

Deviant Sexual Behavior: Child Molestation

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Executive Summary

Sex is a complicated topic as it is constantly evolving with time. Long term ago, things like homosexuality, masturbation, and sodomy were considered huge taboos in the society, but contemporarily, they are no longer a big issue as long as they are done on mutual consent. However, there is one monster which is not undergoing contextual evolution – rape. Although there are various forms of rape including marital, there is another type of rape highly condemnable and tremendously devastating - child molestation. Child molestation is everywhere like the air we breathe – in Canada, United States, Australia, the UK, and France amongst other developed nations. The developing nations are also witnessing unimaginable rates of child sexual abuse. Therefore, this topic will be covered on a global context and not within Canada only.

Sexual crime targeted to children is not only practiced by thugs, but also by religious leaders. For instance, the Roman Catholic Church is home to controversies with respect to priests and clergy sexually abusing children. Learning institutions also experience similar problems where teachers sexually abuse children. Family members are also to be feared with equal intensity. Child molestation has another name – pedophilia. Since the definition of sexual deviance has been changing with time and now the society is increasingly becoming accommodative toward some of the things that were considered taboos, it is indeed invaluable to investigate the background of sexual deviance.

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Introduction

The tendency for individuals to accomplish erotic gratification via means that are considered abnormal, different, or unacceptable to either most or influential people in the community is increasingly becoming worrisome, with child molestation being the most dangerous (“Child Sexual Abuse Fact Sheet For Parents, Teachers, and Other Caregivers”). Children of all ethnicities, races, economic backgrounds and ages are exposed to sexual abuse. Child molestation impacts both girls and boys in all types of neighborhoods and communities and in nations across the globe (Prentky et al., 1997).

Child molestation is any interaction between a boy or girl aged 13 or less, and an adult in which the child is used for the sexual gratification of the perpetrator or observer. The child can sexually be abused through both touching behavior (which might involve touching of the breasts, vagina, buttocks, or penis, oral-genital touch, or actual sexual intercourse) and non-touching behavior (looking at a child’s naked body – voyeurism, showing the child pornographic materials – exhibitionism etc.).

Child sexual abusers - more than often – avoid using force. They use manipulation and persuasion to sexually engage children; and then use threats, deception, play and other forms of soft-deterrence to buy the silence of victims. Buying presents and organizing special activities also confuse the child and make them silent believing that somehow the molester cares about their wellbeing. With this in mind, it has come out clear that child molestation is a complex science in serious need of further and generously funded research. This form of deviance is really eating up the society from right, left and center and if stringent measures are not introduced, more children will end up in the hands of irresponsible adults (“Child Sexual Abuse Fact Sheet For Parents, Teachers, and Other Caregivers”).

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This research topic is of material importance as it talks about one of the most enormous challenges humanity has ever faced. With collective and sustainable research on what constitutes a child molester, how to prevent child molestation, the impact of molestation on children and the various ways of early detection of child molestation situation will greatly provide a cutting edge in the fight against the crime. Child molestation is not a normal sexual deviance. It is a huge source of destruction to children whose futures are being placed on the sword by irresponsible individuals out there. And what complicates the fight against child molestation is the uncertainty surrounding the associated events. For example, over half a dozen decades ago, most child molesters were strangers - people not known to the victim. In this century, things have changed as even family members molest children. This places children in an extremely vulnerable situation. Children trust all members of their family wholeheartedly only to see their innocence and humanity taken from them by the very people who should be defending them (Studies Department's Virtual Humanities Lab at Brown University; Jan 31, 2011).

This paper is concerned about child molestation and its impact on the society and in no circumstance is it based on the legal implications on the offender as everyone known what happens to those who destroy the future of children. Long term prison sentences, death penalties, and social excommunication. These are just a few of the events that happen to people who do not respect the rights of children. This paper will discuss the meaning of sexual deviance, its historical backgrounds, and the types of sexual deviant behaviors including, rape, incest, masturbation, sodomy, and of course, child molestation and narrow down the topic to address the latter.

Background of Sexual Deviance

A study by Brown University in 2011 suggest that during the second half of the Middle Ages (this is the pre-independence age – 800 AD -1500 AD - in reference to the United States) the municipal and royal law became so effective and well-structured that these institutions felt the need to include rape, sodomy, incest, and masturbation (sexual deviance) as fornication and adultery offenses. This was the time that sexual deviants were legally held accountable for their intimate behavior. They were hunted down by law enforcers and police, taken to court and received substantially long jail terms. Through to the Plague years, sexual crime continued to rise despite population increase in Venice, the in the British Rhode Island – currently Rhode Island. So the legal system of this area examined the different types of sexual deviance behavior and separated each to carry a different penalty. At that time, research on sexual deviance was a rare feat among scholars and the knowledge about this mischief came to light during court hearings only (Studies Department's Virtual Humanities Lab at Brown University; Jan 31, 2011).

Incest was another sexual offense. This happens when marriage or sex between close relatives (within four degrees) happened. It is true even in the modern society that marriage between close relatives is considered incestuous. Incest offenders usually do not see the sexual deviance in this act, and instead, suggested that it was a way of promoting intimacy and understanding in the family. Currently, incest is a serious sexual problem among families as some individuals insist on its “not-so-wrongness” (Studies Department's Virtual Humanities Lab at Brown University; Jan 31, 2011).

Sodomy was also not an uncommon offense, but controversies about how to define it were always there. Sodomy was a common thing among the clergy in the 1200s and until now the practice is still ongoing. Celibacy requirements by the Roman Catholic Church forced the

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clergy to possess intense sexual fantasies that resulted to the victimization of children especially boys in service of the church. Non-marital sodomy was heavily penalized with castration or death by hanging. However, in marriage as an institution, sodomy was not allowed and any woman whose husband asked for such sexual pleasure had the liberty to file for divorce, but there was no legal implication on the husband. The women who accepted it did not have to seek divorce. This shows that sodomy was a semi-accepted practice in ancient times. Today, most democratic governments treat consensual sodomy (homosexuality) as a normal thing. If done without consent, it precipitates into a big legal problem for the offender (Studies Department's Virtual Humanities Lab at Brown University; Jan 31, 2011).

Masturbation was sometimes included in the legal description of sodomy and was not taken as a serious sexual offense in the Middle Ages. But with time, religion chipped in and classified masturbation as one of the most serious sins as it was against nature and not for siring. This was the assertion of Thomas Aquinas. In 1388, Archbishop Guy de Roye reiterated that masturbation was so sinful that it had to be handled only by bishops. The seriousness of masturbation as a sin continued through the Plague period which witness unbearable population decrease. To the church, masturbation was a "waste of the seed" and a facilitator of population decline. Nonetheless, the society of today sees not big issue in masturbation. Children and girls are sometimes advised to conduct masturbation as way as understanding their sexuality and exploring their fantasies. This is a great endorsement to sexual deviance and how such a practice can be encouraged is yet to be established (Studies Department's Virtual Humanities Lab at Brown University; Jan 31, 2011).

Rape was subject to disagreement between theologians/canonists and the municipal law. Unlike what happens today, aggressive sexual acts such as rape on women were not regarded as

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a huge offense. Men who raped women easily escaped indictment on the grounds that they were youthful, energetic and sexually active beings. However, a man whose wife was a rape victim of another man could take the aggressor to court to seek justice because the woman was his property. In other words, the sexual offender of a married woman was surprisingly assumed to be a “property trespasser.” How this made sense is totally beyond me to comprehend. In this 21st century, rape is taken as a very serious crime and can hand the rapist a prolonged jail sentence if not death penalty depending on how it was done. Marital rape, when a man forces his wife into having sex with him can lead to court proceedings. Child molestation can include rape, incest, and sodomy; and that is why it was necessary have a grasp of them in the paper (Studies Department’s Virtual Humanities Lab at Brown University; Jan 31, 2011).

Child Molestation Statistics in Canada

Child abuse is one of the most rampant and most unreported crimes in Canada and it is no coincident that the numbers are getting scarier by the day. Only 6 out of 100 incidents of sexual abuse are reported to the police; 25% of all women in Canada and the U.S. will be sexually exploited during their lifetime; 11% of women show physical injuries as a result of sexual assault; 96%-98% of sexual abuses reported are true; 60% of sexual abuse victims are aged 17 and below; more than 80% of sexual abuse victims are females; 17% of girls aged 16 and below have been victims of some forms of incest; 83% of disabled women in Canada will face molestation during their lifetime; 15% of sexual assault victims are aged 16 and under; 50% of sexual criminals are married or in long term relationships; 575 of aboriginal females have been exploited sexually; 20% of all sexual crimes involve a weapon of some kind; and 80% of abusers are friends and family of the victim (“Sexual Assault and Rape Statistics, Canada”).

A Behavioral Analysis of Child Molesters

Lanning (2010) argues that the sexual abuse of children (individuals aged 13 years and below) exhibits differential and wide dynamics. Lanning (2010) adds: Sexual victimization “can range from one-on-one intra-familial abuse to multi-offender/multi-victim extra-familial sex rings and from nonfamily abduction of toddlers to prostitution of teenagers. Sexual victimization of children can run the gamut of “normal” sexual acts from fondling to intercourse. The victimization can also include deviant sexual behavior involving more unusual conduct (*e.g.*, urination, defecation, and playing dead) that often goes unrecognized, including by statutes, as possibly being sexual in nature. There are, therefore, no step-by-step, rigid investigative standards that are applicable to every case or circumstance.” The approaches regarding investigation into child molestation cases thus have to be subject to constant adjustments if things are to be gotten right. In some countries, law enforcers use different units each of which deals with a specific type of child molestation (Lanning, 2010). For instance, one unit investigates extra-familial child molestation and another investigates intra-familial child molestation. This guarantees pin-point precision convictions and an accelerated dispensation of justice. In fact child molestation hearings receive early ruling in an attempt to heal the victim and their loved ones as well as act as a source of deterrence for such crimes. With that in mind, is it not appropriate to what constitute a child molester?

Who Is A Child Molester?

The term child molester is not uncommon among professionals and non-professionals. Law enforcement agents also commonly use this terminology. Lanning (2010) defines a child molester as “a significantly older individual who engages in any type of sexual activity with individuals legally defined as children. When using only the term **child molester**, no distinctions will be made between male and female, single and repeat offenders, or violent and nonviolent offenders. No distinctions will be made as to whether the child victims are prepubescent or pubescent, known or unknown, related or unrelated to the offender. Finally no distinctions will be made based on the type of sexual activity engaged in by the offender.” This means that all child molesters are treated the same. A child molester is therefore any significantly older person who engages in any kind of illegal sexual activity with children (Lanning, 2010).

What constitutes a child is a question wide open for debates and the answer depends on who is asked. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child describes a child “as everyone under the 18 unless, “under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.” Some countries like the United Kingdom specify age limits in different situations. Such situations include but are not limited to child protection; age of consent; and age of criminal responsibility. In regards to protection by the government, a child is anyone under 13. The age of consent represent the legal age for a child to have sex – 16 years. However, a child as young as 10 in the UK; might take the full burden of criminal responsibility. Canada adopted the UK version of the definition of a child. Canada was colonized by Britain so their law structures are nearly identical (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), 2016). Some countries follow the level of education when defining child aside from the “anyone under 18” version. A

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19 year old still in primary school or lower high school might be considered a child. This paper; however, could not have made any sense if the types of molesters were not defined.

Child molestation is such a complicated social, political, and economic problem on the grounds of its variable forms of offenders. For instance, politicians, the society and even professionals such as police or law enforcement agents find it a climbing task dealing with child molesters. Child molesters can be strangers, acquaintances, nice-guys who are in a position of trust from children or a man in a raincoat parading in dark places as patient as a sniper awaiting his catch. This is what the criminal justice system of Canada is up against.

Types of Child Molesters

Pedophile

A pedophile is a man who prefers prepubescent teenagers i.e. individuals aged less than 13. Pedophiles do not necessarily have to abuse the child physically. They may have consensual online chat or ask for pictures of prepubescent teenagers, acquire sexual arousals and probably rush to the washroom to masturbate. Pedophiles can also seek prostitution services from 14 year olds. Pedophilia is a sexual disorder but more than often people interpret it as a sexual deviance behavior. However, children rights and the Canadian justice system treat pedophiles as sexual deviants rather than patients of a disorder. Pedophiles think they are right and that they should be exempted from any severe legal penalties as what happens is beyond their control.

As for pedophiles, the control theory might apply. This sociological deviance theory suggests that “deviance exists because of improper socialization, which results in lack of self-control for the person.” A pedophile’s profile might describe someone as “unsocial, enjoys isolation, loves hanging out in dark or private places and shies away from ladies. Eventually, the lacks of socialization abilities subjugate the person into believing that they are not good enough

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to seduce and win over a woman romantically. They have a low self-esteem with girls of their age, so they hunt for younger girls. They also claim that their pedophilic nature is down to the fact that whatever is happening to them cannot be controlled. "I never meant to hurt the boy, but I could not resist the temptation to touch his privacy." This is one of the excuses pedophiles offer in court as defense. The good news is that pedophilia is relatively less difficult to diagnose in people. For example, a man who rarely seduces or talks to a woman, but loves spending so much time with children can be diagnosed with pedophilia ("Sociological Theories of Deviance: Definitions & Considerations").

The behavior of pedophiles can also be explained by the anomie theory as suggested by Robert Merton. Robert Merton enthuses that confusion often arises when social norms conflict or do not even exist. The differences between socially accepted objectives and the availability of avenues to accomplish those objectives is a great instance for deviant behavior, especially if there are no resources. This analogous to a man who wants to have a beautiful girlfriend but cannot because he has some repellant characteristics often marked by lack of good looks or poverty. Or a man may desire to have a sexual relationship with a grown up woman, but his small size makes him unconfident and opts to look for a small girl. Here, size means genitals (Chadwick, 2011; "Sociological Theories of Deviance: Definitions & Considerations").

Mr. Nice-Guy Offender

A nice-guy offender loves and is loved by children. This type of offender is difficult to notice until damage is done, but sometimes a molestation history might help parents keep their children away. A nice-guy is an acquaintance offender. Such offenders molest children via seduction and/or the collection, creation, or distribution of child pornography. A Nice-guy-offender is not non-violent in nature, but might have predatory and serial instincts. Being able to

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mutually relate to children makes nice-guy molesters attention-drawing to children. The absence of violence or destructive sexual deviance toward children makes nice-guy offenders feel like what they are doing is reasonably fair. Secondly, nice-guy offenders are in possession of strong needs. Having known what offenders look like, it is indeed an invaluable attempt to focus on the victim – children - and how to protect them (Chadwick, 2011; “Sociological Theories of Deviance: Definitions & Considerations”).

What Happen to Abused Children?

Hall (2011) argues that children exposed to molestation show a range of emotions and behaviors that match those under PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder). The child may; therefore, display anxiety, withdrawn patterns, depression, angry outbursts, knowledge about sexual activity, language and any behavior beyond the age of the child. The child also feels unsafe and is always in need of company (Hall, 2011).

Not all children who have been molested develop behavioral or emotional changes. Some remain normal like nothing happened. This makes it an uphill task for detection and intervention. Such children might continue to be sexually abused over and over again until something serious such as STIs or pregnancy comes up and this is dangerous. The best thing is to educate children on how to stay safe, report situations that are or come close to child abuse. In addition to being advised to stay away from adults who might appear to send signals they want to abuse them, parents, teachers, and other caregivers should encourage open communication (Hall, 2011).

Sexual Abuse Reports

Open communication is the best way of letting children share their fears of sexual abuse. However, some children might not report their abuse encounters for various reasons. Now what if the abuser is the child’s father, priest, uncle, teacher, or doctor? Chances are high the child

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might not report because of the authority the abuser has on them. Shame or guilt, fear of not being trusted, threats of bodily harm to the child or his family, and/or fear of being kicked out of the home are the paramount reasons a child might find it hard to report about being sexually abused (Prentky et al., 1997).

But what can be done if a child reports that he or she is being (or has been) sexually molested? First, it is important to stay calm, listen carefully, and avoid blaming the child. Say thank you to the child for disclosing it to you and assure him or her of your support. Promise the child this will never happen to them again. Immediately call for help from neighbors, pedestrians, police etc. and rush the kid to hospital. This is the least that can be done for their courage, trust in you and their need to stop it.

Protecting the Child from Molesters

Child molestation – as stipulated earlier - is very damaging as it changes the child's behavior and emotional status permanently, unless intervened by a therapist specialized in healing sexually abused children. Therapy is helpful, but again, it cannot be assumed that the child will get back to normal. Some bad memories will always remain in his head. There is absolutely no reason to belittle therapists, doctors or caregivers, but the whole concept is to employ preventive methods. Although some parents might consider this gross, it is a great idea to educate the children on the exact names of private parts and advise the child to not let anyone touch them there or report immediately if they get touched. Children must be taught about “okay” and “not okay” touches, and encourage them to take care of their private parts (i.e. taking shower, wiping after bathroom use) to avoid them having to depend on adults or older children for assistance. Educating children about the difference between “okay secrets” and “not- so-okay secrets” can work miracles. Let them know keeping secrets forever is not the best thing to go

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about it. Lastly, should one feel leaving the child with an adult is unsafe, they should not leave them. The most important thing is to trust one's instincts and ask the child questions whenever suspicion rises (Jensen, JC & Jensen, S, 1999; "Child Sexual Abuse in Canada").

Conclusion

The tendency for individuals to accomplish erotic gratification via means that are considered abnormal, different, or unacceptable to either most or influential people in the community is increasingly becoming worrisome, with child molestation being the most dangerous. The fact that 17% of girls under 16 have experienced some form of incest, 15% of boys under the age of 16 have been molested, and 60% of sexual molestation victims are under 17, 80% of sexual abuse cases happen in the home, and 84% of sexual assault cases are not reported to the police shows how dangerously Canadian children are exposed to sexual abuse.

Some molesters had been victims of child molestation and feel like sexually assaulting other people's children might bring healing to their adulthood lives. Others are so possessed by sexual fantasies and sexual deviance behavior that they rarely notice what they are doing is not correct. The future depends on children and if they are left on their own to know what is wrong and what is not, surely, the future will be dark for us. Both acquaintance molesters and molesters who are strangers to victims have an equal ability to destroy children's lives; therefore, it is the duty of parents to teach their children how to maintain healthy bodies and explain to them what each private part is, how it works and how to take care of it and prevent adults from touching or looking at it. Not all parents would agree with this but it is worth the try (Prentky et al., 1997).

Law enforcement organs have to be on alert all time. Cases reported to the police must be taken seriously and immediate actions undertaken to bring the culprits to justice. The sociological theories of sexual deviant behavior hold, but again whether a child sexual offender

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has been motivated by the anomie, control, labelling, or differential-association theory is not important. What is important is the dispensation of justice and keeping children safe at all cost. Character is a matter of choice and not fate. Sexual offenders choose to be sexual offenders and whatever burdens they might have, using children as an escape route will never work for them (Chadwick, 2011).

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