

**The Official Organ of the Criminal Justice
Section of CPA**

CRIME SCENE

**PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND BARS AND
IN FRONT OF THE BENCH**

Criminal Justice Psychology
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Message from the Chair

Jeremy Mills, Ph.D., C.Psych

Greetings everyone. I hope many of you will be attending the Convention in Montreal. It is a great time to reconnect with colleagues and learn from the many excellent presentations and speakers.

I am pleased to announce this year's Criminal Justice Psychology Section award recipients. **Dr. Michael Seto** has been awarded the Don Andrews Career Contribution Award. Dr. Seto is likely best known for his contribution to the sexual offender literature in general, but more specifically to online and internet based sexual offending. His work covers assessment, prediction of reoffence, and treatment of both sexual offenders and offenders with mental disorders. Dr. Seto has been highly prolific and influential in his field with a Google Scholar citation count of over 25,000 (specifically, 25,590 at time of this writing), an h-index of 72 (i.e., 72 papers with 72 or more citations), and an *i*-10 index of 200 (i.e., 200 papers with 10 or more citations). **Drs. Anton Schweighofer and Lyne Piché** are the recipients of the Significant Contribution Award. Drs. Piché and Schweighofer are deserving of this award given the important contribution they have made to the field in their recently published book entitled, *Working with Offenders who View Online Child Sexual Exploitation Images*. To quote Dr. Seto (who highly recommends the book), "Lyne Piché and Anton Schweighofer have made an important contribution in developing this workbook for clients concerned or in trouble for their use of sexually explicit materials depicting children, and the clinicians who work with these clients...Clinicians and clients will greatly benefit from this excellent treatment resource." Congratulations are also extended to **Dr. Mary Ann Campbell** who is being recognized as an Elected CPA Fellow! As one of the featured speakers at the upcoming N6 conference next year, and our Section's Director-at-Large Police Psychology Representative, the Section is proud of Dr. Campbell on this achievement. Congratulations to all award recipients!

The Executive is changing with the departures of **Dr. David Hill** as Director-at-Large (Clinical) and also of **Dr. Pamela Yates** as she steps down from her role as Director-at-Large for the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice (NAACJ). We thank them both for their service on the Executive and to the Section. The elections are for two-year terms so the Executive will meet in the coming months to discuss next steps. The Executive will also be reviewing the Terms of Reference for the Section as it has been a number of years since the last review.

Good things happen every four years like the Olympics, the World Cup, and the North American Correctional and Criminal Justice Psychology Conference. A year of now we will be readying for the N6 conference in Victoria, BC. **Dr. Zoe Hilton** and the Steering Committee have been very busy and we are looking forward to updates in the coming months. N6 is not to be missed!





CPA-CJS 2026 Montréal Schedule

Thursday, June 4, 2026 (Room: Ste-Hélène)

- 10:00 Symposium:** *IPV Services and Co-Research* (Elnaz Moghimi)
- 11:00 12-Minute Talk:** *Exonerations Involving False Accusations of Child Abuse* (Caroline Erentzen)
- 11:15 12-Minute Talk:** *Evaluating a Brief Sexual Violence Intervention* (Kayla Joy Goruk)
- 11:30 12-Minute Talk:** *Older Adult Police Interviewing* (Sarah Arbeau)
- 11:45 12-Minute Talk:** *Coercive Control: How is it Operationalized?* (Millena Grajewski)
- 12:00 Symposium:** *Quantitative Insights on Reintegration in Canada* (Katelynn Carter-Rogers)
- 14:00 Symposium:** *CSEM use and contact sexual offending* (Abiraam Samithamby)
- 15:00 Symposium:** *Psychopathy in Youth* (Kristopher Brazil)
- 16:00 Criminal Justice Psychology Section Annual General Meeting:** All CJS Members welcome to attend; will include Section updates, elections, & presentation of Section Awards.
- 17:00 Career Contribution Award Speaker:** *Risk-Need-Responsivity: Where We Are and What's Next* (Michael Seto)
- 18:00 CJS Section Social Reception:** All CJS Members welcome to attend.

Friday, June 5, 2026 (Room: Ste-Hélène)

- 9:00 Symposium:** *Improving sexual education on sexting* (Julie Blais)
- 10:00 12-Minute Talk:** *Development and Validation of the MI-FPP* (Megan Lall)
- 10:15 12-Minute Talk:** *Peer involvement in grooming dynamics* (Kailey Thompson)
- 10:30 12-Minute Talk:** *IPV Survivors as Research Partners* (Melyk Engaging)
- 10:45 12-Minute Talk:** *Exploring the Impact of Shame and Guilt on Criminal Offending Behavior* (Megan Lall)
- 11:00 Symposium:** *Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Atlantic Canada* (Margo Watt)
- 12:00 Symposium:** *Sexual offending in Colombia* (Skye Stephens)
- 14:00 Symposium:** *Crime Severity, Mortality, and Forensic Psychology* (Andrew Haag)



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CPA-CJS 2026 Montréal Schedule

Friday, June 5, 2026 (Room: Grand Hall)

14:00 CJS Poster Session:

The Role of Mental Health in Wrongful Convictions (Jack Bailey)

Neurodevelopmental Disorders in Canadian Law: An Examination of CanLII Cases (Larbi Benallal)

A Qualitative Application of a Conceptual Model of Post-Incarceration Opioid Overdose Risk to a Canadian Sample (Melissa Corbett)

Adult Attachment Style Mediates Relations between Adverse Childhood Experiences and Maladaptive Personality Traits in Community-Based Men with Pedohebephilic Interests (Jessie Doyle)

The Impact of Apology Composition and Coercion on Jurors' Perceptions and Decision Making (Daniela Druzgala)

Procedural steps to obtaining an interpreter in Canadian suspect interviews (Brooklyn Ferguson)

Specialized Domestic Violence Courts: A Scoping Review of Heterogeneity, Outcomes, and Best Practices (Jolyanne Godin)

Policing the police: An analysis of civilian complaints against police officers (Emma Gray)

Gender Differences in the Experience of Finding Employment with a Criminal Record (Riley Groves-Meagher)

Men who Sexually Offend Against Strangers or Acquaintances are More Likely to Reoffend: A Meta-Analysis (Josie Labrecque)

Sexual health education and digital harassment: Examining the impact of messaging on the willingness to non-consensually disseminate nudes among undergraduates (Maritza Laurienzo)

From Control to Reintegration: Comparative Policy Approaches to Sexual Offenses and Public Safety (Caleb Linder)

Effects of Interpretation on Deception Detection Performance (Alia Louati)

Falsely Accused of the Unthinkable: The Stigmatizing Effect of Being Falsely Accused of Child Sexual Abuse (Sarah Martin)

Relational Proximity, Motive, and the Spatial Ecology of Child Homicide in Canada (Erin McMillan)

"They Asked For It:" The Influence of Diverse Beliefs and Identities on Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA) (Chloe Nelson)

Measuring Intimate Partner Violence in Sexual and Gender Minority Populations: A COSMIN Psychometric Review (Aaron Palachi)

The Influence of Honour Culture Ideology on Juror Decision Making (Aubrey Paschal)

Identifying risk factors for intrafamilial child sexual abuse (ICSA) by fathers against daughters: Individual, evolutionary, and familial context predictors (Abiraam Samithamby)





CPA-CJS 2026 Montréal Schedule

Correctional Interventions and Risk Reduction: Supporting Parole-Decision Making Through Person and Variable Centred Approaches (Matthew Singh)

Unravelling Gendered Pathways: Childhood Abuse and Its Impact on Personality Pathology (Asmeetha Subramaniam)

Stigma and Drug Policy: How Canadians' Attitudes Toward People Who Use Drug Impact Policy Implementation (Emma Summersby)

Listening to lived experiences: Qualitative explorations of incarceration and community reintegration among diverse Canadian populations (Marguerite Ternes)

Evaluating the Real-World Performance of the STABLE-2007: A 15-Year Field Study of Dynamic Risk Assessment for Sexual Recidivism (Audrey Villeneuve)

Perceptions of Defenses of Consent in Sexual Assault Claims (Twila Wingrove)

Saturday, June 5, 2026 (Room: Ste-Hélène)

8:00 Symposium: *Nuances of Intimate Partner Violence and Mitigation* (Mary Ann Campbell)

9:00 Symposium: *Field Validity of STABLE-2007 and ACUTE-2007* (R. Karl Hanson)

11:00 Symposium: *ODARA in Men, Women, and Same-Sex IPV* (N. Zoe Hilton)

12:00 Symposium: *Inpatient and Community Violence With Forensic Mental Health Samples* (Andrew Haag)

Saturday, June 5, 2026 (Room: Notre Dame)

11:00 5-Minute Snapshot Session:

Structural and Convergent Properties of Structured Assessment of Protective Factors (SAPROF) Ratings in a Treated Sexual Offending Sample (Leezan Alawes)

Better to stay? Institutional, psychosocial and clinical characteristics associated with reluctance towards release in Canadian inmates (Ava Bowns)

Unveiling Bias: How Cybersex Crime Type, Victim Age, and Education Influence Juror Perceptions of Cybersex Crimes (Katherine Engel)

Assessing Sentencing Decisions in Canadian Non-Consensual Intimate Image Distribution Cases (Melissa Handford)

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Attachment Style as Predictors of Sexual Violence Perpetration in Community Men (Mariya Nasim)

Do unconditional cash transfers improve mental health, housing or criminal justice involvement for persons with a serious mental illness? (Corina Picco)



NACCJPC Victoria 2027 (N6): Canada's Leading International Conference for Criminal Justice Psychologists, Researchers, and Students!

Ariel D. Jolliffe Simpson, Ph.D., N6 Steering Committee Member
N. Zoe Hilton, Ph.D., C.Psych., N6 Steering Committee Chair

Planning for the 6th North American Correctional and Criminal Justice Psychology Conference (N6) is well underway. The conference will take place from June 3–5, 2027, in Victoria, Canada, alongside the Canadian Psychological Association's 88th Annual National Convention.

We are pleased to announce an outstanding line-up of speakers for N6. **Dr. Alex Piquero** (University of Miami Department of Sociology and Criminology) will deliver a keynote address to both N6 and CPA delegates with the intriguing title, *But first there was citrus fruit, a naval ship, and scurvy: Successes and challenges using scientific research to inform criminal justice policy decisions*.

Also speaking is **Dr. Nneka Jones Tapia**, Psychologist and Managing Director of Justice Initiatives at Chicago Beyond, a US national philanthropic organization committed to addressing systemic inequity by backing solutions led by people closest to the issues. Dr. Jones Tapia will present share her expertise in applying evidence-based psychological research and policy in correctional services, with a focus on trauma-informed care.

Additional featured speakers include **Dr. Michael Seto** (University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research at The Royal), who is widely known for his research and impact on multiple topics in forensic psychology, including high profile and timely areas such as online sexual offending; **Dr. Troy McEwan** (Swinburne University of Technology Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science), who will speak on forensic clinical practice in cases of partner and non-partner stalking; and **Dr. Mary Ann Campbell** (University of New Brunswick Centre for Policing and Criminal Justice Research), who will discuss her work integrating applied criminal justice psychology research with criminal justice practice systems including policing, youth, and custody.

We are excited to share that our hugely popular "Meet the Speaker" sessions will be back at N6! These sessions provide an opportunity for students and others to meet in a smaller room with our plenary speakers, ask questions that they may feel more comfortable to ask in the less formal setting, and have the chance to network and hear any pearls of wisdom that our speaker have offer to younger researchers and practitioners.

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In addition, we will make space in the programme for discussions examining the impacts of populism and anti-intellectualism on correctional and criminal justice research and practice, both in North America and internationally.

CPA and N6 abstract submissions will open this Fall. Get your submission in early to avoid the rush at the December deadline – don't forget to select NACCJCP (N6) when you submit. Typical presentation formats include:

- Poster
- 5-minute Snapshot
- 12-minute Talk
- 25-minute Round Table Conversation
- 25-minute Theory Review
- 55-minute Panel or Symposium

The N6 Marketing Committee, led by Dr. Apriel Jolliffe Simpson and Dr. Brandon Sparks, will share updates on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [BlueSky](#), [Twitter](#), and the [CPA website](#). You can also reach us at NACCJPC@gmail.com with any conference questions.

As the late Professor David P. Farrington noted, “The NACCJPC is the most important and interesting conference in the world on criminological and correctional psychology. The standard of sessions is extremely high and everyone will learn a great deal from attending this conference.” (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/naccjpc/posts/10152086758852765>)

Join us in Victoria for NACCJPC 2027!

N6

June 3-5
2027
Victoria, Canada
cpa.ca/naccjpc

6th North American Correctional & Criminal Justice Psychology Conference

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N6 will mark the **20th anniversary** of NACCJPC.
Here are a few memories from N-conferences over the years.



N1 Social Event



N3 Steering Committee



N4 Steering Committee

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N5 Steering Committee



N5 meet the speakers sessions

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N6

June 3-5
2027

Victoria, Canada
cpa.ca/naccjpc

6th North American Correctional & Criminal Justice Psychology Conference

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Dr. Alex Piquero



Dr. Mary Ann Campbell



Dr. Nneka Jones Tapia



Dr. Troy McEwan



Dr. Michael Seto



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Do Risk Factors for Sibling Sexual Abuse Depend on the Concordance Between Sexual Preference and Sibling Gender?

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Editor's Note: Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Faye Arellano—FayeArellano@cmail.carleton.ca

Sibling sexual abuse (SSA) has enduring effects on survivors, including risks of post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, and suicide ([Beitchman et al., 1992](#); [Browne & Finkelhor, 1986](#); [Paolucci et al., 2001](#)). Researchers have identified risk factors, but do these risk factors work the same way for everyone? Could they differ by sexual preference and whether preferences align with their sibling's gender?

The Motivation-Facilitation Model proposes sexual offending is more likely when individuals possess both motivation (internal drives) and facilitation factors (reduces barriers to acting on those drives; [Seto, 2019](#)). Evolutionary theory offers a complementary perspective through kinship cues, which are signals that help identify biological relatives ([Westermarck, 1921](#)). Greater exposure to kinship cues are associated with moral aversion to sibling sexual contact ([Lieberman & Lobel, 2012](#); [Rantala & Marcinkowska, 2011](#)).

However, these evolutionary mechanisms are framed in terms of reproductive outcomes. Incest-avoidance systems are thought to reduce genetic costs of inbreeding ([Seto, 2018](#)), raising questions about their relevance in same-sex contexts where reproduction is not possible ([Stroebe et al., 2018](#)). These mechanisms operate automatically in response to cues, rather than conscious reasoning. Sexual attraction may function as such a cue, triggering aversive responses regardless of reproductive potential.

What we Did

We examined whether alignment between sexual preference and sibling gender influences SSA likelihood. We conducted an online survey assessing SSA risk factors and aversion mechanisms as measures of SSA likelihood. Participants ($N = 1,104$) were required to have at least one full biological sibling within a five-year age gap; twins were excluded.

48% of participants ($M = 23.1$ years, $SD = 3.9$) were women, 46% were men, and other gender identities comprised $\leq 3\%$. Half identified as straight, while others identified as bisexual (24%), gay

(9%), pansexual (5%), lesbian (5%), queer (4%), or aromantic (1%).

We grouped participants based on sexual preferences and sibling's gender. For example, 'concordant other-gender' was classified by attraction to a gender different from their own and their sibling matching that preference (e.g., a woman attracted to men and has a brother). Most participants were in the 'concordant other-gender' group (43%), then 'concordant same-gender' group (24%). Fewer participants were in the 'discordant other-gender' group (12%) or 'discordant same-gender' group (19%).

Risk factors and aversion mechanisms were assessed using self-report measures. Motivation factors included atypical childhood sexual behaviours and sexual regulation ([Friedrich et al., 1997](#); [Kalichman et al., 1994](#)). Atypical sexual interests were computed from attractiveness ratings of child versus adult images. Facilitation factors were assessed using antisocial traits ([Harris et al., 1994](#)). Kinship cues included perceived physical resemblance, co-residence length, parental perinatal association, and sibling-typical activities ([Bevc & Silverman, 1993, 2000](#); [De Smet et al., 2014](#); [Griffee et al., 2016](#); [Pullman, 2018](#)). We assessed aversion (disgust and moral opposition) using responses to fictional depictions of sibling sexual contact ([Babchishin et al., 2024](#); [Lieberman, 2004](#); [Lieberman et al., 2007](#)). Associations were examined across subgroups using polychoric correlations, which were appropriate for our data.

What we Found

To examine group differences, we compared correlations between risk factors and both disgust and moral opposition across the four groups.

More risk factors were linked to SSA likelihood when sexual preference and sibling gender aligned, especially in the concordant same-

gender group. In this group, both disgust and moral opposition were linked to multiple risk factors, including atypical childhood sexual behaviours, sexual regulation, and some kinship cues. The concordant other-gender group showed a similar but slightly weaker pattern.

In contrast, discordant groups showed few associations. In the same-gender discordant group, only atypical childhood sexual behaviours and sexual regulation were related to disgust, and only sexual regulation to moral opposition. In the other-gender discordant group, only perceived physical resemblance was linked to disgust and no factors were related to moral opposition.

Across groups, most of the 95% confidence intervals for correlations overlapped, indicating no statistically significant differences between groups. The exception was atypical childhood sexual behaviours for the disgust outcome. The concordant same-gender group showed significantly stronger associations than the other groups (differed at the $p < .01$ level). This pattern suggests that atypical childhood sexual behaviours may be a particularly important risk factor for SSA likelihood in concordant same-gender siblings, compared to the other groups.

What does this Mean?

Our study suggests that not all risk factors work the same for everyone. Alignment between sexual preference and sibling gender may shape how strongly risk factors relate to SSA likelihood. Risk factors were more associated with SSA likelihood in concordant groups, although the overall pattern was largely similar across groups, with atypical childhood sexual behaviours emerging as the only clear group difference.

This has important implications for treatment approaches. Current approaches may assume "one-size-fits-all" risk. Our findings suggest interventions may need to be more tailored. Commonly identified SSA risk factors may not be equally rel-



evant for individuals whose sibling gender does not align with their sexual preferences. Future research should refine measurement approaches and further investigate contextual influences on SSA risk.

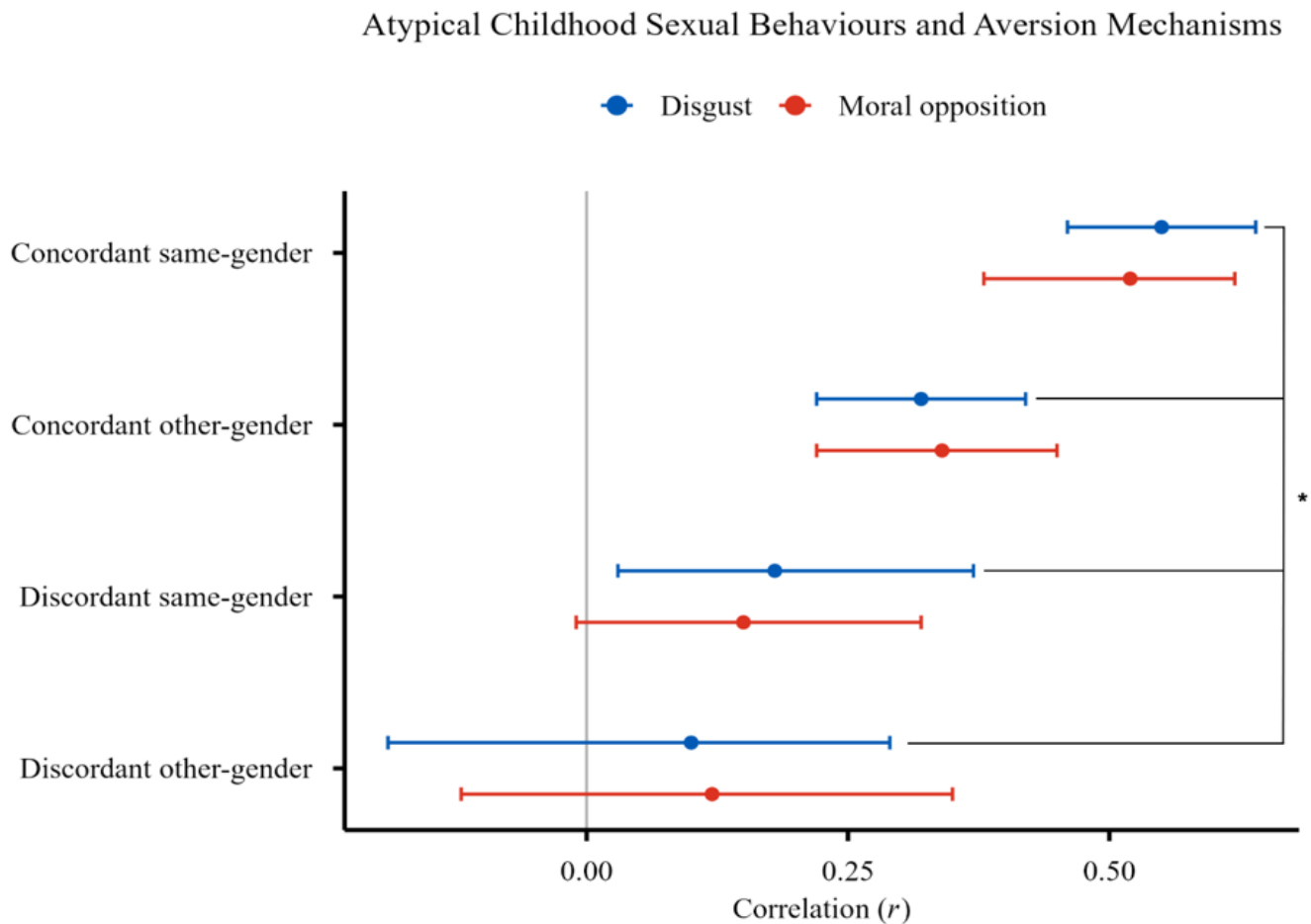
Editors' Note: Additional reference cited can be found below.

Friedrich, W. N. (1997). *Child Sexual Behavior Inventory: Professional Manual Psychological Assessment Resources*.

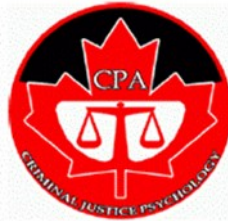
Lieberman, D. (2004). Mapping the cognitive architecture of systems for kin detection and inbreeding avoidance: The Westermarck Hypothesis and the development of sexual aversions between siblings. *ProQuest Dissertations Publishing*, 260.

Westermarck, E. (1921). *History of human marriage*. (5th ed.). Macmillan.

Figure 1. Associations Between Atypical Childhood Sexual Behaviours and Aversion Mechanisms Across Dyads



Note. Points represent polychoric correlations (r) between atypical childhood sexual behaviours and two indicators of SSA propensity (disgust and moral opposition). Error bars show 95% confidence intervals. The vertical line indicates $r = 0$. The concordant same-gender group shows a significantly a stronger association with disgust than any other group, as its CI does not overlap with those of the other groups.



Consensual and Unsolicited Sexting Share Some Correlates

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Author Note: This article summarizes [Holmes et al. \(2025\)](#), published in *Sexuality & Culture*

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Introduction

“Sexting” is often used as a catch-all term, but it covers several different behaviours. Sexting means sharing sexually explicit photos or videos of oneself; whether that sharing is consensual is a distinction that is often overlooked. Consensual sexting is when the sender and the receiver of the sext have agreed to this behaviour. Unsolicited sexting is when someone sends a sext without asking the receiver’s permission.

Why does this distinction matter?

Some existing studies haven’t distinguished between these two experiences (e.g., [Branch et al., 2017](#)), and instead have grouped them together under the single label of “sexting.” This makes it harder to draw clear conclusions.

For example, researchers have found mixed results when examining relationships between sexting and gender ([Branch et al., 2017](#); [Brodie et al., 2019](#)), or sexual orientation ([Brodie et al., 2019](#); [Træen & Kvalem, 2023](#)). One possible reason for these inconsistencies is that consensual sexting and unsolicited sexting likely have

different motivations, which haven’t been previously detected because these distinct types of sexting are usually grouped in the same category.

Unsolicited sexting may share the same mechanisms as other harmful sexual behaviours. The motivation-facilitation model of sexual offending suggests that increased antisociality and sexual motivation increases the likelihood of sexual offending ([Seto, 2019](#)). While the association between impulsivity (a construct related to antisociality) and any sexting is unclear ([Dir & Cyders, 2015](#)), sexting may be associated with higher sexual motivation ([Kosenko et al., 2017](#)). Though the research is inconsistent, it is possible that these results are unclear because consensual and unsolicited sexting haven’t been analyzed separately. Therefore, antisociality and increased sexual motivation may be associated with unsolicited sexting after differentiating these constructs.

What We Did

Our study sought to answer the following re-



search questions: (1) what are the correlates of consensual and unsolicited sexting? and, (2) are these correlates differentially related to consensual and unsolicited sexting?

We recruited a sample of 2,828 participants. About half of the participants (52.7%) were cisgender women, and the other half (47.3%) were cisgender men. Participants were 18-30 years old, ($M = 22.6$), and mostly resided in the United States (57.4%) or Canada (40.6%). About half of the sample identified as heterosexual (55.6%). Participants who indicated a sexual orientation besides heterosexual were grouped as LGBPA+ (44.4%).

Participants completed an anonymous online survey assessing sexting behaviours (whether they had ever sent a consensual or unsolicited sext), peer pressure (Peer Pressure scale; [Santor et al., 2000](#)), perceptions towards sexting (Perceptions Towards Sexting and Forwarding Pictures Scale; [Branch et al., 2017](#)), early antisocial tendencies (Childhood and Adolescent Taxon Scale; [Harris et al., 1994](#); Seto et al., 1997), impulsivity (Barratt Impulsiveness Scale–15; [Spinella, 2007](#)), sexual consent awareness (Sexual Consent Scale–Revised; [Humphreys & Brousseau, 2010](#)), and sexual history (Sexual History Questionnaire; [Lalumière et al., 1996](#)).

Statistical Analyses

We examined the bivariate associations between each of the correlates with consensual and unsolicited sexting by modelling area under the curve (AUC) in receiver operator characteristic (ROC) curves. The correlates that were significantly associated with each of the outcome variables (i.e., $p < .05$) in the AUC analyses were modelled in the two subsequent multiple logistic regressions. Each regression yielded an adjusted odds ratio (aOR) for each correlate, and aOR values outside of the range 0.76-1.31 were considered

meaningfully large. We compared the 95% confidence intervals of the correlates across type of sexting ([Cumming & Finch, 2005](#)).

What We Found

We looked at factors that might be linked to consensual and unsolicited sexting: sexual history, awareness of sexual consent, impulsivity, early antisocial behaviour, attitudes toward sexting, peer pressure, sexual orientation, and gender. All of these were significantly related to consensual and unsolicited sexting in the ROC analyses, so we explored them further in two separate multiple regression analyses.

The logistic regression identified gender, sexual orientation, and positive perceptions of sexting as being statistically significantly and meaningfully related to both consensual and unsolicited sexting (see Figure 1). So, how people feel about sexting, their gender, and their sexual orientation may play a role in consensual and unsolicited sexting.

Antisociality was significantly and meaningfully associated with having sent a consensual sext, and was significantly, but not meaningfully, associated with having sent an unsolicited sext; the difference between aOR values was not significantly different ($p > .01$). Sexual consent awareness was significantly, but not meaningfully, associated with having sent a consensual and an unsolicited sext.

Peer pressure and impulsivity were not significantly associated with having sent a consensual or an unsolicited sext. Only one correlate, sexual history, had a significantly stronger relationship with consensual than unsolicited sexting. This suggests that people with more sexual experience may be more likely to engage in consensual sexting, rather than sending unsolicited sexts.

What It Means

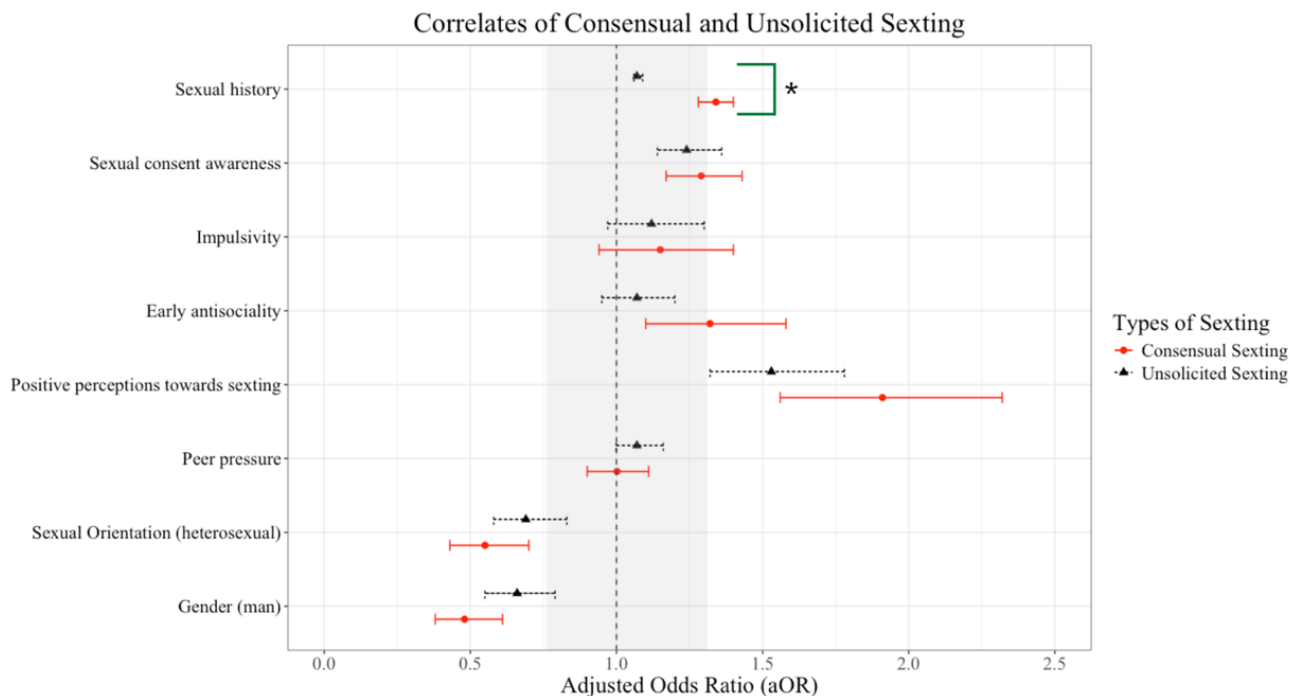
Some of our findings are consistent with past studies, but others are contradictory. For example, like other research, we found that women were more likely than men to send consensual sexts; we also found that women reported sending more unsolicited sexts, which challenges previous findings (Træen & Kvalem, 2023). It's possible that an unsolicited sext from a woman may be seen as a welcome sexual advance, while the same behaviour from a man is likely to be viewed as inappropriate (Træen & Kvalem, 2023). Another key takeaway is that perceptions about sexting matter. If some people view unsolicited sexting positively, then educational campaigns could play a role in correcting these perceptions and clarify boundaries and consent.

We also looked at antisociality and sexual history, which showed similar effect sizes for both sexting behaviours. Our findings suggest that unsolicited sexting may not follow the same patterns as other harmful sexual behaviours.

Where Do We Go From Here?

More research is needed to identify what truly distinguishes these two behaviours to help shape better sex education that specifically targets the factors linked to unsolicited sexting without stigmatizing consensual, healthy, and normative sexual expression. In other words, the goal is to recognize that not all sexting is the same, and reduce the harmful behaviours associated with unsolicited sexting.

Figure 1. Adjusted odds ratio (aOR) results for consensual and unsolicited sexting.



Note. aOR < 1 means that as the correlate increases, the odds of the outcome occurring decreases; aOR > 1 means that the likelihood of the outcome occurring is greater as the correlate increases. Correlates inside the grey area are not meaningfully related to sexting. Any correlate that overlaps the dashed line at 1.0 is not statistically significant ($p > .05$). *Only the extent of participants' sexual history had a statistically significant difference between types of sexting.



LAB SPOTLIGHT

The Social Attitudes Lab Department of Psychology, Saint Mary's University

Investigating how hiring practices affect individuals with criminal records, particularly Black and Indigenous applicants, and the incarceration-related experiences of trans and gender-diverse individuals

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Individuals with a criminal history represent an under-utilized workforce segment. Approximately 1 in 9 people in Canada live with a criminal record, yet having a criminal record remains a primary driver of exclusion in hiring decisions ([Graffam et al., 2008](#); [Pager, 2003](#); [Varghese et al., 2010](#)). People with criminal records encounter multiple intersecting forms of discrimination. Within our carceral system, people are not treated equally. Indigenous adults in Canada are overrepresented in custody (32% of admissions versus 5% of the general population) and are more likely to have re-contact with police following correctional involvement than non-Indigenous people (80% vs. 57%; [Government of Canada, 2026](#)). Black prisoners represent 9.2% of the total incarcerated population despite representing only 3.5% of the overall population ([Government of Canada, 2022](#)). Those differences in treatment and experiences mean that Indigenous and Black job seekers face especially steep barriers to being hired and staying employed—despite stable work being one of the strongest supports for effective reintegration.

The Social Attitudes Lab at Saint Mary's University (SMU) evolved to what it is today through formal and informal partnerships across disciplines and institutions. We are researchers from psychology, law, business, and non-profits who work together to better understand the experiences of people inside and outside the carceral system, with a particular focus on helping people with criminal records find work. The lab consists of researchers from SMU, St. Francis Xavier University, and the University of Windsor Odette School of Business. We are also currently partnering with the John Howard Society of Ontario.

Our recent paper in *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* ([Carter-Rogers et al., 2026](#)) highlights how

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having a criminal record dramatically influences likelihood of being hired. Furthermore, strategies that have been used to circumvent the impact of criminal records for White applicants (i.e., disclosing only after a decision has been made) is not effective for Indigenous applicants. Through national representative sampling of employers and the general public, we also make efforts to design programs and interventions to reduce stigma against people with criminal records and facilitate their reintegration into the workplace.

Likewise, research examining the experiences of transgender and gender diverse (TGD) people in the Canadian carceral system is limited. Chloe Fuller completed their MSc in Applied Psychology (Forensic Psychology) at SMU in 2025 looking at this particular issue. Chloe (who is now at UBC doing their JD degree) conducted a series of nine in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with TGD people with lived experiences within the Canadian carceral system. Participants felt their needs were not met while incarcerated and faced barriers in accessing gender-affirming and general care. While all participants chose to be placed in carceral institutions for women, many continued to face increased restrictions on their movement and placement, including segregation and increased surveillance. Chloe's participants described a frequent lack of knowledge and understanding of TGD identities, needs, and experiences from correctional staff, law enforcement, and legal actors. We published these findings in *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* earlier this year ([Fuller et al., 2026](#)).

In most recent work from the Social Attitudes Lab, we completed a study of 600 employers from across Canada. This research was led by grad students Brooke Macfadyen and Rachel McGeer and funded through a grant from Future Skills Canada to trial an intervention aimed to encourage employers to hire people with criminal records. All 600 employers completed a survey, and we conducted interviews with 60 of them. Selection specifically targeted employers from 6 major industry segments (i.e., healthcare, food service, finance, construction, manufacturing, and retail). Results showed that employers were aware the people with criminal records can make

excellent employees. However, even those employers who were willing to hire people with criminal records expressed concerns about reputation, as well as risk to themselves if they hired an individual and who later became problematic as an employee. Willingness to hire varied by race, industry, type of crime, and time since the crime occurred.

The Social Attitudes Lab recently received funding from SSHRC to expand our research to better understand the impact of training programs on ability to find work for people with criminal records. In the first phase of our work, we will examine data from the John Howard Society of Ontario's (JHSO) existing employee training programs. Using data already collected from participants and employers, we will estimate impacts on job attainment, program completion, and retention, and identify "what works for whom," with specific attention to Indigenous and Black participants.

Ultimately, we aim to devise and test training programs to support employment of people with criminal records. This especially includes support for Black and Indigenous applicants, who are at the greatest risk of unemployment.



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BOOK REVIEW

Working with Offenders Who View Online Child Sexual Exploitation Images by Piché and Schweighofer (2023)

Andrew L. Gray, Ph.D., C. Psych. (Supervised Practice)
 Alison J. Davis, M.A. Psychology, Registered Psychotherapist
 Secure Treatment Unit, Brockville Mental Health Centre
 The Royal Ottawa Health Care Group

Working with Offenders who View Online Child Sexual Exploitation Images



Lyne Piché and Anton Schweighofer



With increasing technological advances, including greater internet access, use of mobile devices, and availability of file sharing apps, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of individuals accessing child sexual exploitation materials (CSEM) over the past decade ([Clark et al., 2025](#)). Despite meaningful differences existing between CSEM-exclusive offenders and contact sexual offenders both in terms of their risk profile/ treatment needs ([Babchishin et al., 2018](#); [Helmus et al., 2025](#)) and recidivism rates ([Clark et al., 2025](#)), there exist few programs designed to address CSEM-exclusive offending. Of particular note is that CSEM-exclusive offenders tend to be lower risk, which can be problematic as general sexual offender programming (primarily designed for contact sexual offenders) may increase risk among lower risk offenders ([Holper et al., 2024](#)).

Working with Offenders Who View Online Child Sexual Exploitation Images by **Piché and Schweighofer (2023)** is a comprehensive treatment guide designed for mental health professionals working with biological men who have accessed CSEM or who may be struggling with the urge to access. Written by two Canadian clinical psychologists with extensive backgrounds in forensic/correctional psychology and the



assessment and treatment of sexual offenders, the intended audience is mental health service providers (e.g., clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers) knowledgeable in the application of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT). The authors integrate US legislation and acknowledge at the outset that the book was not specifically designed for use with individuals with developmental delays, brain injuries, or special-needs. Each chapter is divided into a Clinician Guide and Client Workbook and the book allows for flexibility in treatment format (i.e., group or individually based), with the authors encouraging that treatment be tailored to the needs of the client (e.g., topics may be reviewed in any order depending on the client).

Chapter 1 is dedicated to introducing treatment (e.g., establishing treatment goals), concepts related to CSEM (e.g., legal definition), and addressing risk (i.e., determining risk of suicide, and whether there is an imminent risk of sexually abusing a child). Chapter 2 addresses motivation to change through cost-benefit analysis, introducing the concept of a good life, and personal goals of the client. Chapter 3 provides steps to exploring the client's pathway to viewing CSEM, including examining their strengths and vulnerabilities or risk/need factors (e.g., high sex drive, sexual attraction to children, mental health, and personality traits).

A discussion of CBT techniques is then provided (Chapter 4), including strategies for addressing general problematic thoughts (referred to as thinking errors by the authors) and managing emotions, and is followed by managing sexual fantasies and urges (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 covers the identification and management of emotions using behavioural and cognitive strategies. Problematic thoughts related to offending and CSEM use are addressed in Chapter 7 (e.g., connecting thoughts and CSEM viewing), with useful examples of "Permission-Giving Thoughts" and an additional section that incorporates thoughts related to contact sexual offending. Chapters 8 and 9 address more advanced topics related to sexual management (e.g., consent, views on pornography, sexual attraction to children) and relationships, intimacy, and loneliness, respectively. Chapter 10 discusses potential roadblocks to treatment such as issues with sleep, problem solving, and childhood sexual abuse, though the authors caution this depends on the needs/readiness of the client and competency of the clinician.

Chapter 11 focuses on internet health and problematic internet use, including misconceptions about the internet (e.g., that it is private), online negative peer influence, and developing an internet safety plan. These are particularly important and unique aspects of treatment with CSEM clients. In conjunction with the internet safety plan developed in Chapter 11, Chapter 12 provides guidelines for developing an overall safety plan that includes identifying internal (e.g., challenging problematic thinking) and external barriers (e.g., accountability software) to accessing CSEM, approach and avoidance goals, vulnerabilities and triggers, and coping and escape strategies. Chapter 13 speaks to accountability to others and maintaining treatment gains. Finally, Chapter 14 closes out the book with some concluding comments related to post-treatment engagement (e.g., maintenance sessions) and is followed immediately by a list of recommended readings.

A notable strength of *Working with Offenders Who View Online Child Sexual Exploitation Images* is its practicality and user friendliness. As noted previously, there are exceptionally few, if any, resources to assist and guide therapists working with this growing population of sexual offenders, making this an extremely helpful resource for anyone who has had to work in this area in the absence of a framework from which to base their interventions. The companion therapist and client guides are useful and well laid out and the ability to download the client guides is an excellent feature. Other positive aspects of the book are the inclusion of Good Lives elements, positive psychology, and an emphasis on approach goals. In addition, the criminogenic targets as outlined within the book appear to be very relevant in light of our own clinical work and the book sets out nicely the empirical basis on which the program is based, while attending to what the research (as limited as it is) suggests as the criminogenic needs of this population of offenders.

One of us (Alison Davis) who has engaged in the assessment and treatment of sexual offenders in forensic and correctional settings for over 25 years has begun to incorporate materials and discussions on a variety of the topics and issues as described in the book with our clients. Feedback from our CSEM-exclusive clients thus far has been positive with reports that the materials have been very helpful. A potential drawback of the book includes reference to US legislation only (albeit, only to provide a brief legal definition of child pornography with clients being encouraged to explore legislation in their own jurisdiction later in the book). Other potential drawbacks include its lack of applicability to more diverse client populations (e.g., women, clients with varied cultural/ethnic backgrounds, and individuals with developmental delays/special needs). However, research with respect to risk and CSEM use among these populations is limited (e.g., [Brown, 2022](#)), and these aspects may be less relevant when working with CSEM-exclusive offenders as the majority of online offenders tend to be male, are disproportionately White, and are more educated relative to contact sexual offenders ([Seto, 2021](#)).

Overall, *Working with Offenders Who View Online Child Sexual Exploitation Images* represents an important contribution to the field and a significant step forward in providing evidence-based treatment to men who access CSEM. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this review and congratulate Drs. Piché and Schweighofer on their much-deserved Significant Contribution Award.

Editors' Note: Additional reference cited can be found below.

Piché, L., & Schweighofer, A. (2023). *Working with offenders who view online child sexual exploitation images*. Routledge.

Seto, M. C. (2021). What do we know about online sexual offending? In E. Caffo (Ed.), *Online child sexual exploitation: Treatment and prevention of abuse in a digital world* (pp. 23-31). Springer.



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Meet Your Criminal Justice Section Executives

Vice-Chair & Police Psychology Representative

Nina Fusco, Ph.D., C.Psych, & Mary Ann Campbell, Ph.D., L.Psych



Dr. Nina Fusco
Vice-Chair



Dr. Mary Ann Campbell
Police Psychology Representative

Hello Crime Scene Readers! In effort to help the Crime Scene readership get to know the members on the Section Executive better, we have launched a new piece within Crime Scene to allow for each representative to share a bit about themselves for your benefit. By putting the spotlight on our leadership and executive team, each installment of this feature will give you, the reader, an opportunity to get a closer look at who we are, what we do, and learn what motivates us to serve as your Criminal Justice Psychology Executives.

In this edition, our Section's Vice-Chair and Police Psychology Representative are both featured. Read on to learn more about Nina and Mary Ann!

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Dr. Nina Fusco, Vice-Chair

Dr. Nina Fusco is known for her collaborative approach and her ability to work effectively in complex, high-pressure environments. As Chief Psychologist at Calian, she leads a psychological services team supporting clients in law enforcement and other high-risk sectors across Canada. She has had a strong interest in forensic psychology and trauma ever since deciding to pursue psychology, and her early research work focused on trauma symptoms in crime victims. Now with more than 15 years of experience in clinical, forensic, law enforcement and public safety settings, Dr. Fusco has worked across forensic psychiatric services, correctional facilities, and specialized forensic programs in both British Columbia and Ontario. In these roles, she developed expertise in forensic risk assessment, psychopathy, and broader mental health concerns, while also providing clinical care to individuals involved in the justice system. Her work has also included comprehensive assessments of suicide risk and complex psychological presentations.

In 2020, Dr. Fusco began supporting frontline members, civilians, and their families, of a police service, where she provided psychological support following critical incidents and addresses the cumulative stressors associated with public safety work. This has given her a keen understanding and appreciation for the challenging work of first responders.

In addition to her clinical practice, she has developed and delivered training on trauma-informed leadership, resilience and workplace mental health, including programs for detachment commanders and sergeants across Ontario.

Dr. Fusco holds an honours bachelor's degree in psychology from McGill University and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Université de Montréal. She is registered with the College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analysts of Ontario in Clinical and Forensic/Correctional Psychology.

Within the Canadian Psychological Association's Criminal Justice Section, Dr. Fusco serves as Vice-Chair, following previous roles as Secretary and Treasurer. She also serves as chair of the Psychological Services Committee for the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police.

Some fun facts about Dr. Fusco: she enjoys travel, staying active, and attending Broadway shows and concerts. She played soccer for 30 years but has embraced her coaching days more recently. A foodie, she also has a passion for all things culinary



Dr. Mary Ann Campbell, Police Psychology Representative

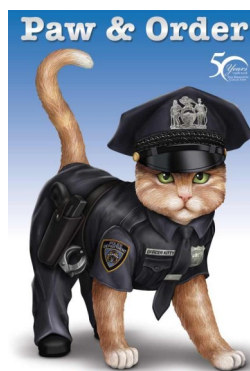
Dr. Mary Ann Campbell, L.Psych, is the Director of the Centre for Policing and Criminal Justice Research and Full Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of New Brunswick, Saint John campus. As an academic who also works in the clinical/forensic psychology sectors, the primary motivation behind her research, mentorship, training, and consultation has always been to ensure that we evaluate what we do so as to test that it achieves the intended goals. This also serves the purpose of improving professional practice and competencies.

Dr. Campbell's applied orientation to research has given her opportunities to collaborate with community and government partners on many multi-method evaluation and performance reviews of corrections, policing, and psychological health practices in first responder organizations. These collaborations support the goal of improved service delivery to the populations served or impacted by these public safety sectors.

Most recently, the Centre for Policing and Criminal Justice Research drew from its own research and the broader literature to develop curriculum for Crisis Intervention Training-New Brunswick (CIT-NB). They trained facilitators in its delivery to roll out CIT-NB to all frontline police officers in New Brunswick, as well as to partnering crisis clinicians to ensure a more collaborative response when responding to calls. This approach also served to develop officers' de-escalation and crisis intervention competencies when responding alone to calls involving persons that require an adapted response to maximize safer outcomes (e.g., persons in emotional distress, persons displaying indicators of acute mental health or neurodevelopmental conditions). Officers' uses of these competencies have been studied at baseline, with follow-up assessment forthcoming to examine how these competencies are impacted post-training at an organizational level. Dr. Campbell and her lab also are undertaking similar research on police officers' use of trauma-informed approaches with complaints of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, as well as police officers' use of procedural justice practices across different call types. All of this evaluation work uses body worn camera footage of actual police calls to get a bird's eye view of officer actions and their impacts in real-time.

Within the Canadian Psychological Association's Criminal Justice Section, Dr. Campbell serves as the Police Psychology Directorate. In this role, she aims to ensure representation of topics focused on policing and public safety personnel at the annual CPA convention. Prospectively, Dr. Campbell intends to work with other subject matter experts to lead an update of the practice guidelines for psychological pre-employment selection evaluation. Also, to broaden the scope of practice to include psychological fitness for duty evaluations of serving members and speciality unit selection evaluation. Her involvement in this work is ongoing and a key piece of her future plans.

A fun fact about Dr. Campbell is that cats are always welcome at her lab meetings!



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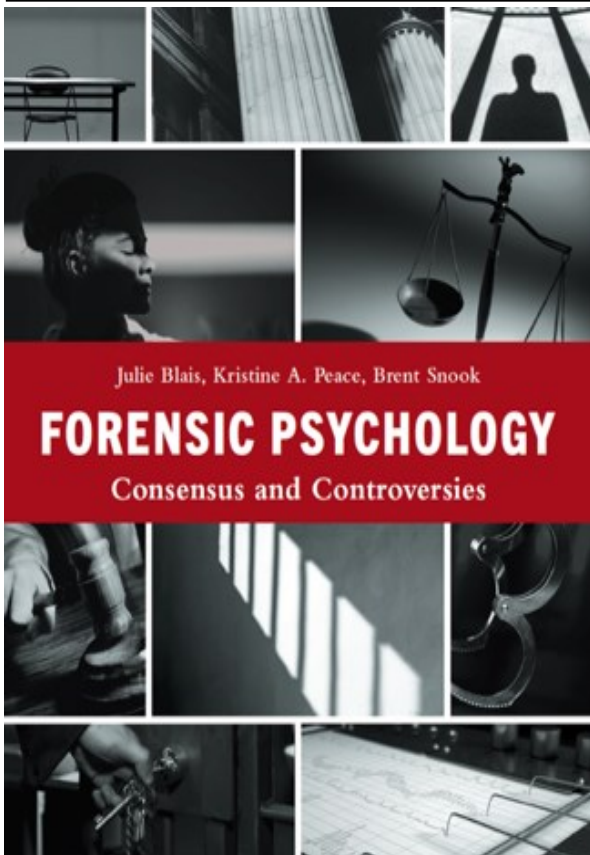


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NEW TEXTBOOK ALERT

Forensic Psychology: Consensus and Controversies



Authors:

Julie Blais, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, Dalhousie University

Kristine A. Peace, PhD, Professor, Department of Psychology, MacEwan University

Brent Snook, PhD, Professor, Department of Psychology, Memorial University

Abstract:

Forensic Psychology offers a fresh alternative to professors and students seeking a broader, more critical examination of the diverse field of forensic psychology. Students are provided with authentic case studies that demonstrate the empirically supported theories and critical perspectives required by professors. Everything is presented in an easy-to-understand manner with glossary terms, feature boxes, and other resources to help students engage with the material. *Forensic Psychology* is a myth-busting text that grounds fascinating case studies in empirically tested theories and solid research.

Resources: In addition to PowerPoint slides and test banks, the Instructor's Manual makes adopting the book easier on you! For each major section of each chapter, we have included a detailed summary of the key takeaways, and, more importantly, in-class hands on activities. That means that each chapter has 3-5 ready to use activities to help students engage more deeply with the material. For example, we've included case studies, example coding for risk assessment, discussion questions, links to videos and documentaries, and so much more!

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PUBLICATIONS

Recently Published Abstracts

Send us the abstract of your recently published paper for inclusion in an upcoming issue!

Check out these recently published worked by our CJS Members!

Wesenberg, M., Jung, S., & Tedeschi, J. (2025). Coercive control in the context of partner abuse: behavioural markers, assessment challenges, and interview approaches. *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being*, 10(2), 105-116. <https://doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.424>

Coercively controlling behaviours are highly prevalent in the context of intimate partner violence. However, coercive control often goes undetected because, unlike physical violence, it has not always been recognized as a criminal offence, is often perceived as less severe, and does not produce visible signs of physical violence. This paper outlines the importance of

understanding what coercive control is, what coercive control looks like, why it is difficult to identify, and how investigative interviewing approaches can be employed to capture behaviours associated with coercive control when working with individuals who have engaged in partner abuse. Investigative interviewing approaches and motivational interviewing can help uncover coercively controlling behaviours that would otherwise be undetected by police and other justice-involved practitioners. Use of these approaches are illustrated to emphasize the importance of planning and preparation prior to the interview process, establishing rapport, and creating collaborative, non-adversarial relationships between the interviewer and the interviewee. These factors are likely to increase the quantity and quality of information gathered during the interview process, capture the nuances of coercive control, and reduce the likelihood that the interviewee will engage in controlling behaviours that could negatively impact the interview process.

Rajack, N., Hilton, Z., Pham, A., Nunes, K., Ennis, L., & Jung, S. (2025). Antisociality in intimate partner violence risk assessment: an analysis of the SARA-V2, SARA-V3, and B-SAFER. *Journal of Criminal Psychology*, 15(6), 741-753. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCP-03-2025-0028>

Purpose. There is evidence that risk factors



measuring aspects of antisociality contribute substantially to the prediction of recidivism in actuarial intimate partner violence (IPV) risk assessment tools, however, this has not been examined in structured professional judgment (SPJ) IPV risk assessment tools. This study aims to examine the representation and predictive accuracy of factors measuring antisociality in three SPJ tools. **Design/methodology/approach.** The authors investigated items measuring antisociality in the SARA-V2, SARA-V3 and B-SAFER to assess IPV risk in a Canadian sample of 266 men who had previously committed a violent crime against their female partner. The authors examined whether the underlying factor structure empirically separated antisocial items from other items and analyzed the predictive accuracy of the antisocial factors. **Findings.** Partial antisocial factors emerged in the SARA-V2 and SARA-V3, while a clear antisocial factor emerged in the B-SAFER. All antisocial factors demonstrated significant predictive values for IPV recidivism in area under the curve and Cox regression analyses. **Originality/value.** This study offers a novel contribution to the field by using an empirical approach to examine antisocial factors in three commonly used SPJ tools. The findings underscore the need for a continued focus on antisocial traits and behaviors during IPV risk estimation, management and treatment.

Pham, A. T., Nunes, K., Hilton, N. Z., Ennis, L., & Jung, S. (2026). The factor structure of intimate partner violence risk. *Criminal Justice & Behavior*, 53(1), 101–118.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00938548251357789>

To improve our understanding of the latent constructs of intimate partner violence (IPV) risk, we explored the underlying factor structure of combined items from three IPV risk assessment tools and examined whether the factors predict recidivism outcomes. Data were examined for 251 adult men who were charged with violence against their past or current female intimate partners and whose files were referred for a comprehensive threat assessment from 2010 to 2016 in Canada. Results suggested six underlying risk

factors, two of which significantly predicted IPV, any violent, and any recidivism outcomes in a 4-year average follow-up with 227 men. However, only one factor (*Antisocial Patterns and Psychosocial Adjustment*) independently predicted IPV and any violent recidivism over time above and beyond other factors. Our findings indicate room to further improve current IPV risk assessment measures and support the call for informative causal theories of IPV recidivism.

Hanson, R. K., Babchishin, K.M., May, K., Reid, B., & Wilson, R. J. (2026). Risk tools predict recidivism for men with low intellectual ability and a history of sexual offending. *Sexual Abuse*.
Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10790632261429124>

Standardized risk assessments are essential to evidence-based responses to criminal behaviour, including sexual offending. Since the 1990s, many actuarial and structured risk assessment instruments have been developed that are now routinely used in sentencing, treatment, and post release risk management. The majority of these scales, however, were developed using undifferentiated groups, raising questions about their utility within meaningful subgroups, such as persons with low intellectual ability. This study presents meta-analytic findings of the predictive accuracy (discrimination) of risk tools for crime and violence when used with men with low intellectual ability and a history of sexual offending. We also examined age as a recidivism risk predictor. Database searches identified 15 distinct samples (N = 923). Age, as a single variable, showed moderate to large effects for sexual, violent, and general (any) recidivism. Overall, the predictive accuracies of the instruments were moderate and similar to those observed for other samples. Amongst the measures investigated, a measure specifically for persons with low intellectual ability (ARMIDILO-S; Boer et al., 2013) demonstrated the highest predictive accuracy. Larger effects were found when recidivism was measured by staff reports than by official records (e.g., charges, convictions). Our findings support the use of existing risk tools with men with low intellectual ability. Researchers should privilege

staff reports over official records for studies concerned with sexual recidivism.

Hanson, R. K., Marquez Alcala, G., & Prescott, J. J. (2025). How public registries obscure sexual recidivism risk: Evidence from state administrative data. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/law0000482>

Public sex offender registries were created on the assumption that people with a history of sexual offending present a high and enduring risk for sexual recidivism. Analyzing data from everyone on Michigan's sex offender registry ($n = 45,145$), we found that recidivism risk was very low for many registrants—and predictably declined in systematic ways that are relevant to registry design. The sexual recidivism rates were 3%–5% after 5 years and 10% after 20 years. Risk of future offending predictably declined the longer people remained sex-offense-free in the community. Assuming a typical distribution of initial risk levels and the observed time-free in the community, the likelihood of sexual recidivism was very low for approximately half of the registrants: out of 35,000 registrants in the community in Michigan, the risk level for 17,000–19,000 individuals was no different from the likelihood of first-time sexual offending in the general male population (2% lifetime). Michigan's registry provides no means for the public to differentiate between the noise presented by the large number of very low-risk individuals and the signal representing the minority of registrants who may be genuinely high risk. Major reforms are needed if public sex offender registries have any potential for advancing community safety. However, instead of placing our hopes in large, passive, and stigmatizing registries, we are more likely to reduce sexual recidivism by investing in individualized supervision, treatment, and other support for people at high risk for sexual recidivism.

Hanson, R. K., Campbell, M. A., Jung, S., Eke, A. W., Ham, E., Kim, S., & Hilton, N. Z. (in press, 2026 – 04). The incidence of police contact for intimate partner violence in three Canadian regions.

Journal of Community Safety & Well-Being.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) places high demands on police, and is the most frequent type of violent offending reported to police in Canada (Burczycka, 2019). Police responses are often guided by actuarial risk tools, such as the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA; Hilton, 2021), which provide estimates of recidivism rates associated with specific scores. The interpretation of these case-specific recidivism rates should be guided by the base rate of IPV perpetration in the general population. Accordingly, this study examined officially reported IPV base rates in three Canadian provinces from 2016 to 2018, the settings used for updating the ODARA norms (Hilton et al., 2025). The overall incidence of perpetration of IPV was 200 per 100,000 (one out of 500 per year), with substantially higher rates for men against women (304 per 100,000) than for women against men (75 per 100,000). Perpetration against same gender victims was rare (11 per 100,000 for men to men; 6 per 100,000 for women to women), although these estimates did not control for the proportion of the population who were in same sex relationships. Regional differences were observed, with lower overall rates in Atlantic Canada than in Alberta and Ontario, and relatively high rates of women as perpetrators in Ontario. All population rates were lower than the lowest rates estimated by the 2021 ODARA norms. We recommend that local IPV rates are used to evaluate the effectiveness of public protection policies.

Nielsen, Y. P., Kroner, D. G., & Mills, J. F. (2025). Base rate utilization in the estimation of violent and criminal risk. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000256>

Risk perception is influenced by various factors, with studies indicating that subjective judgments from both the public and experts contribute to discrepancies between perceived and actual risk estimates. When it comes to risk assessment within criminal justice, there is a similar tendency for professionals to incorrectly estimate risk. One reason for this is poor risk assessment score uti-



lization. To examine the effects of base rate information on risk estimates, mental health professionals ($n = 181$) and students ($n = 132$) were asked to estimate risk in violent, sexual, and mental health scenarios in two related studies. Approximately half of the participants rated scenarios with base rate information and the other half without. The participants who received base rate information had risk estimates that were lower and closer to the actual risk level, which indicated the benefit of providing numeric base rates. However, base rate information did not fully correct the overestimation of risk. Potential social and cognitive mechanisms are suggested. The application of the current results argues for an integration of numeric presentation of risk that also contextualizes that risk.

Nielsen, Y. P., Durham, M., & Kroner, D. G. (2025). Introduction to reliable treatment change: Individual and group applications. *the Behavior Therapist*, 48(3), 493–506.

Determining the true effectiveness of clinical interventions is important for both clinicians and researchers alike. A reliable change index (RCI) represents a statistical approach to determining whether a client's change before and after an intervention is reliable. In other words, do changes in scores represent true change, or can they mostly be attributed to measurement error? When working with clients, clinicians may greatly benefit from utilizing RCIs on relevant measures to evaluate client progress and the clinical significance of any changes. This assessment is crucial, as it provides an objective measure of improvement and aids in making decisions about the client's improvement and future course of treatment. Evaluating reliable change not only guides clinicians in refining intervention approaches, but also provides evidence to third-party constituents, such as insurance companies or legal entities, of the intervention's impact, thereby enhancing trust in clinical outcomes. The purpose of this article is to provide descriptions of some of the most common indices of reliable change in psychotherapy and psychological research, as well as to provide a step-by-step guide for how to carry out these calculations.

Recently Defended Thesis

Yasmin P. Nielsen, Ph.D.
Supervisor: Dr. Daryl Kroner
Southern Illinois University

The relationship between mental illness, criminogenic need, and institutional infractions across risk levels using the Five-Level Risk and Needs system

There is a disproportionately high prevalence of mental illness among criminal justice populations. Theories differ in understanding this observation, with some proposing that mental illness may directly contribute to criminal behavior, and others proposing criminogenic needs as the primary factor. However, neither perspective has examined how these relationships function in the context of criminal risk. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between mental illness, criminogenic needs, and institutional infractions across five levels of criminal risk, and whether the degree of these relationships differ between risk levels. Using data from the nationally representative Survey of Prison Inmates, a secondary data analysis of a sample of over 24,000 federal and state prison inmates was conducted to examine (i) the relationship between mental illness and institutional infractions, (ii) the relationship between criminogenic needs and institutional infractions, and (iii) the synergistic effect of mental illness and criminogenic needs on institutional infractions. Criminogenic needs, but not SMI, emerged as the most consistent predictor of institutional infractions across all risk levels. Despite continued policy and public assumptions that mental illness contributes to criminal behavior, the results of this study reinforce the focus on criminogenic need principles. This suggests that interventions aimed at reducing institutional misconduct, and recidivism more broadly, should give prominence to dynamic criminogenic needs, rather than a predominant or sole focus on mental illness.



Recently Defended Thesis

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Predicting Crime Severity Among Individuals Deemed Not Criminally Responsible on Account of Mental Disorder (NCRMD): The Creation and Initial Validation of the Crime Severity Scale (CSS)

Individuals deemed Not Criminally Responsible on Account of Mental Disorder (NCRMD) typically receive indefinite treatment sentences that fall under the authority of a Provincial or territorial Review Board (RB; CCC, 1985 s.672.38; [Crocker et al., 2015](#)). The RB makes decisions on the conditions and length of sentences based on the risk of severe harm the individual poses to the public (CCC, 1985 s. 672.54; [Glancy & Regehr, 2020](#)). RB decisions are made under consultation with forensic clinicians (i.e., psychologists and/or psychiatrists) who use violence risk assessment measures to estimate the risk of harm the individual poses to the public ([Douglas et al., 2014](#); [Harris et al., 2015](#)). However, present measures are devised to estimate risk of *any* future violent behaviour, without regard for the *severity* of the behaviour ([Nussbaum et al., 2019](#)). The present study sought to improve our understanding of how to predict future crime severity to be able to better inform RBs regarding risk of harm to the public, by addressing two major objectives and research questions (RQs): (1) clarify the most salient predictors of crime severity (RQ1); and (2) if salient predictors are found in addressing RQ1, refine current risk assessment practices by devising and psychometrically testing a scale devised to predict future crime severity, among those deemed NCRMD (RQ2).

A total of 315 archived NCRMD files were coded and analyzed in the present study. Moderate-to-high interrater reliability among the three raters who coded the files was revealed. To address RQ1, postdictive methods were employed, such that historical (e.g., history of offending), social (e.g., gang affiliation), psychological (e.g., previous diagnoses), and cognitive (e.g., previous IQ) variables that would have been reasonably available to a clinician at the time someone was deemed

NCRMD, were used to predict the index offence(s) that led to the NCRMD verdict. In direct test of RQ1, data was analyzed in two ways: (1) by measuring crime severity dichotomously, considering the most egregious of violent offences (i.e., homicide, attempted homicide, assault with a weapon and/or assault leading to bodily harm) as severe—and all other offences as not severe; and (2) by adopting the standards and methods employed by Statistics Canada's Crime Severity Weights (CSW; [Babyak et al., 2009, 2013](#)), and measuring crime severity continuously as the product of incarceration rates and average sentence length. The results of the analyses revealed that the answer to what predicts crime severity substantially depended on how crime severity was operationally defined and measured. Given the discrepancy of definitions, and the result of only one factor being predictive of crime severity, RQ2 could not be meaningfully tested in this research.

The results of the present study suggested that while rigorous efforts were employed to clarify the predictors of crime severity, research is required to clarify how to operationally define crime severity, before further investigations on predicting crime severity should be employed. Future investigations of how to operationally define crime severity are imperative, given that the RB consults with forensic clinicians to understand whether an individual deemed NCRMD poses a risk of severe harm to the public ([Crocker et al., 2015](#)). With unclear and discrepant operational definitions of crime severity, forensic clinicians' ability to inform RBs as to the risk of severe harm an individual poses to the public are hampered. This is concerning given that the answer to whether an individual poses a risk of severe harm to the public impacts the length, conditions, and freedoms of these indefinite treatment sentences—ultimately impacting the lives, liberty and autonomy of individuals deemed NCRMD. It also stifles the ability for forensic clinicians to support the RBs ability to balance the liberty and autonomy of the individual, with the liberty and safety of the general public. While this study had limitations regarding generalizability (e.g., restricted range, disproportionately violent sample) and the use of postdictive, correlational methods, it underscores the importance of future investigations dedicated to understanding and operationally defining crime severity.



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