PROGRESSION TOWARDS SEXUAL RE-OFFENCE: DETAILING THE OFFENCE CYCLE AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN HIGH-RISK SEXUAL OFFENDERS

by

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ABSTRACT

Although not the majority, there are sexual offenders who recidivate at high rates and who continue to re-offend despite periods of incarceration and the system's best treatment efforts, who together comprise a group of particular empirical interest and public concern. The area of sexual violence risk prediction is recognizing the contributions of dynamic risk factors proximal to the re-offence process in identifying increases in risk state. These factors, however, are rarely examined in concert, and their differential presentation across offenders varying in their victim preference and motivational orientation towards offending is not often specified. Certain risk factors may also be associated with a pattern of escalating violence severity across offences. This dissertation project investigated the relevance of a range of dynamic offence process factors to frequency and severity of offending across various types of sexual offenders. Offence-related information was extracted through an extensive review of 191 files (rapists, child molesters, and mixed offenders) drawn from an innovative law enforcement database containing the highest-risk sexual offenders in British Columbia, Canada. Results demonstrated that a number of risk factors were differentially present between different types of offenders. Further analyses revealed that certain risk factors stood out as statistical predictors of frequent offending across offender type. The presence of cognitive-related factors, as well as certain sexualized behaviours, demonstrated significance in this respect.

Conversely, particular non-sexual behaviours were found to indicate a lower level of frequency in sexual offending. Although child molesters had the most prolific offence histories, rapists displayed the greatest severity escalation across their offences. Further, offenders who demonstrated more distorted cognitions and experienced interpersonal conflicts prior to offending were more likely to display escalating severity across their sexual offence histories. Overall, a number of dynamic factors indicated post-dictive utility for identifying frequent and increasingly severe sexual offending. The present line of research delineated specific dynamic factors precipitating re-offence that may assist in refining formulations of risk. The findings may inform criminal justice professionals charged with implementing community-management strategies to monitor risk level, as well as those charged with altering offence-supportive cognitive and behavioural patterns to reduce recidivism.

Keywords: sexual offending; offence process; offence pathways; offence severity escalation

DEDICATION

To Pop – you remain my inspiration after all these years.

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INTRODUCTION

There is no question that the perpetration of sexual violence is viewed by the lay public and clinicians alike as an issue of great concern. Due to the invasive nature of the acts and the negative physical and mental health sequelae of victimization, such trepidation is certainly not unwarranted. In the early 1990s, a number of provisions supplemented the 'high-risk offender' statutes in the Criminal Code of Canada in order to grant the criminal justice system extended control over those who would present an undue risk to public safety (Solicitor General Canada, 2001). Even in some of the most extreme cases, it is mandated that an offender's risk status be reviewed periodically to establish parole eligibility, and facilitate a gradual and supervised return to society. It is also the case that sexual offenders who are considered at high-risk for re-offending may also re-enter the community. In instances where prosecutorial discretion has rendered an offender acceptably inhibited by normal standards of behavioural restraint (and therefore ineligible for restrictive conditions), the offender may receive a full release from custody before or upon warrant expiry. In these latter cases, the offender has served the terms of the initial punitive sentence and may be released without condition.

Determination of risk status has been conceptualized in a number of different ways, but the central concern typically pertains to re-offending. Decisions concerning an individual's risk level encompasses a multi-component

assessment of relevant factors that often includes, but is not limited to, facets of sexual offending such as number of victims, use of drugs, force, and/or weapons during the commission of the offence, duration of offender-victim contact, offender-victim relationship, victim age, and resultant physical/psychological harm (Bonta & Yessine, 2005; Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2004). Sexual offender risk assessments typically demonstrate a trend for a greater number of different risk factors to differentiate the higher- from the lower-risk offenders (Beech, Fisher, & Thornton, 2003).

Although not the majority, there are subgroups of sexual offenders who recidivate at high rates (see Hanson & Bussière, 1998). Those who continue to re-offend despite periods of incarceration and the system's best treatment efforts comprise a group of particular empirical interest and public concern. The categorization of sexual offenders most pertinent in the present study is this significant sub-group of *high-risk* offenders. The characteristics of this special population are important to investigate because high-risk offenders are typically more violent, have a greater number of victims, and pose a greater risk for recidivistic sexual violence (Levenson, 2004).

Despite the importance of understanding these high risk sexual offenders, research lags behind practice with regard to specifying offence patterns. The concept of a multi-component process to offending is recognized by criminal justice agencies and current offender treatment providers (Grubin & Thornton, 1994; Laws, Hudson, & Ward, 2000; Marshall, 1999; Spencer, 1995) as a substantive element in conceptualizing an offender's risk for re-offence. The

'offence process' of sexual offending, commonly referred to as 'crime cycle' or 'behavioural progression' by criminal justice professionals, is posited as a pattern of risk factors including thoughts, feelings, and behaviours preceding the commission of an offence (Laws, 1989; Pithers, 1990; Pithers, Marques, Gibat, & Marlatt, 1983; Ward & Hudson, 1998). The apparent gap in the psychological literature base is likely due at least in part to the complex and multi-factorial nature of this type of crime (Borum, 1996; Monahan, 1981, 1984). More recent research endeavours have begun to identify a number of empirically-derived risk factors associated with sexual re-offence (e.g., Hanson & Harris, 1998, 2001). However, these studies have not often approached offence-relevant factors in combination, particularly those implicated in the temporal period directly preceding an offence. Consequently, there is a need for continued empirical study to elucidate the relevance of various internal (cognitive, affective) and external (behavioural, situational, interpersonal) factors that may indicate an acute risk for re-offending.

This dissertation project acknowledges the need for a more thorough understanding of the re-offence process for different types of sexual offenders. A primary consideration of the study was a comprehensive approach to the many potentially contributing and/or relevant factors in detailing an offender's process towards and execution of (re-) offending in a sexually intrusive manner. The present study appears to be a first to investigate, in concert, the cognitive, affective, behavioural, environmental, and interpersonal factors that are associated with the offence process for different types of high-risk offenders.

Embedded in the methodology was an account of three different types of sexual offenders. Indications from the literature on recidivism relevant factors point to potential differences across rapists and child molesters (e.g., in the nature of their cognitive distortions; Lindsay et al., 2006). Furthermore, a small number of studies suggest mixed offenders - those taking a more indiscriminate approach to victim selection, are 'riskier' when rated on static variables (Cann, Friendship, & Gonza, 2007; Porter et al., 2000; Proeve, Day, Mohr, & Hawkins, 2006), but little is known as to whether they will differ in systematic ways with regard to proximal offence process factors.

Methodological shortcomings of prior investigations, such as small sample sizes (Webster, 2005) and reliance on official re-arrest rates as the sole indicator of recidivism (Freeman, 2007) were also addressed in an attempt to clarify factors related to the offence process. Because of the comprehensive nature of the data source and collection procedure (description to follow below), the current study also allowed for discovery of supplementary factors that may act as indicators of the offender's process to re-offend.

The present inquiry investigated possible associations between the specific proximal re-offence factors and offence motivations, frequency, and severity in sexual offenders. The study was constructed in this way so as to inform our theoretical conceptualization and empirical understanding of the sexual offence process. Describing internal and external factors pertinent to the offence process, particularly across the various types of sexual offenders, will aid in conceptual clarification of proximal 'triggers' that may signal the timing of re-

offence. In terms of practical applications, the findings have the potential inform relevant criminal justice policy such as offender management practices and treatment protocols mandated to target those at the highest risk for re-offence.

The review of sexual offence factors begins with a consideration of recidivism rates to explicate the scope of the problem of sexual offending. Subsequent sections will address the issue of repetitive sexual offending behaviour, and escalation in the severity of sexually violent behaviour as part of the 'how' and 'why' a proportion of those who sexually offend are deemed at high-risk for re-offence.

Consideration of Recidivism Rates

Across the last few decades the recognition of sexual assault as a serious and widespread societal problem has increased. In 1989, a meta-analytic study was conducted of sexual offending studies referenced in four large psychological and sociological article databases and included studies from Canada, the U.S., the U.K., Denmark, Switzerland, Norway, Germany, and Austria (Furby, Weinrott, & Blackshaw, 1989). This review reported victimization data estimates of the annual incidence of attempted or actual rape at 3% for women, and for childhood victimization, 12-28% for females and 3-5% for males. In a 2001 report from Statistics Canada, rates of personal sexual assault victimization within the previous year were 3.3% for women, and .8% for men (General Social Survey 1999 definition of sexual assault based on the Canadian Criminal Code definition: an attempt at, or actual forced sexual activity, or unwanted sexual touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling; Statistics Canada, 1999). Despite these

large gender differences annually, the same survey reported small gender differences in the overall lifetime risk of personal victimization (18.9% for women, 18.3% for men).

Turning now from prevalence rates in victims to perpetration rates in offenders, recidivism studies have tended to yield relatively low rates for sexual re-offence in general. A meta-analysis conducted by Hanson and Bussière in 1998 of 61 recidivism studies placed the sexual offence recidivism rate at 13.4% over an average follow-up period of 4-5 years (no measure of variability provided, *n* = 23,393; 18.9% for 1839 rapists and 12.7% for 9603 child molesters), yet individual studies have yielded significantly higher rates. For example, a recent sexual offender study conducted by Ontario-based Langevin and colleagues (2004) reported that three in five (60.0%) re-offended sexually over a minimum 25 year follow-up period. However, a report directly from the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) found sexual re-offence rates of 5.4% for 'new release' (2.4 year follow-up period) and 8.2% for 'caseload' (4.3 year follow-up period) samples (Motiuk & Brown, 1996).

Inconsistencies in reported re-offence rates have been noted throughout the literature. Across individual studies, including the two Canadian studies just mentioned, estimates have in fact been found to range from zero to 88% (Furby et al., 1989). Discrepancies in reported figures can be attributed in part to the heterogeneity of the population which is not consistently taken into account, but mainly reflect the considerable methodological ambiguity and variability of follow-up periods across studies of sexual offence recidivism.

A cursory review of the recidivism literature shows that differing outcome variables compromise the validity of cross-study comparisons. Various authors have included any of the following in their definitions of recidivism: commissions of a new sexual offence (Prentky, Knight, & Lee, 1997), the same type of sexual offence as a previous offence (Ward & Hudson, 1998), the perpetration of any type of sex act (Hanson & Harris, 2000), a 'lapse' into a risk behaviour (e.g., sexual fantasies; Pithers, 1990), or even commissions of any physically aggressive, non-sexual act (Corbett, Patel, Erikson, & Friendship, 2003), and/or *any* criminal behaviour (Proulx et al., 1997). As many perpetrators of sexual offences have additional non-sexual criminal histories (Miethe, Olson, & Mitchell, 2006; Smallbone & Wortley, 2004; Soothhill, Francis, Sanderson, & Ackerley, 2000), inclusion of other offending behaviours would greatly inflate recidivism rates for sexual offence. Recidivism rates could also be artificially truncated - findings of low recidivism rates in particular have been criticised for being reliant on official reconvictions as only a proxy measure of re-offence (Friendship & Beech, 2005; Hood, Shute, Feilzer, & Wilcox, 2002; Prentky, Lee, Knight, & Cerce, 1997). As sexual offences comprise a type of criminal action that is vastly underreported (fewer than 10% reported to the police in Canada; Statistics Canada, 2006), it is now widely accepted that official records are underestimates of the actual incidence of these offences.

Not only has there been inconsistency in what constitutes a recidivistic act, there have been many different data sources employed in this respect. Of the 61 studies included in Hanson and Bussière's (1998) meta-analytic review,

84% used re-conviction, 54% used arrests, 25% relied on self-report, and 16% used parole violation data to gauge re-offence rates. A number of different recidivism-relevant criteria used across 82 recidivism studies were also identified in Hanson and Morton-Bourgon's (2004) review. National crime statistics were used in 53%, provincial/state records in 41%, treatment program files in 22%, 'other' records in a further 22%, self-report in 15%, and surprisingly, the data source was unknown for a full 15%. Unfortunately, it is unknown whether the 34% of studies that drew their data from multiple sources had higher outcome rates.

Reported recidivism rates are also undoubtedly variable due to remarkably different time periods over which offender follow-up took place: typically less than three years (Furby et al., 1989), the average four to six years (Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004), and very few exceed 25 years (e.g., Langevin et al., 2004). With few investigations involving long-term follow-ups, offenders' 'opportunities' for re-offence in these studies are thus truncated, making substantial underestimations of recidivism rates quite likely. In sum, conclusions regarding sexual offence recidivism rates should be qualified based on the sample in question, operational definitions of recidivism, and data sources utilized. Specification of offender type will now be considered as a substantive issue for determining accurate recidivism rates.

Specialization within Sexually Violent Behaviours: Implications for Identifying an Offender Typology

Assumptions of homogeneity among sexual offenders are now widely recognized as untenable. Current theory and research (Marshall, 1996), and even current legislation (Solicitor General Canada, 2001), is increasingly acknowledging heterogeneity among those who sexually offend. Indeed, when offender heterogeneity has been acknowledged as a substantive methodological issue, group differences based on differences in type of offending can be seen in relation to rate of recidivism. In the studies that have distinguished among subgroups of sexual offenders, variations have been found in their likelihood of sexual re-offence (Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004), especially when follow-up time is addressed (Prentky, Lee, et al., 1997). The rate of recidivism for rapists (17.1%) was higher than that of intrafamilial child molesters (8.4%), but lower than that of extrafamilial child molesters, who recidivated at a rate of 19.5%, according to Hanson (2002). This variation in offending rates across offender type has been evidenced through a number of additional studies (e.g., Harris & Hanson, 2004; Serin, Mailloux, & Malcolm, 2001). Comparing a large sample of child molesters (n = 4700) and rapists (n = 631) on probation in New York State, Freeman (2007) found a trend in the data (p = .07) suggesting that child molesters (5.7%) were more likely to be rearrested for a sexual offence than were rapists (4.0%) during the three-year follow-up period. Further, she reported a 40.9% increased likelihood for child molesters than rapists to be rearrested for a sexual offence. Smallbone and Wortley (2004) collected self-reported offending histories from an Australian sample of 207

incarcerated child molesters. When categorized by history of victim selection, statistically significant differences in the reported number of victims among these offender groupings were obtained between offenders with extrafamilial (*M* = 6.12, *SD* = 13.36), intrafamilial (*M* = 1.53, *SD* = 0.79), and those with both extrafamilial and intrafamilial victims (*M* = 17.48, *SD* = 52.50). The aforementioned Canadian investigation into sexual offender recidivism by Langevin et al. (2004) retrospectively followed different types of sexual offenders over a minimum of 25 years. Based on sexual offence convictions, extra-familial child sexual abusers (73.7%) were found most likely to re-offend, while incest offenders (51.1%) were least likely. Another Canadian study by Greenberg (1998) spanned a period of up to 12 years and found a recidivism rate of 15.1% in child molesters, with a rate of 6.4% for incest offenders. In sum, differing re-offence rates can be used to support methodological considerations of offender type. Research efforts now recognize the need to contrast offender types in order to increase specificity (Firestone et al., 1999; Freeman, 2007). A number of different typologies have been proposed based on offender characteristics such as preferential versus situational offending (Howells, 1981), levels of sexual fixation (Knight & Prentky, 1990), and levels of sexual deviancy (Beech, 1998). More recently advocated methods in offender specification are considered to be more parsimonious by incorporating the offender's victim age preference (Firestone et al., 1999).

Porter and colleagues (2000) specified an offender typology based on age-specific aspects of sexual offence history. These researchers delineated offender categories according to the standard age of consent as established in

Canadian legislation at the time. According to this categorization, ‘rapists’ were classified as those with ‘one or more victims of sexual assault older than the age of 14 years with no victims of or younger than the age of 14 years’. With regard to those who exclusively offended against child victims, ‘extrafamilial molesters’ were classified as having ‘one or more victims of sexual assault 14 years of age or less, and all outside of the offender’s family’, ‘intrafamilial molesters’ had ‘one or more victims of sexual assault 14 years of age or less all within the offender’ family’, including children, grandchildren, nieces/nephews, and stepchildren, and finally, molesters with both intra- and extrafamilial victims had ‘at least one child victim within and one child victim outside of the offender’s family’. Although Porter et al.’s (2000) latter category of sexual offender would be subsumed under the ‘child molester’ domain, the need for this category points to the existence of offenders who exhibit less specification in their victim selection.

Indeed, Porter and colleagues’ typology includes a ‘mixed rapist/ molesters’ classification for individuals having ‘at least one victim older than the age of 14 years and one victim of 14 years of age or less’ (p. 222). Of self-identified, non-incarcerated individuals who have been assured maximized conditions of confidentiality, just under one-half (42.3%) target victims in at least two of the following age groups: children under 14, adolescents 14 to 17, and adults over 17 (Abel, Mettelman, Becker, Rathner, & Rouleau, 1988). Interestingly, individuals who have committed multiple types of sexual offence in relation to victim type, and likely to be classified in the Porter et al. (2000) typology as ‘mixed rapist/molester’ offenders, have been found to have an

increased recidivism risk (Cann et al., 2007; Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Hanson & Harris, 2000). Although previous studies have noted stability in repeat offenders' victim selection (e.g., Gebhard, Gagnon, Pomeroy, & Christiansen, 1964; Soothill, Francis, Sanderson, & Ackerley, 2000), substantial versatility amongst a certain subgroup of offenders has been found with respect to cross-over in victim selection (i.e., in victim age and sex, Cann et al., 2007; Guay, Proulx, Cusson, & Ouimet, 2001). These offenders apparent indiscriminate tendencies towards victim selection may be indicative of a more opportunistic pattern of offending, as well as a more severe display of sexual violence in the commission of their offences.

In addition to specifying offender type, another prominent feature of the present study is in the distinction between the number of victims accumulated from the number of separate incidents of sexual offending across the sexual offence history. A comparison of reports from previous studies, such as that by Abel, Becker, Cunningham-Rathner, Rouleau, and Murphy (1987), reveals broad differences across offender type with rapists reporting a mean number of victims at 7.0, and extrafamilial and intrafamilial child molesters reporting means of 150.2 and 1.7 victims, respectively. In Abel and colleagues' study, the rapists committed an average of 7.2 sexual offences, whereas child molesters were reported to commit averages of 281.7 (for extrafamilial offenders) and 62.3 (for intrafamilial offenders). Therefore, reliance on reports of victim number alone may be misleading with regard to indications of offence frequency. Stranger rapists, for instance, by virtue of the nature of the offence scenario may be likely

to have a higher number of victims, but a lower number of incidents when compared with intrafamilial offenders who may have less victim choice but vastly more opportunities to offend. Indeed, previous research indicates that family members are the most likely perpetrators of child sexual victimization, yet this is not the case for sexual assault victims overall (Greenfeld, 1996). In Smallbone and Wortley's (2004) Australian sample of 207 incarcerated child molesters, the combined sample of offenders self-reported a mean number of sexual offence victims of 5.79 (*SD* = 23.27), which is difficult to compare with that of Abel et al. (1987, i.e., extrafamilial *M* = 150.2, and intrafamilial *M* = 1.7 child molesters). In fact, this group of child molesters appears to offend at the same rate as reported through many other reports of rapists' behaviours. For instance, Lisak and Miller's (2002) sample of undetected rapists disclosed an average of 5.8 (*SD* = 7.7) rapes; therefore, reliance on victim number reports alone would mischaracterize the actual state of frequency in the offending behaviour.

Additional problems arise upon closer inspection of Lisak and Miller's (2002) sample composition that speaks to differentiating offender type. The undetected 'rapists' comprising their sample would actually qualify for classification in the 'mixed rapist/molester' offender typology previously specified, as their acts of interpersonal sexual violence targeted both women and children. Further, although indications suggest 'mixed' offenders are a higher recidivism risk (Cann et al., 2007; Porter et al., 2000; Proeve et al., 2006), they are similar to other offender types through reports of their mean number of sexual offence convictions (e.g., *M* = 6.82, *SD* not reported, Cann et al., 2007). The variation

evident across studies resulting from the indicators of recidivism employed (e.g., number of victims versus number of convictions/arrests versus number of incidents), as well as differences across offender type in the number of sexual offending incidents, highlights the importance of distinguishing number of victims and number of incidents in examinations of sexual offence rates.

Frequency, Escalation, and De-escalation in General Offending

Thus far, the review has focused on rates for sexual offending in the context of different sexual offender types. There is of course an extensive body of literature that speaks to the nature and trajectory of general offending over the life span. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of sexual offending, it would be beneficial to situate sexual offence rates and patterns within the framework of general offending. When speaking in terms of differences in general-crime and sexual offending histories, the distinction may not be as clear as once assumed (Lussier, 2005). Similarities in the offence histories of general and sexual offenders call into question the presumption of sexual offenders as stand-alone ‘persistent specialists’ in their offending behaviours. Furthermore, the progression from low to high seriousness offences may be similar in trajectory for particular subgroups of violent and sexual offenders. Yet it is also a matter of interest, and public safety, to examine if patterns of escalating severity can be detected within offence types. The present study considers offence severity escalation as reflecting an upward trajectory in frequency and/or intrusiveness across every subsequent sexual offence (Greenland, 1985). Offending frequency and severity escalation as important dimensions in the

present study are now reviewed in relation to general, and then sexual, offending behaviours.

Many, perhaps most adolescents engage in some form of criminal activity (Fagan & Western, 2005; Farrington, 2002; Herrenkohl et al., 2000; Williams & Van Dorn, 1999). The age/crime curve is a generally accepted tenet within studies of criminal behaviour because most criminal activities will both peak and desist in the period between adolescence to early adulthood (Farrington, 1986; Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1983). Patterns of life-course persistence may also vary by offence type (Fagan & Western, 2005). Property offences tend to begin and desist at earlier developmental stages than to alcohol/drug and violent offences (Sampson & Laub, 2003). More detailed information of life-course continuity and patterns of offending is still needed (Loeber, 1996; Piquero & Mazerolle, 2001; Sampson & Laub, 1993).

A number of distinct theoretical views provide explanations for variations in offence trajectories across the life-course. In particular, the theories of offending posited by Gottfredson and Hirshi (1990) and Moffitt (1993, 2003) represent two opposing paradigms – the propensity approach and the developmental approach, respectively. Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theory of offending states that criminality is an expression of criminal propensity. These authors posit that the criminal propensity is best described by the multi-dimensional trait of low self-control which includes features such as impulsivity and lack of empathy. These dimensions of low self-control interact with additional factors resulting in an increased likelihood in criminal activity when there is

sufficient opportunity. In contrast, Moffitt (1993, 2003) has proposed a developmental theory of offending acknowledging the presence of different offending trajectories. Two diverging trajectories are delineated through this typology: adolescence-limited and life-course persistent, the former describing the majority of the desisting adolescent offending population, and the latter describing a sub-group (6-7%) of adolescents who are more chronic, persistent, and versatile in their criminal behaviours. Patterns have been noted in certain groups of offenders in support of Moffitt's distinctions. For instance, juveniles who have committed a violent offence are more likely to be re-arrested for the same and additional types of offences than are youths without violent offences in their arrest history (Lattimore, Visher, & Linster, 1995).

There is an extensive body of theoretical and empirical knowledge accumulated on patterns of offence type perpetrated across an individual's criminal history (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; LeBlanc & Fréchette, 1989). A great deal of the research into offence trajectories has focused on high-frequency, low-seriousness offences where stability and de-escalation is more common than escalation (Miethe et al., 2006). A number of important reviews (Cohen, 1986; Piquero, Farrington, & Blusmtein, 2003) and studies (Blumstein, Cohen, Das, & Moitra, 1988; Elliott, 1991; Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, Kammen, & Farrington, 1998) provide insight and evidence into the incidence and process of escalation and de-escalation. In terms of the former, theoretical explanations have been proffered to account for escalation within a particular sub-group of offenders whose criminal histories evince a chronic and severe trajectory of

offending behaviours. The ‘escalation hypothesis’ proposed by Cornell, Benedek, and Benedek (1987) is based on the existence of a select group who manifest criminal behaviours early on in development. It is these individuals displaying an early onset of antisocial behaviours who will be more likely to continue on a life course that includes a greater variety of, and more significant, antisocial behaviours. Juveniles displaying greater variety in their criminal repertoire correspond closely with Moffitt’s (1993, 2003) description of the life-course persistent offender. Further theorizing by Loeber, Lacourse, and Homish (2005) describes an ‘overt trajectory’ of offending wherein violence escalates over the course of offences, from minor aggression to acts of severe violence.

Identifying offenders displaying variety in, and early onset of, criminal behaviours may also provide insight into who is more likely to escalate in their offence severity (Eklund & af Klinteberg, 2006). Specifically, the escalation hypothesis has received support through studies such as those investigating the behavioural correlates of victim injury in juvenile offenders. Compared to the 98 adolescent offenders who caused minor injuries to their victims, the 70 offenders whose actions resulted in hospitalization or death to their victims were significantly more likely to have an earlier onset of offending, and greater variety in criminal behaviours (Vitacco, Caldwell, Van Rybroek, & Gabel, 2007). Loeber and colleagues (2001) found that juveniles who perpetrate major delinquent acts are more likely to escalate to violent acts than those who start and continue with minor delinquent acts. When certain types of high-seriousness offences have been investigated in adult offenders, there has been evidence for offences such

as blackmail, threats to kill, kidnapping, and arson to act as risk markers for subsequent, more serious offences such as homicide. Soothill, Francis, and Liu (2008) found that perpetration of each of these offences indicated an increased likelihood for committing homicide than found in the general population. In fact, a kidnapping conviction was a statistically significant risk factor for homicide, and a blackmail conviction was associated with a more than five times likelihood for murder (Soothill, Francis, Ackerley, & Fligelstone, 2002).

Additional evidence has been presented in support of escalation in terms of a progression towards more serious offences, including sexual offences. Early and persistent indications of antisocial orientation, including aggression and violence, were indicative of a behavioural trajectory to later sexual offending (Lussier, Leclerc, Cale, & Proulx, 2007). This same course of antisocial tendencies, when manifested early in development and persistently displayed, was associated with younger onset and frequency of sexual offending. Further, the relationship between persistent antisocial tendencies and sexual offending was stronger than was the presence of deviant sexual interests (Lussier, Proulx, & Leblanc, 2005). Although it may initially appear that the life-course persistent offender categorization invariably describes those who will offend sexually, or vice versa, Cale and colleagues (2009) caution against such an interpretation. These authors highlight the complexity and diversity found in developmental trajectories of sexual offenders, and propose that a model delineating multiple pathways to sexual offending is the most appropriate conceptualization at present (Cale, Lussier, & Proulx, 2009). In the context of the present study,

recognition of the dearth of investigations into trends for high-risk, high-frequency sexual offenders (Lussier, 2005) was of paramount importance for sampling considerations.

Frequency, Specialization, and Escalation of Sexually Violent Behaviours

Prior to the accumulation of sexual offence recidivism data, offenders' tendencies towards repeated sexual offending were simply assumed (Miethe et al., 2006). Indeed, this belief formed the basis of many 'specialized' sexual offender management and treatment models (Lieb, Quinsey, & Berliner, 1998; Winick & LaFond, 2003). Follow-up studies with sexual offenders provide little evidence that the majority are persistent specialists; finding instead that they were in fact more likely to re-offend non-sexually (Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Lussier, 2005). Such evidence supports the hypothesis that sexual aggression is subsumed by an overarching construct of general deviance (Cale et al., 2009; Lussier et al., 2005). Miethe, Olson, and Mitchell (2006) used a large (i.e., $n >$ 38,000) U.S. national sample of prisoners released in 1994 to examine the nature and magnitude of specialization and frequency among sexual offenders. Their results suggested a significant reduction in specialization among sexual offenders over their offence histories, whereas a trend towards increasing specialization was noted among property crime, public-order crime, and violent crime offenders. As an additional measure of generalist tendencies, sexual offenders as a group had the highest representation (61%) among those who did not repeat the same offence type, as compared with a minority (18%) of public-order offenders. That is, the majority of individuals who had committed one

sexual offence did not commit another. These results indicate that sexual offenders with more extensive arrest records can be characterized more aptly as 'generalists' rather than 'specialists'. In line with a conclusion reached in Lussier's (2005) review, it appears that generalization and specialization are two distinct offending processes characterizing the development of a persisting criminal career.

Apart from the majority of non-specialist, low-frequency sexual offenders, there are nonetheless *subgroups* among these offenders who sexually recidivated at high rates. These repeat offenders have been identified through Hanson and Bussière's (1998) meta-analysis of studies that used official reports (e.g., reconvictions, parole violations), offender self-report, and combined data sources to provide the multiple-factor index of recidivism. Earlier studies also showed that certain groups of sexual offenders self-reported an established and chronic pattern of offending (e.g., Abel et al., 1987). Miethe et al. (2006) identified a small sub-sample (7%) of repeat sexual offenders amongst their national sample of ex-prisoners. These 'persistent' sexual offenders were identified as such based on having committed at least three sexual offences present across the first, middle, and last stages of their offence histories. Overall, the accumulation of literature to date supports both the 'specialist' and the 'generalist' hypotheses for sexual offenders (Lussier, 2005). In short, from either the specialist or generalist perspective, the indications of a prolific sub-group of offenders merits an area for further study.

As previously reviewed, stability rather than escalation is the norm for all but a subgroup of offenders. Not as much is known in relation to seriousness escalation *within* certain types of offence categories. Severity escalation is generally considered an important clinical factor in determinations of risk (Boer, Hart, Kropp, & Webster, 1997; Hart, Kropp, Laws, Klaver, Logan, & Watt, 2003; Ross & Loss, 1991). However, few empirical studies have investigated severity escalation in the small, but not inconsequential, sub-group of prolific sexual offenders who may present this additional dimension of dangerousness. Further, the limited number of studies investigating escalation has not provided a consistent pattern of findings. Infrequent examination into trajectories of offence patterns may contribute to the lack of clear evidence for the utility of escalation in predicting sexual violence (Hanson & Bussière, 1996).

A relatively small number of studies provide indications of the type and extent of offence severity escalation in sexual offenders. Many of these studies have examined escalation as related to a progression from non-contact to contact sexual offences (Mair & Stevens, 1994; Stermac & Hall, 1989). Generally, non-contact offences are defined as 'hands-off' sexual behaviours that do not involve physical contact between offender and victim. Contact offences are 'hands-on' sexual behaviours that involve physical contact between offender and victim. A subgroup of one-third (32%) of Stermac and Hall's (1989) sample of Canadian forensic inpatients were identified as escalating to more serious sexual crimes throughout their offending histories (i.e., from indecent exposure through to kidnapping/abduction with sexual assault). Mair and Stevens (1994)

investigated whether the offending behaviour of non-contact and contact sexual offenders could predict offending histories, and whether their offence became more serious over time. They found that the degree of offence intrusiveness was related to sexual recidivism (i.e., a shift towards less intrusive offences corresponded with a decrease in identified sexual offending) during the approximate 10 year follow-up period. However, the authors concluded that there was no strong evidence supporting escalation in offence severity over time (Mair & Stevens, 1994). The offenders in this study were those who had received at least one conviction from among a substantially diverse range of sexual acts (e.g., from making obscene gestures to rape), and the sample ultimately included only 23 hands-on, 'intrusive' offenders.

More germane to the present study, Abel and colleagues' (1987) recruitment of participants from amongst non-incarcerated sexual offenders voluntarily seeking assessment and/or treatment for paraphilia resulted in a sample of especially deviant and frequent offenders. These authors found patterns within offenders for variation in the type of sexual offence committed (e.g., offending across multiple victim types), and an escalating pattern of offence seriousness (i.e., relating to intrusiveness of the offence, from non-contact to contact sexual offences) in self-reported sexual offending behaviours. It should be noted, however, that Abel and colleagues (1987) have provided a widely-cited, but not as yet replicated study on the offending behaviour of such a sample. Overall, although these types of studies indicate that escalation can

progress from hands off to hands on offending, they do not provide information as to severity escalation within the specific context of contact offences.

There are few studies from which to draw information on sexual offence escalation across contact offences. Hazelwood, Reboussin, and Warren (1989) reported stability in displays of offence severity across the majority of offenders in their rapist sample. A minority sub-group (25%) of this same sample, however, did escalate across their first, middle, and last sexual offences. One recent study that examined a wider range of offence escalation, incorporating analyses both between and within levels of non-contact and contact offending, was conducted by Lussier, Leclerc, Healey, and Proulx (2008). Fifty percent of 216 incarcerated Canadian adult male offenders who had at least two sexual offence victims were found to have transitioned from non- to contact offending. When their behaviours within contact offences were examined, these offenders showed a high level of stability in terms of repeating sexually intrusive behaviours (such as oral-genital sex and penetration), and in the use of physical force, particularly when those behaviours were displayed during the first offence. Therefore, in Lussier et al.'s study, stability rather than escalation was found with respect to intrusion and use of physical force in contact sexual offences. In a study conducted by Warren and colleagues (1999), however, escalation in the use of blunt force was exhibited by one-quarter (n = 27; 25%) of rapists in their sample. These same 'increasers' were those whose first reported rape transpired over a longer period of time and who used more profanity over the course of the incident. In contrast, 'non-increasers', or those whose level of force was determined to have remained

stable or de-escalated, represented three-quarters (*n* = 81) of the sample (Warren, Reboussin, Hazelwood, Gibbs, Trumbetta, & Cummings, 1999). Overall, researchers and clinicians are left with a set of mixed findings concerning the extent and nature of escalation for offence severity. As yet, studies have not tapped into aspects of escalation in a consistent manner due to the diversity of samples used and varying definitions of the construct. Regardless, indicators of offence severity such as psychological coercion, physical harm, and weapon use are considered clinically-relevant risk markers for escalation in offending behaviours (Boer et al., 1997; Hart et al., 2003). It may also be possible to identify factors in the offence process that could be associated with an offender's likelihood of escalation in the severity of their sexually violent acts. Such risk markers could help to identify dangerous offenders, and facilitate implementation of appropriate and timely public safety measures.

Risk Markers Associated with Offence Severity

A number of personological and situational risk factors related to sexual offence recidivism have been associated with severity escalation. For instance, MacPherson (2003) reported that certain risk factors distinguished non-contact from contact sexual offenders. Using the Sexual Violence Risk-20 (SVR-20; Boer et al., 1997), an established risk measure composed of clinical and empirical factors associated with recidivistic sexual violence, escalation was associated with a combination of several risk factors. Contact offenders, compared with non-contact offenders, showed significantly higher ratings of multiple sexual offence

type (e.g., varying nature of acts and victim selection), physical harm incurred by victim (e.g., bodily injury), weapon/threat use (to facilitate the commission of the offence through subduing the victim), and cognitive distortions (i.e., attitudes supporting sexual offences, and minimization/denial; Abel, Becker, & Cunningham-Rathner, 1984). Relatedly, Lussier et al. (2008) reported an association between low-self control with the use of force (akin to the 'weapon/threat use' item of the SVR-20) aspect of offence severity escalation during the commission of sexual violence. However, it should be noted that all of the significant indicators in MacPherson's (2003) study, save for the two indices of cognitive distortions, can be considered as factors representing escalation, not predictors of it. Further, coding for the SVR-20 item 'multiple sex offence type' considers the nature of the sexual violence displayed, in terms of the presence and degree of contact. Thus, higher scores on this item will likely identify contact offenders.

In sum, apart from a small number of studies (e.g., Hazelwood et al., 1989; Lussier et al., 2008), previous work in the area has largely focused on escalation by distinguishing between non-contact and contact offences, and differences between non-escalating and escalating offenders on historical factors such as age, onset of offending, and psychiatric diagnosis (e.g., Hazelwood et al., 1989; MacPherson, 2003; Mair & Stevens, 1994; Stermac & Hall, 1989). The present study sought to expand these lines of inquiry to: a) focus on offence severity escalation within *contact* sexual offences; and b) statistically predict (or more specifically in the present study, postdict) sexual offence escalation across

offenders' sexual offence histories. The specific research questions directed at exploring the statistical predictive ability of specific offence-related variables on escalation are described below.

What has not been made explicit through the majority of research conducted on offence escalation are the potential differences related to the incidence of its occurrence. Offence severity escalation may in fact differ across types of sexual offenders. For example, Stermac and Hall's (1989) subgroup of 'escalators', as opposed to those categorized as non-escalators or first-time offenders, tended to commit serious sexual assaults against adult female strangers. MacPherson (2003) used Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between means on SVR-20 item scores between a small sample (n = 20) of convicted Glaswegian non-contact and contact sexual offence recidivists. A history of progression from non- to contact sexual offending was associated with perpetration of multiple types of sexual offences (e.g., varying victim selection criteria). The particular association noted between escalation and type of offence suggests that mixed offenders, in addition to perpetrating a greater number of offences, may possess an additional propensity to display an increase in violence over their sexual offending careers.

A more comprehensive approach to these offence-relevant factors across offender types will improve our ability to predict who will engage in, and to determine the specific aspects involved in recidivistic sexual offending. We now turn to a consideration of those risk factors previously identified as relevant to sexual recidivism in order of their temporal scientific discovery and clinical usage.

This discussion will begin with a description of historical risk factors, and will then move to the primary focus of the present research - factors that are considered amenable to change and that may provide indications of elevated risk relevant to the offence process. Any differences in offender type that have been explored as related to these risk markers will be noted throughout.

Determination of Factors Relevant to Sexual Offending

As a complex and heterogeneous group of individuals (Marshall, 1996), sexual offenders are likely motivated by a combination of internal and psychological processes and their interactions with interpersonal, environmental features (Ward & Hudson, 1998). Identifying personological factors of the perpetrators and contextual factors in their environments is important for a more complete understanding of why repeat sexual offending occurs and our formulations of risk for further offending. Developments in the area of sexual violence risk prediction, particularly over the last two decades, have contributed greatly to current formulations of risk factors specific to sexual offending (Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Hanson, Scott, & Steffy, 1995). Very generally, risk factors are intuitively or scientifically derived predictors of adverse outcomes. These can include a range of biological factors or life events that when triggered or experienced has a resulting negative impact on the individual (Salekin, 2007). Risk factors can be broadly divided according to their amenability to being altered (Bonta, 1996) into two categories: static and dynamic risk factors.

First, static risk factors consist of factors that are not subject to change: they are fixed variables in an individual's history or are psychological

characteristics of offenders (e.g., age at first offence, abuse history, diagnostic history; Firestone, Bradford, Greenberg, & Serran, 2000; Proeve et al., 2006; Starzyk & Marshall, 2003). Certain features in an individual's static factor profile, however, may in fact have non-stable facets. For instance, there are aspects of certain disorders that display fluctuating, dynamic features. Symptom presentations in an individual's psychiatric disposition are not wholly fixed or stable in their manifestations. Accordingly, *active* psychiatric symptomology (Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Hanson & Harris, 2000) has been identified as a dynamic risk factor for sexual recidivism. As previously mentioned, dynamic factors comprise the second broad category of risk factors, and make unique contributions to risk formulation.

Dynamic risk factors may include relatively stable or enduring features such as antisocial attitudes, interpersonal deficits, and as previously alluded to, symptom features of certain psychopathologies. Unlike static factors, dynamic factors are individual features that are potentially amenable to change (i.e., via targeted treatment efforts). These factors, also referred to as 'criminogenic needs' (Andrews & Bonta, 2003), or 'causal psychological risk factors' (Beech & Ward, 2004), have received less research attention than static factors. Their place in understanding of recidivism, however, is increasingly apparent (Fisher & Beech, 1998; Marshall, Anderson, & Fernandez, 1999). From both a clinical and judicial perspective, dynamic factors are instrumental in formulating assessments of risk and have been found to make significant contributions to the accuracy of risk prediction beyond that achieved by static factors alone (e.g., Beech,

Friendship, Erikson, & Hanson, 2002). Importantly, as their manifestations are often in the form of overt behaviours (e.g., substance use) or tangible situations (e.g., living environment), many have the capacity to be readily observable risk factors for sexual offending than most historical static factors. For the purposes of providing an overview of these factors, they have been assigned to the following broad, non-restrictive, non-exhaustive categories: cognitive, affective, behavioural, environmental/contextual, and interpersonal.

Dynamic Precursors to Sexual Re-Offending

Cognitive Factors

The role of distorted cognitions is widely recognized as an important dimension in the facilitation of sexual offences (Bumby, 1995; Ward, Louden, Hudson, & Marshall, 1995). Models constructed to account for sexual offender recidivism that are based in social cognition theory (see Johnston & Ward, 1996) hold that sexual re-offending is facilitated in part by certain types of schemas, or cognitively constructed frameworks for assimilating information about the world. It is proposed that cognitive information processing structures of this kind are represented by automatic scripts that produce habitual patterns of thought and behaviour. Schemata that are based on socially deviant or offence-relevant cognitions bias information processing in such a way to increase the likelihood of sexual offending (Milner & Webster, 2005).

Offenders may therefore hold implicit theories of their victims that underlie the production of cognitive distortions as a way to explain and predict the world (Ward, 2000; Ward & Keenan, 1999). As defined through the cognitive distortion

hypothesis referred to by Gannon and Polaschek (2006), a prevalent perception is that offenders operate under entrenched and generalized sexual offence-related beliefs that facilitate their offence behaviours. Gannon and Polaschek (2006) describe the research pertaining to cognitive distortions of child molesters in particular (Abel, Gore, Holland, Camp, Becker, & Rathner, 1989; Beech & Mann, 2002, Ward, 2000); however, distorted cognitions have been well-documented for other types of sexual offenders (Mann & Hollin, 2007). Before turning to a discussion of cognitive distortions across types of offenders, it is important to recognize how our knowledge is limited in this area, as made explicit through Gannon and Polaschek's (2006) review of current theory and the empirical research base.

The review draws attention to a number of theoretical and empirical issues that preclude drawing definitive conclusions on the nature, role, and evidence of cognitive distortions in sexual offending. The authors cite large divides between existing theories (e.g., Abel et al., 1984; Ward, 2000; Ward & Keenan, 1999), as well as the lack of a unified theory to guide subsequent empirical study. One of the most significant methodological issues limiting much prior research stems from the use of questionnaires measuring distortions retrospectively with unmatched, known offenders. Out of a number of recommendations for refining the methods by which more direct evidence can be garnered, Gannon and Polaschek suggest the combination of questionnaires with other techniques may yield more promising results. The contributions of some further quantitative and qualitative research will now be discussed.

The set of cognitive and/or attitudinal distortions that potentially enable justification of offending behaviour (Johnston & Ward, 1996; Mann & Hollin, 2001; Ward, Gannon, & Keown, 2006) have been found to differ qualitatively (e.g., Abel et al., 1989; Baxter, Marshall, Barbaree, Davidson, & Malcom, 1984; Hanson, Gizarelli, & Scott, 1994) and quantitatively (Milner & Webster, 2005) across offender type. Mann and Hollin (2001) derived a template for motivational categories through content analysis of 62 offenders' self-reported motivations for offending. After cross-validating the template on a further 100 offenders, they reduced their data to five categories of deviant cognitive schemata that emerged from rapists' explanations for offending: grievance, entitlement, self as victim, control, and disrespect for certain women. Indeed, rapists generally endorse more negative attitudes towards women (Baxter et al., 1984), including what have been referred to as 'suspiciousness of women' (Malamuth & Brown, 1994), and 'hostility/distrust of women' schema (Milner & Webster, 2005).

Similarly, Polaschek and Ward (2002) identified core themes from a number of measures of cognitive distortions and clinical descriptions of sexual offenders. From these, five implicit theories were derived, and have subsequently been cross-validated (Gannon & Polaschek, 2004) through samples of rapists: women are unknowable/ dangerous, women are sex objects, male sex drive is uncontrollable, entitlement, and dangerous world. Implicit theories have also been outlined in relation to child molesters' offence-specific distortions. Employing a method of questionnaire content analyses later adopted by Polaschek and Ward (2002), Ward & Keenan (1999) outlined implicit theories

that emerged from their study of child molesters. The cognitive distortions recorded were subsumed under five category labels: children as sexual objects, entitlement, dangerous world, uncontrollability, and nature of harm (Ward & Keenan, 1999). In sum, although a number of identifiable themes are evidenced in the offence-relevant cognitive distortions in sexual offenders, there are also evident differences across offender categorizations. The function of these distortions as related to offence processes however, may demonstrate relevance regardless of offender type because entrenched beliefs are likely elemental in the precipitation and frequency of sexually intrusive acts (Bickley & Beech, 2002).

Contributions of cognitive distortions to sexual offending have also been noted in terms of difficulties inhibiting deviant schema by those offenders who lack realistic self-management strategies to prevent re-offence (e.g., deviant thought suppression, Johnston, Ward, & Hudson, 1997; compensatory behavioural and interpersonal coping skills, McKibben, Proulx, & Lussier, 2001). Examples of distorted thought-processes have been described by recidivistic sexual offenders in particular. For instance, as compared with sexual offenders who had not recidivated at the time of follow-up, recidivists in Hanson and Harris' (2000) study believed that sexual crimes can be justified, felt a sense of entitlement with regards to expressing their strong sexual drive, and showed little concern for their victims. Furthermore, those who had recidivated tended to view themselves as being at less risk for committing new sexual offences than those who had not recidivated. Overall, the role of anti-social attitudes and other

markers of cognitive distortions in recidivism risk have been acknowledged in the literature and in risk assessments.

Additional cognitive-related aspects of offending have been identified in the form of deviant sexual fantasies (Rokach, 1988). Deviant sexual fantasies have been operationalized to include sexual aggression (Dutton & Newlon, 1988; MacCulloch, Snowden, Wood, & Mills, 1983; Prentky et al., 1989), and sexualizing children (Looman, 1995). Not all research, however, provides consistent indications regarding the effect or existence of sexual fantasy on sexual offenders' behaviours. For instance, of a sample of approximately 200 male sexual offenders (Langevin, Lang, & Curnoe, 1998), a full two thirds (66.7%) did not report any deviant sexual fantasies. The majority did, however, disclose non-deviant adult fantasies. Prior research suggesting a potential relationship between sexual fantasy and sexually aberrant behaviour (e.g., Hazelwood & Warren, 1995; Langevin et al., 1998) has resulted in an increased effort to determine whether sexual fantasy does in fact act as a motivational influence in the commission of sexual violence. Clinically-based indications have proposed that deviant sexual fantasies are elemental in facilitating sexual offending and are important contributors to both the aetiology and dynamics of sexual offending (Deu & Edelmann, 1997; Laws & Marshall, 1990). It has been demonstrated in a small number of studies that deviant sexual fantasies appear to influence the offending process directly, possibly through the provision of a mechanism for rehearsal of premeditated sexually violent behaviours (Deu & Edelmann, 1997; Gee, Devilly, & Ward, 2004). In fact, a number of decades ago,

Abel and Blanchard (1974) called attention to targeting sexual fantasies as a viable means of altering sexual preference and thereby decrease sexual violence. Studies including sexual fantasy have tended to focus on those reported by one type of offender exclusively (in this case, child molesters), or indeed, on sexual offenders as a homogeneous group (Marshall, Barbaree, & Eccles, 1991; Proulx, Pereault, & Ouimet, 1999).

The presence of offence-relevant cognitive distortions may be associated with offence frequency and escalation because distortions may play a role in the maintenance of offending behaviour. Rumination may act as an additional mechanism in this regard as cognitive distortions appear to increase as offending continues (Ward, Hudson, Johnston, & Marshall, 1997), and anger-related rumination has shown a relation with recidivism (Hudson, Wales, Bakker, & Ward, 2002; Thornton, 2002). However, the failure to distinguish between types of offender leaves the existing body of literature restricted in its contribution to how sexual fantasy is associated with sexual offending.

Affective Factors

The contributing role of affective states, as misregulated through affective dyscontrol, has featured prominently in aetiological theorizing of sexual offending (e.g., Hall & Hirschman, 1992; Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Ward & Siegert, 2002). Elevated levels of hostility have been documented in both rapists (Hudson & Ward, 1997; Marshall & Moulden, 2001) and child molesters (Kalichman, 1991) and have been cited as a pre-offence affective states (Proulx et al., 1999) and

related to recidivism (Firestone, Nunes, Moulden, Broom, & Bradford, 2005; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004).

With regard to subjective distress, anxiety and loneliness have also been reported as negative emotions experienced pre-crime (e.g., in extrafamilial child molesters, Proulx et al., 1999). Reports of these negative emotions are consistent with data reported across a number of studies (McKibben, Proulx, & Lusignan, 1994; Pithers, Kashima, Cummings, Beal, & Buell, 1988). Loneliness was the one consistent affective experience across rapists and homosexual and heterosexual pedophiles that was reported to precede overwhelming deviant fantasies and increased masturbatory activity, whereas humiliation was common amongst the former two groups, and anger was specific to the rapist group (Proulx, McKibben, & Lusignan, 1996).

Qualitative differences have also been noted in the types of negative affect reported to follow episodes of interpersonal conflict. Whereas rapists' most commonly stated affect included feelings of rejection (by a woman), feelings of inadequacy, anger, humiliation and loneliness, paedophiles most often reported experiences of loneliness and oppression (McKibben et al., 1994). In summary, it would appear that among both rapists and child molesters, negative emotional states are common precursors to re-offending (Pithers et al., 1988; Pithers, Beal, Armstrong, & Petty, 1989).

The findings reported by McKibben et al. (1994) and Proulx et al. (1996) suggest that negative emotional states may be experienced pre-crime. There is a marked difference between conclusions drawn from such studies examining

emotional ‘states’, and those that have examined ‘trait-based’ measures of emotional dysregulation and recidivism. These latter studies have contributed to the contention that negative affect is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition preceding sexually violent behaviour. Overall, measures of subjective distress (i.e., depression, anxiety, anger, low self-esteem) were unrelated to long-term recidivism in Hanson and Bussière’s (1998) meta-analysis. In an evaluation of child molesters who had undertaken a correctional treatment programme in New Zealand, Hudson et al. (2002) did not find pre- to post-treatment change scores on affect-related scales (assessing depression, anxiety, and aspects of anger) to be significantly related with re-offence at two years post-release. However, trend-level associations were evident between *reductions* in trait anger and *increases* in suppressed anger at post-treatment with lower recidivism rates. The authors suggest that generalized, yet suppressed, anger may leave an individual more susceptible to re-offend when in the presence of additional offence triggers. For instance, in sexual offenders certain affective states can increase the difficulty of altering pre-existing cognitive scripts and ignoring desires for sexual contact. Ward and Hudson (2000), in providing a conceptual account of offenders’ decision-making, note that experiencing stress or depression can compromise an individual’s control of cognitive processes. Further clarification of the influence of various affective states in combination with offence-related patterns of thought and behaviour will inform the study and practice of recidivism prediction.

Behavioural Factors

There are a number of behaviours that have been observed to occur prior to the perpetration of a sexual offence. Behavioural indications of re-offence in particular would have the most practical implications for police surveillance teams who do not interact with the individuals in question. Overt behaviours are readily identifiable, and do not necessitate knowledge of an offenders' history, current situation, or insight into their implicit cognitive schemata, for instance.

As opposed to purely opportunistic offending, it is commonly reported that offenders often construct offence opportunities (Craven, Brown, & Gilchrist, 2006) by actively creating or seeking out sources or locations for potential victims (Hanson & Harris, 2000). Indications of both overt and covert offence-planning strategies in this regard come from patterns of behaviours displayed among certain types of offenders. Grooming is one such example that arises from literature on child molesters' strategies for gaining access to a potential victim. Grooming can involve various processes initiated by the offender towards a target, including self-grooming (i.e., justification and denial of offending behaviour), grooming the environment and significant others (i.e., ingratiating oneself to a parent, or into a child-abundant community), and grooming of the child (i.e., physical: desensitizing to sexual touching, and/or psychological: building trust; Craven et al., 2006). All of these processes represent the creation of an offence opportunity.

Akin to the planning strategies seen in a rapist's offence process, any offence planning can be distal (long-term grooming techniques) or proximal

(observing a lone woman on the street). Further, they can be overtly acknowledged via risk/benefit analysis of offending, or covertly concealed through a seemingly irrelevant decision (e.g., a child molester crossing the street at the boundary of a school zone; Ward & Hudson, 1998). Either way, a high-offence risk situation is likely to be constructed.

Alcohol use as a behaviour relevant to sexual offending has been observed in a number of (Elliott, 1994; Langevin & Lang, 1990; Marshall, 1996; Sasse, 2005), but not all (Hanson & Bussière, 1996) studies of sexual offenders or sexual offence recidivism, and may reflect deeper underlying substance abuse issues. Sexual offenders experience significantly more alcohol-related problems as identified through screening measures for severe drinking problems than non-sexual offenders (Abracen, Looman, Di Fazio, Kelly, & Stirpe, 2006). Almost half of a sample of Canadian rapists (45.8%) and child molesters (41.2%) attending a sexual offender treatment program reported severe alcohol abuse (Abracen, Looman, & Anderson, 2000), consistent with the overall rate of 50% reported by Langevin and Lang (1990). In both of these studies, a smaller proportion of the sexual offenders reported a drug use problem (Abracen et al., 2000; Langevin & Lang, 1990), although differences in problem severity have been noted across offender type. Rapists were found to have significantly higher lifetime drug abuse scores than child molesters on a measure assessing severity of drug abuse (Abracen et al., 2006). The general trend for alcohol to be more prevalent than drug use in offenders has been explained through alcohol's association with

negative emotionality (McGue, Slutske, & Iacono, 1999). It may thereby serve as a proximal disinhibitor through facilitating the expression of sexual violence.

The reinforcing interplay between deviant sexual fantasy and masturbatory activity, identified here as another behaviour with potential relevance in the offence process, has been reported across a number of studies (Laws & Marshall, 1990; Laws & O'Neil, 1981; McGuire, Carlisle, & Young, 1965), and may be a factor that precedes the commission of sexual violence. The use and impact of pornographic materials as an intervening factor between fantasy and behaviour, however, has yielded inconsistent results in the aggregate. Estimates of pornography use in the range of 10 to 25% in one offender sample (Proulx et al., 1999), and 53% in another (Marshall, 1988), demonstrate variability in the reported use of pornography prior to offending, but may instead reflect differences in offender type across studies (i.e., child molesters in the former versus rapists in the latter). Indeed, the use of pornography appears to be a frequent occurrence among rapists (Carter, Prentky, Knight, Vanderveer, & Boucher, 1987), more so than among child molesters (Pithers et al., 1988). It may act as an antecedent to sexual violence, serving to condone aggression, increase sexual arousal (Carter et al. 1987), and thereby show relevance as a proximal disinhibitor (Ward, Hudson, & McCormack, 1997). Establishment of a causal link has been unsuccessful. However, there is a general consensus among researchers for the disinhibiting effect of extensive exposure to pornographic material (Bensimon, 2007). Additionally, after reviewing the literature, Seto and colleagues (2000) contended that the place of

pornography use in the aetiology of sexual offending is ambiguous; however, exposure to such materials may trigger re-offence in those with a pre-existing disposition for sexual aggression. The idea that pornography has a facilitative role in sexual offending was challenged in a review produced by Ferguson and Hartely (2009). These authors suggest that any link between pornography use and increased sexual assault behaviour has been exaggerated by political and social groups, and conclude the time has come for the causal hypothesis to be discarded. In sum, behavioural precursors to sexual offending provide overt indicators of risk and despite some currently ambiguous evidence for their presence across offenders should not be discounted as potential risk markers.

Environmental/Contextual Factors

The identification of specific situational and environmental influences on the perpetration of violence has been largely overlooked (e.g., Loza, 2003). However, 'contextual antecedents to violence' was one of four factor categories (along with dispositional, historical, and clinical) that Beech and colleagues (2003) delineated through their conceptualization of a complete sexual offence risk assessment. Previous research has pointed to certain social environmental features (e.g., 'criminogenic' neighbourhoods – typified by a proliferation of drugs, weapons, and criminal associates) as increasing the risk for anti-social, aggressive behaviour (Hodgins, 2002).

A substantial number of sexual offenders are placed in socially disorganized communities upon release from custody (Mustaine, Tewksbury, & Stengel, 2006; Tewksbury, 2007; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2008). Community

placements for registered sexual offenders tend to be located in areas with fewer economic opportunities, and communities in which there are fewer relationships and interactions between residents (Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2008; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2006; Walker, Golden, & VanHouten, 2001). As a result of the convergence of employment, housing, and friendship formation problems often experienced by registered sexual offenders, there may be an increased potential for activation of offence-related goals (Levenson & Cotter, 2006; Levenson & Hern, 2007; Mustaine et al., 2006). Living in areas where suitable targets and a lack of social 'guardians', or watchdogs (Cohen & Felson, 1979) are present, in addition to the stresses of discrimination, may contribute to the motivation to reoffend.

Mustaine and Tewksbury (2009) stress the importance of context in the activation of motivation to offend, in that community characteristics may introduce opportunities for potential offenders' access to consumable materials and resources that may trigger offending. Mustaine and Tewksbury (2009) tested the hypothesis that the presence of community temptations (e.g., factors that may serve as triggers to offending) may transform potential offenders (as defined by the presence of registered sexual offenders) into motivated offenders as evidenced through higher rates of sexual victimization in the greater Louisville, Kentucky area. The authors concluded that the presence of community structures such as bars, liquor stores, and strip clubs did not consistently act as transformative features of the environment. For example, the presence of bars and the presence of liquor stores were associated with higher and lower rates of

victimization, respectively. The existence of sexually oriented businesses was not significantly associated with rates of reported victimization. Patterns such as these leave the role of contextual factors in the offence process rather undefined.

The role of environmental/contextual factors in the offence process has received recognition through a limited amount of empirical work (e.g., Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2009) and appears in theoretical conceptualizations (Finkelhor, 1984; Marshall & Barbaree, 1990), but little is known about its specific role in the offence process. The sexual offending literature has largely ignored the role of situational factors, preferring instead to focus on innate characteristics that may serve to drive offending behaviours. For instance, adverse family environments have been posited as contributors to sexual offending (Marshall, 1993), but the role of this contextual factor has been considered only indirectly because the foci in these types of inquiry has been largely on the context of the family environment as it may give rise to interpersonal features, such as insecure attachment styles. The role of interpersonal factors will be the final domain of risk factors considered.

Interpersonal Factors

Given that a sexual offence is an extreme interpersonal violation, it is not surprising that sexual offenders often evidence deficits in key interpersonal domains. Interpersonal skills deficits have been considered a clinically-relevant issue in self-imposed social isolation in sexual offenders, as well as their reduced capacity to form appropriate, and their propensity to form inappropriate relationships (Abel, Blanchard, & Becker, 1978; Fisher & Howells, 1993;

Marshall, 1979). The results from a preliminary investigation comparing UK sexual offender and student samples suggest an association between offenders' diminished capacities to form relationships with others and their tendency towards sexual offending (Marshall, Anderson, & Champagne, 1997). This type of association has also been found through the difficulties high deviancy offenders have in their ability to form intimate adult attachments (Fisher, Beech, & Browne, 1999). Instead of producing a diminished capacity for intimacy, insecure attachment may leave the individual unable to meet these needs, resulting in chronic loneliness, a fear of interpersonal rejection expressed through avoidance, and the use of sex as a compensatory measure for needs-fulfillment (Marshall, 1993). As explicated in the section on affective factors, emotional loneliness can play a pivotal role in the life of sexual offenders, and may therefore affect subsequent expressions of sexually violent behaviours. As noted by Marshall (1993) "emotional loneliness sets the stage for aggression and self-serving behaviours that treat others as objects to serve the needs of whoever is willing to abuse them" (p. 114).

Lines of inquiry have been produced in an effort to explicate the role of social bonds as related to recidivistic outcomes in sexual offenders. Amongst sexual offence probationers in the U.S., Hepburn and Griffin (2004) found positive social support from family and friends (as well as full-time employment) significantly predicted longer periods to probation failure, technical violations, or a new criminal offence. A meta-analytic study of offence-related static variables also found that recidivism rates were higher in offenders who had not had an

intimate relationship with an age-appropriate partner (Hanson & Bussière, 1998). In Hanson and Morton-Bourgon's (2005) meta-analysis of dynamic risk factors, only two of the measures included in relation to intimacy deficits (as defined across studies as poor social skills, negative social influences, conflicts in intimate relationships, emotional identification with children, and loneliness) were found to predict re-offence. Conflicts with intimate partners and emotional identification with children emerged as being among the more important predictor variables overall for sexual offence recidivism (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005). Research specific to rapists and child molesters has further delineated the presence of interpersonal conflicts as related to rapists (e.g., McKibben et al., 1994), and identification with children as related to child molesters (Schwartz & Masters, 1985).

Factors Proximal to the Offence Process

We undoubtedly have a substantial understanding of historical risk factors such as antisocial orientation, deviant sexual interests, previous offending, and relationship history, in the sense that they are related to an individual's propensity for, and likelihood of future offence perpetration (e.g., Craig, Browne, Stringer, & Beech, 2005; Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005; Langström & Grann, 2000; Rice, Harris, & Quinsey, 1990; Serin et al., 2001). These risk factors may be useful to predict shorter times to recidivate (i.e., would be significant in survival analyses). They do not, however, inform predictions of the timing of re-offence, nor can they be used to determine whether a meaningful reduction in the probability of re-offence has occurred (i.e.,

as resulting from intervention efforts). Towards this end, a recent distinction has been made in terms of conceptualizing dynamic factors in terms of potential rates of change. Stable dynamic factors that relate to psychological and personality characteristics of an offender may be amenable to gradual change over time. These have been distinguished from acute dynamic factors that may change more rapidly (e.g., over days or hours). Acute dynamic factors have been described as characteristics of an offender's current state or immediate circumstances, and appear relevant in the temporal period directly preceding re-offence (Grubin, 2007). These include active or fluctuating experiences such as negative mood states, substance intoxication, sexual rumination, increased hostility, and breakdown of an intimate relationship. The nature of the offence-relevant factors comprising this category have led to their recognition as risk 'markers' for offending, as they may be state expressions of underlying traits (i.e., as represented through the relevant static and stable dynamic factors; Ward & Beech, 2004). Yet until systematic data on the nature of change in these factors accumulates, the distinction between stable and acute factors remains hypothetical at best (Douglas & Skeem, 2005).

What should be clear through the preceding review is that great strides have been made in terms of identifying and defining risk factors, but that we do not yet fully understand the various antecedent processes and variables directly preceding the commission of sexual violence. Difficulties in identifying risk markers overall may provide one indication as to why there is a relatively limited accumulation of empirically-based research concerning dynamic markers of risk.

Previous file-based research (Proeve et al., 2006) in particular has acknowledged inherent limitations in terms of recording dynamic markers present in the process of re-offending. Despite the need for conceptual clarity, pre-offence changes in cognition, affect, and behaviour do have practical utility for indicating states of increased risk.

The practical payoffs gained through identifying changeable aspects of risk are significant, as Douglas and Skeem noted in their comprehensive 2005 review of dynamic factors in violence risk assessment,

> "First, with an improved ability to assess change in violence potential over time, clinicians could make more informed decisions about when intervention was needed to reduce acute exacerbations of risk, how much individuals had responded to treatment, and whether levels of supervision should be modified. Second, with empirically supported methods for targeting changeable aspects of violence risk, clinicians could better judge when to intervene to reduce risk. These payoffs would be most pronounced in the context of treating high-risk (status) individuals in the community, where effective risk monitoring and risk reduction could prevent a large proportion of violent incidents from occurring." (p. 349).

A relatively small number of studies have examined risk markers indicative of more imminent sexual offence recidivism (as opposed to level of risk for any future sexual offending), thus providing preliminary indications of the importance of variables across cognitive, affective, behavioural, contextual, and interpersonal domains (e.g., Craig, Browne, & Stringer, 2003; Harris & Hanson, 2000; Proulx et

al., 1999). There are a few studies that have been able to identify factors that appear relevant pre-offence. Proulx et al.'s (1999) file-based study included an investigation of 'disinhibitors' that were present during the 12-hour period prior to sexual offending involving an extrafamilial child. Use of illicit substances (alcohol, 18.2%, drugs, 13.6%), pornography use (25.0%), deviant sexual fantasies (34.1%), and activation of cognitive distortions (victim consent, 22.7%; victim requests, 13.6%; victim provocation, 9.1%; victim sexual education, 6.8%) were all noted in the period directly preceding sexual offending. Proulx et al.'s study makes important contributions to offence-relevant process factors, however, conclusions must be tempered by the lack of a comparison group and the focus on only one type of offender (i.e., extrafamilial child molesters).

A substantial quantity of information regarding proximal offence factors has arisen through a comparison of pre-offence behaviours between recidivists and non-recidivists. The Canadian study by Hanson and Harris in 2000 was conducted in an effort to redress the need to identify dynamic factors through recognition that previous meta-analytic work in the area (e.g., Hanson & Bussière, 1998) had not accounted for the more acute antecedent offence process factors. Unlike many prior investigations of offence process factors, Hanson and Harris examined a number of proximal offence antecedents across various internal and contextual domains. Offence process information for offenders under community supervision was collected from parole officer interviews and offender file reviews at six- and one-month time intervals prior to the retrospective identification of a re-offence. Importantly, all recidivists included

in the sample had re-offended with a *sexual* offence (but including non-contact offences) and were matched with a non-recidivist in the same geographic region. Therefore, non-recidivists were those offenders also under community supervision, but were not found to have sexually re-offended across a minimum six month period. On average, most of the recidivists re-offended within 15 months, whereas the non-recidivists had remained in the community for 24 months offence-free. Recidivist (*n* = 208) and non-recidivist (*n* = 201) groups were comprised of equal numbers of rapists and child molesters. In terms of cognitive and affective dynamic risk factors exhibited prior to re-offence, recidivists displayed heightened anger and subjective distress (referred to thereafter as 'decline in overall mood') significantly more so than did the non-recidivists during their supervisory period. Self-report deviant sexual fantasies were also more prominent in the recidivist group of offenders.

The set of findings related to proximal offence process factors among sexual recidivists as reported by Hanson and Harris (2000) is largely intuitive when considering a group that is also likely to hold strong antisocial attitudes and to resist personal change (Andrews & Bonta, 1994; Mann & Beech, 2003). In terms of behaviours noted in Harris and Hanson's study (2000), the recidivistic sexual offenders' compliance with supervision often deteriorated just before re-offending, and their community supervision officers reported that those who went on to re-offend were more likely to become disengaged, absent, or generally uncooperative over the course of supervision (Harris & Hanson, 2000). Those who exhibited deteriorating behaviour over the course of their supervision orders

(and subsequently re-offended) were also more likely to abuse drugs and/or alcohol, and to increase their substance use. The concordance of recidivism and substance use among sexual offenders is consistent with previous findings with rapists in particular (Earls et al., 1989, Pithers et al., 1988), and heterogeneous sexual offender samples more generally (e.g., incarcerated high-risk offenders; Abracen et al., 2006; community-based probationers; Hepburn & Griffin, 2004). The recidivists also took fewer precautions to avoid high-risk situations through which victim encounter was likely. Recidivists were also more likely to be in the company of more negative social influences prior to re-offending (Harris & Hanson, 2000). In addition, they more often engaged in socially deviant sexual activities such as the use of prostitutes. Procurement of prostitutes was a predictive factor for victim age crossover (i.e., for the offender to be characterized by the mixed offender typology) among imprisoned sexual offenders in the U.S. (Ahlmeyer & Simons, 2002), but further specification with regard to this particular offender type was not possible through Hanson and Harris's study as they did not delineate a mixed offender group.

Hanson and Harris also made comparisons between recidivists and non-recidivists on a number of environmental dynamic risk factors. The recidivists were more likely to have resided in a more uncontrolled release environment (e.g., access to victims and illicit substances), and to be more frequently unemployed (Hanson & Harris, 2000). Meloy (2005) also found that sexual offenders with stable residency had lower rates of re-arrest while on probation. The presence or absence of specific environmental features can have an impact

on an offender's current state of risk. As Beech et al. (2003) suggest, even the high-risk offender does not operate at a consistent (i.e., maximal) risk at all times; rather, his risk will fluctuate as determined by aspects of his proximal environment. The authors provide the example of a child molester posing little risk for offending in a child-free environment. Contributions of the immediate environment on the offence process have also been recognized through criminological theory. For instance, theorists have posited that certain environmental characteristics may provide encouragement to sexually offend, or sanction sexual offending (Wortley & Smallbone, 2006).

In terms of the interpersonal domain, when comparing intimacy problems between the recidivists and non-recidivists, those in the former group have evidenced this feature proximal to re-offending more frequently than those in the latter (Hanson & Harris, 2000), supporting indications from the extant literature (e.g., Marshall et al., 1997). Although any one feature may be an important risk factor in offending, it is unlikely that it would yield optimal predictive value in isolation from one another, or from a combination of other dynamic processes that characterize an offender (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2009). As identified in a number of meta-analyses (e.g., Hanson & Bussière, 1998, Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004), the relationship between any single risk factor and recidivism is small; therefore, it is incumbent upon evaluators to include a range of risk factors in a comprehensive evaluation (Beech et al., 2003; McGuire, 2000).

The Sexual Re-offence Process

The supposition that some combination of cognitive, affective, behavioural, contextual, and interpersonal variables contributes to an offender's re-offence process, or 'cycling', through patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours towards relapse has largely arisen from clinical experience and insight (Laws, 1989; Ward et al., 1995). This view that the offence process is an identifiable and cyclical (i.e., repetitive across re-offence periods) aggregation or 'build up' of various internal processes and external circumstances lacks an empirical basis, yet has been adopted by many criminal justice agencies for use in developing offender management strategies to provide indications of imminent re-offence. Indeed, criminal investigators use any relevant offender information they can amass to construct the most probable offence process for a particular offender. The following is an example of the offence process, or a 'behavioural progression' as constructed by criminal investigators:

"Feelings of rejection and abandonment → frustration with inability to do something → feeling like a loser → masturbates → finds a woman to masturbate in front of → feeling rejected and vengeful → woman rejects advances → steals a bike/car → stalks a new victim → proceeds with sexual offence" (Logan, Piche, & Schweighofer, 2007).

As mentioned, police are often left to rely on incomplete information from which to construct their version of the offence process for a particular offender. Many potential benefits stand to be gained from the provision of a strong empirical and theoretical base from which criminal justice professionals could

tailor their investigative and management strategies. In the extant research, factors associated with (re-)offence have largely been studied individually, or together with variables bearing categorical similarity to each other (e.g., interpersonal features such as interpersonal hostility, relationship problems, etc). In contrast, it appears that factors across a number of the broader domains (e.g., identified by Hanson and Harris [2000]: having a sense of sexual entitlement, viewing oneself as being at no risk for recidivating, and having poor social influences) are among the best predictor variables of recidivism. Indeed, evidence from the addictions field indicated that negative emotions, interpersonal conflict, and social pressure were three high-risk situations that constituted almost three-quarters of relapse episodes into various types of repeat, addictive behaviours (Marlatt & Gordon, 1985). In an examination of relationships between emotional states and particular features of deviant sexual behaviours, McKibben et al. (1994) conducted a study with 22 sexual offenders on secondment from prison to a psychiatric hospital for treatment. The researchers employed a self-assessment method for the offenders to record affective components (mood state), sexual fantasy, interpersonal conflicts, and sexual behaviours occurring during the past two days. For rapists, all of these variables were significantly related and suggest that the experience of interpersonal conflicts, negative mood, deviant sexual fantasies, and masturbatory activities all coincided to some degree in the study's two-day time frame. In fact, "when conflicts and negative moods were absent, deviant fantasies either did not occur or were not overwhelming and they were not associated with masturbatory activities" (p.

573). For the paedophiles, a less complicated association was evidenced in that significant relationships were found only between negative mood and deviant sexual fantasies, but not among these two variables and interpersonal conflict. This set of findings is indicative of a complex interplay of numerous factors related to negative mood, deviant sexual fantasizing, and deviant sexual behaviour displayed across offender type.

Across a number of studies, reported experiences of stress and anger have preceded deviant sexual fantasies and the commission of a sexual re-offence (Hanson & Harris, 2000; Proulx et al., 1996). Sexual offences have also been noted to occur following incidents of rejection by adults, disappointment, or pronounced loneliness (Beech & Ward, 2004). There is also a probable interplay of internal (i.e., cognitive) processes in terms of setting up high-risk situations for offending (e.g., entering areas in which victim encounter is likely; Ward & Hudson, 2000). The preceding set of findings is indicative of the interplay between cognition (e.g., fantasizing) and affect (e.g., negative mood state) with behavioural expression (e.g., masturbation) specific to different types of sexual offenders; however, it is unknown as to whether these aspects would feature prominently, or consistently, as antecedents to an intrusive act of sexual violence.

Theoretical Models of the Offence Process

That a convergence of factors in the offence process is central to the initiation of sexual aggression is consistent with a number of different theories of sexual offending (e.g., Malamuth, Heavey, & Linz, 1993; Ward & Siegert, 2002).

Overall, these explanatory theories describe a process involving internal factors, behavioural expressions, and contextual features that must be present for a sexual offence to occur. Until recently, however, there has been an identifiable need for a more comprehensive and integrated description of the cognitive, behavioural, motivational, and contextual factors associated with the commission of sexual offences than has been previously stipulated by models that underlie the majority of treatment programs (Laws et al., 2000) instituted in North America (Marshall, 1999) and the UK (Grubin & Thornton, 1994; Spencer, 1999). The most influential of these models to date is the 'Self-regulation model' constructed by Ward and Hudson (1998).

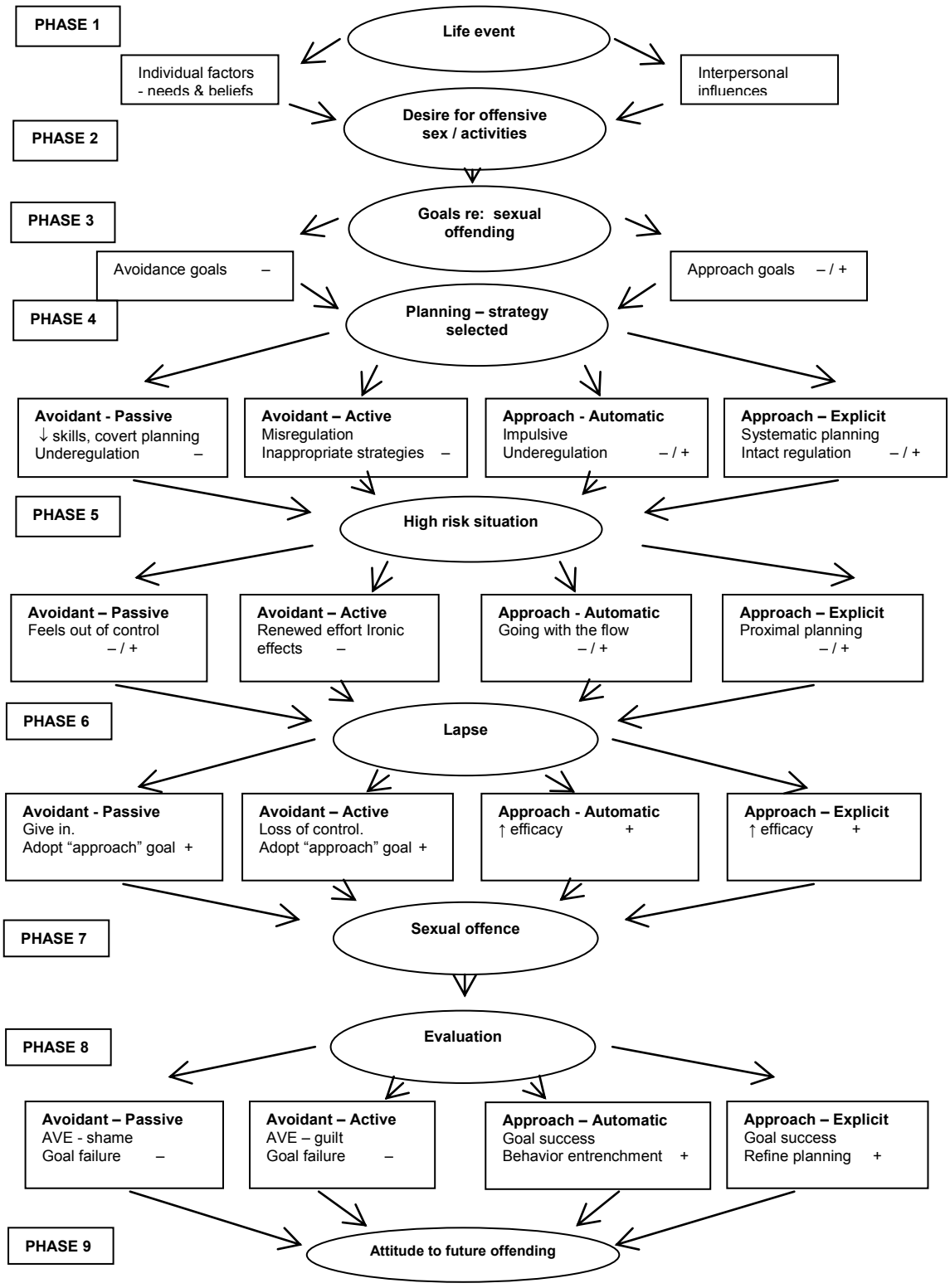
Ward and Hudson's model of the offence process draws upon extant theory that specifically posits an interplay of factors across various domains, while also taking into account the contributions of our internal self-regulation (i.e., internal and external processes that direct goal-specific actions over time and context; Ward et al., 1995). From the perspective of self-regulation theory, individuals' internal and external processes are regulated by an internal control system (Ford, 1987) that permits goal-directed actions to be undertaken across time and context (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996; Karoly, 1993). For sexual offenders in particular, reasoning suggests that not only must the opportunity for offending be created and the motivation present, but inhibitors to sexual offending must be reduced through negative affective states such as anger and hostility, or the activation of offence-supportive cognitive distortions (Finkelhor, 1984; Hall & Hirschman, 1992). Difficulties in self-regulation for the sexual

offender arise out of an inability to manage mood states effectively, and are typically characterized by deviant sexual interests, sexual preoccupation, and distorted sexual attitudes. These personological features are often coupled with an inability to utilize social supports, and result in the use of sex as a coping strategy (Hanson & Harris, 2001; Thornton, 2002).

Ward and Hudson used grounded theory analysis (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), an inductive strategy to obtain a model describing a particular phenomenon that codes concepts derived from qualitative descriptions into categories through an iterative process until model saturation is achieved (Hudson, Ward, & McCormack, 1999). Through their qualitative methodological approach, these authors were able to combine extant sexual offender research with theory related to self-regulation processes, and incorporate aspects of their earlier descriptive model of the offence process (Ward et al., 1995) based on data derived from sexual offender experience. As alluded to earlier, the self-regulation offence process model assumes that relapse does not occur unexpectedly; rather, it is a part of an unfolding sequence of internal (i.e., cognitive) and external (i.e., behavioural) events over time (Polaschek, Hudson, Ward, & Siegert, 2001). Through its inclusion of explicit temporal factors, the model accounts for the dynamic nature of the offence process by focusing on proximal causes of offending (Ward & Hudson, 1998) and by incorporating many of the aforementioned dynamic risk factors. The most recent iteration of the self-regulation model specified by Ward and Hudson (2000) includes nine distinct, proximal phases contained in the offence process (i.e., life event, desire for

deviant sex or activity, offence-related goals established, strategy selected, high-risk situation entered, lapse, sexual offence, post-offence evaluation, attitude toward future offending). The model posits four offence pathways through the phases that classify offenders according to motivational and behavioural goal-directed strategies (avoidant-passive, avoidant-active, approach-automatic or approach-explicit). The phases and pathways will now be described in more detail (also refer to Figure 1 for an illustrative representation).

Figure 1 Self-Regulation Model of the Relapse Process (Ward & Hudson, 1998)



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The Self-regulation model as posited by Ward and Hudson (1998, 2000) identifies nine distinct phases associated with sexual offenders' contextual, psychological, and behavioural progression to their commission of a sexually violent act. In Phase 1 (Life Event), a life event is experienced and subsequently appraised by the abstinent individual as significant, in that it unconsciously activates some form of distorted cognitive schema that produces habitual patterns of thoughts and emotions. A child molester's sudden re-initiation of contact with children, for example, may evoke positive emotions and offence-related memories, whereas a rapist's argument with an intimate partner may culminate in feelings of humiliation and ruminations on anger. Phase 2 (Desire for Deviant Sex or Activity) sees the acquisition of an explicit desire for sexual activity as a result of the positive or negative evaluation of the life event. The offender may fantasize about his own unique desires, which may in turn lead to an overall lowering of inhibitions. Priming of behavioural scripts (i.e., offence-related behaviours) may occur automatically during this stage. Offence-related goals are established in Phase 3 (Offence-related Goals Established), wherein a more explicit consideration of the desire to offend is undertaken. The offender may wish to avoid re-offending and struggle to control or inhibit negative emotions produced by offence-related thoughts, or may be determined to offend in order to maintain the current positive affect state. In Phase 4 (Strategy Selected), an offence-related strategy is chosen either as a result of automatic cognitive processes or from explicit decision-making. In either case, an offender may choose to ignore or passively deal with his offending desire, or may chose a

more active route to seek or create opportunities to offend. The next phase in which a 'High-risk Situation [is] Entered', Phase 5, the offender is brought into contact with the future victim of the sexual act as a result of the passive or active strategy selected in the previous phase. A behavioural 'Lapse' occurs to denote transition into Phase 6, where the prospect of sexual gratification leads to an offence-related behaviour (e.g., attempts to entice an adult female into sexual acts, engaging in wrestling games with a child) and signals what is to be the immediate precursor to the sexual offence. Phase 7 (Sexual Offence) constitutes the act of sexual aggression itself, wherein a sexually deviant act takes place.

Phase 8 is the first of two post-offence stages. The 'Post-offence Evaluation' process sees the offender assess the expression of his sexual behaviour in Phase 7. At this time, offenders may feel shame, guilt, and failure, and thus evaluate themselves negatively. Others may interpret their own behaviours as 'successful' attainment of a desired goal, and accordingly, experience positive affect upon reflection. In the final phase, Phase 9 (Attitude Toward Future Offending), the interpretation of events on future offending intentions influences subsequent intentions to re-offend through inhibitory or acquisitional goal (re-) formulation. At this stage, cognitive and behavioural scripts may be strengthened, especially in the case where the sexual offence is viewed as a successful undertaking. Offence strategies may also be refined (i.e., to reflect learning over the course of the offence process, which could be in terms of better victim acquisition strategies), or resolution to desist from future deviant acts confirmed. Formation of offence-related goals and adoption of a strategy

towards offending as an individual progresses through each of these phases is the subject of the 'pathways' aspect of the model.

Ward and Hudson (1998) proposed four pathways through the phases of the sexual offence process. These four pathways are defined by two pathways characterized by acquisitional or inhibitory offence-related goals. This first goal-related dimension categorizes offenders according to their 'approach' or 'avoidance' goals, both of which arise from a desire to engage in sexually deviant activity (Bickley & Beech, 2002). Approach goals include the intention to achieve a desired state or outcome, whereas avoidant goals include the intention to control or avoid a particular state or situation (Cochran & Tesser, 1996).

The second pathway dimension within each goal type is determined by whether the offender is characterized by an 'Active/Explicit' or 'Passive/ Automatic' self-regulatory style. In this view, self-regulation is determined through the offenders' strategy for goal-attainment, be it approach or avoidance. An active self-regulation style typically includes explicit decision-making and active employment of strategies and behaviours with regard to achieving the desired goal. In the case where approach goals are adopted, the desire to engage in sexually intrusive behaviour is exhibited through the use of explicit plans and procedures to carry out deviant acts. Intact self-regulation allows the offender to delay gratification and manage impulses in such a way to best achieve their goal. If an avoidant goal is selected, attempts are made to control offence-related thoughts and associated behaviours. However, the attempts made are

ineffective, and a misregulation of strategies increases the likelihood of perpetrating a sexually deviant act.

In contrast to active self-regulation, a passive style would see an automatic or habitual strategy selection process, likely based in routinized behavioural scripts (Ward & Hudson, 1998). This style, in combination with an approach goal, would be displayed as the disinhibited use of over-learned sexually deviant behavioural scripts that are consistent with sexual offending and thus facilitate the offence process when an offence-congruent situation arises (i.e., there may be only rudimentary planning and behaviour would therefore be largely impulsive – 'planned impulsiveness'; Pithers, 1990). If an avoidant goal is held, the underregulation of attempts to prevent undesired behaviours (i.e., sexually deviant acts) leads to an unfortunate consequence of 'seemingly irrelevant decisions' where an opportunity to offend is actually constructed.

By way of an illustrative example, the Avoidant-Active offender may function relatively well, but his offence process may be triggered upon losing his employment, and ruminating over past injustices. At the same time he thinks about pleasurable feelings derived from a prior sexual offence. In order to eradicate these thoughts, he decides to relax through alcohol consumption and masturbation, but instead the thoughts increase. While driving a female co-worker home one night, he makes unreciprocated sexual advances, which escalates to sexual assault, and feelings of remorse ensue, leading to a resolution of abstinence. Thus, the Avoidant-Active offender is typified by

misregulation through the use of direct, but counterproductive strategies in attempts to control deviant thoughts.

The Avoidant-Passive offender may present as socially awkward around women and/or adults in general, and after an interpersonal conflict feels rejected, and upon fantasizing about a young female neighbour, is not able to ignore these intrusive cognitions. He is working in his yard outside when the neighbour appears and he suggests they watch a movie, during which he is overcome with desire and sexually assaults the girl. He feels ashamed and is determined not to re-offend in the future. Thus, the Avoidant-Passive offender is an under-regulated individual who has a desire to avoid sexual offending but lacks the coping skills to prevent it from happening.

The Approach-Explicit offender's process appears quite different from those typified in the Avoidant pathways. This individual may experience a negative life event or feel lonely, and console himself with thoughts of forming a relationship with a woman. After a few unsuccessful date offers, he observes a lone female entering a parking garage, follows suit, and sexually assaults her as she gets into her car. He feels happy to have had female contact, and decides to go back to the bar the next night. For this offender, it is clear that intact self-regulation allows for execution of sexual offending goals through carefully considered planning strategies.

Finally, like the Avoidant-Passive offender, the Approach- Automatic offender is also under-regulated, but the desire to offend is solidified as a goal. Thus, it would be probable to see this offender as someone who is desirous of

deviant sexual contact, and after a period of loneliness is happy to see a friend's young daughter making 'sexual advances' by wanting to sit in his lap. He then takes this opportunity to reciprocate, touches the girl under her clothes, and reflects positively on the experience as both getting what they wanted. In this pathway, the characteristic offender employs over-learned sexual scripts in the commission of impulsive, poorly planned sexually intrusive acts. (note: the preceding were adapted from the case examples provided in the Self-regulation model manual; Ward, Bickley, Webster, Fisher, Beech, & Eldridge, 2004).

A strength of the Self-regulation model is in its articulation of differing goals associated with perpetrating sexually violent behaviours (Ward & Hudson, 1998). Differences across types of offenders have been previously noted in internal and external motives for offending (Felson, 1993; Scully & Marolla, 1984); however, offender type as largely been neglected in determinations of offence pathway. Consequently, little is known about differences in Approach/Avoidance and Passive/Active pathways across offender types. As the model was originally developed for offending processes relevant to child molesters, it will be possible to evaluate whether the offence pathways can account for the heterogeneous nature of sexual offending (i.e., if the pathways are able to accommodate different offender types). Indications through prior research point to the likelihood of the Approach goal pathway to be populated by sexual offenders more indiscriminate in victim selection (e.g., intra- and extrafamilial offenders; Bickley & Beech, 2002), however, only one known study

has examined pathway characterizations of mixed offenders (Yates & Kingston, 2006), which was also investigated in the present investigation.

Contributions of the Self-Regulation Offence Process Model

As outlined above, the Ward and Hudson model is an integrated theory of sexual offending goals, offender self-regulation styles, and pathways to re-offence. Delineation of the stages of the offence process has contributed to the overall conceptualization and understanding of pertinent factors and the relevance of offender differences in sexually violent acts. As mentioned, the current self-regulation model incorporates theoretical (Ward et al., 1995) and empirical (Marshall, 1996) evidence for the existence of multiple pathways to sexual offending. Thematic analyses of different types of offenders' self-report motivation for offending have revealed differing reasons that justify and excuse sexually intrusive acts (Felson, 1993; Scully & Marolla, 1984). The Self-regulation model was therefore constructed on empirical evidence (Hudson et al., 1999) indicating that prior offence process models (e.g., Marlatt & Gordon, 1985; Pithers, 1990) did not account for the existence of diverse motivational and behavioural pathways to re-offending.

There are both theoretical (Laws, 1989; Pithers, 1990) and empirical (e.g., McKibben et al., 1994) bases on which previous treatment models had delineated a single negative affect route to re-offence (e.g., characterized by depression, hopelessness, guilt); however, further exploration into offence descriptions revealed that a unidimensional affective approach to sexual offending was unable to account for diverse affective precipitants to re-offence

(Ward et al., 1995). Accordingly, the authors of the Self-regulation model included pathways based on approach paradigms that had not previously been considered in descriptions of the offence process (e.g., Pithers, 1990). Specifically, inclusion of positive as well as negative emotive pathways in the offending process (as indicated by the plus [+] and minus [-] signs in the illustrative representation provided as an in-text figure) additionally allows for sexual offending to arise from approach goals (e.g., via positive reinforcement) and positive affective states.

Moreover, the offence process model was constructed around offenders' accounts of distinctions they make in terms of proximal and distal, sexual and nonsexual goals whereas previous sexual offender taxonomies have treated offender goals as if they are temporally stable throughout the offence process. These goal distinctions are a particular strength of the model because the objective to commit a sexual offence is only rarely explicit early in the offence process and, accordingly, differing goals at the initial stages of the offence process have implications for the situations in which particular offenders are most at risk (Polaschek et al., 2001).

The Offence Process and Offence Pathway

The Self-regulation model has contributed to a more comprehensive picture of the offence process. Its inclusion of approach goals and positive affect states to reflect the existence of diverse goals is unique and, importantly, is accumulating support via empirical research. For instance, Proulx et al. (1999) reported that just over a fifth of their sample of extrafamilial child molesters

reported a positive pre-offence affect state. Further, if offenders can be characterized by one of the four pathways, relevant offence process factors should vary accordingly. Indeed, there are a number of offence-related features that should vary in predictable ways across the model's stipulated pathways. For instance, Avoidant offenders should present negative affective states and covert planning (Bickley & Beech, 2002) because they should be less likely than offenders characterized by the approach pathway to endorse offence-related cognitive distortions. Subsequent negative post-offence evaluations should also be evident among Avoidant offenders, whereas approach offenders should experience positive post-offence affect and evaluation (Ward & Hudson, 1998).

Offence-related distortions have been incorporated into the Self-regulation model and feature prominently in the approach pathways. Child molesters who reported approach offending-related goals reported higher levels of cognitive distortions legitimizing sexual contact with children, in addition to higher levels of emotional congruence/identification with children than Avoidant offenders (Bickley & Beech, 2002). These findings also indicate that cognitive content differs predictably with offender type (Lindsay et al., 2006).

Testing the Validity of the Offence Process Model

There are relatively few studies that have directly tested the Ward and Hudson Self-regulation model empirically, but have nonetheless offered support for its overall conceptual validity. One of the first to do so was conducted in the U.K. by Bickley and Beech (2002). The authors found that all (97.7%) but two of 87 male offenders referred to an intensive community-based program for

committing sexual offenses against children could be reliably allocated to an offence pathway (i.e., agreement between two raters was required on both the Active versus Passive and the Approach versus Avoidant dimensions). Of the 87 offenders in the sample, 41.4% (*n* = 36) were categorized as Approach-Explicit, 34.5% (*n* = 30) as Approach-Automatic, 16.1% (*n* = 14) as Avoidant-Active, and 8.1% (*n* = 7) as Avoidant-Passive. They concluded that the Self-regulation model demonstrated validity in its ability to distinguish between different types of child abusers (e.g., incest offenders, extrafamilial offenders) in terms of their characteristic offence pathway. Further, offenders characterized by Active strategies had significantly lower numbers of previous convictions than Passive offenders, a finding since replicated in subsequent studies (e.g., Lindsay et al., 2008). The difference in conviction rates between pathway groupings was consistent with the authors' *a priori* theory-based predictions and supported the validity of the model's framework.

Subsequent studies have also addressed issues relating to the self-regulation model's underlying theory. In another study based in the U.K., Webster (2005) investigated the content validity of the model with offenders who had undergone sexual offender treatment while in custody, and who had sexually re-offended at least once following completion of this program. As in Bickley and Beech's (2002) child molester sample, in Webster's sample of 25 child molesters and rapists, a high percentage (84.0%) were reliably assigned to an offence pathway. Further, consistency in offence pathway assignment was found across two offences, even though the participants entered treatment between offences

(Webster, 2005). This type of evidence suggesting the temporal stability of offender pathway characterization lends credence to the clinical/experiential-based contention that different types of sexual offenders present identifiable re-offence patterns. In his study, Webster (2005) also investigated differential presentation of offence process features across pathways at each of the nine phases. Consistent with grounded theory guidelines, interview notes from each participant were coded to ascribe relevant sections of the offence narrative to the corresponding phase of the offence process model. The author contends that overall, the results strongly support the content validity across the nine offence process phases (Webster, 2005). For instance, support for the distribution of offence processes across pathway allocation was found in coping and planning strategies at Phase 4 and 5, and 'victim blaming' at Phase 6. Some ambiguity did arise, however, with respect to the allocation criteria in terms of offence process codes containing data that were both Approach and Avoidance in nature. For example, 'rumination' was not distinguishable across pathways at the third phase. Adherence to the model's allocation of non-coercive grooming and coercive strategies to pathways did not occur at Phase 6. The vast majority of the data, however, was applicable to the various phases, supporting the reliability and stability of the Self-regulation model and pathway allocation across two time points (Webster, 2005).

More recently, and with a Canadian sample of treated sexual offender inmates, Yates and Kingston (2006) demonstrated that the four offence pathways (Avoidant-Passive, Avoidant-Active, Approach-Automatic, Approach-Explicit)

were differentially associated with offender type. Of their sample of 80, the greatest proportion of rapists (*n* = 19, 57.6%) were described by the Approach-Automatic pathway, whereas the greatest proportion of both incest (*n* = 12; 50%) and extrafamilial (*n* = 13; 68.4%) child molesters were described by the Approach-Explicit pathway. Of note, all mixed offenders in the sample were characterized by this latter pathway (*n* = 4, 9.8%). Moreover, static and dynamic risk levels statistically predicted pathway membership consistent with the model's underlying theory. Offenders presenting significantly higher static risk were typically characterized by the Approach-goal pathways – recall that this pathway was primarily populated by rapists and mixed offenders. Offenders presenting significantly higher levels of dynamic risk were most likely to be characterized by the Approach-Automatic pathway - recall that this pathway was primarily composed of rapists. As different types of offenders in this sample presented with varying levels of static and dynamic risk, the authors concluded that sexual offenders with different offence processes present different levels of risk to re-offend, and point to the usefulness of the model in this determination (Yates & Kingston, 2006). Thus, combinations of particular offence process factors may be indicative of those presenting a high offence risk in general, but may also further contain those dynamic markers indicative of an acute state of risk for re-offence.

The Self-regulation model of the offence process, although a relatively recent development, has already shown conceptual validity in terms of supportive empirical research, as well as shown substantial influence on current treatment practices (Ward et al., 2004; Webster, 2005). There are, however, a number of

limitations and shortfalls accompanying this model. The current work on offence process modeling is descriptive, relies on qualitative methodology (e.g., participant or clinician narratives), and has been conducted with very small Australian and New Zealand offender samples. Further, the original Ward and Hudson model was derived from these authors' own prior work with child molesters, yet its applicability was extrapolated to all sexual offenders (prior to the emergence of a descriptive model of the offence process for rapists; Polaschek, Hudson, Ward, & Siegert, 2001). As mentioned previously, much of the sexual offender literature has suffered from the absence of distinctions between types of offenders (i.e., rapists and child sexual offenders) in both theoretical conceptualizations and in research design.

Although there are similarities across different types of sexual offenders (Pithers, 1993), the previously specified differences between various offenders' goals and motivations (e.g., Approach/Avoidance goals, distortions in cognitive content) do not support an assumption of similarities in the offence process. The unfortunate consequence of inadequate model specification is a poor understanding of the nature of the mechanisms involved in offending (Polaschek et al., 2001). The specification of various offence pathways has been incorporated into recent developments of sex offender treatment (Ward et al., 2004; Webster, 2005), and therefore it is important to refine theory underlying offence processes.

Extending Offence Process Modeling: A Criminological Perspective

Since the construction of the Self-regulation model, descriptive modeling of the offence process has worked towards addressing some of the previously identified methodological limitations. Beauregard, Rossmo, and Proulx (2007) constructed an offence model intended to provide a complementary account for offenders' cognitive decision-making processes as specified by Ward and colleagues (Beauregard & Leclerc, 2007). This group of Canadian researchers also included previously neglected aspects of the offence process, such as cognitive processing of sexual offenders (Hazelwood & Warren, 1989, 1990; Rossmo, 1997), and widened the scope to incorporate victim and offence context features (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001). They also addressed the issues of small sample size (e.g., Ward et al., 1995) and offender heterogeneity (Proulx et al., 1999) by including all types and security levels of sexual offenders incarcerated for two or more years. Using semi-structured interview data obtained from sexual offenders, these authors recently presented a model describing offenders' victim attainment and attack method. These two facets of criminal behaviour were proposed by Rossmo (1997) as comprising the 'hunting process'. Relevant to theory building, Beauregard and colleagues' line of research also included dimensions of the offence process neglected in past iterations of offence process models. Unlike previous descriptive models, the hunting process model considers pre-offence routine activities of both offender and victim, either of which may consist of recreational activities, commuting, and working environment. Further, this model distinguishes between the methods and location of approaching the victim, transportation to the offence location, method

to commit the offence, and victim release location. The overall model then is composed of nine phases incorporating these new aspects: 1) routine activities of the offender; 2) choice of hunting field; 3) victim selection; 4) method of approach; 5) attack location choice; 6) method to bring victims to crime scene; 7) crime location choice; 8) method to commit the crime; and 9) victim release location choice. As noted by the authors, the model provides information on the relationship between the geographic and the behavioural components of a sexual offence (Beauregard, Rossmo, et al., 2007). It also offers a more thorough account of the hunting process, as reflected by the rational decision-making perspective in outlining the choices that offenders make during each phase of the process. With respect to the present study, the hunting process model highlights the importance of the offenders' situation/context as a potential contributing factor in the offence process. In contrast to the more 'variable- driven' approach to offence pathway testing (e.g., Bickley & Beech, 2002; Yates & Kingston, 2006), Beauregard and colleagues have identified offence pathways as derived from the 'person-oriented' offence process information collected directly from sexual offenders' narrative accounts. Findings from their use of the hunting process variables as a framework for pathway characterization will now be described in more detail.

Moving Offence Process Theory Forward

Beauregard and colleagues' (2007) work has contributed to refining offence process theory, and is now proceeding to a 'bottom-up' empirical account of divergent offence pathways whereas previous efforts have offered them from a

'top-down', theory driven approach (i.e., Ward & Hudson, 2000). The rational choice perspective employed by Beauregard, Proulx, Rossmo, Leclerc and Allaire (2007) in constructing their hunting process model posits the existence of 'crime scripts'. The series of decisions and actions prior to, during, and following an offence form an offender's script, a notion similar to that described in other offence process models. Likewise, there are pathways, or 'tracks' through the script to account for procedural variations in carrying out an offence. Recently, Beauregard, Proulx et al. (2007) used variables in the hunting process model to test for the presence of offence pathways. Results from their sample of federally incarcerated sexual offenders with stranger-only adult, child, and mixed victim types showed six specific sexual offence tracks within three different crime scripts. Whereas the 'outdoor A' rape track offence (22.16%) was characterized by an offender who hunts for and ambushes a solitary victim in an outdoor location, the 'outdoor B' rape track offender (3.60%) relocates the victim from an indoor public location to an outdoor private location. The 'home-intrusion' rape track offender (11.91%) encounters and offends within the victim's own residence, often using physical force and/or threats. These three scripts were found only within the coercive script, wherein the victims are purposefully sought out and attacked almost immediately upon encounter.

The 'direct action' rape track (11.91%) offender, in contrast, observes the victim in a highly-visible outdoor location, and then attacks in an indoor public setting. This track is the only one found within the non-persuasive script, where the offender needs only an opportunity to execute his spontaneous attack.

The ‘sophistication’ rape track (26.87%), the most frequent track, comprises offenders who identify victims via their occupations, seduce or trick the target into moving to a private, familiar offence location. Finally, the ‘family-infiltrator’ rape track offender accesses victims through their occupation or infiltrating families, and then through bribery or grooming techniques. The offence takes place in a private location familiar to the offender. Both of these tracks are present within the manipulative crime script, and are characterized by their similarities in active construction of offence opportunities.

The model of the hunting process proposed by Beauregard and colleagues emphasizes the role of situational features in the context of offence opportunity, whether spontaneous or constructed. The tracks of the hunting process model also correspond in fundamental ways with the pathways described by the Ward and Hudson offence process model. The non-persuasive, direct action offender parallels with the impulsive aspects of Ward and Hudson’s (2000) passive pathway offender. The outdoor/home-intrusion coercive track shares behavioural aspects of the Active self-regulation pathway, as does the sophistication/ family-infiltrator manipulative track. Taken together, the descriptive models seem to be capturing many essential features of the offence process.

At present, the Ward and Hudson (2000) and Beauregard, Rossmo et al. (2007) offence process models remain largely descriptive. As they are both relatively recent in their development, they have not as of yet undergone extensive validation, and are limited by aspects of the methodologies employed

(e.g., sample restricted by offender type, Ward & Hudson, 2000; stranger victims, Beauregard, Proulx, et al. 2007). A unique aspect of the present study was to use the person-oriented statistical methods of the Beauregard, Proulx et al. (2007) pathway derivations to provide a validation of the Self-regulation model's pathways. The model has not yet been subject to such person-oriented validation, nor have offence pathways been empirically derived from offence process variables, as opposed to offence script variables (Beauregard, Proulx, et al., 2007). A detailed description of the current study containing the overall purpose and the specific research objectives is now presented below.

The Present Study

Purpose

This dissertation research project investigates the sexual offence process in high-risk sexual offenders. There are scientific and practical implications of determining whether certain offence process factors can be identified across different types of offenders. By virtue of the unique sample of high-risk offenders chosen, the present study stands to make important contributions to current theoretical, empirical, and applied knowledge. Further, we may be able to describe some reasons as to why these offenders continue to re-offend despite community monitoring and the threat of judicial sanctions.

Two factors in particular contributed to the choice of a high risk sample: 1) a small proportion of sexual offenders are frequent re-offenders who commit a disproportionate number of sexual offences; and 2) there is a need to focus on the factors that set these offenders apart from others who have sexually offended. Most studies have generally found overall low recidivism rates amongst those who have committed a sexual offence (i.e., they are not specialists in repeating the same offence type, nor are they frequent in their sexual offences; Furby et al., 1989; Hanson & Bussière, 1998). It is important, therefore, to understand the factors that contribute to the high recidivism risk status of the frequent offenders.

The current project capitalized on a rare opportunity to access an innovative database of current high-risk sexual offenders in British Columbia,

Canada. The file-based aspect of the study's methodology did not limit data collection to those offenders recruited directly from correctional treatment programmes as in many prior studies (e.g., Ward et al., 1995), and subsequently also freed it from the biasing effects of sampling only those who volunteered to participate. In many previous studies that incorporated file information, this data collection method was primarily used to assist with semi-structured interview with offenders. Many previous sexual offender studies have also relied solely on the unsubstantiated offender self-report data obtained through interviews. It is known that sexual offenders will typically deny, or not report, the maintenance of deviant sexual interests or behaviours (Kennedy & Grubin, 1992; Langevin, 1989, but also see Mann & Hollin, 2007). Underreporting could similarly be expected in the present study's sample for a variety of reasons. For example, offenders whose contact with a law enforcement agency continues upon community release may not be willing to supply police with insight into their offence process, due to a general resistance to change and/or cooperation, and fear of re-incarceration. Or, even if the willingness is present on the offenders' part, they might not have appropriate insight into their own cognitions and behaviour, especially if they have not had exposure to current treatment rhetoric. Furthermore, the memory field has provided strong indications that accuracy and consistency problems accompany retrospective accounts of our own behaviours, emotions, and context (e.g., McNally, 2003). Although incorporating diverse data sources is typically a methodological strength because offenders' accounts can indeed uncover important internal motivations and processes that are inherent during the process

of re-offence, the present study benefits from access to and inclusion of a wealth of sources from which to draw historical reports (i.e., official criminal records, police and correctional reports, and offender and victim self-reports via interview transcripts and notes). Ultimately, this combination of diverse data sources should yield more detailed accounts of the offence process through the various types of information and levels of detail provided in the file documents.

Research Objectives

The dissertation project was designed to take a number of pertinent methodological, logistical, and theoretical considerations into account. The research goals of the present line of inquiry were discussed throughout the various sections of the introduction. They will be reiterated here by major subject heading: A. The Offence Process; B. Offence Pathway; and C. Offence Severity Escalation. Under each of these major headings, the research goals are outlined explicitly in terms of five specific research objectives (1-5) the study was designed to address.

A. The Offence Process

Research Objective 1: Offence Process Factors and Offence Frequency

The first research objective addressed the need for continued empirical investigation into the identification of factors related to the frequency of sexual offending. Specifically, the ability of each offence process factor to predict statistically the total number of sexual offence victims, and the total number of incidents of sexual offending was examined. Further, current theoretical models

suggest that victim age preference is likely to be associated with deficits in sexual self-regulation (Beech & Ward, 2004) which, in turn, may have implications for the frequency of sexual offences perpetrated by any one offender. Based on previous empirical reports (e.g., Looman, Abracen, Serin, & Marquis, 2005; Smallbone & Wortley, 2004), and the division between, not within, offender types in the present study, it was expected that child molesters as a group would be more frequent in the number of incidents perpetrated. In terms of the offence process factors, the preceding review has outlined a number of variables associated with recidivism. In particular, factors also implicated in the self-regulation conceptualization of offending may be associated with more frequent acts of sexual violence for some offenders. Drawing on relevant theory (Finkelhor, 1984; Hall & Hirschman, 1992) and research (Hanson & Harris, 2001; Thornton, 2002), it was anticipated that higher levels of behavioural manifestations of affective states (e.g., hostility, aggression, impulsiveness), as well as offence-supportive cognitive distortions, would be associated with higher indications of both aspects of offence frequency (i.e., number of victims, number of incidents).

B. Offence Pathway

Research Objective 2 (a and b): Offence Pathway and Offence Process Factors

A call for research has been made for continued investigation into the generalizability, reliability, and validity of the Ward and Hudson (1998) Self-regulation model of sexual offending (Polaschek et al., 2001). To do so, further explorations as to whether offence characteristics vary in hypothesized ways

across the model's pathways are needed. The present study contained a series of analyses pertaining to offence pathways to appraise whether the goal orientations and self-regulation strategies could be applied to a sample of high-risk sexual offenders. As such, offenders were assigned to pathways as defined by the Self-regulation model via a coding scheme developed for this purpose (i.e., Bickley & Beech, 2002).

Objective 2a relates to potential differences in offence process factors across the pathway distinctions. There are some indications from the literature that would suggest differential presentation of offence process factors across offenders. For instance, predatory sexual offenders (including rapists and child molesters), who are most likely characterized by the Approach-Explicit offence pathway, reported more detailed and organized offence-related fantasies in addition to explicit offence planning (Deu & Edelmann, 1997). In the present study's high-risk sample similar patterns may be expected in relation to Approach-Explicit offenders. Once again, it is the aim of the present study to help clarify the contributions of offender differences to offence process factors.

Through Objective 2b, the present study also acknowledges the need for extending empirical testing on offending profiles and therefore included a 'person-oriented' approach to investigate diverse offence processes. That is, in addition to examining the data from a 'variable-oriented' approach where pathways were assigned to offenders based on a coding scheme, the 'person-oriented' approach followed the rationale of Beauregard, Proulx et al. (2007) and Cale et al. (2009). Analytical methods assuming a 'person-oriented' approach

have provided preliminary evidence for various offence pathways, or profiles, in sexual offenders based on offence scripts (e.g., Beauregard, Proulx et al., 2007). It has yet to be demonstrated if offence profiles can be empirically derived from offence process factors in high-risk sexual offenders. The current analyses explored the existence of multiple profiles of the offence process as derived from the offence process information collected via a cluster method of analysis. A particular aim of this testing was to determine whether the offending process of sexual offenders can be re-grouped by the cognitive, affective, behavioural, interpersonal, and environmental indicators. If distinct groups are found, they could be descriptively compared as to their correspondence with the pathways previously delineated by the Ward and Hudson model.

Research Objective 3: Offence Pathway and Frequency of Offending

Objective 3 related pathway assignment to number of victims and number of sexual offending incidents. Consistent with previous research (e.g., Lindsay et al., 2008), variations in re-offending rates were expected for offenders characterized by different pathways, even in the current high-risk sample. Drawing on the limited number of previous findings (Bickley & Beech, 2002; Lindsay & Goodall, 2006), as well as the theoretical importance of motivation (Lindsay et al., 2008), it was hypothesized that offenders characterized by the Approach pathways would display higher rates of re-offending than those by the Avoidant pathways. The separate treatment of number of victims and number of offending incidents for analyses will further specify offender distinctions between offence pathways. Findings with the present sample were anticipated to

correspond to previously reported trends in frequency for both offender type, and pathway categorization. Specifically, in this high-risk sample there should be a greater number of Approach-Explicit child molesters, and these offenders should have the greatest number of sexual offending incidents.

C. Offence Severity Escalation

Research Objective 4: Offence Severity Escalation and Offence Process Factors

Although there is a large, and growing, body of literature concerning the behaviour of sexual offenders, no known line of research has investigated the sexual offence process in addition to offence severity escalation in a sample of high-risk sexual offenders. Thus, the current study also included means to determine if a pattern of escalating offence severity could be detected. Objective 4 was to determine which factors in offence processes may show utility in predicting an upward trajectory in offence seriousness across offenders' sexual offence history. In the case that escalation was present, rapists in this sample who display higher levels of deviant fantasy could be more likely to escalate in offence severity, especially in terms of physical coercion and the resulting level of victim injury. Although not all deviant sexual fantasies are violent, some offenders may attempt to approximate the aggressive content of their fantasies on successive victims (see Deu & Edelmann, 1997; Gee et al., 2004). In contrast, child molesters who as a group tend to display less violence overall, may become more adept in their use of psychologically coercive strategies as a means to gain compliance. Additionally, rumination, justification, and a negative orientation towards self and others have been found across offender types prior

to offending (e.g., Hanson & Harris, 2000). In the present high-risk sample, it was predicted that these types of offence process factors, along with an antisocial orientation, would correspond with higher levels of escalation overall.

Research Objective 5: Offence Severity Escalation and Offence Pathway

The last objective pertained to offence severity escalation and examined whether this factor may differ as a function of offence pathway. It was predicted in particular that Approach, as compared with Avoidant, pathway offenders would demonstrate higher levels of escalation over the course of their sexual offences. This hypothesis is consistent with the Approach offender characterization, on the assumption that their offending is guided by a determination to offend sexually. These offenders are driven by their acquisitional goals, which may be in the service of other needs, such as aggression or entitlement to sex (Ward & Hudson, 1998). Therefore, in addition to an overall higher level of escalation, it was predicted that these offenders would be more likely to escalate in their weapon use, and the injuries inflicted on victims. Further, based on their tendency to seek out and create offence opportunities (Ward & Hudson, 1998), Approach-Explicit pathway offenders were expected to show an escalating pattern of frequent/clustered offending.

METHOD

Participants

Prior to the construction of the Integrated Sexual Predator Information Network (ISPIN) database, law enforcement in B.C. did not a have a research-based assessment resource that focused on sexual offenders. The need to target high-risk sexual offenders proactively via an assessment and target prioritization process led to the creation of the database by Staff Sergeant Matthew H. Logan of the Behavioural Sciences Group (BSG) of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The ISPIN system acquires individual files on sexual offenders identified through the B.C. High Risk Offender Identification Program (HROIP). HROIP files are used by the Crown prosecution as a basis for both dangerous and long-term offender application decisions. There is no specific exclusion criteria applied to the cases - every sexual offender identified by HROIP is potentially eligible for inclusion into the ISPIN system. The offenders could fall under any of the various policing jurisdictions within the province, thus, there are no geographical restrictions that may limit the sample to only those offenders residing in RCMP catchment areas. These offenders may have committed their offences in B.C. or elsewhere, but all would be housed or reside within B.C. while their files were maintained in the system.

Information entered into the ISPIN system draws on a variety of contributing resources, including documents from Provincial and Federal

Corrections, Crown Prosecution, National Parole Board, police departments, and other community resources. These documents yield information such as demographics, offence details (including preferred victim types), psychological/psychiatric reports (including information on research based risk factors; i.e., deviant arousal, mental health, substance use, childhood family and adult family relationships), risk measure scores (i.e., Violence Risk Appraisal Guide [VRAG], Harris, Rice, & Quinsey, 1993, Historical-Clinical-Risk Management – 20 [HCR-20], Webster, Douglas, Eaves, & Hart, 1997), hobbies/interests pertaining to offending, and any other relevant offence-related behaviours. ISPIN also contains Partnerships, Assessment, Selection, Training, and Enforcement (PASTE) forms (a term for an RCMP operational group to combat predatory offenders). PASTE is a template that allows a score (totalled to a maximum of 10) to be assigned to a variety of risk factors each particular offender may present. The total cumulative score is a summation of the numerical value assigned to scores from actuarial measures indicating a risk to re-offend, and numerical values assigned to 'other factors' listed on the template. This latter category contains items such as psychiatric diagnoses, age of onset of offending, and exposure to environmental destabilizers, to which each is assigned a numerical value. Higher values represent increasing risk to re-offend, or the presence of the pre-disposing or destabilizing factors in the offender's environment. The PASTE template was derived within the context of police operations; no interrater data has been compiled. Further, the Sexual Predator Intelligence Reports (SPIRs) is an electronic spreadsheet which contains a

summary of pertinent offender information compiled from the various documents within each offender's file. RCMP officers assigned to manage the ISPIN files have extracted offence process information from all available offender file information and detailed it in the 'Known Behavioural Progression' section of the SPIR, along with identifying the type of offender via the 'Preferred Victim Type' section; therefore, the presence of a SPIR in an offender's file indicates that offence process information is available throughout that offender's documentation.

The overall sample for the current study consisted of 191 sexual offender files from the aforementioned database of B.C.'s highest risk sexual offenders. ISPIN was created in May/June 2005, with most of the initial sampling taking place within six months. Files are added and removed from the system as needed (e.g., offender is now deceased). For the present study, cases were first selected based on the availability of a SPIR report to ensure that offence process information could be collected. From the database, nine files had PASTE scores of 6.9 or below, 74 files had scores between seven and 7.9, 100 files had scores between eight and 8.9, and 47 files had scores between nine and 10. Cases were then selected based on the presence of three or more incidents of sexual offending to enable sufficient data to code escalation variables across sexual offence history. Incidents of offending refers to the number of separate times an offence occurs, and were chosen in light of the offending pattern of child molesters who may re-offend multiple times against only one victim. This selection procedure yielded 110 files. A further 81 offender files were identified

as having SPIR reports with one or two sexual offences documented and were coded based on the collated information available in the SPIR document. Escalation information and the two risk assessment measures employed in the study (i.e., the SONAR and SVR-20, see Materials section below for a description of these instruments) therefore could not be coded in relation to these files.

Materials

Offender information was extracted from ISPIN offender files via the following coding measures:

(1) Summary information. The ISPIN coding protocol (see Appendix A) was constructed for use in the present study to collect demographic, psychological/psychiatric, offence-related information (e.g., number of offending incidents, offender type, offence severity escalation across offences), and information pertaining to offence process factors for each offender. Cognitive, affective, behavioural, environmental, and interpersonal factors germane to the offence process were identified from all file-based sources drawn on to produce the 'Known Behavioural Progression' summary (as identified above). Information on the offence process factors was coded across all sexual offences for a particular offender; that is, the present study is based on aggregate data, as opposed to offence-specific data.

(2) Elements of the Offence Pathway Interview protocol as contained in the *Self-Regulation Model of the Offence and Relapse Process: A Manual* (Ward

et al., 2004) was incorporated into the coding sheet to gather information on aspects of the offence process, as were additional dynamic risk markers identified through the literature reviewed in the Introduction. A brief description of each item and coding examples can be found in Appendix B, by order of the offence process categories. The domains of interest are 'cognitive', 'affective', 'behavioural', 'environmental/situational', and 'interpersonal'. Also contained in this appendix is a description of items pertaining to cognitive, affective, and behavioural post-offence factors, as well as the offence severity escalation factors recorded in relation to each case coded for the present study. Item coding was consistent with that of numerous assessment schemes (e.g., SVR-20; Boer et al., 1997; HCR-20, Webster et al., 1997). The metric assigned for item coding was 0 (not present/relevant), 1 (somewhat/to a limited extent present/relevant), and 2 (definitely present/relevant). Therefore, higher scores reflect the extent to which this factor was present and pertinent for the offender, in the case of the offence process factors, or worsened across the offence history, in the case of the escalation factors.

(3) Ward and Hudson (1998) offence pathway assignment. The Offence Pathway Checklist was constructed to classify sexual offenders as belonging to one of the four offence pathways identified by Ward and Hudson in their Self-regulation model (1998; Bickley & Beech, 2002; contained in Appendices C and D). The Checklist is divided into two sections based on the two relevant pathway classification dimensions (i.e., passive versus active strategies, avoidant versus approach goals). Each part contains a number of factors that have been

identified as being pertinent to the Self-regulation model. In Part 1, judgments are made according to five scales that each range from zero to ten on observed adherence to Passive versus Active offending strategies. Ratings are completed for scale items pertaining to the complexity of offending strategies employed (e.g., in relation to grooming, setting up the offence scenario), the degree of thought before acting in a sexually violent manner (e.g., evidence for impulsivity or full consideration of consequences), and the offender's locus of control (e.g., taking a passive stance or seeing himself as being in control of his own behaviour). Four scales comprise the second component (Part 2) to an offender's pathway classification using the Offence Pathway Checklist: that of Avoidant versus Approach goals. Items in this section include desire to control or prevent offending in terms of the degree of restraint, if any, evidenced by the offender pre- or during the offence, and their level of explicit involvement in pro-offending activities (e.g., hobbies, clubs, child pornography). After these ratings are completed, a decision on the most likely of the four aggregate offence pathways is made (Avoidant-Passive, Avoidant-Active, Approach-Automatic, Approach-Explicit). There are no explicit decision criteria (e.g., cut-off scores) for pathway assignment based on this method; rather, the scales were devised to aid the reliability of pathway classification (Bickley & Beech, 2002). Offenders were categorized by taking scale scores and the accumulation of evidence for each item decision into account.

(4) The Sex Offender Need Assessment Rating (SONAR; Hanson & Harris, 2000). The SONAR was developed as an assessment tool to evaluate

change in risk among sexual offenders. It is one of the actuarial risk assessment tools cited by the Government of Canada task force to contribute to the production of comprehensive dangerousness assessments (Solicitor General Canada, 2001). Items on the SONAR are intimacy deficits, social influences, attitudes, sexual self-regulation, general self-regulation, substance use, negative mood, anger/hostility, and opportunities for victim access. For the first five (stable) items, ratings are made from zero to two based on the presence of a number of factors outlined for each item. For the four acute risk factors, ratings are made between -1 to +1, indicating if the factor has become better, remained the same, or become worse during the coding timeframe. Ratings are summed to a total score, which is then translated into a risk category ('Low': -4 to 3; 'Low-moderate': 4 or 5; 'Moderate': 6 or 7; 'High-moderate': 8 or 9; 'High': 10 to 14). The standard period within which to code the offender is the preceding 12 months for the stable factors, and the previous month for the acute factors. As information pertaining to timeframe was variable across offenders, and the focus was on factors preceding sexual offences, SONAR ratings were made in relation to the periods leading up to sexual (re-) offence. As the complete aggregation of documents in each file was reviewed for the primary sample of 110 files, the SONAR was able to be coded for this set of files.

(5) Sexual Violence Risk-20 (SVR-20; Boer et al., 1997). As its name suggests, 20 items comprise the SVR-20, which is specified as an assessment method rather than a test or scale for categorizing risk. The presence, partial presence, or absence is coded for 11 items pertaining to psychosocial

adjustment: sexual deviation, victim of child abuse, psychopathy, major mental illness, substance use problems, suicidal/homicidal ideation, relationship problems, past non-sexual violent offences, past non-violent offences, and past supervision failure. Seven items relating to sexual offences are coded on the same three point scale: high density sexual offences, multiple type sexual offences, physical harm to victims in sex offences, uses weapons or threats of death in sex offences, escalation in frequency or severity of sex offences, and attitudes that support or condone sex offences. The final two items are similarly rated, and relate to the offender's future plans: lack realistic plans and negative attitude toward intervention. Determinations of no, maybe, or yes indicating recent change are assigned to each of the 20 items. Instead of summing the presence or absence of the factors, upon completion the rater is prompted to make a summary judgement of 'low', 'moderate', or 'high' risk for future sexual violence. As with the SONAR ratings, for the present study the SVR-20 was coded for the primary sample of 110 files and in relation to the period of the offender's offence process. Both the SONAR and the SVR-20 were included in the present investigation to provide a cursory validity check on the assigned risk levels and offence process coding scheme.

Procedure

The present study consisted of a substantial review of individual sexual offender files compiled in an active research-based police network. Data was collected by the principal investigator at the RCMP BSG headquarters, Surrey satellite office in British Columbia, Canada. All coding materials are stored in a

locked desk within this secure police office. No personal identifying information was collected from the files; each file was assigned a number for the purposes of data entry and subsequent analyses. Further, the master list linking offender file identification numbers with participant numbers remains secured at this office.

In relation to this project in its entirety, the Institutional Review Board at Simon Fraser University (SFU) was responsible for granting ethical approval. SFU ensures a rigorous and thorough review process of all studies, with special attention and concern to those involving special human populations and collection of secondary data. Additionally, the RCMP granted approval of use of their offender files via the officer in charge its administration, S/Sgt. Logan.

Coding

Offender Characteristics: Offender Type and Sociodemographic History

Offender type was defined based on sexual offence history, and more specifically, was constructed around the dimension of age of selected victims. In line with the offender typology previously specified by Porter and colleagues (2000), 'rapists' were classified as those with 'one or more victims of sexual assault older than the age of 14 years with no victims of or younger than the age of 14 years', and 'mixed rapist/molesters' as those having 'at least one victim older than the age of 14 years and one victim of 14 years of age or less'. With regard to those who offended against child victims exclusively, 'extrafamilial molesters' were to have 'one or more victims of sexual assault 14 years of age or less, and all outside of the offender's family', 'intrafamilial molesters' had 'one or more victims of sexual assault 14 years of age or less all within the offender's

family', including children, grandchildren, nieces/nephews, and stepchildren, and finally, offenders with both intra- and extrafamilial victims had 'at least one child victim within and one child victim outside of the offender's family' (p. 222). The latter three categories were recorded, and then collapsed for the purposes of the present study's analyses, thus, a tripartite offender typology was delineated. A preliminary file review undertaken at the RCMP BSG office confirming previous research with the ISPIN system (Freimuth, 2008) indicated relatively comparable group sizes across sexual offender types.

Sexual Offence History

Information relevant to offending history was extracted from Canadian Police Information Centre Criminal Record Synopsis (CPIC reports), police statements/reports, and the various CSC reports. If a particular offence is contained in the file, it is likely to have been one for which the offender was officially charged, convicted, and/or cleared. However, to be inclusive, and to ensure the use of a consistent definition in the present study, coded 'offences' were any legally-defined sexually offensive act, involving an unwilling second party, and the use of coercion/restraint/violence. Mair and Stevens' (1994) differentiation of 'contact' from 'non-contact' offences as described earlier was followed, with the present study being concerned only with the former type of sexual offences. Coding for the number of both official sexual offence convictions and sexual offence charges were recorded separately. A major methodological shortfall in studies relying solely on formal conviction information is that they will capture only the 'tip of the criminality iceberg'. In the context of sexual offences,

one estimate of the reporting rate is placed at fewer than 5% for adult (female) sexual offences (completed or attempted rapes; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000), intrafamilial child sexual abuse at 2%, and extrafamilial at 6% (Russell, 1983). The actual conviction rate is considerably lower among these reported offences (for cases originally recorded by the police as rape, 6%; Harris & Grace, 1999), and this has been the typical study's 'official file information'. Inclusion of both charges and official convictions provides a more complete record of offending history. Further, the nature of the file information on which the study was based allowed for inclusion of offenders' self-reports and victims' reports on additional incidents of sexual offending that were not accounted for in the official statement of charges/convictions. Using data based on official charges, convictions, and other reported incidents is an important methodological aspect of the current study. First, as described earlier, these data allowed for a division of offenders' number of previous sexual offence victims as separate from the number of sexual offending incidents. The separation of victims from incidents provides a more accurate representation of the frequency and severity of sexual offending. Second, a more refined consideration of offending history is reflected by our ability to differentiate the aspects of victim versus incident across offender type. To ensure that victims and/or offences were not double-counted from repeated reporting of a sexual offending event in the files, a checking protocol was implemented throughout the coding process. All offending incidents were recorded and identified by offence-specific markers, such as date, victim initials, or offence description and location. If there was any uncertainty as to the ability

to differentiate one offence from another, one of the incidents was dropped from coding so as not to artificially inflate the offence count.

Sexual Offences: Offence process, pathway, and severity escalation

To ensure all relevant offence information was collected, a complete review of each offender's file was conducted (i.e., drawing on the original source of information from which the SPIR reports are produced). Relevant offence information is contained within CSC Intake Assessments, CSC Psychology Reports, CSC Integrated Therapy Reports, CSC Program Performance Reports, CSC Sex Offender Program Final Reports, Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission (FPSC) Dangerous Offender Assessments, High-Risk Offender (HRO) Risk Assessments, general risk assessment reports, and finally, offender interview notes. These reports contain a variety of offence and offender-related sections from which elements of offence processes, offence pathway, and severity escalation were coded. Specifically, the reports detail areas of interest including: circumstances surrounding sexual offence(s), offence descriptions, offender version of offence(s), high-risk re-offence factors (i.e., emotional, cognitive, situational, behavioural, and interpersonal elements of the offence process), elements of sexual (offence) fantasy, and history and development of sexual behaviour. In the case of any discrepancies between official documents and offender accounts, the information from the official document was used.

In terms of coding specifications for offence processes, for consistency across offenders (because each will have a varying number of offences), factors relevant to the offence process were coded from any and all information related

to their sexual offending. Such an approach is favoured over coding only the index offence; for example, as an offender's most recent offence may not reflect their 'typical' sexual offending pattern, nor be a sexual offence at all. In relation to offence severity escalation, for the purposes of the present study escalation encompassed aspects of acceleration and/or intrusiveness in the frequency and/or severity of sexual offences. Variables relating to escalation severity were drawn from a number of empirical studies (e.g., Lussier et al., 2008) and established risk assessment measures (Risk for Sexual Violence Protocol [RSVP], Hart et al., 2003; SONAR, Hanson & Harris, 2001; SVR-20, Boer et al., 1997). The escalation factors included in the present study recorded aspects of progressively increasing offence severity over the history of sexual offending. Evidence was collected with regard to acceleration in the frequency of offending, and severity of injuries incurred to the victims. The use of psychological or physical coercion, and the use of weapons to facilitate offending were also included as factors relevant to escalation (see Appendix B for full coding details).

Analytic Strategy

The present study sought to achieve multiple objectives, which necessitated the use of differing analytic techniques. This section briefly outlines the analyses undertaken with respect to each of the five research questions, followed by sub-sections outlining the approach to interrater reliability analysis, and finally, data preparation procedures. A more through description of the statistical techniques, as needed, are presented along with their respective analysis in the sections below.

Research objective 1: Analysis pertaining to the first objective was to determine the statistically predictive utility of the offence process factors on the two frequency indicator variables. These two variables, 'number of sexual offence victims' and 'number of sexual offending incidents', were based on count data. Count data are sometimes transformed, rescaled, or collapsed into dichotomous categories to facilitate certain statistical procedures (e.g., logistic regression); however, this has been noted as a suboptimal strategy (Gardner, Mulvey, & Shaw, 1995). Negative implications are seen in a reduction of statistical power, and indeed, a reduction in the meaningfulness of the original data. Further, attempting to fit a linear model to data that are often skewed is obviously problematic. Therefore, for the current sets of analyses using count data (i.e., 'number of victims' and 'number of incidents'), all subsequent regression procedures including these dependent variables were undertaken within a generalized linear model (GLZ). The alternative models that are offered are based on nonlinear models for the expected counts that recognize that the data are nonnegative by way of using probability distributions for the dispersion of the dependent variable scores around the expected value. At each step, possible competing models in the generalized linear equation (i.e., standard and overdispersed Poisson, negative binomial) were compared for goodness-of-fit via standard examination procedures including scatterplots of the predicted versus standardized residuals, Chi-square values, the -2 log likelihood value, and the significance of the Lagrange multiplier test. Corresponding model fit estimates suggested that the negative binomial model was the most reasonable alternative

in all cases. Compared to Poisson models based on extremely restrictive data dispersion assumptions, the negative binomial regression model can better account for variability by incorporating a random term reflecting unexplained between-subject differences.

Research objective 2a: The study also investigated offence process factors as related to pathway distinctions. A regression analysis was used towards the aim of identifying a combination of predictors (i.e., the offence process factors) that best predicts membership in a particular group. In this case, a logistic regression analysis was employed to accommodate the categorical outcome variable of pathway assignment.

Research objective 2b: The existence of multiple profiles of the offence process was tested via a cluster analytic procedure. Cluster analysis is a technique for categorizing large numbers of cases into a smaller subset of clusters using the proximities between cases as derived from a set of descriptor variables. Clustering methods can be employed for data exploration, as well as for hypothesis testing and confirmation (Gore, 2000). Accordingly, clustering analysis was employed in the present study to provide a 'person-', or 'case-' oriented approach to validating the pathways proposed through previous theoretical (Beauregard, Rossmo et al., 2007; Ward & Hudson, 1998) and empirical (Beauregard, Proulx et al., 2007) derivations of pathway distinctions.

There seems not to be an explicit rule established in the literature for an acceptable minimum proportion of cases to variables for clustering methods. The ratio of cases to variables used for the present cluster analysis (i.e., 191:14) is

within the recommended ratio for other multivariate analytic techniques such as regression analysis (i.e., 10:1). A number of peer-reviewed studies have proceeded with cluster analysis based on similar case to variable ratios (e.g., Bagley, Abramowitz, & Kosson, 2009; Boswell, Castonguay, & Pincus, 2009; Farrington-Flint, Vanuxem-Cotterill, & Stiller, 2009; Jackson, 2009; Owen, Wong, & Rodolfa, 2010; Vachon & Bagby, 2009; Vancleef, Valeyen, & Peters, 2009). Further explanation of the rationale for the procedures follows through a description of the analytic process that was undertaken. The procedures chosen were based on a number of established recommendations and guidelines (Gore, 2000; Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1995). Consistent with the analyses to follow, the final 14 offence process variables were selected for inclusion in the cluster analysis guided by theory, as well as by practicality (Gore, 2000). Cluster analysis necessitates that the variables are chosen based on their characterization of the cases being clustered, and that the variables relate specifically to the objectives of the analysis (Hair et al., 1995). Together, these requirements discourage the exclusion of any factors at the initial stages of the analysis. Additionally, the 14 offence process variables were derived from the larger set of variables coded for the study and therefore had already been subjected to the data reduction techniques described below. As opposed to further *a priori* reductions to the data, the recommendation that “the researcher is always encouraged to examine the results and to eliminate the variables that are not distinctive (i.e., “that do not differ significantly across the derived clusters”, as proffered by Hair et al. [1995, p. 482]) was followed. Such a method lends the

additional advantage of further specifying the final model. Specifically, the technique maximally defines clusters based only on those variables that differ across the cases. Hierarchical cluster analysis was selected as an appropriate technique to determine a range of possible offence profiles from the data.

Research objective 3: Differences between a) pathway assignment and b) offence profiles in regard to number of victims and number of sexual offending incidents were contrasted via independent-sample *t*-tests.

Research objective 4: The statistical utility of the offence process factors in predicting escalation was examined via a logistic regression analysis with the presence of offence severity escalation as a dichotomous categorical outcome.

Research objective 5: The offence severity escalation factors were used as predictors in a logistic regression analysis to investigate their statistical predictive utility as a function of offence pathway. Finally, the offence profile clusters were contrasted on the escalation factors via an ANOVA.

Interrater reliability (IRR). A recommended approach to providing IRR data includes calculating and reporting two indices of rater consistency or agreement (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2010). IRR of the independent ratings was conducted using intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC_1), where alpha was set at .05 in all cases. Using absolute agreement, the ICCs were determined using a two-way mixed effects model where the measure effect was fixed and the rater/participant effects were random. As a more conservative approach to IRR analyses, Krippendorff's alpha was also calculated using software and guidelines developed for the procedure (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007).

Data Preparation. Prior to the tests involving offence process factors, eight of the original 35 factors that evidenced little to no variance were removed from subsequent analyses (i.e., *Mental health symptoms*, *Physical health concerns*, *Affective – other*, *Attempts to stop-alter offence progression*, *Behavioural – other*, *Dependent problems*, *Friendship problems*, and *Interpersonal factor – other*). The remaining 22 of 27 factors that evidenced significant intercorrelations, and whose descriptors made conceptual sense to collapse were combined into single variables and renamed for ease of reference (refer to Appendix A for a complete factor listing, and Table 1 for correlation coefficients for the combined factors).

Table 1 Correlation Coefficients for Combined Offence Process Factors

Offence Process Factor	(1 & 2) r_s	(1 & 3) r_s	(2 & 3) r_s
Distorted cognitions			
(1) Distorted thinking	.184*	.187**	.267**
(2) Rumination			
(3) Self-view			
Justification/fantasy			
(1) Adaptation processes	.177*	.182*	.310*
(2) Deviant fantasy			
(3) Non-deviant fantasy			
Impulse (non-)regulation			
(1) Affective-behavioural manifestation	.246***	-	-
(2) Cognitive – other			

Offence Process Factor	(1 & 2) r_s	(1 & 3) r_s	(2 & 3) r_s
Antisocial orientation			
(1) Non-sexual behaviours	.204**	.144*	.207**
(2) Associating-antisocial others			
(3) Substance use			
Pornography/Masturbation			
(1) Pornography use	.324**	-	-
(2) Masturbation			
Offence positioning			
(1) Planning	.177*	-	-
(2) Pre-sexual behaviours			
Residence issues			
(1) Living situation problems	.259**	-	-
(2) Environmental - other			
Interpersonal issues			
(1) Relationship problems	.315**	.363**	.183*
(2) Interpersonal rejection			
(3) Seek-create conflict			
Interpersonal orientation			
(1) Ability to relate/socialize	.164*	-	-
(2) Orientation towards others			

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

To ensure sufficient power to conduct analyses for each research question, the number of offence process factors entered into the primary analyses was subjected to data reduction via preliminary regression analyses on the combined offence process factors within each of the five larger groupings (i.e., ‘cognitive’, ‘affective’, ‘behavioural’, ‘environmental’, and ‘interpersonal’). Of these, only the significant variables were then entered into each of the main

analyses. Variables retained from these preliminary regression analyses will be reported in the respective sub-sections below. Alpha was set at .05 for all analyses unless stated otherwise.

RESULTS

Interrater Reliability

The primary investigator (CG) was granted RCMP security clearance and undertook the file review and coding for the project. Two RCMP officers, a Bachelor's student Corporal, and a Master's level Constable from the BSG office provided interrater coding on approximately 15% (*n* = 16) of the primary sample of files, thereby enabling reliability estimates for offence process factors, offender pathway assignment, and offence severity escalation. The coders met for a training session on the file review coding sheet and the two risk assessment measures, and were provided with coding manuals. Coders also met periodically throughout the coding process to discuss any questions or issues that arose during the course of the file reviews.

Interrater reliability (IRR) analyses are now provided in terms of the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) and Krippendorff's alpha (α). Commonly used interpretative guidelines suggest that the mean ICC for item scores on the offence process factors was good to excellent (.88; Cicchetti & Sparrow, 1981; Landis & Koch, 1977), and a Krippendorff's α of .77 falling within acceptable limits (Lombard et al., 2010).

Next, the IRR for the Offence Pathway assignments was calculated using the IRR indices. According to established guidelines, substantial consistency was reached for the Pathway decision (.72), and the more conservative Krippendorff's

α indicated an acceptable level of agreement (.72). *Overall Escalation* judgements also achieved substantial consistency across the three raters (ICC = .76), but less exact agreement (α = .63). IRR was also computed for total scores on the two independent risk assessment measures employed in the current study, the SONAR and SVR-20. The ICCs for the instruments were .81 and .90, respectively. The Krippendorff's α values for the instruments were .73 and .78, respectively.

Internal consistency for the offence process factors coded in the study was determined using coefficient alpha. Across all of the offence process factors, Cronbach's α = .70 which indicates good reliability of the items contained in the coding form (Cronbach, 1951).

Characteristics of the Sample

Offender Type

Categorized by offender type, the total sample consisted of 72 rapists (37.5%), 66 child molesters (34.6%), and 53 mixed offenders (27.6%). Offender age did not differ significantly across the groups (F[2, 190] = 1.28, p = .281; rapists: M= 43.79, SD = 9.42; child molesters: M = 46.15, SD = 13.83; mixed: M = 43.18, SD = 8.59). The mean number of documents within each file was 20.89 (SD = 13.32), and did not differ across offender types (rapists: M = 18.78, SD = 12.02; child molesters: M = 20.41, SD = 13.07; mixed: M = 22.42, SD = 14.37; F[2, 190] = 1.33, p = .266). It is possible that available information on offence processes may differ as a function of whether the sexual offences were committed pre- or post-1995 (i.e., when the current Relapse Prevention

treatment program incorporating use of 'offence cycles' was implemented at Correctional Service Canada institutions). There were no differences found with respect to file information between offenders incarcerated pre- (M = 22.20, SD = 13.08) or post-1995 (M = 24.0, SD = 17.85; t[8] = -.18, p = .860).

Frequency of Offending

Data for the variables representing 'frequency of offending' (i.e., number of victims and number of incidents) were highly skewed. Therefore, prior to analyses, these variables were log transformed to more closely approximate normality within the distributions. With regard to both of the following analyses, a significant Levene's statistic (p < .001) indicated that the homogeneity of variance assumption was not met; accordingly, the Welch's F statistic is reported. An ANOVA revealed significant differences between the three groups (Welch's F[2, 114.94] = 12.66, p < .001, partial η^2 = .12). Specifically, child molesters had a greater number of victims (M = 8.88, SD = 6.16; Median = 7) than both the rapists (M = 4.42, SD = 4.17; Median = 3), and the mixed offenders (M = 6.77, SD = 4.75; Median = 5), and the mixed offenders more than the rapists (p < .05). Similarly, when considering the mean total number of sexual offending incidents, the child molesters had a significantly greater number of incidents (M = 44.41, SD = 31.00; Median = 36.5; Welch's F[2, 64.09] = 19.86, p < .001, partial η^2 = .250) than both the rapists (M = 11.33, SD = 15.92; Median = 6), and the mixed offenders (M = 21.82, SD = 24.24; Median = 12), but rapists and mixed offenders did not differ.

Age differences between the offenders (range: 20-77) may reflect 'exposure' to risk and thereby influence the frequency counts. As both number of victims (r = .19, p < .01) and number of incidents (r = .20, p < .05) were significantly related to the age of the offender, this variable was controlled for in the relevant analyses, as specified below.

Risk Assessment Instruments: SONAR and SVR-20

To inform the current sampling description of 'high-risk' offenders, offenders' risk level was rated on two established risk assessment instruments. Where the SONAR was completed, 81.6% (n = 89) of offenders were categorized as 'high' or 'high moderate' risk, with the remaining 18.4% (n = 20) categorized as either 'moderate' or 'low moderate'. The SVR-20 ratings categorized 74.3% (n = 81) of offenders as 'high', 24.7% (n = 27) as 'moderate', and .9% (n = 1) as 'low' risk.

Additional information on participant risk ratings was provided through subjecting the SONAR and the SVR-20 total scores to Pearson correlations. The total scores were significantly associated (r = .48, p < .001). SONAR scores did not differ (F[2, 108] = 1.85, p = .162, whereas SVR-20 total scores significantly differed across offender type (F[2, 108] = 8.82, p < .001, partial η^2 = .14). Rapists (M = 26.94, SD = 4.98, p < .001) and mixed offenders (M = 26.61, SD = 5.28, p < .01) had significantly higher scores than the child molesters (M = 22.55, SD = 5.39). Neither SONAR nor SVR-20 total scores were correlated with number of victims (r = .04, p = .685, r = -.12, p = .235, respectively), nor number of incidents (r = -.15, p = .118, r = -.05, p = .629, respectively). Both SONAR and SVR-20

total scores were significantly correlated with offence severity escalation ratings (r = .22, p < .05, r = .50, p < .001, respectively).

Major Research Objectives: A. Offence Process Factors, B. Offence Pathway, and C. Offence Severity Escalation

The results will now be presented by the major sub-headings: A. Offence Process Factors, B. Offence Pathway, and C. Offence Severity Escalation. These sections are structured by order of each specific research objective (1-5).

A. Offence Process Factors

Summary Statistics: Offence Process Factors and Offender Type

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to describe differences in the offence process factors across the different types of sexual offenders (i.e., adult rapists, child molesters, mixed offenders). MANOVA results indicate that the offender type category significantly differs for the combined DV of 14 offence process factors, Wilks' Λ = .63, F(28, 348) = 3.25, p < .001, multivariate η^2 = .21. Offender category differences were significant for *Justification/fantasy* (F[2, 187] = 11.09, p < .001, partial η^2 = .11), *Negative affective state* (F[2, 187] = 6.62, p < .01, partial η^2 = .07), *Antisocial orientation* (F[2, 187] = 10.58, p < .001, partial η^2 = .10), *Pornography/masturbation* (F[2, 187] = 7.74, p < .001, partial η^2 = .08), *Offence positioning* (F[2, 187] = 9.29, p < .001, partial η^2 = .09), *Interpersonal issues* (F[2, 187] = 4.85, p < .01, partial η^2 = .05). The alpha level used to determine statistical significance was adjusted to be more stringent due to the number of variables subjected to post-hoc comparisons

(i.e., .05/14 = .004). The following Tukey HSD post-hoc analyses revealed that a number of these significant differences were evident between the rapists and child molesters, to the exclusion of mixed offenders. Child molesters displayed more *Justification/fantasy*, *Pornography/masturbation*, and *Offence positioning*. In terms of *Antisocial orientation* and *Interpersonal issues*, rapists were rated higher on these factors than were child molesters. On one variable mixed offenders differed significantly from child molesters – the mixed offenders displayed greater levels of pre-offence *Negative affective state.*

Means and standard deviations are presented by the groupings of offence process factors in Table 2.

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations for Offence Process Factors by Offender Type

	Rapists		Child Molesters		Mixed	
Offence Process Factor	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Distorted cognitions	.90	.62	.81	.53	.96	.55
Justification/fantasy***	.44	.48	.86 $_{a}$	.59	.69 $_{b}$	.55
Negative affective state**	1.25	.80	.89 $_{b}$	.77	1.40 $_{a}$	.79
Negative outlook	.49	.77	.61	.74	.53	.67
Impulse (non-)regulation	.78	.65	.69	.66	.93	.63
Antisocial orientation***	1.06 $_{a}$	.50	.66 $_{b}$	.50	.90	.49
Pornography/ masturbation***	.44	.69	.92	.76	.69	.69
Offence positioning***	.99 $_{b}$	.59	1.42 $_{a}$	.61	1.25	.56

Offence Process Factor	Rapists		Child Molesters		Mixed	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Entering restricted areas	.68	.78	.83	.87	.74	.84
Residence issues	.55	.55	.77	.60	.62	.55
Employment problems	.90	.85	.74	.71	.74	.74
Withdrawal-isolation	.68	.87	.68	.79	.57	.80
Interpersonal issues**	.73 $_a$	.60	.44 $_b$	.41	.68	.63
Interpersonal orientation	.44	.52	.53	.56	.46	.58

**p <.01; ***p < .001. Note: different subscripts denote significant differences.

Research Objective 1: Offence Process Factors and Frequency of Offending

Number of Victims. A regression analysis, under the GLZ, was conducted to ascertain the statistical predictive ability of each offence process factor on the total number of sexual offence victims. From the set of regressions conducted for the purpose of data reduction, *Justification/fantasy* and *Pornography/ masturbation* were retained for analysis. Offender age and offender type were entered as covariates. Results indicated the overall model retained one variable (*Justification/fantasy*) that significantly predicted an offenders' number of victims (Log Likelihood = -542.62, Likelihood ratio $\chi^2[4] = 51.53$, $p < .001$) while controlling for age and offender type. Regression coefficients are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Offence Process Factors and Number of Victims

	B	SE	Wald	95% CI
Justification/fantasy	.37	.11	11.30***	.15 - .58
Pornography/masturbation	.13	.08	2.36	-.04 - .29

***$p < .001$

Number of Incidents. Regression analyses were also conducted to determine which independent variables (offence process factors) were statistical predictors of the number of sexual offending incidents. From the set of regressions conducted for the purpose of data reduction, *Justification/fantasy*, *Negative affective state*, *Antisocial orientation*, *Pornography/masturbation, Residence issues,* and *Interpersonal orientation* were retained for analysis. Results indicated that the *Antisocial orientation* and *Pornography/masturbation* variables significantly predicted an offenders' number of sexual offences (Log Likelihood = -454.92, Likelihood ratio $\chi^2[8] = 72.51$, $p < .001$). The relationship between the *Antisocial orientation* variable and the outcome variable was negative; that is, increasing levels of *Antisocial orientation* was associated with decreasing sexual offence incidents. As with the analysis on number of victims, the present finding was observed while controlling for both offender age and type. Regression coefficients are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Offence Process Factors and Number of Sexual Offending Incidents

	B	SE	Wald	95% CI
Negative affective state	-.25	.12	2.19	-.49 – .01
Justification/fantasy	.15	.17	.78	-.18 – .47
Antisocial orientation	-.62	.18	11.31***	-.98 – -.26
Pornography/masturbation	.30	.15	4.05*	.01 – .60
Residence issues	.12	.14	.72	-.16 – .40
Interpersonal orientation	.26	.16	2.59	-.06– .58

*$p < .05$, ***$p < .001$

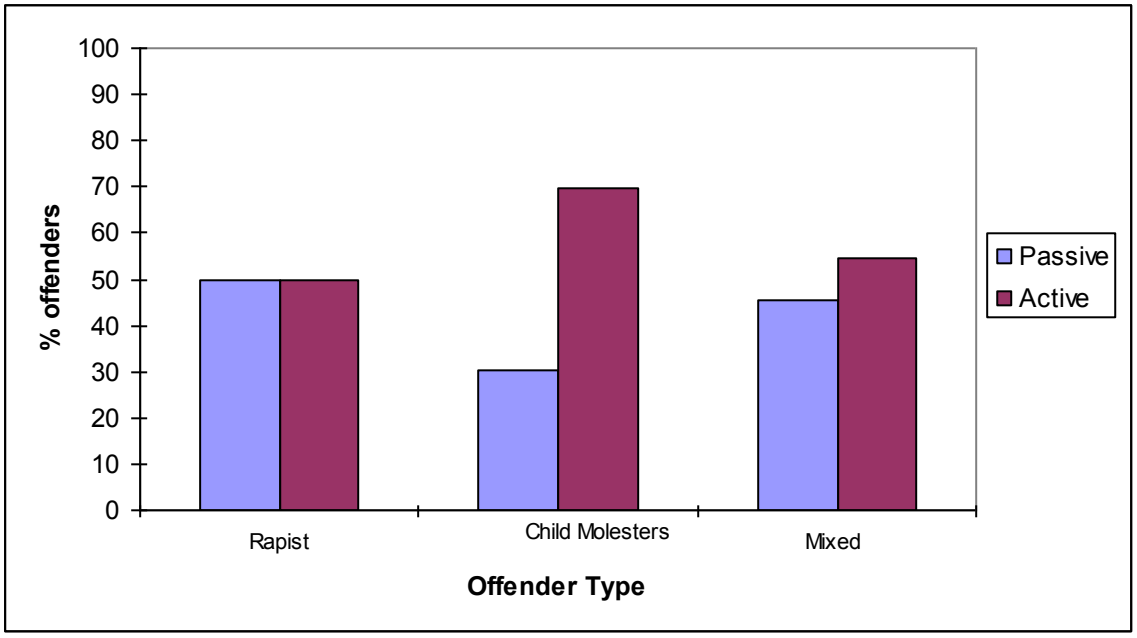
In sum, the offence process factor *Justification/fantasy* was an important statistical predictor of number of victims across offenders, and was displayed more by child molesters than in the two other types of offenders. Child molesters also tended to display aspects of *Pornography/masturbation*, which was an indicator of a greater number of incidents. A negative relationship was observed between *Antisocial orientation* with number of sexual offending incidents. The expectation that child molesters would be the most prolific offenders was supported, but the hypothesis that *Affective/behavioural manifestations* would statistically predict frequency of offending was not.

B. Offence Pathway

Summary Statistics: Offence Pathway and Offender Type

Chi-square analyses were conducted to determine any differences in offence pathway classification across the offender types. These analyses revealed that child molesters (n = 46, 69.7%) were relatively more likely than rapists (n = 36, 50.0%) or mixed offenders (n = 29, 54.7%) to be assigned to an Active offending pathway (χ^2 [2, 191] = 5.84, p < .05, Cramer's V = .18; see Figure 2).

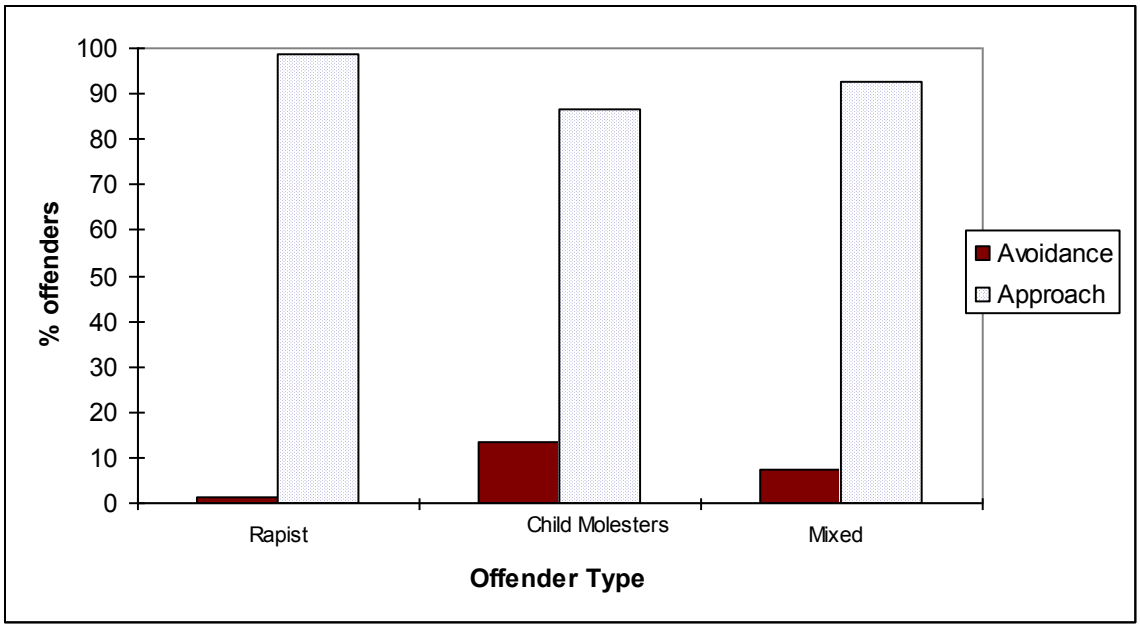
Figure 2 Passive and Active Offence Pathway Classification by Offender Type



More marked differences were evidenced between the Avoidance and Approach pathways: the offence process of only one (1.4%), nine (13.6%), and four (7.5%) of the rapists, child molesters, and mixed offenders, respectively, were characterized by the Avoidance route to offending, whereas the offending

process for 71 (98.6%), 57 (86.4%), 49 (92.5%) of offenders in the same respective categories were characterized by the Approach offending pathway (differences significant, $\chi^2[2] = 7.61$, $p < .05$, Cramer's V = .20; see Figure 3).

Figure 3 Avoidance and Approach Offence Pathway Classification by Offender Type



In the present high-risk offender sample, and consistent with research conducted with particular sexual offender samples (e.g., intellectually disordered high-risk offenders; Lindsay et al., 2008), there was a low endorsement rate for the Avoidant (as opposed to the Approach) goal distinction. Prior to collapsing these categories across strategy, analyses were conducted on the Passive/Active distinction with the Avoidant offenders removed. All pathway results were consistent with those conducted when Avoidant cases were included; therefore, the subsequent offence pathway assignment analyses were conducted on the full sample. Following previous analytic strategies (i.e., Bickley

& Beech, 2002), pathway analyses considered the self-regulation style distinction of Passive versus Active.

Research Objective 2a: Offence Pathway and Offence Process Factors

A 'Variable-Oriented' Perspective. First, no differences were found between the pathway distinction (Passive/Active) and number of offence process factors present, $t(189) = -1.55$, $p = .122$. With regard to the second specific objective to determine which independent variables (offence process factors) were statistical predictors of pathway assignment, forward logistic regression was conducted. As the only variable retained from the set of data reduction analyses, regression results indicate that the overall model of one predictor, the combined *Offence positioning* factor was indeed statistically reliable in distinguishing between the dependent variable, Passive/Active pathway assignment (-2 Log Likelihood = 211.49; χ^2 [1] = 48.24, $p < .001$). Wald statistics indicated that the variable significantly predicts offence pathway. Specifically, the more pre-sexual behaviours and planning were evident, the more likely the offender was to be described by the Active pathway. The model correctly classified 66.0% of the cases, and neither offender type nor offender age influenced the dependent variable. Regression coefficients are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Offence Process Factors and Passive/Active Offence Pathway

	B	SE	Odds Ratio	Wald	95% CI
Offence positioning	1.91	.32	6.73	36.00***	3.61 – 12.54

***$p < .001$

In sum, consistent with expectations, *Offence positioning* statistically predicted a greater likelihood of being an Active pathway offender. Active pathway offenders were characterized by offence positioning behaviours regardless of offender type. The determination of Active pathway characterization also corresponds to higher levels of the *Offence positioning* factor in child molesters.

Research Objective 2b: Offence Process Factors as Determining Offence Pathway

A 'Person-Oriented' Perspective. As mentioned in the preceding Analytic Strategy section, hierarchical cluster analysis was used to determine a range of possible offence pathways from the data. The squared euclidean distance was utilized for deriving proximities, and cluster variables were converted to *z*-scores prior to analysis as recommended by Hair et al. (1995). The 14 offence process factors used in the previous analyses derived from the Self-regulation model (Ward & Hudson, 1998) were entered as cluster descriptor variables. Clusters were derived using Ward's hierarchical method, and the optimal cluster solution was determined through examination of absolute changes in agglomeration coefficients. A substantial jump in within-cluster variability at the one-cluster level

indicated that a two-cluster solution was the most valid selection point. That is, a 12.9% increase in the agglomeration coefficient was observed between the first and second clustering, whereas the preceding 10 cluster solutions averaged a 4.5% increase. Having determined that the best solution included two distinct clusters of offenders based on their offence process variables, analysis proceeded with significance testing between the groups.

An inflated familywise error rate would arise if numerous univariate comparisons on each descriptor variable were performed. Multiple discriminant analysis (MDA) was employed as a viable alternative in this case (Drew & Bishop, 1999). MDA is a technique to guide the interpretation of clusters through a description of the differences between groups, and significance testing. MDA analysis revealed that 88.4% of the cases were correctly classified into the two clusters. The results of the MDA also indicated that the groups were significantly discriminated by all but two of the predictor variables. As such, the cluster analysis was conducted again excluding the *Residence issues* and *Entering restricted areas* variables, as per procedural recommendations delineated by Hair et al. (1995). The same specifications and assessment methods were employed for the second analysis as in the first.

As expected, two groups were again the most valid clustering solution. This time, a 15.5% increase in the agglomeration coefficient was observed between the first and second clustering. Further, MDA analysis revealed that 93.2% of the cases were correctly classified, an almost 5% increase over the first

cluster solution. A description of the two groups specified by the final solution is presented by the offence process variables that characterize them.

Cluster 1: Low = Negative Affect Offenders (LNA). Members of the first cluster comprised 85.7% of the sample (*n* = 163). They were characterized by lower levels of *Distorted cognitions*, *Negative affective state, Negative outlook,* and *Impulse (non-)regulation* problems than offenders in the second cluster.

Cluster 2: High = Antisocial Offenders (HA-S). Members of Cluster 2 comprised 14.2% of the sample (*n* = 27). Members of this cluster differed from members of the first cluster by higher levels of *Antisocial orientation*, *Justification/fantasy*, *Pornography/masturbation, Withdrawal/isolation, Employment problems, Interpersonal issues* and *Interpersonal orientation*. Means and standard deviations for the offence process factors across cluster groupings are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 Means and Standard Deviations for Offence Process Factors by Cluster Groupings

	Cluster 1 LNA (*n* = 163)		Cluster 2 HA-S (*n* = 27)	
Offence Process Factor	M	SD	M	SD
Distorted cognitions***	.78	.53	1.44	.44
Justification/fantasy***	.57	.54	1.17	.42
Negative affective state***	1.06	.81	1.81	.48

Offence Process Factor	Cluster 1 LNA (*n* = 163) M	SD	Cluster 2 HA-S (*n* = 27) M	SD
Negative outlook**	.48	.71	.89	.80
Impulse (non-)regulation**	.37	.47	1.09	.64
Antisocial orientation***	.81	.49	1.30	.54
Pornography/masturbation***	.59	.70	1.24	.75
Offence positioning	1.18	.63	1.43	.49
Employment problems***	.69	.75	1.44	.58
Withdrawal-isolation***	.55	.78	1.22	.80
Interpersonal issues***	.52	.50	1.16	.53
Interpersonal orientation***	.37	.47	1.09	.59

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$. Note. LNA = Low Negative Affect Offenders; HA-S = High Antisocial Offenders.

The *Low Negative Affect* and *High Antisocial* pathway groupings that were derived were also contrasted on variables not included in the analysis. As demonstrated by Swogger and Kosson (2007), this additional step of 'external validation and profiling' allows for conceptual validation of the clusters. Three variables relating to an offender's cognitions, affect, and behaviours *post*-offence were used to contrast the cluster groupings. Cluster 2 'High Antisocial' offenders were more likely to display behaviours that would increase the likelihood of their apprehension or identification ($p < .05$), and in addition, to reflect on their

offences positively ($p < .01$). No significant differences emerged between the two groups on the post-offence affective ($p = .513$) category.

Summary Statistics: Offence Pathway Clusters and Offender Type

Using the offence pathway clusters derived from the cluster analysis (*Low Negative Affect* and *High Antisocial*), chi-square analyses were conducted in order to determine if offender type varied across the two offence pathway clusters. These analyses revealed that no significant differences emerged (χ^2 [2, 190] = 1.16, $p = .560$) - all three offender types were equally likely to be categorized by either of the two offender groupings. To illustrate, approximately equivalent proportions of rapists ($n = 59$, 83.1%), child molesters ($n = 59$, 89.4%), and mixed offenders ($n = 45$, 84.9%) in the sample were described by the Low Negative Affect grouping.

In sum, the outcomes of research objective 2b indicated the existence of two groups of high-risk offenders based on their offence process factors. Results from the cluster analysis revealed a group of offenders characterized by lower levels of negative affect, and another group by higher antisocial cognitions and behaviours.

Research Objective 3: Offence Pathway and Frequency of Offending

Number of Victims. No differences were found between the pathway distinction (Active: $M = 7.17$, $SD = 5.71$; Passive: $M = 5.79$, $SD = 4.85$) in regard to number of victims, $t(186) = -1.78$, $p = .077$. However, number of victims differed between the two pathway cluster groupings described above. Cluster 2 (*High Antisocial*)

offenders had significantly more victims (M = 9.85, SD = 6.26; t[185] = -3.46, p < .01) than did offenders in Cluster 1 (*Low Negative Affect*; M = 6.07, SD = 5.08). *Number of Incidents.* In contrast to the null findings from offence pathway and number of victims, Active pathway offenders (M = 34.17, SD = 31.29) had a history containing significantly more sexual offending incidents than did Passive pathway offenders (M = 21.45, SD = 24.85; t[108] = -2.34, p < .01). However, no significant differences emerged between the two pathway clusters of offenders in this regard (Cluster 1: M = 28.54, SD = 29.00; Cluster 2: M = 30.50, SD = 31.32; t[30.74] = -.27, p = .792).

In sum, the Active pathway was predominantly composed of child molesters, those who were more likely to display *Offence positioning*, and those with a more prolific offending history in terms of number of sexual offending incidents. Although deviant fantasy was not found to be significantly elevated in Active pathway offenders, the association between the Active pathway and each of the factors listed above (i.e., those pertaining to offender type, *Offence positioning*, and number of incidents) provided partial support for the hypotheses outlined in the present study. Offenders characterized by the High Antisocial cluster pathway had more victims in their offending histories.

C. Offence Severity Escalation

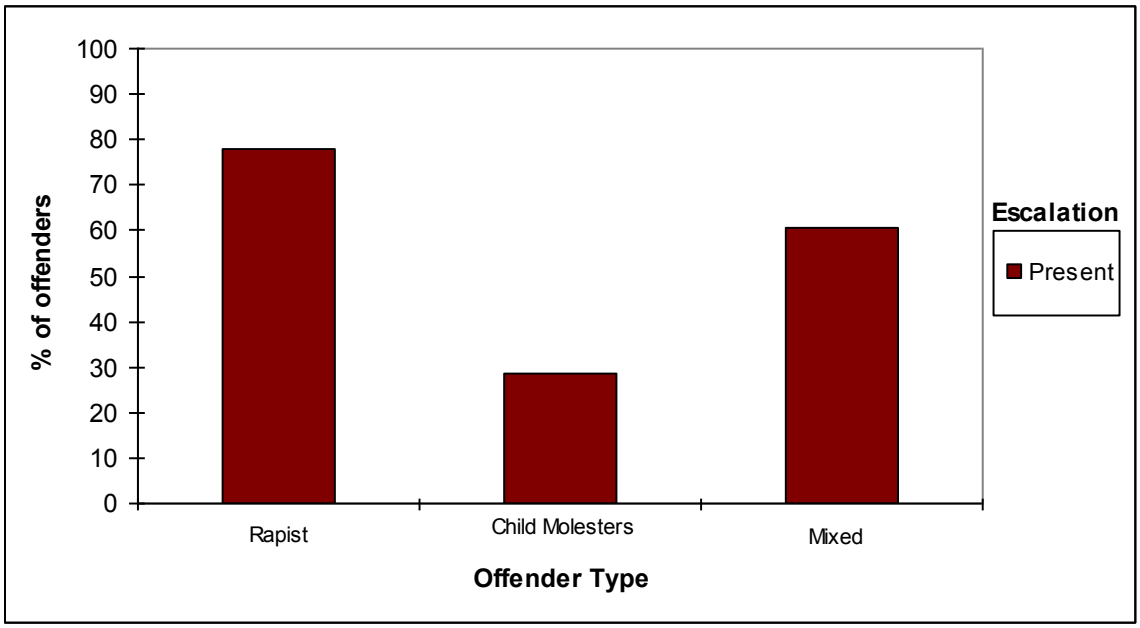
Offenders in the primary sample (n = 110) were compared with the secondary grouping of 81 offenders on which escalation variables could not be coded to determine if the groups differed in terms of age and risk level. Age was positively correlated with frequency of offending and therefore may be expected

to be similarly associated with escalation. Offenders in the primary sample (M = 47.63, SD = 10.86) were significantly, but not substantially, older than those in the secondary sample (M = 40.19; SD = 9.65; t[189] = 4.91, p < .001). No differences were observed in the PASTE risk rankings between the two groups (t[187] = .95, p = .344).

Summary Statistics: Offence Severity Escalation and Offender Type

Across their offending history, offence severity escalation was more frequently evident in the rapist group (n = 25, 78.1%) than among the child molesters (n = 17, 28.8%) or the mixed offenders (n = 17, 60.7%; χ^2 [2, 109] = 20.34, p < .001, see Figure 4). Child molesters and mixed offenders did not differ in this regard.

Figure 4 Percentage of Offenders Evidencing Offence Severity Escalation across Offences by Offender Type



A one-way MANCOVA was conducted to determine the effect of offender type on the offence severity escalation variables (DVs) while controlling for offender age. Results revealed significant differences among the offender types on the combined dependent variable, Pillai's trace = .56, $F(14, 202) = 5.60$, $p < .001$, multivariate $\eta^2 = .28$. Offender category differences were significant for *Psychological coercion* ($F[2, 109] = 3.20$, $p < .05$), *Physical coercion* ($F[2, 109] = 24.18$, $p < .001$), *Weapon use* ($F[2, 109] = 25.54$, $p < .001$), and *Victim injury* ($F[2, 109] = 14.43$, $p < .001$). *Overall escalation* approached significance at $p = .058$ ($F[2, 109] = 2.93$). The alpha level was again adjusted for the number of variables subjected to Tukey's HSD-adjusted post-hoc comparisons – in this case .05/7 = .007. All of the following differences found between offender type were significant at $p < .007$. A descending trend was found in relation to use of *Physical coercion* across offenders (rapists > mixed > child molesters). The same descending pattern across offenders was found in relation to likelihood of *Weapon use* (rapists > mixed > child molesters). Although the rapists and mixed offenders did not differ with respect to *Victim injury*, rapists differed from child molesters in that the former offender type were more likely to cause injury to their victims. Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Means and Standard Deviations for Offence Severity Escalation by Offender Type

Escalation Factor	Rapists		Child Molesters		Mixed	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Frequent/clustered offending	1.16	.81	1.49	.71	1.32	.61
Psychological coercion	1.16	.77	.84	.69	.71	.71
Physical coercion***	**1.53**	**.67**	**.49**	**.65**	**.82**	**.67**
Weapon use*** **	**1.34**	**.75**	***.24***	***.56***	*.79*	*.79*
Victim injury***	**1.09**	**.69**	**.29**	**.61**	.68	.72
Escalation – other	.88	.71	1.02	.78	.75	.52
Overall escalation	1.41	.71	1.04	.78	1.00	.76

**$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$. Note: Bold and italics denote significant differences.

Research Objective 4: Offence Severity Escalation and Offence Process Factors

To examine the statistical predictive utility of the offence process factors for offence severity escalation, a logistic regression analysis was conducted on a median split of offence severity escalation total score to allow for restriction of the offender age and type variables as covariates. Variables retained from data reduction analyses were *Distorted cognitions*, *Antisocial orientation*, and *Interpersonal issues*. Regression results indicated an overall model fit of two predictors (*Distorted cognitions* and *Interpersonal issues*), -2 Log Likelihood = 119.64; $\chi^2(6) = 31.39$, $p < .001$. The model correctly classified 74.3% of the cases. Wald statistics indicated that the two significant variables predict greater

levels of offence escalation while controlling for offender type and age. Regression coefficients for these analyses are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Offence Process Factors and Offence Severity Escalation

	B	SE	Odds Ratio	Wald	95% CI
Distorted cognitions	.73	.43	2.10	2.90*	.90 – 4.77
Antisocial orientation	.44	.49	2.33	.81	.60– 4.01
Interpersonal issues	1.17	.50	3.22	5.54*	1.22– 8.50

*$p < .05$

Research Objective 5: Offence Severity Escalation and Offence Pathway

A 'Variable-Oriented' Approach. Preliminary t-tests were conducted to determine differences in Active/Passive offender pathway assignment and severity escalation in sexual offences. Both *Frequent/clustered offending* (t[107] = -3.16, $p < .01$) and *Psychological coercion* (t[107] = -2.22, $p < .05$) differed by pathway type. Active pathway offenders were more frequent/clustered offenders than Passive pathway offenders (M = 1.53, SD = .62; M = 1.11, SD = .79, respectively), and used more psychological coercion on their victims (M = 1.03, SD = .72; M = .72, SD = .71, respectively). Forward logistic regression was conducted to determine which independent variables (escalation factors: *Frequent/clustered offending*, *Psychological coercion*, *Physical coercion*, *Weapon use*, *Victim injury*, *Escalation – other*, and *Overall escalation*) were

predictors of Passive versus Active pathway assignment. Regression results indicate that the overall model of two predictors (*Frequent/clustered offending* and *Physical coercion*) were statistically reliable in distinguishing between the dependent variable, pathway assignment (-2 Log Likelihood = 215.30; χ^2 [7] = 20.42, $p < .01$). The model correctly classified 69.3% of the cases. Wald statistics indicated that these variables significantly predicted offence pathway. Specifically, the more frequent/clustered the offending became over time, and the more physical coercion was used, the more likely the offender was described by the Active pathway. Regression coefficients are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Passive/Active Offence Pathway and Offence Severity Escalation

	B	SE	Odds Ratio	Wald	95% CI
Frequent/clustered offending	.87	.24	2.39	13.32***	1.50 – 3.82
Psychological coercion	.34	.29	1.40	1.71	.85 – 2.32
Physical coercion	.51	.27	1.67	3.66*	.99 – 2.83
Weapon use	-.33	.26	.72	1.57	.43 – 1.21
Victim injury	.27	.28	1.31	.91	.75 – 2.29
Escalation – other	-.02	.26	.99	.00	.59 – 1.64
Overall escalation	-.32	.26	.73	1.50	.44 – 1.21

*$p < .05$, ***$p < .001$

A 'Person-Oriented' Approach. Between-cluster comparisons were conducted on the severity escalation variables. All findings were significant at the .05/7 = .007 alpha level. The *High Antisocial* offenders, as compared with the *Low Negative Affect* offenders were found to have greater levels of escalation on the following variables: *Physical coercion* (F[1, 107] = 7.68, p < .01), *Weapon use* (F[1, 107] = 10.81, p < .001), *Victim injury* (F[1, 107] = 8.28, p < .01), and *Overall escalation* (F[1, 107] = 8.82, p < .01). The two groupings did not differ on the *Frequent/clustered offending*, *Psychological coercion,* or *Other* escalation factors (p = .256, .260, and .146, respectively). Means and standard deviations for each of the escalation variables are presented in Table 10.

Table 10 Means and Standard Deviations for Offence Severity Escalation by Offence Pathway Clusters

	Cluster 1 (LNA)		Cluster 2 (HA-S)	
Escalation Factor	M	SD	M	SD
Frequent/clustered offending	1.30	.74	1.50	.67
Psychological coercion	.85	.69	1.05	.84
Physical coercion**	.77	.76	1.27	.77
Weapon use***	.57	.74	1.18	.91
Victim injury**	.51	.68	1.00	.82
Escalation – other	.85	.69	1.09	.68
Overall escalation**	1.02	.74	1.55	.74

**p < .01; ***p < .001

In sum, differences emerged between offender type and likelihood of displaying aspects of escalation across the offence history. Rapists were more likely than the other types of offenders to escalate in terms of their use of *Physical coercion, Weapon use* and *Victim injury*. Consistent with expectations, offence severity escalation variables statistically predicted offender assignment to the Active pathway. Specifically, *Physical coercion* was more likely to be demonstrated by Active offenders, as was *Frequent/clustered* offending. Consistent with predictions, offenders who displayed *Distorted cognitions* were more likely to escalate in severity of offences. However, *Interpersonal issues* were also statistically predictive of escalation. The High Antisocial pathway cluster was more likely to present offence histories with *Physical coercion*, *Weapon use*, *Victim injury*, and *Overall escalation*.

DISCUSSION

The growing literature on risk factors for sexual offence recidivism suggests that changes in certain dynamic risk factors may precede the perpetration of a sexually intrusive act. These proximal offence factors, however, have not often been investigated in tandem, nor in relation to other relevant indications of risk such as offending frequency and severe offence trajectories. Further, despite theoretical and empirical evidence indicating differential presentation of such factors across various types of sexual offenders, methodological considerations relating to offender differences have not received consistent attention. Therefore, the present study examined the presentation of risk markers proximal to the re-offence process in a sample of high-risk sexual offenders. Specifically, the present study was constructed around five particular objectives as related to offender type, offence frequency, and severity escalation in sexual offending. First, the offence process factors related to the frequency of sexual offending were investigated. Second was an exploration of potential differences in offence process factors across pathway distinctions of the Self-regulation model, as well as a test of dynamic risk profiles as derived from the offence process factors considered herein. Third, the association between offence pathways and the frequency of offending was examined. The two remaining objectives centred on an exploration of severity escalation. The fourth objective considered which offence process factors were associated with an

upward trajectory in offence seriousness across offenders' sexual offence histories. The fifth and final objective investigated whether the presence of severity escalation differed as a function of offence pathway. It was anticipated that the present study would provide additional insight into offence-relevant details of the group of offenders that criminal justice professionals consider to be the most frequent, dangerous offenders.

Characteristics of sexual offence histories

The present sample of sexual offenders identified by criminal justice agencies as high-risk provides a preliminary descriptive profile of offenders flagged for community risk management efforts. Given that 191 of 230 offenders in the ISPIN system were eligible for inclusion in the present study, the profile is highly representative of individuals the system considers likely to re-offend. Interestingly, the three different types of sexual offenders identified by the tripartite classification showed approximate equivalent representation within the sample. The 191 offenders were comprised of 72 rapists (37.5%), 66 child molesters (34.6%), and 53 mixed offenders (27.6%). The composition of this group suggests that a range of sexual offenders are currently regarded as high risk, without reference to preferred victim type. Although it would seem that as a group these offenders do not show an overall preference for any particular type of victim, it can also be stated that the majority of these offenders (72.1%) have only offended against victims falling in one age category.

A particular strength of the present study was in the coding of all victims and incidents noted throughout offenders' criminal and judicial records.

Frequency counts were also inclusive of victims and incidents that may have preceded an offender's first official contact with the criminal justice system. Whereas a considerable number of studies have considered only official convictions and/or charges (e.g., Cann et al., 2007), the coding undertaken in the current study was able to provide a more accurate picture of the occurrence and nature of repeat sexual offending.

Besides preferred victim type, offenders in the current study displayed differences on additional aspects of their offence histories. Child molesters, as compared to rapists and mixed offenders, had a significantly greater number of both sexual offence victims (means of 8.88, 4.42, and 6.77, respectively) and sexual offending incidents (means of 44.41, 11.33, and 21.82, respectively). Child molesters' propensity to be comparatively prolific offenders has been repeatedly documented (e.g., Abel et al., 1987; Looman et al., 2005). As such, a similar trend was expected and found in the present sample. Indeed, the average number of victims and incidents of these high-risk offenders are situated between those reported from lower-risk samples (e.g., Smallbone & Wortley, 2004) and Abel and colleagues' (1987) findings, the latter of which are generally considered to be vast overestimates. It is also, however, important to note the relatively large standard deviations for both number of victims and number of incidents is indicative of considerable heterogeneity across child molesters. Such variability in the indicators of offence frequency suggests that the present sample of child molesters are not all as active as the group mean might suggest.

The mixed offenders, by nature, are a particular group that perpetrates sexual acts against both adults *and* children. Given that they are considered 'riskier' than other sexual offenders, along with their more indiscriminate victim selection, it may seem surprising that they did not emerge as the most prolific type of offender over the others. Recall that mixed offenders were found to have a significantly greater number of victims, but not incidents, than those who offended exclusively against adults. Although statistically different, the average victim count (M = 6.77) and the average incident count (M = 21.82) of the mixed offenders may better approximate that of the child molesters (M = 8.88 and 44.41, respectively). That the mixed offenders appear between the rapists and child molesters with regard to absolute numbers of victims and incidents raises the possibility for a few different types of offending patterns. If they are more akin to child molesters in this way, the mixed group would repeatedly offend against children at the times when suitable victims are available, and against adults when child victims are not. It may also be the case that these mixed offenders are offending against victims above and below the age of 14, but also display a more specific pattern of victim selection. For instance, these offenders could be habitually targeting children who display signs of early maturational development, or adults who are late in their development of secondary sex characteristics. Alternatively, this 'mixed-type' of offender may indeed offend against adults and young children on very disparate ends of the maturational spectrum. Further research is needed to substantiate these suppositions. As empirical research on mixed-type sexual offenders continues to accumulate we can draw more

reasonable conclusions as to what may be a fair representation of their offence style.

Offence process factors and their relationship with offender type and offence frequency

Findings relating to the number of victims and incidents identify factors that distinguish the more prolific offenders and consequently, determine who may be considered particularly risky and dangerous across the different types of the high-risk offenders. In the present study, the primacy of certain offence process factors varied by offender type. Some of these factors were also significantly related to the indicators of offence frequency. The offence process factors that were found to vary across offender type will be discussed first. The discussion will then turn to those factors that demonstrated post-dictive utility for the frequency indicators.

More so than the other two offender types, rapists were found to display higher levels on the offence process factors represented by *Interpersonal issues*. Indicators such as relationship problems, interpersonal conflicts, and a propensity to seek out or create periods of interpersonal tension were combined to characterize this offence process factor. Conflict has been noted as a common feature in rapists' interpersonal domains (McKibben et al., 1994) - a premise that was supported by the present findings. A possible explanation as to the significance of *Interpersonal issues* in the offender type analysis, but not the subsequent offence frequency analyses could be in the specificity of this factor's association with rapists. That is, the persistence analyses examined offence

process factors across all offender types, and may have muted the significance of the *Interpersonal issues* factor. Given that the present sample of rapists are repeat offenders, the significance of *Interpersonal issues* for high-risk rapists is in line with previous research relating interpersonal conflict with recidivism (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005). This is not to say that child molesters have fewer or less significant interpersonal difficulties. A sizable proportion of child molesters can be characterized by avoidant personality traits and lack interpersonal relationships with peers. Consequently, these offenders would not have similar opportunity to experience or create interpersonal conflict with adult peers - a different type of interpersonal issue that would not have been captured in the present *Interpersonal issues* coding item.

One hypothesis generated through the present study was that offenders displaying higher levels of behavioural manifestations of affective states (e.g., hostility, aggression, impulsiveness) would show higher indications of both aspects of offence frequency. This hypothesis was not supported by the present study's findings, and these types of manifestations have in fact shown inconsistent relationships with recidivism (e.g., Hanson, Harris, Scott, & Helmus, 2007; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004; Knight & Thornton, 2007). The mixed offenders as a group did display higher levels of *Negative affective state* (e.g., anger, embarrassment, stress) than the other two offender types. With mixed offenders in particular, one possible explanation for their greater pre-offence experience of negative affect than the other offender groups is that the negative feelings that increase in intensity during their offence process may be relatively

generalized. More specifically, if their negative affect is not accompanied by fixated beliefs that a particular victim group is responsible for producing these negative feelings, they may offend against an available victim of any age. It is also possible that as a group, mixed offenders are more prone to engage in sexualized coping strategies. Dysfunctional methods of coping that use inappropriate sexual activity to manage negative emotions may increase during periods of stress (Cortoni & Marshall, 2001), and is associated with recidivism (Hanson et al., 2007). Pre-existing negative affect may therefore underlie subsequent expressions of hostility and aggression. In the present study, the manifestations of such aggressive impulses were not significantly displayed pre-offence in any offender type, as demonstrated by non-significance of the *Affective-behavioural manifestation* item. However, for the mixed offenders, negative affect may have been expressed through the actual commission of sexualized violence.

Typically, a link between negative emotion and sexual behaviours in child molesters has been found (Whitaker et al., 2008), and hostility has been associated with sexual recidivism in both rapists and child molesters (Prentky et al., 1995; Rice, Quinsey, & Harris, 1991). With regard to the child molesters in the present sample, they may represent a certain subgroup of child molesters who do not offend exclusively during periods of acute distress, but engage in effortful *Offence positioning* activities from which they derive pleasure. The characterization of these child molesters as high-risk, repeat offenders with sizable victim and incident offence histories is consistent with such a supposition.

Further, sexually deviant offenders (i.e., those with a deviant sexual preference for children, or sexual violence) need not experience a negative affect state as part of the offending process – an aspect recognized by Ward and Hudson (1998). Indeed, experiencing positive pre-offence affect may be indicative of a poorer prognosis; that is, these offenders may be at ease with their sexual preference and actively seek or create offence opportunities through which they may be expressed.

Child molesters displayed higher levels of the *Offence positioning* factor than did the rapists, suggesting that offences perpetrated by child molesters will typically involve a greater amount of forethought, manipulation, and planning. Prior research has demonstrated a relationship between victim access and recidivism (Hanson et al., 2007; Hanson & Harris, 2000). Individuals who offend against children have been noted to engage in behaviours that serve to set up an offence scenario, or a general opportunity to offend (Craven et al., 2006; Hanson & Harris, 2000). These types of actions may be initiated by taking on employment where children are likely to be present, befriending adults with children, or even entering into a relationship with an adult female to gain proximity to potential victims (e.g., Leclerc, Proulx, & McKibben, 2005). Grooming behaviours, such as non-sexual touching or wrestling with a target may be a first-step in testing limits of physical contact, which then progresses to more intimate acts of kissing, removing clothing, and fondling private parts. In fact, the degree of intrusiveness in a sexual offence has been related to the degree of victim compliance, often gained through strategic methods used by the offender (see Leclerc, Proulx,

Lussier, & Allaire, 2009; Leclerc & Tremblay, 2007). The relative difference in success of *Offence positioning* behaviours between child molester and rapist offender groups may be in the greater ease of manoeuvring an adult into isolation versus encountering a solitary child. There is also likely to be a relatively greater degree of difficulty in manipulating a potential child victim to the point where their caregivers are comfortable in leaving the child alone in the offenders' company. Child molesters' offences may therefore lack overall spontaneity, as their victim preference necessarily requires more calculated methods of selection.

In addition to *Offence positioning*, the offence process factors of *Justification/fantasy* and *Pornography/masturbation* were also observed in greater frequencies in relation to the child molesters as a whole. Moreover, each of these offence process factors demonstrated a significant relationship with an indicator of frequency. *Justification/fantasy* was found to significantly post-dict offenders' number of victims, whereas *Pornography/masturbation* showed a similar association with number of incidents.

The 'justification' portion of the combined *Justification/fantasy* variable relates to an offender's capacity to rationalize or legitimize his sexually intrusive acts, or to 'explain away' the negative aspect to the perpetration of sexual violence. Results indicated that *Justification/fantasy* was particularly relevant to child molesters' offence processes, and the importance of the 'justification' component to molestation may be viewed in light of their targeting a particularly vulnerable, as well as non-sexual, segment of the population. An aspect of the

grooming process noted amongst child molesters is self-grooming, or re-affirming one's justification for sexually offending (Craven et al., 2006).

Analyses also revealed that the more that *Justification/fantasy* is present in any type of sexual offenders' offence process, the greater number of victims are likely to be present across the offence history. Whether educating a 'little adult' in the ways of sexual intimacy, or misdirecting acts of vengeance on a woman as a result of perceived wrongs, rationalizing offending could facilitate the progression from thought to action. For rapists (and perhaps mixed offenders) processes of cognitive adaptation such as justification may stem from more generalized hostile beliefs about women. Malamuth and Brown (1994) report that offenders holding hostile views see women as manipulative, deceitful, and untrustworthy, especially in matters concerning their interactions with men. Not only does endorsement of this view predict sexual aggression in community (Malamuth, Linz, Heavey, Barnes, & Acker, 1995; Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, & Tanaka, 1991) and offender (Hanson et al., 2007) samples, a greater number of sexual recidivists tend to have this general orientation towards women than do first-time offenders (Thornton, 2002).

The finding linking offence justification to repeat offending is also consistent with the supposition lately offered by Mann and colleagues (2010). These researchers contend that sexual offenders are able to act in ways that may be contrary to their values and moral beliefs, as would any other member of the general population. Whether offenders feel ashamed and remorseful but feel they cannot, or ultimately do not desire to control their inappropriate behaviour

and therefore develop cognitive justification and rationalization strategies to overcome cognitive dissonance is a legitimate question warranting further empirical attention.

Consistent with previous research linking violent sexual fantasy with violent sexual offending (Deu & Edelmann, 1997; MacCulloch et al., 1983), the present study found a significant association between sexual fantasizing and prolific victim histories. Sexual fantasizing in general, or the combination of deviant and non-deviant fantasy content, may help to identify the most frequent of the high-risk offenders. Previous research has also shown that offenders who endorse deviant sexual fantasies are deemed more dangerous and more emotionally disturbed than offenders who disclose non-deviant sexual fantasies (e.g., Deu & Edelmann, 1997; Prentky et al., 1989). Indeed, a number of clinicians endorse the view that the content of offenders' fantasies can escalate in frequency and intensity, thereby propelling the subsequent commission of sexually violent acts (Howitt, 2004). Where sexual fantasizing is deviant in nature, the content may relate to an offender's preference for coercive sexual activities, or further, a proclivity for sexual sadism. Previous research has related 'sexualized violence', which comprises these two sexual preferences (Lalumière & Quinsey, 1994) to sexual recidivism (Knight & Thornton, 2007; Mann et al., 2010).

As part of the offence process, sexual fantasy may be a component of the 'sexual preoccupation' risk factor identified through past research, which "refers to an abnormally intense interest in sex that dominates psychological functioning"

(Mann, Hanson, & Thornton, 2010, p. 198), and may lead to engaging in high levels of sexual behaviour (Langström & Hanson, 2006). Sexual preoccupation has emerged as a significant predictor of recidivism in a number of studies (Hanson et al., 2007; Knight & Thornton, 2007), and its contribution was further substantiated through Hanson and Morton-Bourgon's (2004) meta-analysis. Using structural equation modelling to investigate the behavioural antecedents of deviance in sexual aggressors, Lussier et al. (2007) found higher rates of sexual aggression in child molesters with higher levels of sexualisation. The three constructs comprising sexualisation - impersonal sex, sexual compulsivity, and sexual preoccupation, were represented by behavioural indicators such as overwhelmed by deviant or non-deviant sexual fantasies, use of prostitutes, compulsive masturbation, and use of pornography.

One of the offence process factors consistent with these findings is *Offence positioning*, which in the present study includes pre-sexual behaviours. Coding of this factor included consideration of aspects such as sexual promiscuity, and elevated levels of sexual contacts. Interestingly, this factor was a significant component in the present sample of child molesters' offence processes. It is possible that its effect was not strong enough to retain significance across offender type, when examined in relation to the frequency indicators. Instead, it is possible that a relevant behavioural manifestation of sexual preoccupation can be seen through the significant role of *Pornography/masturbation*. It may be the case that the increased use of pornography as well as masturbatory activities during the offence process is an

expression of an underlying, and acutely activated, sexual preoccupation, as indicated by Lussier et al.'s (2007) findings. The significance of the *Pornography/ masturbation* factor with regard to sexual offending incidents will now be explored.

The *Pornography/masturbation* variable emerged as a significant statistical predictor through the analyses which sought to relate offence process factors and incidence rates. The present findings suggest that, amongst high risk offenders, pornography use is significantly greater amongst child molesters than rapists. Collectively, the results from a number of studies have demonstrated pornography use as more frequent amongst rapists than child molesters (e.g., Carter et al., 1987; Earls et al., 1989; Pithers et al., 1988). Pornography use has in fact been noted in dynamic risk studies employing exclusive samples of child molesters (Proulx et al., 1999). Similarly, the focus of the present study concentrated on factors proximal to the offence process, and demonstrates that whereas rapists tend to report more pornography usage in general, child molesters increase their viewing in the acute phases of the offence process.

The difference between rapists' and child molesters' pornography usage may also stem from a combination of consumption and production of pornographic materials. In the age where the internet is an immense file-sharing resource, individuals can easily join online forums geared towards child pornography. Therefore, online sources may play more of a facilitative role for child molesters than other offender groups. Additionally, child molesters may spend time in the midst of their offence process reminiscing over photographs or

videos of victims acquired through previous offences. Regardless, *Pornography/ masturbation* was found to feature in the offence process of all types of prolific sexual offenders. The most prolific rapists and mixed offenders may engage in similar consumption and production type activities. Thus, pornography's role as a proximal disinhibitor (Seto et al., 2000; Ward, Hudson, et al., 1997) may work similarly to condone aggression by increasing sexual arousal (Carter et al., 1987) in all types of offenders.

To reiterate, along with the *Justification/fantasy* variable, *Pornography/ masturbation* was an offence process variable associated with the most prolific offenders. The positive relationship between *Pornography/masturbation* and incidence rates suggests a link between these offenders' cognitive processes (i.e., justification) and sexual fantasizing with their actual behaviour. Although it is implausible to determine a strict temporal sequence of cognitions and behaviours, it is possible to posit the existence of a cyclical pattern amongst the offenders' cognitions and behaviours from the present dataset. It may be the case that for repeat offenders, fantasizing drives pornography consumption, which encourages masturbatory activities, which may further increase an offender's appetite for pornography, and so on until their activities culminate in an act of sexual violence. In studies that have investigated a number of dynamic factors together, offenders have self-reported sexually deviant fantasizing, pornography use, and masturbatory activities prior to a sexual offence (McKibben et al., 1994; Proulx et al., 1999), but the specific sequence of events has not yet been substantiated.

The final offence process factor that displayed significance in relation to both offender type and frequency of offending was the *Antisocial orientation* variable. In terms of offender type, rapists more frequently endorsed the behavioural indicators comprising this factor. The combined *Antisocial orientation* factor included offenders' non-sexual behaviours (e.g., non-sexual criminal activity, violent acts), tendency to associate with antisocial peers, and substance use in the period proximal to reoffending. The present finding confirms the typical rapist profile outlined in previous studies. Rapists as a group tend to have more of an antisocial profile than do other sexual offenders, engaging in substance use, violent acts, and to endorse a general criminal lifestyle (Abracen et al., 2006; Firestone et al., 2000; West, 1983). Lussier, Proulx, et al.'s (2005) findings demonstrated that accounting for early and persistent antisociality in childhood and adolescence sufficiently explained a criminal propensity in rapists. Moreover, a general construct of deviance explained the onset, frequency, and variety of criminal activity in adulthood for sexual aggressors, but frequency of sexual crime was not part of this general construct for child molesters in particular (Lussier, LeBlanc, & Proulx, 2005). The presence of negative social influences is also one of the strongest predictors of criminal recidivism in general offenders (Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996), and may help to explain why the *Antisocial orientation* factor was most prominent in rapists.

More specifically, the antisocial profile likely has developmental antecedents that may be associated with their acts of sexual violence. Lussier and colleagues (2007) report that early and persistent indications of an antisocial

nature (e.g., aggression, violence) were associated with subsequent sexual offending. In rapists displaying this type of behavioural pattern and lifestyle orientation, behaviours representing the antisociality construct may 'ramp up' in the period directly preceding a re-offence - a premise supported by the present findings.

The *Antisocial orientation* factor also showed post-dictive utility in relation to offenders' number of sexual offences. The relationship between *Antisocial orientation* and incidents of offending was in the negative direction, and held across offender type. That is, the present results show a significant, but inverse relationship between the predictor and the outcome. Interestingly, the *Antisocial orientation* factor was not associated with number of victims. Taken together, this pattern of findings may suggest that those offenders with higher antisociality may persistently take advantage of similar opportunity structures, through repeat offending with the same victim. This type of repeat offending is found amongst typically low antisocial child molesters, and may be true for a particular group of low antisocial rapists who offend against their intimate partners, friends/ acquaintances, or adult family members with whom they have frequent contact. Also, offenders described by the *High Antisocial* profile, described further in subsequent sections, had similar numbers of offending incidents, but more victims, than those with lower displays of antisociality. It may be the case that the *High Antisocial* profile identifies offenders more likely to seek out offence opportunities with a greater number of victims. These present findings are predominantly in line with those reported by Lussier et al. (2007). A high

antisocial tendency (the ‘externalization’ factor) was associated with impersonal sex, as well as a higher rate of offending as indicated by number of victims and charges. The present study represents a preliminary exploration of offence processes with these particular high-risk offenders, therefore replication will be key in further explicating the association between specific components of dynamic offender profiles and repeat offending.

A further explanation for this finding may be found in the general offending literature. The antisociality factor has more consistently and linearly predicted general recidivism (Hanson et al., 2007), and is a prominent player in the major theories of crime (e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2006; Sutherland & Cressey, 1970). It seems to be the case that across all types of offenders in the current sample, there are those who expend energy pursuing antisocial activities other than sexual offending. If these offenders diversify their antisocial activities to pursue substance use, violent acts, and other criminal behaviours, there may be a decrease in the actual number of sexual offences perpetrated overall.

As the direction of the relationship between antisociality and number of sexual offences was found to be opposite to that suggested by previous research (Andrews & Bonta, 1994; Mann & Beech, 2003), the inconsistency between the present study and the general literature base also merits some discussion with respect to measurement issues in past research.

Attitudinal and lifestyle factors used as proxies for an orientation towards antisociality have varied across studies. For instance, definitions of ‘antisocial orientation’ have been limited to or combined indicators such as offence

supportive attitudes (Maurana & Mann, 2006), negative social influences (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004), and resistance to rules and supervision (Hanson et al., 2007; Hanson & Harris, 2000) as examples. The different ways in which this factor is defined is a possible reason for its inconsistent association with sexual recidivism because each of the individual indicators has shown inconsistent patterns of association (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004). The inconsistency may also be due to treatment (Craig, Thornton, Beech, & Brown, 2007; Olver, Wong, Nicholaichuk, & Gordon, 2007) versus community (Hanson et al., 2007) samples employed, or to the context in which the construct has been measured (judicial proceedings versus correctional intake assessments; Hanson et al., 2007; Mann et al., 2010). As it stands, further efforts should determine if there are more consistent ways of conceptualizing and measuring antisociality (Mann et al., 2010). In sum, the set of findings relating offence process factors to offender type and offence frequency suggests that there are pertinent factors particular to different types of offenders, and that amongst high-risk offenders there are factors that relate to offence frequency across all offender types.

Associations between offence process factors, offence pathway and offence frequency

Through a series of analyses based on the offence pathways specified in Ward and Hudson's (1998, 2000) Self-regulation model, the present study was able to assess offender strategy (as collapsed across offending goals) posited by the underlying theory as displayed in a sample of high-risk sexual offenders. The present study also addressed the relevance of offence process variables as

ascribed by the Self-regulation model's hypothesized offence strategies, as reflected across offender type. The findings from the pathway analyses will now be discussed in turn.

First, there are some noteworthy differences between the present study's analysis of offence process factors and the model validation conducted through past research studies (e.g., Bickley & Beech, 2002; Yates & Kingston, 2006). Most importantly, the data discussed here do not reflect the four combinations of offender self-regulation strategies and goal formulations as stipulated by the theoretical model. Only the Active and Passive pathways showed variability across offenders, whereas the Approach pathway was over-represented, and the Avoidance pathway under-represented, precluding exploration of meaningful differences within the sample.

The lack of offenders characterized by the Avoidant pathway suggests that the Approach/Avoidant dichotomy is not necessarily a meaningful construct as applied to high-risk offenders. Lindsay and Goodall's (2006) work with intellectually disabled offenders has also indicated that the Avoidant offence orientation is not likely to be pervasive within repeat offenders because the majority of individuals who subsequently recidivated had been assigned to the Approach pathway. Even studies that determined offence pathways in lower risk samples have demonstrated variability with respect to pathways followed. Bickley and Beech's (2002) sample of treatment-eligible community-based offenders showed an 80%-20% split between the Approach/Avoidant pathways. These child molesters were lower risk than the present sample, as almost half (47.1%)

had no previous conviction for a sexual offence beyond their index offence. These findings, along with the present results, suggest that at least some level of motivation and desire to offend must be present - not simply to carry out a sexually aggressive act in the first place, but in order for an individual to repeat his acts of extreme social deviance.

The distribution of offender types across the Active/Passive pathways was consistent with expectations. As anticipated, child molesters were more frequently characterized by the Active (*n* = 46, 69.7%) than the Passive pathway (*n* = 20, 30.3%). Studies with lower risk samples have reported more variable distributions (e.g., Active = 53.6%, Passive = 43.6%; Bickley & Beech, 2002), but higher risk samples more closely match that of the present study (e.g., Active = 65.2%, Passive = 34.8%; Yates & Kingston, 2006). Further, the uneven distribution of child molesters in favour of a more directed, purposeful offence orientation corresponds with their greater likelihood of engaging in planning and grooming behaviours pre-offence.

When contrasted with Yates and Kingston's (2006) mixed offenders who were characterized exclusively by the Approach-Explicit pathway, the mixed offenders in the present study were represented more equally across the Active/Passive distinction. There were considerably more of these offenders in the present (*n* = 53) than in Yates and Kingston's (*n* = 4) sample. No other known study has included the mixed offender subgroup in validations of the Ward and Hudson model and thereby precludes definitive conclusions about the typical pathway characterization of mixed offenders. When considering within-group

differences, both the mixed offenders and the rapists were represented across the two offence pathways, demonstrating that pathways are not exclusively associated with one type of sexual offender (Yates & Kingston, 2006). Overall, the distribution of offender types across pathways only partially supports one of the fundamental premises of the Self-regulation model - that different offender groups display different self-regulatory styles, motivations, and goals of offending (Ward & Hudson, 1998). Future studies should continue to include these offender categories to delineate further differences in offending characteristics, as these may pertain to offender-specific assessment and treatment considerations.

The present study also examined differences between pathways with respect to frequency indicators. Results revealed that Active offenders had a greater mean number of incidents than Passive offenders (34.17 versus 21.45, respectively). Some previous research suggests that Active offenders may not exhibit high rates on the frequency indicators (e.g., Bickley & Beech, 2002; Lindsay et al., 2008). Due to the use of convictions, charges *and* incidents to form the frequency outcome measure in the present study, and the use of a particularly high-risk sample, these methodological points of difference may be able to explain the present finding with respect to offending frequency and pathway. Many previous studies have relied on official convictions as an indicator of repeat offending. Often, official convictions are often the best indicator of frequency that is available to researchers. Conviction records can be problematic because is well-established that a substantial proportion of sexual offences remain unreported (Koss & Oros, 1982), and the majority of charges do not result

in convictions (Statistics Canada, 1993). Therefore, the use of sexual convictions alone to determine characteristics of offenders' criminal histories restricts our ability to approximate 'ground truth' of the offence histories. Using multiple indicators of frequent offending, the results reported herein support the notion that the likelihood of repeat offending differs by pathway type. An additional point to address regarding the pathway findings is that Active offenders were found to have perpetrated more sexual offence incidents, which was very likely influenced by the prevalence of child molesters in this pathway grouping. However, the influence of child molesters in this pathway is not clear as there was a non-significant finding for pathway and number of victims. The more comprehensive 'incidents' outcome used in the present study makes direct comparisons with conviction-based outcomes of previous studies difficult.

Variations in offence-related factors are expected according to the underlying conceptual structure of the Self-regulation model. The model describes the (Approach-) Active pathway offender as one with a capacity for explicit decision-making and active use of goal-directed strategies and behaviours (Ward & Hudson, 1998). Consistent with this offender description, high-risk Active offenders were more likely to engage in planning and strategic pre-sexual offence behaviours (i.e., *Offence positioning*) as part of their offence process. This observed offence characteristic demonstrated an empirical relationship with the different pathways as stipulated by the theoretical model, and in part replicates validation research conducted to date (Webster, 2005; Yates & Kingston, 2006). Furthermore, this finding was exhibited across offender

type, and as such, the importance of assessing offence planning within all groups of offenders was demonstrated.

The significance of only one offence process factor in differentiating Active/Passive offenders does not make obvious the model's practical utility in terms of providing an empirically grounded distinction across high risk offenders. This is not to say that the model's framework or practical applicability are brought into question. The model's recognition of multiple pathways to offending, and its utility for identifying treatment targets in offenders based on these pathway characteristics is well documented (Bickley & Beech, 2002; Hudson et al., 2002; Webster, 2003; Yates & Kingston, 2006). Overall, the pathway results do support Ward and Hudson's (2000) view that Approach-Explicit offenders are likely to be the most difficult to change in treatment. Approach-Explicit offenders are perceived to have intact self-regulation and are thus the most predatory, making calculated rational choices regarding when, how, and with whom to offend. Similar to Webster's (2005) sample of offenders who had recidivated following participation in sexual offender treatment, the present sample predominantly contained Approach-Explicit offenders. These were also offenders who had prolific offence histories, many of whom had cycled through numerous correctional treatment programmes during their various periods of incarceration.

An issue relating to the sample composition needs to be addressed with respect to offence process factors and offence pathway. The Self-regulation model posits that the Approach-Explicit pathway offender is sexually deviant and whose offence planning is explicit and intentional – a description which the

present study supported only partially. *Offence positioning* was the only factor that demonstrated post-dictive utility with regard to pathway characterization. However, because the model anticipates differences between the Approach/ Avoidance rather than the Passive/Active distinction across a number of the offence process factors, this is one possible reason why none but the very factor that defines the distinction between the two groups (e.g., *Offence positioning*) was significant. To illustrate this point further, Bickley and Beech (2002) found that differences in cognitive distortions supported the Approach/Avoidant distinction, but the distinguishing factors between the Passive and Active offenders yielded a less conclusive pattern of results. These authors posit that offending behaviour may not represent the individual's overall self-regulation style; that is, self-regulation styles may vary by context. If clinician-raters in their study gave undue weight to offending behaviour in their pathway determinations, their ratings may have inaccurately reflected the pathway most characteristic of the individual. The present study also used offence-specific information upon which to base the ratings which may account for the lack of Passive/Active distinction. In addition, there is likely to be an issue with predictor-criterion contamination with pathway allocation and the *Offence positioning* factor. Evidence of planning forms part of the pathway determination and thus may provide part of the reason that *Offence positioning* was a significant predictor of pathway. It is also important to recognize that many of the offence process factors defined herein may be observed within multiple pathways; that is, with the

exception of a distinguishing pathway variable such as *Offence planning*, they are generally not exclusive features of any one pathway.

Offence Pathway Clusters – *Low Negative Affect* and *High Antisocial* Offenders

Whereas previous efforts to validate the Self-regulation pathways have used offenders' characteristics and traits (e.g., Bickley & Beech, 2002) or risk levels (e.g., Yates & Kingston, 2006), the present study focused on specific offence variables and derived offence process pathways via cluster pathway analysis. The pathway cluster analysis offered particular strengths to compliment the 'variable-oriented' analysis, and was informative in a number of ways. Results from the present cluster analysis would not have been influenced substantially by offender type due to the relative equality of rapists, child molesters, and mixed offenders distributed across the two clusters. Following the promising research leads demonstrated by Beauregard and colleagues (2007), the present study contributed to the preliminary evidence for offence script-based offence pathways in sexual offenders. Deriving offence pathways from offence process factors, the present sample of high risk offenders were predominantly characterized by the *Low Negative Affect* cluster (85.7%, n = 163), displaying lower levels of negative affect, distorted cognitions, negative outlook, and fewer impulse regulation issues than their counterparts in the second, less populated cluster.

The 27 *High Antisocial* offenders, comprising just under one-sixth of the sample, are of interest by virtue of their elevated levels on almost all (11 of 14) of

the offence process factors. Even within this already high-risk sample, the findings identified a subgroup whose members employ offence-related cognitive distortions (*Distorted cognitions, Justification/fantasy*), are in a negative affective state (*Negative affect state, Negative outlook*) and who display a number of observable behaviours and social functioning issues (*Antisocial orientation*, *Pornography/masturbation, Withdrawal/isolation, Employment problems, Interpersonal issues, Interpersonal orientation*) through the course of their offence progression. Offenders characterized by the *High Antisocial* cluster pathway also had more victims in their offending histories. From the preliminary offender profile outlined by the present study, High Antisocial offenders may have issues with coping and self-regulation, as displayed by their negative affect and apparent impulse control problems. Future studies could address the correspondence between these clusters and the pathways in greater detail. At present, the cluster profile is able to make explicit the offence process factors that are most pertinent in the pre-offence period. Thus, the offence pathway description as derived from the pathway clusters may be a useful approach to identifying a particularly dangerous subgroup of already high-risk offenders. Should findings be replicated through subsequent cross-validation, one application of the offender profile obtained from the cluster solution is to generate hypotheses regarding specific interventions tailored to the groups. For instance, the numerous dynamic variables displayed by the *High Antisocial* offenders could be targeted to address these particular vulnerabilities.

Offence severity escalation and its relation to the offence variables

In addition to identifying specific subgroups of offenders by their offence pathways, offence severity escalation was included in the current line of inquiry to provide insight into an additional dimension of dangerousness. Findings of the present study are in accordance with the few others (e.g., Hazelwood et al., 1989; Warren et al., 1999) that demonstrate offence severity escalation to be a measurable component of sexual offence histories. The overall pattern of severity escalation observed is consistent with the existence of escalating subgroups (Hazelwood et al., 1989), and the pattern of findings for offender type and pathway cluster suggests the relevance of escalation to certain sexual offender groups.

Adding to the recent set of findings of Lussier et al. (2008) who reported an association between low-self control with the 'use of force' aspect of offence severity escalation, the present study found that the *Distorted cognitions* offence variable demonstrated a relationship with escalation. That is, in line with predictions made for the high-risk sample, offenders who displayed cognitive risk markers in the offence process were also likely to escalate in the severity of coercion or violence perpetrated across subsequent sexual offences. Specifically, this offence process variable reflects aspects of rumination, distorted thinking (e.g., hopelessness, revenge), and a negative self-view, which consistent with theory (Gannon & Polaschek, 2006; Mann & Beech, 2003) and research (Abel et al., 1984; Bickley & Beech, 2002; Gannon & Polaschek, 2004), implicates cognitive risk markers as key components in offending risk. The

present findings add to the research signifying cognitive aspects of risk are identified as important proximal offence process variables (Hanson & Harris, 2000; Proulx et al., 1999).

Along with *Distorted cognitions*, the *Interpersonal issues* (relationship problems/interpersonal rejection/seek-create conflict) offence factor also statistically predicted escalation. The dual presence of these two factors in predicting escalation indicates that for some offenders, interpersonal conflicts or rejection may incite perseveration on perceived wrongs and an externalization of blame. For illustrative purposes, the rapist may interpret conflict with his intimate partner as consistent with his schema that women are manipulative and deceitful, and consequently ruminate on revenge themes, whereas for the child molester, a rejection by a peer may feed into his already low self-worth, and will use it as confirmation of his views that children are more accepting, or at least more pliable to his requests for company.

Contrary to predictions, offenders' *Antisocial orientation* did not show significant utility in predicting an upward trajectory in offence seriousness across the sexual offence history. This finding suggests that for high-risk offenders, associating with antisocial others, substance use, and non-sexual criminal activity has relevance for rapists' offence process, but does not factor in to their, or other offenders' likelihood of escalating.

Offence severity escalation and offender type

In relation to offender type, rapists' offence histories contained comparatively stronger indications of escalation than did those of child molesters

and mixed offenders. Rapists' escalation was displayed through physical coercion, weapon use, and resultant injury incurred by the victims of their assaults, and is consistent with data acquired from past research indicating that violence is more often a component of rapists' than child molesters' offences (Lanyon, 1986; Porter et al., 2000; Terry, 2006). Child molesters will rarely employ physical force to secure victims, more often using psychological manipulation and desensitization tactics to gain compliance (Murray, 2000). Interestingly, mixed offenders did not emerge as comparatively 'riskier' in this regard, as is suggested by findings such as those reported by MacPherson (2003). Offenders in his sample who varied in their preferred victim selection criteria demonstrated severity escalation. The primary difference between MacPherson's sample and that of the present study is that MacPherson investigated non-contact to contact escalation, whereas the present study examined escalation across contact offences exclusively. It may be that mixed offenders as a group have a greater likelihood progressing from non- to contact sexual offences as MacPherson concludes, but they develop a consistent set of offence behaviours *within* their contact offences. This supposition is supported by the relative stability of offence seriousness across Lussier et al.'s (2008) subsample of contact offenders.

Offence severity escalation and pathway

Finally, the present investigation included an exploration of offence severity in relation to the various offence pathways. Although the lack of Avoidance offenders in the sample precluded analyses across the Approach/

Avoidance distinction, i.e., testing the hypothesis that Approach, as compared with Avoidance offenders, would display greater levels of escalation, partial support for this prediction can been seen through the presence of escalation across the sample of primarily Approach oriented offenders. In contrast, findings from a number of previous studies have refuted the existence of escalation as a component of offence histories in all but a small minority of sexual offenders (e.g., Mair & Stevens, 1994; Stermac & Hall, 1989). It is likely that the present study of high-risk Approach offenders corresponds to the minority of high-risk offenders in other research samples. Theory suggests that Approach offenders form acquisitional offending goals, which may be fuelled by aggressive urges or cognitive distortions pertaining to sexual entitlement (Ward & Hudson, 1998). Pathway distinctions could be post-dicted by the Approach-Explicit offenders' increasing frequency and clustering of offences, as well as their increasing use of physical coercion across offences. As posited by the Self-regulation model, Approach-Explicit pathway offenders have a tendency to seek out and create offence opportunities (Ward & Hudson, 1998), which corresponds to their frequent/clustered offending tendencies.

The escalation and pathway cluster analyses highlights two rather unique aspects of the present investigation – the inclusion of multiple indicators of escalation, and derivation of sample-based pathway clusters. Results from the pathway cluster analysis demonstrated a tendency of *High Antisocial* offenders, as compared with the *Low Negative Affect* offenders, to display more indications of escalation as a whole, and specifically showed greater levels of *Physical*

coercion, *Weapon Use*, and *Victim Injury*. Although all types of offenders in the High Antisocial cluster exhibited these aspects of escalation, it is noteworthy that these were displayed by escalating rapists in the present sample, and correspond closely to variables distinguishing escalators among prolific rapists in previous research. For instance, escalators identified in Hazelwood and colleagues' (1989) incarcerated rapist sample also displayed increasing frequency of offending, levels of force, and victim injury. It is possible that their 10 rapists from the total sample of 41 repeat offenders who were observed to increase significantly in these aspects over a series of sexual assaults may exhibit traits commensurate with *High Antisocial* offenders in the present study. As Hazelwood et al. (1989) suggest, aspects of brutality observed in this escalating subgroup may be indicative of sexual sadism as a motivating component of their assaultive behaviour. Deviant sexual interest has been identified as one of the best predictors of sexual recidivism (Hanson & Harris, 2000; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005), and a significant factor discriminating sexual offenders who recidivated with a non-contact sexual offence from those whose offence severity escalated (MacPherson, 2003). This deviant personological factor has been related to increased risk for re-offence (e.g., Hanson & Bussière, 1996), and therefore implicates associated risk markers such as multiple sexual offence types, physical harm to victims in sexual offences, use of weapons and/or threats in sexual offences, escalation in frequency or severity of sexual offences, and number of sexual offences.

Hazelwood and colleagues restricted their sample to rapists exclusively precluding parallels to be drawn across offender type – future research efforts would benefit from inclusion of different offender types to elucidate trends across escalating offenders. As indicated by the present set of findings, there appears to be a subset of child molesters and mixed offenders whose offence characteristics may approximate rapists' escalation tendencies. A next step towards determining if this subset holds across additional samples would first necessitate replication of the cluster findings, and then proceed to a more in depth analysis of this minority of offenders characterized by the *High Antisocial* cluster. More specific suggestions for future research are detailed in the following review of the study's major limitations.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

The present study was constructed to maximize methodological strengths (e.g., increased sample size, inclusion of different offender types, more complete representation of offence histories), but it nonetheless has several of its own limitations. Although there are additional aspects that limit the present study, five of the main limitations are addressed.

First, a limitation stems from the nature of the high-risk sample selected. The sample included sexual offenders currently flagged as high-risk by the RCMP in British Columbia, thus, it is not possible to generalize the current findings with an acceptable level of certainty to moderate or low risk offenders without use of the mixed-methods approach and cross-validations that have been called for in the literature (Polaschek et al., 2001). Subsequent studies should

extend the present line of inquiry to allow for comparisons with lower-risk levels of offenders. It is likely that low-risk offenders have not yet, or will not develop the type of planning strategies and behaviours that more experienced high-risk offenders have developed over the course of their criminal careers. Lower risk offenders may also display a unique set of internal process or behaviours during their offence process. It may also be the case that low-risk offenders displaying similar offence process characteristics to high-risk offenders are predictive of repeat offending. Studies providing comparisons between, in addition to within, risk levels is just one step towards helping to clarify similar features of the offence process. Although generalization across risk levels is not tenable, the present results could be applicable across other high-risk sexual offender samples. The ISPIN system from which they were derived was not selective based on geographic or other criteria that may restrict the nature of the sample.

Second, the current study was limited by the retrospective file review methodology on which its analyses were based. Despite incorporating information from many and varied sources in each offenders' police dossier (e.g., official criminal justice and correctional reports, offender interview/self-report, victim statements), data collection that is strictly file-based may overlook important internal motivations that are inherent to the offence process. It is also conceivable that a high-risk sample may inadvertently over-represent offenders in the Approach pathways. Moreover, previous reports have noted that file documentation tends to accentuate the period directly preceding the offence, at which time offenders are likely to adopt approach goals (Ward & Hudson, 2000;

Yates & Kingston, 2006). Because the focus of the study was specifically gauged to this temporal pre-offence period, the proliferation of Approach pathway offenders is an expected consequence. It would be advisable for future studies to utilize a mixed-method research design that supplements file review with offender interviews to collect additional self-reported insight into offence-relevant factors. Such an approach may also balance the proportions of offenders found across each of the pathway distinctions.

Third, compounded by the absence of a broad temporal component to offenders' histories, retrospective file coding precludes determination of the temporal sequence of factors pertinent to the re-offence process. For any given offender, there may be variation in the relevance of factors prior to each individual offence. Information used to inform coding of the offence variables was only able to provide a depiction of the presence, but not the relative relevance, of the significant psychological and contextual aspects of the progression towards re-offence in the aggregate. However, although the relevance of offence process factors may fluctuate across the offence history, previous studies have found stability rather than variation in allocation to offence pathways pre- to post-treatment. For example, only two of 11 sexual recidivists in Webster's (2005) incarcerated offender sample deviated from their original pathway characterization subsequent to participation in treatment, suggesting that offence-related strategies/goals are an entrenched aspect of the offence process.

This last point regarding the progression of the offence process over time underscores the fourth, but perhaps the most significant limitation of the present

study – the inability to establish whether the risk markers are also present in the *absence* of offending. An essential next step is to determine if these internal processes and external situations are unique to the pre-offence period, or if these are relatively constant or recurring variables in the life experience that are only associated with recidivism when experienced concomitantly with another factor. Future research could address the sample limitations and extend foundational work herein by conducting a longitudinal recidivism study, for which the present study provides the foundation. This study would involve sequencing events in the offenders' life, and more specifically, offending behaviour over time in order to establish a temporal pattern to the occurrence of these factors.

Fifth and finally, the scope of the present line of inquiry also did not permit direct exploration into the more stable, characteristic features of the offenders. There is, however, a need to capture the causal origins of dysfunctional sexual behaviour in order to advance integrated theory-building efforts to account for converging developmentally-relevant learning events, psychological vulnerabilities, and offence process factors (e.g., Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending; Ward & Beech, 2006). Through a line of research focusing specifically on offending trajectories, Lussier and colleagues have made strides towards identifying the behavioural and psychological antecedents to sexually aggressive outcomes with a developmental trajectory framework (e.g., Cale et al., 2009; Lussier et al., 2005; Lussier et al., 2007; Lussier & Healey, 2010). Other studies are demonstrating the added significance of key developmental (i.e., childhood victimization), and psychological (i.e., contacts with mental health services)

factors, in combination with the offence-related variables, to treatment program completion (Craissati & Beech, 2006). The present study offers some insight for current treatment modalities, and direct implications to current offender management strategies. Applications to both of these areas are discussed in turn.

Implications for treatment practices

In light of the potential malleability of dynamic factors, it is not surprising that these factors are a central focus in what is the most widely endorsed treatment approach for sexual offenders. This approach, used in an estimated 90% of treatment programs in North America, is labelled Relapse Prevention (RP; see Wheeler, George, & Marlatt, 2006; see Pithers et al.'s [1983] original conception of the relapse model). In this context, RP is centered on the concept that an offender will likely experience a 'relapse' into previous patterns of deviant behaviours. As its name suggests, RP endeavours to prevent such relapses through strategies to identify and manage situations that may compromise abstinence (Wheeler et al., 2006).

RP as a treatment model for sexual offenders has received much criticism in the literature due to its largely untested modification from its development for substance addiction. It has also been widely implemented prior to empirical validation in correctional and community-based sexual offender treatment programmes. RP necessitates that an offender have and verbalize insight into his offence process triggers, yet there has been relatively little scientific evidence upon which criminal justice and mental health professionals can draw. The

present study provides an additional piece of support for the offence factors with the most potential relevance for subsequent treatment needs. Treatment plans could be refined to attend to relevant factors for different types of high-risk offenders (e.g., interpersonal conflict and negative affect for rapists and mixed offenders, respectively), and escalators (e.g., distorted cognitions, interpersonal conflict). The more traditional treatment approach has been criticised for incorporating too many, perhaps irrelevant, treatment components. Consequently, some have argued that treatment should target its intervention strategies on the essential dynamic risk factors involved in sexual offending (Thornton, 1997).

The dynamic factors measured in the present study also signalled potential targets for intervention across high-risk offenders in general (e.g., *Pornography/masturbation*, *Justification/fantasy*). Given that sexual offenders are typically poorly motivated to alter their behaviour (Laws & Ward, 2006), these offence factors may instead be more indicative of suitable management, as opposed to treatment, candidates. Furthermore, it has been suggested that many, if not all, risk markers stem from underlying neuropsychological, social, and/or psychological mechanisms (Ward & Beech, 2006). Dynamic factors measured in the present study and elsewhere (e.g., Hanson et al., 2007) may in fact reflect ongoing, current expressions of underlying propensities or traits, rather than purely contextually-driven signals to re-offence. Thus, it is conceivable that at least some of the causal factors will not readily change in response to deliberate intervention. Mann et al. (2010) note that the treatment

potential of deviant sexual preferences, for example, continues to be debated in the clinical and scientific arenas. There are also indications that the effectiveness of intervention strategies for negative affect states and deviant sexual fantasies may vary by offender type (McKibben et al., 2001), and in conjunction with other personality characteristics (Lussier, Proulx, & McKibben, 2001).

With regard to the intent and practical applications of the present study, researchers have contended that the majority of underlying propensities will manifest in consistent and predictable ways that are relevant to recidivism (Mann et al., 2010). Thus, the manifestations should still contribute to identifying the risk markers that are most pertinent to individual formulations of risk. Even if the mutability of a factor fails by contemporary treatment modalities, efforts should still be made towards teaching the offender behavioural management techniques. Restrictive conditions are often also reasonable and necessary to protect society and to facilitate successful reintegration of the offender into the community. Due to the repetitive nature of some offenders' sexual behaviour, it is likely that constant supervision by people who are aware of offence progressions and signs of deterioration are essential to an integrated, and individual, risk management strategy. The offender could be monitored for changes in certain behaviours, at which time additional restrictions could be implemented to decrease exposure to environmental triggers.

The most relevant offence-related variables for any particular offender should guide community-based management efforts, as the efficacy of safety planning policies for sexual violence depends on refining our understanding of

the problems for which they were designed. A number of policies have been developed to address the concern evoked by community-based offender management strategies, including sex offender registries and long-term supervision orders. Some potential implications of the present study are presented after a brief review of current offender management policies.

Implications for community-based offender management protocols

Comprehensive reforms to the Canadian criminal code in the early 1990's intended to improve the options available for members of Canada's criminal justice system to control offenders deemed an undue 'high-risk' to the public (Solicitor General Canada, 2001). Offender management provisions now stipulate that dangerous violent/sexual offenders could remain under the purview of the criminal justice system in some restrictive capacity. However, should parole criteria be met at some future point in time, and/or the offender's risk lowered to meet or fall below thresholds for acceptable risk to public safety, it becomes incumbent on the criminal justice system to facilitate gradual and supervised re-integration of the individual into society.

The need to ensure public safety in these instances has led to the creation of specialized observation and monitoring units within police forces, such as the RCMP's Integrated Sexual Predator Observation Team (ISPOT) in British Columbia, Canada. In order to fulfill their mandate of effectively surveilling and controlling community-based sexual offenders, these high-risk offender management teams are charged with identification of a breach where the court has imposed specific conditions, and timely intervention in the offender's process

towards commission of a sexually violent act. Thus far, previous field experience and relatively unsubstantiated clinical opinion have formed the basis for senior investigators' recommendations to their surveillance teams for identifying possible precursors to re-offending. In conjunction with parole/probation officers, investigators must piece together the elements they believe are indicative of impending re-offence in order to formulate a judicial application requesting continued surveillance, or a Breach of Probation/ 810 Order. In this capacity, investigators educate the Courts on offence relevant behaviours through inclusion of an 'offence cycle', containing factors deemed relevant to the offence process.

The present study contributes to a growing pool of resources that can assist B.C. police construct cases to Crown when a breach of court-imposed conditions has been observed. In their applications to the courts, police can reference the need for intervention at a certain point in the offender's progression towards re-offence (e.g., when a particular breach has occurred). For instance, results suggest that child molesters in general should be monitored for increased levels of offence-supportive justifications, sexual fantasizing, pornography use, masturbation, and behavioural indications of active offence positioning. Combined with case workers' knowledge of the offenders' history, individually relevant risk factors can be considered more carefully in the case-specific risk formulation. The ability for investigators to produce a report to prosecution requesting specific sanctions and/or conditions based on empirically valid rationale will enhance the credibility of investigative strategies concerning

offence-relevant factors. Moreover, courts can use empirical information to modify conditions that have significance for a particular offender, as opposed to imposing 'blanket' conditions, some of which may not have relevance to the offender in question. Overall, detailing elements in the offence process can be used to inform observation teams as to potential internal and external indicators that merit particular attention, and just as importantly, to those that are likely irrelevant to certain offenders.

The present study also offers a number of indications of frequent offending which may be used to identify the most prolific, repeat offenders. It has been noted previously that the effectiveness of specific community safety policies (e.g., long-term supervision orders) are dependent on our ability to differentiate offenders according to risk level (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2009). It is necessary to distinguish offenders on both ends of the risk spectrum (i.e., those who have a greater than 50% probability for re-offence, and those whose probability is less than 10%; Hanson & Thornton, 2000), and also from amongst the pool of high-risk offenders. An important point to note here with respect to the present study is its basis in a group of offenders designated *a priori* as high risk. Heterogeneity within the risk levels has been found among 'high-risk' offender samples similar to that of the present study. Lussier, Deslauriers-Varin, and Râtel (2010) provided a descriptive profile of offenders in B.C. designated high-risk and eligible for restrictions under an 810 Order. The authors reported that although their sample of offenders received higher risk ratings than typically found for convicted sexual offenders, only one in four of these offenders were classified as

high risk on both of the two risk instruments employed. Again, taking the two measures into account, almost half of the sample was considered no more than medium risk, with approximately one-eighth of those offenders as no more than low risk. Findings such as these underscore the importance of corroborating classifications that have been based on external selection criteria. In the context of the present discussion of 'high-risk' individuals as identified by the RCMP ISPIN assessment template, two established risk assessment measures did categorize the majority of offenders as 'high-moderate' to 'high' risk (SONAR – 81.6%; SVR-20 – 74.3%). According to both of the measures, however, just under one-fifth on the SONAR and almost one-quarter on the SVR-20 were classified as 'moderate' or 'low- moderate' risk. These findings may warrant a review of the process for identifying high-risk offenders most deserving of intensive community supervision. More germane to the present study, and similar to findings from Lussier et al.'s (2010) descriptive profile, certain dynamic risk factors appear to show promise in identifying those most at risk in the community.

When viewed in combination, the offence factors found to be associated with repeat and severe offending provide a description of those warranting the often limited offender-management resources. Those whose offence-supportive cognitive schemas and sexual fantasizing are activated during the pre-offence period are likely to have the most prolific victim histories. Offenders who increase both their pornography use and masturbatory activity pre-offence are likely to be those who have perpetrated the greatest number of incidents across their

offending histories. Moreover, any offender who is active in his offence preparation, as manifested through offence planning and victim grooming strategies, is also likely to be a prolific offender, as are those who display high negative affect and lower levels of pro-social functioning (i.e., the *High Antisocial* cluster offenders).

Based on their prolific offending histories, the child molesters appear to be the 'riskiest' offender group. However, offender management resources may also need to consider escalation in offence severity as an additional dimension of dangerousness. Using combinations of offence process factors associated with the frequency and escalation indicators, evaluators can differentiate between those most likely to be at the highest levels of risk. For instance, when offence severity escalation is entered into the risk formulation, Active *High antisocial* rapists who display distorted cognitions and interpersonal issues in particular seem to represent a sub-group of repeat offenders whose offences become progressively more violent and injurious. Identifying those who are likely to exhibit frequent offending along with increasing offence severity would greatly assist in pro-active target prioritization. Providing police agencies with indicators relevant to aspects in the sexual offence process can help to promote more effective monitoring strategies for the most dangerous community-based sexual offenders. Toward this aim, graduated and responsive interventions can be implemented prior to the perpetration of a future sexual offence (Hanson & Harris, 2000).

Conclusions

Building on numerous studies that have related dynamic variables to the incidence of recidivism (e.g., Hanson & Harris, 2000; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005), the present study identified dynamic variables associated with repeat offending. By employing frequency indicators as outcome variables, the results can be related more directly to the frequency of repeat offending in different types of high-risk sexual offenders. An overview of the findings suggests that the most pertinent offence factors for sexual offenders include behaviours such as pre-sexual, planning, substance use, pornography, and masturbatory activities, in addition to associating with antisocial others, engaging in interpersonal conflicts, fantasizing and justifying offence-related activities, and displaying negative affect. When frequency of offending is included, it may be most advantageous to examine a subset of these activities, including offence rationalization, sexual fantasizing, use of pornography, and masturbation.

As suggested by the present findings, there is a multidimensional aspect of sexual re-offence risk. Empirical research efforts are expanding to include varied internal and external factors (e.g., Hanson & Harris, 2000; Proulx et al., 1999), which will refine our conceptualization of offence factors that are included as components of theoretical offence process models (e.g., Polaschek et al., 2001; Ward & Hudson, 1998). Risk prediction efforts also recognize that a combination of risk factors best predicts recidivism. Reviews of the literature have established that no single risk factor has a strong relationship to sexual offending (e.g., Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004). As

the relationship between any single risk factor and recidivism is small, researchers and assessment professionals should avoid being unduly influenced by the presence of any one of these factors (Mann et al., 2010). Conversely, although a particular risk factor may be integral to the offence process, it is unlikely to predict offending in isolation from other features of the offender and his environmental context (Hudson et al., 2002). Assessments should be oriented to the most relevant factors for a particular of offender, and most important for offender management practice, the lack of a significant association displayed by some factors in the present study does not discount their contribution to the offence process for any given offender. In order to produce the most useful and accurate prediction of risk possible, it is incumbent upon evaluators to include a range of factors in a comprehensive evaluation (Beech et al., 2003; McGuire, 2000).

Findings from the present study provide insight into offence process factors that may signal imminent re-offence in the most frequent sexual offenders. Additional insights offered from the bottom-up, 'person-oriented' approach to offence pathway analysis may provide an alternate means of further reducing heterogeneity amongst very high-risk, predominantly Approach-oriented sex offenders. Although the factors selected for inclusion showed promise as acute precursors to offending, they are not purported to comprise an exhaustive list of all possibly relevant rapidly changing factors associated with the timing of recidivism. This study contributes to the growing body of literature intending to inform accurate assessments of the currently identified risk factors for different

types of offenders, and those specific to very high-risk offenders. The contributions made by continued research efforts identifying risk-relevant factors will help effectively facilitate community-based offender supervision strategies, and thus the criminal justice goals of public safety and offender management.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A ISPIN File Review Coding Protocol

ISPIN File Information Background Data Participant #: _____ Coder:_____ Date of Review: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY		
Date of Birth	_____ /_____ /_____ DD MM YY	☐ 99. Unknown
Ethnicity	☐ Caucasian ☐ First Nations ☐ Asian ☐ South Asian ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic	☐ 97. Other _____ ☐ 99. Unknown
Ever Been Married	☐ No ☐ Yes	☐ 99. Unknown
Education	☐ No schooling ☐ 8th grade or less ☐ 9th – 11th grades ☐ High school (GED) ☐ Technical or trade certificate ☐ Some college/university ☐ Diploma / Bachelor degree ☐ Masters or PhD degree	☐ 97. Other _____ ☐ 99. Unknown
Number of Children	☐ None ☐ Yes _____ (number)	☐ 99. Unknown

Treatment	☐ No treatment history ☐ Medication _____ (specify) ☐ Individual Therapy _____ (specify) ☐ Group Therapy _____ (specify) ☐ Substance Use Program _____ (specify) ☐ Sex Offender Therapy _____ (specify) ☐ Other _____ (specify) **Resistance to treatment** ☐ No ☐ Yes _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
	Legal and Criminal History	
Age at First Formal Criminal Justice Contact	☐ No previous contact ☐ _____ (age in years)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY

Age at First Violent (Non-sexual) Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (age in years)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Age at First Sexual Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (age in years)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Number of Charges for a Criminal (non-violent/non-sexual) Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (number) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Number of Charges for a Violent (Non-sexual) Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (number) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY

Number of Charges for a Non-Contact Sexual Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (number) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Number of Charges for a Contact Sexual Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (number) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Number of Convictions for a Criminal (non-violent/ non-sexual) Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (number) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY

Number of Convictions for a Violent (Non-sexual) Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (number) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Number of Convictions for a Non-Contact Sexual Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (number) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Number of Convictions for a Contact Sexual Offence	☐ None ☐ _____ (number) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence) ☐ _____ (specify) ☐ _____ (sentence)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY

	Risk Assessment History	
ISPIN Template Rank	_____ (rank)	☐ 99. Unknown
Actuarial Measures	☐ None	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
	☐ SORAG _____ _____ (score) (percentile) _____ (categorization)	Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
	☐ VRAG _____ _____ (score) (percentile) _____ (categorization)	Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
	☐ HCR-20 _____ _____ (score) (percentile) _____ (categorization)	Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
	☐ SVR-20 _____ _____ (score) (percentile) _____ (categorization)	Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
	☐ STATIC-99 _____ _____ (score) (percentile) _____ (categorization)	Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
	☐ SONAR _____ _____ (score) (percentile) _____ (categorization)	Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
	☐ Other _____ _____ (score) (percentile) _____ (categorization)	Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY

Offender Designation	☐ None ☐ Dangerous Offender ☐ Long-term Offender	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
SEXUAL OFFENCES	**Offender Type Summary Details**	
Predominant Age of Victim (Offender Type)	☐ Rapist (adult victims; age: 15+) ☐ Child Molester (age: 0-14) ☐ Extra-familial ☐ Intra-familial ☐ Both ☐ Mixed Age _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
Predominant Gender of Victims	☐ Male Only ☐ Female Only ☐ Male and Female	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
Predominant Relationship to Victim(s)	☐ Stranger ☐ Family Member ☐ Friend ☐ Co-worker / acquaintance ☐ Mixed _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
Total Number of Victims	_____ (number)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
Total Number of Incidents with Each Victim	☐ Victim 1 _____ ☐ Victim 2 _____ ☐ Victim 3 _____ Total: ☐ Victim 4 _____ ☐ _____ ☐ Victim 5 _____ ☐ Victim 6 _____	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
Multiple Victims in One Incident	☐ No ☐ Yes	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____

Multiple Incidents with One Victim	☐ No ☐ Yes	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
Predominant Method of Establishing Contact with Victim	_____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
	Offender Pathway	
Predominant Offender Pathway	☐ Avoidance - Passive ☐ Avoidance - Active ☐ Approach - Automatic ☐ Approach - Explicit	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
SEXUAL OFFENCES	**<u>Offence Progression Details</u>**	
Description of Offence Process	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____
	Cognitive Factors	
Cognitive Factors	☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N _____ _____

Distorted Thinking / Processes	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Engaging in Rumination	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Engaging in Deviant Sexual Fantasy	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Engaging in Non-Deviant Sexual Fantasy	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Engaging in Adaptation Processes	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Mental Health Symptoms	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present ☐ Delusions ☐ Hallucinations ☐ Hostility/Anger/ Aggressiveness ☐ Confusion/Disorientation ☐ Manic symptoms ☐ Other _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Self-Concept/ View	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Cognitive Trigger - Other	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

	Affective Factors	
Affective Factors	☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Affective Factors / State	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Negative Outlook / Depression	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Physical Health Concerns	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Affective Trigger - Other	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
	Behavioural Factors	
Behavioural Factors	☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Affective – Behavioural Manifestation	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Substance Use	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present ☐ Alcohol ☐ Drugs ☐ Both alcohol and drugs _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Associating with Antisocial Others	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Engaging in Non-Sexual Behaviours/ Offences	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Engaging in Pre-Sexual Behaviours/Offences	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Entering Restricted / 'No-go' Areas	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Offence Planning	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify) ☐ Covert Planning _____ (specify 'seemingly irrelevant decisions')	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Attempts to Stop / Alter Offence Progression	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Pornography Use	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify) ☐ Procured via Internet _____ (specify type) ☐ Pre-offence use ☐ During offence use ☐ Post-offence use	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Masturbation	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify) ☐ Pre-offence ☐ During offence ☐ Post-offence	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Withdrawal / Isolation	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Behavioural Trigger - Other	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
	Environmental/Contextual Factors	
Environmental / Contextual Factors	☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Living Situation	☐ Alone – supporting self ☐ Alone – subsidized ☐ Group living ☐ With family ☐ With friends ☐ No fixed address	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY

Living Situation Problems	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Employment Situation	☐ Not employed ☐ Part-time ☐ Full-time ☐ Seasonal	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Employment Problems	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Environmental / Physical Trigger – Other	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

	Interpersonal Factors	
Interpersonal Factors	☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Interpersonal Relationship Status	☐ Single ☐ Married/Common-law ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed ☐ Re-married ☐ Other _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY
Interpersonal Relationship Problems	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Number of Dependants	☐ None ☐ Yes _____ (number) _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY

Dependant Problems	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Friendship Problems	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Interpersonal Rejection	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Seek/Create Interpersonal Conflict	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Ability to Relate/ Socialize	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Orientation to Others / Society	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Interpersonal Trigger - Other	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
	<u>Post-offence Factors</u>	
Affective Response to Offence	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Cognitive Response to Offence	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Attempts to Avoid Detection	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Post-Offence Response - Other	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

SEXUAL OFFENCES	**Offence Escalation Details**	
History of Relevant Violent/ Sexual Offences	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ Victim(s): ☐ Stranger ☐ Family/intimate partner ☐ Friend ☐ Co-worker/acquaintance ☐ Mixed _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ ____ /____ /____ ____ /____ /____ ____ /____ /____ ____ /____ /____ ____ /____ /____ ____ /____ /____ ____ /____ /____
Frequent/ Clustered Sexual Offending	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Psychological Coercion	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Physical Coercion	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Weapon Use	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Victim Injury	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Escalation Evident - Other	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N
Overall Escalation Evident	☐ No / Absent ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes / Present _____ (specify)	☐ 99. Unknown Source: _____ Date: ____ /____ /____ DD MM YY ***Individual Relevance:*** Y / M / N

Appendix B Offence Process Coding Item Descriptions

Cognitive Factors

- "*Distorted Thinking / Processes*" reflects evidence that the offender

espouses non-normal beliefs (but not delusions) or attitudes, or experiences non-rational thinking processes about himself, others or the world. Problems with self-awareness (e.g., lack of insight or lack of understanding/appreciation of their crime cycle risk factors) should be coded in this item. Items may include cognitive distortions related to their current life situation – doom, hopelessness, revenge thoughts, and negative thoughts about being 'controlled' by probation conditions.

- "*Engaging in Rumination*" reflects evidence that the offender thinks

repeatedly about a topic, or is plagued by repetitive brooding on usually negative thoughts or scenarios about the offender's life. Items may include ruminating on life stressors or on 'why bother', 'can't have a normal life' 'jail is easier' thoughts, sulking, and brooding.

- "*Engaging in Deviant Sexual Fantasy*" reflects evidence that the offender's

sexual fantasies include "non-normal", deviant, violent, and/or criminal participants or scenarios. Items may include prepubescent males/females, non-consensual acts, and prior victims/offences.

- "*Engaging in Non-deviant Sexual Fantasy*" reflects evidence that the

offender's sexual fantasies include "normal", non-deviant, non-criminal participants or scenarios. Items may include age-appropriate partners and consensual acts.

- "*Engaging in Adaptation Processes*" reflects thoughts and feelings evidenced prior to sexual offences that would include cognitive justification/ rationalization 'allowing' the offender to commit a sexual offence. Include attitudes, beliefs, values, cognitions that support or condone sexual violence, directly or indirectly encourage or excuse coercive sex, sex with minors, and other sexual violence. Attitudes can be stated directly, or shown through behaviour, such as membership in The North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), viewing/creating child pornography, or the offender's characteristic style of interacting with women. Items may include justification, attitudes condoning acting out through sexual violence, and viewing the activity as consensual (e.g., "the woman/kid wanted it to happen").

- "*Negative Self-View*" reflects attitudes or views that indicate a lowered and/or negative view of the self. Items may include being down on self, inadequacy, and low self-esteem.

Affective Factors

- "*Negative Affective State*" reflects the affective state from which the offender leads up to and/or carries out his offences. Include affective and emotional factors that are predominant in driving the offender to offend. Items may include anger, embarrassment, and stress.

- "*Negative Outlook/Depression*" reflects statements or indications of affect that are specifically related to a depressed state or negative outlook the offender has on his current situation, offending history, life, and/or future. Items may include depression and loneliness.

- "*Physical Health Concerns*" reflects evidence that the offender has concerns regarding an outwardly physical or internal condition. Items may include anxiety arising from physical/bodily issues.

Behavioural Factors

- "*Affective-Behavioural Manifestation*" captures behavioural indications of an underlying affective state. Items may include agitation, suspiciousness, and risk taking/stimulation seeking.

- "*Substance Use*" reflects use of alcohol and/or drugs prior to and/or during the offence that facilitate the offence behaviour. This item includes alcohol, illegal drugs, and the misuse of legal drugs (e.g., prescriptions), and indications may include drug/alcohol binge prior to offence, drinking with victim, and drinking alone or at bar prior to offence.

- "*Associating with Antisocial Others*" reflects belonging to, seeking out, or spending increased amounts of time, prior to the offence, with individuals, groups, or associations that may subtly support or even condone antisociality. Items may include gangs, child or deviant/violent pornography rings, and other child molesters/rapists.

- "*Engaging in Non-Sexual Behaviours/Offences*" reflect acts or behaviours that are not themselves sexual in nature, but that relate to another of the offender's offence process factors, or his behavioural progression overall. Among some sexual offenders, noted in rapists in particular (Knight & Prentky, 1990), the commission of a sexual offence has occurred during the commission of some other criminal act (e.g., breaking and entering for the purposes of theft). Offences of this kind could reflect opportunistic offending, covert planning, or mask overt sexual offence planning. Items may include acting violently, and seeking out 'drug buddies'.

- "*Engaging in Pre-Sexual Behaviours/Offences*" includes acts or behaviours that are or could reasonably be perceived as sexual in nature, but that are not *necessarily* antisocial/criminal, and that relate to another of the offender's offence process factors, or his offence process as a whole. This item includes non-contact sexual offences, exhibitionism, voyeurism, and items to be coded may include touching a child for non-sexual reasons, and engaging with adult to try to obtain sex (e.g., 'testing limits' by trying to kiss, touch, remove clothing, etc).

- "*Entering Restricted/'No-go' Areas*" includes the offender going to or hanging around in areas where potential victims are likely to be, or where they could be offended against more easily. Includes places that have been legally restricted for the offender, or that resemble past offending locations, and items

may include libraries, school zones, playgrounds, parks, secluded outdoor areas, prostitute ‘strolls’, and bars or strip clubs.

- “*Offence Planning*” reflects evidence that the offender has thought about (in some way - either minimally or extensively, non-specific/tentative or concrete plans) sexually offending in general prior to his offences, or has thought about or is acting on plans to offend in some form. Include indications of covert planning, as this type of planning involves what has been referred to as “seemingly irrelevant decisions,” which are choices that appear superficially reasonable and unrelated to criminal behaviour but that individually or collectively help set up high risk situations. Such decisions often appear practical and harmless to the offender, when in fact they serve to facilitate the offense process (Note: not if offender explicitly plans offence scenarios). Items may include setting out/going to a location with the intention of offending, ‘scoping’ out victim, setting up an offence situation. Covert planning may include buying children’s toys, babysitting, and positioning self for opportunity (attending locations where victims likely to be encountered).

- “*Attempts to Stop/Alter the Offence Progression*” reflects evidence that the offender recognizes that he is in his offence process and/or has some kind of insight that he will likely offend soon, and takes some action (internal or behavioural) that attempts to curb his impulses or avoid being in an offending situation. Items may include talking with someone about current offence-related thoughts/feelings and avoiding certain high-risk areas.

- "*Pornography Use*" reflects evidence that the offender used pornographic material of any kind before or during (e.g., taking pictures, videos) the offence. Items may include viewing videos with the victim prior to the offence.

- "*Masturbation*" includes evidence that the offender masturbates prior to the offence. Note if this behaviour occurs more frequently in the time leading up to the offence and if there is evidence it is connected with the offender's fantasizing, especially about offending situations, and or deviant scenarios.

- "*Withdrawal/Isolation*" reflects evidence that the offender does not engage in many social activities or engage in contact with others in the period prior to offending. Also includes offenders who isolate themselves in general (e.g., choose to live in an isolated location). Also include indications of a desire to hide offences or the risk factors associated with his offending. Items may include alienating self, and lying about life and circumstances, or being secretive about past offences, and denial of risk factors.

Environmental/Contextual Factors

- "*Living Situation Problems*" refers to any troubles, issues, or problems noted in the offender's living arrangements. Include rent/landlord issues, being kicked out/evicted, having no fixed address, staying at a place where there are stressors. Items may include potential victims in home (e.g., living with girlfriend and her children, living at friend's house, potential victims visit), and recently being kicked out of home.

- "*Employment Problems*" include any troubles, issues, or problems noted in relation to the offender's job or at his place of employment. Include stressors at work, problems with boss/co-workers, lay-offs, firings, etc. Items may include potential victims at or near place of work, and threat of losing job or actually being laid off.

Interpersonal Factors

- "*Intimate Relationship Problems*" reflected any troubles, issues or problems noted in the offender's intimate relationship(s) at the time of the offences. Items may include offending where the partner(s) is/are the victims, and fighting with partner and relationship instability.

- "*Dependent Problems*" included any troubles, issues or problems noted in the offender's relationship(s) with any of their dependants at the time of the offences. A dependent includes the offender's own children, step-children, or elderly parents who live with them or are directly reliant on them for money, etc. Items may include offending where the dependant(s) is/are the victims, or fighting with children.

- "*Friendship Problems*" includes any troubles, issues or problems noted in the offender's relationship(s) with any of their friends at the time of the offences. Items may include offending where the friend(s) is/are the victims, and fighting with friends.

- "*Relation/Orientation to Society/Others*" includes any indication that the

offender espouses an orientation to other people or society in general that is negative and/or facilitative towards sexual offending. Items may include superficial/shallow orientation to relationships and treating woman as objects.

- "*Rejection/Jealousy*" includes any thoughts, feelings, and actions that denote the offender is jealous of intimate partners, or has experienced or perceived rejection by a partner. Items may include rejection by female and jealousy created by actions or perceived actions by intimate partner.

- "*Comfort/Ability to Interact with Adults/Females*" reflects any indication that the offender does not possess the ability or comfort level to socialize or form appropriate relationships with age-appropriate or gender appropriate adults. Items may include feeling or behaving awkwardly around females, and exhibiting excessively discomfort in social situations.

- "*Creating/Engaging in Conflict*" reflects evidence that the offender seeks out, creates, or engages in conflicts or conflictual interactions with others. Items may include being argumentative and an increase in domestic incidents.

'Other' Item Factors

Within each of the five broad factor categories is an '*Other*' item (e.g., 'A*ffective – Other*') that should coded with respect to any additional dynamic factors that appeared relevant to the offence process. For instance, the other category was intended to capture offence process factors that would not otherwise be recorded among the present coding scheme's extant items, such as

changes in appearance, and deterioration of hygiene, as documented in Hanson and Harris (2000).

Post-Offence Responses

- "*Affective Response*" reflects feelings, as evidenced by statements made by the offender or otherwise noted in the file, the offender experienced in relation to his offences. Items may include lack of remorse, scared/guilty, and hates self for his actions.

- "*Cognitive response*" reflects thoughts (as reflected in the way the offender explains his offences), any time *after* offences have occurred that speaks to his cognitive interpretation of the event. This may be related to attitudes that support or condone sexual offending behaviour. It is necessary to differentiate between this item and item "*Engaging in Adaptation Processes*" (which occurs prior to an offence). Items may include victim blaming, and being verbal about or embellishing offences.

- "*Attempts to Avoid Detection*" reflects actions the offender carries out that would assist him in avoiding detection regarding the offence(s). Items may include moving residences/towns and cleaning up/rearranging crime scene.

Offence Severity Escalation Factors

- "*Frequent/clustered Sexual Offending"* refers to the number of offences, in terms of a 'cluster' of offences occurring within a relatively limited period of time. 'Frequent/clustered' offending would also be present if the time period between

offences becomes shorter over the offending history. Items may include offending against one victim per incident, multiple victims in one time period, and offences occur closer together across time.

- "*Psychological Coercion*" reflects evidence that the offender

has used and has become more likely or more severe in his use of psychological coercion on the victim(s) prior to or during the offence. Items may include death threats, and (psychologically) intimidating the victim.

- "*Physical Coercion*" includes evidence that the offender has

used and has become more likely or more severe in his physical coercion used on the victim(s) prior to or during the offence. Includes acts prior to, during the course of, or to further the commission of the offence. This item includes acts that are deliberate or reckless and have the potential to cause bodily injury to the victim. Items may include power, control, predominant element of aggression, and using alcohol/drugs to sedate victim.

- "*Weapon Use*" reflects the offender's use of or threats to use a weapon

during the commission of the offences, and specifically, if the threat or use of weapons during the incident became increasingly more severe or intrusive across offences. A 'weapon' could be any object with which the offender threatens the victim. Note if the offender brings the weapon with him to the offence location, has the weapon with him/on him at the time, or opportunistically takes a weapon found at the offence location. Items may include guns, knives, strangulation devices, and pepper spray.

- "*Victim Injury*" reflects evidence that there was psychological and/or physical damage incurred to the victim(s) as a direct result of the offence, and in particular if this damage appeared to become more severe across the offence history. Items may include cuts, bruising, and loss of consciousness.

- '*Escalation - Other*' item reflects any other indication that the offender is escalating in the frequency, intensity, severity, or diversity of offending behaviour across the offences. Items may include offending against progressively younger and/or more vulnerable victims (less resistance, easier to coerce), or if other people present during offence (either accomplice, other victims, people in the direct vicinity).

Appendix C

Offence Pathway Coding Sheet – Passive vs. Active Strategies (Bickley & Beech, 2002)

Part 1: Passive Versus Active Strategies

	Passive		*Active*
1. Degree of planning: Evidence for decision:	No awareness of any planning, covert route (e.g., seemingly irrelevant decisions)	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	Extensive and detailed overt planning
2. Degree of thought before acting: Evidence for decision:	Very impulsive, little thought before acting	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	Fully considers consequences before acting
3. Complexity of strategies used (either to offend or prevent offending): Evidence for decision:	Basic strategies, poor problem-solving abilities	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	Complex grooming or prevention strategies used
4. Locus of control (victim stance): Evidence for decision:	Passive stance, events controlled externally	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	Sees self as in control of own behaviour
5. Ability to delay gratification: Evidence for decision:	Problem of immediate gratification, "I want it now, sod the consequences"	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	Able to delay gratification for long-term gains (e.g., not getting caught)

Decision:
If "Don't know" please explain:

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Appendix D

Offence Pathway Coding Sheet – Avoidant vs. Approach Strategies (Bickley & Beech, 2002)

Part 2: Avoidant Versus Approach Goals

	Avoidant		*Approach*
6. Reported desire to control/prevent offending: Evidence for decision:	Awareness of harm of fear of consequences, active restraint	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	No restraint
7. Beliefs about children and sex (cognitive distortions): Evidence for decision:	Acknowledges abuse is harmful few cognitive distortions	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	Sees no harm in sex with children, many cognitive distortions
8. Degree of guilt/shame following offense : Evidence for decision:	Extreme guilt/shame reported following offense	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	No negative self-evaluation
9. Level of pro-offending behaviour: Evidence for decision:	No explicit engagement in activities	0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10	Explicit activities supporting offending (e.g., hobbies, clubs, child pornography, etc.)

Decision: Avoidant/Approach/Don't Know
If "Don't know" please explain:

Decision on most likely offense pathway:
based on (a) at time of entry to clinic and (b) using all information gathered during stay

*Avoidant-Active ___ Avoidant-Passive ___
Approach-Active ___ Approach-Passive ___

(*Tick as appropriate. Note if more than one pathway is running concurrently or if pathway has changed over time, indicate and explain below.)
Additional information:

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