Gaining Insight to Sexual Offending Populations

Working with the Offender

- Who works with offenders?

- Who wants to work with offenders?

- You WANT to work with offenders, BECAUSE?

- Who is the offender?

- What is “his problem?”

- What constitutes “Offending Behavior?”
“Offensive Behavior”

- Inappropriate Behavior: Behavior which is outside the normative for the culture, tradition or situation

- Dysfunctional Behavior: Behavior which does the “Do’er” harm

- Deviant Behavior: Behavior which does harm to others

- Disordered Behavior: Behavior which is not pathological, forecastable

- Criminal Behavior: Behavior which crosses societal law
“Offensive Behavior”

- Inappropriate
- Dysfunctional
- Deviant
- Disordered
- Criminal
“Offensive Behavior”

Inappropriate
Dysfunctional
Deviant
Disordered
Criminal
Regardless of the offense or how it is outlined in the jurisdiction where it may have been committed, there are specific “elements” which are consistent across the various statutes.
Defining Sexual Offense & Offending Behavior

- Sexual offense may have as many definitions as there are those who might define it.

- Most often those defining sexual offense will (erroneously) categorize these into three groups:
  - The Rapist
  - The Child Molester
  - The Internet Predator
Elements of Sexual Offense

- Most definitions of sexual offense/assault contain four common elements which can be found in any sexual offense.
  - The Abuse of Power
  - The violation of another’s rights
  - The betrayal of trust and/or responsibility
  - The inability for consent
  - Criminal Behavior where sex/sexual intent is the weapon

- Sexual Offenses are generally separated into two basic groups.
  - ”Contact” or “Hands On”
  - ”Non-Contact” or “Hands Off”
Reasons Offending Behavior Occurs?
Signature * Typology * Modus

- The Signature refers to “why” the offender offends, what is the payoff, gratification, what does it psycho-emotionally satisfy.

- The Typology is a classification according to general type classified through similar characteristics.

- The Modus Operandi is the method used to complete the criminal act.
  - contact vs non-contact
  - Manipulations, grooming, style of hunt, etc.
Defining Risk

• Risk: “...a compound estimate of the likelihood of an undesirable outcome” (Yates & Stone, 1992)

• Risk of recidivism is not the same as “dangerousness” which implies severity of the behavior
What Places Someone at Risk
What are the “Red Flags”

Answering the question of “Why?”

Because
Factors often Identified with Risk

- Sexual deviancy
- Antisocial orientation
- Sexual interest in children
- Sexual disorders and/or paraphilia
- Sexual preoccupation and/or hypersexuality
- Multiple victims, diversity in victimization and/or presence of strangers
- Age of onset for sexually offending behaviors (i.e. juvenile offender)
- Adversarial sexual attitudes
- Abuse supportive beliefs
- Grievance thinking and/or hostility
- Poor emotional intimacy
- Impulsivity
- Poor problem solving
- Psychiatric/psychological disorders
- Substance abuse
- History of abuse
- Chaotic, transient and/or parasitic lifestyle
- Sense of entitlement
- Victim access
- Rejection of supervision

Not all areas identified with Risk are significantly correlated to Risk

Hanson, Harris, Lynne Scott and Helmus, 2007 & Craig, Browne and Beech, 2008
Grouping Factors into Domains

- Risk factors can be grouped into a variety of domains or categories. These include:
  - Power and Control Issues
  - Sexual Dysfunction/Deviance/Disorders
  - Character Disturbances and/or Antisocial Personality
  - Poor Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulatory Skills
  - Distorted Paradigms often Abuse Oriented
  - Intimacy Deficits/Socio-Affective Deficits

Hanson & Harris, 2000, Thorton, 2003, Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004
Risk Assessment vs. Risk Management

It is important to keep a correct perspective on the two

- **Assessment;** assesses the “likelihood that an event will occur and/or re-occur”

- **Management;** assesses the risk in order to place external limitations and constraints on the behavior or individual

K. Hanson & D. Doren 1995
A Quick Note About:
Sex Offender Evaluation & Risk Assessment

There is a difference between the evaluation and a risk assessment.

- The evaluation develops the interviewee’s history and patterns by which the evaluator (and subsequent reader) can identify potential risk factors, cycles and treatment issues to be addressed in therapy.

- The risk assessment makes use of the actuarial instruments (and potential adjustments) to identify risk factors and provide predictions on recidivistic tendency.
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Typologies of Offenders
The Offender/Client

- Sexual Offenders are not a homogenous group

- Despite theoretical frameworks, societal stereotypes or conceived beliefs as to what offenders “look” or “act” like, individuals who commit sexual offensive acts come from a variety of histories, socio-economic backgrounds, race/ethnicity, education levels, and etc. Offending also has different etiologies.

- Although there are some common characteristics among offenders and/or groups of offenders. There is no one specific group from which they are grouped, or originate from.
Offender Typology

- Typology of offenders vary and no single method seems to be completely accurate. Some are based on a legal approach, a psychiatric perspective and etc.

1. Intra-Familial Offender
2. Exploitive Offender
3. Criminally Distorted Offender
4. Psycho-Sexually-Emotionally Impaired Offender
5. Psychiatrically Impaired Offender
6. Sociopathic/Psychopathic Offender
Intra-Familial Offender

- Offenders who:
  - Prey upon family members
  - May include several generations
  - Very secretive and at times have the offenses unwittingly supported by dysfunction and secrets within the family
  - Tend to prefer opposite gender victims
  - History of age appropriate, consensual relationships
Intra-Familial Offender

Bill is a 62 year old husband and father of 5. He has three grown daughters, two of whom he sexually molested without detection during their pre-teens. He has been married for 41 years and his wife, who he dated for 3 years is 59. Although she had suspected some dysfunction she claims to have never known of his offending lifestyle and believed him to have anger problems. She reports the marriage as stable and described Bill as a good father. After being convicted of molesting two of his 9 grandchildren it has been discovered that he has also abused nieces and nephews during the course of the last 3 decades. He has no criminal record, has always worked and neighbors describe him as a friendly man.
Exploitive Offender

- Offenders who have:
  - No lengthy criminal history documented
  - No psychological or psychiatric issues, per-say
  - Often prefers opposite sex
  - Dysfunction in life is present yet not really addressed specifically
  - Taking advantage of situation to offend
  - History of multiple relationships
  - Tend to be higher functioning
Exploitive Offender

Steve is a 24 year old physics student at the university. He has no legal history aside from a possession charge 2 years ago and is scheduled to graduate this spring. He has been dating his girl friend for 2 years and has a good history of functional relationships and appropriate sexual encounters. Last weekend, at the behest of his friends he went out for pizza and a beer. As the evening continued he found himself flirting with a female he and his friends met at the pizza place. The two hit it off, and feeling “buzzed” they slip away for a “quickie”. Upon being charged he finds out she was a 17 year old runaway whom he provided alcohol to and had sex with.
Criminally Distorted Offender

- Offenders who have:
  - Extensive history of illegal activity (sexual & non-sexual)
  - Attitudes and cognitive process support violence and the victimization of others as well as ego-centric behaviors
  - Offenses are commonly secretive
  - May not have psychiatric/psychological diagnosis
  - Opposite gender preference
  - Presence of severe dysfunction in life due to general deviant and illegal behavior
Marc is a 32 year old male with a vast criminal history. He has been charged (and sometimes convicted) of a variety of criminal offenses in the past ranging from possession to aggravated battery. He sees no harm in what he does, as long as he enjoys it and no one gets hurt, by his interpretation. He has a poor work history, having been terminated from several positions or just not showing up for work when he does not feel like it. He has no stable relationships in his life and upon further investigation it is found that he has participated in multiple transient relationships and is very promiscuous. Polygraphs in treatment have also uncovered a history of sex with minors.
Psycho-Sexually-Emotionally Impaired Offender

- Offenders who have:
  - Serious psychological issues other than axis II
  - Diagnosis may vary including mood disorders, impulse disorders, sexual disorders and etc.
  - May have consenting, age appropriate relationships
  - Victimization of both genders
  - Little illegal activity other than offending
  - Secretive
  - Tend to be lower functioning
Psycho-Emotional-Sexually Impaired Offender

Teddy is a 37 year old fast food service worker. His legal history is mostly disturbing the peace, providing alcohol to minors and excessive speeding. Teddy lives at home with his father, stating it is more economical but hopes to move out again “someday.” His relationships are often tumultuous and he disclosed feeling as though his girl friends often leave him for men who offer more. In sessions he reports feeling insecure and having a low self esteem which he wishes he could improve. When exploring his social connections he generally hangs around the bars with the 18-23 crowd. He is also known as “the man” with the high school junior & seniors. His offense included having sexual intercourse with a 16 year old and receiving oral sex from a 14 year old.
Psychiatrically Impaired Offender

- Offenders who:
  - Most likely suffering from a personality disorder
  - Presence of deviant arousal patterns and may fit criteria for DSM sexual disorder (i.e. pedophile, paraphilia, etc.)
  - Few age appropriate relationships and/or multiple failed or impaired relationships
  - Criminal behaviors are most likely present
  - Lack of remorse
  - Offense may be secretive and may not due to a lack of conscience
Psychiatrically Impaired Offender

Carla is a 53 year old female who suffers from a Histrionic Personality Disorder with Borderline features. She has been married on three occasions, all ending in a divorce. The last of which she attempted suicide on the day the separation was legalized. She has had multiple police contacts but no convictions until her current offense. Her social contacts are minimal due to her mood swings and instability. As such, for sexual satisfaction she has made active use of the internet, looking up pornography and then indulging in fetish porn. Most recently she has become aroused to images of pubescent boys and was arrested when she attempted to entice a male minor (or so she thought) during an internet chat room session.
Sociopath/Psychopath Offender

- Offenders who:
  - High number of victims and offenses
  - Psychiatric diagnosis present (axis II)
  - Severe dysfunction present in life
  - High level of denial and often elaborate defense mechanisms
  - No remorse
  - Very limited appropriate relationship history
  - Impulsive
  - No gender preference
  - Variety of offense profiles
Sociopath/Psychopath Offender

Douglas is a 45 year old male with no criminal history other than traffic stops in a variety of counties and states. He has worked as a district manager for a local department store for the last 17 years and was once married (having divorced 9 years ago). He and his wife had two children both are now grown and live in different states. Doug has recently been arrested for three rapes in different parts of the county, ending the life of two victims and seriously mutilating the third. The victims tend to be hitchhikers, prostitutes or runaways who he picks up, befriends then drugs. After sexually torturing the victim in a variety of ways he usually asphyxiates them. He is suspected in 6-8 other similar cases in the tri-state area over the last 15 years.
FBI National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC)

- The NCAVC breaks down offenders into four categories.

1. The Power Reassurance Offender
2. The Exploitive Offender
3. The Anger Offender
4. The Sadistic Offender
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Offender Specific Therapy
Offender Specific Therapy

• In the 1960 those using Behavioral Therapy were starting to indicate success.

• Cognitive Behavioral Therapy followed focusing on some of the following:
  - Offending attitudes
  - Distortions
  - Empathy
  - Offending cycles
  - Modifying thoughts & beh.
Goals of Offender Specific Therapy

Although goals will vary from treatment to treatment, the core goals remain consistent.

1. No more victims or victimization
2. Reduction of deviant arousal
3. Alter lifestyle to support new pro-social behaviors conducive to relapse prevention and reduction of risk
4. Address core issues and improve self efficacy
Components in Therapy

Important domains to cover in providing effective therapy are:

- Better choice & problem solving skills
- Increased self esteem
- Emotional identification, articulation and management
- Sexual understanding
- Social Skills
- Communication
- Arousal management
- Offense cycles/chains
- Relapse prevention & wellness planning
- Empathy
Techniques Used in Therapy

- Sex offender specific therapy is confrontational, structured and directive.

- Aggressive confrontations are best avoided with a more empathic, supportive and respectful style utilized which is also firm and challenging (Marshall & Serran 2003)

- Create a cognitive tree for the offender to better understand life events, their history of coping and options for the future.

- Utilize this cognitive tree during sessions for the offender to “hang” their experiences and therapeutic processes on so they may better understand themselves.
“Why work with the sex offenders?”

“Everyone is here, at the river’s edge, working as fast as they can pulling the soaked and drowning from its vicious currents …..

Someone should really run upstream to find out who is throwing them in.”

-Anonymous-

As passed on to me by my friend and mentor, “Opie”
Web Sites

- Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) – www.atsa.com
- Center for Sex Offender Management (CSOM) – www.scom.org
- Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) – www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov
- Illinois Sex Offender Registration (ISOR) – www.isp.state.il.us
- KlaasKids Foundation – www.klaaskids.org
Resources

1. Dr. Andrew Harris, Forensic Assessment Unit. Ontario Canada
2. Dr. Hanson, Ontario Canada
3. Dr. Dennis Doren, Wisconsin
4. Dr. Mark Carich, SDP Program Illinois Corrections at Big Muddy River Correctional Center
5. John La Fond, University of Missouri
6. Dr. Michael Seto, Clarke Institute
7. A.T.S.A. (Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers)
8. Kim English, Colorado Department of Public Safety
9. Illinois State Police Registration Web Site
10. Center for Sex Offender Management
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Illinois Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers

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