sibling – Present

I don't talk to him or see him.

Metaphor – Our relationship is calm as a river, without no ripple going through it. Smooth.

Picture – Now my mom keeps in touch with him on the phone. That's me...when she's not home I'll just say a few words about where she is.

Sibling – Future

Picture – [...in the future it will be very much like it is now.]

Safe but no relationship.

APPENDIX Q

General Direction of the Rebuilding of the Relationship Through Time Including Legal and Mental Health Intervention

Figure 2 presents a summary of the sibling dyad experiences through time. It is a useful summary to keep in mind as one tries to understand these complicated relationships.

**Big Brother
Sibling/Offender**

Past

Relationship

Love

Care taking

Then manipulation, resentment, anger, aggression

Past at Abuse

Denial, Confusion, Objectification

Anger, resentment, hate, conflict

Alone, lack of connection

Past at Discovery

Resent, hate, conflict, objectification

Lack of connection in all areas

Failure in all areas

Loss

No sense of future

Present – Before Clarification

Defensive

Time has stopped

Disconnected

Objectification

Snuffed spirit

No sense of future

Beginning to reckon with his actions

Beginning to learn about the sibling

Dealing with stop measures

Present – Clarification

Grief, shame

Empathy, desire for closeness, relationship

Appreciation of sibling, new positive

Interactions

New relationship experiences

Sense of future

**Sister or Brother
Sibling/Victim**

Past

Relationship

Adoration

Imitation

Then fear, being manipulated, loss of power and safety

Past at Abuse

Fear, Confusion, Denial

Adoration, Alone

Destruction of feeling safe

Past at Discovery

Resent, hate, conflict, objectification

Fear, sadness, alone, confusion, feeling safe

Boys (identification with brother)

Preoccupation of issue

Desire for relationship, regret, blaming

Loss

No sense of future

Present – Before Clarification

Grief, desire for connection

Confusion, pining

Loss of time, going on

Loss of memory of brother

Appreciation of safety

Learning to not blame self

Learning to have a voice

Abstraction of relationship

Continuance of fantasy of what was

And what will be

(this was their most significant relationship)

Beginning to understand what happened is

major organizing principle

Present – Clarification

Feeling philosophical

Aware of tenuous nature of the relationship with the offender

Awareness of voice

Awareness of needing other people for safety

Life going on, brother's back

Devaluing importance of relationship

Developing new positive interactions and

New positive relationship experiences

Sense of future

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Circular Questioning - an interviewing technique aimed at eliciting differences in perception about events or relationships from different family members particularly regarding points in the family life cycle when significant coalition shifts and adaptations occurred.

Clarification – Clarification is a term used in the treatment process close to the end of individual treatment. Clarification is when the offender has been able to take complete ownership for his actions, have empathy for the victim, and apologizes in a letter and in person to the victim. The family has changed its structure and relationships to one another. The offender then faces the victim and the victim faces him in a family meeting. In the family meeting the offender again verbally takes ownership for the abuse and apologizes to the victim. Then further family meetings take place to help with behavioral changes.

Coalitions -covert alliances and affiliations, temporary or long term, between certain family members against others in the family.

Discovery – Discovery is a term used in treatment as the time the incest between the children was found out by the parents or authorities. This time also, by finding out about the incest, terminates the contact between the children thus terminates any further abuse.

Family systems theory - the theory advanced by Bowen that emphasizes the family as an emotional unit or network of interlocking relationships best understood from an historical or trans-generational perspective.

DEFINITION OF TERMS (Continued)

General systems theory- the study of relationship of interactional parts in context, emphasizing their unity and organizational hierarchy.

Narrative- a study of relationships through stories which emphasize their influence from society and culture.

Sub system- an organized, co-existing component within an overall system, having its own autonomous functions as well as a specified role in the operation of the large system; within families, a member can belong to a number of such units.

Systemic Family Therapy- a therapeutic approach in which the family, as an evolving system, that continues to repeat no longer working behavior patterns. The therapist directly or indirectly introduces new information and interventions into the family system to create new behavior patterns.

(Definitions from Goldenberg and Goldenberg, 1991)