

National Youth Protection Symposium

Dynamics of Sex Offenders

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Agenda

- How offenders fool people
- Grooming of adults & children: The role of likeability
- Profiles? Implications for screening
- Dynamics of cover-ups
- Child Pornography offenders

Caveat: Reoffending vs Reconviction

Reconviction

14%

5 years

10 Retrospective Studies

Cases reported to authorities

10% - 18%

(London et al., 2005)

Silence

39%

Never told anyone as children

(O'Leary et al., 2010)

Percent Who Never Disclosed

- 22% Bottoms et al., 2007
- 28% Smith et al., 2000
- 31% Arata, 1998
- 33% Finkelhor et al., 1990
- 46% Ussher & Dewberry, 1995

Techniques Sex Offenders Use

Fooling People

- No Need to Lie
- Sins of Omission
- Must Hide Activities
- Establishing Character

The Double Life

&

One on One Techniques

Fooling People

One on One

Child Molesters

Why Do Some Men Molest Children?

Sexually Abused as Children?

No
Polygraph

Future
Polygraph

67%

29%

65%

32%

61%

30%

(Hindman & Peters, 2001)

1. Deviant Arousal Pattern

Sexually attracted to children

Otherwise responsible

E.g., teachers, priests, youth leaders,
doctors, businessmen, etc.

- Pedophiles Prepubescent <13
- Hebephiles Barely pubescent 11-14
- Telieophiles Post-pubescent 14 or 15+

Motors & Brakes

Pedophiles & hebephiles

Motor: Deviant arousal

Brake failure: Thinking errors
Psychopathy

Attracted to post-pubescence

Brake failure: Thinking errors
Psychopathy

Successful Predators

Charming

Do Favors

Genial, Affable, Likeable

Deviant Arousal

“When I jerked off, I tried to fantasize about girls my age in my classes, but it didn’t work. When I thought about kids, I felt guilty, but I got really aroused and I could ejaculate. Although I didn’t really want them to be, the fantasies were about feeling these kids up and sucking their dicks. The more I did it, the easier it got.”

Sexually Attracted to Children

Q. “How old were you when you began to have fantasies about children?”

A. About 13 or 14

Q. How often would you say during masturbation you had sexual fantasies involving children?

A. All the time.”

Sexually Attracted to Children

Q. How much of the time do you fantasize about boys?”

A. I'd say about half the day. It's when I'm not doing anything.”

Minister Who Molested Grandchildren

“I suppose that being a devout religious person, if I had believed with all of my mind and heart that the earth was going to open up and swallow me into hell, I would have went ahead and done it anyway.”

“People often confuse issues of traits of character with issues of . . . the type of sexual interest an individual has.

Persons who may be compulsive pedophiles, for instance, may obey the law in other ways, may be responsible in their work, may have concern for other persons.”

(Berlin, quoted in Knopp, 1984, p. 9)

Likeability versus trustworthiness.

Impact of Likeability

- Victims protect them
- Parents refuse to believe
- Authorities discount
- Communities support them
- Juries acquit

“Niceness is a decision . . .

not a character trait.”

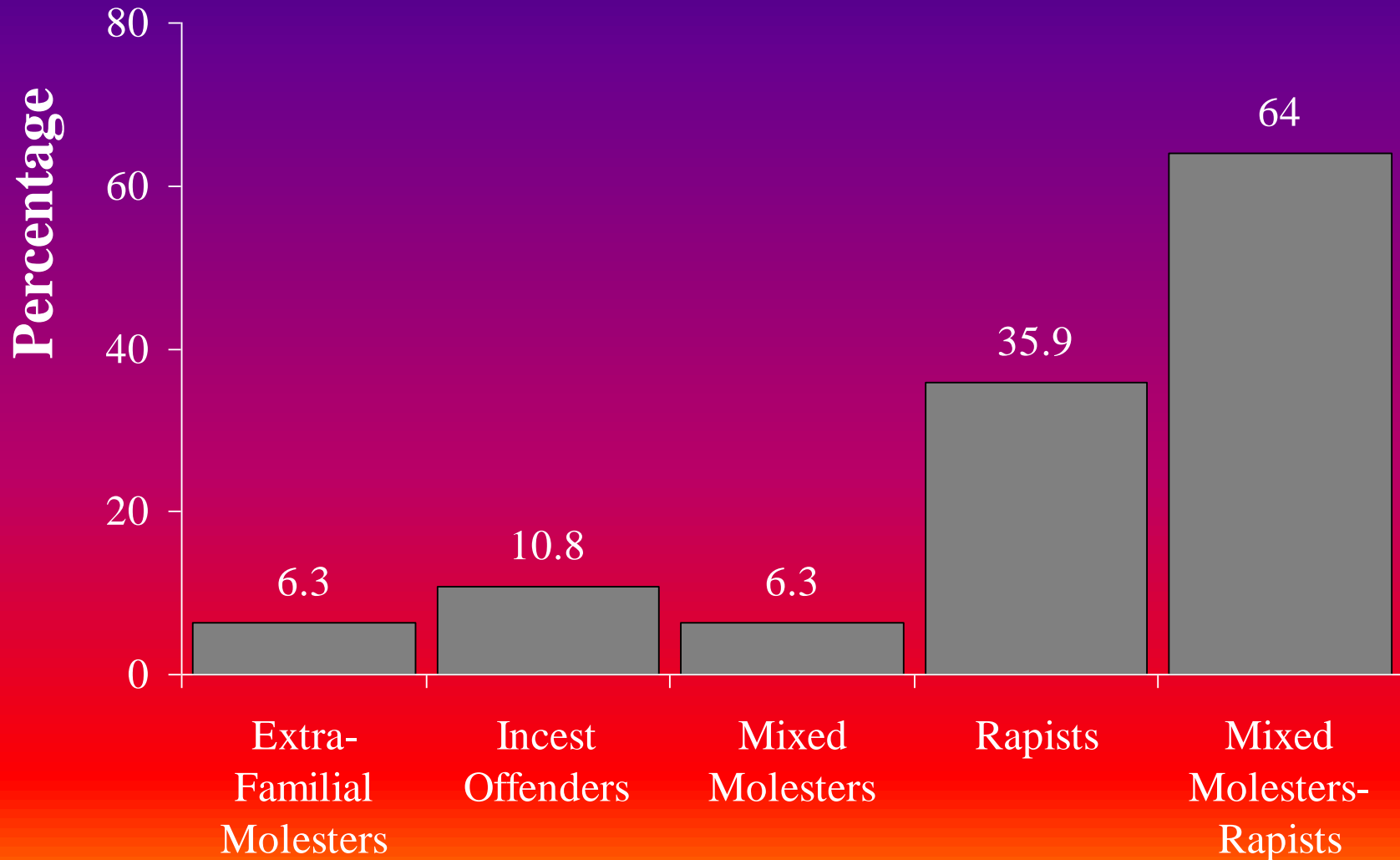
(DeBecker, 1997)

Betrayal of Trust

How Can They?

Are They Psychopaths?

Percentage of Sex Offenders with PCL-R Score of 30+ (Porter et al., 2000)



Percentage of Sex Offenders with PCL-R Score of 30+ Across Studies

- Child Molesters 5 – 10%
- Rapists 25-30%
- Child/Adult 60-70%

(Hare, 2003)

Capacity for Empathy or Conscience



Normal

None

Capacity for Empathy Conscience



Normal

Antisocial

None

Attitudes

Capacity for Empathy

Thinking
Errors

Deviant
Schemas



Normal

None

Thinking Errors of Nonsadistic Sex Offenders

- The child wanted me to do those things to her.
- She enjoyed it as much as I did.
- She was just a little flirt.
- He knew what he was doing.
- He came on to me.

Identification with Children

Identification with Children

Antisocial offenders

Sadists

Status offenders

Incest offenders

Profiles of Sex Offenders?

Profiles

- Endocrinologist
- Excellent teacher
- Excellent physician
- Charming, likeable

1965 – 1986

1 report

Report to ethics board, not to hospital

1987

- Disclosure to licensing board
- Hospital contacted – any concerns?

1992-1993

Multiple complaints

Lost license

Hospital read in paper

Civil Suits

- Multiple evals by psychologists
- Cleared
- Won suits

Post-mortem

- Died
- New house owners remodeling
- 60,000 photos of children

Symptoms

Angie – age 5

Wet the bed

Nightmares

Not wanting to go on visits

Refused to let grandmother shower her

Dad gave “fun showers” on “boobies
and vagina”

Straddle injury

Symptoms

Brad – age 6

- Public masturbation
- Refusing to stop
- Grabbing sister from behind (both nude) & rubbing penis on her
- Said touching his sister's butt with penis
- Dad would think it is funny

Disclosures - Angie

- Father told her a secret
- “It’s in the play shower”
- Dad would get mad & throw toys out
- Drew penises extended
- Dad doesn’t want S. [brother] to know
- Dad rubbed her vagina “a lot”
- She washed him and rubbed his penis

Disclosures - Angie

- “He rubs me in the shower and I can’t rub myself”
- She rubs dad’s penis and he gets soapy”
- “It stands up and sits down”
- “It was red when it was up and red and peach when it sits down.”

Sex Offender Evaluation

“My clinical interviews with Mr. G. also made clear that he is not a pedophile, has not engaged in activities involving pedophilia and is not dangerous to his own or anyone else’s children.”

Sex Offender Evaluation

“Moreover, and importantly, I do not believe, based upon my professional opinion and experience that Mr. G is a pedophile. While it is unfortunate that he did not observe boundary behavior in showering with his son, this was not sexualized by Mr. G., was not done for the purpose of sexual gratification, not did it provoke sexual gratification. “

Profiles

- Disclosure by 6-year-old
- Mom severe health problems
- Overdosed with date rape drug

Clinical Interview

- “Sincere”
- “Forthright”
- “Quite concerned and frustrated about his legal situation and the limitations on his contact with his three children”

- “No evidence of pedophilia”
- No known history
- “Did not demonstrate or report past or current attitudes that would condone or be supportive of sexual offending”

- “No evidence . . . That he has sexual preoccupations”
- Admitted to obsession with sex clubs
- Therapist: “no more than \$10,000”
- Spent as much as \$200,000 on them

- “Lowest category of risk”
- “Does not show evidence of deviate sexual behavior”

Strip clubs

- “Unsatisfactory sexual relations with his estranged wife”
- “An indicator of a dysfunctional marital sexual relationship”

- “this evaluation . . . Did not reveal any marked concerns regarding the question of inappropriate or paraphilic sexual behaviors with or interests in prepubescent children, including his youngest daughter”

What is Important Information?

- Child's disclosure?
- How he scores on personality tests?
- Dad's criminal record?
- How "nice" dad is?
- How he presents clinically?
- Self-report?
- Strip clubs?
- Drugging mom?

ATSA Standards of Practice

“Evaluators do not offer conclusions regarding whether an individual has or has not committed a specific act of sexual abuse.”

(Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers 2005).

ATSA Standards of Practice

- “Members refuse referrals for evaluations to determine if someone has or has not committed a specific sexual act.

(Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers 2005, p.4)

ATSA Standards

“Members are aware of the limitations of client self-report and use collateral information in conducting evaluations so that conclusions and recommendations are not based solely on client self-report (i.e., interviews and/or computerized paper-and-pencil tests).”

(ATSA Standards of Practice)

“Psychological tests and instruments are useful aids to diagnosis and treatment, but they cannot be used to determine whether an act occurred. . . . When working with individuals who deny deviant behavior, however, all available psychological tests are subject to “faking” and concealment. There is no psychological litmus test to detect sexual deviancy.”

(Nicholas & Molinder, 1984, pp 133-134)

Profiles?

“There has been no documentation of a typical ‘offender personality’ . . . Rather, these men were characterized by their diversity: An offender could as well have been a professor as a pauper. . . Moreover, an offender . . . Might as well have had an extensive history of arrests or none at all.”

(Maletsky, 1991, pp. 16-17)

Profiles?

- “In retrospect, these patients did not seem to share any definable demographic or personality traits to render them distinctive.”

(Maletsky, 1991, pp. 16-17)

- “Evidence suggests that very few child molesters suffer from either any form of psychopathology or disturbances in personality functioning.”

(Marshal and Laws, 1997)

Screening

Background checks

Necessary, not
sufficient

Diana Screen

Research?

What's next

Training films