

ABSTRACT

In today's world, men are often under represented within the domain of the victim. Dominant narratives such as feminism and those that inform masculinity could be seen as maintaining this under representation. One area where this is particularly evident concerns the male victim of rape.

This study utilised a phenomenological methodology in an attempt to describe the phenomenon of male rape from the victims' perspectives. The methodology that was employed relied on transcendental phenomenology in order to create the descriptions of this phenomenon. Through the application of this method it was discovered that the phenomenon of male rape has a dominant structure that is related to the destruction and reconstruction of the masculine self. The research also revealed several textural themes that include the characteristics of the assault, the treatment and support that victims receive, the effect of the assault on the self, disclosure about the assault, the learning's and life changes brought about by the assault, the victims' feelings towards their assailants and the effect of the assault on the victims' relationships.

The research furthermore provides individual textural and structural descriptions for each of the individual participants who took part in the study. Composite textural and structural descriptions were also created for the group of participants as a whole. The final description that was created through the research process includes the intuitive integration of the fundamental composite textural and structural descriptions into a unified statement of the essences of the experience of male rape as a whole.

Key words: Male rape/ feminism/ masculinity/ male rape survivors/ male rape victims/ non-institutionalised male rape/ gender narratives/ gender discourses/ phenomenology/ transcendental phenomenology/