Online CEM and Contact Child Sexual Offenders

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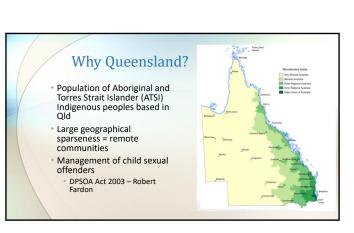Danielle A. Harris, PhD

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Introduction

- Currently working for Queensland Police Service (QPS) and PhD student at Griffith University
- Presenting research from Honours program (2018)
- A comparative study:
  - Men arrested for Contact Child Sexual Abuse (CCSA) and;
  - Men arrested for Child Exploitation Material (CEM)

Other comparative research

- Similar research in other international jurisdictions
- Not been done in a Queensland (QLD) or Australian context
- Studies have found CEM offenders to be:
  - Predominantly men (Wolak, Finkelhor & Mitchell, 2011)
  - Caucasian (Wolak, Finkelhor & Mitchell, 2011)
  - Less likely to have antisocial or psychopathic traits than CCSA (Babchishin, Hanson & Hermann, 2011)
  - Less likely to have a criminal history than CCSA (Babchishin, Hanson & Hermann, 2011)
  - More likely to be well educated than CCSA; and
  - Less likely to be in significant long term relationships than CCSA

Why Queensland?

- Population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Indigenous peoples based in Qld
- Large geographical sparseness = remote communities
- Management of child sexual offenders
  - DPSOA Act 2003 – Robert Fardon

Why CEM?

- Internet and technology has greatly increased CEM access
- 2-4% of men estimated to have viewed CEM (Seto & Ovid, 2013)
- CEM offenders more likely to be paedophilic (Seto, Cantor & Blanchard, 2006)
- Paedophilia does not mean CSA (Cantor & McPhail, 2016)
- Assumption of escalation – is this true?

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Escalation from CEM to CCSA

- Pornography precursor to contact offending dates back to before internet (Marshall, 2000)
  - Desensitisation, breaking down barriers to CCSA (Beech, Bartels, & Dixon, 2013)
  - Lack of empirical evidence of a direct causal link (Malamuth, 2018)
  - Perhaps one of many contributory factors in already developed sexual deviancy (Marshall, 2000)
- Low prevalence - based on charge and conviction data is 2 to 4.6% (Seto, Hanson, & Babchishin, 2011)
- Rates of CCSA amongst CEM offenders much more prevalent in studies involving self-report or polygraph data (DeLisi, 2016; Bourke & Hernandez, 2009; Neutze, Seto, Schaefer, Mundt and Beier, 2011)

Risk in an actuarial age

- Actuarial risk assessment – likelihood of reconviction
- Most abuse is not reported:
  - Approximately 10-18% is reported (London, Bruck, Ceci & Shuman, 2005)
  - 44% of CSA cases in US were dropped (Stroud, Martens & Barker, 2000)
- Scale of CSA is huge:
  - 12% of females and 4.5% of males (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005)
  - As high as 30% of children (Cutajar, Mann, Mullen & Ogloff, 2012)
- Risk of what, and how do we factor in harm?

Why is this important?

- Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) have become reliant on actuarial risk assessment
- This is based on likelihood of further sexual charges or convictions
- LEA allocate most intensive resources towards the highest risk
- CEM offending rates of recidivism is very low
- Therefore, CEM offenders are:
  - Less likely to receive SO treatment programs through prison;
  - More likely to maintain access to relationships, including with children, and;
  - Less intensive community supervision from LEA

Methodology

- Sample of 199 men:
  - 100 charged exclusively with Child Exploitation Material (CEM)
  - 99 charged exclusively with Contact Child Sexual Abuse (CCSA)
- Sample retrieved from administrative data from the QPS:
  - QPRIME (QPS police database)
  - National Child Offender System (NCOS)
  - Criminal histories
  - Sentencing reports
  - Court briefs

Measurement

- Variables:
  - Age
  - Ethnicity – Indigenous, Non-Indigenous
  - Occupation skill level – tertiary required, non-tertiary required, unemployed
  - Marital Status – married, de-facto, single, unknown
  - Access to children – direct, indirect, minimal, unknown
  - Criminal History prior to sexual offence arrest
  - Supervision violations and
  - Drug / alcohol use

Results - Univariate

- Age:
  - CEM group were 5 years older:
    - 41.76 (SD = 13.16) CEM group
    - 36.91 (SD = 14.20) CCSA group
  - A quarter of the CCSA group were under 25, compared to 10% for the CEM group.
  - 29% of the CEM group were over 50, compared to 18% CCSA.

Results - univariate

	CEM (n)	CCSA (n)	Cramer's V
Indigenous Status***	100	99	.271
Indigenous	1	16	
Occupation skill level**	85	85	.283
Tertiary required occupation	34	16	
Non-Tertiary skilled	35	34	
Unemployed	16	35	
Recorded with Criminal history***	37	65	.287
Supervision violations***	14	49	.382
Drug and alcohol use	43	35	.223
Access to Children***	59	87	.333
Direct access	22	39	
Indirect access	14	38	
Minimal access	23	10	
Long Term relationship	87	89	.116

Results - Multivariate

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	Wald	Odds Ratio	Wald	Odds Ratio	Wald	Odds Ratio
Age	6.576**	0.962	4.822**	0.962	2.145	0.973
Access to children			14.168***	6.746	13.481***	7.309
Tertiary occupation			3.853*	0.383	1.426	0.536
Unemployment			1.356	1.356	0.256	1.318
Criminal history					5.611**	3.215
Supervision violation					1.351	1.894

Summary

- CEM offenders have different characteristics to known CCSA offenders;
- These differences often mean CEM offenders score lower on actuarial risk;
- Heterogeneity of CSOs - Focus on intervention and supervision needs – not just grouping people into categories;
- Further research required on behavioural indicators for predatory and persistent CSOs;

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