

FEMALE SEXUAL OFFENDERS – AN UNDEREXAMINED POPULATION

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

Sex crimes are considered to be among the most damaging and heinous forms of social deviance in existence. Besides the acts perpetrated by the offenders, the social stigma attached to being victimized is often just as injurious to the victim. Society sees males as the sole perpetrators of acts of sexual abuse, but this is not the case. The extant literature shows that women, while fewer in number, also perpetrate acts of sexual abuse and assault against other adults and children.

This thesis is a preliminary typology that classifies female sexual offenders based upon the acts perpetrated, using cases presented in the extant literature. The pre-existing typologies that have been developed come largely from the psychiatric community, and therefore are classified on motivation rather than acts.

While this is by no means a complete typology, it is an essential first step in learning more about this underexamined population.

I would like to dedicate this work to my wonderful wife Angela, who helped me whenever I would be faced with frustration or writer's block. I will love you always and forever. I would also like to thank my parents, Craig and Sue, for instilling in me the importance of education throughout my entire life.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction**

Very few criminal offenses garner the amount of media attention and public disgust as sexual offenses. It is rare that one can turn on the local news without hearing of either a local or national incident of rape, sexual abuse, or child molestation. By now, these offenses have become commonplace on our local evening news. Inevitably, we can almost even describe the type of individual who commits these offenses without even watching the report. Of course, there are regional differences, but for the most part we all have in our minds the stereotypical rapist, or child molester.

One of the few constants in this field of study is that male offenders commit most offenses that are brought to the attention of the public. Rarely, if ever, do you hear of a female molesting a child, or sexually victimizing another. In fact, rarely do we ever hear of cases where females relate violently to one another. There have been some notable exceptions to this rule, (i.e., Pamela Smart, Susan Smith, Aileen Wuornos), however, there does appear to be a dramatic difference in the offending behavior of both men and women.

Despite the fact that we hear very little about cases where women sexually victimize others, these incidents do occur. While women may not abuse their victims at the same rate as

men, the incidents of violence and abuse that females perpetrate can be just as physically and emotionally damaging as that of men.

As a population, female offenders, and specifically female sexual offenders, are an understudied population. In fact, the traditional criminal justice or criminologically trained scholar knows little about the mind set and motivations behind these offenders. Holmes and Holmes (2002) state that crime scenes perpetrated by female homicide offenders may be some of the most difficult crime scenes to profile because more often than not, the crime scene does not reflect the same amount of love, hate, rage and anger when compared to those perpetrated by male offenders (Holmes & Holmes, 2002).

Not only are the crime scenes different, but so apparently are the motivations to commit these type of offenses. Take for instance the crime of rape. The extant literature provides overwhelming evidence that rape is not a sexual crime, but rather a crime of violence. Furthermore, for most rapists, the act of sexual penetration is often seen as secondary to issues of power and control (Holmes & Holmes, 2002) . Evidence of this phenomenon lies in the fact that many serial rapists can not even complete the act due to the loss of erectile function (Douglas, 1997).

The truth of the matter is that many of the current typologies of male offenders simply don't apply when we seek to explain the behavior of criminals across genders. Female offenders often have different motivators. The intrinsic rewards they receive from perpetrating these crimes of violence are different than their male counterparts. And so are the mechanisms they use to select their victims (Holmes & Holmes, 2001a, 2002).

Holmes, Hickey and Holmes (1998) in their article “Female Serial Murderesses” found that in one list of 57 serial killers, there were only three women. The second killed members of her family and the third killed lovers. Clearly this type of offending behavior does not fit the pattern of male serial offenders picking up hitchhikers, or even male pedophiles trolling city parks in their search of victims of opportunity (Holmes & Holmes, 2001b).

Males, more so than females, when seeking victims of violent crime, hunt for their ideal victim type and choose to act when the compulsion is overwhelming and the opportunity presents itself. Females on the other hand, appear to prey on those closest to them (Holmes, 1990). More often than not, the victims are often their lovers, family members, those in their care and even their children (Greenfeld & Snell, 2000). This pattern of victim choice seems to be consistent discussing either violent or sexual crimes.

### **Direction of Research Effort**

It is the purpose of this thesis to delineate the observed difference between the typologies of male and female sexual offenders and to compare and contrast these to other existing typologies of male and female criminals. To complete this task, I will begin with a wide-angle lens examining the differences between the innate violent and aggressive tendencies across sexes and proceed to adapt currently existing male typologies of sexual offenders to females. However, before we can begin we must frame the population under study. In this research I will focus much of my effort on defining the differences in the typologies between male and female sexual offenders.

### **National Data Collection Efforts and Clearinghouses**

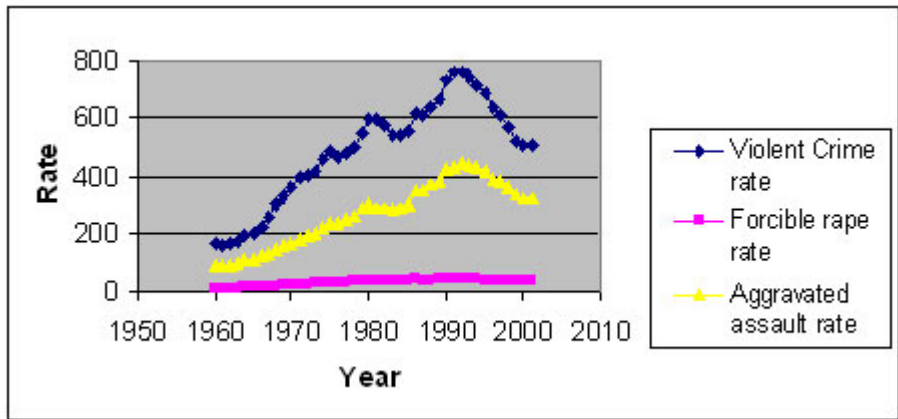
Currently there is no national database or statistical clearinghouse that collects, stores and disseminates data on crimes of a sexual nature. The closest data source of this kind is that collected by the *Federal Bureau of Investigation* (FBI) through the Uniform Criminal Code.

The FBI's Uniform Crime Report (UCR) system was first developed in 1929 as a means of creating a uniform system for reporting crime statistics throughout the country, in order to provide an accurate depiction of nationwide crime trends. As of 2001, the UCR system covered 92 percent of the total population of the United States (UCR 2001).

To accurately depict the overall fluctuations and changes in crimes, the UCR created seven main classifications, which developed into the Crime Index. This index consists of the violent crimes: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, along with the property crimes of burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. An eighth index offense, arson, was added in 1979. These offenses make up the Part I offenses. Participating law enforcement agencies submit their UCR information monthly to the FBI. These reports include their monthly aggregate totals of the number of Part I offenses, those cleared by arrest or other means, and the age, sex, and race of arrested perpetrators (UCR 2001).

Within the UCR, the trend of reported rapes closely follows trends within the overall violent crime and the aggravated assault rates. Interestingly, looking at trends from 1960 to 2001, the level of violent index offenses, and consequently the number of rapes, has dropped to one of the lowest rates in history. As Figure 1 shows, the amount of rapes has decreased steadily in recent years. While there are no data given in regards to child molestation, one can infer that

they would follow similar trends and that we are experiencing a lull in the number of reported incidents.



**Figure 1: Comparison of UCR’s Violent Crime, Forcible Rape, and Aggravated Assault Rates 1960-2001**

Similarly, the Bureau of Justice Statistics in conjunction with the US Bureau of Census collects another source of data that taps into the dark side of criminality – victimization surveys (Walker, 1993). These victimization surveys capture crime that often goes unreported to local law enforcement authorities. Many in the literature have claimed that victimization surveys not only measure the dark side of criminality but also provide researchers, politicians and policy planners with a clearer indication of crimes that are often under-reported or hidden in national reporting mechanisms.

One of the only national research studies, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which is based upon representative sampling of United States households, collects data

on crimes against persons aged 12 and older. The FBI's Uniform Crime Report does not include child sexual abuse or molestation that is not considered rape within its statistics. Regarding rape, the incident rates are relatively low. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports only 0.6 incidents of rape per 1,000 members of the population through the NCVS. According to these data, in 2000, there were 254,870 rapes reported to the police, which constitute less than half of the actual total number of rapes (Hart 2000). The social stigma and psychological trauma make it a significant problem for society (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/viortrdtab.htm>). However, there is no way to know this for sure, because these data are not collected.

Data on the sexual victimization of children may not be collected for a variety of reasons including: differential reporting across states, lack of standardized reporting classifications, political correctness, etc. But if our children are truly this country's most prized possession, and the future of the entire nation, it would seem that the planners in Washington would want real and hard facts concerning the sexual victimization of its constituents.

One must consider that, given the shame and humiliation associated with sexual offenses, along with the secretive nature of child sexual abuse, that data produced from incident reports might well significantly underestimate the actual problem.

### **Defining The Population**

Sex crimes are largely divided into two broad categories: rape and molestation. In contemporary society, rape is defined as situations when a male sexually forces himself on an adult female victim, without consent. Molestation on the other hand is when an adult offender

performs sexual acts on a child. The FBI's Uniform Crime Report (UCR) defines rape as:

The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Assaults or attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are also included; however, statutory rape (without force) and other sex offenses are excluded.

This definition includes molestation when the victim is female, but males are not considered as being potential rape victims, as exemplified in this statement:

Sexual attacks on males are classified as assaults or other sex offenses depending on the nature of the crime and the extent of the injury. The UCR Program classifies sex offenses (except forcible rape) as Part II offenses and, as such, collects only an aggregate total on these crimes. (UCR 2001)

These statements and definitions as provided by the FBI through the UCR illustrate how difficult a time it is to gather hard data concerning the prevalence of female perpetrated violent and sexual crimes. It is clear that both men and women commit these similar offenses, however hard official data appears to only be collected on a national level for male perpetrators. While the federal government does collect data across sexes for homicide, rape and other sexual offenses is another story.

There are many reasons why there are no national data collection efforts underway for violent female sexual offenders. First, victims (especially male victims) are reluctant to report these types of offenses. And when they do, the actors and agents that comprise the criminal justice system are not likely to take them seriously. Second, because of the perceived rarity of female perpetrated sexual offenses, no national self-report studies have been initiated to tap this hidden population. And finally, those studies that have addressed this population have relied solely on self-reported behavior of women incarcerated. While not the best population to



generalize a sample to the population from, it is clear that many of the inmates will either overstate their crimes or underestimate them, giving into the social desirability of the researchers' intuition.

### **Incidence and Prevalence**

Despite the fact that there has been limited research conducted in the field studying this special population, it is clear that there are a significant number of females that commit these types of offenses. In fact, the Bureau of Justice Statistics claims that 22 percent of all arrests made by personnel within the criminal justice system involve female offenders. Further, 14 percent of violent offenders incarcerated were female (Greenfeld & Snell, 2000). When looking solely at violent offenses committed by females, some interesting patterns arise. For instance, 3 out of 4 victims of female violent crime are other females, and, 75 percent of these offenses involve some type of simple assault. Further, the per capita rate for violent crime for juvenile violent female offenders was twice the rate of that of adult females (Greenfeld & Snell, 2000).

**Table 1**  
**Felony Convictions of Women in State Courts, 1990-1996**

	1990	1992	1994	1996	Percent Change 1990-1996
Total	112,800	120,550	131,404	160,470	42%
Violent Felonies	10,428	12,313	13,936	13,509	30%
Murder	1,051	1,205	1,289	1,005	-4%
Rape/Sexual Assault	202	375	630	442	119%
Robbery	3,047	3,142	2,854	2,290	-4%
Aggravated Assault	5,043	6,152	6,906	7,786	54%
Other Violent	1,085	1,440	2,256	1,356	25%

Source: Greenfeld, L., & Snell, T. (2000). *Women Offenders* (Special Report No. NCJ 175688). Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

These official statistics only tell half the story. As shown in Table 1 the overall number of women convicted in state courts between 1990 and 1996 increased 42 percent. Further, looking only at the violent felony conviction rate, women were sentenced to violent felonies 30 percent more in the mid 1990's than they were at the beginning of the previous decade. This same rate for men rose only 12 percent. Of noted significance is the percentage change in conviction rates for the crimes of rape and sexual assault, aggravated assault and other violent

offenses. In each of these categories the conviction rates rose 119, 54 and 25 percent respectively (Greenfeld & Snell, 2000).

While it is difficult to establish any pattern with only six years of data, it is clear that something is happening with regards to rate of participation of females in traditionally male dominated violent crime. While there is no data to suggest that women are now committing more crime, especially violent crime, than they have in years past, it is clear that they now are more so than any other time in our history being sentenced for violent felonies in our national state criminal justice system. It can be noted that crime rates increased during the six years in which this study was conducted, however, the proportional increase of female crime rates was the factor of interest.

### **Women as the Hidden Class of Offenders**

While stated previously that there are national studies looking at the incidence and prevalence of sexual crimes, those that do evaluate these issues generally look at the crime of rape and sexual abuse of children by male perpetrators. As such, female offenders in previous studies have been portrayed as extreme cases of deviance in which the woman's acts are a betrayal of their feminine nature and an adoption of stereotypically male gender roles. This formulates what is often regarded as the "Madonna/Whore" duality. Women who follow the socially defined construct of femininity are the "Madonna", the archetype of all that is pure and perfect. Burkett (1973) describes how this type of woman is able to avoid prosecution and perpetuate the myth that women aren't criminals:

“I think it is obvious that many women are involved in behavior which is technically illegal, whether it’s victimless behavior that violates the social norm or harm to people or property. And just as the majority of men who break laws aren’t arrested, the majority of women aren’t either. I think the differentiation of treatment for women being arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced, though, is simple. For one, I think that men are discriminated against with proportionally higher arrests and convictions because they are considered more dangerous, not because they are more dangerous. People are more afraid of being hurt by a man than of hurting him. This is not so true with women.” (Burkett 1973:78)

When the violent or criminal prone female falls from this proverbial grace and commits an act of deviance such as crime, the woman immediately loses her perfect status and becomes a “Whore”, an embodiment of all that is depraved and reprehensible. Those involved with the criminal justice system often abandon their leniency when a woman is so far beyond her stereotypical feminine role that she can no longer be looked at as a mother figure. When this happens, discretion is utilized and women are often deemed as greater flight risks and consequently given larger bond amounts that cannot be met. Women are also often subject to longer sentences than men for similar crimes and are looked down upon by the components of the criminal justice system as “tramps” and essentially the antithesis of all that is good in femininity.

Criminologists Lombroso and Ferrero (1897) look at this woman who becomes the “whore” as a “monster”. As related to the justice system, females have been forced into a very black and white situation, either they are examples of all that is good and pure, or depraved traitors to their gender.

While it has become widely accepted that women can commit crimes, even violent ones, statistics show that women do not commit offenses at the same rates as that of male offenders.

As mentioned previously, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) found that women account for around 14% of all violent offenses, which constitutes around 2.1 million violent female offenders. The largest portion of these offenses (11%) were violent offenses committed by females against other females. One of the earliest reports via the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports in 1971 attributed the rise in female crime as a direct byproduct of the women's liberation movement (Burkett 1973). While that may be a part of the equation, it simply does not explain all of the variation in offending behavior. What is more likely happening is that females more so now than in the past are being thrown into non-traditional roles (bread winner, management positions, single parents) and are adopting non-traditional roles. Unfortunately, it may be that their violent offending behavior may be a by-product of this evolution. Similarly, society may now be more willing to recognize female deviance and take action. As the female role in society changes culturally, so does the reaction to their behavior, and the reporting behavior of their victims.

### **Changing Role of Females in Society and the Workplace**

Women in society have made great strides towards equality in all facets of life. While in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was nearly unheard of that a woman would hold any career other than teacher, nurse, or housewife, today it is a widely accepted fact that women hold successful positions in industry or commerce at all levels. The feminist movements of the 1960's and 70's lend credence to the notion that women were and should be accepted as equals in both society and the workplace.

The growing social acceptance of divorce has also placed women in the workplace as no longer a simple symbol of liberation but as a means of survival. Mothers avoiding abusive situations and abandonment had to resort to entering the workforce at varying levels in order to simply survive and provide for their children. This changing role of women has led them to adapting and developing stereotypically male traits in order to exist, adapt and succeed in society. The development of these traits by women may have created the root of the increase of female criminality, or at least the recognition of it.

### **Female Sexual Perversion**

Part of this role change may be that females are adopting more masculine roles and are throwing out the traditional feminine roles, especially when it comes to female sexuality. With the proliferation of female heroines in the mass media (*Tomb Raider*, *Charlie's Angels*, *Alias*, etc.) as well as the media portrayal of active female sexual transgressors (*Ally McBeal*, *Sex and the City*), it may be that females are now more likely to not only engage in sexual fantasy but also attempt to live them out.

Women voluntarily participating in various forms of sexually perverse acts are as unheard of today as female criminals were previously. Our society frequently refuses to see women as having their own unique sexual drive and deep rooted carnal inclinations that males do. A woman with a sexual perversion is in direct conflict with the aforementioned mother/Madonna archetype. Louise Kaplan's *Female Perversions* (1991) describes the case of a female transvestite and fetishist:

From the time she was pubescent, Sally was turned on sexually by dressing up in male clothing. Moreover, she had invented a dressing-up masturbation ritual that would give her a fantastic orgasm. At age eleven, Sally had already realized that the sexual excitements she was beginning to experience could be heightened when she put on Levi's jeans. A year or so later she was elated to discover that wearing boots could further intensify her sexual arousal and climax.

Sally would loll about the house planning for the delicious moment when she could begin dressing up in her jeans. The idea was to try to put off the ritual as long as possible. The luxuriating anticipations that preceded the jeans ritual could bring tears to her eyes. It was like eating the cake but saving the frosting until the last possible moment. (246)

Some studies have found that women with perverse sexual drives often find an outlet for their urges within motherhood (Welldon 1988). The mother-child relationship is considered to be so natural and close that nothing sinister could come of it. The expected level of intimacy allows for the perverse mother to act upon her urges with little or no suspicion. There is also an element of power and control between the mother and the child, a recurring theme within perverse sexuality. Incestuous relationships do occur between mother and child, and constitute the most prevalent form of sexual abuse at the hands of a woman. But the nature of motherhood obscures this fact. Welldon (1988) states:

The mother is so obviously close to the baby, biologically and emotionally, that no ambivalence or hostility towards it is expected from her. The father is considered to be much more distant from the infant, and is thus seen as exploiting his own power when taking advantage of his child's body and mind. (Welldon 1988:104)

Women are also frequently considered to be incapable of sexual offenses, because they are seen as being too entrenched in maternal instinct and the drive to nurture. Women are society's caregivers and protectors, and thought to harbor a less dominant sex drive than males. The literature shows, however, that women do perform abusive sexual acts, sometimes

subversive and nearly undetectable, and sometimes even violent and sadistic. Previous studies also show that the target of female sexual abuse is overwhelmingly a child, with the offender's preferences determining male or female victims. The children are usually those in which the offender serves in a caregiver's role, such as a mother, stepmother, or babysitter. Interestingly enough, the literature shows that the sexual molestation and abuse of female children tend to be the most sadistic, violent, and damaging, while the abuse of male children is likely to be subtle, incestuous and most pleasurable for both the offender and the victim. It is in these cases that the victims are least likely to report the incident.

### **Female Sexual Abuse of Adult Victims**

Although it is seen less frequently female sexual abuse of adult victims do occur. And when they do, they are the least likely types of offenses to be reported or even studied by academicians. With the recent renaissance in "Queer Studies" at many of our nation's colleges and universities, we are learning more and more about this type of abuse. It is now suggested that the majority of these offenses take place between consenting females. What is new, however, is the discovery that domestic violence in homosexual relationships may be just as prevalent as in heterosexual ones. And just as in heterosexual relationships, physical abuse often precipitates sexual abuse. In a study of male and female homosexual college students, it was found that 31 percent of the lesbians reported being sexually abused by other lesbians (Waterman, Dawson & Bologna 1989). Another study by Claire Renzetti (1992), it was found that in a sample of 100 lesbians who reported being battered by their partners, 48 of them also



reported incidents of being forced into sexual activity. A different study of 118 lesbians reported a combined total of 133 incidents of unwanted sexual behavior involving their partners (Waldner-Haugrud & Gratch 1997). Finally, a study by Lie, Schilit, Bush, Montagne and Reyes (1991) found that 57 percent of their respondents reported some form of sexual victimization, with 19 percent describing painful or forced sexual acts. There are also some incidents in the literature of women sexually abusing men, although in much smaller quantities.

### **Why Female Sexual Offenses Are Kept Secret**

The aforementioned societal prejudices against females as potential sexual offenders have most likely produced a low, underrepresentative number of incidents. Whenever incidents of females sexually offending are confronted, excuses are often made, albeit not necessarily by the perpetrator, to explain this type of deviant offending behavior. Sexual activities between mother and child are often written off as simply as “inappropriate affection” (Saradjian & Hanks, 1996). In one case, a mother visited a doctor for help involving incidents of attraction and sexual contact with her daughter. The doctor informed her “it is just natural for a mother to feel very fond of her children” (Welldon 1988). Another means of minimizing the acts of female sexual offenders is by denying that she has full responsibility for her acts. While many incidents of females participating in sexual abuse involve a partnership with a male abuser, it is often assumed that these women are placed under physical or psychological duress and essentially forced into an abusive role (Saradjian & Hanks, 1996). Although there are many incidences of women being forcefully coerced into abusing, there are also a number of women who participate

as an equal partner, or completely on their own. One female subject in Saradjian and Hanks study (1996) reported targeting male pedophiles in order to abuse with them, and another coerced a male into the act. Whenever females are responsible for sexual abuse, they are often seen as an evil demonic entity. A representative example of this is the case of notorious British sexual serial killers Ian Brady and Myra Hindley. While Brady was the initiator of most of the acts, the public outcry was against Hindley, who became the more hated of the two, due to no other fact than she was a female who had disregarded her stereotypical nurturing role and actively participated in criminally sexual and sadistic acts (Saradjian & Hanks, 1996).

Adams (1991) presented three observations of societal beliefs that may interfere with the acceptance of female sexual offenders: “overestimating the strength of the incest taboo, overextending feminist explanations of child sexual abuse; and overgeneralizing the empirical observation that the sexual abuse of children by women is rare.”

On the other side of the spectrum, the victims of female sexual offenders rarely report abuse. Since abuse by females is often less violent, especially in cases involving male victims, physical symptoms of sexual abuse are most often not visible. In those incidents involving male victims, even if the crime is reported by the victim, the police often consider the claim to be false, or even as far as considering the boy to be “lucky” to have had sex with an older woman. Boys are often more apt to keep the event quiet, not only because society enforces the belief that males should not talk about feelings and emotions, which is greatly relevant in this situation, but also that they feel emasculated by being taken advantage of by the “weaker sex” (Hislop 32).

Young women often are also hesitant to report sexual abuse due to the development of

confusion concerning their sexual preference (Sgroi & Sargent, 1997). When their first sexual contact is with a woman, they become afraid that they may be homosexual and in response keep quiet about the situation (Hislop 37). Abuse between females is often much more difficult to detect and assess because of the socially accepted behaviors of mothers and daughters. Mother and daughter sharing a bed, being together when changing clothes, or bathing is often regarded as natural, whereas if it was between a father and daughter, or a father and son, there would be immediate suspicions of abuse (Rosencrance, 1997).

The structure of law itself is also an obstacle in dealing with female sexual abusers. Kasl (1990) noted that most laws against sexual abuse are based on the act of penetration, which does not always occur when females are the abusers. Before 1994, laws in the United Kingdom prevented males from being regarded as potential rape victims. Although the laws have been amended, rape can only be, by law, perpetrated with a penis, not another object (Rentoul & Appleboom, 1997)

### **Typologies of Male Sexual Offenders**

The extant literature on male sexual offenders is considerably larger than that of females. This literature has examined the motivations of these offenders and has also sought solutions to curb this large social problem. These efforts have led to the development of typologies (or in some circles *Psychological Profiles*) of male rapists and child molesters. Typologies of rapists break down the offenders by their primary motivation and level of social competency. Typologies of child molesters are based on the amount of contact the offender has with children,

and the degree of fixation. Further they examine the relationship between offender and victim, trolling behavior, and the intrinsic rewards of their offending behavior. By basing the typologies upon these factors, law enforcement and criminal justice representatives may look at a potential offender and determine their type, and choose a course of action that may help catch the offender or keep other unsuspecting victims safe.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Sex offenses are so reviled within our society that we must do all that we can to reduce the number of sex crimes committed and the physical and psychological trauma caused to the victims. While the social stigma attached to these crimes is often significant enough to keep many victims from reporting the offense and prevent them from being counted in official statistics, this simply is not enough. One sexual victimization by a male or female is too many.

In those offenses perpetrated by female sex offenders, social pressures against understanding the offender, and the victim keeping the abuse secret out of shame, leaves the offenses out of the public eye. Society needs to become aware of the presence of female sexual offenders in order to reduce and prevent future incidents. A comprehensive typology with ramifications for law enforcement and criminal justice officials would assist in the recognition and reduction of the problem of the female sexual offender.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to develop a preliminary typology of female sexual offenders based upon research and case studies available in the literature, and by building upon those typologies that have already been created largely in the psychiatric community. While useful, they are far from comprehensive and do not delineate the varying types sufficiently.

The current typologies are also created by and applicable towards the psychiatric and therapeutic communities. While they have validity within a criminal justice setting, they are still lacking when it comes to identifying and preventing sexual offenses. This study will look at the current typologies and utilize typologies that have been created, in combination with published information and case studies to create a more thorough typology that will be useful to law enforcement professionals.

### **Predictions**

Before research was conducted, it was expected that most cases located will be of a non-violent, consensual nature between teenaged boys and older women, and that the males will be the predominant victims. It was predicted that there will be a limited number of cases that involve adult victims, and that incidents in general will be mostly non-sadistic. It was believed that a classification scheme would include those offenders who sadistically abused children, but that they would constitute a minority of the population.

## **Conclusion**

Increasing social recognition of women as social deviants has opened the door to the acceptance of the female sexual offender. Because law enforcement professionals and the media have grown in their acceptance of the existence of female offenders, there becomes a need for expanded understanding of the nature of these offenders. A typology that examines the similarities and differences in the nature of the offenders will provide an essential reference point in the recognition and prevention of future offenses by looking for similar patterns in motive and execution.

The next chapter of this thesis will provide an examination of the currently existing literature that has been published on female sexual offenders. The widely accepted typologies of male rapists and child molesters will be examined as well. The chapter will further examine the previously developed typologies of the female sexual offender in order to provide a solid foundation upon which to develop a new typology, which will increase the understanding of these offenders.

Chapter three will discuss the methodology utilized in developing my typology. Chapter four examines the typology synthesized based upon the literature, case studies attributed to each of the taxonomies, and how they relate both to the previously existing typologies of female sex offenders and correlations to male offenders. Finally, chapter five will discuss conclusions and areas for future research in this area.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

All facets of the criminal justice system realize the seriousness of sexually based offenses, especially those against children. However, the training received by members of criminal justice agencies is often not sufficient to prepare them to recognize a predatory female sex offender. These officials are often trained only to recognize offenders who are male, and therefore may not see the frequently subtle characteristics of female perpetrated sexual abuse. It is not only offenders, but also the consequences of the acts that often go unnoticed. Many officials are not trained or equipped to treat male victims, especially adult male victims.

The female sexual offender may share some commonalities with her male counterpart, but her intrinsic motivation, demographic makeup, and abusive acts are often perpetrated in such a way that they may be easily overlooked. A clear perception and understanding of the characteristics of a female sexual offender is integral in future response and management of potentially abusive situations. Without a clear profile of who offenders are, it is all too easy for offenses to slip through the cracks and be allowed to continue undetected.

Typologies, or profiles, have proven useful in all realms of social deviance. They help us understand the various types of offenders who commit crimes. By recognizing recurrent patterns

in victim choice, type of offense, and personality characteristics of offenders, criminal justice professionals are better prepared to investigate and understand the modalities of the offender's acts. Understanding a typology, they are more able to more readily identify a possible offender in a given situation or take steps in preventing a potential offense based on early signs that may be recognized through the use of a typology.

While profiling is far from an exact science, especially given the heterogeneous nature of sex offenses, they often provide a sound theoretical framework for recognizing patterns and alerting social welfare workers when there is a potentially abusive situation. One must be careful to draw the distinction between profiling and the use of typologies. Profiling is a catch phrase that has been met with great media interest. Profiling is simply a method of inferring future criminal behavior based on observed characteristics. Typologies, however, classify offenders based on observed behaviors after the fact. While utilizing typologies may be a component of profiling, the two are very different.

## **Outline of Chapter II**

This chapter will examine the current literature to develop a more thorough understanding of who female sexual offenders are. It is divided into three main sections: background information on female sexual offenders, an examination of the existing typologies of male sexual offenders, and finally, an in-depth examination of preexisting typologies of female sexual offenders.

The background information on female sexual offenders will provide a comprehensive



study of who female sexual offenders are. It examines the prevalence statistics of sexual abuse perpetrated by females, the demographics of female sexual offenders, and the abuse histories of known offenders. The section also examines the theoretical concepts that may motivate the offender, their choice of victims, how female sexual offenders usually come to the attention of authorities, and how the criminal justice system responds.

The second section discusses the reasons why typologies are important and how they are constructed. The third section will be an analysis of widely accepted and implemented male sexual offender typologies.

The fourth section of this chapter will carefully examine the existing typologies of female sexual offenders as largely developed within the psychiatric community. It will detail the elements of each category of offender, and provide case examples that were used in developing the typology. This provides the basis for the new typology proposed within this thesis.

### **Prevalence of Female Sex Offenders**

While females are overwhelmingly underrepresented in the extant criminological literature on sexual offending, it is estimated that females are responsible for molesting between 14% and 24% of boys, and 6% to 14% of girls. (American Humane Association, 1981 as cited in Green 1999, Johnson & Schrier, 1987). Finkelhor (1979) found that among college students who reported being sexually abused, 16% of the males and 6% of the females reported an incident of sexual abuse by a woman. Through self-report studies, much higher numbers have been reported, with as many as 44% to 60% of male victims of sexual abuse reporting a female

abuser (Allen, 1991). Allen (1991) utilized US Census data to estimate that females have historically been responsible for the sexual abuse 1.6 million males and 1.5 million females. Although some of the reported percentages may seem low, the estimated number of cases suggests that this is still a serious issue that faces this country.

Like their male counterparts, females who abuse often choose children as their targets. Saradjian and Hanks (1996) found that most female sexual offenders participated in sexual contact with children several times a week. Female abusers report first committing abusive acts during their mid teen years, and the initial victims of abuse are similar in age to the perpetrator (Saradjian and Hanks, 1996). Similarly, they found that female sexual abusers report lower levels of self-esteem than non-offenders, with those who abuse young children reporting the lowest levels compared to those who target adolescents.

### **Demographics of Female Sexual Offenders**

Demographic information on offenders is very important when evaluating potential offenders. Knowing the characteristics of a particular offender is essential when developing a typology, as it aids in finding consistent patterns in those who may potentially be an offender. Understanding demographics of offenders can also play an essential part in criminal profiling, which can be a useful tool in locating and apprehending sexual predators.

From the limited samples available, it has been reported that most female sexual offenders ages are in the mid 20's, with a great deal of variance beyond the mean (Faller, 1995). Women who are found to be sex offenders are usually of lower socio-economic status and have a

lower level of education than the national average (Faller, 1987). In one of the few empirical analyses of the demographics of female sexual offenders, Allen (1991) found that female offenders, on average, were 9 years younger than their male counterparts (32.8 years versus 41.5 years). The average level of education between male and female sexual offenders was similar, with most (around 75% of males and females) being high school graduates, 30% of both males and females having attended some college, and very few (8% of males, 3% of females), actually being college graduates.

Levels of income between males and females also vary widely. In one study, female offenders earn approximately \$7,250 per year, in comparison to the males' earnings of \$18,700 (Allen, 1991). Adjusting for inflation, the current variance would be \$11,899 income for female sex offenders and \$30,690 for their male counterparts (<http://www.halfhill.com/inflation.html>). These income patterns show an extreme example of the earning gap between the sexes, but it should be noted that the reported incomes of both male and female offenders were lower than the general population. These income figures also reflect only those who were processed by the criminal justice system and various related agencies. Allen (1991) reported that the female offenders on average hold mostly traditional female occupations such as service workers, clerical, laborer, and homemaker. Female offenders were also less likely to hold a stable job compared to their male counterparts, and reported employment rates of 44%, much lower than the 70% employment rate of male perpetrators.

The racial backgrounds of sex offenders were consistent across genders, however. Allen (1991) study found that more than 92% of females and almost 95% of males being Caucasian.

### **Sexual Abuse Histories of Female Sexual Offenders**

Female sexual offenders who are brought to the attention of authorities, either through counseling or the criminal justice system, report high levels of sexual abuse from childhood. This abuse frequently begins at a young age, at the hands of someone who is known to the victim; most often a family member or family acquaintance. This abuse consists of typically intrusive acts or violence, and can occur over a long period of time. It is not uncommon for other forms of child abuse to be present, such as emotional and physical abuse, and general neglect, along with a dysfunctional family life (Hislop, 2001).

From studies of treatment and evaluation groups consisting of female sexual offenders, estimates indicate that 33% to 94% of the offenders studied were themselves the victim of sexual abuse (Rowan, Rowan & Langelier, 1990, Matthews, Mathews, Speltz, 1991). Similarly, Mathews, Matthews and Speltz (1989), found that all of the 16 offenders within the Genesis II treatment program had been sexually abused themselves, some reported only a single incident of sexual abuse and others reported multiple incidents with many different abusers. Surveys, record reviews, and interviews (conducted by outside researchers, not therapists or evaluators), found percentages ranging between 72% and 100% of female sexual offenders having abuse histories (Allen, 1991, Knopp and Lackey, 1987). It is interesting to note that in a few of these studies, data was collected on the rates of sexual abuse histories of non-offenders as well. Fromuth and Conn found in their self-report survey of female college students that 77% of the abusers reported being abused as children, while only 28% of the non-offenders reported any abuse at all.

It is suspected, however, that female sex offenders with little or no pathological histories

may exist as well. For instance, Mathews, Hunter and Vuz (1997) discovered a group of adolescent female sexual offenders who committed acts against children largely out of curiosity. Some adolescent offenders have also been found to offend due to a lack of social appeal or weak peer relations (Faller, 1995). This type of offender is very similar to the regressed pedophiles, which are attracted to children due to feeling little or no connection with other adults. Caution should be taken when evaluating these percentages, due to the relatively small sample sizes analyzed in each study.

### **General Abuse Histories of Female Sexual Offenders**

Along with histories of sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, verbal abuse, and abandonment is found in many cases within the immediate families of female sexual offenders (Hislop, 2001). Freel (464 in Hislop, 2001) found that of six studied female child molesters, four had been removed from their homes due to parental neglect.

**Table 2**  
**Abuse history of offenders by victim choice**

<b>Victim Type</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Young Children	64%
Adolescents	30%
Coerced Victims	25%
Non-offenders (Control)	14%

Source: Saradjian and Hanks (1996)

As shown above in Table 2, comparison studies between female sexual offenders and a control group found that 64% of the group targeting young children reported experiencing physical abuse (defined as “Physically harmful actions directed towards the child causing actual bodily injuries such as bruises, cuts, burns, head injuries, fractures, abdominal injuries and poisoning”). Of the group who targeted adolescents, only 30% reported prior abuse, compared to 25% of the coerced offenders and 14% of the control group (Saradjian and Hanks, 1996).

Abuse histories of female sexual offenders are not limited to just physical abuse incidents. Family instability and pathology is a recurrent theme among female offenders. In one study of reported cases of sibling incest, it was found that among 25 families, females were perpetrators in 20% of them (Smith & Israel, 1987). It has been noted that, in the histories of female sexual offenders, there were high incidents of multiple caretakers, traumatic parental

marriage dissolution, and alcoholism (McCarty, 1986). Lack of parental support is also a common factor. In one study of five offenders referred to a treatment program, none of the offenders reported being able to receive any help from their mothers or other adult caregivers when they were physically, sexually, or psychologically abused (Travin, Cullen & Protter, 1990). Family treatment of the offender as a child was often regarded as being inconsistent, where a parent would be abusive one moment, and then very caring another, or one parent was abusive and the other was caring (Mathews, et. al. 1989).

Parental involvement in the development of the female sex offender is speculated to play a significant role. It is believed that the biological family helped female sex offenders to develop the ability to commit sex crimes (Larson and Maison, 1987). More subtle forms of emotional abuse are also frequently present. None of the female offenders who had committed crimes against very young children or adolescents were able to recall any incidents in which they were physically comforted or cuddled by anyone who was not also their abuser (Saradjian and Hanks, 1996).

### **Causative Patterns of Female Sexual Abuse**

Research has shown that past histories of sexual and physical abuse, along with general neglect, are present in the histories of both male and female sexual abusers. However, most survivors of abuse as children grow up and never abuse. Therefore, the search for other formative factors is necessary. Psychiatric impairment has been the subject of much attention in recent years (Grayston & DeLuca, 1998). Some studies have found as much as 47.5% of female

perpetrators suffer from some form of mental difficulties, with 32.5% displaying signs of brain damage or mental disabilities (Faller, 1987). Studies of incarcerated female offenders displayed previous or current histories of post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression, the presence of one or more personality disorders usually associated with impulse control. Further, they found that these offenders had significant problems with alcohol and substance abuse. Other studies have also indicated substance abuse problems with a majority of female sexual offenders (Faller 1987, 1995, Wolfe, 1985 as cited in Grayston & DeLuca 1998). Allen (1991) found substance abuse histories present in 20% to 25% of cases.

Juvenile female sexual offenders are found to often suffer from Conduct Disorder, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, and Oppositional Defiant Disorder. It is interesting to note that these disorders were found in much higher levels among juvenile male sexual offenders when compared to juvenile female sexual offenders (Gray, Busconi, Houchens & Pithers, 1997)

Non-offending sexual behavior in female offenders has also been found to be deviant. Studies have shown that some women were promiscuous with males before offending, but reported feeling that they were exploited by their partners and did not enjoy sexual relations (Matthews, Mathews, Speltz, 1991).

Kaplan and Green (1995) studied incarcerated female child molesters and found that sexual activity began later with them, as determined by age at onset of regular masturbatory episode. This suggests a potentially inhibited upbringing. Similarly, a study of juvenile female sexual offenders showed deviant sexual arousal prior to first offense, with sexual fantasies



involving younger children (Hunter, Lexier, Goodwin 1993). These juveniles also reported that they were sexually aroused during their own molestations in childhood (Hunter, et al. 1993). Additionally, Matthews and colleagues (1991) found that 11 of 16 female child molesters studied reported sexual arousal and sexual fantasies about victims specifically, not just children in general. These 11 offenders all were the initiators of at least some of the abuse, while 4 of the offenders abused only after being coerced by a male partner. These individuals reported no arousal at all.

### **Theoretical Approaches to Motivation**

The exact cause of sexual abuse and assault are rarely understood. Even within a well-studied population, such as male sex offenders, there is no definitive answer. This of course leads to even more confusion when the population in question is female offenders. There is uncertainty about the preferences of female sex offenders as compared to male pedophiles, and whether or not power relations play a role in this type of deviance (Davin, Hislop & Dunbar, 1999). It has been theorized that perhaps females sexually abuse others to recreate their own previous abuse (Saradjian & Hanks, 1996, Welldon 1988). This sort of recreation is essentially described as an evolved form of play that children use to adapt to the outside world (Erikson, 1950). Research has shown that this method of understanding situations does not cease at childhood, but continues in different forms throughout the lifespan (Erikson, 1977). In situations where an abused woman abuses a child, she may be acting out a fantasy she's held in order to understand why she herself was victimized. After the offense, the abuser feels rewarded, but

once again traumatized, and the cycle of abuse begins again (Saradjian & Hanks, 1996).

However, this cannot explain those incidents in which a female who did not have a history of sexual abuse commits abusive acts. Saradjian and Hanks (1996) also state that the social unacceptance of female sexual offenders can compound the effects of the abuse. The social disbelief that a woman is the offender belittles the victim even more.

### **Traumagenic Dynamics Model**

Other ideas are laid out in the Traumagenic Dynamics in the Impact of Child Sexual Abuse model proposed by Browne & Finkelhor (1986), which discusses the effect of abuse upon child victims. This model consists of four parts: Traumatic Sexualization, Stigmatization, Powerlessness, and Betrayal.

### **Traumatic Sexualization**

The process of Traumatic Sexualization occurs when a child's sexuality, both their feelings and attitudes towards sex, are shaped at an inappropriate time through dysfunctional methods. An example would be when an abuser requires an exchange of sexual favors for his/her attention. This is a common means of coercion by sexual abusers, in which the offender does not need to use any force to get what they want. It is speculated that experiences in which the child is not physically coerced, but enticed to perform sexual acts will lead to a greater degree of sexualization. Because of the frequent exchange of normal parental attention for sexual favors, Traumatic Sexualization distorts the barrier between affection and sex in the mind

of the child. Because the sexual offender is often a family member, this leads the child to believe that sexual activity is a means of expressing genuine affection. As described by Browne and Finkelhor, “Children who have been traumatically sexualized emerge from their experiences with inappropriate repertoires of sexual behavior, with confusion and misconceptions about their sexual self-concepts, and with unusual emotional associations to sexual activities.” (p.182)

### **Stigmatization**

Stigmatization is the shame and sense of guilt that abuse victims often suffer as a direct consequence of their victimization. The negative connotations of sexual abuse, such as shame and guilt, become part of the abused child’s self-image. This stigma is often received from the abuser, who may place blame on the victim, or pressure the victim to keep the offense secret, thus giving the abusive act shameful connotations to the victim. Since society views the woman as the all perfect Madonna, the sense of shame and guilt the victim feels is compounded with female offenders, especially in cases in which the abuser is the mother. Because their caregiver, who is seen as essentially perfect, is inflicting this pain on them, the victim feels an even greater sense of guilt.

### **Powerlessness**

Abused children often feel a sense of powerlessness as well, because they feel that the abuser is in full control of the child’s life, due to threats and the invasion of the child’s body. The process of “disempowerment”, removes the child’s power in a situation by subjugating the

child's will, desires, and sense of efficacy. This sense of powerlessness is magnified whenever the child tries to stop the abuse and/or is not believed, or even simply ignored. Another compounding factor occurs when the child recognizes that he or she is dependent upon this abusive caretaker. It is speculated that this sense of powerless is a continuing feeling during any form of child abuse, sexual or otherwise, and the only potential remedy is a reduction in the sense of powerlessness when the victim is able to bring about the end of the abuse.

### **Betrayal**

Betrayal is the understanding by the child that someone who should care for them, who they are dependent upon, is hurting them. Because of women being seen as caring, trustworthy, and not abusive, the sense of betrayal may be even greater (Saradjian & Hanks, 1996). The victim often feels betrayed not only by their abuser, but by other family members as well, for not discovering and putting an end to the abuse. The sense of betrayal can be closely linked with powerlessness as well, for if the victim tries to stop the abuse by telling another family member and is rejected, they will gain an additional sense of betrayal from that family member as well.

This framework by its very definition predisposes abuse victims to become abusive themselves. If they develop an inappropriate definition of sexuality, they would of course be likely to act against others, for to them, sexual acts are a normal expression of affection. Heavily stigmatized victims would feel little or no connection to others and society in general, and may be apt to ignore social conventions that would prevent them from committing abusive acts. A long standing sense of powerlessness would give the victim a need to assert a sense of power and

dominance over something else they can control to compensate and medicate for the pain. Those that felt betrayed could potentially lack a sense of trust, and therefore feel no discomfort in lashing out at others. These four factors also create enough of an impact to potentially cause the abused to initiate the same cycle of violence on others.

**Table 3**  
**Traumagenics Dynamics Model**

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**Traumatic Sexualization**

Dynamics

Child rewarded for sexual behavior inappropriate to developmental level  
 Offender exchanges attention and affection for sex  
 Sexual parts of child fetishized  
 Offender transmits misconceptions about sexual behavior and sexual morality  
 Conditioning of sexual activity with negative emotions and memories

Psychological impact

Increased salience of sexual issues  
 Confusion about sexual identity  
 Confusion about sexual norms  
 Confusion of sex with love and care-getting or care-giving  
 Negative associations to sexual activities and arousal sensations  
 Aversion to sex or intimacy  
 Behavioral manifestations  
 Sexual preoccupations and compulsive sexual behaviors  
 Precocious sexual activity  
 Aggressive sexual behaviors  
 Promiscuity  
 Prostitution  
 Sexual dysfunctions; flashbacks, difficulty in arousal, orgasm  
 Avoidance of or phobic reactions to sexual intimacy  
 Inappropriate sexualization of parenting

**Powerlessness**

Dynamics

Body territory invaded against the child's wishes  
 Vulnerability to invasion continues over time  
 Offender uses force or trickery to involve child  
 Child feels unable to protect self and halt abuse  
 Repeated experience of fear  
 Child is unable to make others believe

Psychological impact

**Anxiety, fear**  
 Lowered sense of efficacy  
 Perception of self as victim  
 Need to control  
 Identification with the aggressor

Behavior manifestations

Nightmares  
 Phobias  
 Somatic complaints; eating and sleeping disorders  
 Depression  
 Dissociation  
 Running away  
 School problems, truancy  
 Employment problems  
 Vulnerability to subsequent victimization  
 Aggressive behavior, bullying  
 Delinquency  
 Becoming an abuser.

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**Stigmatization**

Dynamics

Offender blames, denigrates victim

Offender and others pressure child for secrecy

Child infers attitudes of shame about activities

Others have shocked reaction to disclosure

Others blame child for events

Victim is stereotyped as damaged goods

Psychological impact

Guilt, shame

Lowered self-esteem

Sense of differentness from others

Behavioral manifestations

Isolation

Drug or alcohol abuse

Criminal involvement

Self-mutilation

Suicide

**Betrayal**

Dynamics

Trust and vulnerability manipulated

Violation of expectation that others will provide care and protection

Child's well being is disregarded

Lack of support and protection from parent(s)

Psychological impact

Grief, depression

Extreme dependency

Impaired ability to judge trustworthiness of others

Mistrust, particularly of men

Anger, hostility

Behavioral Manifestations

Clinging

Vulnerability to subsequent abuse and exploitation

Allowing own children to be victimized

Isolation

Discomfort in intimate relationships

Marital problems

Aggressive behavior

Delinquency

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From "Initial and long term effects: A conceptual framework" by A. Browne and D. Finkelhor, in *A Sourcebook on Child Sexual Abuse*, by D. Finkelhor (Ed.). 1986 Sage Publications

Female sex offenders who abuse male children often seem to show the same psychological motivations as that of male rapists. For instance, Mathews and colleagues (1987) found many of the female sexual offenders said their arousal during the abuse was in imagining that their victims were adult males, and that they held power over the male. One offender stated:

Having sex with my sons was more enjoyable than having sex with a man and that was because I had some control over what was going to happen (Mathews et. al., 1989).

This statement itself provides a good insight into the sense of Powerlessness described in the previous model. The offender is able to avoid their sense of powerlessness by subjugating someone else in place of themselves.

More is known of those females who are coerced into offending against children. Psychologically, the women who are coerced into an abusive incident with children describe themselves as being needy or experiencing significant emotional crises in their life. They frequently suffer from low self-esteem, isolation, and having unmet needs (Mathews, Matthews & Speltz, 1990). These woman typically have no personal interest in sexual relations with children however, they are so attached to their partner that they are willing to commit such despicable acts simply to maintain the acceptance of their partner.

### **Victim Choice**

Saradjian and Hanks (1996) found within their study that female sex offenders who target children, most are likely to abuse their own children, children closely related to them,



or children with whom they were a caretaker. Males and females seem to be abused at equal rates, with some offenders showing specific preferences in children, and most offenders being very specific about adolescent victims, with victim gender based on their own sexual orientation (Saradjian and Hanks, 1996). Among juvenile female sex offenders, victim preferences were inconsistent, with some showing a greater number of males, and others with mostly female victims (Johnson, 1989, Mathews et. al., 1997, Gray et al., 1997). Juvenile female sexual offenders often target siblings, usually those perceived as being the parental favorite, and that are frequently 3-4 years younger (Araji and Boseck, 1997).

There seems to be no consistency in the gender preference of female sexual offenders. A study by Brown, Hull, and Panesis (1984) found that in 20 cases, more than three fourths of the victims were female. Similarly, Grier and Clark (1987) found 11 of 13 victims of female sexual offenders being female. Conversely, a study by Hislop (1999) found that 35 of the 56 victims of female sexual abusers were male.

### **Effects of Abuse by Females**

Existing studies have found that the detrimental effect of those abused by females is no different than if a victim was abused by a male. While the extant literature in this area is lacking, what has been found shows the same levels of emotional and social trauma associated with any other form of sexual abuse. Studies have also shown that a large percentage of convicted male sexual offenders report childhood abuse at the hands of a female. In a sample of 75 male sex offenders, 45% reported being molested by a woman

(Allen, 1991). These figures are consistent with other research. Within a group of 348 male child molesters and rapists, 18% of the child molesters and 38% of the rapists reported being abused by women before the age of 16 (Groth, 1979). Another study of 83 incarcerated rapists found that 59% of them reported being molested by a woman during their childhood (Petrovich & Templer, 1984). A study of 41 male rapists found that 40% of them reported being sexually abused by females (Burgess, Groth, Holmstrom 1987). While one must always look with some level of skepticism at self-report data, the rates from the above studies may point to a potential factor in the psychological development of the male sex offender.

**Table 4**  
**Sex offenders reporting previous abuse by a woman**

<b>Study</b>	<b>Type of Offender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percentage reporting sexual abuse by women</b>
Allen (1991)	Male Sex Offenders	n=75	75%
Groth (1979)	Male Child Molesters	n=348 (total)	18%
Groth (1979)	Male Rapists	n=348 (total)	38%
Petrovich and Templer (1984)	Male Rapists	n=83	59%
Burgess et al (1987)	Male Rapists	n=41	40%

In the case of male victims, their socialization as the sexual initiator puts such a strain on their experience that they often mentally “change” the experience so that they are the

initiator and the sexual aggressor, which could add weight to the theory that abuse by a woman increases the potential of the victim becoming a sexual offender themselves (Bolton, Morris & MacEachron, 1989).

Those who are abused both by women alone and by a combination of male and female show two notable responses, anger and issues with identity (Saradjian and Hanks, 1996). While anger is a natural reaction to any sort of abuse, victims abused by both males and females reported feeling the most anger towards the abusive woman, due to a heightened feeling of betrayal (Saradjian and Hanks, 1996). When maternally abused, the victim often feels conflicted about his or her identity in relation to their mother. This seems to be most pronounced among female victims, whom may go as far as extensive plastic surgery (to remove any physical resemblance of their mother), or even desiring a sex change (Saradjian and Hanks, 1996).

### **Identifying Female Sex Offenders**

Because the victims of sexual abuse are often reluctant to tell authorities, both due to their own shame and fear of retaliation, it is difficult to discover who their abusers are. Previous studies on female sexual offenders have been conducted by locating offenders through child protective agencies, penal institutions, mental health treatment or assessment agencies, day care populations, and other social service agencies (Hislop, 2001). Victims of female sexual offenders were located through college surveys, sexual abuse victim clinics, therapists, self-reports by other sexual offenders, and therapists (Hislop, 2001).

## **Female Sex Offenders and the Criminal Justice System**

Sexual abuse cases are very difficult for the criminal justice system, largely because it occurs in such a high level of secrecy, with the victims often scared to report any of the abuse to authorities (Mathews, Matthews, Speltz, 1989). In most cases of sexual offenses, the only witnesses are the offender and the victim. In their study, Mathews and colleagues (1989) studied 16 women, none of whom had any prior felony convictions, with one having a conviction for prostitution and another for petty theft. Only five of the women involved in this study had any contact with the criminal justice system, although all 16 cases were referred to child protection services. Of the 9 cases in which charges were levied, the punishments were as minor as a single count of a fourth degree criminal sexual conduct charge to six counts of criminal sexual conduct in the first and second degree. The women all pled guilty and seven of the nine of them pled to a lesser crime. The two who faced the most severe charges ended up with a plea bargain for testifying against other adults involved in the abuse. All of the women eventually received probation from between 2 to 15 years and were required to complete sexual offender treatment, some received prison sentences between two months to one year (with none of them serving a full term). Seven of the sixteen women were not criminally charged in any way for the sexual abuse.

It has been speculated that the relatively minor penalties may have been because the children involved were either too young or too seriously disturbed to testify in court, the abuse was non-violent with potentially little or no corroborating evidence, no witnesses other than the abuser and victim, the abusers were cooperative during the investigations, the county

attorney felt that Juvenile Court or Child Protection had jurisdiction, or a conviction would have been unlikely (Mathews et. al., 1989).

**Table 5**  
**Why minor penalties are given to Female Sexual Offenders**

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Victim too young to testify in court  
Victim too disturbed to testify in court  
Abuse was non-violent with little/no corroborating evidence  
No witnesses other than abuser and victim  
Abusers were cooperative during the investigation  
Attorney felt Juvenile Court or Child Protection had jurisdiction  
Conviction would have been unlikely

---

Although these may seem like relatively minor penalties, it was consistent with the guidelines established by the county's sentencing guidelines commission. The women had mixed feelings about their experience in jail, but their experiences were not out of the ordinary. Some of the women felt degraded by the way they were treated by police officers, while others reported that the officer seemed to really care about helping them get better. Some of the women even reported positive experiences in their post-conviction jail time, largely due to the isolated and abusive situations which they came from. The women consistently said that they felt that professionals throughout the criminal justice system should receive some sort of training regarding female sexual offenders to reduce or eliminate the prejudice and insensitivity that the offenders experienced. (Mathews et. al. 1989, 67-75)

With proper treatment, the recidivism rate for female sexual offenders seems to be low. Mathews and colleagues' study of 16 offenders found that none had reported

committing any new offenses after their release from the Genesis II sex offender treatment program (Mathews et. al. 1989 67). This could be symptomatic of the fact that female abusers are frequently referred to psychiatric care as opposed to purely punitive sanctions such as incarceration.

### **Typologies**

Female sexual offenders, and sexual offenders in general are a heterogeneous group. While a criminal act such as robbery almost always has a clear-cut goal (financial gain for the perpetrator), sexually based crimes are committed for a variety of reasons as shown in Table 6. These motivations include: sexual pleasure, power, control, exploration, experimentation, etc.

**Table 6**  
**Motivations for Sexually Based Crimes**

---

Sexual pleasure  
Power  
Control  
Exploration  
Experimentation

---

To understand the structural taxonomy of a population is the foundation for the development of theory and intervention (Knight & Prentky, 1990). Nearly any interaction with a population, intervention, treatment, researching developmental roots, or tracing the life course events requires a taxonomic structure to avoid practical, methodological and

theoretical errors (Knight & Prentky, 1990). The creation of typologies in respect to social deviance is an essential tool as summarized by Prentky, Knight and Lee:

A reliable, valid classification system can improve the accuracy of decisions (1) in the criminal justice system (where dangerousness and reoffense risk are assessed and resources are allocated), (2) in the clinical setting (where a more informed understanding of particular classes of offenders can be used to optimize treatment plans), and (3) in the design of more effective primary prevention strategies. A classification model may also help in deciphering critical antecedent factors that contribute to different outcomes (i.e., different “types” of child molesters) (p. 4).

A more in-depth analysis of the development and characteristics of a well-developed typology will be addressed in chapter 3 of this thesis.

## Typologies of Male Child Molesters

### **Cohen, Boucher, Seghorn & Mehegan (1979)**

Cohen and colleagues (1979, as cited in Knight, 1988) developed a classification scheme of male child molesters that suggested four different categorizations for male sex offenders, Fixated, Regressed, Exploitive, and Aggressive.

**Table 7**  
**Typologies of Male Child Molesters**

<b>Cohen, Boucher, Seghorn, &amp; Mehegan (1979) – MTC:CM1</b>	<b>Knight &amp; Prentky (1990) MTC:CM3</b>
Fixated	Interpersonal
Regressed	Narcissistic
Exploitive	Exploitative
Aggressive	Muted Sadistic
	Nonsadistic Aggressive
	Sadistic

### **Fixated**

The Fixated type is akin to typologies that exist in many other taxonomic systems of sexual offenders. They are unlikely to use force within interactions with children and their sexual contact is most often non-genital (touching, kissing, etc). These offenders are usually average in intelligence, and are socially adequate, but are often timid or shy in their interactions with others. Fixated offenders have been found to be the least dangerous to their



victims, but have one of the higher rates of recidivism.

### **Regressed**

Regressed offenders, similar to the Fixated offenders, are usually non-violent in their molestations. Only the level of force applied enough to gain the compliance of the victim is often used. The Regressed offenders are more likely to initiate genital contact during sexual activities when compared to Fixated offenders. It is noted that Regressed offenders usually have established social interactions with adults and show no outward signs of having any pedophilic tendencies. However, these offenders are often unable to cope with stressful situations in life. During these tenuous times, it is most likely that they will abuse children. They usually only abuse children for a fixed period of time, and then frequently return to normal sexual relations. It is also not uncommon for a regressed offender to try and gain the consent of their victim. Regressed offenders frequently experience guilt or remorse afterward. Because the offender isn't highly fixated sexually on children, their recidivism rate is often contingent upon their avoidance of stress that led to the offending.

### **Exploitive**

The Exploitive offender often uses a child only for his own sexual interests. Violence may be instrumental, but can be potentially severe if the offender believes it is necessary to ensure compliance. The form of contact is frequently genital in nature, and the offender considers the feelings of the child as of no concern to them. They most often suffer from anti-social personality disorder and have poor social relations with peers.

## **Aggressive**

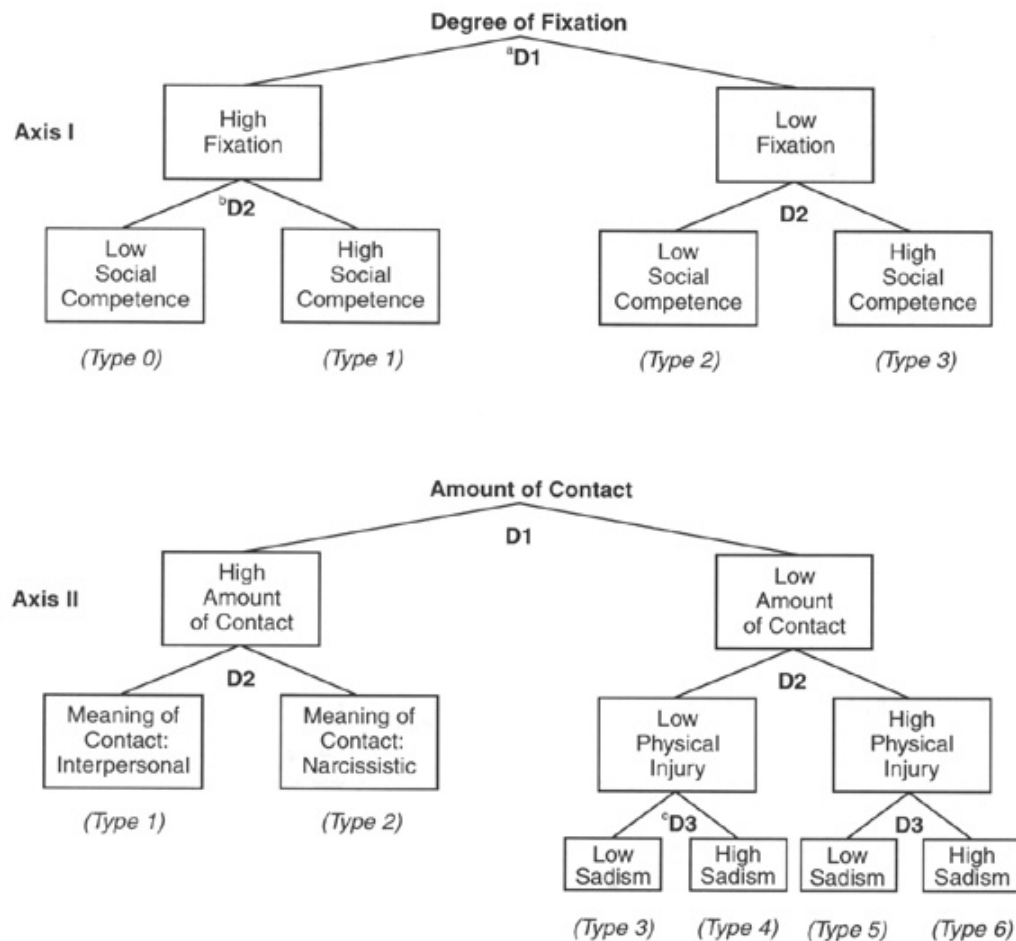
The fourth type is the Aggressive offender. These are frequently cited as the most dangerous and threatening offenders due to their propensity to focus on violence and sadistic sexual acts when they molest. The victims are more likely to be male, and it is thought that they are subconsciously reenacting abuse that they themselves received as a young child. The Aggressive offender is seen to be the least common of the male child molesters.

### **Knight And Prentky (1990)**

This previous typology by Cohen and colleagues was then revised by Knight and Prentky (1990) and expanded it to a comprehensive set of six categories, based on the degree of fixation and the amount of contact the offender has with children. Titled the Massachusetts Treatment Center: Child Molester Typology 3 (MTC:CM3), their classification system is more in depth than the aforementioned one, and their points of analysis make for a well-balanced typology. A dual axis design was implemented, based on the Degree of Fixation upon children and the Amount of Contact with the victim. The “Degree of Fixation” measured the level of fixation, and the offender’s social competence to determine the type. The second axis, “Amount of Contact”, evaluates the amount of contact the offender has with children, the meaning of the contact, the amount of physical injury involved, and whether the injury is representative of sadism. Because this typology looks at more than just the acts of the offender (their motivations and their own personal

characteristics), it is able to give a more thorough view of the offender, and is therefore more useful.

Figure 2.1 shows the dual axis design of the MTC:CM3 typology, and where the decision points are located when assigning offenders to specific categories. The first axis, “Degree of Fixation”, evaluates how fixated the offender is upon children first, and then categorizes the offender based on their level of social competence. The second axis, “Amount of Contact”, decides the offender’s type based upon the amount of contact the offender has with his/her victim. After deciding upon the level of contact, High Contact Offenders are then evaluated based upon the meaning of their contact, either Narcissistic or Interpersonal. The Low Contact Offenders are first categorized on the amount of physical injury (high or low) inflicted upon their victims, and then by the motivation of the violence, either high sadistic or low sadistic.



<sup>a</sup>D1 Decision 1  
<sup>b</sup>D2 Decision 2  
<sup>c</sup>D3 Decision 3

Source: Knight, Prentky, Lee (1997)

**Figure 2 - MTC:CM3 Typology**

### Interpersonal

The acts of Interpersonal offenders consist of high levels of contact with children, but relatively non-intrusive forms of sexual contact, such as fondling, caressing, and other forms

of frottage. The offender often knows the victim and spends a lot of time planning the offenses, but does not cause significant physical injury to the victim. An Interpersonal offender is one who perpetrates crimes against children he/she has a preexisting relationship with, not usually strangers.

### **Narcissistic**

Narcissistic offenders also have high levels of contact with children, but only spend a moderate amount of time planning their offenses. Their sexual contact is phallic, but still non-sadistic. This definition of the sexual contact by definition would exclude females who abuse in a similar manner, but through the use of foreign objects and digital penetration. They also cause little injury to the victims. One major factor that separates the Narcissistic offender from the Interpersonal one is the extant relationship with the child. The Narcissistic offender has no other relation or interest in their victim other than sexual, while the Interpersonal offender has a non-sexual relationship. The sexual goal of the Interpersonal is largely non-orgasmic, while the intent of the Narcissistic offender is usually orgasmic.

### **Exploitative**

Exploitative offenders have little contact with children otherwise and do not extensively plan their offenses. They are usually strangers and participate in phallic, non-sadistic sex, with only enough physical violence to gain compliance. A female sexual offender would commit intrusive physical acts of penetration in place of the phallic contact. Child pornographers would be deemed as exploitative offenders, because their act is to use

the victim for a specific purpose other than their own pleasure. A hallmark of the Exploitive offender is that the child is instrumental for other goals beyond sexual pleasure.

### **Muted Sadistic**

Muted Sadistic offenders also have low levels of contact with children. Their offenses usually consist of sodomy and “sham” sadism (which imply sadistic fantasies, but without high levels of physical violence). They are usually strangers to the child they molest, and spend a moderate amount of time planning their offenses. The Exploitive and Muted Sadistic offenders both fall into a category of low injury, which means that any physical violence is limited to activities such as pushing, slapping, holding, and threats. The fantasies of the Muted Sadistic offender set them apart from the Exploitive offender. Fantasies of bondage, spanking, urination, etc, delegate them to their own potentially more threatening category.

### **Nonsadistic Aggressive**

Nonsadistic Aggressive types are similar to the above, but they lack the sadistic fantasies of Muted Sadistic offenders. Due to the aggression in the frequently phallic sexual acts, there is a high level of physical violence. The sexual acts would be similar to a female sexual offender who penetrates her victim either digitally or with an object. The violence itself is not an integral part of the Nonsadistic Aggressive offender’s modus operandi, but is a side effect of his acts. The Nonsadistic Aggressive type does not spend a large amount of

time planning his offenses, and the violent acts committed during his offenses are not part of his sexual pleasure.

### **Sadistic**

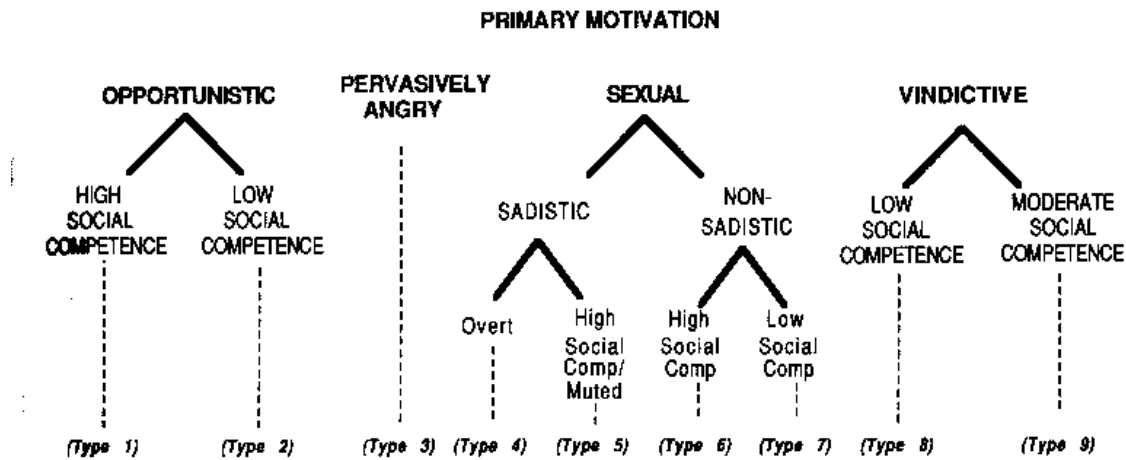
The Sadistic type, conversely, spends a lot of time planning his offenses. The sexual acts are based completely upon the pleasure of inflicting pain upon the child, who is usually a stranger. While both the Nonsadistic Aggressive and Sadistic offender commit acts of violence during their offenses, it is the eroticisation of this violence by the Sadistic offender that makes them a unique class. The pain and humiliation inflicted during the sexual act is integral in the offense. The Sadistic offender derives his sexual excitement and pleasure from the power over his victim, and from seeing the pain he inflicts and their victim's suffering. Because of their nature, these offenses are by far the most traumatizing, and often fatal to the victim. The Sadistic offender is the most dangerous and the most threatening of all of the child molesters to children. These are the offenders that traditionally troll for children in playgrounds and parks. Afterwards, the child and their remains are never heard from or seen again.

### **Typologies of Male Rapists**

Similarly, Knight & Prentky (1990) also developed a typology of male rapists, titled the Massachusetts Treatment Center: Revised Rapist Typology (or MTC:R3). Their classification system took a similar approach to that of the MTC:CM3, but used the primary

motivation of the rapist as the axis, not the proximity to children and degree of fixation. They identified a total of nine types of rapists, largely categorized by their level of social competence and underlying motivation of their attacks. Figure 2.2 shows the categories and subcategories utilized in categorizing the rapists.

**Knight & Prentky (1990)**



**Figure 3 – MTC:R3 Typology (from Knight & Prentky, 1990).**



**Table 8**

**MTC:R3 Typology of Male Rapists (Knight & Prentky 1990)**

---

Opportunistic High Social Competence  
Opportunistic Low Social Competence  
Pervasively Angry  
Sexual Sadistic (Overt)  
Sexual Sadistic (Muted)  
Non-Sadistic High Social Competency  
Non-Sadistic Low Social Competency  
Vindictive Low Social Competence  
Vindictive Moderate Social Competence

---

**Opportunistic**

Opportunistic offenders, subcategorized into High and Low Social Competence, are those rapists who only attack victims whenever an opportunity presents itself. Their offenses are largely unplanned and predatory, controlled by contextual factors and a sense of immediacy. The Opportunistic rapist is rarely acting on any held fantasy, but more on impulse and a desire for immediate sexual gratification. Knight and Prentky found that these offenders do not often use violence in anything other than an instrumental context in order to maintain victim compliance. The subcategorizations of social competence allow for a further refining of the types of offender based upon how well they are integrated in society. One clear delineation is that those of High Social Competence often have a social relationship with their victims.

### **Pervasively Angry**

The Pervasively Angry rapist is primarily motivated by anger, more so than sexual desire. They are similar to the Opportunistic offenders in that they often rape on impulse, in unplanned offenses. However, the rapes committed by a Pervasively Angry offender display gratuitous amounts of violence, even when attacking a compliant victim. Serious injuries to the victim is common, even death, although there does not appear to be an eroticisation of the violence. These rapists report difficulty controlling their anger, which is often directed at males as well, and show significant difficulties in impulse control.

### **Sexual Sadistic**

The four types that make up the sexual based offenders are linked by extensive fantasies of a sexual, or sadistic nature that heavily influence their actions. The Sexual Sadistic offenders display marked interest in sexualized violence. They are subdivided into two types, Overt and High Social Competence. Overt Sadistic rapists display violence in their sexual assaults, which results in a physical injury to their victims. These acts of violence are not simply instrumental, but are sexualized and often the primary focus of the assault, even more than sexual interplay rape itself. In this regard, they are similar to the Pervasively Angry rapists, with the largest differentiation being that the violence is eroticized and often a point of fantasy before and after the assaults.

The Muted Sexual Sadistic rarely displays the same acts of extreme sadistic violence in their rapes as their Overt counterparts. It is noted, however, that Muted Sexual Sadistic

rapists describe fantasies of a sadistic nature, but seldom enact them. Other than a slightly higher level of impulsivity, they closely resemble the Nonsadistic High Social Competence rapists.

### **Sexual Non-Sadistic**

Again subclassified based on level of social competence, Sexual Non-Sadistic offenders show very little physical violence in their offenses. It is noted that they are frequently the least violent, in both sexual and non-sexual contexts, of all of the offenders, and will often flee from an incident if the victim is resistant. They are acting based on fantasy, but those fantasies are of a non-sadistic nature. As Knight and Prentky describe, “Their fantasies and assault behaviors are hypothesized to reflect an amalgam of sexual arousal, distorted “male” cognitions about women and sex, and feelings of inadequacy about their sexuality and masculine self-image.” (p. 45).

### **Vindictive**

The final set of categories proposed by Knight and Prentky (1990) are the Vindictive offenders. As with the Pervasively Angry offenders, there is a potential for serious physical abuse and death in their rapes, but unlike those offenders, the Vindictive displays extremely focused anger and violence towards women. They are extremely misogynistic offenders who rape not for sexual pleasure, but for the sake of exerting power and force over a female victim. Overall, they also display a lower level of impulsivity when compared to Pervasively Angry and Overt Sadistic types.

### **Male vs. Female Typologies**

The pre-established typologies of both child molesters and rapists provide an excellent understanding of their differing motivations and victim choices. While a group as heterogeneous as sex offenders are nearly impossible to fully identify and determine their underlying motivations that lead to offending, the typologies discussed above do a satisfactory job.

One negative feature of the typologies, however, is the lack of consideration for female sexual offenders. The definition of offender's acts as "phallic" is a specific example of this. While women who offend sexually commit similar intrusive acts, frequently through digital penetration or the introduction of foreign objects, these would still not be defined as "phallic". Another difference in the typologies when applied to female offenders is the presence of sadism. The aforementioned typologies consider only two levels of sadism, either low or muted (often in fantasy only), or high (involving prominent physical violence). The extant literature shows that while extreme physical acts of sadistic violence are occasionally present with female offenders, it is an uncommon occurrence. Sadism is often manifested in more subtle acts, such as the unnecessary use of enemas and other offenses with a greater focus on humiliation than physical violence.

It is differences such as these that make the development of a typology that is more attributable to a female sexual offender a necessity. There have been some attempts to develop typologies of offenders, but these are largely descriptive only, and therefore of limited use.

## Typology Development of Female Sexual Offenders

The psychiatric community has made the greatest strides in researching and discussing the prevalence and activities of female sexual offenders. Preliminary typologies have been developed to describe the type of cases that are often reported. In most situations, these typologies are developed simply for convenience and only really applicable to the sample utilized in the study. While these typologies may be generalizable to other studies, the heterogeneous nature of female sex offenders makes them far from comprehensive. An overview of the most prevalent typologies of female sexual offenders can be found in Table 9.

**Table 9**  
**Preexisting Typologies of Female Sex Offenders**

---

<b>Sarrel &amp; Masters (1982)</b>	<b>McCarty (1986)</b>
Forced Assault	Independent Offenders of Males
“Baby Sitter” Abuse	Independent Offenders of Females
Incestuous Abuse	Co-Offenders and Accomplices
Dominant Woman Abuse	<b>Mathews, Matthews, Speltz (1991)</b>
	Teacher/Lover
	Predisposed (Intergenerational Factors)
	Male-Coerced

---

### **Sarrel and Masters (1982)**

One of the first classifications proposed was in a study of females who sexually abuse males, was completed by Sarrel and Masters (1982). They based their categories on a total of eleven cases, six from the Yale University Health Service, and five from the Masters and Johnson Institute. The authors do not refer to their classification as a typology, and even

admit that there may be an overlap within their classes. While admittedly tentative, the classification has been referenced in recent publications.

### **Forced Assault**

The first of the four classes proposed by Sarrel and Masters is the Forced Assault type. Their study reported four participants who were the victims of Forced Assault by a woman, which construed being physically constrained and put in fear of their safety or lives, by a woman who took sexual pleasure from the incident.

An example of this type includes a case where a 27 year old man, a recently divorced truck driver who frequented bars and occasionally patronized prostitutes. After leaving a bar with a woman he had not met before and entering a motel, he passed out from alcohol consumption. When he awoke, he had been stripped and tied to a bed, gagged and blindfolded. He reported being raped by several women, and was threatened with a knife to his scrotum if he could not sexually perform. The man reported being held captive for nearly 24 hours before he was released into a remote area. He did not report the assault for fear of embarrassment of being raped by women, and reported difficulty maintaining an erection after the assault.

### **“Baby Sitter” Abuse**

The second class discussed was “Baby-Sitter” abuse. This type of female sexual offender is thought to be perhaps the most prevalent, in which a young boy is seduced by an older female. There is usually no relation between the offender and victim within these

offenses. These incidents rarely involve physical restraint or violence, threatened or physical.

One case reported in the study was of a 25 year old man who, at the age of 10, was sexually molested by an older woman who acted as his babysitter. He spoke of frequent incidents of fondling without ejaculation, and the man even reported possible attempts at being mounted, although he could not recall specific details.

### **Incestuous Abuse**

Incestuous Abuse constitutes the third classification proposed. The offenders are largely the mothers and older sisters of male children who participate in sexual activity with them. Of the two cases encountered during this study, one did report that threats of violence played a role in the abuse, in a case which involved siblings. This is uncharacteristic of most Incestuous Abuse situations, which are mostly non-violent in nature and occasionally even consensual.

The study featured a 30-year-old man whose mother began performing sexually abusive acts on him at the age of 13. She began fondling his penis, which led to fellatio, and then eventually to full blown intercourse. The sexual relations continued until the boy left for college. The victim did not report any resentment on his part to the acts, and even felt as if he was betraying his mother when he began a sexual relationship with a woman in college.

### **Dominant Woman Abuse**

The final class proposed by Sarrel and Masters is Dominant Woman Abuse. These

are abuse situations in which the traditional sex and gender roles are completely reversed, in which the woman acts sexually aggressive against the wishes of her male partner. This type of offense, defined within the confines of this study as between adult partners, is perhaps the closest parallel to spousal rape with male perpetrators. Within this study, there was no overt use of physical violence or threat from the perpetrators.

The most indicative case presented details a 40-year-old man who was, at the time, separated from his wife. While they were both in their summer cottage alone, she stripped, grabbed his penis through his pants, manipulated him to erection, and quickly mounted him. While there was no act of physical violence in this case or any others in this typology, the males were victims of sexual aggression and acts against their will.

### **McCarty (1986)**

Loretta McCarty (1986) developed a second preliminary typology of the female sex offender in her study of maternal incest perpetrators. The study was conducted to explore the characteristics of females who commit incestuous acts against both male and female children. While an exploratory study, McCarty did make attempts at categorizing the offenders in a very rudimentary fashion. She proposed three categories: Independent Offenders of Males, Independent Offenders of Females, and Co-offenders and Accomplices.

#### **Independent Offenders of Males**

These offenders are those who offend alone against their male children, without the presence of a male partner. In all of the cases in the study, the mothers began offending



against their children largely as a replacement for their absent spouses. One case detailed a mother's relationship with her oldest male child. The mother of this child was only 13 when he was born. When he was older, he frequently acted as a caretaker for his six-year-old female cousin. He began to become sexually abusive towards this younger cousin, and it was eventually revealed by the cousin that she was also abused by the mother, and that the mother and son frequently had intercourse with each other.

### **Independent Offenders of Females**

McCarty's study found four independent offenders who offended against female children. They did not act in conjunction with their spouse or a male partner. The mothers in these situations were very attentive to their children, which is attributed to the fact either that the children were very young, or because the mothers saw their daughters as extensions of themselves, and treated them as such. The case study presented was of a mother and daughter who were physically very close to each other. The mother and daughter shared a bed and bathed together since the daughter was of a very young age. These age inappropriate acts from the mother frequently involved physical contact as well. When the daughter became a teenager, the mother pressured her to model naked for the daughter's stepfather. The daughter became very uncomfortable with this, and with the increasing discomfort with the physical touching, she alerted the authorities.

### **Co-offenders and Accomplices**

The co-offenders and accomplices were not largely discussed within this study, but it

was stated that the offenders were largely neglectful, occasionally physically abusive, and placed their need for a man above the needs of their children. These are women who perpetrated incestuous acts in concert with a male partner. This is a rather broad category that consists of those who were active abusers with a male partner, and those women who were coerced into abusing against their will.

### **Mathews, Matthews and Speltz (1989)**

While the research focus of McCarty, and Sarrel and Masters was not the development of a cohesive typology, Mathews, Matthews and Speltz (1989) did set out to categorize female sex offenders through an explorative study. Mathews and colleagues developed a tentative typology based upon a qualitative study of 16 female sexual offenders participating in the Genesis II sex offender program. Within their research, they delineated three specific typologies: Teacher/Lover, Predisposed (Intergenerational Factors), and Male-Coerced. Within their study, these were mutually exclusive categories, although by analyzing the descriptions, one can find exceptions.

#### **Teacher/Lover**

The Teacher/Lover typology consists mostly of those female offenders who are in sexual relationships with younger, sometimes active partners. These offenders are frequently only breaking age of consent laws with their partners. Teacher/Lover offenders are rarely violent and their offenses are less tied to issues of power and control. These types of offenders are the ones that are most widely recognized and sworn off as being of little

danger, and the victims of which are often considered lucky. National examples such as Mary Kay LeTourneau, who was arrested and imprisoned for having a sexual relationship with one of her teenage students (Ramsland, 2003). The view that this is an unimportant crime is one that further perpetuates the denial and ignorance of female sexual offenders. If a 35 year old male was in a sexual relationship, consensual or not, with a 13 year old girl, it would be deemed horrific. A 35-year-old woman in the same relationship with a 13-year-old boy is seen to be less reprehensible and is often ignored.

One offender in the study, identified as Ann, was categorized as being of the Teacher/Lover type. Unlike many sexual offenders, her abusive incidents were not related to any sort of power or control, but as an equal partner. She didn't believe her behavior was criminal for this reason, and claimed to have fallen in love with an adolescent male who was her sexual partner. She grew up with self-esteem issues related to her physical disability, and when reaching adulthood, was involved in a multitude of physically and emotionally abusive relationships. As is the case with many women who suffer from poor self-image, Ann would enter sexual relationships with anyone who would give her positive attention. She offended against a 13-year-old friend of one of her children. Their sexual relationship began with Ann performing oral sex, but developed to sexual intercourse. The child was a willing participant and was not coerced into the act. The relationship ended when the boy stated he did not have the same feelings of love, and the two went their separate ways, no charges were ever filed. Afterward, Ann was charged with a fourth degree criminal sexual conduct charge for sex games she orchestrated with adolescents. Her final offense came after being admittedly drunk, she propositioned two boys, ages 12 and 13 into sex. There was no force or coercion

on her part, she simply told the boys she would be open to having sexual intercourse with them. The activity ended when Ann confessed to her therapy group and Child Protection Services. Neither boy would verify her story, so she was not charged criminally for the act. At this point she entered the Genesis II Female Sex Offender Program.

### **Predisposed (Intergenerational Factors)**

The Predisposed offenders, within the confines of this study, consisted of those offenders who were linked only by their own sexual abuse histories. Predisposed offenders were those who acted on their own volition when offending. They were not partners with another male offender, nor were they in any sort of “relationship” with their victim. This makes for a very heterogeneous group. Nearly half of the offenders studied fell into this category. All but two of them offended against their own children, and the targets were mostly younger. The two who did not abuse their own children committed acts that were based around the themes of power, revenge and control. The members of the Predisposed group reported that all throughout their lives they had a tendency to act out against others. Psychopathology of the offenders was a recurrent theme, with the offenders suffering from extreme distrust, anguish, nervousness, distorted thinking, feelings of persecution, chemical dependence, and in dependant relationships.

The case study presented for the Predisposed typology, named Bonnie, was first molested by her father at age four. The abuse was recurrent through her childhood, and her mother was emotionally abusive as well. Bonnie’s grandfather also raped her when she was eight years old. She was an average student, and actually had two close friends, an

abnormality in most of the cases. Similar to the previous case, she would allow men to take advantage of her sexually in order to gain acceptance and attention. Bonnie eventually had a child, who became the target of her offending. Whenever her daughter would make a mistake, Bonnie reacted violently, often yelling at and physically abusing her daughter. Eventually, Bonnie began fondling her daughter while she slept. She turned herself in to the authorities and was not given any jail time on the condition that she enter therapy.

### **Male-Coerced**

The Male-Coerced type of female sexual offender were those who did not offend against children on their own volition, but were persuaded or forced into it by a male partner. As with the other offenders, these women suffered from low self-esteem and some married only to not be alone. These women were frequently the victims of physical and sexual abuse from their male partners. All of the male-coerced cases involved men who initiated the abuse and either persuaded or threatened their female partners into becoming abusive. In three of the cases, the female partner began to abuse on her own as well as with her male companion.

The case study presented is of Kris, who was encouraged to be a passive and compliant woman by her conservative religious family. She was herself the victim of sexual abuse at an early age, but at the hands of a stranger, not her family. Her mother reacted to the abuse in such a way that she felt the abuse was her own fault. While her family was not sexually abusive, they would frequently abuse her physically at nearly any infraction she caused. At high school age, she began hanging around a crowd of juvenile delinquents where casual sex amongst friends was expected, at which she obliged in order to maintain her

friendships. She eventually married and had children with a man named Tony, who was the partner who persuaded her to sexually abuse their children. Tony was physically and sexually abusive to both her and their children, and coerced her into playing a game of “spin the bottle” in which the children would be made to disrobe and perform sexual acts on the adults. She eventually began to play this game without her husband, and preferred sexual activities with her sons more than her husband, because she had control of the situation. Tony was arrested for sexually assaulting other boys in the neighborhood and sentenced to jail with the testimony of Kris, who received no jail time for her abusive acts. Her children were removed and she was ordered to attend therapy for sex offenders.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This study of the pre-existing typologies of both male and female sex offenders provides a foundation upon which to develop a new, more refined typology of female sex offenders. This literature review examined commonalities and differences between the typologies that have been developed from other empirical studies in order to find the best facets of all of them to be integrated into a more wide reaching typology. The examination of female sex offenders who have come to the attention of the authorities also allows for a better view of the demographics of the offenders. Understanding the characteristics of these offenders also provides an essential component of developing a typology that is more descriptive than pre-existing ones.

The next two chapters will further outline the development of a new typology that

was synthesized from the pre-existing typologies, the offender demographics, and the cases that have been recognized by the authorities. Chapter three will provide a more in-depth look at the creation of typologies and the developmental framework used in the new typology. The limitations of the aforementioned typologies of female sex offenders will be discussed as well. Chapter four will discuss the typology created in more depth. It will examine the motivations and acts of the offenders, and provide examples of cases that have been published in the literature.

My typology is created both from the strengths of the previous typologies, and consists of two axes, based upon either adult or child victims. It consists of a total of nine categories, which will be discussed in greater depth. While it is limited in its effectiveness due to the use of previously published sources, it does create a new research direction that will allow for wider recognition of females as sexual offenders, and will also aid in possibly preventing future offenses.

This chapter examined many aspects of female sexual offenders. The study of their demographics, their abuse histories, their choice of victims, and possible theoretical causation factors paints a more vivid picture of an offender that many do not believe even exists. In addition, by examining the most widely accepted typologies of male sexual offenders, a further understanding of the components of typologies that have been tested and refined through academic research, one is able to understand what makes an efficient typology. The study of tentative typologies that have been developed by the psychiatric community also provides a clearer understanding of similarities in offense patterns, which provided a research direction for my own typology synthesis.

By examining this extant literature that has been most often relegated to psychiatric and psychological journals, it becomes apparent that more females who commit sex crimes exist. These offenders most likely exist in numbers far beyond what is recognized by the criminal justice system and therefore shows an underlying problem that needs to be recognized in order to prevent future victimizations.



## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

When compared to their male counterparts, female sexual offenders are a much smaller population. However, the seriousness of sexual offenses makes the understanding of the offender imperative in prevention. Sex crimes as a whole are of an extremely secretive nature, usually occurring in private situations, and frequently with the offender and victim the only witnesses. The lack of third party witnesses means that no witnesses can corroborate abuse allegations, nor bring them to the attention of the authorities. Given the shame and fear a sexual assault victim usually experiences, the victim themselves rarely report the offense to the authorities. When it is a female who is the abuser, the criminal justice authorities are even less likely to detect signs of abuse due to the societal rejection of a female as a potential sex offender. Developing a further understanding of the female sexual offender will allow criminal justice professionals to become aware of potential signs of abuse, and thereby have the tools to proactively identify and hopefully reduce the number of potentially hidden offenses.

### **Outline of Chapter III**

This chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section examines what constitutes a typology, the elements of a sound typology, and potential limitations of their usage. The second details how information and incidents used in this new typology were obtained. The third section provides a critique of the pre-existing typologies of female sex offenders, noting their restrictions and limitations. The final section will discuss the methodology utilized in the development of the typology.

### **Basics of Typologies**

The process of identifying, organizing, and integrating elements that share commonalities is an essential facet of human cognition (Knight & Prentky, 1990). Knight and Prentky (1990) summarize the importance of typologies with:

In the scientific study of anomalous behavior, the indispensable role of classification is well established. Understanding the taxonomic structure of a deviant population is the keystone of theory building and the cornerstone of intervention. It provides a pivotal underpinning for research on a population and is an essential prerequisite for determining the optimum response of society to deviance. Whether the goal is making decisions about intervention, treatment, and disposition, tracking down the developmental roots of a deviant behavior pattern, or following the life course of this pattern, failure to take the taxonomic structure of a population into account can lead to serious practical, methodological, and theoretical errors. (p.23)

### **The Value of Typologies and Classifications**

Classification typologies are a beneficial tool in all areas of the criminal justice

system. Even within the corrections system, having an appropriate classification system is advantageous for the staff and aids in rehabilitation efforts. Solomon and Camp (1993, as cited in Megargee, Carbonell, Bohn & Sliger, 2001) delineated these benefits of classification within the corrections system.

**Table 10**  
**The benefits of classification in the corrections system**

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To assess and group offenders for the purpose of designating security and custody

To diagnose offenders and determine programs and services, such as medical and mental health services, vocational programs, educational programs, and work programs, based on their need and the availability of services

To designate offenders for the appropriate housing placement within a facility or institution

To schedule reviews of security, custody, and program placement within a facility or institution

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To assess inmates for placement in community transition programs and for special needs

Source: Solomon and Camp (1993)

### **The Elements of a Typology**

Classification systems require some basic elements in order to be considered meaningful, or even practical.

A widely accepted characteristic of a taxonomic system is that its defining characteristics be as observable as possible. If an element of a classification is very general, it should be operationalized in such a way that it is observable and measurable. (Quay, 1986a).

These observable features must exist in a cluster of covarying characteristics that can be observed in at least one situation with at least one method of observation (Quay, 1986b). Basing a classification scheme on less tangible characteristics that are not clearly observable can lead to confusion, and thus weaken the effectiveness of the typology.

A classification system must also display validity and discriminability in order to be appropriate. In essence, it is the extent that observers can discriminate between disorders or taxonomies within a classification system. Discriminability is closely linked with operationality and observability, because those two characteristics allow for the discrimination between categories (Quay, 1986a). Similarly, validity acts as the determinate to ensure that the system can adequately perform the functions of “nomenclature, information retrieval, description, prediction, and theory building” (Quay 1986b, 3). A classification system that lacks distinct powers of discrimination and validity is likely to suffer from individuals who fit into a multitude of classifications, because the classification system does not clearly delineate between types.

Reliability, especially interrater reliability, also plays a significant role in the development of a typology. In psychiatric work, the clinicians must arrive at a consistent diagnosis in order for it to be properly integrated into a typology (Quay, 1986). There should be established agreements between raters as to what variables constitute being relegated to a specific category. Also, it is important that these decisions remain consistent over a reasonable interval of time as well (Quay, 1986b).

Megargee (1977) provides an even more comprehensive series of seven criteria that must be met for a corrections classification system. These criteria, presented in Table 11, are

essential for a typology to be effective and to truly be indicative of the population studied.

**Table 11**  
**Megargee's Seven Criteria for Classification System Evaluation**

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1. It must be able to classify most of the individuals in a setting.
  2. It must have clear operational definitions of the various types.
  3. It must have good inter-rater reliability
  4. It must have validity. It must be demonstrated that the members of a given class actually have the attributes that they are hypothesized to possess.
  5. It must be able to reflect changes in the individual as a result of correctional treatment
  6. It should have implications for treatment
  7. It should be cost-effective so large numbers of offenders can be classified with minimal expense and personnel.
- 

Source: Megargee (1977)

Megargee and colleagues (1979) reviewed a variety of systems of categorizing criminal offenders a wide spectrum of disciplines, such as anthropology, criminology, psychology, psychiatry, and sociology. Because these different disciplines are often focused on different elements of the human condition, the implementation of them can have a drastic effect on the variables utilized in the development of categories. These systems are outlined in Table 12.

**Table 12**  
**Review of typological characteristics**

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1. Typologies based on physical and constitutional appearances.
  2. Typologies based on the offense, crime patterns, degree of deviance, or career nature of a crime.
  3. Categories based on class differences, subcultures, and deviant social groups.
  4. Typologies based on distinctions developed among criminal offenders themselves.
  5. Psychological, psychiatric, and psychoanalytic typologies.
  6. Classifications developed by theories of development.
  7. Empirically created typologies.
- 

Source: Megargee and colleagues (1979)

The development of this typology follows most of these characteristics, while lacking in one. A previous limitation of published typologies of female sex offenders has largely been discriminability. The classifications were overly broad and allowed for overlap. Discrimination was a problem, because it was just too simple for an offender to fall into two or more categories. The typology developed created more specific classifications that allowed for better discrimination. The issue of reliability does pose a limitation in my research, however. Since the classifications were developed based on published case studies and anecdotes, there is no real way to measure interrater reliability. I do not believe that this poses a significant hindrance, however, because the typologies are based on the reported acts of sexual abuse, not the psychological or theoretical motivations of the offender. However, it is hoped that further research will pick this up and test it for reliability.

## **Purposes of Typologies**

Another important factor to consider when developing a typology is the exact purpose(s) for which the classification system is created. The use of an efficient classification system is what produces a typology. Brennan (1987) proposed that there are six purposes of creating classifications, as outlined in Table 13.

**Table 13**  
**Purposes for classifications**

- 
1. Description
  2. Discovery of new typologies
  3. Prediction
  4. Creating new analytical entities
  5. Theory confirmation and model testing
  6. Classification and nomenclature
- 

Source: Brennan (1987)

### **Description**

One of the most basic functions of classification, and a typology, is to describe unknown or complex phenomena in a clear, rudimentary manner. This function allows various complex variables to be presented in a simplified fashion, and therefore more easily understood.

### **Discovery of new typologies**

It is through the use of classification that typologies are created. The process of categorizing offenders based on commonality makes apparent underlying similarities and

consistencies that lead towards the creation of a functional typology. Unlike other forms of research in which hypotheses are tested, classification allows for finding out exactly what data “has to say” (Green, 1980). Another important factor in the development of new typologies in classification is the ability to discover previously unseen hidden structures of behavior (Brennan, 1987).

### **Prediction**

Prediction is the use of a classification or typology in order to forecast criminal behaviors or the potential presence of said behaviors based upon the observed characteristics of previous offenders. There are noticeable differences in the purpose of predictive versus descriptive classifications, however. Predictive classification is only concerned with predicting behaviors, it does not take into account causal or explanatory factors in its development. Conversely, descriptive classification seeks to look at causation and explanations of behavior (Brennan, 1987).

### **Creating new analytical entities**

Another function is to create individual entities that allow for more in-depth studying. By separating a very diverse population into separate classes with consistent characteristics, a study of a particular population is easier. In the case of sex offenders that are a heterogeneous population, trying to study their nature would prove impossible if they were not clustered into groups with similar qualities.



### **Theory confirmation and model testing**

Classification systems and the development of typologies can also be utilized to test theoretical concepts or conceptual typologies with empirical data and observations. The inclusion of real world observations into these studies often leads to modifications or refinements of these typologies into ones that are more reflective of an actual population. For example, the act of classifying homicides by Blackburn (1971) proved the presence of two broad types, as initially proposed by Megargee, but discovered the presence of four subtypes as well. Classification can also work in explanatory and casual research. Because the act of classifying a very heterogeneous group into categories with common features, patterns of causal homogeneity may begin to show through (Brennan, 1987)

### **Classification and nomenclature**

Another contribution of classification systems and typologies is the development of a new nomenclature that allows for ease in communication. If one were to try to describe an offender without the use of a classification or typology, all of their individual characteristics would have to be discussed, which would give the potential for miscommunication and difficulty in comprehension

This leads to the need for obvious nomenclature when creating a typology. While a seemingly superficial aspect of the process, a clear and explicitly meaningful label for a specific type allows for ease in communications with a variety of persons. An explicit taxonomic system also allows for a classification that encompasses a wide variety of factors

and variables to be clearly summarized (Brennan, 1984).

The new typology was developed to be largely descriptive, in order to classify the varying types of female sex offender as categorized by recurrent themes of their abusive acts. While the purposes of typology creation discussed by Brennan (1984) are not mutually exclusive, I believe that this typology would require additional research and testing before it could be fully applicable as predictive. I feel that, even given its limited scientific power, it is a definite asset to describe the types of offender that have been discovered in the literature, and raises the awareness of the female sex offender as a real and present threat.

### **How Information Was Collected**

Given the limited resources and scope of this thesis, it was determined that there would be no way of empirically collecting data for the purpose of analysis. The Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan was initially consulted with the intent of locating quantitative data for analysis. No data was located, but given the limited population in question, it was not surprising. The decision was then made to conduct qualitative research in order to formulate a preliminary typology based upon ones that have been previously constructed within the psychiatric community, for both male and female sexual offenders, with the addition of case studies and incidents reported in the literature. While this method does introduce potential bias of the original researcher into the newly created typologies, it does generate a framework from which future research can be conducted upon to increase validity.

The table below presents the data sources used to create this new typology. Only those sources that included case studies in which specifics of the offense are included. Although limited to a sample size of N=99, it was obvious that in the cases presented, there were commonalities among offenses, in the presence (or lack there of) of specific variables. These variables were not always addressed in the previously developed typologies, and when looking at the full picture, their limitations became even more recognizable. Because the sample sizes contained in these articles is so small, they are limited in terms of their generalizability.

**Table 14**  
**Sources used for typological data**

Source	Study n	N used in analysis	Data from	Source of data
Alarid, L. F. (2000)	N=25	N=2	Offenders	Corrections
Chow, E. W. C.,	N=1	N=1	Offenders	Clinical
Choy, A. L. (2002)				
Cooper, A. J., Swaminath, S., Baxter, D., Poulin, C.	N=1	N=1	Offender	Clinical
Crawford, C. (1997)	N=16	N=7	Victims	Clinical
Elliot, M. (1993)	N=30	N=23	Victims	Self-report
Evert & Bijkerk (1987)	N=1	N=1	Victim	Clinical
Evert, K., Bijkerk, I. (1987)	N=1	N=1	Victim	Self-report/Clinical
Girshick, L. B. (2002)	N=70	N=22	Victim	Self-report
Higgs, D. C., Canavan, M. M., Meyer, W. J. (1992)	N=1	N=1	Offenders	Clinical
Holubinskyj, H., Foley, S. (1987)	N=1	N=1	Victim	Social Workers
Hunter, K. (1993)	N=1	N=1	Victim	Clinical
Matthews, J. K., Mathews, R., Speltz, K.	N=16	N=3	Offender	Clinical
McCarty, L. M. (1986)	N=26	N=3	Offenders	Clinical
Mitchell, J., Morse, J. (1998)	N=80	N=6	Victims	Self-report
Peluso, E., Putnam, N. (1996)	N=2	N=2	Victim	Clinical
Saradjian, J., Hanks, H. (1996)	N=36	N=14	Offenders	Clinical
Sarrel, P. M., Masters, W. H. (1982)	N=11	N=9	Victims	Clinical
Travin, S., Cullen, K., Protter, B.	N=9	N=4	Offender	Clinical

### **Critique of current typologies**

For the most part, the existing typologies of female sex offenders have been created by and used within the psychiatric community. Surprisingly, given their therapeutic origins, the typologies mostly delineate offenders by their offense type, not by intrinsic motivations or mental state. However, these typologies have been developed more for the convenience of organization as opposed to recognition and prevention of offenses.

#### **Sarrel & Masters (1982)**

Although this was one of the earliest published typologies, it was the most comprehensive of the currently existing classification systems. The four types given, Forced Assault, “Baby Sitter” Abuse, Incestuous Abuse, and Dominant Woman Abuse covered a wide range of the offenses of female sexual offenders. The largest detriments of this typology are that it is aimed at only male victims, and the individual types do not exactly delineate between adult and child victims.

The Forced Assault type provided two examples of women using the threat of violence to gain the coercion of an adult male for sexual gratification. This is already a very specific category, however, it does not discern the use of violence as either part of the sexual nature of the assault, or simply instrumental in gaining victim compliance. The case studies presented as examples all used violence or the threat of violence to ensure the victim would comply.

The “Baby Sitter” type was probably the most homogenous of all of the types

presented. It consisted of an older female and a younger boy, in which the female performed sexual acts that are of an exploratory nature on the child. None of the cases presented showed the use of violence or force in the offense. The sexual offenses presented were also of a less intrusive nature, mostly fondling, oral-genital contact, or possible attempts at intercourse. Although Sarrel & Masters (1982) developed this typology considering only male victims, it is conceivable that female victims could be present in these types of offenses.

Their third classification, Incestuous Abuse, is of less value, however. The Incestuous Abuse category was made up of older females and younger males who were biologically related. The case presented was of a mother and son who had consensual sexual relations with each other. I feel that using this as a category is a bit limiting, because the classification is based only upon the relation between abuser and victim. The offense in question could be like the one presented in the literature, which consisted of consensual sex. However, an incident where a mother forcibly penetrated an infant son with a foreign object could still fall into this category, even though the nature of the offense is considerably different.

The final of Sarrel and Masters' categories was Dominant Woman Abuse. These situations consist of women who essentially rape their adult male partners without the use of violence. This type does not discuss if the threat of violence could play role in the offense or not, and also does not take into consideration the types of incidents that could take place in the context of a lesbian relationship.

### **McCarty (1986)**

McCarty's typology was created only for the study of females who committed incestuous acts of sexual abuse against children, and therefore is more limited in its applicable population than the other two typologies. It consists of only three types, independent offenders of males, independent offenders of females, and co-offenders and accomplices.

The independent offenders of males largely consisted of non-invasive sexual contact between mother and son, with little coercion, force, or violence present. In some of the cases, the victim was also an active participant. The mothers reported that they used their child as a surrogate partner when their adult partner was either not present or abusive. This was a common thread throughout incestuous offenders with male victims.

The second class, independent offenders of females, seemed to be a bit less well defined. In McCarty's study, the offenses reported were subtle ones, consisting of touching and excessive contact between mother and daughter while naked. These offenses documented within this classification were rarely of an overt sexual nature. However, by classifying offenders based solely on their relationship to their victims, the power of classification is severely limited, as the actual offense can be very different from offender to offender within that category.

McCarty's final type, Co-offenders and accomplices, is a broad umbrella classification that encompasses any offender who was to commit sexually abusive acts in concert with a male partner on a child. Even within this study, the details on what constitutes

these offenders was sparse, with the only insight into the offender being that they are mostly neglectful and put the needs of their spouse above the needs of their children. Categories such as this one are, I feel, are of limited utility in the prevention of female sex offenders, and continue to promote the myth that women cannot engage directly in sexually aggressive behavior.

### **Mathews, Matthews, and Speltz (1989)**

The typology developed by Mathews, Matthews and Speltz has become one of the most widely recognized in the study of female sexual offenders. In an exploratory study of participants in a female sexual offender treatment group, they devised a typology consisting of three classes of offender: Teacher/Lover, Predisposed, and Male-Coerced.

The Teacher/Lover type follows along the stereotype of the older woman who initiates a sexual relationship with a minor child, most often a teenager. These offenses are not violent in nature, and are almost always consensual. Because this class represents a very homogenous group that commits consistent acts, this appears to be a well-developed classification.

The second classification, Predisposed (Intergenerational Factors), is defined only by the fact that the offenders were themselves the victim of sexual abuse or molestation. This forms the entire basis of classification, and severely limits its use in classifying offenders. The offenders who are potentially the most violent and sadistic, and therefore the most dangerous, are relegated to this rather ambiguous category. This typology is also not mutually exclusive, as many of the offenders in the Teacher/Lover and Male Coerced/Male



Accompanied taxonomies were they themselves the victims of childhood abuse. This typology could also combine both the mother who has incestuous, non-violent sexual intercourse with her son, and the aunt who physically abuses her niece and violently penetrates her with foreign objects. These are two very different types of offenses and offenders, which would require different forms of identification and intervention by law enforcement, and therefore should be delineated into differing categories.

The final classification, Male Coerced, is similar to the previously discussed Co-offenders and accomplices classification in McCarty's 1986 typology. These are the female offenders who either offend at the coercion of a male accomplice, or are an active partner with the male. Within this research, this classification is of little value because the intentions and motivations of the offender are different between groups, and combining them together makes understanding even more difficult. The women who only offend when forced to by a male partner are best categorized as a separate type of offender, as they have no intention or motivation on their own. Male accompanied offenders, however, are often times an equal partner in the context of the abuse, and therefore have their own intrinsic motivations for their offenses, and should be categorized as an individual, rather than as a subservient participant. They should not be classified simply because of their participation with an accomplice, but by the acts they commit for their own intrinsic motivations. By categorizing female offenders who participate equally with males on the basis of their partnership alone, the misconception that females cannot be sexual offenders on their own is reinforced and legitimized.

While these pre-existing typologies do have merit, on their own they are all deficient

in some regard, and are often based on a system that has little to no value for criminal justice professionals. I feel that it is important to develop a typology specifically aimed at female offenders that creates classifications based on more than convenience, but on the nature of the offense, which can provide insight into motivation, the combination of which can lead to prevention. Another factor in these typologies is they were designed more to classify for psychiatric purposes, not for crime prevention. By looking at factors such as the victim choice, the nature of the offense, amount of violence involved, and the intent of the violence, a typology could be devised that would have more pragmatic implications for the criminal justice system.

### **Development of Typology**

The creation of this new typology was largely based on the developmental methods utilized by Knight and Prentky's 1990 classification of male sexual offenders. In their development of typologies, they implemented a dual strategy of research: Deductive/Rational, and Inductive/Empirical. The Deductive/Rational methods utilized pre-existing typologies in order to discover commonalities between them that would be useful in the development of a new typology. The Inductive/Empirical approach implemented collected empirical data confirms these commonalities in order to improve levels of reliability. Knight and Prentky investigated their data with cluster analysis, with the intention of locating homogenous patterns within the offenders. For this thesis, cluster analysis was not used, but could be a direction for future research.

This methodology of developing typologies was chosen because it structurally allows the researcher to expand upon the previously laid foundations of a typology, or to integrate multiple typologies into a single comprehensive one, and also allows for the inclusion of empirical data that was not included within a pre-existing typology that could prove essential in further subdividing the existing taxonomies into more exclusive ones.

Figure 4 is a flow diagram of the typology development method utilized in this thesis:

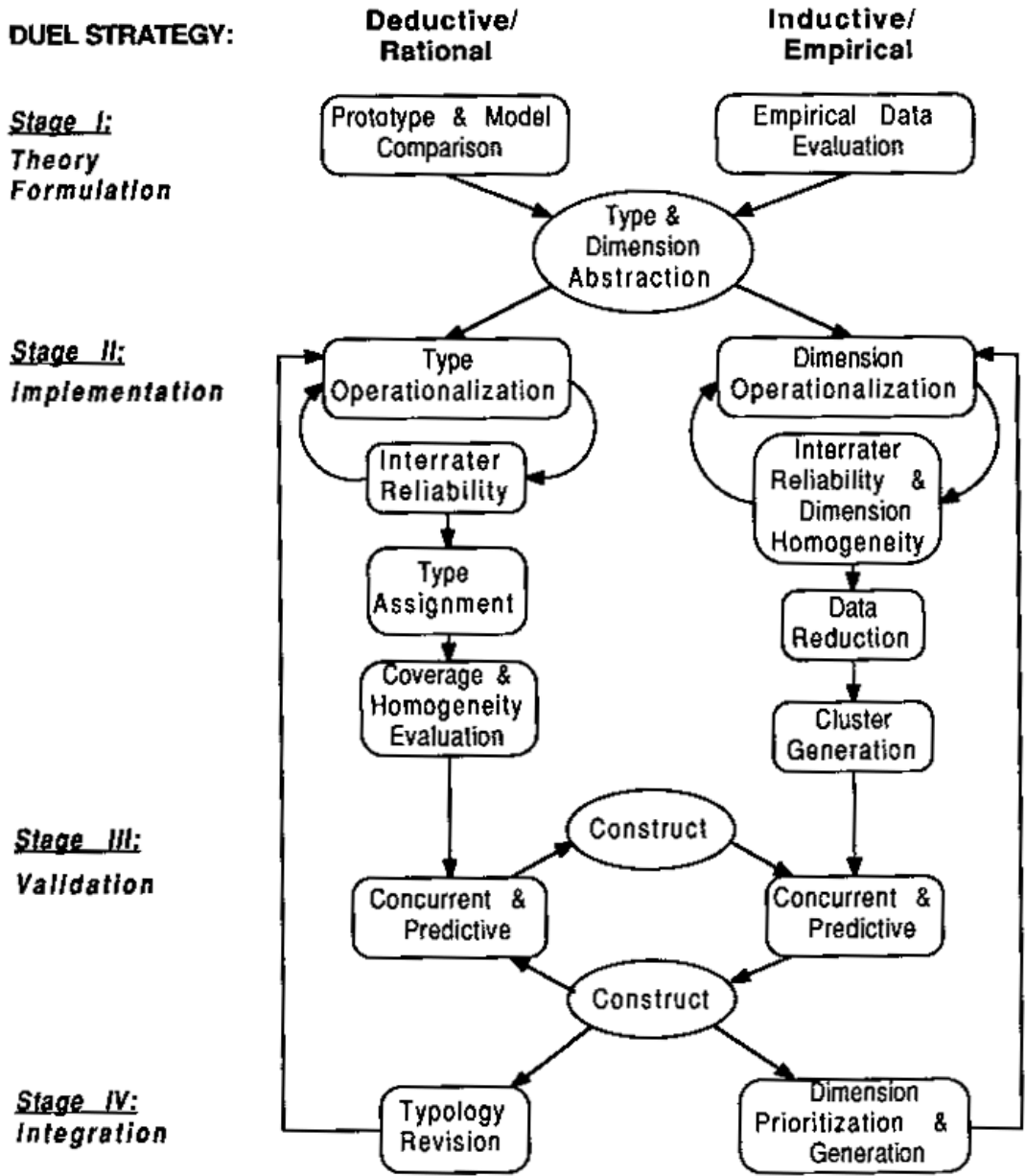


Figure 4 – Development Model (Source: Knight & Prentky, 1990)

Figure 4 is a truncated version of the model utilized by Knight and Prentky, which omits their third and fourth stage of development. Their model's third stage, validation, assessed the concurrent and predictive validity of each typology that was generated through their research, and was the framework for construct validation. The fourth stage, integration, was a means of cross-validation to test the newly developed typology in order to further validate the newly created taxonomy. Owing to the limited time frame of this work, the decision was made that for the creation of a new preliminary typology of female sexual offenders, the initial groundwork for the theory will be laid, with further validation and integration steps to be undertaken at a later date.

It is also important to note that because the data utilized for this research was collected from pre-existing sources, the reliability may be compromised due to potential bias from the original author. It is because of this that this typology must be looked at solely as a tentative step towards a more refined one. However, because this typology is built upon the nature of the offense, and not something less tangible such as the offender's state of mind or their psychological motivations, the use of second hand data still has scientific value.

The data collected through case studies and published interviews looked at the offenses on four main categories: age of victim, nature of the offense, level of violence in the offense, and the intent of said violence. These dimensions were chosen because all indications pointed to these as the most appropriate variables to cluster offender types.

As previously outlined in chapter 2, there seemed to be no consistency with the preference of victim's gender other than the female sexual offender's own sexual preference. Although it was noted in the literature that offenses against female children seemed to be of a

more violent and sadistic nature when compared to male children, there was not enough information to use this as a determinant. Using the age of the victim, however, does have greater merit, because the nature of a sexual offense can vary with the variable of the victim being either an adult or a child.

Further, it was also found that evaluating the nature of the sexual offense has value as well. The type of offense committed is an important element in preventing offenses, because criminal justice professionals must be sensitive to potential abuse situations, and the best way to accomplish that is to know what type of offenses are indicative of a female sex offender.

The level of violence in an offense also was shown to be an excellent point of delineation when developing a typology. The extant literature indicates that some offenders use no violence in all in their offenses, while others show high levels of physical abuse.

Similarly, the intent of this violence is another important aspect of an offense to look at. As previously discussed in the summary of pre-existing typologies, some of the female sex offenders utilize violence as a means to gain the compliance of her victim, while others use sexualized violence as part of their offense for sadistic gratification.

It was decided that each of these facets of the recorded offenses would be evaluated on a simple three level scale for categorization purposes. While this is a simplistic method of judging the offenses, it does provide a necessary step in developing a more cohesive typology than those that have been previously published.

**Table 15**  
**Variables Evaluated for Typological Assignment**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Nature of Sexual Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>
1.	Consensual encounters	No violence present	No violence
2.	Fondling, frottage, Sexual humiliation	Threats of violence, restraint.	Only to gain compliance
3.	Rape, forced oral sex, forceful penetration (digital, objects)	Violence is sexualized, part of the overall act.	Violence is highly sadistic

One significant inclusion in this typology of female sexual offender is an inclusion of those who victimize adults, as opposed to children only. I made the decision to create a single, unified typology of offenders, as opposed to the separate taxonomies for child molesters and rapists that have been applied to male sexual offenders. This decision was based upon the extremely limited population of those women who victimize adults, which constitutes largely other women within the context of a lesbian relationship. While they do make up a very minute portion of a small population, their presence is worth including. Three types of adult offenders are included, with the delineation based upon the physical nature of the acts. Offenders where there is no physical violence at all are relegated to the Adult Non-Aggressive type. In instances in which there is the use of force, or the threat of

force, but solely to gain compliance, the offender is deemed as an Adult Aggressive offender. Finally, those in which the violence, either physical, or through humiliation and threats, is part of the sexual act, the offender is named an Adult Sadistic.

The “Baby Sitter” typology proposed by Sarrel and Masters (1982) was determined to constitute a largely homogenous population of juvenile and adult females who commit sexual acts against children in their care. This type of offender is a recurring theme throughout the literature. The offenses are non-violent in nature, and are usually of an exploratory nature, consisting of touching, fondling, and mostly non-invasive acts. While no less traumatizing to the victim, these offenders are experimenting and exploring their sexuality, hence they usually have no intent to harm the victim. I have termed this category Exploratory, because it is a more descriptive title and also does not trivialize the offender.

As outlined in Chapter II, a commonality among typologies is often the class of male coerced/accompanied. As previously discussed, those who are accompanied by a male, but are an active partner, should not be evaluated based upon their partnership, but on their own motivations and actions. Therefore, the class of male accompanied is not used. However, those who are coerced by a male partner and offend only at their instruction should be at least classified as a separate type of offender, even though they are only acting on the motivations of another. I have titled this classification “Coerced”, to also allow for the inclusion of those coerced to offend at the guidance of another woman. While the literature did not show any record of these female partnership offenders, it is likely that they do exist.

It was decided that the “Teacher/Lover” category was an effective one, as it encompasses a heterogeneous group of offenders who participate in non-violent sexual



contact with adolescent males, often times in a consensual manner. This typology is included in the one developed in this research, however, it has been renamed as “Statutory”, in order to clearly define the offense that takes place, and also to avoid the original label which almost belies the danger of the offense. These are the offenders that law enforcement often chooses to ignore, instead referring to the victim as “lucky”. The crime is the same as when an adult male has sexual relations with an underage female who is a willing participant. The law has to be enforced equally.

I have also included an incestuous classification that mirrors McCarty’s offenders against male children. Because these are largely homogenous and non-violent, and almost exclusively against male victims, I felt this was a specific enough classification to incorporate. Although the offenses are very similar to that of the Statutory offender, the biological relationship between offender and victim warrants a separate classification. An important distinction of this Incestuous class is that it only comprises male victims who participate in sexual intercourse. Female victims, and male victims who are sexually abused in non-coital ways are classified differently based upon their offense.

Finally, I have also created a pair of sadistic offenders, muted and overt. The muted sadistic offender does not display a large amount of violence in her offenses, but either fantasizes about sadistic behavior, or commits acts of muted sadism, such as the administration of unnecessary enemas or rectal thermometers at inappropriate ages. While these acts on their own are not excessively violent, they do display a tendency towards the humiliation of the victim. The sadistic overt offender, on the other hand, integrates a high level of physical violence, such as beatings or other forms of abuse into the sexual act, or

commits directly violent sexual acts, such as the penetration of the victim with objects.

### **Conclusion**

Although preliminary, my research has developed a fundamental classification scheme that, with further research and verification, could lead towards a widely accepted typology that could aid in classifying known offenders and also function as a predictor, and allow for even more proactivity by criminal justice professionals. The next chapter will go into greater depth the elements of my typology. Each classification will be discussed, the criteria for each of them, and examples of cases from the literature will be provided. A comprehensive chart of each case utilized will be presented as well. Finally, chapter 5 will provide a summary of my work, and also directions for future research as well.

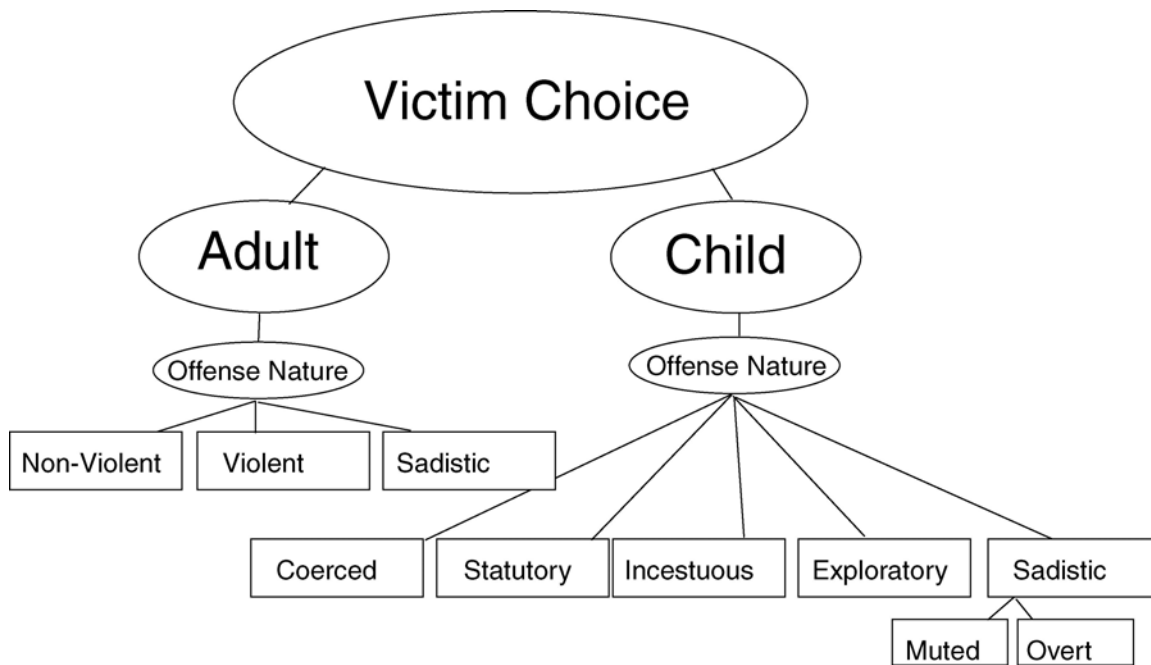
## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### Introduction

The development of a typology for an understudied population, such as female sex offenders, serves multiple purposes. It increases the visibility of the offense and the offender: by discussing the types of offense committed, and the nature of the offender, people are more prepared to recognize female sexual offenders. A typology also provides a departure point for policy development. In an understudied field, such as female sex offenders, a comprehensive and descriptive typology may be utilized by criminal justice agencies to develop new policies for the recognition and processing of offenders. Finally, as previously discussed by Brennan (1987), typologies can be used as a tool to predict offenses based upon observable clues. These are all but a few of the valuable applications of a typology.

This chapter consists of two large sections. The first section is an in depth discussion of each of the classifications that constitute this new typology, with specific case examples presented. Each typology is broken down into the variables classification was based on: nature of the act, the level of violence, and the intent of violence. Descriptions of the victim choice, possible intrinsic motivations, and potential implications for the criminal justice

system are included as well. The second part is a set of tables summarizing the data used in the creation of my typology. As previously discussed in Chapter 3, the extant literature was used to locate narrative case studies and direct quotes from offenders and victims in order to provide a clear picture of the offense. The tables list each individual offender/victim, the age of the victim (adult or child), the gender of the victim, and a rating from 1 to 3 of the level of violence, the intent of said violence, and the nature of the sexual act. While this use of published information does limit the validity of the typology and brings forth reliability issues, in a field which such limited recognition, such as female sex offenders, any preliminary attempt at developing a typology is a step towards the right direction.



**Figure 5 – Typology Structure**

Figure 5 is a chart that represents the organizational structure that was developed for this typology. The first decision made is based on the presence of an adult or child victim. From this point, the individual classifications are based largely on the level of violence in the sexual act. On the adult axis, the typologies begin with the Adult Non-Violent, in which sexual acts are committed through coercion, but not the use or threat of physical violence. Second, Adult Violent offenders commit acts against other adults using physical violence or

the threat of violence to gain compliance. Finally, Adult Sadistic offenders commit acts of overt violence as part of their sexual act, not simply for instrumental purposes.

The child axis begins with the Coerced offender. Within the structure of this typology, the Coerced offender is a separate entity, because her offenses are determined only by the actions of her partner, since she is only a forced participant. Next is the Statutory offender. These offenders are so named because in most of the cases, it is a case of statutory rape only, in which the victim is usually a consenting and active participant. The Incestuous offender is next, which consists of only offenses involving a minor male victim and a related female offender. In most cases, these acts mirror the Statutory offenses as being non-violent, but not always consensual. Exploratory offenders commit acts that are occasionally more invasive, but are usually non-violent. Muted Sadistic offenders usually do not show clear sadism in their acts, but report fantasies of a sadistic nature and the use of subtle tools of humiliation. Finally, the Overt Sadistic offender shows a great deal of physical violence as part of a sexualized act.

**Table 16**  
**Summary data of cases evaluated**

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>Adult Non-Violent</b>	2	4	6
<b>Adult Violent</b>	3	10	13
<b>Adult Sadistic</b>	0	10	10
<b>Male Coerced</b>	2	1	3
<b>Statutory</b>	3	0	3
<b>Incestuous</b>	22	0	22
<b>Exploratory</b>	8	7	15
<b>Muted Sadistic</b>	1	8	9
<b>Overt Sadistic</b>	4	14	18
<b>Totals</b>	45	54	99

Table 16 shows the total distribution of cases to each relevant classification. As it shows, there are some notable variations in the distribution of victim gender to each classification. It should be noted that in the Statutory and Incestuous categories, only males were included.

Table 17 gives a comprehensive list of the classifications developed within this typology and their relevant variables:

**Table 17**  
**Elements of the proposed typology**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Nature of act</b>	<b>Level of violence</b>	<b>Intent of violence</b>
Adult Non-violent	Aggressive fondling, oral sex, intercourse	None	No violence
Adult Violent	Fondling, intercourse, forced oral sex	Instrumental, restraint, threats	Violence used to gain compliance
Adult Sadistic	Forceful digital/object penetration	Violent penetration, intent to cause harm	Violence is highly sexualized
Coerced	Varies	Varies	Varies
Statutory	Consensual fondling, oral sex, intercourse	None	No Violence
Incestuous	Fondling, oral sex, intercourse, occasionally consensual	Rare, but occasionally threats or restraint	Violence to gain compliance
Exploratory	Non-consensual fondling, oral sex, inappropriate touching	Physical restraint or threats to gain compliance	Violence to gain compliance
Muted Sadistic	Verbal humiliation, use of enemas, rectal thermometers, inappropriate touching.	Violence manifested through humiliation.	Violence is minimal, but sexualized
Overt Sadistic	Forceful digital/Object Penetration	Violent penetration, intent to cause harm	Violence is highly sexualized.

### **Adult Non-Violent**

Adult Non-Violent sexual offenders are those who offend against another adult,



usually in a sexually aggressive way, but without the use of any violence or the threat of violence. An Adult Non-Violent offense can be committed against a male or female victim, but is often limited to intimate partners. It is essentially the female perpetrated equivalent of partner or spousal rape, because the act does not demonstrate any sort of physical threat or violence, but consists of the aggressive female committing sexual acts on her partner against his or her will. The literature has shown that this is not simply limited to acts of intercourse, but has been tied to acts of fondling as well. A total of six cases of Adult Non-Violent offenders were located, two with victimized males and four with females.

Sarrel & Masters (1982) reported a single case that has been categorized here as Adult Non-Violent, which is described below.

A 40 year old man was sexually abused by his wife. The abuse occurred during the first year of a legal separation. Alone in their summer cottage, she attacked him by taking off her clothing and 'coming at me'. She opened his pajamas and grabbed his penis. His thoughts at the time were the following: "What in the world is going on? Why is she behaving this way? Why doesn't she stop? I felt [from her] a ferocity and aggressiveness. I felt helpless to stop her...I couldn't believe I had an erection. I was so scared...And then she was sitting on me and she had a quick orgasm. And it was over...I felt confused and humiliated. (p. 125)

The woman in this case did report that she attacked her husband out of anger, and was hoping to hurt him through sex. This incident displayed no violence or threat of violence, and although the motivation was angry, this anger was not directly manifested in the attack. The researchers also discussed two other cases of cases classified as Adult Non-Violent offenders, in which males were forced into intercourse by females, but without the use of violence or the threat thereof. One of the males described, "I felt violated, speechless, almost paralyzed with fear." (p. 126).

Peluso and Putnam (1996) presented a case that could be considered Adult Non-Violent as well. Although the perpetrator and victim were both 17, their proximity to adulthood and the nature of the female's offense was closer to an adult offender. The two were dating at the time. He reported:

...She wanted to see him almost daily, and on each visit she insisted on having sex. Disregarding his reluctance, which he expressed by becoming totally passive, she performed fellatio on him several times per week. The psychiatrist initially assumed he was experiencing guilt over these sexual encounters, and attempted to reassure him, but to no avail. He was relieved only when the psychiatrist validated his sense of having been violated. (p. 52)

These Adult Non-Violent classified offenses were noted to occur between two adult females as well, within the context of lesbian relationships. Girshick (2002) reported of four in her study, two of which will be described here. The first is of Stacy, who was the victim of her girlfriend at the time:

It seems that many times within my current relationship I have been coerced into sex to "keep the peace". Such times have included: unwanted kissing and rubbing while out at gay bars, and unwanted sexual contact when my girlfriend would come home drunk. The latter of the two would consist of penetration of my vagina with fingers or dildos or just grinding of our vaginal areas. (p. 74)

The second case was reported by Lauren, who was abused at age 24 by the team manager of her college softball team:

She started with telling me she had hit her long time partner just before leaving...She said she felt real badly about it. She wanted to snuggle to feel better. I was not interested. She was persistent. I gave in hoping she'd stop it. She kissed me. I stopped it and said no-I wasn't going there. She stopped. Later after I'd gone to sleep, she rolled over and started touching me. I said no (verbally) but my body reacted. I asked her to stop. She held me down with her body and made love to me digitally...Later that night/early the next morning, she digitally brought me to orgasm again. This pattern continued for the length of the trip. (p.80-81)

Neither of these women reported that the offender used any violence, or the threat of violence to get them to react sexually. In most cases, the offenders simply forced themselves on the victim, ignoring any verbal protests from the victim. In these types of situations, with both male and female victims, the offenders may use the victim's physical response to the acts as justification.

Due to the nature of the acts, it is unlikely that these offenses, especially ones with male victims, would come to the attention of the authorities. Since these are non-violent offenses, the victim is hesitant to alert the authorities, because they often do not see it as a severe incident, and the female offender will often try to apologize to the victim and assure him or her that it will never happen again, much like a male offender in a spousal rape. Also, because the victim and offender are usually intimate partners, the victim may feel that no one will believe them, or that no one will care.

### **Nature of the offense**

The sexual act perpetrated by the Adult Non-violent offender varies greatly from case to case. In much of the research, these offenses manifested themselves in the form of fondling or oral contact. There were cases of intercourse as well, as discussed previously. The sexual contact is not usually of a violent or particularly invasive nature.

### **Level of violence**

Adult Non-violent offenders, show, by definition, no attempts at violence. While the

women may show aggressive behavior of a sexual nature, it is not characterized by any sort of force, threat, or restraint.

### **Intent of violence**

There is no violence in the acts of the Adult Non-violent offender.

### **Victim choice**

The victim in an offense with an Adult Non-violent offender is usually an intimate partner of the victim, such as a spouse or partner. While this is not a requirement, as demonstrated by the case of Lauren, there is mostly a need of a pre-existing level of intimacy in order for the offender to perform her act of sexual abuse. There was no obvious pattern of gender preference in these offenses; both males and females were victimized.

### **Intrinsic Rewards**

The most obvious intrinsic reward in these acts is sexual gratification. While aggressive, there is little indication from the offenses discussed of showing power and domination over the victim. Anger, directed at the victim, may be a factor, as presented in the case of the 40-year-old man attacked by his wife.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

Criminal Justice professionals mostly need to become sensitive to these types of incidents. While it is unlikely that they will be brought to their attention by anyone other

than the victims, it is important that the prejudices against males as victims, or homophobia about lesbian relationships, be eschewed in face of justice for the victim.

### **Adult Violent**

Adult violent offenders include the threat of or the use of violence in their acts, but it is of an instrumental nature. The violence is not an actual part of the sexual act, but is most often used to ensure the victim will comply, to coerce him or her to perform sexually, or to keep the victim from alerting authorities. This is similar to the Adult Non-Violent offender with the exception that there is most often the inclusion of violence in the assault, and that the victim and offender do not have to have any pre-existing relationship for this to take place: the Non-Violent offender is usually able to assault her victim without the use of violence due to a pre-existing level of trust. While that is not to say that an Adult Violent offender would not commit an offense within in a relationship, these types of offenders can also strike against people who are complete strangers. The literature revealed a total of 13 cases involving Adult Violent offenders, 3 with male victims and 10 with female victims. The first to be detailed here is of a 27 year old male who was kidnapped and raped by four women after meeting one woman at a bar.

He awoke to find himself naked, tied hand and foot to a bedstead, gagged and blindfolded...t was evident that several women were present. Initially he was manipulated to erection and mounted. After a very brief period of coitus, he ejaculated. He was immediately restimulated to erection and the performance was repeated...When he couldn't function well, he was threatened with castration and felt a knife held to his scrotum...He believes that the period of forcible restraint and repeated sexual assaults continued for more than 24 hours. When the women decided to release him, his feet were untied and he was dressed and taken by automobile to an isolated area where, still blindfolded and with hands loosely tied, he was pushed from

the car. He was able to free himself without difficulty. (p. 120-121)

In this case, the male was essentially kidnapped and gang raped by a group of women. They used restraint and the threat of violence to gain his compliance, but the actual sex act was not violent. Sarrel & Masters (1982) reported other similar instances where a male was coerced into performing sexually by being threatened with a gun, a scalpel, and the threat of physical violence.

Female corrections facilities were found to be the source of many instances of Adult Violent offenses. Alarid (2000) discussed two instances in detail. Both were instances of rapes by a large number of offenders. The first was reported by a woman named Velmarine:

I was stripped of my bra and county dress (all women wore one piece dresses in the County Jail at that time). While for women were holding me down, Anna ordered one grotesque female to sit on my face and to force me to perform an act of cunnilingus. When I refused to cooperate, and threatened to bite her if she tried, they moved me to a smaller cell. As I struggled on the floor of Cell #7, I felt fists pummeling my legs and thighs. When I relaxed under the blows, Anna straddled my face while begging me to “just stick your tongue out a little bit.” If I would have complied with Anna’s please, (I found out later) that Sherylynn and Joniqua would have forced as many women to try and have me in the same manner. (p. 396)

The violence in this act was obvious, but was used instrumentally. While there was a sense of humiliating the victim, the offenders were more interested in coercing her to perform sexual acts upon them.

A second, similar act was perpetrated by seven offenders against one victim.

After they stripped her out of her clothes, one of the Black stud broads vaginally penetrated the Victim with her fingers, the other Black stud administered passion marks to the victim’s neck while the White “stud” continued to help hold the victim down. Several femmes looked on and gave loud blow-by-blow descriptions of what was transpiring. After about five minutes of this commotion, the victim was called out by Officers amid yells from the dorm inmates to “cover up her neck.” The

victim...screamed and hollered “no” every step of the way. This leads me to believe that an involuntary sexual act had taken place with force, which equals rape irregardless of how the victim later explained it to inquiring staff. (p. 398)

Girshick (2002) reported eight cases that would qualify as Adult Violent offenders in her study of lesbian partner violence, two of which are discussed below. Cecile was raped violently by her partner on a camping trip.

We went for a walk on the beach at night. She started pressing me for details on a previous sexual assault. I said I didn't want to talk about it, but she kept making up details herself until I finally said what really happened. She then declared that I had turned her on so much with this story that she had to have me right there on the beach. I said I really dint' want to and she kept pushing. I kept saying no, and she kept insisting that I wanted it. She pushed me down on the sand and raped me with her hand...When she was done I was crying and she comforted me... (p.70).

A woman named Courtney reported another similar instance.

...She pinned me in a sag in the mattress. She knew I don't like to be held down, and I don't like being told to suck on anything due to what happened to me when I was four, but she did this anyway. She pinned me down and started riding me, would not let up. Then she took her shirt off and told me to suck her breast. When I refused she pushed her chest into my face so hard I couldn't breath without opening my mouth. She forced me to suck her. (p. 71)

The violence in these cases was used to gain compliance and to coerce the victim.

This is a large differentiation point when compared to the other adult offenders, because the Adult Non-Violent offenders use no violence at all in their offenses, and in the case of Adult Sadistic offenders, the violence is as important of a component of the sexual act as any sort of genital contact, or the genital contact itself is extremely violent.

### **Nature of the offense**

Adult Violent offenders commit sexual acts similar to those of their Non-Violent counterparts, such as intercourse, and oral and genital stimulation. However, they also were shown to include acts that require the victim to perform acts on the offender, which is not present in the Non-violent offenders. Acts such as performing oral sex on the offender are perpetrated because the victim is actively coerced into the act, and not a passive participant.

### **Level of violence**

Violence varies in the acts of the Adult Violent offender, from the threat of violence, to restraint and minor physical injury. The violent acts are only instrumental, and used to ensure the victim complies or participates. Threatening the victim with pain or death, physically restraining them, or the use of physical force such as punches and slaps were mostly used.

### **Intent of violence**

The violence used is to ensure the compliance of the victim, through threat, force, or restraint, and to force the victim to participate in the sexual act. The violence is not of a sexual nature.

### **Victim choice**

The literature showed that the victim is most likely to be a female, and not usually a



stranger. While cases involving male victims were noted, they were outnumbered 3 to 1 by female victims. This may be attributable to a number of things, which will be discussed later.

### **Intrinsic rewards**

It can be speculated that, along with sexual pleasure derived from the act, that the offender feels a sense of power over being able to dominate and coerce her victim into submission. The victim Cecil touched upon this when she stated how her attacker expressed arousal at hearing of her history of sexual abuse. This shows that the offender enjoyed hearing of the victim's pain and suffering.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

The victims themselves may bring these offenses to the attention of the authorities, as the offenses are physically abusive as well as sexually abusive. Criminal Justice authorities need to be sensitive to these types of offenses and ignore prejudices of male victims being either "lucky" or "weak" for being targeted by females. Another situation in which authorities should be aware of potential signs of abuse are in battered women's shelters, which may or may not be properly trained to deal with victims abused by other females.

### **Adult Sadistic**

The offenders that make up the group of Adult Sadistic offenders implement a great

deal of extreme violence as part of their sexual act. This violence is not just used to gain victim compliance, but is often highly sexualized. The Adult Sadistic offender is not likely to assault her victim with punches or other such forms of physical violence exclusively. Her violent acts will be much more sexually based, such as the attacking of the genitals or the forcible insertion of objects. The review of the extant literature found a total of 10 cases of incidents meeting the criteria for Adult Sadistic offenses, all with female victims. The offenses described in the following cases also show an intent to humiliate the victim, and for the offender to assert her power.

Marianne was battered and sexually abused by her partner when she was in her early 20s.

This is how she described incidents that happened in that relationship:

After awhile she'd hit me or push my face, hard, if I did something she disliked or didn't do what she asked or demanded. She constantly threatened to leave, told me I was worthless or dumb, told me my friends (I didn't have many) were idiotic, told me I was unattractive or ugly, and so on... Sometimes she would beat on me until I was crying and subdued (and hurting), then she'd tear my clothes off and force me down, then force her fingers or other objects inside of me, kiss me roughly... hit me on the breasts, etc... One time she literally raped me with a plastic dildo. (p.67).

The violence used in this assault was of a sexual nature, consisting of violent penetration and the abuse of the victim's breasts. Other offenders were found in the same study to have committed acts with an aim at humiliation as well as pain. The case of Jannette, who was frequently abused by the graduate assistant in her sorority and her "pledge mom", shows this desire for humiliating the victim:

They basically included me in their lives at a time when I was very lost and lonely. The first time that we engaged in any type of sexual activity, I was the one who initiated it. While [the graduate assistant and I] were sitting on her couch at this extremely tense moment she was looking at me very expectantly and, I thought, almost beckoning for me to kiss her. So, I did. She said she wondered when I would

finally do that...After that point, we began sleeping together and engaging in various sexual activities. The frequency and type of activity gradually intensified. At one point, I was performing oral sex on her and I had a severe flashback regarding my mother. I stopped what I was doing and I began to gag and to cry. She became enraged by my reaction and she beat me. After that point, she was violent, aggressive, and insistent regarding our sexual relations. Much of the time, we both had been drinking. If I refused to have sex in any way, she would hit me or beat me. Several times I attempted to avoid the situation by staying away. She tracked me down at my sorority house and would twist my arm behind my back and force me to go with her to her apartment. If I was not compliant to her demands in bed, she would beat me or, sometimes she would tie me to her bed and stick objects in my vagina and my rectum. One time, when I was tied to her bed in that way, her roommate returned home with several friends. She got dressed and dragged me naked into the TV room and ordered me to masturbate in front of the people there. (p. 67-68)

This case showed violence on two levels, the first being instrumental (the arm twisting and beatings to gain the compliance of the victim), but also on a sadistic level, noted by the penetration with various objects and humiliation by making the victim “perform” for the offender’s friends.

Another victim, Ariel, reported being sadistically raped by her female partner

I was asleep and awakened by my wife, who was rubbing my vaginal area with her hand in my underwear. I told her to stop. She was obviously turned on because I can tell by her breathing and shakiness. I grabbed her hand to stop her. She grabbed my hand back and pushed it away. She forced herself on top of me and proceeded to penetrate me with so much force that she caused bleeding and cuts with her wedding ring that she was wearing. I remember lying there, crying, and wishing she’d just hurry up and get it over with. A part of me was very scared and another part of me was very angry. I stayed with her for five more years before I was able to break the circle of violence. She was good at apologizing and buying gifts after she assaulted me *but*, she never “said” she was “sorry.” Her apologies were things like gifts, trips, or taking me out. (p. 73)

While most of these incidents of Adult Sadistic offenders were found in established lesbian relationships, there were also some offenses reported that were perpetrated by an

acquaintance, such as a coach or a landlord, and in date rape cases.

One thing of note from evaluating the cases that fell within this category is that they are largely occurring within lesbian relationships. None of the cases reported in the literature described a male victim of a female sadistic offender. This is a point of interest, because nothing of the nature of the recorded assaults would really indicate this sort of disparity. One possible explanation is that incidents do occur in heterosexual relationships in which the male partner is victimized, but refuses to report to authorities out of embarrassment, but that is purely speculative.

#### **Nature of the act**

The sexual abuses committed by Adult Sadistic offenders showed an overwhelming presence of acts of penetration, usually vaginal and occasionally anal. These penetrations were usually digital, involving the offender's fingers or occasionally fists, and also frequently involved the use of foreign objects as well. The acts of penetration were of great force, motivated by anger and sadism. Many of the incidents presented also showed an inclination towards humiliating the victim as well.

#### **Level of violence**

Of all the adult offenders, Adult Sadistic offenders showed the highest level of violence inflicted upon their victims. The sexual acts of vaginal and anal penetration were committed with such force as to cause tearing and bleeding. Many of the victims reported that the acts often occurred after bouts of physical abuse as well.

### **Intent of violence**

The violent acts perpetrated by these offenders are purely for their own sexual gratification. While it is likely that there will be violence used to gain the victims compliance, the actual sexual act is wrought with violence, intentionally inflicted upon the victim.

### **Victim choice**

The cases found showed no male victims of Adult Sadistic offenders, just females. The cases presented were mostly of offenders and victims who were intimate partners, but there is nothing in the act that would disallow for predatory females who offend against strangers.

### **Intrinsic motivation**

Because the sexual acts of penetration by these females provides no direct genital stimulation to the offender, it can be viewed that the offenders are motivated and gratified by seeing their victim suffering, and enjoying the power they have over them. While this may also be a motivation of the other adult offenders as well, it is much more clearly manifested here. While the offender may derive sexual pleasure from the act, the sexual act itself does not provide physical stimulation.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

Of all offenses perpetrated by adult females, these sadistic offenses are the most likely to be brought to the attention of authorities by the victim, because of their extremely damaging nature. Besides having criminal justice professionals trained to accept that females can be sexual offenders, those police officers responding to calls of domestic violence should also look for signs of sexual assault, especially when the domestic partners are lesbians.

### **Coerced**

The offenders in the Coerced category are very different compared any of their fellow offenders. While it is even questionable if they should be considered sex offenders, they are included here because they do commit sexually abusive acts. Unlike the offenders in similar categories in pre-existing typologies, however, these are women who only commit sexual acts at the coercion of a partner, usually male, and do not continually offend without their partner. This category is prevalent in the extant literature, but I feel by making it an over-reaching classification that encompasses all females who offend in concert with a male, the myth that a woman alone cannot be motivated to commit sexual acts on her own is supported. The literature showed that there are many female offenders who offend in partnership with a male, but as an active partner. These offenders are excluded from this classification and placed in one that fits their actions, not their partnership. Because of this restriction, only three cases detailed in the literature were considered as being Coerced.

An example presented in Saradjian & Hanks (1996) described a woman who had fondled her daughter's breasts and genitals, and also performed oral sex on her. There was no record of any abuse by the female on her own, and the male partner (the offender's spouse and the victim's father) commanded the female offender to do specific acts. Another reiterated how she was acting against her will:

I never did anything to the kids unless he was there...I was dead scared of him...it repulsed me as much as it repulsed them. I just can't understand the kids reaction, two of them won't talk to either of us, I understand that but the other two...John writes to him every week and he got Susan to go with him to see him in prison...neither of them write to me, nor visit. I did get one letter...it was full of hatred...yet they're willing to see him (p. 10)

Although specifics on the nature of this abuse were not disclosed, it is obvious that the female perpetrator in this act did not do so on any motivations of her own, and only molested her children out of fear of her husband. She never committed any acts when he was not present, and was extremely unhappy about offending.

Elliot (1994) reported a similar incident in which a male victim was sexually abused by his mother at the coercion of his father, who was also sexually and physically abusive himself. The mother performed abusive acts such as bondage, oral sex, enemas, and penetration using foreign objects. The male victim was also made to have intercourse with his mother and older sister as the father looked on. The mother only participated out of fear of being abused herself. There was no indication that the female offender acted on her own, or that she continued abusing without the presence of her husband.

Although limiting the scope of this category only to those who offended without any motivation of their own, one can speculate that there are more offenders like this that were

not reported in the literature because they were simply forced into committing these acts. The criminal justice system needs to be careful in determining sentencing on offenders such as this. While a judge may tend to be lenient in sentencing a case in which the partner coerces the female offender, care should be taken to ensure that this is the appropriate case, and not simply a chance for the female offender to minimize blame, or the male offender to accuse his partner as well.

This category could also cover instances in which a woman is coerced by a female partner into committing sexual abuse, or abuse committed against adults, but there were no records of either type of cases reported in the literature.

#### **Nature of the offense**

The offense will vary drastically from case to case, as the male offender directs it.

#### **Level of violence**

The level of violence in the act is dependent upon the male offender's acts.

#### **Intent of violence**

The intent of the violence will vary depending on the acts perpetrated by the male partner.

#### **Intrinsic motivation**

In these acts, it is assumed that the intrinsic motivation of the woman is only to please



her male partner. These offenders do not act on any other motivation other than to please their male partner, and often to avoid being physically abused herself.

### **Victim choice**

Again, the choice of victim will depend on the male partner's choice, as the female offender is simply an instrument in the abuse.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

The largest factor the authorities have to consider is the woman's exact role in the act. While leniency should be imposed on those women who only committed sexually abusive acts in order to avoid abuse, careful investigations must be able to prove that this is the case, and not an excuse for the female to avoid punishment.

### **Statutory**

The first of the offenders who exclusively target child victims is the Statutory offender. This classification is essentially adapted from Mathews, Matthews & Speltz (1990) "Teacher/Lover" group, with the name changed to one that is more descriptive and less flippant. These offenders target teenage males in order to pursue an adult relationship of a sexual nature. These are sexual offenses that feature no violence at all, and frequently no use of coercion either, the male is often an active participant and consenting partner. Due to the fact that the males in these relationships are under the age of consent, the sexual act

constitutes statutory rape, and is therefore a sexual offense. The sexual acts committed in these offenses are of a non-invasive nature, consisting of consensual intercourse, masturbation, and oral sex. A review of the literature only found three total cases that qualified as being Statutory, which is a rather low number, considering that this is quite likely one of the most prevalent forms of sexual abuse perpetrated by females.

This example is from Saradjian & Hanks (1996)

I used to go round to her when I truanted from school. She always had time for me and we'd get videos out and watch them on her TV . . . we didn't have a video at home. She'd get in crisps and pop. I began 'bunking-off' . . . until I was hardly at school. It started with us snuggling up watching a film and then she started playing with my hair, kissing my neck . . . Then she began to get out films with more sex in them and the next thing we were doing it [having sex]. We did everything and if she ran out of ideas, we'd get out real sex films and do what we saw. . . I liked the attention and she made me feel very special. I was never comfortable with it though, I always felt dirty afterwards. If I started to tell her I didn't want to do it anymore, she told me I must be homosexual so I felt I had to. If I didn't go round she told me she'd tell what we'd done. She said people didn't understand relationships like ours and I'd go to prison. I believed her. (p.14)

The woman in this case was 33 years old and perpetrated an adult relationship with a 13-year-old boy. While the victim does state that he felt "dirty" from the acts, he was an active participant and was not coerced through the use of violence.

A second case featuring a Statutory offender was Ann, presented in Mathews, Matthews & Speltz (1989). Ann was a 40-year-old woman who reported having multiple abusive relationships with men, but "fell in love" with a 14-year-old boy. The relationship was consensual, until the boy decided he no longer wanted to continue his relationship with Ann. The offender reported being involved in other, similar incidents, but not in any that could be described as more serious.

### **Nature of the offense**

Statutory offenses are non-violent, non-sadistic, and more often than not, consensual. The young male victim is an active participant. Sexual acts are non-invasive, consisting of fondling, oral contact, and sexual intercourse.

### **Level of violence**

Violence is not present in these acts.

### **Intent of violence**

Statutory offenders do not use violence in their sexual acts.

### **Victim selection**

Other than being adolescent males that they have some sort of contact with, there really are no specific characteristics of a victim. Because of the adolescent male preoccupation with sex, it is very likely that many males would avoid the advances of an older woman.

### **Intrinsic motivation**

A frequent claim of the Statutory offenders is that they felt truly “in love” with their victims, which could be the manifestation of psychologically stunted development. A few, mostly those who were either in abusive relationships or were in the past, reported that they

felt more “in control” with a younger male partner, and that was some of the allure. The offenders were largely motivated by feelings of attraction towards their victims, however.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

It can be speculated that the dearth of Statutory cases presented in the literature is attributable to the perceived insignificance of the offense. These are the type of cases in which the victim is most often considered to be “lucky” for having sex with an older woman. However, this fact does not mitigate the potential harm on his development that this can lead to. Incidents such as these should be approached with the same care that is taken in which a consenting, minor female is found to be having relations with a male over the age of 18. While the decision to press charges is often left to the victim’s family, this should be consistently applied when the offender is female.

### **Incestuous**

The scope of what constitutes an Incestuous offender was narrowed for this typology when compared to the previously established ones. For the sake of clarity, Incestuous offenders are females who initiate sexual contact with a younger male relative, most often a son or a nephew. The literature demonstrated cases in which there were incidents of sexual abuse between a young girl and her mother or aunt, but the nature of these abuses varied greatly from case to case, and the decision was made to relegate them to categories more fitting the abuse situation and not just based upon their pre-existing relationship. Those

incestuous cases reported that included a younger male victim and an adult female were of a much more homogenous nature. These offenders are very similar to the Statutory offenders, but the victims are related and the age difference is often greater. It was decided that because of the offender-victim relationship, the motivation for the offense is different, and therefore should be considered separately. The literature review found 22 cases of Incestuous offenders, which comprises the largest group within the typology.

The literature also showed that violence, or the threat of violence was occasionally present as well. Some of the cases presented male victims who were willing and consenting participants in the abuse, while others reported that they were victimized against their will. It is of note that the offenders in these cases described using their male victims as a surrogate for absent or abusive male partners, and they reported enjoying being able to control their partner, instead of being the one who was controlled.

Saradjian & Hanks (1996) presented this case of a male who was offended against by his mother from the age of 10 until he was a teenager:

He had begun to talk about sexual contact with his mother from the age of 10 when she had begun to massage his body. She told him that his body was changing, growing and developing, and she needed to make sure that his 'hormones were evenly distributed'. This led to her masturbating him, fellating him and eventually, in his early teens, to intercourse. (p. 16)

The victim in this case had repressed the memories of the incidents, leading to the belief that these incidents were not of a consensual nature. Another case presented displays the dynamic of the victim as surrogate partner:

Pam began grooming her son sexually when he was 8 and began actual sexual acts with him when he was 11. This continued until he had a psychotic breakdown in his mid-teens...Her belief that he had sexual desire was based on her interpretation of her

son wanting her to hold him and cuddle him and him wanting to sit on her knee. When he did she would sexually touch him. The fact that she bought him his favorite comics each week and made him sit on her knee and be touched by her before he was allowed to have them was ignored in her assessment of his sexual desire. Other evidence Pam gave of her son's desire to have sexual contact with her was his going upstairs to the toilet in the evening. The only toilet in the house was in the bathroom. When he went to the bathroom in the evening she would attribute it to him 'teasing her' and she would bath him. She would masturbate him to the point of ejaculation saying to clean him 'from the inside out'. She bought him a ring and would punish him if he did not wear it. If he did wear it, she would attribute this to 'testimony to their love for each other' and his desire of her. (p. 129-130)

### **Nature of the offense**

The acts committed by Incestuous offenders were very similar to that of the Statutory offender, consisting of oral/genital contact, fondling, and sexual intercourse. While there were some reports of instrumental violence, it was not used in a sadistic manner. Some of the cases showed male victims as active participants, others who were abused against their will.

### **Level of violence**

The level of violence present in Incestuous offenses varied case to case. Some showed no aggression at all, in which the male victim was a consenting partner, much like the Statutory cases. However, some of the cases did report the use of threats or instrumental violence to gain compliance. On the whole, the cases were mostly nonviolent, however.

### **Intent of violence**

In the cases in which violence was present, it was used instrumentally to ensure victim compliance, restraint, or to keep the victim from reporting the abuse to authorities. The violent cases did constitute a minority of the sample, however.

### **Victim selection**

The victims were largely homogenous in these incidents, due to the specific nature of the classification. Young males, mostly from an early childhood age to early teenage years, and related to the offender in some way, constituted the majority of the victims. Most of the victims were the biological sons of the offenders, but cases of Incestuous Aunts and Sisters were also noted.

### **Intrinsic motivation**

Two major themes of intrinsic motivation were noted throughout the existing literature on Incestuous offenders. The first theme is the use of the male victim as a surrogate partner. This was seen most often in cases in which the offender's partner or husband was either not present or disconnected from the female. The offenders used their male relatives as a replacement spouse, taking over the duties of the "man of the house" along with sexual relations. The second prevalent theme was use of the male victim as a sexual partner who the female offender had control over. This was the case in many of the abusive relationships in which the female was physically or sexually abused. They were able

to transfer their feelings and be in control of their young male relative, and therefore be in control of the situation.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

One can attribute the rather large proportion of incidents reported of Incestuous offenders to the source of data. Most of the research conducted, and therefore the cases evaluated, were from the psychiatric and therapeutic community. It is in these settings that cases of incest are more likely to come out, more so than to the criminal justice system. It is also reasonable to assume that this may be an even more widespread problem than the numbers show, given the inherently secretive nature of incest.

### **Exploratory**

Exploratory offenders are similar to the “Baby Sitter” classification presented by Sarrel & Masters (1982). These types of abuses are carried out by an older female offender against an infant to very young child. While not a rule, these female offenders are often a caretaker of the victim, either a relative or an employed childcare worker. It is of note that within these cases there are often the presence of juvenile female sex offenders, who are most often pre-teens to teenagers. The offenses committed by an Exploratory offender are largely non-violent and consist of fondling, genital manipulation, and masturbation. The literature showed some examples of attempted intercourse between the offender and her victim as well. While there is little violence in her offenses, there is occasionally the threat of violence in



order to keep the victim from telling anyone. The review of the literature found a total of 15 cases that were deemed to be Exploratory, with 8 male and 7 female victims. It is notable that of all offenses, this category displayed an equal victimization of both genders.

Saradjian & Hanks (1996) presented this case study of an Exploratory offender:

Mary was an extremely prolific sexual offender. She tried to target any child she came into contact with. She preferred toddlers, but could and did sexually abuse children of all ages. She could not describe any characteristics of the children she sexually abused. To her, who the child was was less important than the fact it was a child. Her abusive behaviour would consist of 'accidentally' touching the child's genitalia and later masturbating to thoughts of the touch. Her motivations included feelings of exceptional envy and anger towards children especially when she sees them 'having fun'. She says she then feels like she wants to hurt them 'just like she was hurt'. The closer the relationship and the more time she had with the children, the more extensive the sexual acts she perpetrated would be. Mary was also 'in a sexual relationship' with two 14-year-old boys. She construed these boys positively and saw herself as their peer. Her responses to these children were similar to those who primarily targeted adolescents. (p. 108)

While her motivations may be different, the acts of abuse committed by Mary were that of an exploratory offender. She would fondle her victims only, and make no attempts at harming them, or forming a relationship with them. While she also offended against teenage boys, that information was not presented and was not as seemingly as prevalent of a behavior.

Elliot (1993) reported a case in which a mother committed Exploratory offenses against her daughter:

At first the abuse was mild. She used to lie me on the bed, take off my diaper, and gently stroke between my legs. She never said anything but her eyes never left my face. Neither did she make any attempt to penetrate me, just the rhythmic stroking, up and down, up and down....This went on for 2 or 3 years, past the time when I was out of diapers. She would suddenly come, squat down beside me while I stood up. She would put her left arm around my shoulders and hold up my dress with her left

hand. Pulling down my knickers with her right hand she would once again begin that awful stroking. (p. 115-116).

The offender in this incident also only fondled her daughter, with no mention of coercion or threats against the child. By no means does this reduce the severity of the offense, but does show a pattern of mostly non-invasive, non-physically injurious incidents. Another Exploratory offender was located in Chow and Choy (2002), which discussed the case of a female pedophile who was taking sertraline for her behavior.

Ms. A's offences took place 5 years apart. The first incident happened when she was 18. Her first victim was the 4-year-old daughter of a friend. Ms. A. had become sexually aroused while watching adult, heterosexual pornographic videos with her adult boyfriend earlier in the evening. While bathing the 4-year-old girl, she became further aroused by the touching of the girl. After the bath, she took the girl into a bedroom, spread her legs, and licked the child's vaginal area for a few minutes. This was sexually gratifying to Ms. A. She recalled that the girl squirmed around in the bed, but she did not believe the child resisted her actions.

Ms. A's second victim was also a 4-year-old daughter of an acquaintance. Ms. A was babysitting the second victim and her 5-year-old sister. Ms. A became sexually aroused by the two girls' naked bodies while bathing them. She tried to say away from the girls by asking them to dress themselves and used the bathroom door to separate the children from her. The 4-year-old victim, however, did not want to get dressed, and began running around the apartment naked. Ms. A chased after her. She felt that the girl was inviting and teasing her sexually and became further aroused. When she finally caught the 4-year-old girl in the bedroom, she rubbed the girl's genital area with her fingers, picked her up by the legs, and proceeded to lick her genital area. (p. 212)

### **Nature of offense**

By definition, Exploratory offenses consist of mostly touching, fondling, minor oral contact, and in one case, possibly intercourse. The offenses are non-invasive in nature.

Many of the cases that involved a caretaker, such as a mother or babysitter, featured very subtle abusive acts, taking place during such things as bathing, or the changing of diapers.

### **Level of violence**

Violence was not found to be a major factor in these types of offenses. While a few of the cases showed attempts at restraint or verbal coercion, the acts were overall non-violent.

### **Intent of violence**

In the cases in which violence was present, it was manifested mostly as restraint, such as holding the victim down, or verbal coercion, to keep the abusive incident a secret.

### **Victim selection**

Victims in these cases were split almost equally between being male and female. Age-wise, the victims of Exploratory offenders were most often very young, from infants to about five or six years old. The offenders were occasionally in caretaker roles to the victims, such as mothers with female children, or babysitters. The case of Mary detailed above showed that there were occasionally females who showed predatory behaviors against children who were strangers to them.

### **Intrinsic motivation**

Many of these offenders, who were often juveniles themselves, seemed to be motivated by exploring their own sexuality and experimentation. The nature of the abusive

acts showed an intent at the exploration of the victim's genitals, and basic attempts at sexual interactions. This would seem to be consistent with the behaviors of someone who is sexually inexperienced and experimenting with children in their care.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

Once again, the sexual act perpetrated was of a non-damaging nature, consisting of, in this case, minor oral contact and fondling. These abuses may come to light from the children talking to their parents or teachers about what their babysitter or mother might do to them, and these parents or teachers would most likely contact police or social workers. It is therefore important that these authorities recognize the potential for abuse and act upon it appropriately.

### **Muted Sadistic**

The Muted Sadistic female offender commits acts of a sexual nature that display or imply subtle sadistic tendencies. Their sexual offenses are not usually of a violent nature, but the sadism manifests itself usually in the form of acts of humiliation, or in some cases, the self-report of fantasies of a sadistic nature. The literature review located only nine cases that qualified as Muted Sadistic, one with a male victim and the remaining eight with female victims.

The case of Jane Swann, presented in Elliot (1993) outlines the basics of this limited sadism through humiliation of a sexual nature:

I was bathed weekly until I was 16....When I was bathed I was "treated like a baby."

In my teens I can remember her staring at me fixedly while I was in the bath, which made me feel extremely uncomfortable and “dirty.”

I was asked constantly if I had washed “down there.” I was physically abused over trivial misdemeanors and hit around the head and body so vehemently I had to crouch in a corner with my arms over my head to protect myself. (p. 127-128)

While this case showed limited contact sexually, there was an obvious intent of the perpetrator, the victim’s stepmother, to humiliate.

One of the recurrent themes within the case studies that were evaluated was the use of unnecessary enemas. Female offenders frequently administered enemas, as often as daily, to both male and female victims. These enemas had no medicinal value, and as discussed below, a few reported that the offender displayed signs of sexual excitement during the enema. The administration of enemas is most often an inherently humiliating experience for the person receiving it, and these offenders seem to do so to humiliate their victims.

The case of Jan, presented in Mitchell & Morse (1998) outlined this use of enemas in a sadistic, sexual context:

Jan believes that her abuse began as early as six months. While babysitting Jan, her aunt would tie Jan to the toilet with a belt and leave her there until she urinated because she didn’t want to change dirty diapers...Jan’s mother was overly involved with Jan’s bowel movements, and gave Jan frequent enemas. She also insisted on taking Jan’s temperature rectally to make sure she got the “correct temperature” until Jan was 10 years old. (p. 33-34)

Similarly, Mitchell & Morse also reported the case of a woman who was abused from childhood until her teens by a nurse. The offender performed unnecessary medical exam procedures that resulted in the humiliation of the victim.

I was touched inappropriately during exams from age 5 until about 12 or 13 years. I was subjected to unnecessary embarrassments, such as being forced to be naked on

the table with the door wide open...and (these are my worst memories) I was treated abusively during painful medical procedures, such as leering glances (that I still see when I shut my eyes!), inappropriate remarks, tension, fear, and anxiety-producing comments. My worst memory is of her giving me an extremely painful penicillin injection in which she was cruel through dragging out the agonizing minutes before [the shot] while she teased me about my physical and emotional reactions to my fear (I was about 5 and had never had a large injection before), made a display of showing me the injection, when I cried (beforehand) she said things, such as “I haven’t even touched you yet” etc., etc...Additionally, I was subjected to unnecessary procedures such as her taking my temperature rectally when I was 12 years old. And I was penetrated anally. (p.85)

The level of physically abusive sadism is rather low in this incident, but it is obvious that the offender made an attempt to humiliate the victim sexually, most notably in leaving her naked on a table with a door wide open, and the use of rectal thermometers.

Another facet of a Muted Sadistic offender that is not as widely noted in the literature is the presence of sadistic fantasies involving child victims. I believe this is probably a more widespread factor than the literature presents, given that much of what has been published is sourced from the recollections of the victim, who would in all likelihood have no knowledge of their abusers fantasies and motivations. Crawford (1997) presented the case of a patient who sought therapy for her sadistic desires involving children. While this woman did not report committing any sexually abusive acts, the presence of sadistic fantasies are worth noting in this classification:

Patient E was extremely sexually attracted to young boys and would derive a sexual satisfaction from watching children play or by playing with children within her extended family. She had deeply sadistic sexual fantasies which involved children “being tied up” and beaten with “canes, straps, belts and whips.” She commonly fantasized about doing this to me, as her therapist, and gave fantasized accounts of deeply sadistic sexual abuse. However the most significant fact with Patient E was the fact that she did not have children because she knew “that she would abuse them. (p.35)

Most of these offenses, like those of the Exploratory offenders, took place within the contexts of caregiver/child relationships, be it familiar or non familiar. Because these offenses do often show victims of a cognizant age, there is a chance that they will alert authorities of what is happening to them. While there may still be pressure to keep the abuse secret, since it is more invasive than that of the Exploratory offenders, the victims may be more likely to take action to stop the abuse, and professionals need to be sensitive to this issue.

### **Nature of the act**

The Muted Sadistic abuser often performed acts of abuse that were not too far removed from the Exploratory offender in that they showed limited uses of force and/or violence. However, the intent was much different in these cases. Besides the act, they often showed an intent to humiliate the victim instead of explore them. Verbal humiliation of a sexual nature was present in many of the cases. As previously discussed, the unnecessary administration of enemas and the use of rectal thermometers was a recurrent theme. While more invasive than the acts of the Exploratory offender, they still did not show an intent to cause pain.

### **Level of violence**

There was the presence of instrumental violence in these cases, in which offenders may physically attack their victims to ensure their compliance, but the pain inflicted was mostly emotional, in the form of humiliation.

### **Intent of violence**

The violence used was to gain victim compliance, and was not usually overly damaging. Those offenders who reported having fantasies of a sadistic nature, in which physical pain is inflicted as part of the sexual act, were also included in this classification.

### **Victim selection**

The victims were usually mid-childhood in age, occasionally stretching into adolescence. The victims were overwhelmingly female, with eight female victims compared to a single male victim. Many of the cases involved mothers abusing their daughters, or other children in their care. There was little evidence of cases involving females offending against children who were strangers to them.

### **Intrinsic motivation**

It could be speculated that these women offend against victims in order to assert a sense of power or control, which they may lack in another aspect of their life. The sexual acts may also be used as a way to reenact the abuse they themselves may have suffered as children, and allow them to identify with the stronger abuser rather than the weaker victim.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

While often hidden in parent-child relationships, these sorts of acts could eventually come to the attention of teachers or other adults in which the child has a sense of trust. In



many of the cases, especially those in which the abuses consist of frequent enemas and obsessive cleanliness rituals, the child may see it as perfectly normal parental behavior due to their young age and naivety. If incidents such as this are reported by a third party to the criminal justice system, they should be trained to be aware that acts such as this can be indicative of a much deeper problem of abuse.

### **Overt Sadistic**

The Overt Sadistic offenders constitute the most damaging and dangerous of the female sex offenders who target children. Unlike the Muted Sadistic, the Overt Sadistic commits acts of highly sexualized violence, with the aim to hurt the child for her own pleasure.

The Overt Sadistic offender includes penetration, most often with foreign objects, into her assaults. The literature has shown the use of brooms, thorns, knives, and caustic chemicals used by these offenders in penetrating their victims. The case of Lori, presented by Mitchell & Morse (1998), shows just how brutal these incidents can be:

My mother forced me to do oral sex on her; she did the same to me several times. She inserted objects (an egg beater, toys of metal, a knife, etc.) inside of me and hurt me when she was raging. She forced me to “nurse” when I was six or seven-to stimulate her. When I was nine, she cut me internally with a razor blade when I rebelled against having my legs shaved. She screamed out that I had injured her at birth and she wanted me to hurt and die. My mother also used the douche bag regularly to “clean me out” and called me a “whore” from age five up. (p. 2).

It is hard to imagine a more physically abusive and sadistic type of abuse than the one described above. The offender displayed a direct intent to sexually harm her daughter, as

manifested by the violent acts of penetration. Saradjian & Hanks (1996) described a similar case, from the victim.

The worst [sexual abuse] were [sic] when she were [sic] angry. It was always when she were [sic] angry but I never knew what made her angry...It were [sic] as if she wanted to tear me apart inside. She'd sometimes grab whatever were [sic] nearest to her and come at me. She'd insert anything into me 'down there', sometimes it were [sic] all her fingers, she'd push them at me really hard, sometimes it were [sic] a bottle neck or a brush handle, once or twice it were [sic] a knife and once rose stems. That were [sic] awful...I often bled but she never took me to the hospital or anything. I bled so often that when I started my periods I didn't realize, I just thought it were [sic] more bleeding from what she'd done. (p. 14)

There is a recurring theme of the insertion of foreign objects in the sexually abusive acts, as noted in this case presented by Elliot (1993):

The initial memories of abuse were that of being fondled, which probably began in infancy. By the time I was 3 years old, Mother was having me touch her as well. Later I was introduced to oral sex. This sort of behavior occurred almost nightly until I was 12 years of age. This in itself was horrible enough, but by the time I entered school, Mother started torturing me in sexual ways.

The first time I remember being sexually tortured was when Mother took me into a wooded area, fondled me, had oral sex with me, and inserted her fingers into my vagina. I cried and screamed because of the severe pain. This only made Mother angry; so, to shut me up and threaten me, she picked up a large stick and shoved it inside my vagina. This incident taught me the lesson of silence and to turn off feelings of pain.

At age 5, I wanted some attention from Mother, but she was too busy ironing. I accidentally knocked off the old sprinkling bottle and broke it. Mother was furious. She dragged me off to the bedroom and chained me, spread-eagled, to the bed. Then she took a piece of the broken glass and lacerated me inside of my vagina with it.

Another time Mother got angry with me for some sort of infraction. My punishment on this occasion was an ice pick in my anus. I suffered from a perforated rectum. One December Mother and I were going to sleep on a hide-a-bed in the living room, because it was too cold to sleep in the unheated upstairs bedroom. Mother began stroking my genitals. Then she put her fingers inside me. I knew if I fought back or made any noises, it would only make matters worse for me.

There was one time when Mother put a candle into my vagina. I must have done something to provoke her, but I have no idea what it was. Anything would set her off, from my presence to the weather conditions.

Once I picked a bouquet of flowers for my mother from our neighbor's garden without permission. Mother fumed. She forced me onto the dirt floor of our shed. She sat on top of me to hold me down while she pried my legs and shoved the thorny rose stems into my body." (p. 119)

This was by far the most violent of the cases located, and also included further accounts of the abuse not presented here. The common thread of object insertion continues, and the literature also showed that most of the victims reported that they were abused when the offender displayed obvious signs of anger.

One case of interest was that of a predatory overt sadistic offender presented in Saradjian & Hanks (1996):

Alice would target a vulnerable young woman she saw 'hanging around' and strike up a conversation. She would then follow her for several days and eventually at an expedient time, 'accidentally bump into her'. She would buy the girl things like burgers, chips and shakes, and eventually actually arrange to meet her. During 'the date' Alice would sexually assault the girl, attributing to the girl the motivation for the act because she agreed to meet her. Alice never pursued the girl again after the sexual assault. When Alice was asked to rate on a seven-point scale how much she believed these girls loved her and cared for her, she scored each of them at the maximum seven on each factor. (p.77)

Alice portrayed all of the hallmarks of a predatory rapist in her abuses. Like a male rapist would, she stalked the girl for a period of time, then befriended her and essentially took her out on a 'date'. This date ended with the other girl's sexual assault, which, although not described in the literature, amounted to rape.

### **Nature of the act**

The sexual abuses committed by Sadistic Offenders are of an extremely violent and dangerous nature. Similar to the acts perpetrated by Adult Sadistic offenders, the Overt Sadistic offenders are characterized by forcible penetrations with foreign objects, frequently resulting in severe injury. The sexual acts are extremely violent and injurious to the victim.

### **Level of violence**

These acts are the most violent of all of those perpetrated by female offenders who target children. Instrumental violence to gain compliance may be present, but the focus is on highly sexualized violence, targeting the child's genitals and aiming to inflict great pain and suffering. Although no cases of death due to sexual abuse by a woman were found, it is very likely that the type of violence inflicted by these very dangerous offenders could lead to homicide.

### **Intent of violence**

While instrumental violence may be used in these cases, the focus of the violence is purely sadistic. The offender commits the violent acts against the child for her own sexual gratification, derived from seeing the child's suffering.

### **Victim selection**

The victims of Overt Sadistic offenders was most often the offender's own children,

with a single exception of predatory behavior that was noted in the case of Alice described previously. An interesting note that would warrant further examination is the greater quantity of female victims in these offenses. Within this examination, 14 of 54 female victims were subjected to these types of sadistic abuses, while only 4 of 45 male victims were.

### **Intrinsic motivations**

The sense of power and control the offender has over her victim may be the greatest motivator in the commission of the act. Because many of these offenders were also the victim of sexual abuse in childhood, they may also be offending to relive the act with themselves in the dominant role.

### **Implications for criminal justice**

Most of these Overt Sadistic offenses take place between family members, so the victims may be very reluctant to bring this to the attention of authorities. However, because of their violent nature, many injuries consistent with this type of abuse may be discovered by health care providers, and social service workers, who should be trained to recognize the signs of abuse and attempt to prevent it.

### **Miscellaneous**

One case of note that was located in the literature, but excluded for specific reasons

from this typology, was that of a woman named Stephanie, as presented in Saradjian & Hanks (1996). Her father sexually abused Stephanie from her early teens until she was married at 23. Once married, she pressured and coerced her husband into raping a 14-year-old neighbor who had occasionally babysat for them. During the actual act of abuse, Stephanie was merely an observer, but it was shown that she initiated the abuse by pressuring her male partner. While the literature has shown very few instances of predatory behavior by female sexual offenders, this is one of the only cases in which the female coerced the male into the act. This case was excluded from my typology, because the female offender did not physically take part in the abusive act, but it was still of note to be included.

### **Conclusion**

While this is a rudimentary attempt at developing a more cohesive typology than those that have been previously established, it is a step in the right direction towards understanding a phenomenon that is thought by much of the population to not even exist. As shown by reviewing the literature, there are commonalities among the types of offenses committed, and that makes for an excellent point of classification.

The next chapter will look at directions for future research and the potential implications of refining a classification of female sex offenders

**Table 18 – Incidents by Classification**

<b>Adult Non-Violent</b>								
<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
N/A	Stacy	Partner	F	Adult	2	1	1	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Judy	Partner	F	Adult	2	1	1	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Diana	Partner	F	Adult	2	1	1	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Lauren	Partner	F	Adult	2	1	1	Girshick (2002)
N/A (Case 2)*	N/A	Acquaintance (Girlfriend)	M	Child (17)	2	1	1	Peluso & Putnam (1996)

<b>Adult Violent</b>								
<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
Anna, Joniqua, Sherylynn, Unknown	Velmarine	Strangers (Inmates)	F	Adult	3	2	2	Alarid (2000)
N/A (7 Total females)	N/A	Strangers (Inmates)	F	Adult	3	2	2	Alarid (2000)

N/A	Christy	Partner	F	Adult	2	2	2	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Cecile	Partner	F	Adult	2	2	2	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Courtney	Partner	F	Adult	2	2	2	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Brandie	Partner	F	Adult	2	2	2	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Liz	Partner	F	Adult	2	2	2	Girshick (2002)
N/A (multiple offenders)	N/A	Strangers	M	Adult (27)	3	2	2	Sarrel & Masters (1982)
N/A (two offenders)	N/A	Strangers	M	Adult (37)	3	2	2	Sarrel & Masters (1982)
N/A	N/A	Strangers	M	Adult (23)	3	2	2	Sarrel & Masters (1982)
N/A	N/A	Wife	M	Adult (40)	3	1	1	Sarrel & Masters (1982)

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**Adult Sadistic**

<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
N/A	Evon	Partner	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)



N/A	Marianne	Partner	F	Adult	3	2	2	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Jannette	Partner	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Kara	Partner	F	Adult	3	2	2	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Maureen	Partner	F	Adult	3	2	2	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Roxanne	Partner	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Shelley	Partner	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Ariel	Partner	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Lucy	Partner	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Renee	Partner	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Leigh	Friend (and male acquaintance)	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Nina	Stranger	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)
N/A	Deidre	Partner	F	Adult	3	3	3	Girshick (2002)

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**Coerced**

<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
N/A	Case 2	Mother (coerced by father)	M	Child	3	3	3	Elliot (1993)
N/A	N/A (Case 1.3)	Mother (coerced by Father)	F	Child	2	1	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
N/A	N/A (Case 1.4)	Mother (coerced by Father)	M&F	Child	N/A	N/A	N/A	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)

**Statutory**

<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
N/A	Judy	Stepson	M	Child (16)	1	1	1	Elliot (1993)
Ann	N/A	Acquaintance	M	Child (14)	1	1	1	Matthews, Mathews, Speltz (1989)
N/A	N/A (Case 1.6)	Stranger	M	Child (13)	1	1	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)

**Incestuous**

<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
N/A (Interviewer 1 Case 3)	N/A	Mother	M	Child	1	1	1	Crawford (1997)
N/A (Interviewer 3 Case 2)	N/A	Mother	M	Child	2	1	1	Crawford (1997)
N/A	Richard Carter	Aunt	M	Child	2	2	2	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Tony Schreiber	Aunt	M	Child	2	1	1	Elliot (1993)
N/A	George Woods	Sister	M	Child	1	1	1	Elliot (1993)
N/A	William Banks	Mother	M	Child	1	1	1	Elliot (1993)
Ruth	Andrew Martin	Aunt	M	Child	1	1	1	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Philip Marshall	Mother	M	Child	2	1	1	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Paul Thorrson	Mother (Adoptive)	M	Child	2	2	2	Elliot (1993)
Carol	Mike	Cousin	M	Child (7)	1	1	1	Higgs, Canavan, Meyer (1992)

Mrs. Q.	N/A	Mother	M	Child (13)	3 (Intercourse, no mention of consent)	1	1	McCarty (1986)
Mrs. Z	N/A	Mother	M	Child (14)	1	1	1	McCarty (1986)
Kris	N/A	Mother (Offended w/Husband)	M	Child	2	1	1	Matthews, Mathews, Speltz (1989)
N/A	N/A (Case 1.6)	Stepmother	M	Child	2	1	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
N/A	N/A (Case 1.10)	Mother	M	Child (10- 17)	2	1	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
Mavis	N/A	Mother	M	Child (2-14)	1	1	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
N/A*	Kevin	Mother	M	Child (14)	2	3	3	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
Nancy	N/A	Aunt	M	Child	1	2	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
Pam	N/A	Mother	M	Child (8- Adolescence)	1	1	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
Sandra	N/A	Mother	M	Child	2	1	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
N/A	N/A	Mother	M	Child (13)	1	1	1	Sarrel & Masters (1982)

N/A	N/A	Sister	M	Child (10-12)	3	2	2	Sarrel & Masters (1982)
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**Exploratory**

<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
Ms. A.	N/A	Stranger (Babysitter)	F	Child (4) x2	2	1	1	Chow & Choy (2002)
N/A (Interviewer 1 Case 1)	N/A	Mother	F	Child	2	1	1	Crawford (1997)
N/A	Patient F	Strangers	M	Child (10-13)	2	1	1	Crawford (1997)
N/A	Case 1	Strangers (2 Female offenders)	M	Child (8)	2	1	1	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Case 10	Sister	F	Child	2	2	2	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Eleanor	Mother	F	Child	2	1	1	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Jill	Mother	F	Child	2	2	2	Elliot (1993)
N/A (Case 1)	N/A	Acquaintance (Mother of friend)	M	Child (14)	2	1	1	Peluso & Putnam (1996)
Mary	N/A	Strangers	Various	Child	2	1	1	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
N/A	N/A	Strangers (Babysitter)	M	Child (10)	2	1	1	Sarrel & Masters (1982)

N/A	N/A	Strangers (Babysitter)	M	Child (11)	2	1	1	Sarrel & Masters (1982)
Ms. C	N/A	Acquaintance	M & F	Child	2	2	2	Travin, Cullen & Protter (1990)
Ms. E	N/A	Mother	M	Child (11 months)	2	1	1	Travin, Cullen & Protter (1990)

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**Muted Sadistic**

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<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
N/A	Case B	Sister/Acquaintance	M	Child (12)	2 (Humiliation)	2	2	Crawford (1997)
Patient E*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2 (Fantasies)	1	1	Crawford (1997)
N/A	Case 8	Mother (with Father)	F	Child	3	2	2	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Case 9	Mother	F	Child	2 (frequent Enemas)	1	1	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Jane Swann	Mother	F	Child	2 (limited contact, high humiliation)	1	1	Elliot (1993)

N/A	Rachal Robinson	Mother	F	Child	2 (Enemas, sexual humiliation)	1	1	Elliot (1993)
Mrs. N	N/A	Mother	F	Child	3 (Frequent enemas, douches)	1	1	McCarty (1986)
Bonnie	N/A	Mother	F	Child	2	2	2	Matthews, Mathews, Speltz (1989)
N/A	Ann	Mother	F	Child	2 (Humiliation)	3	2	Mitchell & Morse (1998)
N/A	Jan	Aunt/Mother	F	Child	2 (Humiliation, enemas, rectal thermometers)	2	1	Mitchell & Morse (1998)
N/A	Sandy	Stranger (Nurse)	F	Child (5-13)	2 (Humiliation)	1	1	Mitchell & Morse (1998)

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**Overt Sadistic**

<b>Offender Name</b>	<b>Victim Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Victim Gender</b>	<b>Victim Age</b>	<b>Nature of Sex. Offense</b>	<b>Level of Violence</b>	<b>Intent of Violence</b>	<b>Source</b>
Miss K	N/A	Sister	F	Child (4 and 5)	3	3	3	Cooper, Swaminath, Baxter & Poulin (1990)
N/A	Patient 3	Teacher	M	Child	2	3	3	Crawford (1997)

N/A	Lucy Jenner	Mother	F	Child	3	3	3	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Lynne Marie	Mother	F	Child	3	3	3	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Gillian Balas	Mother	F	Child	3	3	3	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Sarah Miller	Mother (accompanied with Father)	F	Child	3	3	3	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Alan Long	Aunt	M	Child	3	3	3	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Peter Vaughan	Mother	M	Child	3	3	3	Elliot (1993)
N/A	Kathy	Mother	F	Child	3	3	3	Evert & Bijkerk (1987)
N/A	Jenny	Mother	F	Child (3-13)	3	3	3	Holubinskyj and Foley (1987)
N/A	Lori	Mother	F	Child (2-14)	3	3	3	Mitchell & Morse (1998)
N/A	Cheryl	Mother	F	Child	3	3	3	Mitchell & Morse (1998)
N/A	Hannah	Mother	F	Child (Infant-11)	3	3	3	Mitchell & Morse (1998)
N/A	N/A (Case 1.9)	Mother	F	Child (Infant-12)	3	3	3	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)



Carrie	N/A (Case 2.5)	Stranger (partnered with Male)	F	Child (15)	3	3	3	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
Alice	N/A	Stranger	F	Child (Adolescent)	3	3	3	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
Angela	N/A	Stranger (Neighbor)	M	Child	3	3	3	Saradjian & Hanks (1996)
Ms. A.	N/A	Aunt	F	Child	3	3	3	Travin, Cullen & Protter (1990)
Ms. D	N/A	Acquaintance	F	Child (6)	3	3	3	Travin, Cullen & Protter (1990)

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## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION**

### **Introduction**

While there are much fewer women who commit sexual offenses than men, their very presence is often overlooked due to social and societal stereotypes. In general, women are typically seen as benevolent caregivers and nurturers, not sexual offenders. However, as this research has shown, this is not always the case. Women can indeed commit acts of sexual violence that is both shocking and repulsive. This chapter will discuss the findings of the thesis, and directions for future research.

### **The Scope of This Work**

The aim of this work was to develop a rudimentary classification scheme, or typology, to categorize female sex offenders that have been discussed within the extant literature. The previously developed typologies from the psychiatric community were excellent initial strides in creating a deeper understanding of this often hidden population, but many are rather limited in scope. Sarrel & Masters (1982), McCarty (1986) and Mathews, Matthews & Speltz (1989) all attempted to classify female sex offenders, but their typologies are often limited only to the

characteristics of the participants in their small respective studies, thus leaving out many different types of female offender. By implementing the developmental model used by Knight & Prentky (1990), I was able to synthesize a more cohesive, and encompassing typological system that takes into consideration both the strengths and weaknesses of the existing research.

What follows is a table outlining the variables upon which this typology was constructed. The types were first divided into those who victimized adults, and then those that victimized children. After that decision, the nature of the sexual act, the types of sexual interactions that occurred in the offense, was evaluated, and then the presence of violence, and the intent of that violence was categorized. Sexual acts found consisted mostly of unwanted touching, fondling, oral sex (perpetrated by the offender and forced performance from victim), and penetration with fingers and objects. The violence found consisted of physical abuse to gain compliance of the victim, restraint, and acts of extreme violence directed towards the victims genitals.

**Table 19**  
**Summary of Typology**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Nature of act</b>	<b>Level of violence</b>	<b>Intent of violence</b>
Adult Non-violent	Aggressive fondling, oral sex, intercourse	None	No violence
Adult Violent	Fondling, intercourse, forced oral sex	Instrumental, restraint, threats	Violence used to gain compliance
Adult Sadistic	Forceful digital/object penetration	Violent penetration, intent to cause harm	Violence is highly sexualized
Coerced Statutory	Varies Consensual fondling, oral sex, intercourse	Varies None	Varies No Violence
Incestuous	Fondling, oral sex, intercourse, occasionally consensual	Rare, but occasionally threats or restraint	Violence to gain compliance
Exploratory	Non-consensual fondling, oral sex, inappropriate touching	Physical restraint or threats to gain compliance	Violence to gain compliance
Muted Sadistic	Verbal humiliation, use of enemas, rectal thermometers, inappropriate touching.	Violence manifested through humiliation.	Violence is minimal, but sexualized
Overt Sadistic	Forceful digital/Object Penetration	Violent penetration, intent to cause harm	Violence is highly sexualized.

A total of 99 cases that were presented in the literature were utilized in the development of this typology, each rated based on the nature of the sexual act, the presence of violence, and the intent of the violence used. The offenses were also delineated by the age of the victim, either

adult or child. With the exceptions of the Statutory and Incestuous classifications, there were no distinctions made of victim gender in classification, however, some interesting patterns were revealed.

### **Characteristics of Typologies**

A classification system requires that the factors of classification be clearly observable, be discriminate, reliable, and contain validity, according to Quay (1986a). A typology must also be able to classify most of the individuals in a population, and have operationalized definitions of the various types (Megargee, 1977). This typology is based upon clearly defined characteristics of the offenses committed, which are clearly observable, and as outlined in Table 19, operationalized within each type. This typology was also able to classify all of the cases in which sufficient details of the offenses committed that were presented in the literature. It is, however, limited in reliability.

### **Limitations of Typology**

It is important to reiterate the limitations of this typology. Because it was developed using case studies and accounts provided in other research, issues of reliability may arise. However, this typology classified the offenders based upon the nature of the offense that was committed, not their psychological state or intrinsic motivations. Since this data was not empirically collected, it must be taken tentatively. The intent of this typology was to propose a

preliminary typology that can be refined through future research.

### **Purpose of this typology**

The largest concern of this typology is to describe the offenses and nature of female sex offenders. While it does have some potential to function predictively, that was not the primary aim of this typology. Because of the limited reliability, it is most adept at categorizing the offenses and offenders, and with future research it may function in some sort of predictive capacity. It is not designed to predict an offense or offender based on anything but evidence of the crime.

### **Discussion of results**

#### **Females Victimized of Adults**

For adult offenders, females were more likely to be the victims of the most violent offenses. The Adult Non-Violent offenders, who displayed no physical aggression or intent at violence at all, totaled 6 of the cases located, consisting of 2 male and 4 female victims. However, in the incidents in which there was the use of instrumental violence, restraint, or the threat of violence, which were classified as Adult Violent, there are only 3 male victims compared to a total of 10 females. Finally, the Adult Sadistic classification, in which there is a high level of violence that is sexually motivated and directed, showed no males victimized, compared to 10 females. Within the axis of adult victims, I believe this may be attributed to the

physical differences between males and females. Because males are often physically larger and stronger due to biological factors, it is less likely that they could be physically coerced into sexual acts against their will. On the other hand, it could be a fear of embarrassment and humiliation on the part of male victims to come forth to authorities and report victimization. Adult victims of female sexual offenders are a very understudied population that, while maybe small in number, are still important to understand and recognize.

### **Female Victimiziers of Young Children**

The offenders who victimized children also showed oddly similar patterns of victim gender selection. While the Incestuous and Statutory classifications by definition only consisted of male victims, these were mostly non-violent, non-invasive acts of abuse.

### **The Exploratory Offenders**

The Exploratory offenders, those who committed sexually experimental acts such as fondling and oral sex, were the most egalitarian when it came to victimization. There was nearly an even split between male and female victims, with eight and seven, respectively. However, when we shift the focus to the Muted Sadistic offenders, who showed intent at humiliation or fantasies of a sadistic nature, the balance shifts to female victims, with four male and eight females.

### **The Overt Sadistic Offenders**

Finally, within the Overt Sadistic classification, in which there was the greatest intent at inflicting sexualized pain, there were only four male victims versus fourteen females. Unlike the adult victims, there can be no excuse that males were more prepared to physically refuse being sexually abused, because these offenses all consisted of older females against younger males and females.

### **The Statutory Offenders**

It was also of note that what could be assumed to be the most common classification of female sex offender, the Statutory type who have sexual relationships with males who are not of the age of consent, only represented 3 of the 99 cases evaluated. I believe this could be attributed to the fact that the males in these relationships are consenting partners, who would therefore be less likely to make any attempts to stop the acts from occurring. Similarly, because society views younger males who have sexual relations with older women at a young age as “lucky”, it is unlikely that anyone else would bring these cases to the attention of authorities.

### **The Incestuous Offender**

The Incestuous offenders, those older women who have sexual relations with biologically related male relatives, comprised the largest group, 22 offenders out of 99 total, or 22.2% of total offenses. This disproportionately large number could be caused by the source from which these



cases were gathered. Most of the data used in this classification development was gleaned from psychiatric studies of female sexual offenders. Incestuous relationships often only come to light in therapy sessions, because by their very nature they are extremely secretive acts.

### **Implications for Future Research**

The greatest direction for future research on this topic is to expand this classification from being based solely on published cases and to include formal, structured interviews with offenders, victims, and those who have worked with both. While this thesis classified cases based on their reported acts, it would still be more reliable and applicable if it was refined using empirically gathered data. Also, the active use of it within a treatment center or correctional facility would also aid in ensuring consistency between types, and the possible need for the creation of new types.

Another area that would be of interest to study is the presence of mostly female victims in the offenses that are the most violent and sadistic. While this would be less in the realms of criminal justice and more of a research topic suited for psychological studies, it is something that an extensive literature review turned up no studies of.

### **Conclusion**

In summation, this thesis was a preliminary attempt at developing a comprehensive system of classification of female sexual offenders, who while limited in population, commit acts

that can be just as despicable as their male counterparts. A well developed typology will aid both in the understanding of female sex offenders, and allow for criminal justice professionals at all levels to recognize their presence, and develop appropriate policies to punish, to rehabilitate, and to prevent. This understanding, perpetuated by the refinement of a descriptive typology, will allow for law enforcement and criminal justice professionals to recognize patterns and behaviors that, on their own may not seem indicative of female sexual abuse, but when placed into an appropriate context, become a matter of concern. While this typology currently only functions as a descriptive entity, it can be expanded upon to be used in therapeutic, or corrections setting, and even act predictively to discover abusive acts that may otherwise remain hidden. An act as heinous as sexual abuse should not be allowed to go unchecked, no matter what the perpetrator's gender is.

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