The Role of Moral Emotions
in the Onset and Progression of Child Sexual Offending

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the role of moral emotions in child sexual assault. Despite an extensive literature on moral emotions among non-offending populations, there has been little investigation of the role of shame, guilt and pride in the onset and maintenance of child sexual assault. Current theories have generally paid little attention to moral emotions, instead relying on the concept of low self-control/self-regulation to help explain some aspects of this phenomenon.

The empirical data on child sexual assault has consistently found that extrafamilial offenders, offenders against boys and younger offenders are more likely to reoffend. The major theories of child sexual assault provide a degree of explanation for the age effect, but do not provide a satisfactory explanation of the findings related to extrafamilial offenders and offenders against boys.

This thesis argues that incorporating moral emotions into the existing theories will provide a much more satisfactory explanation of child sexual assault than the explanations yielded from self-control/self-regulation theory. A crucial distinction between self-control/self-regulation theories and an explanation based on moral emotions is that the former presumes a deficit (either ongoing or transient) in the offender, whereas the latter is encapsulated within a motivational balance model, which views the outcome as a result of an interplay between a number of competing motivations. This provides a much more satisfactory explanation for the amount of offending by people who “have” high self-control, while simultaneously helping explain the repetitive nature of chronic offenders.
The literature on moral emotions was investigated and it was concluded that the view of shame and guilt outlined by Tangney and Dearing (2002) was most consistent with the empirical data. This conceptualisation draws a contrast between shame and guilt. Despite their many commonalities, the core difference relates to the view of the self. While both involve feeling bad, with shame the sense of self is damaged or faulty, whereas with guilt the self is intact. Unfortunately, the instrument chosen to measure shame and guilt in this thesis – the State Shame and Guilt Scale-Modified (SSGS-M) did not distinguish these emotion with the participants, who were prisoners convicted of sexual offences against children. It was concluded that the Shame and Guilt scales of the SSGS-M were probably measuring guilt and that the Pride scale was probably a measure of detachment – a lack of shame and guilt.

It was hypothesised that levels of moral emotion reported after the first sexual offence against a child, would distinguish extrafamilial from intrafamilial offenders, offenders against boys from offenders against girls and be related to the age of the offender. These hypotheses were supported.

It was also hypothesised that the tendency to experience moral emotions would similarly distinguish these different groups of offenders. These hypotheses were not supported.

The third group of hypotheses relate to the direct connection between moral emotions and sexual recidivism. It was found that levels of moral emotion after the first sexual offence against a child predicted officially detected reoffending, but had mixed results with self-reported reoffending. Among those who continued to offend, their levels of moral emotions after their most recent offence was not significantly different from their initial offence.
Despite difficulties in directly identifying shame, guilt and pride, meaningful associations were found between moral emotions and features of child sexual offenders. The difficulties in measurement are probably due to a combination of ceiling effects, lapsed time and the desire to escape the discomfort of shame, which likely skewed the reports of some participants. Future investigations of moral emotions with child sexual offenders should include observational measures of shame-related and guilt-related behaviours, based on Nathanson’s (1992) Compass of Shame, to assist in distinguishing between the two. Additionally, more extreme measures of shame and guilt may assist in separating shame and guilt with this population. This distinction is essential if the general literature on moral emotions with non-offending populations is to be integrated with the research on offenders.

This thesis found that guilt (measured by the Shame and Guilt scales) is a restraint against further offending and detachment (measured by the Pride scale) represents the relative absence of that restraint. It was found that moral emotions can help explain why some categories of child sexual offender reoffend at a higher rate than others. In contrast, a measure of low self-control was not associated with these distinctions.

This suggests that, while there may be differences in child sexual offenders’ ability to restrain from offending, the restraining force of guilt can help explain some of the observed differences among offenders. In particular, differences in motivational balance should be considered before assuming there are differences in ability.

One particular group, extrafamilial offenders against boys, was identified as potentially different from other participants. While this group, being composed of two intersecting risk factors, would be expected to be higher risk than other participants, it appears that it is more than the sum of its parts and warrants further study.
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Richard Parker
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis proposes that moral emotions play a crucial role in the progression of child sexual assault. Specifically, it is hypothesised that the levels of moral emotion, after a first sexual offence against a child, influence the likelihood of subsequent sexual offending and may play a mediating role in the established empirical findings that intrafamilial offenders, older offenders, and offenders against girls are less likely to reoffend.

A number of theories have been developed to explain sexual offending against children. These theories will be examined later in this thesis (pp. 32 - 71). However, as will be shown, none of these theories adequately address the offender’s decision making in the period immediately preceding the offence, particularly the process by which many offenders act against their own values and beliefs. Most theories are either silent on this issue or argue that offenders have difficulty controlling their impulses, either as a general deficit or in response to certain pressures.

This is similar to the concept of low self-control, which came to prominence in Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) general theory of crime. This theory argues that offenders lack the ability to resist impulses to offend when opportunity presents (Morris, Gerber, & Menard, 2011). However, despite its popularity, this concept suffers from a lack of conceptual and definitional clarity. This will be explored later in this thesis (p. 58).

An alternative view is that while offenders may vary in their ability to resist impulses, many offenders may have little desire to refrain from criminal behaviour (Tittle &
Paternoster, 2000). This opens the door to an exploration of the motivations for restraining from offending. It is here that shame and guilt rise to the fore as potential restraints to criminal activity generally and child sexual offending specifically. However, shame and guilt have been examined only peripherally by some child sexual assault theorists, and not at all by others. Additionally, while some theorists integrate child sexual assault with general theories of crime, none of the major theories attempt to integrate their theories with general theories of decision-making.

Of particular relevance for child sexual assault and crime generally, are economic theories of time discounting, which explore the process by which people choose between an immediate consequence or a delayed consequence. This situation is directly applicable to child sexual assault as, like most crime, it involves a choice between immediate and delayed consequences.

The major theories of child sexual abuse also fail to adequately explain a number of the major empirical findings, such as why offenders who molest boys or victims outside their own family are more likely to reoffend. Additionally, as will be shown later, like most theories of crime generally, they struggle to explain the mechanisms behind desistance effects associated with increasing age.

The aim of this thesis is to address part of this shortfall by investigating the role of shame and guilt in aftermath of a first sexual offence against a child. Incorporating the extensive body of research on moral emotions with non-offenders, into theories of child sexual assault may allow sexual offending to be explained without the conceptual difficulties associated with the concept of low self-control.

Shame and guilt are powerful moral emotions that function to inhibit certain behaviours (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). The differences between shame and guilt are
subtle and often misunderstood, even by researchers. As they are both similar emotions evoked by similar situations, they often occur together to some degree, adding to this confusion. Most situations that involve guilt will also invoke some degree of shame and vice versa. However, ultimately, one of these will be dominant and motivate a particular response from the person.

Guilt is focussed on an identifiable act of wrongdoing, with the focus on the behaviour and motivates the person to repair the damage that has been done by this behaviour. Shame is focussed on the self rather than a specific behaviour, and motivates the person to withdraw, avoid, or escape from the shameful feeling. Additionally, shame can be focussed on an aspect of the self that is unrelated to behaviour, such as ethnic origin or appearance (Vallelonga, 1997).

This thesis examines the role of moral emotions in men who have sexually abused children. Child sexual abuse is considered one of the most heinous crimes in society today, a behaviour that many would expect to be restrained by shame and/or guilt. However, very little empirical attention has been devoted to the role of shame and guilt in child sexual abuse.

This thesis attempts to increase the understanding of the role of moral emotions in the aetiology of child sexual abuse through an examination of reported levels of moral emotions experienced by offenders immediately after their first offence. The thesis will examine the degree to which shame and guilt restrain and pride enables, a continuation of offending after the first offence. Additionally, it is proposed that moral emotions may mediate some of the empirical findings related to recidivism, specifically the age of the offender, gender of the victim and the relationship between the offender and victim.
CHAPTER 2: SEXUAL OFFENDING: EMPIRICAL DIMENSIONS

Before investigating a range of theories, which attempt to explain sexual abuse of children, the key findings these theories attempt to explain will be examined. Rather than examining all characteristics of sexual offenders and victims, this review will be restricted to findings of relevance to this thesis.

Defining child sexual abuse

There is no universally agreed definition of child sexual abuse. The Center for Sex Offender Management (1999) produced a comprehensive glossary of definitions for terms commonly used in the treatment of people who have committed sexually abusive acts. However, despite the complex series of definitions in this document, it simply defined sexual abuse as “Forced or manipulated unwanted sexual contact between two or more persons” (p. 20) and offered no definition of “child” or child sexual abuse, separate to their definition of sexual assault. This definition is silent on the factors that might affect someone’s ability to consent.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2004) also noted that there was no universally accepted definition of sexual abuse, and offered the following as its working definition:

Sexual assault is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature directed

towards a person:

which makes that person feel uncomfortable, distressed, frightened or threatened, or which results in harm or injury to that person;
to which that person has not freely agreed or given consent, or to
which that person is not capable of giving consent;
in which another person uses physical, emotional, psychological or
verbal force or (other) coercive behaviour against that person (p. 8).

This definition introduces the concept of consent, including the different types of coercion that are possible, but still does not directly address the issue of age as a factor in consent. They then expand on the definition of consent, outlining how consent cannot coexist with factors such as threats, deception and where the person is incapable of giving free consent. Insofar as this relates to age, they rely on the legal definition.

Abel, Becker and Cunningham-Rathner (1984) sought to define these consent issues independently of the legal definitions:

*Informed consent presents four major problems: (1) does the child understand
what he or she consents to, (2) is the child aware of the accepted sexual
standards in his or her community, (3) does the child appreciate the eventual,
possible consequences of the decision and (4) are the child and the adult
equally powerful so that no coercion influences the child’s decision? (p. 94).*

While this is less black and white than legal definitions, which often rely on fixed age limits, it does outline the issues involved in consent in a meaningful way. This definition, being rather idiographic, cannot be applied to large groups, as it requires an individual assessment of the child’s state of mind. Hence, for a definition to apply to large groups the use of a fixed age becomes more appealing.
The definition of child varies from culture to culture and the age of consent for sexual activity ranges from as low as 12 to as high as 21 (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008). Finkelhor (1984) reported that some objectors have attempted to discredit the consent-based definitions of child sexual abuse, arguing that they represent an ideal that is not reached in many adult sexual encounters. However, Finkelhor countered that: “Children constitute a clearly identifiable class where these conditions do not prevail; they deserve special protection” (p. 19, emphasis in original).

There can also be variations in the types of behaviours that are considered acceptable between adults and children – a cultural norm in one society might clearly constitute sexual abuse in another society, or in the same society at another time (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008). Herdt (1998) described how young males in a remote part of Papua New Guinea must perform oral sex on older males over an extended period as part of an initiation ritual, fuelled by a belief that swallowing semen was a prerequisite to full sexual maturity. While that was considered normal behaviour in that society, it would clearly be considered sexual abuse in the vast majority of cultures throughout the world.

It is clear that a universal definition of child sexual abuse is somewhat elusive. Rather than making an argument for one definition in favour of another, this thesis will define child sexual abuse as sexual contact with a person under the age of 16, where there was more than a two year age gap between the perpetrator and victim or where the child did not consent, regardless of any age gap.

The lack of a consistent definition among academics suggests a similar problem will exist in the community, raising the possibility that some offenders will not view their
behaviour as wrong, or perhaps not “as wrong” as other people view it. This has implications for the level of shame and guilt they will feel.

**Characteristics of child sexual offenders**

Information about offenders and victims of sexual abuse is constrained by the very low rates of reporting of sexual abuse (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008). Browne (2009) reported that about 2% of child sexual abuse cases are reported to police. Hence, available information about convicted sexual offenders may be unrepresentative of sexual offenders generally. For example, victims may be more likely to report an assault by a stranger, than a relative or someone they care about (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004; Finkelhor & Ormrod, 2001), resulting in an under-representation of offenders who have offended against people they know. Similarly, younger victims may be less likely to report than older victims (Finkelhor, 1994), leading to an under-representation of offenders who offend against younger victims in research samples. If the victim is young enough, they may not even remember the abuse (Finkelhor, 1994).

Finkelhor (1984) reported that boys were less likely to report sexual abuse than girls, leading to the possibility that offenders who offend against boys more than girls are less likely to be apprehended and hence less likely to be included in studies on child sexual abuse.

It is likely there are numerous other factors that could affect the decision to report abuse. It seems feasible that offenders who are more attractive may be more able to influence a victim not to report, as this is a factor in interpersonal influence generally.
(Kahle & Homer, 1985). Similarly, the use of threats may also dissuade victims from reporting sexual abuse (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008).

In addition to reporting bias, there may also be bias introduced through the legal system, as most reported sexual abuse does not lead to a conviction (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008). Hence offenders who deny any wrongdoing may be found not guilty by a jury, whereas an offender who admits their offending will usually plead guilty and dispense with the need for a decision about their guilt by the court. This is likely to further bias the samples of convicted offenders compared to the actual population of people who have committed child sexual abuse.

Finally, many studies of convicted sexual offenders rely on volunteers from within the criminal justice system (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008), introducing yet another form of bias. As a consequence, many studies are investigating offenders who share the following characteristics: the victim disclosed to authorities; the authorities believed them and acted upon it; the offender confessed or was found guilty by a court; he was sentenced to a term of imprisonment; and he volunteered for a particular study. Such a person may or may not be representative of people who molest children. He may in fact be quite unusual.

There have been some attempts to deal with this bias by deriving characteristics of offenders from victim reports (Finkelhor, 1994) but this introduces further sources of bias, such as the types of victims likely to seek assistance services, the types of victims who never tell anyone, and possible reporting biases from those victims.

In any regard, when examining statistics on child sexual abuse, it is important to consider that the sample almost certainly contains some source of bias, and cannot purport to tell the full picture of child sexual abuse. However, by examining data from
officially reported child sexual abuse, and comparing that to victim surveys, we can
draw some cautious inferences about child sexual abuse generally.

Gender of offenders

Sexual assaults against children are mainly committed by males. Gelb (2007) reported
a range of international statistics indicating that males were responsible for between
96% to 98% of sexual assaults on children. When considering people in Australian
prisons for sexual offences, the figures were even more striking, with only 0.7% being
female (Gelb, 2007). A similar result was found for prosecutions in Australia, with
99% of defendants of sexual assault in 2002-03 being male (Australian Bureau of

There is some evidence that victims may be less likely to report sexual assaults by
females (Nathan & Ward, 2001), which would suggest that the actual figures may not
be as extreme as reported above. This can also be seen in the figures given earlier,
where statistics generated from victim surveys produce rates as low as 96% of
perpetrators being male, whereas statistics generated from courts and prisons returned
figures around 99%.

However, given the size of the gender disparity in both convictions and victim
surveys, it is likely that men are responsible for the substantial majority of sexual
assaults against children (Grayston & De Luca, 1999). Consequently, and for ease of
language, in this thesis the male pronoun will be used to describe offenders.
Age of offenders

In contrast to the literature on general criminality, which finds a peak in offending between 16 and 20 years of age (Andrews & Bonta, 2003; Hanson, 2002), the age of child sexual offenders appears to be bimodal, with peaks in adolescence and the mid to late thirties (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008). Hanson (2002) noted that aggressive behaviour peaks in preschool years and declines afterwards, with the apparent rise in crime during adolescence representing a decreased tolerance for these behaviours by society.

The reason for this bimodal distribution is unknown, but Hanson (2002) speculated that adolescent offenders and adult offenders may be qualitatively different, with juvenile offending being attributed to an increase in sexual activity among antisocial youth and the peak in the late thirties being related to increased opportunity. The latter possibility was explored by Smallbone Marshall and Wortley (2008) who noted that the teenage years and thirties are the stages of life when males most have unsupervised access to children, either as siblings/baby sitters in their teens or as parents/care-givers in their thirties. They argued that, while some child sexual offenders begin offending in adolescence and continue offending into adulthood, generally adolescent-onset and adult-onset offenders are best conceptualised as separate groups.

Evidence for differences in adult and adolescent child sexual offenders supports this position. Adolescent child sexual offenders generally resemble juvenile delinquents, rather than adult child sexual offenders (Letourneau & Miner, 2005), whereas adult child sexual offenders tend to be older (Hanson, 2002) and better educated than
general adult offenders (Schwartz, 1996), even though if they do reoffend, it is more likely to be a non-sexual offence (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008).

However, this view has been challenged by Seto and Lalumièere (2010), who conducted a meta-analysis of male adolescent sexual offending, and concluded that adolescent sexual offending could not be “… parsimoniously explained as a simple manifestation of general antisocial tendencies” (p. 526).

Deviant sexual arousal has been shown to predict sexual recidivism in adult child sexual offenders (Hanson & Bussiere, 1998). Consequently, Letourneau and Miner (2005) argued that, if adolescent child sexual offenders were similar to adult child sexual offenders, they should exhibit deviant arousal and it should predict recidivism among this group. However, reviewing a range of studies, they reported that neither of these effects were observed. Additionally, deviant arousal failed to differentiate between adolescent child sexual offenders and juvenile delinquents.

Again, Seto and Lalumièere (2010) challenged this view and claimed that atypical sexual interest was the largest single factor differentiating male adolescent sexual offenders from male adolescents with non-sexual offending histories. In defence of their viewpoint, they cited previous research demonstrating that adolescents who had sexually offended against children demonstrated phallometric response patterns which was similar to adult child sexual offenders, and different to a non-offending group of young adults (Seto, Lalumiere, & Blanchard, 2000).

Smallbone and Wortley (2004) found that adult-onset child sexual offenders were typified by having a conviction for a non-sexual offence prior to their first sexual offence and were twice as likely to reoffend with a non-sexual offence than they were to reoffend with a sexual offence. Hence, similar to Letourneau and Miner’s (2005)
conclusions about adolescent sexual offenders, Smallbone and Wortley (2004) concluded that most adult-onset child sexual offenders were generalist rather than specialist offenders.

One conclusion from this debate is that adolescents who molest children do not neatly fit into a category of generalist offenders, but neither can they be neatly categorised as adult child sexual offenders who are waiting to grow up. It may be that there are several different categories subsumed within this group, with some whose sexual offending is driven by the same factors that drive general adolescent offenders and others with a more specifically sexual motivation driving their offending.

The bimodal distribution of age mentioned earlier, is derived from the offence that brought the offender into contact with the criminal justice system. This generally reflects their most recent sexual offence, not necessarily their first such offence, or even their first conviction. It is important to draw a distinction between the offenders’ age at the time they most recently committed a sexual offence against a child and the age at which they first committed such an offence. While the former appears to be bimodal, the latter may not necessarily be so. Investigating a group of child sexual offenders in Queensland prisons, Smallbone and Wortley (2004) found that the self-reported age of onset was normally distributed with a mean of 32.2 years and a range from 10 to 63 years.

This would suggest that the frequency of offending among active child sexual offenders may increase in their early teens, decrease during their late teens and twenties, when they do not come into contact with children frequently (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008), and increase again during their thirties, when they again come into contact with children at a higher rate. Hence, while onset may be normally
distributed, once an offender has started offending, the frequency may reflect a range of factors, including opportunity.

While it has already been mentioned, it is useful to repeat the caution about current data being based on official records and self-report. Wilcox and Sosnowski (2005) found that offenders’ average age at first offence reduced from 27.9 years to 13.5 years after they had been polygraphed. Their result suggests that a substantial number of offenders categorised as adult-onset in other studies would actually be better classified as adolescent-onset, if the polygraph-inspired figure is more accurate. Their sample was too small to test for normality of the age distribution.

Consequently, it is not possible to be categorical about the age of child sexual offenders either at the onset of their first offence or at the time of life when they are most likely to offend. What is clear is that both these ages can vary widely, with the lowest ages often representing the age of criminal liability, rather than being an absolute lowest age, and the oldest ages representing limits on the physical ability to offend. Nevertheless, we can conclude that child sexual offenders, at least in terms of their age, are more heterogeneous than non-sexual offenders and that the frequency of their offending is not static.

**Characteristics of Victims of Child Sexual Abuse**

Snyder (2000) examined a large US database of sexual assaults, covering nearly 61,000 victims and 57,000 offenders and found that the modal age of victims (including adult victims) of sexual assault was 14 years of age and that 86% of victims were female.
Australian national data on child sexual abuse, cannot be readily separated from the
data on sexual assault generally, as one of the age groupings used in reporting by the
Australian Bureau of Statistics (15 to 24 years of age) includes both adults and
children. However, males and females are most likely to be a victim of sexual assault
when they are aged 10 to 14 years of age (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2007).
Across all age groups, 84% of sexual assault victims were female, but this drops to
68% for victims less than ten years of age (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2007).

Finkelhor (1984) analysed data from a study involving a group of college students in
the USA and was able to uncover a range of factors that distinguished females who
had suffered child sexual abuse from those who had not – there were insufficient
males reporting child sexual abuse for analysis of factors to be meaningful. The
background factors most strongly associated with being a victim of child sexual abuse
were characteristics of the parents, particularly having a stepfather.

Finkelhor pointed out that while the stepfather was the abuser in many cases, there
were many cases where the girl was abused prior to the stepfather coming into her
life. Consequently, he speculated that a mother who was dating is more likely to bring
opportunistic men into the household who may molest her daughter if the opportunity
arose. Additionally, Finkelhor found other factors of fathers distinguished women
who had been molested as children, from those who had not, including conservative
family values and showing little affection towards the child.

Additionally, girls who ever lived without their mother or whose mother was
emotionally distant, often ill or unaffectionate, were more likely to have been sexually
abused. However, “…daughters of mothers who worked were not at higher risk, so it
is not simply a matter of a mother’s not being around the house” (Finkelhor, 1984, p. 26).

There is little doubt that child sexual abuse causes harm to most victims. Summarising the literature, Hébert, Parent, Daignault, & Tourigny (2006) noted that “… sexually abused children are likely to present significant anxiety, depression, somatic complaints, social withdrawal, anger, and aggressive behaviors compared to nonabused children” (p. 203). They also noted that these effects were worse when the abuse was longer, more violent and/or perpetrated by a father or father figure. While their own research uncovered similar findings, they also found there were a minority of victims who, despite being subjected to severe abuse, were able to utilise efficient coping skills.

The findings that victims are likely to have stepfathers and that the effects of abuse are aggravated by being committed by a father or father figure, raise questions about the relationship between the offender and the victim.

**Relationship between offender and victim**

In a large survey Snyder (2000) found the vast majority (86.2%) of child sexual offences were committed by someone the victim knew. However, females were twice as likely to be victimised by a stranger than were males (14.7% compared to 7.3%).

Australian figures are similar, with only 23% of females and 15% of males assaulted by a stranger (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2007). Using a sample of offenders, from Queensland prisons, Smallbone and Wortley (2001) found that only 6.5% of offenders sexually assaulted a stranger in their first sexual assault against a
child, suggesting that assaults against strangers are rare in a first offence. This lower figure for first offences suggests that some offenders might ‘graduate’ from offending against people they know to strangers, that those who offend against strangers may be more likely to continue to offend (Hanson & Bussiere, 1996), or both.

Consistent with these findings, most sexual assaults occurred in a dwelling, usually the home of the offender, victim or both (Snyder, 2000). In the United States, Snyder (2000) found that 70% of the sexual assaults occurred in a residence. Again, the Australian figures are similar, with 66% of sexual assaults occurring in a residence (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2007).

Hence, both internationally and in Australia, the majority of victims are females, who are victimised in a home, by someone they know. As noted above, there is some suggestion of a difference between the patterns in a first offence and subsequent offences. This then leads into the issue of onset and progression of sexual offending against children.

**Onset and progression**

The progression of sexual offending is a controversial topic because of highly conflicted data. Official recidivism statistics for sexual offenders show recidivism rates much lower than for general offenders (Gelb, 2007) with the vast majority of offenders not reoffending sexually within five years at risk.

In contrast, among general offenders recidivism rates of over 50% within two years are not uncommon. Langan and Levin (2002) studied released prisoners and found that 67.5% had been rearrested and 46.9% had been reconvicted within three years of
release. In contrast Langan, Schmitt and Durose (2003), studying a subset of the above data classified as child molesters, found that 39.4% were rearrested and 20.4% had been reconvicted for any type of crime within three years of release. These figures are about half the general rate reported earlier. When the type of new offence is restricted to sex crimes the recidivism rates are much lower, with only 5.1% being rearrested for a new sex crime and 3.5% being reconvicted for a new sex crime.

Contrasting this, are a variety of studies that show sexual offenders admit substantially more victims when polygraphed (Heil, Ahlmeyer, & Simons, 2003). For example, Wilcox and Sosnowski (2005) found that polygraphing child sexual offenders in the UK raised the mean number of disclosed victims from 3.7 to 16.9, a ratio of 1:4.6. This could imply that sexual offenders reoffend at rates much more comparable to non-sexual offenders, but are simply detected at much lower rates. However, non-sexual offenders also escape detection for substantial numbers of offences (Hall H. V., 1982; Monahan & Steadman, 1994), rendering comparisons between sexual and non-sexual offenders quite problematic.

There have been some efforts to compensate for the amount of under-reporting, such as the use of multipliers to increase the officially recorded number of offences to a rate that is consistent with victim surveys. Rollings (2008) applied a multiplier of 5.3 to sexual assault, 5.2 to assault, 7.2 to personal robbery, 3.4 to residential burglary, 2.8 to thefts from vehicles, 100 to shop thefts, 2.7 for other theft, 4.3 for criminal damage and 1.0 for murder and vehicle theft. This would suggest that the under-reporting of sexual assault is not dramatically different for other interpersonal offences, although it would seem likely that the reporting rates for child sexual assault may be lower than by adult victims of sexual assault.
Regardless of this debate, some child sexual offenders do reoffend and there a number of features that are associated with repeat offenders, such as age, gender of victim, relationship to victim, deviant sexual arousal and antisocial orientation (Hanson & Bussiere, 1998).

Specifically, offenders are more likely to reoffend if they: are younger at the time of release (Barbaree, Langton, Blanchard, & Cantor, 2009); offend outside their family/against strangers; offend against boys; have prior convictions for sexual offences (Gelb, 2007); exhibit high sexual arousal to children; or have an antisocial orientation (Hanson & Bussiere, 1998).

Some of these factors, such as sexual arousal to children and antisocial orientation, are well explained by current theories of child sexual abuse, as will be shown later in this thesis. However, these theories struggle to explain why men who offend against boys, who offend outside their family or who are younger, should be more likely to reoffend.

While it is clear that these factors predict future offending, or at least future apprehension, the mechanisms behind this are not always clear. For example, while high sexual arousal to children may produce a much higher drive to engage in sexual activity with children, it is unclear why having male victims is associated with a higher likelihood of recidivism, or why those who offend against strangers, or outside their own family, are more likely to offend than those who offend against children they know or are related to.
Proxy variables and causal variables

In examining such issues, it is important to distinguish between proxy variables and causal variables. In the above example, while having offended against a boy is associated with a higher likelihood of reoffending, any explanation needs to involve a variable that the offender possesses (such as a personality feature) or interacts with, such as situations he is more likely to encounter due to his lifestyle or location. As it is historical, having a prior male victim cannot by itself cause future offending, but it could be associated with other factors, which do contribute to the likelihood of an offence. That is, it is a proxy variable not a causal variable. Explanations for child sexual offending will be examined later in this thesis (p. 32).

In the context of progression of child sexual assault, there is much to be discovered. One factor that remains unclear is whether the differences between recidivists and non-recidivists are evident before or at the time of their first offence, or whether these differences become evident later, perhaps as a response to that offence or the reactions of others (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008).

“Natural” desistance

Another feature, which remains largely unexamined, concerns the process of desistance or reoffending by those who have not been officially detected or sanctioned. In other words, what is the ‘natural’ process of desistance/persistence among child sexual offenders whose offending is not reported to authorities? In contrast, this area has been heavily researched for nonsexual offenders (Laub & Sampson, 2003; Maruna, LeBel, Mitchell, & Naples, 2004).
While many child sexual offenders continue to offend until they are detected, it is highly likely that a number of offenders cease offending for reasons other than disclosure by the victim, as many prosecutions involve offences from many years ago, with no other convictions during that time period (Smallbone & Wortley, 2001).

Barbaree, Langton, Blanchard and Cantor (2009) suggested that aging itself may be a factor in desistance, as a result of both diminishing sex drive and maturity. It is possible there are a variety of factors involved in this desistance and they may bear some similarities to the issue of desistance among general offenders.

In a qualitative examination of a group of chronic general offenders, Maruna (2001) found that three factors were associated with desistance: a view of oneself as always having been a good person; taking responsibility for current behaviour (although not necessarily for past behaviour); and a desire to “make good”, to pay back for previous behaviours. It is possible that a similar process may occur in child sexual offenders.

In summary, the literature on onset and progression of child sexual offending raises as many questions as it answers. There is evidence that some offenders may change their modus operandi after their first offence and it would seem logical that at least some offenders would change their offending patterns. As demonstrated above, the ages of child sexual offenders appear to be bimodal, but it does not necessarily follow that the age of onset is bimodal. The next section examines the modus operandi of child sexual offenders in more depth.
Offender modus operandi/Offence settings

As noted above and contrary to ‘stranger danger’ campaigns perpetuated by governments and popular media, most child sexual abuse occurs in a home between two people who are related or know each other (Lievore, 2004; Smallbone & Wortley, 2000).

Child sexual abuse most often occurs long after a relationship has begun. Smallbone and Wortley (2000) found that 73% of the offenders in their sample had known the victim for more than a month prior to the first sexual offence, and more than half had known the victim for over a year.

This long relationship is open to two broad interpretations. The first is that offenders consciously target families with children and invest substantial energy into grooming victims and their families, so they can gain access to children (Salter, 2003). In this scenario, the offender is characterised as a predator who spends a great deal of time planning his offences. This characterisation implies a degree of homogeneity among child sexual offenders, as the “groomer” described above is not necessarily substantially different from an offender who randomly snatches children off the street, other than the methods he uses and a greater display of patience and planning.

The alternative scenario is that many of the offenders who molest a child within their social sphere, are opportunistic or reactive. In this scenario, the decision to molest a child is not a factor in the formation of that relationship, but may even be cued by aspects of an existing relationship that was formed with no thought of sexual abusing children. Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008) described how many such offenders report acting quite impulsively without a detailed planning process, a direct contrast to the calculating predator described by Salter.
As there is evidence that some offenders do engage in substantial planning and consciously enter into relationships for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Salter, 2003), it is clear that child sexual offenders are not an homogenous group. Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008) argued that planning/grooming is likely to be a consequence of offending for persistent offenders – something that is more likely to emerge over the course of repeat offending and less likely to be present at onset. If this is the case, then the planning process may become more evident as an offending career unfolds, but would not be evident during the first offence.

A number of theorists have proposed typologies to separate child sexual offenders into a number of more homogeneous groups, while acknowledging a degree of heterogeneity across child sexual offenders generally (Ward & Siegert, 2002; Worling, 2001; Wortley & Smallbone, 2006). These typologies raise the possibility of differing explanations for child sexual abuse by the different types of offenders.

While it is clear that most sexual abuse of children occurs in a dwelling between two people who are already acquainted, it is equally clear that some child molestation is perpetrated by strangers, who will offend soon after making their first contact with a child.

In summary, child sexual abuse most commonly occurs between a child and someone who is related to that child or has some established relationship with them. These offences generally occur in domestic settings such as the home of the victim, offender or both. A small percentage of offences are perpetrated by strangers, who will generally attempt to access children through social or institutional settings – although a minority of these will access a child directly. Explanations of child sexual abuse need to be able to explain these different scenarios. The following chapter examines
the major theories of child sexual assault, with an emphasis on how they explain the empirical findings that those who molest boys, outside their own family, or who are younger, are more likely to reoffend.
CHAPTER 3: THEORIES OF SEXUAL OFFENDING

As noted in the previous chapter, child sexual abuse is overwhelmingly perpetrated in a private dwelling by males who have an established relationship with the victim. The offenders’ ages vary widely, but the peak ages for offending are around 14 years of age and in the early thirties.

Once detected, most child sexual offenders are not sanctioned for a further sexual offence. Continuation of child sexual assault after sanction, is known to be associated with a number of factors including offender age, relationship between the offender and victim, gender of the victim, the number of past offences, antisocial orientation and atypical sexual interests.

Having examined the types of behaviours that need to be explained by theories of child sexual abuse, the theories will now be examined. As others have noted (Wortley & Smallbone, 2006), a number of these theories have evolved specifically to explain sexual offending, with little reference to theories about other forms of crime, such as Finkelhor’s (1984) Preconditions model and Ward and Siegert’s (2002) Pathways model. Two notable exceptions are Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s (2008) revision of Marshall and Barbaree’s (1990) Integrated Theory and Stinson, Sales and Becker’s (2008) Multimodal Self-Regulation Theory. As these theories are described, they will be investigated for consistency with explanations of general crime, what role, if any, they ascribe to shame and guilt in the aetiology of child sexual abuse and how well they explain the empirical data on child sexual abuse outlined earlier.
Finkelhor’s Preconditions model will be examined first, as it is the earliest of these explanations for child sexual assault.

**Finkelhor’s Preconditions Model**

While not presented as such, Finkelhor’s Preconditions Model (1984) effectively deals with the question “Why do people commit sexual offences against children?” by reversing the question to “Why wouldn’t they?” In essence, he examined child sexual assault by postulating the factors that generally restrain people from child sexual assault and then attempted to explain why these factors were ineffective in restraining some people from committing child sexual assault. From this he developed four preconditions that are required for an offence to occur: motivation to commit a sexual offence; overcoming internal inhibitors; overcoming external inhibitors; and overcoming the child’s resistance.

*Motivation to commit a sexual offence* outlines the types of motivation that may drive a person to sexually abuse a child. Finkelhor explained that the motivation does not need to be a sexual attraction to a child and that the child victim could in fact be a target of last resort rather than the offender’s first sexual preference. The motivation does not even need to be sexual. Finkelhor hypothesised that in some cases, the motivation is emotional contact. He also pointed out some of the reasons that an offender would turn away from their normal sexual preference to abuse a child, including difficulties in establishing consensual adult relationships. There is also no requirement in Finkelhor’s model that this motivation is enduring – it could be quite transient.
Overcoming internal inhibitors recognises that many offenders have beliefs that are inconsistent with their offence: “We presume that most members of society have such inhibitions” (Finkelhor, 1984, pp. 55-56). Hence, these inhibitions need to be overcome before an offence is possible. He listed a number of mechanisms through which this is possible including the use of alcohol, mental dysfunction and the failure of normal incest inhibition mechanisms. Finkelhor did not elaborate on the nature of inhibitions themselves, although he recognised them as a part of normal human psyche: “If there are those who do not [have inhibitions], then the absence of inhibitions needs to be explained” (Finkelhor, 1984, p. 57). Although not specifically mentioned by Finkelhor, it is clear that emotions such as guilt, shame and fear would be prime candidates for inclusion in a list of inhibitions that could prevent child sexual abuse.

A common conceptualisation of lack of inhibition presumes a deficit in the person – that they lack an ability to control themself or are impulsive (Jones & Lynam, 2009). This will be discussed later in more detail (page 58). It should be noted that Finkelhor did not rely on a general lack of inhibition. Rather, he proposed mechanisms by which normal inhibitions were disabled.

Overcoming external inhibitors recognises that parents are usually protective of children and will not willingly expose them to harm. Some of the common forms of this precondition are when the mother is absent or ill, is not close or protective of the child, or is dominated or abused by the father. He also cited unusual opportunities to be alone with the child and unusual sleeping arrangements as examples where the normal guardian of a child is less likely to notice the child being abused.
The final precondition, *overcoming the resistance of the child*, recognises that the abuse cannot take place unless the child’s ability to resist is somehow diminished. Often this is done through manipulation or force, but Finkelhor pointed out that abusers may recognise that some children are more vulnerable than others and choose the path of least resistance. Very young children have little ability to resist and little ability to disclose the abuse, particularly if they are pre-verbal.

Slight changes in Finkelhor’s model can produce a theory which is applicable to general offending, as motivation to commit a sexual offence can be broadened to motivation to commit any particular crime; internal inhibitors can be reframed to refer to crime in general; external inhibitors are conceptually similar to the capable guardian described by Routine Activity Theory (Clarke & Felson, 1993, p. 2) which required “… three minimal elements for direct contact predatory crime: a likely offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian against crime”; and the child’s resistance can be replaced by the victim or target’s resistance.

Finkelhor’s model has been criticised (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008; Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) because it fails to adequately explain how the initial motivations for sexual offending arise. This would appear to be a valid criticism, as other theories have addressed that issue in some detail. However, it does not detract from the elegance of this model in describing the factors involved in an offence, in a manner that brings together characteristics of a potential offender, the situation in which an offence can take place and characteristics of the victim and family.

In essence, Finkelhor’s model can be built upon with other theoretical ideas, which might not necessarily contradict the core tenets of his model. Of particular note for the current thesis, Finkelhor’s model allows for the potential restraining effects of shame.
and guilt to be incorporated into theories of sexual offending, but it does not explain some of the empirical findings, such as the preponderance of men as offenders and why some subgroups of offenders are significantly more likely to reoffend. Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006) concluded “… its lack of scope, conceptual vagueness and incoherence, and lack of unifying power mean that it no longer stands as an adequate explanatory theory” (p. 30).

Marshall and Barbaree/Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s Integrated Model

In contrast, Marshall and Barbaree’s integrated model (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Marshall & Marshall, 2000) contains much more detail about the origins of the motivations for sexual offending. This theory has been recently revised by Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (Smallbone, 2006; Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008) and that version of the theory will be addressed.

This theory is underpinned by four major contentions:

1. Evolution has provided humans with a high degree of behavioural flexibility, including the potential for both prosocial and antisocial behaviours. Male sexual behaviour can be enacted in response to a wide range of stimuli and in both nurturing and aggressive contexts;

2. Attachment, initially to parents, but later to a wider range of social contacts, provides a basis for restraining people from committing antisocial acts. Initially this is driven through parenting behaviour, but adult attachment patterns also serve to restrain antisocial behaviour;

3. Social ecosystems influence the potential for child sexual abuse to occur by presenting risk and protective factors at various (e.g. peer-, family-,
neighbourhood-) levels of the offender’s and victim’s natural social ecologies; and

4. Situational factors influence the potential for child sexual abuse to occur in a particular context by presenting an opportunity for offence-related motivations to be enacted, or by evoking offence-related motivations.

This theory will now be explained in more detail and some criticisms of this theory considered.

Evolution

Evolutionary theory posits that organisms that are well adapted to a particular environment will have a greater chance of survival than organisms that are less well adapted to that environment (Darwin, 1859). Consequently, organisms that are able to adapt to a range of environments will have a better chance of survival in a range of environmental conditions.

Genetic survival depends on procreation, including the search for a suitable mate. As part of their flexibility, human males have developed the ability to secure a mate through both cooperative methods and by the use of force, deception and opportunism.

While not directly stated by Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley, this aspect of the theory can explain why males are responsible for so much more child sexual abuse than females. Because females carry the burden of a lengthy gestation period, raising children and a shorter period of fertility, their chances of passing on their genes are best served by careful selection of a mate who will support them and assist in raising
the children (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008), reducing the viability of coercive and deceptive strategies.

In contrast, men have less investment in the child rearing process and can adopt a non-complementary strategy of attempting to mate with as many women as possible, while simultaneously providing little in the way of child rearing. While the children of such a man may have higher mortality, the sheer weight of numbers may ensure enough survive to pass on his genes.

Consequently the traits of force, deception and opportunism can be a successful evolutionary strategy for men, but are of much less evolutionary benefit for females. Hence, evolution would result in a greater preponderance of these characteristics among males. Child sexual abuse, being associated with these characteristics, is therefore much more likely to be perpetrated by males. Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008) cited a range of findings consistent with this view, including higher density of testosterone receptors and differences in brain metabolism and neurochemistry.

**Attachment**

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley argued that child sexual abuse can be partly viewed as a sub-type of antisocial conduct. They point out that many child sexual offenders have histories of other types of offending and it is possible that the drivers for these offences are similar to the drivers for child sexual abuse, consistent with Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) general theory of crime which posited that crimes are intrinsically rewarding and can be explained by a lack of self-control, in conjunction with opportunity.
However, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley also noted that many, albeit not most, child sexual offenders do not have a history of other offences and some even appear to lead exemplary lives apart from their child sexual abuse. Additionally, most general offenders do not sexually molest children and in fact hold very strong prohibitions against child sexual abuse, to the point that incarcerated child sexual offenders are usually placed in protective custody to protect them from assaults by other prisoners (Schwaeb, 2005; Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008).

To assist in explaining why otherwise law-abiding men sexually abuse children, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley incorporated biological research about sexuality, aggression and nurturance. Noting that most child sexual abuse does not involve overt aggression, they postulated that normal nurturing behaviours with children can evoke sexual interest in males who are caring for children. Hence, some child sexual abuse arises from normal prosocial care-giving behaviours.

To explain this, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley drew upon the attachment research pioneered by Bowlby (1969). Bowlby outlined three separate mechanisms underlying attachment: care-seeking, care-giving and sexual interactions. In adult-adult relationships, all three of these mechanisms can be evoked simultaneously in the same interaction, where it is not usually problematic.

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley noted that because care-seeking, care-giving and sexual interactions often occur together, each of these mechanisms can cue the others. Consequently care-seeking and care-giving could cue sexual behaviour in adult-child interactions as well as in adult-adult interactions. They argued that this is particularly likely to occur in people who have developed insecure attachment styles.
Strong social and possibly biological, restraints apply to sexual interaction between adults and children. Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley noted that these restraints are generally, but not universally, effective in preventing child sexual abuse, particularly among men.

Drawing upon other research, they proposed that sexual drive and sexual attraction have evolved to drive different aspects of reproduction. Whereas sexual drive provides the incentive to engage in sexual behaviour, sexual attraction targets that behaviour towards a limited subset of the available sexual targets. From an evolutionary perspective, it is most advantageous to target the group that will maximise reproductive outcomes. They noted that while both males and females prefer sexual partners who are healthy, dependable and intelligent, men value youth and beauty more than women do (Buss, 1994).

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley argued that while there is no reproductive advantage in targeting pre-pubescent children, there is an advantage in targeting pubescent girls. They noted that this is consistent with the findings that 13-17 years old is the age at which females are most likely to be sexually abused. It is also consistent with the finding that females are much more likely to be the victims of sexual abuse than males.

In addition to evolutionary/biological factors in child sexual abuse, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s theory incorporates developmental influences. In essence, the biological foundations of human behaviour allow for a great variety of behaviour, including both prosocial and antisocial behaviour. Socialisation and development mediate the biological potential.
One of the most important developmental milestones is the formation of emotional attachments to other people. A child’s initial attachments are to its parents and family, but as they develop, this attachment broadens to include friends and eventually romantic attachments.

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley posited that attachment is an important tool for parents to socialise children away from antisocial behaviour. The parenting effort required to train children to refrain from socially undesirable behaviours is considerable, and is made easier when there is a secure attachment between the child and parents. If this socialisation process is successful, a child will develop the capacity to autonomously regulate their emotions; learn empathy and perspective taking skills; adopt a cooperative approach to influencing others; and link moral reasoning to moral actions. Together these skills represent what is required to self-regulate.

In contrast, the child who develops insecure attachments, often as a result of caregivers who are “unavailable, emotionally distant, inconsistent, overly intrusive or rejecting and particularly where care-givers are abusive or violent” (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008, p. 31) is more likely to react to others impulsively, with violence and hostility, or to withdraw from relationships generally. When this child reaches puberty and develops motivations towards sexual interactions with others, it is likely they will approach this task using the same tactics they have already used to achieve their desires in the non-sexual arena. Hence, their sexual interactions are likely to be characterised by aggressive and opportunistic behaviours carried out with little regard for the welfare of the other person.
In summary, they proposed that poor attachment operates in several different ways to raise the risk of child sexual abuse. Firstly, it reduces the individual’s capacity to exercise self-restraint, particularly in interpersonal interactions (Smallbone, 2006, p. 100). Secondly, insecure attachments weaken the individual’s attachment to society in general, weakening their commitment to social conventions and rules. Thirdly, insecure attachment increases the risk that the individual will tend to engage in emotionally detached, risky or socially irresponsible sexual behaviour. Finally, insecure attachment reduces the independence of the attachment, nurturing and sexual behavioural systems, increasing the risk that nurturing or attachment behaviour with a child may evoke sexual behaviour.

**Ecosystemic factors**

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley pointed out that individuals are embedded in a range of ecological systems that range from proximate, such as family and friends, to distal, such as societies and broad cultural groupings. These ecological systems exert an influence on each individual according to their proximity and the individual’s connection and commitment to those ecosystems. Hence, family and friends will generally exert a stronger influence than more distant ecosystems.

Focussing on child sexual abuse, they noted that while society in general has strong prohibitions against child sexual abuse, some prosocial groups, such as the Catholic Church have, at times, acted in ways that minimise this prohibition. In contrast, many criminal subcultures have extremely strong prohibitions against child sexual abuse.

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley noted that some societies encourage behaviours that would clearly be labelled as child sexual abuse in Western societies, such as genital
stimulation of infants to pacify them, or the use of fellatio in initiation ceremonies. They stated that some of the harm caused by child sexual abuse is related to the social meaning associated with the abuse, a point further elaborated by Clancy (2009).

As well as societies condemning child sexual abuse, various sections of the society act protectively towards children in an attempt to prevent child sexual abuse. Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley argued that sections of society differ in their ability to provide this protection. Consequently, a range of indicators of social dysfunction such as poverty, housing stress, unemployment, high childcare burdens and alcohol abuse are all predictors of child sexual abuse, because they inhibit the ability of society to protect children against sexual abuse.

At a more proximal level, peers and factors related to parents are also associated with child sexual abuse, because they weaken the protections that normally exist. However, drawing upon Routine Activity theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979), which posits that a crime requires the congruence of a potential offender, a potential victim and the absence of a capable guardian, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley noted that the majority of child sexual abuse occurs in private homes. They note that in some homes, the absence of a capable guardian is more likely, due to family dysfunction and other factors mentioned earlier. In many cases, the person trusted with the guardianship of a child is the potential offender himself.

Additionally, there are many other areas, outside the home, where potential offenders and potential victims may come into contact. These encounters are influenced by the routine activities of both potential offenders and potential victims, such as school attendance or enclaves within neighbourhoods.
In summary ecosystems can either enable or restrain child sexual abuse. They also provide both prevention opportunities, through the guardianship of children and lack of prevention, when guardianship is weak.

**Situational Factors**

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley also incorporated factors of the situation where child sexual abuse occurs. They propose that situations can influence child sexual abuse through providing opportunities for child sexual abuse and somewhat controversially, through providing cues, stressors or other signals to a potential offender that precipitate an assault.

To examine this further, they adapted Cornish and Clarke’s (2003) typology of general offenders into a child sexual abuse specific typology. In this, they proposed three types of offenders: committed, opportunistic, and situational.

The committed offender represents an offender who actively seeks opportunities to molest children. Such an offender fits the stereotypical image of the predatory paedophile (Salter, 2003), an offender who will snatch children from public places or actively groom parents and children so they can secure ongoing access to molest a child. Committed offenders often begin molesting children in adolescence and may continue to reoffend throughout their lifetime.

The opportunistic offender is typified by Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) general offender, whose main defining characteristic is a lack of self-restraint and a proclivity for a wide range of rule-breaking behaviour. Where the committed offender is an opportunity maker, the opportunistic offender is an opportunity taker. Such an
offender will not actively seek out children to molest, but may well do so should the opportunity arise.

The third type of offender is the situational offender. This offender does not seek children to molest and is generally law abiding. Some may be remarkably prosocial in all other aspects of their lives apart from their molestation. Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley proposed that this group usually molest a child as a result of temporary stressors and environmental cues, including overlaps between the caregiving, attachment-seeking and sexual behavioural systems mentioned earlier.

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley acknowledged that this typology is effectively defined after some offenders reoffend. For example, the differences between situational and committed offenders may not necessarily be evident at the time of their first offence – it is continuing to offend after being apprehended that defines the committed offender.

Consequently, they then examined the influence of situations upon people who have not yet offended. In doing so, they returned to the research on attachment and hypothesised that men with insecure attachment styles may be vulnerable to cues in nurturing situations, such that these cues activate sexual behaviour systems alongside the nurturing behaviour systems.

In summary, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s theory attempts to integrate biological, developmental (with an emphasis on the formation of attachment styles), ecosystemic and situational explanations for child sexual abuse. In essence, child sexual abuse is the result of a complex interaction between these various influences and cannot be explained by any of them in isolation.
Critiques of the Integrated Model

Ward and colleagues (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006; Ward & Siegert, 2002) criticised the original version (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990) of the integrated model as it “… seems to place too much emphasis on impulsivity and ignores the fact that sometimes the real problem lies with the content of the beliefs underlying offenders’ goals and values” (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006, p. 40).

The concept of impulsivity is problematic and appears to be linked with self-control theories, which appear to hypothesise an inability or reduced capacity to control one’s behaviour. Alternatively, if impulsivity is posed merely as a description, rather than a lack of ability, it has no explanatory power. This issue will be examined in more detail later (page 58).

A further criticism of the integrated model made by Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006), was that the theory fails to explain how some individuals manage to live offence free lives until their 30s or 40s and then molest a child. This criticism may have been valid for earlier versions of the theory, because while the early version included situational factors, it did not spell out the connection between insecure attachment styles and nurturing, care-giving situations which might evoke a sexual response in the poorly attached male (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990). This criticism appears to have been adequately dealt with by Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s (2008) recent revision.

Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006) criticised the integrated model by referring to findings that aggression is more likely to be related to unstable high self-esteem than it is to low self-esteem. This criticism specifically relates to rape, which is covered in
the original version of the integrated theory (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990), but the most recent revision (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008) only attempts to explain child sexual abuse.

Nevertheless, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008) did include aggression as a possible route to child sexual abuse. While they did not describe the links between self-esteem and aggression, it does appear possible to explain the links between high self-esteem and aggression using Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s theory. It should be noted that the link, between high self-esteem and rape, may not be as clear cut as posited. Marshall, Marshall, Serran and O’Brien (2009) concluded that the high self-esteem scores for a subset of rapists in an earlier study were more likely a statement of bravado than actual self-esteem.

A revision of Bowlby’s (1969) theory of attachment considered attachment as a two dimensional interaction between view of self and view of others (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). One of the four styles (positive view of self, negative view of others) could reasonably be seen as being associated with high self-esteem, yet is still categorised as a type of insecure attachment. Consequently, insecure attachment can be associated with both high and low self-esteem. Thus, while Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008) did not directly outline the link between high self-esteem and aggression, it is possible to do so within their theory.

Another criticism of the integrated model by Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006, p. 42) relates to the “… claim that offenders are likely to confuse sexual and aggressive drives and that this confusion is causally related to their subsequent offending”. They argued that the claims about the neurological basis of this confusion are not precise and are inconsistent with some of the literature.
As the most recent revisions of the integrated theory (Smallbone, 2006; Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008) have appeared at the same time or after the Ward, Polaschek and Beech book, they do not address Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s claims about confusions between nurturing, attachment and sexual systems. Presumably they would have similar criticisms. This argument cannot be resolved without an in-depth knowledge of neurobiology, which is beyond the scope of this thesis — suffice to note that Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s theory about different behavioural systems being activated by similar cues is something that may be challenged by future researchers.

The integrated model has also been criticised by Stinson, Sales and Becker (2008). While they repeated some of the criticisms made by Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006), they also add additional criticism. Firstly, they claimed that the integrated model only applies to a very specific subset of sex offenders “… preferential pedophiles with low self-esteem, childhood sexual abuse histories, early onset of sexually inappropriate behavior, and poor coping skills” (pp. 144-5). While the current revision of the integrated theory only addresses child sexual abuse and not rape, this criticism does not appear to be valid as applied to the latest revision, as the integrated model specifically includes those who are not preferential paedophiles, those who commence offending late in life and offend for a variety of reasons.

Another criticism by Stinson, Sales and Becker was that the integrated model ignores different typologies. Again this was addressed by the recent revisions, which includes a typology adapted from research into situational crime prevention.

Finally, Stinson, Sales and Becker criticised the link between poor attachment and child sexual abuse. This criticism contains two parts, a claim about a lack of empirical
evidence linking poor attachment to child sexual abuse and an issue about the
directionality of this link. The latter criticism will be addressed first.

Stinson, Sales and Becker argued that the causality of poor attachment proposed by
the integrated model is in doubt because there is a lack of evidence that the poor
attachment existed prior to the abuse. Stated like that this may be a valid criticism, but
as they develop their argument, they appear to be talking about poor attachment of the
victim, not the offender. The integrated model clearly talks about insecure attachment
of the offender being a risk factor for sexual abuse. Hence, this criticism by Stinson,
Sales and Becker appears to be rather confused and inadequate.

Their other argument, that there is a lack of evidence linking poor attachment to child
sexual abuse, is clearly an empirical one. While Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley
(2008) cited some literature, which indirectly supports their contention that insecure
attachments are a risk factor for child sexual abuse, they did not directly cite literature
to evidence this point. However, neither did Stinson, Sales and Becker cite evidence
to the contrary. This is clearly an area where further research is required.

Despite the fairly vigorous critiques of the integrated model cited above, there remain
some unexamined areas where this model fails to explain some of the features of child
sexual abuse. The integrated model does provide a rationale for the over-
representation of males in the population of people who molest children. It does so in
a manner that also explains why this over-representation is even more extreme than
the over-representation of males in general offending behaviours.

However, the model fails to explain some of the key findings from the empirical
literature – why men who molest boys; who molest children outside their own family,
or against strangers; and who are younger; are more likely to re-arrested than those who molest girls; inside their own family or against acquaintances; or who are older.

One hypothesis which might flow from the integrated model, would be that intrafamilial offenders are more likely to have stronger attachments than extrafamilial offenders, because they (by definition) are within a family that maintained at least some level of contact. As most adult intrafamilial offenders are fathers or step-fathers (Finkelhor, 1984), they are likely to be heterosexual and be more likely to target girls, rather than boys when they sexually offend. Also, their engagement in a heterosexual relationship means they are less likely than extrafamilial offenders to have a preferential attraction to children.

Hence, the association between victim gender and recidivism may be an artefact of its relationship with victim/offender relationship, rather than being an independent predictor of recidivism. However, prediction research with large samples, has found that victim gender predicts recidivism independently of its relationship with victim/offender relationship (Hanson & Thornton, 2003).

To be fair, Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley’s model focuses on onset, more than recidivism. However, to be fully adequate, a theory of child sexual offending needs to explain, not just why someone would offend for the first time, but why some would continue and others desist. In the following section, other major theories of child sexual abuse will be examined to see how well they explain these findings.
Ward and Siegert’s Pathways Model

In response to perceived weaknesses in other theories, Ward and Siegert (2002; Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) developed the pathways model, which proposes there are a number of different pathways that can lead to child sexual abuse. Notably, they include both approach pathways, where the offender overtly desires and plans the offence and avoidant pathways where the offender initially has no intention to offend.

Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006, p. 61) described the pathways model as a “theory knitting” approach because it doesn’t replace the theories it is built on, rather it attempts to incorporate the best of the models noted above, as well as Hall and Hirshman’s (Hall & Hirshman, 1991; Hall & Hirshman, 1992; Hall G., 1996) quadripartite model.

The pathways model proposes that there are four causal mechanisms associated with child sexual abuse: emotional regulation difficulties; a lack of interpersonal competence; cognition; and deviant sexual scripts. They hypothesise that these mechanisms interact to produce a number of distinct pathways. Initially they proposed there were five unique pathways (Ward & Siegert, 2002), but more recently Ward (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) proposed that the five pathways are not exhaustive, but merely illustrative of the common pathways to an offence. Before examining the pathways themselves, it is necessary to examine the underpinnings of the theory itself, beginning with the four causal mechanisms.
**Intimacy and social skills deficits**

The pathways model incorporates the same types of intimacy deficits proposed by Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008), including their roots in childhood attachment. Where it differs is by explaining how childhood experiences translate into adult behaviour.

Similar to the integrated model, Ward and Siegert (2002) proposed that early childhood experiences form a template for adult relationships. The pathways model utilizes schema research, which hypothesises that people develop an internal working model of perceptions of the world around them, specifically concerning other people’s trustworthiness and the worth of other people. These internal models are outlined in the following section.

**Cognition**

Ward and Siegert (2002) noted that much of the early research into child sexual abuse hypothesised cognitive distortions were causal in child sexual abuse and consequently many treatment models are based on this assumption. However Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006) pointed out that the original cognitive distortion theories actually suggested these cognitive distortions may be an after-the-fact phenomenon used to minimise responsibility for an offence after it has already happened. Instead Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006) proposed that while the observed cognitive distortions may be an after-the-fact mechanism to reduce shame and guilt, the offenders hold schemas that existed prior to onset and these schemas have a causal role in child sexual abuse.
Utilising schema research, they proposed that there are five implicit theories that may be held by child molesters. These internal working models are hypothesised to operate in such a manner that they give the offender permission to molest children when certain criteria are met. The first, *children as sexual beings*, suggests that children are capable of understanding sexual interactions and can freely make decisions to participate in sexual activity with an adult. *Nature of harm* proposes that there are degrees of harm and/or that sexual activity is unlikely to harm a person. *Entitlement* is based on the idea that the person has a right to assert their needs over others. *Dangerous World* is rooted in the person’s belief that the world is dangerous and that others are likely to behave abusively towards them. An abusive act, in this scenario, can be justified because others do it or as a means of striking back. A belief that the world is *uncontrollable* removes restraints that might apply personal responsibility to the person. If he does not have control over his own actions, he cannot be held accountable for them.

**Deviant sexual scripts**

The third causal factor proposed by Ward and colleagues is deviant sexual scripts. Deviant sexual arousal, that is a preference for sexual activity with children or involving a non-consenting party, has been linked with an increased likelihood of sexual reoffending (Cortoni, 2009). Consequently, it is an important component of research into child sexual abuse. However, while this was initially conceived as penile erection to a stimulus deemed socially inappropriate, a more nuanced view has emerged with unfolding research (Marshall, Laws, & Barbaree, 1990).
Ward and Siegert (2002) proposed that an alternative way of viewing deviant sexual arousal was through the lens of scripts. They drew upon script theory (Gagon, 1990), which conceptualises scripts as representations individuals acquire during their development. These scripts define the circumstances in which sex is likely to happen, including the who, how and what. According to this theory, certain experiences during development can result in distorted scripts, which support inappropriate partner selection, maladaptive behaviours and/or inappropriate contexts for sex.

**Emotional regulation difficulties**

The final causal factor proposed by Ward and Siegert (2002) is difficulty in emotional regulation. They drew on the research of Baumeister and Heatherton (1996), which examined the internal and external process that enable a person to engage in goal-directed actions in a relatively consistent manner. Some of this research has been criticised, as what appears to be a failure of self-regulation may represent nothing more than a change of mind. Additionally, the statement “I cannot control myself” presents conceptual problems. Research on self-regulation will be examined in more detail later in this thesis (page 58).

Ward and colleagues (Ward & Siegert, 2002; Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) attempted to avoid these problems by focussing on emotional self-regulation, which concentrates on the ability and confidence a person has in their ability to cope with, and overcome, an unpleasant emotion. Hence, someone with little confidence in their ability to cope with an unpleasant emotion is likely to take action to reduce this unpleasant state, which could include abusive actions or actions that increase the likelihood of abusive actions, such as consuming alcohol.
Pathways

Ward and Siegert proposed that all of the four factors outlined above are involved in every sexual offence, but that the offender need only have a deficit in one of these areas. They proposed that the primary causal mechanism recruits the other mechanisms.

As an example, they hypothesised that difficulties in emotional regulation (the causal factor) may lead an offender to turn to sex to deal with unpleasant emotional states. Lacking a partner (temporary lack of emotional intimacy), he turns to a child for sexual relief. While the child would not normally be sexually arousing to him, he fantasises about a woman he knows (temporarily enacting a deviant sexual script) and distracts himself from his moral views about the wrongness of his actions (cognition) by focussing on the anticipated pleasure.

Utilising this model, they proposed five pathways to sexual abuse. While their initial model (Ward & Siegert, 2002) proposed that these five pathways explained all sexual abuse, they now (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) accept that other pathways are possible, but proposed the following five pathways explain the majority of sexually abusive behaviour.

Pathway 1: Multiple dysfunctional mechanisms

This pathway presumes deficits in all four domains, although the deviant sexual scripts area is perceived to be at the heart of the issue. This pathway describes what is commonly referred to as a preferential paedophile, a person whose primary sexual
target is children, has difficulty forming intimate relationships with adults, justifies his behaviour through cognitions and emotionally regulates unpleasant emotions, or seeks positive emotional states, through molesting children.

Pathway 2: Deviant sexual scripts

This pathway assumes a deficit only in the area of sexual scripts, most commonly a preference for impersonal sex, disconnected from emotion and intimacy. In this pathway, children are not seen as a preferred sexual partner, but are rather a target of opportunity when consensual sex with adults is not readily available. The avoidance of intimacy, which flows from impersonal sexual encounters, makes it less likely that adult relationships will be available.

Pathway 3: Intimacy deficits

In this pathway the offender has an insecure attachment style and has difficulty in establishing intimate relationships. The offender’s desire for intimacy, combined with a fear of rejection, leads him to seek this from children, rather than adults, as children are seen as less threatening. Having done so, when sexual desire arises, a child is a likely target for this.

Pathway 4: Emotional dysregulation

Offenders who have difficulty coping with unpleasant emotional states may turn to sexually abusing children as a way to punish their partner, because they have “lost
control of their actions” (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006, p. 72), or as a way of modulating an unpleasant emotion.

Pathway 5: Antisocial cognitions

This type of offender holds beliefs and attitudes that support criminal behaviour in general. He is a generalist who has little difficulty in breaking laws. Consequently, child sexual abuse is merely another means to meet an end. An extreme example of this type of offender would be the prototypical psychopath outlined by Hare (1999), but it is also the versatile offender contemplated by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) in their general theory of crime.

Critiques of the pathways model

Like Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008), Ward and Siegert’s theory attempts to integrate trait factors of the offender with the situation. What does not appear to be well explained by either of these theories are the mechanisms of these interactions. For example, Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006) hypothesised that an offender can lose control in the face of sexual arousal and commit an offence that is against their values. What they did not explain is the mechanism for this switch, nor did they attempt to explain how a complex series of behaviours can be committed by someone who is out of control. This is critical, as the decision to molest a child, by a person who previously was committed to avoiding such an offence, is perhaps the most important part of the offence process. This problem will be examined further in the section below on self-control/self-regulation.
Additionally Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006) acknowledged that the concept of a dysfunctional mechanism “recruiting” other normally functioning mechanisms is essentially metaphorical and needs further explanation. Similarly Stinson, Sales and Becker (2008) criticised the pathways model for a lack of clarity in the transition from cognition to action.

However, paralleling the problems noted earlier with the integrated model, the pathways model also fails to explain some of the key findings from the empirical literature – why men who molest boys are significantly more likely to reoffend; why men who molest children outside their own family, or against strangers, are significantly more likely to reoffend; and why younger offenders are more likely to reoffend than older offenders.

**Self-Control/Self-Regulation**

The concept of self-regulation is a critical concept in both the integrated model and pathways model. Stinson, Sales and Becker’s (2008) Multimodal Self-Regulation theory aims to add to these theories by expanding upon the concept of self-regulation and how it applies to sexual offences. Rather than critiquing their theory as a whole, this thesis will instead utilise it to examine the concept of self-control/self-regulation as it applies to child sexual offenders.

Somewhat problematically, this concept has been examined using different labels with different definitions. Criminologists, such as Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) generally use the term ‘self-control’, whereas psychologists tend to use the term ‘self-regulation’ (e.g., Seidner & Matthews, 2005). A third concept, impulsivity (Baumeister & Vohs, 2003), is also inextricably linked with the first two labels.
Rather than trying to disentangle these terms, this thesis follows the lead of Baumeister and Vohs (2003) and uses the terms interchangeably as they all relate to the core issue of immediate self-gratification versus delayed reinforcement.

A core issue for this thesis, is whether self-regulation helps explain child sexual assault or whether it is merely a descriptive label that gives the appearance of an explanation. If self-regulation is an ability or capacity, then its absence could certainly play a role in child sexual assault. If on the other hand, it merely represents a greater than usual preference for immediate rewards over more distal consequences, then it is simply a description with no explanatory power – why does the person have this preference?

This section argues that self-control has been used as an explanation – that some people have a lower capacity for self-control – when it more correctly describes those who have a higher than average preference for immediate self-gratification. This preference, while it has been extensively observed, requires explanation. It will be argued later, that moral emotions are part of this explanation.

Stinson, Sales and Becker divided self-regulation into four types: emotion regulation; cognitive regulation; behavioural regulation; and interpersonal regulation. Emotional regulation refers to the types of strategies people use to control unpleasant emotions as outlined in the pathways model earlier. In essence, people are motivated to maintain a pleasant emotional state and act to escape or change unpleasant emotions. This concept is not problematic in itself, although they do appear to be arguing that unpleasant emotions are the only type of emotions driving sexual offending:

*In our model, we hypothesize that sex offenders are individuals who lack adaptive, internalized strategies for dealing with negative affect, which may...*
lead to a number of internalizing problems, such as psychopathology and externalized behaviors characterized by aggression and impulsivity (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008, p. 178).

This is in direct contrast to other theorists (Finkelhor, 1984; Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008; Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) who believe that some sexual offenders are acting to enhance positive feelings about sexual contact with children, rather than escaping an unpleasant emotion. Hence Stinson, Sales and Becker were either proposing a more homogenous grouping of child sexual offenders or they were only describing a subset of such offenders.

However, the general concept of emotional regulation does appear to have its place in the aetiology of child sexual abuse. Many offenders do report negative emotional states prior to offending (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) and it seems reasonable to assume that the offence or offence process, may assist them (however temporarily) in overcoming that negative mood.

In essence, emotional regulation is a process by which people undertake actions or thought processes to reduce or eliminate, the discomfort of an unpleasant emotion. By manipulating people’s belief in their ability to change their emotions, Tice, Bratslavsky and Baumeister (2001) concluded that people indulge in immediate gratification to make themselves feel better – if they believe they cannot alter the unpleasant emotion, they do not engage in the immediate gratification they would otherwise indulge in.

For some offenders the strategies chosen, to reduce their immediate discomfort, for a wide variety of reasons well covered by other theories (Smallbone, Marshall, &
either involve a sexual assault, or increase the risk of such an assault.

The concept is quite robust, as it covers situations where the person is restricted in their options because they do not know how to use alternative strategies of emotional regulation, as well as situations where the person has the skills to use alternative strategies, but chooses to use or has a habit of using certain strategies, in particular situations.

What remains unclear is how to know whether the person lacks knowledge of adaptive, internal strategies, lacks confidence in using these strategies, fails to use strategies they are competent in or simply chooses not to utilise those strategies in certain circumstances. If an offence reduces the perpetrator’s emotional distress, it could be argued that the strategy was successful, albeit dysfunctional because it causes distress to another person.

This is an important point. Distasteful as it may be, if a person’s mood is alleviated by molesting a child it can be viewed as a successful emotional regulation strategy – not a lack of ability. We cannot argue that this person molested a child because he cannot control his emotions, when this behaviour removes the unpleasant emotional state.

If he perceives that molesting a child is his only option for alleviating the unpleasant mood, then an argument could be made that a lack of ability exists. However, a perception does not mean the person was incapable of alternative strategies, although such a perception is easily capable of directing behaviour towards a restricted set of options, as evidenced by research into learned helplessness (Seligman, 1990). The concept of emotional regulation appears to be a useful framework, as it directs
attention towards the immediate motivations surrounding some child sexual abuse, but it remains unclear whether it represents an ability or a motivation.

However, the other three types of self-regulation (cognitive, behavioural and interpersonal) discussed by Stinson, Sales and Becker (2008) share a major conceptual difficulty with the self-control theory of Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990). Gottfredson and Hirschi proposed that low self-control was the primary causal factor in crime. Despite their strong focus on only one factor, their definition of this factor lacked clarity – most importantly for this thesis, whether low self-control represents a lack of ability, a preference for short-term rewards over longer-term goals or some combination of the two (Tittle, Ward, & Grasmick, 2004).

This is a critical distinction. If self-control is simply a preference for immediate gratification, it has no explanatory power – the question remains, why does the person have this preference? On the other hand, if self-control is an ability, then the lack of this ability could provide a meaningful explanation for behaviours such as crime.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) avoided addressing this issue. While they proposed that low self-control was the primary cause of crime, they did not define this concept independently of crime, arguing that low self-control and crime were inseparable from each other. Naturally, this led to criticisms of tautology (Akers, 1991; Geis, 2008).

In response to criticism, they (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 2008) later explained they had considered a number of different labels for this concept, including ‘criminality’. However, it is clear that such a label is purely descriptive and carries no explanatory power, whereas the concept of low self-control has been used by theorists as if it has explanatory power – some people offend because they have low self-control or stated differently, criminals offend because they are criminals. For example, discussing low
self-control, Morris, Gerber and Menard (2011, p. 3) stated: “It is the inability to
avoid such acts that perpetuate crime” (emphasis in original), indicating they view
self-control as an ability. Similarly Hirschi (2004, p. 548) stated: “… a central
assertion of the theory is that deviant and reckless acts are also explained by (low)
self-control”.

Hirschi (2004) redefined self-control to include “… the tendency to consider the full
range of potential costs of a particular act … Put another way, self-control is the set of
inhibitions one carries with one wherever one happens to go.” (p. 543), which
broadens self-control from an internal skill to an internal weighting of consequences,
including short-term social consequences, such as disapproval from important others.
In effect, he is proposing a type of motivational balance – a concept which is
discussed later in this thesis (page 71).

Part of the reason for the popularity of the notion of low self-control may stem from
the fact that many offenders, particularly child sexual offenders, report they “… acted
on impulses beyond their self-control” (Anderson, Gibeau, & D'Amora, 1995, p. 221).
However, given the potential for shame after the commission of a sexual offence
against a child, we cannot dismiss the possibility that this denial of responsibility is an
attempt to minimise shame. It is likely that this tactic would be especially useful for
reducing the discomfort of shame as it matches one of the tactics Vallelonga (1997)
described for disconnecting the link between the behaviour and the self. In effect the
person is saying: “I did the behaviour, but it does not define who I am, because I did
not mean to do it”. This issue will be examined in more detail later in this thesis (page
100). Similarly Lewis (1971, p. 89) noted: “Since shame is a painful affect, its
characteristic defense is turning away from the stimulus situation. Denial is thus a
characteristic defense against shame”.

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Stinson, Sales and Becker clearly view self-regulation as an ability. In essence they proposed that the person cannot, or lacks an ability to control their behaviour, cognitions or interpersonal interactions: “Finally, criminal or delinquent acts may result as a maladaptive strategy for self-regulation because of the individual’s inability [italics added] to delay gratification and control his impulses” (2008, p. 180).

Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008) also drew upon this concept to help explain why opportunistic offenders take advantages of opportunities to offend: “Because they have neither a strong capacity for self-restraint nor a strong stake in conformity, they succumb easily to temptations and perceived provocations” (p. 41).

Similarly, the Pathways model also gives explanatory power to low self-regulation: “First, individuals might primarily have problems controlling their emotions (e.g. anger) and sexually abuse children either as a way of punishing partners or simply because they have lost control of their actions, and therefore behave in a self-destructive and antisocial manner” (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006, p. 72).

Hence self-regulation is considered to be part of the explanation by most of the major child sexual assault theorists, making it a popular concept. However, not all theorists have welcomed this concept.

Shapiro (1996) criticised the concept of low self-regulation, proposing that the issue is simply a clash between competing aims, values and interests. In a similar vein, King (1996) suggested that the issue is best conceptualised as one of motivational balance, a concept that will be examined later (page 71).

This concept has been criticised for being problematic in explaining crime:
Despite its extensive use, there remains a lack of consensus in the literature regarding the definition of self-control or the mechanisms of self-regulation. Instead, impulsivity, seen as a result of a deficiency in the self-regulation process, is frequently used as a catchword to clarify a wide variety of antisocial tendencies that otherwise lack sufficient explanation (Stewart & Rowe, 2000, p. 49).

It is of note that impulsivity is almost universally used in a negative context in criminological research, the person impulsively carries out an act that is antisocial or detrimental to themselves or others (e.g., Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008; Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006). This is in contrast to the dictionary definition which refers to “… having a tendency to act on sudden urges or desires” without any negative connotation (Rooney, 2004).

It could be argued that all people are impulsive. Ross and Hilborn (2008, p. 65) noted:

An assumption that is frequently made about offenders is that, in contrast to antisocial individuals, prosocial individuals ‘stop and think’ and engage in careful reasoning before they act. The simple truth is that when faced with problems, most of us, most of the time, appear to behave in the same way as offenders. We seldom delay our response while we carefully analyse the problem, consider the short and long term consequences of each, and think of a variety of alternative solutions before we take action. On the contrary, we usually react automatically without appearing to engage in any thinking at all.

Rather than describing certain offenders as impulsive, we could more precisely describe them as people who commit crimes or dangerous acts without any significant consideration. Ross and Hilborn (2008, p. 67) concluded that the difference between
offenders and non-offenders is that the latter fail to “think well” and tend to “think antisocially”.

Kuhl (1996) criticised self-regulation theory because it implies a unitary model of mind, which leads to the conclusion that what appears to be a regulation failure is simply a change of mind:

*I proposed that terms like self-regulation or volition lead to circular or contradictory explanations unless one adopts a modular architecture of mind... As long as we adhere to a unitary model of mind... any behavioral change implies by definition that the actor’s intention or will must have changed. Concepts like weakness of will, self-regulation failure, or volitional inhibition do not make sense within a unitary architecture: If we agree to call the source of an individuals’ action his or her will, any behavioral change is just an indication of a change of will, rather than a weakness of will (p. 63).*

In place of this, Kuhl proposed a model where different parts of the brain are interacting, often with competing goals – a concept which has some neurological evidence. Damasio (2006) posited that there are two neurological systems, an older automatic system and a newer rational system. He also credits emotion with a role in influencing decision-making:

*The new proposal in Descartes’ Error is that the reasoning system evolved as an extension of the automatic emotional system, with emotion playing diverse roles in the reasoning process. For example, emotion may increase the saliency of a premise and, in so doing, bias the conclusion in favour of the premise (p. 140).*
Ross and Hilborn (2008) described the differences between ‘automatic thinking’ and ‘rational thinking’. Automatic thinking evolved well before rational thinking and is “… preconscious, operates automatically, and is intimately associated with emotions”. In contrast, rational thinking “… operates according to logical inference, is conscious, deliberative, controlled, rational, and relatively emotion-free” (p. 66). Hence ‘impulsive’ behaviour is behaviour which is much more likely to be influenced by emotion – a point which will be explored later (page 75).

Self-regulation has also been investigated by economists, who generally refer to this issue as time discounting (Loewenstein, Read, & Baumeister, 2003). Time discounting refers to the finding that people generally value something more when it occurs sooner than when it occurs later – hence the latter reward is ‘discounted’ because of the delay and therefore valued less than if it were delivered sooner.

For example, Thaler (1981) asked subjects to identify an amount in one month, one year and ten years, which would make them indifferent to $15 now. The median responses were $20, $50 and $100, indicating a clear, non-linear trend for the amount to increase as the time delay increases. It should be noted there are clear interpersonal differences in this – the median responses noted above obscure a range of responses by different people – yet the concept applies to all people, not just the special class envisaged by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990).

Moreover, time discounting does not just apply to financial transactions – the same processes have been used to explain a wide range of non-financial behaviours, such as why someone, who is committed to a diet, will break that diet when certain foods are presented, even when the person had specifically planned not to eat that type of food. This phenomenon can be seen for a wide range of behaviours where the person faces
choices that produce differing immediate and distal consequences, including addictions (Bickel & Johnson, 2003), health (Chapman, 2003), and dieting (Herman & Polivy, 2003) as well as offending.

When someone contemplates committing an offence, they will anticipate the benefit from the crime – usually something relatively immediate. If they also contemplate any longer-term consequences such as being imprisoned, time discounting theory says that they will discount this consequence because it is removed in time and is uncertain.

In essence, while studying the financial behaviour of people, economists delved into the broader phenomenon of how people make trade-offs between consequences that occur at different periods of time. As part of this investigation they uncovered factors which influence these decisions, including the salience of the different choices, the motivation to pursue the long-term goal, the level of belief that the long-term reward will be achieved (compared to the certainty of the immediate reward), and the individual’s use of strategies to distract from the immediate reward or focus upon the long-term reward (Mischel, Ayduk, & Mendoza-Denton, 2003).

An important finding from this research is that time discounting is a universal phenomenon, applying to humans and many types of animals (Kacelnik, 2003). While there are clear interpersonal differences in time discounting, it is an adaptive stance, presumably one that carries an evolutionary advantage (Baumeister & Vohs, 2003; Kacelnik, 2003). Deferring all immediate gratification would lead to a rapid death from starvation, as the organism would be constantly storing food and never eating. Similarly, never delaying immediate gratification would reduce survival chances through failure to prepare for Winter, or potential food shortages. In essence, neither extreme of this continuum represents the best survival strategy.
Consistent with evolutionary theory (Darwin, 1859), we would expect humans to differ in their preference for immediate and deferred gratification. These differences are easily observed. Some people consistently defer gratification in some aspects of their life, but not in others, such as the large numbers of law-abiding people who smoke or over eat. Similarly, people vary across time in their preference for immediate and deferred gratification (Mischel, Ayduk, & Mendoza-Denton, 2003).

Baumeister and Vohs (2003) proposed that self-regulation is analogous to a muscle, being something that gets tired but gets stronger with repeated exercise. However, this is influenced strongly by motivation – they reported a study showing reduced self-regulation when a person had been made to exercise self-regulation tasks, but this reduction disappeared when the incentive was raised to “… a relatively large amount of money” (p. 207). Hence there are situations where a person has more or less willingness to delay gratification and motivation is a substantial part of this equation.

It could be posited that ‘low self-control’ may be nothing more than a descriptive label, applied to those who habitually engage in self-gratification in preference to deferred gratification. More precisely it could refer to those who do so more than average. However, adopting such a stance removes low self-control as an explanation – it is a label that has been placed on a phenomenon after the fact, not an explanation. This of course raises the question – why do some people have a higher preference for immediate gratification than others and more crucially, why do people sometimes opt for immediate gratification and at other times, opt for deferred rewards?

The former part of that question is partly answered by the issue of socialisation – most parents train their children to delay reward (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990) and to regulate the immediate discomfort that comes from doing so (Mikulincer & Shaver,
2005). However, the second part of this question remains unanswered by this. Many people who clearly would be described as high in self-control have an area of their life that is typified by a preference for immediate gratification over longer term goals, whether it be smoking, over-eating, failing to exercise or some other behaviour which produces short term reward at the expense of longer term goals. Similarly, people who are described as having low self-control do defer gratification at times.

Discussions about low self-control are often based on an assumption, usually unstated, that there is no plausible alternative to explain the observed phenomena. For example Smallbone (2006, p. 101) suggested child sexual offenders “… would demonstrate reduced capacities for behavioural restraint”. Similarly, Cassel and Bernstein (2007, p. 144) conceptualised self-control as a learned skill: “Children who fail to learn these self-control skills early in life are more likely than others to remain emotionally uncontrolled into adolescence and adulthood”.

A far less problematic way of conceptualising self-regulation is to view offending decisions as the outcome of a motivational balance between driving motivations and restraints. Within this framework, emotional self-regulation remains a useful component, as it outlines the reasons people may engage in certain behaviours to reduce the discomfort of unpleasant emotions, without the problematic concepts involved in the other forms of self-regulation or self-control. Utilising this framework also allows the general psychological and neurological literature on decision making to be incorporated into a decision to offend. This is discussed in the following section.
CHAPTER 4: MOTIVATIONAL BALANCE

Given the lack of evidence that substantial numbers of offenders lack an ability to control urges or delay gratification, it would make more sense, conceptually, to talk about reluctance to delay gratification or resist the temptation to offend. For example, would it be reasonable to expect that the vast majority of offenders who are presumed to be low in self-control would be willing to desist from all forms of illegal behaviour for a week if they were guaranteed one million dollars at the end of that week? If the answer is “yes”, then it raises the question as to how an increase in reward for good behaviour improved their self-control skills. However, it is clear the possibility of a large financial reward changes the motivational balance, as noted earlier in the research by Baumeister and Vohs (2003).

In a motivational balance model, a person is faced with motivations leading both towards and away from a particular behaviour. Where that behaviour is an offence, the motivation is usually some reward or gain that would come from that offence. The motivations not to offend include contemplation of the costs of that behaviour, usually more distal than the rewards of the offence (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Restraints can then be considered as the motivations that lead the person away from committing the offence, along with any physical restraints. This is similar to the Rational Choice theory of offending, which posited that:

... crime is purposive behavior designed to meet the offender’s commonplace needs for such things as money, status, sex, and excitement, and that meeting these needs involves the making of (sometimes quite rudimentary) decisions
and choices, constrained as these are by limits of time and ability and the availability of relevant information (Clarke & Felson, 1993, p. 6).

Ariely and Loewenstein (2006) demonstrated how sexual arousal influenced decision making in a range of hypothetical situations. This study provides support for a motivational balance model over a self-control model, as the subjects never carried out the behaviours in question, only indicated their likelihood of doing so. In essence, they demonstrated that sexual arousal changed the motivational balance, making certain activities more attractive than they would have normally been:

Specifically, the increase in motivation to have sex produced by sexual arousal seems to decrease the relative importance of other considerations such as behaving ethically toward a potential sexual partner or protecting oneself against unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease (Ariely & Loewenstein, 2006, p. 95).

Explaining these findings using a self-control model becomes more difficult. The simple explanation would be that sexual arousal lowers self-control. However, given that the subjects were consciously contemplating a range of options and did not carry any of them out, it seems they were all in complete control of their actions, even though some indicated they were more willing to engage in the sorts of behaviours associated with ‘low self-control’.

Using an experimental design, Vohs and Schooler (2008) demonstrated that a belief behaviour was determined by outside factors rather than free will, was associated with higher rates of cheating on a test. If this finding is replicated with more antisocial acts in real life settings, then an offender’s statement that he couldn’t control his behaviour might be more indicative of a permission-giving statement than a lack of ability to
restrain from acting on impulses. An example of such permission giving is contained in the ‘uncontrollable’ schema hypothesised by Ward and Keenan (1999). Offenders who have this schema believe that they are not responsible for their actions and that others ‘make’ them do things. It is inconceivable to such an offender that he could resist a sexual urge, because the urge ‘makes’ him act sexually.

As noted earlier, a core component of low self-control is impulsivity “… which refers to a lack of impulse control and need for instant gratification” (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008). However, the impulsivity so commonly described in offenders actually refers to a pattern of acting impulsively to commit antisocial acts. If instead, we use the general definition of impulsivity, which includes everyday and even prosocial acts, the concept does not appear to imply a lack of anything.

An alternative view is that all people are capable of and regularly perform, impulsive acts (Ross & Hilborn, 2008). In this sense, any over-learned behaviour is likely to be performed when certain cues are present. The difference with offenders who are labelled ‘impulsive’ is that they commit antisocial acts with the same lack of consideration that others give to habitual non-criminal (even prosocial) activities. It could be argued that all people are impulsive, just not impulsively antisocial.

Yet, there are clearly neurological facets associated with violence and crime, which are commonly connected with the concepts of self-control and/or impulsivity (Stinson, Sales, & Becker, 2008). Examining tinderbox violence, Pallone and Hennessy (2004) attempted to reconcile the neurological research identifying brain patterns linked to violence with the rational choice model. Rather than identifying the key construct as impulsivity or lack of self-control, they instead cast it as a preference for risk-taking. Although Pallone and Hennessy did not mention it, a preference for
risk-taking may be the absence of an aversion to risk-taking by the rest of the population. In other words, it may not be so much that chronic offenders enjoy risk-taking, just that they fail to find it as aversive as others do (Felson & Osgood, 2008).

Hence, while there are biological correlates with violence, this still requires choices to be made. A person with these biological characteristics will find certain situations more stimulating and enjoyable, whereas others may find these situations quite unpleasant. Hence, risk-takers find themselves in situations where violence is more probable and additionally are more likely to react to cues in that environment in a violent manner, because they weigh the pros and cons differently.

A motivational balance model is not conceptually at odds with the integrated and pathways models, although it would suggest some slight modifications to those models, through reframing a lack of self-regulation skill as a motivational balance tipped in favour of offending. With an habitual offender, this motivational balance can be perceived to be chronically tipped in that direction, whether aided and abetted by a biologically based taste for risk-taking, or by attitudes, beliefs or schema which support frequent offending. For an occasional offender, the balance may only tip in favour of offending on rare occasions or in unusual situations.

A motivational balance model is not at all inconsistent with Finkelhor’s (1984) barriers to offending model. Such a model is also consistent with Routine Activity Theory and Rational Choice models (Clarke & Felson, 1993) and with Tittle and Paternoster (2000) who view offending as the end result of a balance between motivation, opportunity, ability, competing motivation and constraint. It is also consistent with economists’ findings about time discounting (Loewenstein, Read, & Baumeister, 2003). Likewise, Stinson, Sales and Becker (2008, p. 75) noted:
A second and related point that we gain from behavioral theories is that a critical balance of reinforcement and punishment is a necessary component of the process. It is not enough that the behavior is reinforcing; we know from operant conditioning models that potential reinforcement must be considered in light of potential punishment.

Viewing sexual offending as the outcome of a motivational balance avoids the conceptual difficulty caused by models that assume some (or even most) offenders have an inability or reduced capacity to control their behaviour, even though they may have biologically-based preference for, or lack of aversion to, risk-taking.

Having posited that child sexual offending can be conceived as the outcome of an in-the-moment battle between action motivations and restraints, the next section examines the nature of those motivations and restraints, with an emphasis on the role of emotions.

**Emotions as Motivators and Restraints**

When an offender is in a situation where an offence is possible, Finkelhor (1984) hypothesised that an offence will not happen unless the offender is motivated to commit this offence — a point of agreement among all major theorists. It should be noted that this motivation does not need to be a trait and could in fact be quite fleeting. One factor considered by many to be a motivator, if not the prime motivator, of human behaviour is emotion (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Newell, Lagnado, & Shanks, 2007). Brehm (1999) described emotions as “states of motivational arousal” (p. 3). That is, they motivate specific forms of behaviour in preference to other types of behaviour – the higher the intensity of the emotion, the greater the urge to act.
Even more so, Nathanson (1992) saw emotions as the core of motivation and argued that even physical drives such as hunger, have no motivational value until they are paired with an emotion. If this is correct, it would be unlikely that any cognitive commitment to a concept would produce motivation, in the absence of affect.

A corollary to this view would be that people with lower emotionality would be expected to behave differently. They should be unlikely to consistently commit to ideas and organisations, due to a lack of drive emotions and should be willing to undertake a much wider range of behaviours than others, because restraining emotions such as guilt, shame and fear, will be limited in their ability to regulate behaviour.

The research into psychopathy is entirely consistent with this. Psychopaths fail to commit to values, people and organisations and are willing to engage in a much broader range of behaviours than others (Hare, 1999). The terrible crimes committed by some psychopaths can be viewed, not the result of strong driving emotions, but as the consequence of weak restraints — committing a sexual assault requires no more motivation than any other complex behaviour, it is the level of restraint that differs. It is implicit in Hare’s writings that the lack of emotional depth is directly related to a lack of motivation; hence he views emotions as a primary motivational force.

It should be noted that Hare’s conception of psychopathy does not imply a total absence of emotion, only a deficient or blunted emotional life. Nevertheless, this blunting of emotions is associated with higher rates of criminality demonstrated by extensive research into psychopathy: “There can be little argument that psychopathy predicts both violent and general recidivism” (Douglas, Vincent, & Edens, 2006, p. 542).

A more nuanced view was presented by Newell, Lagnado and Shanks (2007):
... emotions seem to play an important role in decision making, and in particular may be critical in causing time-based preference reversals when an imminent event gains control of our behaviour against our more long-term objectives (p. 147).

They continued by outlining empirical evidence demonstrating that different neural networks were used when processing immediate versus delayed rewards. Immediate rewards were more powerful than larger rewards, which were delayed. This seems to be of particular importance for criminology, as the majority of crime and certainly child sexual abuse, involves a short-term immediate reward taken in favour of longer-term delayed rewards (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

In and of itself, this provides part of the explanation for offending behaviour, in the face of long-term negative consequences of that offending. The short-term reward produces an incentive greater than the strength of the long-term cost, even though that cost may be objectively larger. This is consistent with the research into time discounting which was discussed earlier.

While the motivation to commit an offence may be perceived by many people, including those who never commit crimes (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008), what may differentiate those who act on this impulse may be the strength of the restraint. Consequently, the next section explores some factors which can act to restrain people from offending. Rather than examining all possible restraints, it focuses on those described by Finkelhor (1984) as internal restraints, specifically the emotions that could restrain someone from committing a sexual offence against a child.
Emotional Restraints to Offending

As noted earlier, Finkelhor (1984) outlined four preconditions for sexual offending against a child to occur: Motivation to sexually abuse; overcoming internal inhibitors; external inhibitors; and resistance by the child. The first precondition speaks to the motivation for offending, but the other three outline different types of restraints. This section focuses on the second – internal inhibitors.

The previous section explored the notion that emotions are a major source of motivation. It follows from this that emotions must play a key role in the internal inhibitors described by Finkelhor. Nathanson (1992) carried out a detailed study of emotions. The three emotions with potential to restrain offending behaviour are fear, shame and guilt.

Fear could operate entirely separately to shame and guilt, as in the case of an offender whose fear is focussed entirely upon the legal consequences of detection, or it could operate in concert with them. An example of the latter would be an offender who fears the shame that would come from public exposure of his actions. While acknowledging the role that fear could play in restraining sexual offending against children, this thesis will focus on the role of shame and guilt.

By ascribing an explanatory role to low self-control, the theories described earlier have felt little need to explain actions that would appear to be inconsistent with an offender’s core beliefs. While they allow for the possibility of offenders having high self-control and prosocial attitudes, they do not outline how such a person can molest a child, when such an act is at odds with their beliefs. As a consequence, the literature on shame and guilt appears to have evolved quite independently of the very behaviours most likely to evoke them: “There is perhaps no aspect of adult life as
securely linked to shame and pride as our relation to sex” (Nathanson, 1992, p. 259).
How much more shameful could a behaviour be than molestation of children, if sex itself is so linked with shame?

However shame or guilt after the fact cannot directly influence the act itself, although they may influence subsequent actions. It is shame and guilt prior to the offence, or the anticipation of shame or guilt, which has the potential to influence behaviour. In essence, can these emotions influence the behaviour of potential offenders? Do they inhibit child molestation?

In criticising Finkelhor’s model, Stinson, Sales and Becker (2008) argued that while overcoming internal inhibitors is still necessary, it should not be given as much attention as motivation. This ignores the possibility that the ultimate outcome or ‘net motivation’ is the result of an interaction between approach motivations and restraint motivations (King, 1996).

In summary, this thesis has outlined several features of child sexual assault, which have not been well explained by the major theories. These are the findings that offenders who molest boys, who molest outside their own family, or who are younger are more likely to reoffend. The major theories also ascribe a causal role in offending to low self-control, because self-control is conceived as an ability or capacity, the absence of which leads to impulsive behaviour, such as offending. An examination of research into self-control brings this conception into question and suggests that self-control is more likely a descriptor with no explanatory power. Instead, it is proposed that offending, including child sexual assault is the result of an in-the-moment balance between drive motivations and restraint motivations, at a time when an offence is possible.
The focus of this thesis is on the potential of moral emotions to act as restraint motivations. Before examining the potential for shame and guilt to restrain someone from committing a sexual offence against a child, it is first necessary to explore the literature on shame and guilt.
CHAPTER 5: SHAME AND GUILT

Shame and guilt are often referred to as moral emotions (Tangney & Dearing, 2002) due to their role in restraining socially proscribed behaviour. While there have been a number of explorations of shame and guilt, the most thorough has been the ongoing body of research by June Tangney and colleagues. Their key finding (Tangney & Dearing, 2002) has been the conclusion that:

... the fundamental difference between shame and guilt centres on the role of the self. Shame involves fairly global negative evaluations of the self (i.e., "Who I am"). Guilt involves a more articulated condemnation of a specific behaviour (i.e., "What I did") (p. 24).

Tangney and Dearing (2002) built on the earlier work by Helen Lewis (1971) who posited that the key difference between shame and guilt was the role of the self, rather than earlier theories which posited that “…guilt was a response to violation of internal norms, whereas shame is a response to (or fear of) criticism or disapproval by others” (Harris, 2003, p. 458).

Table 1 below, reproduced from Tangney and Dearing (2002), summarises the key similarities and differences between shame and guilt.
Table 1

Features Shared by Shame and Guilt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both fall into the class of &quot;moral&quot; emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both are &quot;self-conscious,&quot; self-referential emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both are negatively valanced emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both involve internal attributions of one sort or another</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both are typically experienced in interpersonal contexts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The negative events that give rise to shame and guilt are highly similar (frequently involving moral failures or transgressions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Key dimensions on which shame and guilt differ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of evaluation</th>
<th>Shame</th>
<th>Guilt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global self:</td>
<td>Specific Behaviour:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I did that horrible thing”</td>
<td>“I did that horrible thing”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of distress</td>
<td>Generally more painful</td>
<td>Generally less painful than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>than guilt</td>
<td>shame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenological</td>
<td>Shrinking, feeling small, feeling worthless,</td>
<td>Tension, remorse, regret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience</td>
<td>powerless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation of “self”</td>
<td>Self “split” into observing and observed</td>
<td>United self intact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“selves”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on “self”</td>
<td>Self impaired by global devaluation</td>
<td>Self unimpaired by global devaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern vis-à-vis the</td>
<td>Concern with others’ evaluation of the self</td>
<td>Concern with one’s impact on others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“other”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterfactual processes</td>
<td>Mentally undoing some aspect of the self</td>
<td>Mentally undoing some aspect of behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational features</td>
<td>Desire to hide, escape, or strike back</td>
<td>Desire to confess, apologise, or repair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Through a series of experiments using the Test of Self Conscious Affect (TOSCA) and its predecessor, they found that while shame and guilt were strongly correlated, once the unique components of guilt and shame (shame-free guilt and guilt-free shame) were extracted, they acted as predicted by
The correlation between guilt and shame is not unexpected, given that both are unpleasant emotions that occur in the face of some perceived wrongdoing by the subject. One of Tangney and Dearing’s key findings, was that the failure to separate guilt and shame in experimental design was responsible for a significant amount of the findings contrary to their theory. In other words, many studies were unable to separate guilt and shame or even labelled them incorrectly, attributing results to shame rather than guilt and vice versa. One particular form of this error was assuming that subjects in experiments could make the subtle distinction between shame and guilt. These studies are summarised by Tangney and Dearing (2002). The following section outlines some of the key studies contributing to these conclusions.

Using a phenomenological approach, Lindsay-Hartz (1984) was able to draw distinctions between shame and guilt based on asking interviewees to describe situations when they felt guilty and ashamed. While interviewees “eagerly” described an experience of guilt, they were reticent to describe a time when they had felt ashamed. When describing their experience of shame, all interviewees said they felt a desire to hide or escape from the situation where the shame arose. In contrast, guilt reflected an urge to confess, discuss their transgressions and make things right.

Lindsay-Hartz (1984) also found that shame involved feelings of being small and worthless. In contrast, guilt involved an ambiguity about the self: “We are not confident of our goodness or our badness; rather our identity is in question” (p. 695). Hence, while shame transforms the identity, guilt places it in question.
She also found that contrary to earlier theories, shame did not involve a failure to live up to an idealised characteristic. Instead, it was concerned with the ownership of a negative characteristic, which does not necessarily involve any moral transgression. Guilt, on the other hand was always associated with a moral transgression where the person perceives they could have done better.

Earlier theories had proposed that the difference between shame and guilt was that shame arose from public exposure and disapproval, whereas guilt was a more private emotion. Tangney (1995) demonstrated no difference between shame and guilt on this dimension, with both shame and guilt most likely to arise in the presence of others, but solitary guilt and solitary shame were as likely as each other.

Niedenthal, Tangney and Gavanski (1994) found that when subjects were asked to generate alternatives to shame situations, they tended to do so by altering aspects of the self. In contrast, when the subjects were asked to undo guilt situations, they did so by altering actions. This supported the self versus actions distinction proposed by Helen Lewis (1971).

Similarly Tangney, Miller, Flicker and Barlow (1996) found that subjects were able to distinguish between shame and guilt when reporting upon their own experiences. The subjects reported that shame was more intense than guilt, and was accompanied by feelings of being small and inferior to others.

Tangney (1991) found that guilt proneness among university undergraduates was positively correlated with a measure of empathy towards others, whereas shame proneness was negatively correlated with empathy towards others. This is of particular relevance to child sexual abuse, as victim empathy is a common treatment
target, as it is believed to be criminogenic (Briggs, Doyle, Gooch, & Kennington, 1998).

Tangney and Dearing (2002) summarised a series of studies involving a range of subjects and found that proneness to shame was correlated with a tendency to externalise blame and with trait anger, whereas proneness to guilt did not have this relationship. They interpreted this by proposing that, because shame involves a global attribution of the self as bad, it cannot be readily resolved in the moment. However, blaming someone else offers a ready way to reduce the discomfort of shame. The reduction in empathy towards others reduces the inhibitions against attacking other people.

**Shame, Guilt and Criminal Behaviour**

Somewhat surprisingly, very little psychological research has attempted to investigate the role of shame and guilt in criminal behaviour (Stuewig & Tangney, 2007). The criminological research that has investigated these links has generally ignored the psychological research into shame and guilt, with the consequent result that the criminologists have relied on out-dated conceptions of shame and guilt.

Tibbetts (2003) commented that criminologists tend to disregard the emphasis of shame on the self, rather than on one’s own actions. Consequently, they tend to conclude that shame has an inhibitory effect on offending; in contrast to the findings of Tangney and Dearing (2002) that shame-proneness is either positively associated with or unrelated to delinquent actions, whereas guilt-proneness is consistently protective of delinquent behaviour. One reason for this finding is because the
Criminologists define shame in a way that is not consistent with the definitions used by psychologists (Stuewig & Tangney, 2007).

However, some studies of criminal behaviour have used definitions of shame and guilt consistent with the psychological literature. In a longitudinal study of children followed into adolescence, Stuewig and McCloskey (2005) found that shame-free guilt proneness was inversely related to delinquency, whereas guilt-free shame proneness was unrelated to delinquency.

Reporting upon an unpublished study, Stuewig and Tangney (2007) noted that guilt-proneness in the 5th grade was predictive of by arrests and convictions at age 18, whereas shame-proneness was unrelated to either. In a series of studies with both college undergraduates and jail inmates, Dearing, Stuewig and Tangney (2005) found that shame proneness was generally positively correlated with substance abuse problems and guilt proneness was inversely related to substance abuse problems.

More recently, Marshall, Marshall, Serran and O’Brien (2009) attempted to integrate the concepts of shame and guilt with research into attachment, cognitive distortions, self-esteem and empathy as they specifically apply with child sexual offenders. They proposed that the concepts are related to each other in the following ways: attachment influences the amount of self-esteem a person possesses and this, in turn, drives the likelihood of the person feeling shame or guilt in response to a particular situation; shame produces a focus on self, resulting in lower empathy for others; and cognitive distortions are a defence against feelings of shame. This appears to neatly integrate the research into sexual offending with the psychological research into shame and guilt, although these links do not appear to have been empirically tested at this stage.
The view of shame and guilt theorised by Tangney and Dearing, although widely accepted (Barr, 2004; Hanson, 2003; Potter-Efron, 2002; Proeve & Howells, 2006; Vallelonga, 1997), is not universally accepted, particularly insofar as it applies to offenders. The following section explores some of the alternative views.

**Harris' views of shame**

Nathan Harris (2003) concluded that shame and guilt were a united concept, which he labelled shame/guilt. However, he failed to appreciate that factor analysis would group shame and guilt items together as both are reasonably correlated (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). His shame/guilt factor behaved similarly to guilt, being associated with empathy and negatively associated with anger/hostility. Another factor, which he labelled embarrassment/exposure, contained many features of shame and gave results similar to Tangney and Dearing’s (2002) conceptualisation of shame.

**Proeve and Howells' criticisms**

A slightly more subtle change to Tangney’s concept of guilt and shame, was proposed by Proeve and Howells (2006). Drawing on research by Gilbert (1998) they proposed that shame could be divided into internal and external shame. Internal shame reflects a negative self-evaluation, whereas external shame is focussed on how other people view the person. While these two domains are expected to be highly correlated, it is proposed that they have a degree of independence, so a paedophile who recognises other view his actions poorly but does not feel bad about himself, would have a high degree of external shame, but a low degree of internal shame.
However, external shame as defined by Gilbert appears to be a non-emotional state. The paedophile described above, simply has no shame, nor guilt. Tangney would describe such a state as “detached”, one of the domains measured by the TOSCA. It would make more sense to describe this paedophile as someone who feels no shame, or guilt about his behaviour. The alternative is to redefine shame, or a type of shame as not being an emotion, or expanding the definition of emotion to include states that don’t involve feelings — something that becomes conceptually quite problematic. Additionally, external shame could then be applied to everyone, as there is always someone else who sees the actions as wrong, even though the actor may be content with their actions. In short, this addition seems to add confusion without adding any explanatory depth.

**Jenkins’ criticisms**

Another critic of the guilt/shame distinction is Jenkins (2005; 2009). Writing from a clinical perspective, his criticisms seem to relate to misinterpretations or misuses of this conceptual distinction than in the difference per se:

> However, they can serve to privilege ‘guilt’ and promote bypassing or attempting to rush the significant developmental journey of transition from a shameful judgement of self to a shameful judgement of the act, and the social role that this gradual transition can serve for all concerned (2005, p. 117).

Jenkins’ treatment goals appear identical to Tangney’s definition of guilt. His criticism focuses on attempting to rush the client from a shameful state to a guilty state without doing the necessary therapeutic work. This is excellent advice for therapy, but does not serve as a valid argument against Tangney’s distinction.
In summary, while Jenkins has criticised the guilt/shame distinction, this appears to be more a matter of making a therapeutic point about the importance of recognising and working through shame, rather than ignoring it. However, he does not acknowledge that his end game is to induce a sense of guilt in his client.

**Nathanson’s conceptualisation of guilt**

Nathanson (1992) undertook a very deep investigation into the nature of shame. Despite a very different theoretical stance to Tangney (Psychoanalytic versus Cognitive Behavioural), his definition and understanding of shame seems consistent with that of Tangney. However, his definition of guilt seems quite at odds with hers.

Before these differences can be explored, some explanation of Nathanson’s work is necessary. Drawing on the work of Silvan Tomkins (1962; 1963; 1991), Nathanson divided emotions into their component parts: Affect, Feeling, Emotion and Mood.

Affect is defined as the strictly biological component of emotion, which is evident in newborn babies and a wide range of animals. He believed that nine affects are sufficient to explain all human emotion: interest-excitement; enjoyment-joy; surprise-startle; fear-terror; distress-anguish; anger-rage; disgust; and shame-humiliation. Most of these affects have duel names to indicate the range of intensity of the affect; hence a low level of Interest-excitement is experienced as interest, whereas a higher level is experienced as excitement.

Nathanson reserved the use of the word feeling to indicate that the organism has become aware of an affect. Hence, feelings are restricted to life forms capable of awareness. He defined emotion as a higher order construct involving memories of
similar situations involving a particular affect, or combination of affects. Numerous learned scripts can be called into action at this level to guide cognition and behaviour. Mood is then defined as an enduring emotion. Hence, while all people are assumed to have the same biological affects, the experience and expression of these as emotion is contingent upon each person’s history.

Returning to the issue at hand, Nathanson’s definition of guilt seems consistent with that of Tangney. The differences appear when Nathanson (1992) outlined the underlying mechanisms he believed drive guilt. He hypothesised that guilt is composed of shame affect in combination with fear affect. However, this explanation fails to explain some of the empirical findings into guilt. For example, if the addition of fear affect to shame affect is the critical difference between shame and guilt, then guilt should feel more intense than shame and private guilt should not provoke a desire to confess, apologise or repair the relationship, as fear would most likely drive a desire to hide or escape.

Tangney and Dearing (2002) clearly concluded that shame is generally experienced as a more intense emotion than guilt. They also found that guilt, as opposed to shame, is more likely to provoke a desire to confess, apologise or repair, but do not appear to have examined the specific case where no one else knows about, or is likely to discover the transgression.

However, given their other findings it seems likely that guilt operates the same way in the absence of a watching other:

*We should emphasize that in our Longitudinal Family Study, no apparent benefit was derived from the pain of shame. There was no evidence that*
shame inhibits problematic behaviours. The propensity for shame does not
deter young people from engaging in criminal activities; it does not deter them
from unsafe sex practices; it does not foster responsible driving habits; and in
fact it seems to inhibit constructive involvement in community service.

Guilt, on the other hand, seems to be a powerful moral emotional factor.

People who have the capacity to feel guilt about specific behaviours are less
likely than their non-guilt prone peers to engage in destructive, impulsive,
and/or criminal activities. They have sex with fewer partners and are more
likely to use protection. They are more likely to drive responsibly, to apply to
college, and to actively contribute to the community (Tangney & Dearing,

It would appear more likely that the difference appears at Nathanson’s third level, or
emotion as opposed to affect or feeling. In this scenario guilt is provoked by shame
affect, but moderated by scripts that maintain the sense of self as adequate and not
under threat. These scripts will generally contain the intensity at a lower level, but
also trigger other scripts involving empathy for the other and socially acceptable
methods of making amends. An alternative explanation would be the polar opposite of
Nathanson’s hypothesis about guilt – the emotion of shame may consist of shame
affect plus fear affect, while guilt consists of shame affect without any significant
amount of fear. Hence the shame responses of fight or flight, evident in Tangney’s
research may actually be fuelled by fear. Consequently, it appears likely that
Nathanson’s theorising has not adequately captured the concept of guilt, nor did he
produce any empirical evidence to challenge Tangney’s distinction.
In summary, it is concluded there is nothing in the works of Braithwaite and colleagues, Proeve and Howells, Jenkins or Nathanson, to detract from the findings of Tangney and colleagues into the differences between guilt and shame. Before moving on to outline some theories about how shame and guilt function to suppress or fail to suppress criminal behaviour, it is helpful to first describe detachment, a lack of shame or guilt.

**Detachment**

Having described shame and guilt in some detail, it is useful to also examine the lack of shame or guilt, i.e., detachment. Proneness to detachment is one of the concepts measured by Tangney’s TOSCA, mentioned earlier. It should be noted that the majority of the research she and her colleagues have carried out has focussed on the differences between shame and guilt, while leaving detachment mostly unexamined. A fourth scale on that instrument, externalisation, is better thought of as a method for achieving detachment, rather than an end state of its own. Externalisation will be examined later, along with other tactics for reducing shame.

Detachment can be achieved in a number of ways. Guilt arises when the person perceives they have breached their own values and shame arises when this affects their view of themself. It is also possible to feel ashamed, but not guilty, for some aspect of one’s being.

Someone who feels good about himself and doesn’t perceive he has breached his own values would then be described as feeling detached. This is not necessarily a bad thing, as the person may not have done anything wrong, either by his definition or by others’. A good example may be eating pork, something that strict Muslims, Jews or
vegetarians would abhor, but others may have no issue with. In relation to the ‘sin’ of eating pork, they would be detached.

A related issue is importance. Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton (1995, p. 298) noted that “People apparently feel less guilty about their transgressions against people whom they dislike or disrespect”. Hence a transgression against an intimate partner or good friend is more likely to invoke guilt or shame, than a similar transgression against a stranger or someone they dislike.

There is some support for this in the literature on sexual abuse of children. Offenders who have sexually abused strangers, are more likely to reoffend than those who have only abused people they know. Similarly, those who have sexually abused people outside their own families are more likely to reoffend than offenders who have only sexually abused members of their own family (Hanson & Bussiere, 1996). Do guilt and/or shame play a role in these findings?

It is likely that the offender’s values are critical at this point, as they will determine where a bad feeling is likely to arise and not. In fact, many committed criminals have values that are quite consistent with their criminal behaviour and would not evoke guilt either before or after the behaviour (Covert, Tangney, Maddux, & Heleno, 2003; Dassey, 2006; Hanson & Harris, 2001; Hare, 1999; Lindsay-Hartz, 1984; Marshall, Serran, & Marshall, 2006; Marshall, Thornton, Marshall, Fernandez, & Mann, 2001; Samenow, 2004).

In this case, society would expect the offender to feel guilty or shameful, but he will not, convinced that it is a ‘dog eat dog world’ and he is acting no different to others. The most extreme example of this would be the prototypical psychopath (Hare, 1999)
who effectively has no values and is therefore immune from guilt. A prototypical psychopath also feels good about himself and is therefore immune from shame.

However, many offenders commit offences that are inconsistent with their own values (Felson & Osgood, 2008; Jenkins, 1990; Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Thompson, 2002). In this instance they will feel shame or guilt, unless they can neutralise this bad feeling. These neutralisation techniques will be described later, under shame- and guilt-based pathways.

To the extent that guilt and shame represent an obstacle to offending behaviour, detachment can be seen as the absence of that restraint. In the pathways described below, it can be seen how guilt should prove more effective in restraining a contemplated offence than shame, due to subtle, but critical, differences in the strategies for neutralising the bad feeling.

Given the substantial correlation between shame and guilt (Covert, Tangney, Maddux, & Heleno, 2003; Tangney & Dearing, 2002), it is likely that most offenders will experience some degree of both shame and guilt when they contemplate an offence for the first time, but it is the relevant balance of these that is responsible for the outcome. Hence, this distinction while not absolute, is useful in explaining some group-based differences. Before examining the relevance of moral emotions for sexual offending, it is helpful to first consider another way shame and guilt could be conceptualised, without contradicting the research findings already outlined.
Reconceptualisation of Shame and Guilt

Similar to Bartholomew’s (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1993) reconceptualisation of attachment as a two dimensional concept, it may be helpful to consider moral emotions using a two dimensional model. Shame and guilt are both painful negative emotions, with many similarities. Where they differ is in the role of self in this painful emotion. Thus shame is a state characterised by a painful moral emotion (Nathanson’s (1992) shame affect) combined with a negative self-evaluation. Guilt can be thought of as the same negative affect combined with a positive self-evaluation. This then leaves two types of detachment, both characterised by low levels of shame affect, but differing in self-evaluation.

In this conceptualisation the substantial correlation seen between shame and guilt can be seen not as measurement error, but as an indication of the underlying shame affect felt by the subjects. Additionally, it is clear that the emotions are dimensional rather than categorical, as both shame affect and view of self can vary continuously.

In the above sections, the various theories used to explain sexual offences against children were underlined. In doing so their reliance on the concept of low self-control was highlighted and it was shown how this could be more satisfactorily explained by integrating empirical and theoretical findings about guilt and shame from the general psychological literature.

Measuring Shame and Guilt

The diverse definitions of shame and guilt outlined earlier, mean that measurement of shame and guilt is likely to be problematic. This problem is even greater when the psychological study of moral emotions meets criminological research. Tibbetts (2003)
noted that psychology and criminology have carried on parallel investigations into this area while ignoring each other, leading him to conclude: “… virtually all recent criminological studies of self-conscious emotions have included measures in which the relationships of shame, guilt, and embarrassment are confounded” (p. 102).

However, even when consistent definitions of shame and guilt are employed, measurement is problematic: “Shame and guilt are internal affective states that are difficult, if not impossible to assess directly” (Tangney & Dearing, 2002, p. 26). This is complicated by the finding that people find it difficult to distinguish shame and guilt (Tangney & Dearing, 2002), ruling out direct inquiry as a reliable method of measuring shame and guilt.

Consequently, researchers have tended to rely on scenario-based measures, where a subject is given a range of behavioural options in relation to a particular situation. Each of these behavioural options being associated with a particular moral emotion (or its absence). The Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA; Tangney & Dearing, 2002) is the most commonly used trait-based measure of shame and guilt which is consistent with the definitions of shame and guilt outlined earlier in this thesis (Robins, Noftle, & Tracy, 2007). This instrument asks the subject how likely they would be to pick each of four responses in relation to a range of common scenarios, such as missing an appointment with a friend, failing in a work project and damaging property. Tangney and Dearing (2002) reported good reliability and validity for this instrument.

However, trait-based measures of shame and guilt do not allow us to infer what emotion is being experienced at any particular point in time – they are effectively probabilistic measures of the likelihood of experiencing, or not experiencing, a
particular emotion. When examining the emotions of a person around the time they first sexually assault a child, it is problematic to extrapolate how they felt then, from their reactions to a range of rather benign situations. Consequently, it is important to examine state-based measures of shame and guilt.

**State versus Trait measures of Shame and Guilt**

A review of shame assessment tools by Robins et al. (2007) identified only one state-based measure of shame and guilt – the State Shame and Guilt Scale (SSGS; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). They also noted that the SSGS was “rarely used”. This would indicate that few researchers have invested energy in measuring shame and guilt as a state-based phenomena as opposed to a trait, which has been well researched.

The SSGS contains 15 items, which are measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = “not feeling this way at all”; 3 = “feeling this way somewhat”; 5 = “feeling this way very much”). The 15 items are grouped into three scales of five items each, measuring shame, guilt and pride; hence each scale has a range from 5 to 25. Robins et al. (2007) reported reliabilities of $\alpha = 0.89$; 0.82; and 0.87 respectively for these three scales.

Consequently, state-based measurement of shame and guilt is problematic. Having now outlined shame, guilt and detachment, the methods used by people to cope with shame will be explored. Later, the methods used to cope with guilt will be explored and contrasted with the methods used to cope with shame.
Shame-based Pathways

Elison, Lennon and Pulos (2006) made the point that shame can be resolved in a manner that deals with it once and for all, or simply reacted to in a manner that reduces the pain of the moment without addressing the underlying cause:

A constructive script for shame management is to attend to its source and evaluate whether one cares to address it; few people consistently achieve this ideal. The four poles of the Compass of Shame characterize the many scripts by which shame is reduced, ignored or magnified, without addressing its source (p. 222).

At one level this dichotomy is slightly artificial, as it is likely that many situations involve partial resolution of shame, but it remains a useful framework. The Compass of Shame to which Elison et al. refer, was developed by Nathanson (1992). He hypothesised that when people feel shame and do not resolve this they have four options for reducing the discomfort, which he described like the four points of a compass: withdrawal, avoidance, attack-self and Attack-Other. Attack-Other is conceptually similar to the phrase externalisation used by Tangney and others. Externalisation seems to be a more useful descriptor, as it also captures situations where the blamed other is inanimate, such as alcohol. Hence, the latter term will be used in this thesis.

It is worth noting that “Nathanson, following Tomkins, uses a very broad definition of shame, that is, shame is the negative affect felt in response to any impediment to the ongoing experience of interest or joy” (Elison, Lennon, & Pulos, 2006, p. 222). Consequently, his definition of shame includes guilt as a form of shame. When guilt-based pathways are explored later, the different pathways available to someone
experiencing guilt as opposed to shame, will be highlighted. These differences while sometimes subtle, have great importance for their crime prevention potential.

**Withdrawal**

Of all the methods of coping with the discomfort of shame, withdrawal is the closest to the behaviours associated with the innate affect of shame. Nathanson (1992) described how infants droop their head and shoulders and drop eye contact when they feel shame. Similar behaviour can be seen in domestic dogs, whom Nathanson believes can feel shame affect.

Nathanson (1992) argued that a degree of withdrawal can be a healthy response to shame as it allows the space to contemplate one’s actions. In effect, withdrawal provides the space that makes resolution possible. However, Nathanson pointed out that extreme levels of withdrawal can lead to depression and chronic levels of low self esteem. In the absence of any resolution, withdrawal only eases shame for as long as it is used. Once attention returns to the trigger, shame is reinvoked. Paradoxically, the realisation that shame has not been resolved may induce a more intense shame reaction, by reinforcing pre-existing beliefs about the self.

When shame is triggered by contemplation of an offence this is usually a private matter, hidden from everyone other than the offender, with no visible signs of the offender’s intent. In the majority of child sex offences the offence is contemplated while in the child’s presence for legitimate reasons (Wortley & Smallbone, 2006). In this case withdrawal is unlikely to be a strategy that reduces the discomfort in any significant manner, as the contemplation can continue in the absence of the potential victim.
Even more importantly, due to the private nature of the contemplation, it is hard to see how withdrawal is possible as the withdrawal response implies something to withdraw from. If the trigger for shame occurs in the presence of the potential victim, then the withdrawal may remove the offender from an immediate likelihood of an offence. However, it is more likely that the withdrawal in this case will be a withdrawal from social interaction generally, something associated with a higher likelihood of committing a sexual offence in the longer term (Hanson & Harris, 2001).

**Avoidance**

Avoidance can take many forms, but basically involves methods to ease the shame by running away, or distracting one’s thinking in some form. Avoidance is conceptually similar to withdrawal. The important distinction for Nathanson, centres on awareness, as avoidance is often done without an acknowledgement of the bad feeling or the sense of self as under attack. Done frequently and habitually enough, avoidance can function as a pre-emptive strike against the perception of shame. Forms of avoidance include substance abuse (Potter-Efron, 2002), suicide (Brown, 2006; Tangney & Dearing, 2002), denial (Potter-Efron, 2002), or even literally running away from a situation or community (Potter-Efron, 2002).

Escape could also be made into a fantasy world (Potter-Efron, 2002), where the offender dreams of a much more pleasant world, which is also totally unrealistic. This fantasy could ultimately become a rehearsal for an offence. The thought processes involved in this pathway could include such thoughts as “I can’t stand it”, “I can’t face this”, “I have to get away” and various escape fantasies.
It should be noted that this pathway will usually only provide temporary relief and the offender will need to constantly refuel their avoidance or switch to another pathway to avoid feeling the shame. However, in the context of shame in response to contemplating an offence, an avoidance strategy is capable of neutralising the shame long enough for the offence to take place. This is seen in the high numbers of sexual offences committed while the offender is under the influence of drugs or alcohol (Peugh & Belenko, 2001).

In fact, any pleasant activity can serve as an avoidance strategy from shame. Paradoxically, committing the contemplated offence (usually a pleasant activity for the offender, but not the victim) may distract the offender from the shame caused by contemplating that offence. As Nathanson (1992) noted: “For many of us, almost any affect feels better than shame” (p. 312).

**Attack-Self**

This strategy outlined by Nathanson (1992), ranges from mild self-deprecating thoughts to suicide. Attack-self can be successful in reducing the pain of shame as it puts the shamed person in control of the shaming experience, while simultaneously presenting as deferential, which may invoke sympathy or at least, less condemnation from others.

The ultimate form of self-punishment is suicide, which could be fuelled by thoughts such as “I should not be, so I must destroy myself” (Potter-Efron, 2002). While the result would be the same as suicide driven by avoidance, the thinking driving the suicide is quite different. Other forms of self-punishment could include self-harm (such as wrist cutting) or depriving oneself of pleasant things. Typically, such self-
punishment will be internal self-talk such as self-directed anger (Elison, Lennon, & Pulos, 2006). Ultimately (unless a suicide attempt is successful), this strategy is likely to result in greater feelings of self-hatred and it is likely that the person will switch to one of the other pathways in this section, which could include an offence.

**Externalisation**

Attack-other, as outlined by Nathanson is conceptually similar to what others call externalisation (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). When the bad feeling is predominantly shame-based, thoughts about not doing the action will not eliminate the feeling, as it is a sense of personal badness, unworthiness, etc., that is at the core of the emotion. However, shifting the blame to someone or something else can produce a feeling of righteous anger or rage (Dutton, 2007; Elison, Lennon, & Pulos, 2006; Samenow, 2004).

The thinking associated with this pathway will typically consist of a justification for blaming someone/thing else, followed by permission giving thoughts. This could be as simple as “Everyone always picks on me. Fuck them!”, but could also involve quite elaborate justifications. Dutton (2007) described this process in men who are violent with their partner:

> The feelings of shame are intolerable, so they are converted immediately (and without awareness) to anger and blame; the partner is blamed for the intolerable feelings. If it happens repeatedly with more than one woman, these men go from blaming “her” to blaming “them” (p. 192).
While Potter-Efron (2002) listed rage separately from externalisation, it appears more logical to include them under the same category, as rage is better thought of as externalisation with anger and does not appear to exist separate to externalisation. In other words, rage without an attack-other component is not a viable pathway to avoid the feeling of shame.

Resolution of Shame

Shame can be temporarily disabled through the routes outlined above, or it can be resolved (Nathanson, 1992). When shame is not resolved it is prone to reoccurrence, for the simple reason that the cause still exists. This is analogous to taking aspirin for toothache — once the aspirin has worn off, the underlying pain is able to be felt again.

Potter-Efron (2002, p. 40) described how shame can appear in cycles, which increase in intensity as the non-productive coping mechanism is utilised repetitively:

“Unfortunately, the cost of such compulsive behavior is that the true self does not develop fully; it remains incomplete, leading people back towards shame and eventually more compulsivity”.

However, resolving the shame will deal with the heart of the matter and it should not return. This does not mean that the person will never feel shame again, only that the particular instance of shame has been resolved and will not constantly fuel a shame experience.

Offenders whose bad feeling in relation to a contemplated wrong-doing, is based more on shame than guilt are unable to remove the bad feeling by simply deciding not to commit the contemplated offence, as the bad feeling is rooted in their sense of self
being bad, not their specific behaviour. In essence the offender may say to himself “It
doesn’t matter what I do, I’ll still be useless/hopeless/no good”. This does not imply
that the offender will automatically commit the offence if he feels ashamed, just that
deciding not to act on the thought will not resolve the shame. Lindsay-Hartz (1984, p.
697) explained:

*When ashamed, we are helplessly stuck with our negative identity. We can
change what we do, but we cannot instantly change who we are. We have
taken a part of ourselves to be the whole of who we are, and following this
kind of logic, we cannot be anything else. For example, one 20-year-old
woman felt ashamed when she realized she was fat and unattractive. She was
aware that she could in the future go on a diet and lose weight, but she also
felt that “right there and then, there was nothing I could do about it.” In the
moment of shame, she took her fatness to be the whole of who she was,
ignoring the beauty of her face and the warmth of her personality.*

Hence, resolving shame will require more than just a commitment to not repeat the
instigating behaviour as the essence of self as bad needs to be changed, something
that is not easily done. Vallelonga (1997) noted that “being ashamed” was actually
better described as “being ashamed of oneself” (p. 134).

One more short cut does exist however, which involves changing core beliefs so they
are consistent with the behaviour (Vallelonga, 1997). In this scenario, similar to what
Potter-Efron (2002) called exhibitionism, the offender adopts the bad identity and
attaches a sense of pride to it – in effect, feeling good about being bad. However, in
the situations Vallelonga outlined this can be constructive, such as where a person
gives up an unrealistic ideal for a more realistic life plan. In the case of sexual offending as discussed in this thesis, the new identity is by definition, antisocial.

Examples of such identity transformation can include membership of an outlaw motorcycle gang or an organised paedophile ring, but would more commonly be expressed as an internal state of mind that glorifies the bad actions, while remaining invisible to the rest of society. This can be seen in the thief who prides himself on his offending skills or the sex offender who feels pride in his targeting and grooming skills. This identity transformation is likely to be a risk factor for offending, as it potentially gives permission for almost any form of bad behaviour. Another variation of this theme (Potter-Efron, 2002) is the identity of “loser”, where the person can adopt failure as their identity, reducing the impact of any specific instance of shame.

The remaining alternative is to resolve the source of the shame by re-evaluating its meaning for the person. Vallelonga (1997) broke this into two parts. The first is to separate oneself from having the deficit that is linked to shame. In essence by denying having the shameful characteristic, one is free from the shame that accompanies this deficit. This is seen in the substantial number of sex offenders who deny their offending (Marshall W. L., Marshall, Serran, & Fernandez, 2006) – a strategy that causes its own problems, as denial is not something authorities and treatment providers readily tolerate (Marshall, Thornton, Marshall, Fernandez, & Mann, 2001).

The second method proposed by Vallelonga, is to undo the generalisation from doing the action to owning that characteristic – in effect saying: “That act does not define who I am”. This is particularly difficult when the behaviour involves sexual offences, as society has increasingly depicted sexual offenders as “creatures” (Dassey, 2006; Marshall, Serran, & Marshall, 2006) incapable of rehabilitation, or simply too
dangerous to be released (Winick & La Fond, 2003). Some of the labelling employed under schemes enacted by governments include sex offender registers, civil commitment at the expiry of sentence, residence restrictions and proposals that sex offenders place a sign in their front garden warning that a sex offender resides there and be required to have specially coloured licence plates on their car (Driehaus, 2007). These laws stand in stark contrast to the handling of other categories of offences, where even the highest risk offenders are released to the community at the end of their sentence.

Someone who is ashamed because they have contemplated or committed sexual offences, has to make the journey from “sex offender” to an alternative construction of self that is not shame infested. Maruna (2001) described one such process:

By “making good,” not only is the desisting ex-offender “changed,” but he or she is also reconstituted. As with first becoming deviant, “the former identity stands as accidental; the new identity is the basic reality. What he is now is what, after all, he was all along” (p. 10).

Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006) have identified this identity transformation as an important part of sex offender treatment, which has long been neglected. They argued that the focus of sex offender treatment needs to assist the offender to lead a better life, while simultaneously addressing the factors that contributed to the offending in the first place.

While it is reasonably simple to describe the outcome of the identity transformation that can resolve shame, the process itself can be very involved and time consuming. Potter-Efron (2002) pointed out that shame tends to heal slowly, especially when it is linked to physical or sexual abuse in childhood. As a substantial number of child
sexual offenders suffered physical and/or sexual abuse in their background, it is likely that Potter-Efron’s caution applies to child sexual offenders.

However, as Vallelonga (1997) observed this process can, at least in some circumstances, be undertaken by the person themselves without any formal intervention. It would seem likely that this is more feasible at the lower end of the shame spectrum, where the shame is not entrenched and overwhelming. In contrast, the process of shame resolution in more entrenched cases requires time and assistance. In this manner, the positions taken by Potter-Efron and Vallelonga in no way contradict or invalidate each other.

Potter-Efron (2002) described a number of defences against shame, most of which are subsumed into the pathways above. One of those not included above is perfectionism. While Potter-Efron’s description of this as a defence against shame appearing appears valid, it appears to have little utility in removing the feeling of shame once that feeling arises, hence it is not included in the pathways above. Additionally, this is unlikely to be a common defence against shame used by sexual offenders.

In a similar manner, Potter-Efron’s (2002) defence of arrogance can be seen as an attempt to prevent shame occurring, rather than a mechanism to remove the feeling of shame in the moment. Also, the main mechanism of arrogance is denigrating others, which can be seen as a form of externalisation.

Having examined the pathways for responding to shame, the next section explores the pathways for responding to guilt and contrasts them with the pathways for shame reduction. It should be remembered that these differences will generally reflect a matter of degree rather than absolute difference, given that shame-free guilt and guilt-
free shame are likely to be abstract states rather than the norm where the two emotions overlap (Tangney & Dearing, 2002).

**Guilt-based Pathways**

In contrast to shame-based pathways, offenders whose bad feeling is predominantly focussed on their proposed actions rather than their sense of self, have a different but overlapping set of options available to alleviate that bad feeling:

*The anticipation of guilt works as a deterrent, motivating people to avoid behaving in ways that will result in guilt ... consequently, without this foresight there may be little to discourage an individual from behaving in an antisocial manner (Cripps, 1997, p. 89).*

In particular, the ability to remove the bad feeling by deciding not to carry out the contemplated offence is a significant difference between shame and guilt and is consistent with the findings that guilt motivates reparation (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1995; Lindsay-Hartz, 1984). The following section examines each of the pathways used to reduce the experience of shame and describes how these may apply to guilt reduction.

**Externalisation**

As with the same shame-based pathway, this is an option open to someone who feels guilty about his proposed action. The thought patterns described earlier for shame-based pathways should be equally able to neutralise guilty feelings and allow the offence to proceed. However, there is no reason to suspect that this pathway is more
likely to be used with guilt than shame. Rather, Tangney and Dearing (2002) found that guilt was less likely than shame to result in externalisation – guilt was associated with constructive intentions and negatively associated with methods of displacement.

Hence, while it is theoretically possible to avoid guilt through this route, it does not appear to be a pathway that is appealing to people feeling guilty — certainly not as appealing as for those feeling ashamed. This can be understood by contrasting the cognitions associated with shame and guilt. With shame there is a sense of self that it threatened, which is not the case with guilt. Thus, shame has a dimension of threat, which is not present in guilt.

Revisiting Nathanson’s (1992) conjecture that guilt is shame affect plus fear affect, it seems more likely that the reverse is true. The sense of threat-to-self inherent in the emotion of shame is likely to produce greater amounts of fear affect than in guilt. Hence, pathways such as externalisation, attack-self, withdrawal and avoidance are more likely to occur in response to shame, because they are a response to fear.

It is possible that there may be differences in the style of externalisation used to defend against guilt rather than shame. It might be speculated that guilt-based externalisation may be less aggressive and more focussed on responsibility diversion, rather than attacking another.

**Attack-Self**

While this pathway could also be used to defend against guilt, it is less likely to be used for guilt than shame because the cognitions associated with guilt do not include a self as bad, hence the drive to punish the self is unlikely to be strong. In the case of a
proposed action, attempting to resolve the bad feeling by punishing the self is unlikely to reduce feelings of guilt as guilt focuses on the proposed action, not the self. Hence, compared to shame, guilt can be relieved by avoiding the offence and cannot be relieved by self-punishment.

Withdrawal

In a similar vein to the previous pathway, withdrawal is a pathway most likely associated with shame rather than guilt. Additionally, there is evidence that the behavioural urges associated with guilt are confession, rather than withdrawal (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Hence, while this strategy could remove the offender from an accusing other, the offender still retains their internal critic, which is likely to be more salient if the offender withdraws from others.

Avoidance

As it does for shame, avoidance strategies will also temporarily neutralise the guilty feelings, or at least enable the offender to ignore them for a period of time. While avoidance may work in a similar manner for both shame and guilt states, in the case of a contemplated offence if the alternative activity results in the person avoiding an offence, the guilt may resolve itself unless the desire to offend remains, in which case the anticipatory guilt should re-emerge. On the other hand, if the avoidance strategy includes the offence or facilitates it (e.g. through the disinhibiting effects of alcohol consumption) then the guilt should increase once the mood enhancing effects of the pleasant activity have expired.
Resolution of Guilt

When guilt exists in relation to contemplation of an offence, it can be readily resolved by deciding to not commit the offence. Additionally, the guilt could be resolved by convincing oneself that the contemplated offence is not wrong. After an offence has been committed, guilt may be resolved by some form of reparation. These pathways are discussed below.

Decide to not carry out the contemplated offence

While this choice is also available to someone predominantly feeling shame, it will not resolve the shame, because the sense of self as bad or defective has been activated. When the guilt concerns a proposed action rather than one that has already been carried out, it should resolve itself as soon as the decision not to proceed is made, leaving the person in a neutral or even pleasant state. For guilt, this process can be exceedingly simple and can be carried out with little or no conscious thought.

Thoughts associated with this pathway could include: “I’d better not do that because it might hurt someone” and “That’s not the sort of thing someone like me does”. The decision to avoid the offence may even improve the person’s self esteem, leading to a self-reinforcing pattern: “I really am a caring person, to think of others like that”. As this pathway is so different for shame and guilt, it is expected that this pathway is responsible for a significant amount of the outcome differences between shame and guilt.
Change beliefs about the offence

Feelings of guilt will only arise when the person has committed or contemplates committing, some behaviour they believe is wrong. Hence, another way to resolve guilt is to change the beliefs around the proposed action.

Using this strategy, the offender convinces himself that the proposed actions are not wrong. An examination of the process for doing this is beyond the scope of this paper as it involves an entire field of research into changing attitudes and beliefs. For the purposes of this thesis it is sufficient to note that changing beliefs is possible and that this can resolve the guilt.

Reparation

As guilt is focussed on the action and not the person, major changes are not required to resolve guilt once a guilt-inducing action has been committed. For many behaviours, people can engage in reparative actions to alleviate the guilt. While social circumstances influence the flavour and form of these behaviours, it is the internal beliefs of the guilty person, about what constitutes appropriate reparation that will be critical in determining whether the reparation is successful in resolving the guilt. Having examined the various strategies used to alleviate feelings of guilt and shame, the following section explores how these different strategies may influence the likelihood of an offence occurring.
How Resolution/Neutralisation of Shame and Guilt leads to or away from offending

The particular method used to cope with the bad feeling will determine what happens next. If the method neutralises the bad feeling in a manner that still allows the possibility of an offence, through routes such as externalisation, avoidance or changed values, then the situation is analogous to the offender who was detached in the first place, as the person no longer feels bad, even if only temporarily.

Thoughts associated with this transition could include: “Well, I am obviously a paedophile, I might as well act like one”; “It’s not fair that I’m the one who always misses out. Who do they think they are anyway?”; and “I’ll just think about touching her and then I’ll feel better. I won’t really act on it”.

This is similar to the process outlined by Ward and colleagues (Laws & Ward, 2006; Ward & Hudson, 2000; Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) where an offender switches from an avoidance goal to an approach goal. The discussion of shame and guilt outlined above, adds to Ward’s model by attempting to explain the process by which this switch occurs and outlining the cognitions and emotions involved. In this case the bad feeling which was restraining the offender from acting, has now been removed and the offender now only faces the same restraints as a detached offender who sees no wrong in the contemplated offence.

The process outlined above allows for a great deal of heterogeneity in offence paths, so that some offenders may only need to neutralise the guilt or shame for a relatively brief period to enable an offence to happen. If the offender neutralises the bad feeling through avoidance, then the particular type of avoidance strategy used becomes critical. This issue is analogous to Ward’s emotional dysregulation pathway (Ward,
Polaschek, & Beech, 2006) and the Seemingly Unimportant Decisions\(^1\) from Relapse Prevention models (Salter, 1995), as the offender may not consciously plan to do something that increases the likelihood of an offence, he is merely acting to reduce his own psychological discomfort.

Some avoidance strategies such as consuming alcohol, may increase the likelihood of an offence (Wortley & Smallbone, 2006). These strategies may have side effects of disinhibition, permission giving or increased access, lowering the threshold to actually commit an offence.

For example, if an offender chooses alcohol as an avoidance strategy, the physical and psychological effects of the alcohol may increase his mood, removing or masking the bad feeling which acted as a restraint against the contemplated offence. In concert with that, the disinhibitory effects of the alcohol further reduce restraints to action.

Restraints and motivations are best viewed as a continuum rather than as dichotomous options, even though the end result is dichotomous (offend/not offend). Hence, depending upon the salience and strength of the various motivators and restraints in a particular case, reducing the strength of one of the restraints may be sufficient to allow an offence to happen in one case, but not in another. Additionally, alcohol may impair judgement, making it difficult to evaluate the long-term consequences of proposed actions. Alcohol may be a particularly attractive avoidance strategy for someone who is feeling ashamed as Nathanson (1992) noted: “It seems reasonable to

\(^1\) Also known as Seemingly Irrelevant Decisions (Laws, 1989) and Apparently Irrelevant Decisions Error! Reference source not found.
assume that one of the primary actions of alcohol is to release us from the bonds of shame, that it is a ‘shamolytic’ agent” (p. 356).

In another example, the offender chooses to play non-sexually with the child he is fantasising about molesting, to avoid thinking about molestation. For a period of time this may distract him from the thoughts of molesting her and his bad feeling may be replaced by the enjoyment and excitement of being around her. However, if his thoughts of molesting her return, the physical obstacles to molesting her may have been substantially reduced by the play. In this situation a sudden decision to carry out the offence could be acted on quickly, leaving less time for intervening thoughts and feelings to prevent the offence. This is similar to the reformed smoker who has a packet of cigarettes handy. If she has to drive to the shops to purchase more cigarettes, there is a greater chance she will abstain.

It may be that the avoidance strategy chosen acts to reduce the risk of an offence, such as the decision to visit a friend, which may distract an offender from thoughts of molesting a child. In this case, the distinction between shame and guilt may be critical as the shame is likely to return once the avoidance activity has ended, whereas the guilt should pass, as the offence is no longer being contemplated. This is because shame is focussed on the relatively stable view of oneself, which is unlikely to change suddenly without reason, whereas anticipatory guilt is connected to a specific thought about a specific action, which is no longer being contemplated.

Hence, when an offender uses an avoidance strategy to neutralise a feeling of shame, the relief is likely to be only temporary, even in those cases where the avoidance strategy takes away the immediate risk of an offence. However, when the same strategy is used to neutralise a guilty feeling, the offender will not automatically feel
bad later unless he again contemplates committing an offence. Hence, a shame-based avoidance pathway for an offender may involve numerous repetitions of avoidance strategies providing temporary relief before returning to a shameful state. In such a scenario, the odds of using an avoidance strategy that increases the likelihood of an offence are much higher, due to the number of cycles. Also, such an offender may eventually choose different strategies, increasing the likelihood of an offence.

When an offender uses an attack-self strategy to neutralise shame, he imposes a punishment upon himself for being bad. This punishment may be physical such as cutting or punching himself, but will more commonly consist of mentally punishing himself through self-berating thoughts. While such a strategy is unlikely to lead directly to an offence, being aversive it is unlikely to be sustainable and the offender may change to another strategy to ease the shame.

Externalisation is likely to follow self-punishment, as the offender can rebel against his own self-inflicted punishment just as easily as he can rebel against an externally inflicted punishment. This author personally witnessed an offender generate his own resistance by making a series of responsible statements and then react against these proclaiming “It’s not fair. I’m damned if I’m going to change my life to please other people”. This occurred without any verbal input from any other group member or facilitator.

The final option for resolving guilt but not shame, is to decide not to commit the contemplated offence. Such a resolution will not eliminate shame, as it does not go to the heart of the shame, but is perfectly capable of neutralising guilt. This represents the clearest difference between shame and guilt in the crime prevention benefits of guilt over shame. In the case of guilt or shame after an offence, the decision to never
repeat the offence may also assist in resolving guilt but is unlikely to be sufficient, in
and of itself, to resolve shame.

**The Relevance of Shame and Guilt in Sexual Offending**

Shame and guilt have not been studied in depth for their relationship to either general
offending or sexual offending. Tibbetts (2003) is a rare exception to this. He found
relationships between various moral emotions and general offending behaviour, with
the general finding that pride was positively associated with offending and guilt was
negatively associated with offending. He found no clear relationship between shame
and offending, concluding the relationship was dependent upon the way shame was
measured.

It should be evident from the discussion above, that issues of shame and guilt can be
applied to sexual offending. However, the general discussion of shame and guilt may
under-emphasise their role in sexual offending. Hastings (1998) noted that sexuality
itself is often a shame-laden subject: “Sexuality is different from other issues because
of the shame that is elicited by open, non-defended conversation about sexual
behavior”.

The importance of shame and guilt issues for sexual offenders, has been noted by
Bumby, Marshall and Langton (1999). They stated that their previous arguments
against the use of a confrontational approach to treatment were consistent with
research suggesting that such an approach would induce shame and lower the chances
of successful treatment. Given society’s view of sexual offences as particularly
offensive and unforgivable, it may be that issues of shame and guilt are even more
important for sexual offenders than they are for other offenders or the general public.
Incorporating the literature on shame and guilt into theories of child sexual assault may assist in explaining some of the empirical findings that are not well explained by current theories. In particular, the findings that offenders who molest boys; who molest outside their own families; and who are younger; are more likely to reoffend.

The finding that people feel higher levels of guilt when they transgress against people they like or respect (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1995) may help explain why intrafamilial offenders are less likely to reoffend. This does not imply that extrafamilial offenders do not like their victim, merely that intrafamilial offenders have a stronger bond with their victim. In essence, degree of liking is a continuous variable and it may be expected that the amount of guilt rises with the level of fondness that the offender feels for the victim. Similarly, the finding that guilt-proneness increases with age (Orth, Robbins, & Soto, 2010) may help explain the drop-off in both general- and sexual-recidivism with increasing age.

There appears to be little in the shame and guilt literature to explain why molesting girls may generate more shame and guilt than molesting boys, but such a finding would provide more explanation than is currently theorised for the finding that offenders who molest boys are more likely to reoffend. However, there is some indirect evidence to suggest this may be the case. For example, there is evidence that people believe boys are more willing to engage in sexual activity than girls suggesting that offenders may feel less shame and guilt when they molest boys, rather than girls.

For example, Hilton, Harris and Rice (2003) found that male to female sexual violence was evaluated by high school students, as more serious than female to male sexual violence. Using meta-analytic techniques Rind, Tromovitch and Bauserman (1998) found that male victims of child sexual abuse reported less negative outcomes.
than female victims. Bauserman and Rind (1997) found that many male victims of child sexual assault rated the experience as positive. Given that many child sexual offenders have themselves been victims of child sexual assault (Craissati, McClurg, & Browne, 2002) they may be inclined to view boys as not being harmed by this.

Ward (2000) hypothesised that child sexual offenders “…most particularly those men offending against other than family members, see children in sexual terms, as wanting sex, as not being harmed by sexual contact with an adult and themselves as not really being responsible”. He argued that offenders’ implicit theories about children being sexual help explain why they would molest children. Consequently, it is possible that these same men also see sex with boys as less harmful than sex with girls, leading them to feel less guilt and shame if they molest a boy rather than a girl.

The next chapter summarises the main points from this literature review and details the methodology of the studies which form the basis of this thesis. After that, the following chapter details the results of those studies.
CHAPTER 6: METHODOLOGY

Summary of the Literature

This literature review has examined the empirical and theoretical literature on child sexual assault. While the theories underpinning child sexual assault have evolved to address weaknesses in earlier models, several of the empirical findings are still yet to be adequately explained by current theories. In particular, the findings that the gender of the victim and the relationship between the victim and offender are associated with further sexual assault charges being laid has not been adequately addressed.

The major theories which have evolved to explain child sexual assault, all partially rely on the concept of low self-control/self-regulation. This concept was found to be problematic and has been criticised in both the psychological and criminological research. In particular, it is often unclear whether the concept relates to an ability/deficit or simply a greater preference for immediate gratification. If it is the latter, then the theories need to explain why someone would have this preference.

It was found that the literature on shame and guilt with non-offenders, offers a more elegant method of conceptualising this problem, which is particularly appropriate for child sexual offenders. The following study examines the role of moral emotions in the onset and maintenance of child sexual abuse.
Rationale for the Study

The underlying rationale across all the hypotheses is to deepen the understanding of the processes involved in the onset and progression of child sexual assault, with a focus on the role of the moral emotions – shame, guilt and pride – in this process. The investigation is broken into three studies which each focus on a particular aspect. Study 1 examines whether moral emotions can help explain why men who molest boys, outside their families, or who are younger, are more likely to reoffend after being sanctioned by authorities. Study 2 then examines whether any observed differences are due to trait-based differences in moral emotions. Study 3 examines the direct effect of moral emotions on progression of child sexual assault. After the results have been analysed, further post-hoc examinations of these findings will be conducted. Before the individual hypotheses are outlined, the rationale for each of these areas will be examined.

In each study, similar hypotheses are made for both shame and guilt, with the opposite hypothesis being made for pride. While the literature review examined many of the differences between shame and guilt, there were also many similarities. Nathanson (1992) believed the same underlying affect drove both emotions and Harris (2003) believed they were the same emotion. The pathways to resolve both shame and guilt were examined and found to be similar, albeit with important differences. In contrast, Pride would be expected to have an action tendency dramatically at odds with both shame and guilt.
**Study 1: Moral Emotions, Age, Gender of Victim, and Relationship to Victim**

This study concerns the age of the offender, the gender of the victim and the relationship between offender and victim. Offenders who molest boys are more likely to reoffend after being sanctioned, as are younger offenders and offenders who molest children outside their family. These characteristics regularly feature in risk prediction instruments for sexual offenders (Grubin, 2011; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Helmus, Thornton, Hanson, & Babchishin, 2011).

While these factors have been well established empirically, as was noted earlier there is little or no theoretical explanation of these findings — what is it about being younger, molesting a boy, or someone outside their own family, that makes such an offender more likely to reoffend? This is a dilemma raised by any static factor associated with increased risk. How does an historical fact act on an offender, so as to influence a decision many years later? It would appear likely that such static factors are actually proxies for some other, stable dynamic property associated with the offender, such as deviant sexual interests (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004), a particular schema/implicit theory (Thakker, Ward, & Navathe, 2007), or some other factor.

It is hypothesised that moral emotions may help to explain these associations. Earlier it was noted that people feel less guilt about their transgressions against people they dislike or disrespect (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1995). It therefore seems likely that people will feel more guilt or shame if they transgress against a family member than an acquaintance or stranger.

The literature doesn’t directly address why offenders would feel more shame or guilt if they offend against a girl, rather than a boy. However, as noted earlier, there are
indirect findings which suggest this may be the case, such as the findings that sexual violence against males is viewed as less serious than sexual violence against females. Hilton, Harris and Rice (Hilton, Harris, & Rice, 2003) found that 16 year olds of both genders rated sexual aggression against males as less serious than sexual aggression against females. Beyers, Leonard, Mays and Rosen (2000) found that undergraduates rated sexual aggression against males as less serious than against females. They also found that male participants rated male victimisation less seriously than female participants. Bauserman and Rind (1997) found that some male victims viewed their victimisation experience as positive.

In relation to age of the offender, the literature on sexual offending clearly draws the conclusion that younger offenders are more likely to reoffend (Helmus, Thornton, Hanson, & Babchishin, 2011). In parallel, the literature on moral emotions clearly shows that the tendency to experience guilt increases with age. Hence, it is reasonable to speculate that moral emotions may play a role in explaining the link between offender age and recidivism.

Study 2: Trait-based differences in moral emotions

Study 1 examines links between SSGS-M\^2 Shame, Guilt and Pride scores, after the initial offence against a child and the gender of the victim, the age of the offender and the relationship between the offender and the victim. There are two possible

\^2 The State Shame and Guilt Scale – Modified (SSGS-M) is an adaptation of the SSGS for use with a particular point in the past, rather than in the present. It is described later in this section.
interpretations of any link between moral emotions and the above characteristics. The first is that those who molest girls, inside their own families, or who are older, may be prone to higher levels of moral emotion, than their counterpoints. The alternative possibility is that any observed differences are not stable features of those offenders – rather, they are a reaction to the situation. Similarly, older offenders may experience more shame and guilt than younger offenders, because they are more aware of the stigma attached to this behavior. These possibilities are not mutually exclusive and there may be both situational and trait contributions to any observed differences.

Study 2 focuses on participants’ tendency to experience shame, guilt and pride, by presenting participants with an identical scenario. The aim of this study is to separate the tendency to feel shame, guilt and pride, from the situational aspects of the participants’ first sexual offence against a child.

**Study 3: The Impact of Moral Emotions on Recidivism**

While Study 1 tests whether moral emotions play a role in reoffending, this is only indirectly through their association with other known predictors of recidivism. This study seeks to directly test the effect of moral emotions, after the first offence, on subsequent offending.
Hypotheses

Study 1 Hypotheses

This study aims to explore the relationship between moral emotions with victim gender, victim-offender relationship and offender age. While the latter factors have been consistently linked with sexual recidivism, these links have not been adequately explained by the current theories. If moral emotions are linked with these factors, it suggests the possibility that moral emotions may mediate the link, or part of the link between these variables and sexual recidivism.

Hypothesis 1.1

Participants will report less Shame and Guilt, and more Pride, after their first sexual offence if the victim is male.

It is hypothesised that offenders who molest boys do not feel as bad about this as offenders who molest girls. Accordingly, there is less restraint to them repeating this behaviour in the future.

Hypothesis 1.2

Intrafamilial offenders will report more Guilt and Shame, and less Pride, after their first offence than extrafamilial offenders.

Hypothesis 1.2 positions shame and guilt as restraints that act more strongly on those who offend against their own family members, and posits the SSGS-M Pride scale as the absence of that restraint (Hanson & Harris, 2001).
Hypothesis 1.3

SSGS-M Shame and Guilt scores after the first offence, will be positively associated with the participant’s age at that time, and the Pride score will be negatively associated with age.

Guilt-proneness tends to increase with age. The relationship between age and shame-proneness is less clear as it appears to decrease until about age 50, before increasing (Orth, Robbins, & Soto, 2010). Given the similarities between the Shame and Guilt scales, and their greater similarity to guilt (Hopfensitz, 2006), older offenders should score higher on the Shame and Guilt scales and lower on the Pride scale than younger offenders after their first sexual offence against a child.

Study 2 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 2.1

Participants whose first offence was against a girl will report higher levels of trait-Shame and trait-Guilt, and lower levels of trait-Pride, than participants whose first sexual offence was against a boy.

This hypothesis will help to establish whether the higher levels of moral emotion reported by those whose first sexual offence was against a girl is an enduring feature of the types of offenders who molest girls, or is a reaction to molesting a girl, rather than a boy.
Hypothesis 2.2

_Intrafamilial onset offenders will report higher levels of trait-Shame and trait-Guilt, and lower levels of trait-Pride than extrafamilial onset offenders._

This hypothesis will help to establish whether the higher levels of moral emotion reported by those whose first sexual offence was against a family member is an enduring feature of intrafamilial offenders, or is a reaction to molesting a family member, rather than someone they are not related to.

Hypothesis 2.3

_The age of participants at the time of their first sexual offence against a child, will be positively correlated with their trait Shame and trait Guilt scores. The trait Pride scores will be negatively correlated with their age at the time of their first sexual offence against a child._

The association between age and moral emotions hypothesised in Study 1, could be due to Shame- and Guilt-proneness increasing with age and Pride-proneness decreasing with age. Alternatively, the association hypothesised in Study 1 may be due to a tendency for participants who have lower levels of Shame-proneness and higher levels of Pride-proneness to offend at an earlier age. If the latter is the case, the relationship will be statistically significant, otherwise there will be no relationship between Shame-, Guilt-, and Pride-proneness and the participants’ ages at the time of their first sexual offence against a child.

Rather than comparing participants’ age at the time they completed the questionnaire (which would be merely a test of whether the scenario measures a tendency for Shame
and Guilt to increase, and Pride decrease with age) this hypothesis is investigating whether age at time of the first sexual offence against a child is reflective of some underlying characteristic of the participants, which changes with age.

**Study 3 Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 3.1**

*Participants who offended against only one victim (single-victim offenders) will have higher levels of Shame and Guilt, and lower levels of Pride, after their first offence than participants who proceeded to offend against other victims (multi-victim offenders).*

This hypothesis tests whether the level of moral emotion, after the first sexual offence against a child, restrains the offender from molesting another child.

**Hypothesis 3.2**

*Participants, who committed only one incident of child sexual abuse (single-incident offenders), will have higher levels of Shame and Guilt, and lower Pride, after that offence, than participants who proceeded to commit a second sexual offence against a child (multi-incident offenders).*

This hypothesis tests whether the level of moral emotions after the first incident, influences the likelihood of further incidents of child sexual abuse.
Hypothesis 3.3

Multi-incident offenders will have lower levels of Shame and Guilt, and higher levels of Pride, after their most recent offence, than after their first offence.

Theories surrounding cognitive distortions propose that cognitive distortions serve to reduce shame and guilt after an offence (Abel, Gore, Holland, Camp, Becker, & Rathner, 1989). It is somewhat controversial whether they have any causal role in child sexual abuse (Fisher & Beech, 2007), although treatment programs commonly include modules on cognitive distortions (Mann & Marshall, 2009), suggesting a widespread belief in a causal role.

One part of this puzzle involves whether the cognitive distortions become stronger over time, or whether they are established fairly quickly around the time of the first offence and then remain stable. If distortions become stronger over time, and if distortions are associated with shame/guilt, then shame and guilt should reduce as the number of offences increase. Hence, this hypothesis, by investigating changes in moral emotions over time, has implications for theories of cognitive distortions.
Method

Participants

The data for this thesis comes from a confidential questionnaire given to 135 Queensland male prisoners who had been convicted of sexual offences against children. Participation was purely voluntary and no inducements were offered for participation.

Characteristics of Participants

A total of 136 participants consented to take part in the research and completed some, or all, of the questionnaire and/or consented to researchers accessing their criminal history from official records. Due to methodological issues imposed by ethical constraints, it is not possible to know how many people refused to participate, but it is likely the refusal rate was above 50%, as more than 300 potential participants were initially identified by Queensland Corrective Services.

Many participants failed to complete various items on the questionnaire. This may be a consequence of the large size of the questionnaire, the low literacy levels of the participants and/or numerous other potential causes. Additionally, many questions are not applicable to all participants – such as questions pertaining to repeat offending by those who have only offended once. Consequently the number of participants in any particular test is usually less than the total number of participants. Unless specifically noted, all results include the maximum number of participants who validly completed the various items.
There were 110 participants who completed the parts of the questionnaire relevant to this thesis. Their mean age was 45.36 years (SD = 12.24), ranging from 20 to 84. In contrast, the mean age at date of first admitted sexual contact with a child (N = 100, SD = 32.07) was 32.07 years, ranging from 11 to 79.

Subjects were generally poorly educated and 45% of subjects left school during Years 8 to 10, with smaller numbers in each of the categories above and below that. In total, 64% of the subjects had not completed Year 12. This is seen in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Highest level of Education attained

![Bar chart showing the highest level of education attained by the subjects. The chart indicates that the majority of subjects left school during Years 8 to 10, with smaller numbers in each of the categories above and below that. In total, 64% of the subjects had not completed Year 12.](chart.png)
The mean sentence length (see Figure 2 below) being currently served by subjects (N = 109) was 95.08 months (SD = 70.45), ranging from 2 months to an indeterminate sentence (which was coded as 300 or 360 months). This distribution was highly skewed with 83.8% of subjects serving a sentence of 126 months or less.

**Figure 2**

Official Sentence Length

Overall, 48% of respondents (n = 46) had an official record of prior non-sexual offences and 31% of respondents (n = 29) had an official record of sexual offences, prior to their current conviction.
Measures

State Shame and Guilt Scale-Modified

As noted earlier, the measurement of moral emotions has been problematic (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Some measures have failed to separate shame and guilt, and others have mislabelled the concepts. Additionally, most attempts to measure shame and guilt have focussed on measuring the tendency to experience shame and guilt as a general trait, not in response to a particular situation.

As the only validated instrument known to measure state shame and guilt as conceptualised in this thesis (Robins, Noftle, & Tracy, 2007), the State Shame and Guilt Scale (SSGS; Tangney & Dearing, 2002) was selected for this purpose. The SSGS was devised to measure moral emotions in the present tense, so it was modified to ask about moral emotions at a particular point in time. The modified version is referred to as the State Shame and Guilt Scale-Modified (SSGS-M) and this modification is described later in this section. A copy of this instrument is in the Appendix on page 254.

The studies also require a measure of proneness to moral emotions. Without such a measure it is difficult to know whether differences in participants’ reaction to a particular situation is a feature of that situation or a pre-existing characteristic of those participants. For example, it is hypothesised that moral emotions can help explain why those who molest boys are more likely to reoffend after that offence. It could be that molesting a girl creates higher levels of shame and/or guilt than molesting a boy. However, such a finding could also be caused by the type of person who molests a boy rather than a girl – molesters of boys may be less prone to shame and/or guilt than those who molest boys.
While the Test of Self Conscious Affect (TOSCA) could have been used for this, it has the problem (noted earlier on page 97) of using much less serious moral violations, rendering it not directly comparable with the SSGS-M measures involving child molestation. Hence, while the ratio of shame to guilt in the TOSCA could be compared with the same ratio in the SSGS-M subscales, the absolute scores could not be meaningfully compared. Consideration was given to including a version of the TOSCA in this study alongside the SSGS-M, but was rejected due to space demands in the large questionnaire, of which these studies formed only a small part. An additional problem is that while the participants have all committed child sexual offences, the seriousness of their offences vary. Consequently, variations in their levels of shame, guilt and pride, may be a reflection of the seriousness of their offence.

To counterbalance this, all participants were asked to complete the SSGS-M in relation to a hypothetical scenario where they ran another car off the road. This scenario appears in the Appendix on page 256. The scenario was designed to create an event which serves several purposes. Firstly, the participants should be readily able to imagine themselves participating in this event. That is, the situation needs to be within their range of experience or imagined experience. A ‘road rage’ driving example was selected as an experience of becoming upset while driving is a fairly common experience. Secondly, the scenario needed to be fairly serious. In this case, forcing another car off the road could have potentially fatal consequences, while still originating from a common phenomena. Finally, the scenario needed to be non-sexual, so it would not be affected by any sexual scripts that participants may have. The scenario selected was chosen because it met these three criteria better than any
proposed alternatives. The participants’ responses to the scenario will be described as trait-Shame, trait-Guilt and trait-Pride.

The SSGS-M consists of five items for each of the three subscales (Shame, Guilt and Pride). Each item is rated on a five point Likert scale; hence each subscale has a range from 5 to 25. Some sample items from the SSGS-M are: “I wanted to sink into the floor and disappear” (Shame); “I felt good about myself” (Pride); and “I felt like apologising, confessing” (Guilt).

The SSGS-M was administered up to five times to each participant; covering their reactions to: contemplating their first sexual abuse of a child; in the aftermath of that offence; after their second offence; after their most recent offence; and their likely response to a hypothetical scenario where they ran a car off the road. As noted earlier, this latter measure is designed to measure the tendency to experience shame, guilt and pride, through providing one identical scenario for all subjects. The psychometric properties of the SSGS-M will be investigated in the results section on page 141.

Reoffending

Reoffending was measured using both official records and self-report from the participants. For the purposes of this thesis, reoffending refers only to sexual offences against children, not any other form of offence.

An examination of the participant’s criminal history allowed them to be separated into those who had never previously been convicted for child sexual offences and those who had. While this is not a perfect measure of reoffending – the ‘non-recidivists’ are
better described as ‘first time offenders’, as they have not had an opportunity to reoffend, given that at the time they completed the questionnaire, they were incarcerated for their first offence(s). However, it should serve as a reasonable proxy for recidivism, given the generally low recidivism rates for sexual offending. For ease of expression, this thesis will define those who have been sanctioned at least twice for child sexual assault as recidivists, while those with only one such conviction will be referred to as non-recidivists.

Low Self-Control

Low self-control was measured using the measure devised by Grasmick, Tittle, Bursik and Arneklev (1993). This 24-item scale was designed to measure the six facets of self-control hypothesised by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990). This instrument has demonstrated good predictive validity across a range of studies and appears to be the accepted attitudinal measure of self-control in criminological research (Piquero, 2008). A copy of this instrument appears at Appendix C on page 257.

Delinquency

The participants in this thesis also completed the self-report delinquency questions from the National Youth Survey (Elliott, Huizinga, & Morse, 1986). This instrument asks participants to report whether or not they had ever engaged in a range of delinquent behaviours. A copy of these questions appears at Appendix D on page 259.
**Procedure**

Initially, subjects were recruited through personal approaches by Queensland Corrective Services staff, although later subjects were approached directly by researchers. The current study is a subset of a larger study involving these men.

Participants who agreed to meet with the researchers were taken to a private room where they were given details about the purposes of the study and information about confidentiality. They were given an information form, which is attached at Appendix E on page 261. This information form outlines the rationale for the study, what they are being asked to do, how their confidentiality will be maintained and a statement that their participation is purely voluntary – information about participation/non-participation was not conveyed to Queensland Corrective Services. The contents of this form were also explained verbally to each participant.

Participants were informed that the study aimed to gain information about men who had sexually assaulted children. The research method involved a questionnaire and a private interview. It was explained that the project was independent of Queensland Corrective Services and no information would be published in any format that could identify individual participants.

Participants who agreed to take part in the study were given a consent form that requested separate consent for each part of the study. This included the questionnaire, re-administration of the questionnaire for test-retest reliability, individual taped interviews, willingness to be re-contacted for follow-up in future and access to their prison records. The consent form is at Appendix F on page 267.

The studies were devised so as to maintain the maximum possible confidentiality for participants. Participant names were not recorded on the database used to gather
results, nor on the actual questionnaire that participants filled out. Instead, these records were linked by the participants’ Correctional Identification Number. Consent forms with participants’ names were stored separately to their personal information. Participants were informed about the limits to confidentiality, specifically if they disclose that someone is still being hurt, that their own safety is at risk, or if they provide identifying information about a previously undetected offence.

This ethical protocol was approved by Griffith University, protocol number CCJ/06/06/HREC. Participants were informed they could obtain feedback about the outcomes of the studies if they desired. Contact details of the principal researchers were provided.

The questionnaires were administered by students who are involved in a range of studies based on this questionnaire. Most questionnaires were filled out by participants without assistance, but some participants (generally with poor literacy) had the questionnaire read to them by a researcher. Ethical approval for these studies, was granted by Griffith University and Queensland Corrective Services.
CHAPTER 7: RESULTS

Psychometric Properties of SSGS-M

This section examines the psychometric properties of the SSGS-M as it was used in this thesis. This is done in two parts, the first investigating its use as a trait-based measure of moral emotions and the second its use as a state-based measure of moral emotions.

Psychometric Properties of SSGS-M Hypothetical Scenario as a Trait-based Measure of Shame, Guilt and Pride

The SSGS-M was administered to all subjects in relation to their reactions to a hypothetical scenario where they ran a car off the road. Table 2 below shows the correlations between the three trait measures on the SSGS-M. Of note is the very large correlation between the Shame\(^3\) and Guilt scales. While measures of shame- and guilt-proneness generally correlate with each other, this is usually in the magnitude of \(r = .5\) (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). This suggests that the instrument does not differentiate between shame and guilt with the current sample. Another interesting finding is that the trait-Pride scale demonstrates a degree of independence from both

\(\text{__________________________}\)

\(^3\) For clarity, throughout this thesis, when referring to the Shame, Guilt and Pride subscales of the SSGS-M, their first letter will be capitalized. When referring to shame, guilt and pride as concepts, they will not contain capital letters.
the trait-Shame and trait-Guilt scales, rather than being the polar opposite of one or both of them.

**Table 2**

**Correlation of SSGS-M Trait Measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Shame</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.81**</td>
<td>-.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Guilt</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>-.48**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pride</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. *p < .05. **p < .01. N varies between 108 and 112.

If the SSGS-M trait measures are an accurate measure of the tendency to experience shame, guilt and pride, then they should predict behaviours associated with those characteristics. The participants answered a series of questions about their interview with the police after their most recent conviction for child sexual assault. The following questions should be associated with shame, guilt or pride (the hypothesised emotion is in brackets after the question, along with the justification for this classification).

1. Did you feel guilty about the offence? (Guilt, Shame – feeling bad);
2. Were you ashamed about having committed the offence? (Guilt, Shame – feeling bad);
3. Did you feel you needed to talk to someone about what you had done? (Guilt – confession);
4. Did you want to get it off your chest? (Guilt – confession);

5. Did you think you would have a sense of relief if you told? (Guilt – confession);

6. Did you admit the offence? (Guilt – confession, inverse relationship with Shame – denial);

7. Was the police interviewer aggressive towards you? (Shame – externalisation);

8. Did the police interviewer cooperate with you during the interview? (Inverse relationship with shame – the opposite of externalisation);

9. Did you have a legal advisor present? (Shame – denial, externalisation);

10. Did you try to get help before the police first spoke to you? (Guilt – confession).

These questions were answered on a seven point Likert scale, except Question 10, which was coded yes/no based on answers to other questions about help seeking.

While some questions appear dichotomous (e.g., Q6 and 9) a number of participants answered with a response other than 1 or 7. Accordingly, the analyses are conducted using correlation and t-tests respectively.

In a similar manner, a measure of low self-control (Grasmick, Tittle, Bursik, & Arneklev, 1993) was administered to all subjects. This should be correlated with trait-Pride and inversely associated with trait-Guilt.

The section below discusses the relationships between the above questions and the trait Shame, Guilt and Pride scales of the SSGS-M. The correlations for Questions 1 – 9 are shown in
Table 3 below.
Table 3

Correlation between Selected Questions and Trait Shame, Guilt and Pride

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Trait Shame</th>
<th>Trait Guilt</th>
<th>Trait Pride</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Feel guilty</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>-.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ashamed</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>-.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Talk about it</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Get it off your chest</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Relief if told</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>-.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Admit</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Police aggressive</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Police cooperative</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Legal advisor present</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.22*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. *p < .05. **p < .01. N varies between 99 and 109.

Questions 1 and 2 enquire directly about feelings of guilt and shame. The trait-Shame and trait-Guilt scales are both positively correlated with these questions. Similarly, the trait-Pride scale is negatively correlated with questions about shame and guilt. This is similar to the problems with shame and guilt measures noted by Tangney and Dearing (2002) – participants do not readily distinguish shame and guilt when asked directly about them, so they respond to questions about either in a similar manner. Not surprisingly the responses to Questions 1 and 2 were strongly correlated with each other, r(105) = .66, p < .01.
Questions 3 to 6 address confession, the desire to admit what they had done, which is a feature of guilt, but not shame in the literature discussed earlier. These questions should intuitively be related to guilt, as they tap into the construct of confession as a way of resolving the bad feeling. There is a significant finding for the trait-Shame, trait-Guilt and trait-Pride scales (an inverse relationship for Pride) on Question 3 and there is a small trend in a similar direction for Pride in Question 4 and trait-Shame and trait-Guilt in Question 5, but this is clouded by the lack of any significant relationship in Question 6. Generally, the concept correlates positively with Shame and Guilt, and negatively with Pride, although only about half of these relationships are statistically significant.

The next group of questions concern the subjects’ views of the police interviewer. Shame-prone subjects should be more likely to view the interviewer as hostile and be more likely to have legal representation, due to an attack-other pathway. This is not to suggest that all subjects who engaged legal representation are using an ‘attack-other’ strategy, just that for those who are using such a strategy, legal representation is a good method of attack. Consequently, it should correlate with shame. While there is no relationship to the trait-Shame or trait-Guilt scales to this construct, there appears to be a consistent, significant relationship with the trait-Pride scale.

Question 10, which asked about help-seeking behaviour prior to police contact, should conceptually, be related to guilt. However, it was not significantly related to trait-Shame, t(99) = -0.61, p = .54; trait-Guilt, t(98) = -1.10, p = .28; or trait-Pride, t(97) = -0.96, p = .34.

Finally, the low self-control measure was moderately related to trait-Pride, r(98) = .45, p < .01; but not trait-Shame, r(100) = -.02, p = .82; or trait-Guilt, r(100) = -.12, p
It was suggested earlier in this thesis, that low self-control may be better conceptualised as an absence of restraint. This would suggest that the trait-Pride scale may be measuring a tendency towards detachment – an absence of shame or guilt, rather than shame.

Taken as a whole, these findings suggest that the trait-Shame, trait-Guilt and trait-Pride scales tap into moral emotions, but it is unclear exactly what they are measuring. The trait-Shame and Guilt scales may be measuring guilt, as they are related to a question about needing to talk to someone about their offence, and relief if they did, suggesting a drive towards confession. Confusingly, they were not related to ‘Did you want to get it off your chest’ or ‘Did you admit the offence’. This could be a statistical anomaly as the confession questions are all significantly correlated with each other as shown in Table 4 below. With the exception of one correlation, all were moderate or large in magnitude.

### Table 4

**Correlation between Confession Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did you feel you needed to talk to someone about what you had done?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you want to get it off your chest?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you think you would have a sense of relief if you told?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Did you admit the offence?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.
Combining these four confession items into a confession scale allows an overall examination of the relationship between the trait-Shame and trait-Guilt scales and confession. This shows that both trait-Shame, \( r(100) = .23, p = .02 \), and trait-Guilt, \( r(100) = .24, p = .02 \), are associated with a desire to confess what they had done. Adding the two scales together (trait-Shame + Guilt) produces a similar result, \( r(100) = .25, p = .01 \).

In contrast, the trait-Pride scale may be tapping into shame or detachment, although this is far from definitive. It may be related to an attack-other pathway and has elements of denial, suggestive of shame, along with a moderate association with low self-control. It was noted earlier that low self-control could be conceived as a lack of restraint, similar to the concept of detachment. Consequently, the use of the SSGS-M as a measure of shame-, guilt- and pride-proneness, is not clear-cut. However, it does offer some insight into the moral emotions of the subjects. Interpretation of the SSGS-M trait scales will be continued in the Discussion section of this thesis.

A small subset (\( N = 25 \)) of participants agreed to complete the questionnaire a second time for the purposes of test-retest reliability. The retest was completed a mean of 128.33 days later (SD = 68.54), with a range from 46 to 219 days.

Test-retest reliability for the trait-Shame and trait-Pride scales were fair, \( r(17) = .58, p = .01 \) and \( r(17) = .62, p < .01 \), respectively. However, the trait-Guilt scale had extremely poor test-retest reliability, \( r(17) = .23, p = .38 \). The combined trait-Shame + Guilt scale fared in between these extremes, \( r(17) = .43, p = .09 \). The next section investigates the properties of the state-based scales of the SSGS-M.
Psychometric Properties of SSGS-M as a State-Based measure of Shame, Guilt and Pride

Internal reliabilities for the SSGS-M scales range from modest to good, with correlations of very large or nearly perfect magnitude. These are displayed in Table 5, Table 6 and Table 7 below.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability of SSGS-M Shame Scale</th>
<th>Valid N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1st Offence</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 1st Offence</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 2nd Offence</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Most Recent Offence</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability of SSGS Guilt Scale</th>
<th>Valid N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1st Offence</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 1st Offence</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 2nd Offence</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Most Recent Offence</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

Reliability of SSGS-M Pride Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>Valid N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Cronbach’s Alpha)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1st Offence</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 1st Offence</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 2nd Offence</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Most Recent Offence</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test-retest reliabilities were reasonable for Shame, $r(17) = .77$ ($p < .01$) and Guilt, $r(17) = .77$ ($p < .01$) but marginal for Pride, $r(17) = .51$, $p = .04$.

As noted earlier, an important function of a tool for measuring moral emotions is the ability to independently measure shame and guilt. The correlations between the Shame and Guilt scales of the SSGS-M are shown below in Table 8 below.

Table 8

Correlation of SSGS-M Shame and Guilt Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Correlation (Pearson’s r)</th>
<th>Valid N</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1st Offence</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 1st Offence</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 2nd Offence</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Most Recent Offence</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen in each case, there is a very large magnitude of correlation between the Shame and Guilt scales. There are a range of potential reasons for this high level of correlation, including measurement error, vagaries of the current subjects or methodology, a fusing of shame and guilt (Lewis, 1971), and the possibility that high levels of shame and guilt may function differently to the milder levels commonly studied. Theoretical explanations for this finding will be discussed later in this thesis.

The earlier examination of the trait-based measure of moral emotions compared the scales to a confession scale, comprised of four questions that directly address the desire to confess. It is possible to compare this scale to the Shame and Guilt scales for participants whose current offence was their first conviction for sexual offences, as the SSGS-M scales after their first offence, relate to the same offences they were questioned about by police. This shows that that both Shame, $r(61) = .34, p < .01$, and Guilt, $r(61) = .27, p = .03$, were related to confession. Adding the two scales together produces a similar result, $r(61) = .31, p = .01$.

Measurement error cannot be discounted in the current studies. The modal response for both Shame and Guilt was the maximum possible score. This is illustrated for the Shame scale after the first offence, in Figure 3 below. The result for the Guilt scale is similar and the result for Pride is inverse, with the modal response being the lowest possible score.
This suggests a ceiling effect may be in operation. This is not surprising, given that the SSGS was developed for use with the general public, to measure shame and guilt arising from everyday occurrences. Given the current views about child sexual abuse, it is not surprising that these extreme scores have been recorded.

In contrast, the distribution of trait-Shame and trait-Guilt are much less skewed, while the trait-Pride scale is notably skewed. These are shown at Figure 4, Figure 5 and Figure 6 below.
Figure 4

Distribution of Trait Shame Scores

- Mean = 15.16
- Std. Dev. = 6.025
- N = 110
Figure 5

Distribution of Trait Guilt Scores

- Mean = 17.29
- Std. Dev. = 8.002
- N = 199
It is unlikely that the group who obtained the extreme scores are an homogeneous group; rather there are degrees of shame and guilt within those subjects which are not captured by this instrument. Methodology also cannot be ruled out as a contributing factor. Subjects in these studies were asked about events which occurred years ago, often many years. It may be that their recollection is not subtle enough to distinguish between feelings of shame and guilt.

Given the difficulties in separating shame from guilt with the SSGS-M Shame and Guilt scales, an examination was made of the relationship between the Pride scale and the Shame and Guilt scales. This shows correlations in the expected negative
direction, but at a much more modest level, ranging from a low of $r = -.29$ to a high of $r = -.56$. These results are shown in Table 9 and Table 10 below.

Table 9

**Correlation of SSGS-M Pride and Shame Scales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Valid N</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Pearson’s r)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1st Offence</td>
<td>-.41</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 1st Offence</td>
<td>-.56</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 2nd Offence</td>
<td>-.48</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Most Recent Offence</td>
<td>-.52</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10

**Correlation of SSGS-M Pride and Guilt Scales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Correlation (Pearson’s r)</th>
<th>Valid N</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1st Offence</td>
<td>-.29</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 1st Offence</td>
<td>-.52</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 2nd Offence</td>
<td>-.54</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Most Recent Offence</td>
<td>-.54</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Pride scale demonstrated a degree of independence from both Shame and Guilt. Pride is generally conceptualised as the opposite of shame or guilt (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). The TOSCA includes Alpha Pride and Beta Pride scales to denote the
conceptual opposites of shame and guilt respectively. Alpha Pride is a globalised form of pride, sometimes called ‘hubris’ whereas Beta Pride is more specific and relates directly to the person’s actions. It is not clear whether the Pride scale of the SSGS is intended to be the opposite of shame or guilt but, as it has been used here, it demonstrates a degree of independence from both, at a level not dissimilar from what is usually achieved by shame and guilt scales on the TOSCA. It is possible that some of the expected differences between the Shame and Guilt scales may be captured by the independence of the Pride scale.

An examination of the items of the Pride scale may help shed some light on these differences. These items are:

1. I felt good about myself;
2. I felt worthwhile or valuable;
3. I felt capable or useful;
4. I felt proud; and
5. I felt pleased.

Items 2 and 3 are concerned with self-evaluation. In contrast, items 1, 4 and 5 seem more neutral with regards to self-evaluation, but focus on positive affect. Consequently, it is possible that the Pride scale may be capturing two separate concepts – feeling good and a positive self-evaluation.

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the Pride scale after the first offence to investigate this possibility. The strongest pattern of correlations was consistent with this hypothesis, as shown in Table 11 below.
Table 11

Correlation of Pride Items (after first offence)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I felt good about myself</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>-.32**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I felt worthwhile or valuable</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I felt capable or useful</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I felt proud</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.76**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I felt pleased</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. *p < .05. **p < .01. N varies between 97 and 98.

The factor analysis showed that this scale was best represented as a single factor, which explained 54.75% of the variance and included all five items. The second component had an eigenvalue of 0.91, less than the minimum value of 1 recommended by Pallant (2007). However, given the exploratory nature of this investigation and the small number of items, the second factor was examined further.

The second factor explained a further 18.14% of the variance and a rotation divided the Pride scale into the two hypothesised factors, as shown in Table 12 below. Table 13 is also included below for information, as recommended by Pallant (2007).

Consequently, it cannot be definitively stated that the Pride scale is measuring a singular construct. Rather, it is possible that it is composed of two components – feeling good and a positive view of the self.
Table 12

Pattern Matrix, Pride Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt pleased</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt proud</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt good about myself</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt worthwhile or valuable</td>
<td></td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt capable or useful</td>
<td></td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13

Structure Matrix, Pride Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt pleased</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt proud</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt good about myself</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt worthwhile or valuable</td>
<td></td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt capable or useful</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This section outlined the scales, which are used in the studies and described their psychometric properties. Of particular note is the failure of Shame and Guilt scales to independently measure shame and guilt, and the unclear composition of the Pride
scale. The next section tests the hypotheses, commencing with an investigation of the relationship between moral emotions and the three empirical findings that have been least well explained by current theories of child sexual offending.
Primary Analyses

Study 1 Results: Moral Emotions, Age, Gender of Victim, and Relationship to Victim

Study 1 hypotheses relate to the relationship between moral emotions and offender age, victim gender and offender-victim relationship. The finding that these factors are associated with a higher likelihood of reoffending was also observed in the current study, as these factors were all related to reappearing in court for a child sexual offence after having been sanctioned previously for such an offence.

A Pearson Chi-Square analysis reveals a significant relationship between sexual recidivism and the gender of the first victim, $\chi^2 (84) = 12.26, p < .01$. That is, those whose first victim was male were more likely to be reconvicted for child sexual assault. The relationship between victim-offender relationship and sexual recidivism trended in the expected direction, but fell just short of significance, $\chi^2 (85) = 3.70, p < .06$. Similarly, recidivists were significantly younger at the time of their first sexual assault against a child (M = 24.15 years, SD = 11.19) than non-recidivists (M = 35.95 years, SD = 13.71), $t(83) = 3.85, p < .01$.

To avoid issues with multiple hypothesis testing and covariance, the relationship between these factors and moral emotions will be examined jointly using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). Pallant (2007) recommended testing for a number of assumptions before proceeding to analyse the MANOVA results. The following section examines these assumptions.
In regards to sample size, Pallant advised, “You need to have more cases in each cell than you have dependent variables” (p. 277). This assumption is just met, as there are only 5 cases where an intrafamilial victim was male, although all other cells have at least 22 cases.

Pallant further advised “MANOVA works best when the dependent variables are only moderately correlated … Correlations up around .8 or .9 are reason for concern” (p. 282). As noted earlier, the correlation between the Shame and Guilt scales, after the first offence was $r = .9$. Following Pallant’s advice, the Shame and Guilt scales were collapsed into a single scale, formed by adding the two results together. This scale is referred to as “Shame + Guilt”.

Pallant noted that MANOVA is “reasonably robust to modest violations of normality” (pp. 277-278) and that a sample size of at least 20 in each cell is enough to ensure ‘robustness’. However, in this case, as noted earlier, there is not a sample size of 20 in each cell, nor is there normality. Table 14 and Table 15 below, show that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic is significant in three of four tests, for victim-offender relationship and two out of four tests for victim gender, meaning that the assumption of normality has been violated. This is visually evident from earlier histograms of Shame, Guilt and Pride, such as Figure 3 above.
### Table 14

Test of Normality – Victim-offender relationship and moral emotions after first offence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to Victim</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt After 1st Offence</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrafamilial</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride after 1st Offence</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrafamilial</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Lilliefors Significance Correction

### Table 15

Test of Normality – Victim gender and moral emotions after first offence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victim Gender</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trait Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Pride</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Lilliefors Significance Correction
Pallant (2007) also advised checking for outliers, as MANOVA is particularly sensitive to outliers. She recommended calculating a Mahalanobis distance for this purpose. In this case, the Mahalanobis maximum difference for Shame + Guilt and Pride after the first offence (N = 96) is 11.61 (SD = .02). This is less than the critical value of 13.82 quoted by Pallant for two dependent variables, consequently outliers are not an issue for the purposes of a MANOVA.

To test for the assumption of linearity, Pallant (2007) recommended a visual inspection of a matrix of scatterplots. This matrix appears below in Table 16 and does not show any obvious evidence of non-linearity.

The final assumption suggested by Pallant is to test for homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices. The result for this sample, Box’s M(9, 1436) = 25.55, p = .006, shows that the significance is larger than .001, indication this assumption has not been violated.
In summary, while these tests reveal that most of the assumptions required for a MANOVA have been met, the assumptions of normality and multicollinearity have
been violated. While the latter is easily fixed by combining the Shame and Guilt scales as mentioned earlier, the former is not so easily resolved. Consequently, the results of the MANOVA should be viewed with caution. To allay these cautions somewhat, Hypotheses 1.1 – 1.3 will be separately analysed using t-tests and correlations after the MANOVA, to verify the results obtained.

The initial step in conducting a MANOVA is to apply Levene’s test of equality of error variances. These results are shown below in Table 17.

### Table 17
Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>7.18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Design: Intercept + Participant age + Child gender + Relationship + Child gender * Relationship

This significant result shows that the assumption of equality of variance has been violated for both Shame + Guilt and Pride. Pallant cited authorities suggesting that a more conservative alpha of .025 or .01 is called for. Accordingly, this study will use an alpha of .025 for the main multivariate tests. Table 18 below shows the main multivariate tests.
### Table 18

Main Multivariate Analysis (Wilk’s Lambda)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>219.33*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant age</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>3.94*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child gender</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>1.20*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>.306</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>3.89*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Gender *</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>1.48*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Exact statistic

**Design:** Intercept + Participant age + Child gender + Relationship + Child gender * Relationship

This shows significant effects for participant age and victim-offender relationship, but not for the gender of the child or an interaction between gender and relationship.

Having found these significant effects, the next step is an analysis of the between-subjects effects. These results are shown in
Table 19 below. Pallant (2007) advised using a higher level of alpha to control for multiple hypothesis testing inherent in this type of test. Consequently, this part of the analysis uses an alpha level of .01.
Table 19

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>2256.04</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>564.00</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80.97</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>14820.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14820.51</td>
<td>113.86</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>1557.56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1557.56</td>
<td>118.83</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant’s age</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>59.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59.52</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>97.77</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>97.77</td>
<td>7.46</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s gender</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>47.53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>47.53</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>31.54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31.54</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>1024.48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1024.48</td>
<td>7.87</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>23.96</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23.96</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s gender *</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>300.06</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>300.06</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>11585.08</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>130.169</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>1166.57</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>13.107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>139511.00</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>8113.000</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>13841.117</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>1490.436</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[a\] R Squared = .163 (Adjusted R Squared = .125)

\[b\] R Squared = .217 (Adjusted R Squared = .182)

Only two significant relationships were found. The participants’ age at the time of their first offence was associated with Pride after their first offence and the
relationship between the offender and child was associated with Shame + Guilt after the first offence. The next section uses these results to test the first three hypotheses.

**Hypothesis 1.1**

This hypothesis proposed that participants felt less Shame and Guilt, and more Pride, after their first sexual offence, if the victim was male. These results are shown in Table 20 below.

**Table 20**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>Victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>31.22</td>
<td>38.75</td>
<td>12.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Guilt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>10.52</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of the MANOVA results failed to find any significant relationship between either Shame + Guilt or Pride and the gender of the victim after controlling for other effects. Consequently, Hypothesis 1.1 was not supported by this data. This does not allow a conclusion that there is no association between moral emotions after the first offence and the gender of the victim – a separate t-test shows significant differences for both Shame + Guilt ($t(94) = -2.83, p < .01$) and Pride ($t(94) = 2.98, p$
<.01). However, the results of the MANOVA suggest this may be an artefact of another relationship.

Hypothesis 1.2

This hypothesis proposed that intrafamilial offenders felt more Shame and Guilt, and less Pride after their first offence, than extrafamilial offenders. These results are presented in Table 21 below.

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shame + Guilt and Pride, by relationship between offender and victim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra-familial Victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of the MANOVA results support the hypothesis that intrafamilial offenders would report significantly more Shame + Guilt, after their initial offence, than extrafamilial offenders. However, the Pride scores were not significantly different for intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders. Consequently, this hypothesis is supported for Shame + Guilt, but not for Pride.
Again, due to the concerns about violated assumptions underpinning MANOVA, a t-test was conducted. This showed significant associations for both Shame + Guilt ($t(93) = 3.45, p < .01$) and Pride ($t(93) = -3.28, p < .01$), partially contradicting the MANOVA analysis, as these findings would still be significant after a Bonferroni adjustment.

**Hypothesis 1.3**

It was proposed that SSGS-M Shame and Guilt scores after the first offence, would be positively associated with the age of the offender at the time of that offence and that Pride scores would be negatively correlated with age. The MANOVA analysis (shown earlier) supports this hypothesis for Pride, but not Shame + Guilt. A correlational analysis confirms this result for both Pride, $r(96) = -.37, p < .01$, and Shame + Guilt, $r(95) = 0.19, p > .05$.

**Study 2 results**

Whereas Hypotheses 1.1 – 1.3 examined the relationship between moral emotions and factors that are associated with recidivism (victim gender, offender age and victim-offender relationship), the following hypotheses 2.1 – 2.3 examine the association between these factors and the tendency to feel moral emotions. In a similar manner to the Study 1 hypotheses, these hypotheses will be examined using multivariate analysis of variance and will follow a similar procedure, checking the assumptions behind MANOVA before proceeding to the actual analysis.
The assumption in regards to sample size is just met, for the same reasons as earlier.

A similar issue arises with the high correlation between the trait-Shame and trait-Guilt scales, \( r(111) = .81, p < .01 \). Similar to the Study 1 analysis, the trait-Shame and trait-Guilt scales were collapsed into a single scale, formed by adding the two results together. This scale is referred to as “trait-Shame + Guilt”.

Pallant (2007) advised checking for outliers, as MANOVA is particularly sensitive to outliers. She recommended calculating a Mahalanobis distance for this purpose. In this case, the Mahalanobis maximum difference for Trait Shame + Guilt and Trait Pride (\( N = 108 \)) is 32.79 (SD = 3.40). This is greater than the critical value of 13.82 quoted by Pallant for two dependent variables, consequently there is a problem with outliers. Sorting the cases by their Mahalanobis distances revealed one participant had a Mahalanobis distance of 32.79. This was the only participant whose score exceeded the critical value of 13.82. Consequently, that participant will be removed from this analysis. Repeating the above test with that outlier removed reveals an acceptable Mahalanobis maximum difference (\( N = 107 \)) of 8.32 (SD = 1.95).

While the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic indicates the Trait Shame + Guilt scale does not breach the normality requirement for victim-offender relationship the Trait Pride Scale appears to breach this requirement for both intrafamilial and extrafamilial victims. This is shown in Table 22 below.

For victim gender, the Trait Shame + Guilt scale breaches the normality requirement for female victims, while the Trait Pride scale breaches the normality requirements for both male and female victims. These results are shown in Table 23 below.
### Table 22

**Test of Normality – Victim-offender relationship and trait moral emotions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victim-Offender relationship</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trait Shame + Guilt Intrafamilial</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrafamilial</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Pride</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrafamilial</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

### Table 23

**Test of Normality – Victim gender and trait moral emotions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victim Gender</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trait Shame + Guilt Male</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Pride</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction
The next check recommended by Pallant (2007) is to check for linearity. As before this is done by examining the matrix of scatterplots in Table 24 below. Again, there is no obvious non-linearity, so this criteria is met.

Table 24
Matrix of Scatterplots
In a similar fashion to the earlier MANOVA, the assumption of normality and multicollinearity have been violated. An outlier was removed as described above. Similar to the earlier example, the Shame and Guilt scales have been collapsed into a single scale. Consequently, as done with Study 1 results, the hypotheses will also be tested with t-tests and correlations to verify the results. As earlier, the initial step in conducting the MANOVA is to apply Levene’s test of equality of error variances. These results are shown in Table 25 below.

Table 25
Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trait Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Pride</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Design: Intercept + Participant age + Child gender + Relationship + Child gender * Relationship

Neither of these results are significant, indicating that the assumption of equality of variance has not been violated.

Table 26 below shows the main multivariate tests.

Table 26
Main Multivariate Analysis (Wilk’s Lambda)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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As none of the main effects were significant, an analysis of between subjects effects is not warranted. The next section formally examines Hypotheses 2.1 – 2.3.

**Hypothesis 2.1**

The multivariate analysis of variance, above, revealed no significant differences in trait-Shame + Guilt or trait-Pride scores between offenders whose first victim was male or female. As with the Study 1 results, due to concerns about violations of the assumptions needed for MANOVA, a separate analysis was conducted using t-tests. These tests were conducted on the same sample as the MANOVA, that is with the outlier removed. This replicates the finding of no significant effect for trait-Shame + Guilt, t(95) = -0.85, p = .40, but reveals a significant finding for trait-Pride, t(95) = 2.06, p = .04, albeit not one that would survive a Bonferroni adjustment for multiple hypothesis testing.
This would suggest that participants whose first offence was against a boy do not have significantly different scores on trait moral emotion measures than those whose first offence was against a girl. These results are shown in Table 27 below.

**Table 27**

**Trait-Shame, Guilt and Pride, by gender of first victim**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>Victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>30.60</td>
<td>32.83</td>
<td>9.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>9.36</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis 2.2**

Similar to the previous hypothesis, the MANOVA revealed no significant differences in the level of trait-Shame + Guilt or trait-Pride between intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders. The confirmatory t-test revealed a similar result with no significant differences for trait-Shame + Guilt, t(94) = 1.19, p = .24, or trait-Pride, t(94) = -0.95, p = .35, between intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders. That is, the intrafamilial offenders appear to be no more, or no less prone to Shame + Guilt or Pride than the extrafamilial offenders.
Again, this suggests that the higher Shame + Guilt, felt by participants after they molested a member of their family is not likely to be a stable feature of that group of offenders. These results are in Table 28 below.

**Table 28**

**Shame, Guilt, and Pride Proneness, for Intrafamilial and Extrafamilial Offenders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intra-familial</td>
<td>Intra-familial</td>
<td>Extra-familial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>Victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>33.50</td>
<td>11.79</td>
<td>10.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>7.85</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis 2.3**

The MANOVA analysis above, revealed no significant association between participants’ ages, at the time of their first offence against a child, and their tendency to experience Shame + Guilt or Pride. A confirmatory correlation supports this result for both trait-Shame + Guilt, r(97) = .09, p = .40 and trait-Pride, r(97) = -.06, p = .56.
Study 3 results

Whereas the first two studies examined the connection between moral emotions and factors associated with reoffending, Study 3 directly examines the connections between moral emotions and reoffending. Starting with an examination of those who progress to a second victim, before examining those participants who progressed to a second incident of sexual abuse. To maintain consistency with the earlier hypotheses, the Shame and Guilt scales will be collapsed into a single Shame + Guilt scale.

Hypothesis 3.1

It was predicted that single-victim offenders would have higher levels of Shame and Guilt, and lower levels of Pride, after their first offence than multiple-victim offenders. This hypothesis was supported for Shame + Guilt \( t(86) = 2.17, p = .03 \), and Pride, \( t(86) = -3.06, p < .01 \). These results are shown below in Table 29 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shame, Guilt, and Pride, after First Offence for Single- and Multiple-Victim offenders</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One victim</td>
<td>More than one victim</td>
<td>One victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>39.66</td>
<td>33.89</td>
<td>11.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>9.34</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 3.2

It was predicted that single-incident offenders would have higher levels of Shame and Guilt and lower levels of Pride after that assault, than multi-incident offenders. If we take participants at their word, 15 participants said they offended on only one occasion and 79 admitted at least one further offence after their initial offence. Based on this categorisation, there were no significant differences in the levels of Shame + Guilt, \( t(92) = 1.84, p = .07 \), or Pride, \( t(92) = -1.21, p = .23 \) between those who had only one incident of child sexual assault and those who continued to a second offence. These results are shown in Table 30 below.

Table 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Shame, Guilt, and Pride, after First Offence for Admitted Single- and Multiple- Incident offenders</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One</td>
<td>More than</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>incident</td>
<td>one incident</td>
<td>incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>41.60</td>
<td>35.38</td>
<td>11.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.20</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, applying a cross check against the number of admitted victims and an official history of previous sexual offences results in the reclassification of five of the fifteen participants who claimed only one incident of child sexual abuse, as being multi-incident offenders. Consequently those who admitted only one incident of child
sexual abuse and did not contradict this by admitting more than one victim, and also did not have an official history of previous sexual offences, will be referred to as ‘confirmed\textsuperscript{4} single incident offenders. Using this classification system, confirmed single incident offenders reported higher levels of Shame + Guilt, $t(92) = 2.29, p = .02$, but did not report significantly different levels of Pride, $t(92) = -1.47, p = .15$, than those who committed more than one incident of child sexual abuse. These results are shown in Table 31 below.

**Table 31**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One</td>
<td>More than one</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incident only</td>
<td>44.50</td>
<td>35.40</td>
<td>9.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 3.3

It was hypothesised that multi-incident offenders will have lower levels of Shame and Guilt and higher levels of Pride, after their most recent assault than after their first

\textsuperscript{4} It is acknowledged that there is no actual confirmation of this, however, there is no direct contradictory evidence.
offence. This hypothesis was not supported for either Shame + Guilt, $t(60) = 0.50, p = .62$, or Pride, $t(60) = -0.82, p = .41$. There is no suggestion of any trend in these figures. These results are shown in Table 32 below.

**Table 32**

**Shame + Guilt, and Pride, after First Offence and Most Recent Offence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>After first offence</th>
<th>After most recent offence</th>
<th>After first offence</th>
<th>After most recent offence</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>36.64</td>
<td>36.02</td>
<td>12.14</td>
<td>11.19</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>8.23</td>
<td>8.66</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Post-hoc analysis

Hypotheses 1.1 – 1.3 demonstrate that the Shame, Guilt and Pride scales of the SSGS-M appear to be tapping into moral emotions, a dynamic (changeable) measure that is associated with two well-established static predictors of recidivism among child sexual offenders (age of offender and relationship to victim). While there was no conclusive association between moral emotions and the gender of the child, the size of the current sample and the violation of the assumptions required for MANOVA do not allow the conclusion that such an association does not exist. The confirmatory t-test indicates that moral emotions were associated with the gender of the child.

These findings also raise the supplementary question as to whether victim gender, offender age and victim-offender relationship have independent effects on Shame, Guilt and Pride, or whether one of them is an artefact of one or more of the others. This section explores these issues using post-hoc analysis. While this question has been partially answered by the MANOVA, which indicated that victim gender failed to independently affect Shame + Guilt or Pride, further analysis can provide a richer understanding of the earlier findings, particularly given the violation of several assumptions underpinning a MANOVA analysis.

Combining the two categorical variables creates four categories of offender, which can be compared with each other for their contributions to Shame, Guilt and Pride: Intrafamilial offenders who first offended against a boy or a girl and extrafamilial offenders who first offended against a boy or a girl. Each of these four categories will
then be examined to determine if offender age makes an independent contribution to 
Shame, Guilt and Pride.

Figure 7, below, shows that, while extrafamilial offenders are just as likely to molest 
boys as they are girls (22 boys compared to 27 girls), intrafamilial offenders are much 
more likely to offend against girls (5 boys compared to 47 girls). This difference 
between intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders is statistically significant, \( \chi^2(101) = 16.03, p < .01 \).

**Figure 7**

*Gender of Victim by Relationship to Offender*

Examining this in more depth, for intrafamilial offenders there are no differences in 
Shame + Guilt, \( t(46) = 0.57, p = .57 \), or Pride \( t(46) = 1.67, p = .10 \), between those who 
molested boys or girls. These figures are shown in Table 34 below.

Among extrafamilial offenders there were also no significant differences in the 
amount of Shame + Guilt, \( t(45) = -1.88, p = .07 \), or Pride, \( t(45) = 1.55, p = .13 \), 
between those who molested boys or girls, although there is a trend for extrafamilial
offenders to feel less Shame + Guilt if they molested a boy rather than a girl. These figures are shown in Table 33 below. This result suggests that victim gender may have an impact on Shame + Guilt for extrafamilial, but not intrafamilial offenders.

Table 33

Shame + Guilt and Pride by victim gender for extrafamilial abuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Victim</td>
<td>28.59</td>
<td>35.72</td>
<td>12.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Victim</td>
<td>10.86</td>
<td>8.76</td>
<td>4.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reversing this analysis, among those who initially offended against a boy there were differences in the amount of Shame + Guilt t(25) = 2.46, p = .02, between intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders, indicating that intrafamilial offenders reported more Shame + Guilt than extrafamilial offenders. There were no significant differences in Pride scores, t(25) = -0.80, p = .43. These figures are shown in Table 34 below.
### Table 34

**Shame + Guilt and Pride, for Participants who First Offended Against a Boy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intra-familial</td>
<td>Extra-familial</td>
<td>Intra-familial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>42.80</td>
<td>28.59</td>
<td>5.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>10.86</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, among those who first offended against a girl there were no differences in Shame + Guilt, $t(66) = 1.49, p = .14$ or Pride, $t(66) = -1.89, p = .07$, between intrafamilial or extrafamilial offenders. These figures are shown in Table 35 below.
### Table 35

Shame, Guilt and Pride, for Participants who First Offended Against a Girl

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intra-familial</th>
<th>Extra-familial</th>
<th>Intra-familial</th>
<th>Extra-familial</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>40.28</td>
<td>35.72</td>
<td>9.74</td>
<td>13.35</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>8.76</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This result suggests that victim relationship has an impact on Shame + Guilt (but not Pride) for those whose initial offence is against a boy, but not for those whose initial offence is against a girl.

In summary, if the initial offence is against a girl or involves an intrafamilial victim, then the other factor (relationship, victim gender) does not have any additional impact on moral emotions. However, if the victim is a boy unrelated to the offender, then the trend appears to be for the offender to report less Shame and Guilt, and more Pride.

This is illustrated in Table 36 below, which combines the figures from the previous four tables.
Table 36

**Shame + Guilt and Pride, by Victim Gender and Victim/Offender Relationship**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intrafamiliar</th>
<th>Extrafamiliar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>42.80</td>
<td>40.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>6.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of note, all the statistically significant findings relate to extrafamilial offenders whose initial victim was male, with the pattern of findings being that those offenders felt less Shame + Guilt and more Pride than the other groups. A further post-hoc analysis, comparing the extrafamilial offenders against boys to the other categories combined shows that the extrafamilial offenders against boys reported less Shame + Guilt, t(93) = 3.72, p < .01, and more Pride, t(93) = -3.41, p = .01, than the other participants (combined into one group). These figures are shown in Table 37 below. It is noteworthy that the standard deviations for the combined group are not higher than the standard deviations for the extrafamilial offenders against boys, suggesting that these groups are relatively homogenous when combined – or at least as homogenous as the extrafamilial offenders against boys.
Table 37

Shame + Guilt and Pride, for Extrafamilial Offenders Against Boys, compared to Other Offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra-familial, Male Victim</td>
<td>Extra-familial, Male Victim</td>
<td>Extra-familial, Male Victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>28.59</td>
<td>38.89</td>
<td>12.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Guilt</td>
<td>10.86</td>
<td>7.71</td>
<td>4.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the earlier examination of the SSGS-M Pride scale, it was suggested that there is a possibility the Pride scale is actually composed of two factors – feeling good and a positive view of the self. Applying these two factors to the differences between extrafamilial offenders against boys and other offenders suggests that the differences are related to the feeling good factor, t(94) = 4.10, p < .01, rather than the view of self, t(93) = 1.56, p = .12. These results are shown in Table 38 below.
Table 38

**Components of Pride Scale, for Extrafamilial Offenders Against Boys, compared to Other Offenders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra-familial, Male Victim</td>
<td>Extra-familial, Male</td>
<td>Extra-familial, Male Victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive view of self</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling good</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final part of this section is to examine whether offender age makes any independent contribution to Shame + Guilt and Pride, once the victim/offender relationship and victim gender have been taken into account. The correlations between age and Shame + Guilt and Pride appear below in Table 39.
Table 39

Correlation between Age and Shame + Guilt and Pride for Categories of Offender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Shame + Guilt</th>
<th></th>
<th>Pride</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrafamilial, male victim</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrafamilial, female victim</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrafamilial, male victim</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-.34</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrafamilial, female victim</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. *p < .05. **p < .01.

There are no significant correlations between age and Shame + Guilt for any of the categories. The Pride scale produced a significant correlation with age for intrafamilial offenders with female victims. The result for intrafamilial offenders with male victims and extrafamilial offenders with female victims was of a similar magnitude, suggesting it may be useful to again collapse the three groups which are not extrafamilial offences against a boy, into one group. This result appears below in Table 40 and shows a significant correlation between Pride and age for those who are not extrafamilial offenders against boys. This suggests that increasing age reduces the amount of Pride felt by an offender, unless that offender is engaging in an extrafamilial offence against a boy.
Table 40

Correlation between Age and Shame + Guilt and Pride for Categories of Offender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Shame + Guilt Correlation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Pride Correlation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extrafamilial, male victim</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-.42**</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. *p < .05. **p < .01.

The correlations for all SSGS-M scales for extrafamilial offenders with male victims are all close to zero, suggesting the very tentative speculation that age is unrelated to the level of moral emotions reported by the very same group who already appear to report less Shame + Guilt, and more Pride than the other three categories of offender. Consequently, this group deserves further analysis.

Given the well replicated finding that extrafamilial offenders and those who molest boys, reoffend sexually at higher rates (Gelb, 2007), a group with both these factors would be expected to be particularly at risk of further sexual offences against children. Extrafamilial offenders against boys were more likely to have an official history of previous sexual offending than other participants (47.4% c.f. 22.5%). This difference is statistically significant, $\chi^2 = 4.61, p = .03$.

Extrafamilial offenders against boys were more likely ($\chi^2 = 5.83, p = .02$) to report being a victim of sexual abuse outside their home (72.7% c.f. 43.6%). They were not
significantly more likely ($\chi^2 = 1.30, p = .25$) to report being sexually abused by a parent (42.9% c.f. 29.6%). This data is shown in Table 41 below.

Table 41

Self-reported sexual victimisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Abuse by Parent</th>
<th>Sexual Abuse Outside the Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrafamilial offenders against boys</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants in this thesis also completed the self-report delinquency questions from the National Youth Survey (Elliott, Huizinga, & Morse, 1986). An analysis shows no significant differences in self-reported delinquency between extrafamilial offenders against boys and other participants in this study, $t(100) = -0.99, p = .33$, or their scores on Grasmick’s (Grasmick, Tittle, Bursik, & Arneklev, 1993) measure of low self control $t(92) = -0.58, p = .57$. Neither do their official histories of previous non-sexual offences differ, $\chi^2 = 0.78, p = .38$. However, extrafamilial offenders against boys were substantially younger than other participants at the time of their first offence, $t(100) = 2.67, p < .01$. These results are shown in Table 42, below.
Table 42

Delinquency and Age at First Offence for Extrafamilial Offenders Against Boys, compared to Other Offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Extra-familial, Male Victim</th>
<th>Mean Other Extra-familial, Male Victim</th>
<th>Mean Extra-familial, Male Victim</th>
<th>Mean Other Extra-familial, Male Victim</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency NYS</td>
<td>9.91</td>
<td>8.14</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>23 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Self Control</td>
<td>53.90</td>
<td>52.18</td>
<td>12.96</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>20 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at 1\textsuperscript{st} Offence</td>
<td>25.48</td>
<td>34.19</td>
<td>13.85</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>23 79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The project also collected other information from participants, which may shed further light on these differences. Participants were asked if they had ever had intimate sexual activity with a man. 65.2% (15 of 23) of extrafamilial offenders against boys admitted to this contact, compared to only 12.7% (10 of 79) of the other participants. This difference was statistically significant $\chi^2 = 31.26$, $p < .01$.

Although 82.6% (19 of 23) of extrafamilial offenders against boys admitted to intimate sexual activity with a woman, this was still less than other participants where 96.3% (77 of 80) disclosed such activity. At the time of their first offence, only 30.4% (7 of 23) of extrafamilial offenders against boys were in a close adult relationship, compared to 62.3% (48 of 77) of other participants. This may be a reflection of their...
younger age, as participants who were in close adult relationships were significantly older than those who were not, t(99) = -3.44, p < .01. These results are shown in Table 43 below. The means for these categories are very similar to the means for extrafamilial offenders against boys compared to other offenders, as shown in Table 42 earlier.

Table 43

Age of participants who were, or were not, in committed adult relationships before their first offence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean (age at 1st offence)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In a relationship</td>
<td>35.70</td>
<td>11.10</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in a relation-</td>
<td>26.80</td>
<td>14.88</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the post-hoc analyses of Hypotheses 1.1-1.3 shed some light on those initial findings and highlights those whose first offence is against a boy they are not related to, as a group who may be different to other child sexual offenders – at the time of their first offence, they were younger, less likely to be involved in an intimate sexual relationship, felt lower levels of Shame + Guilt, higher levels of Pride and were more likely to be reconvicted for child sexual assault. They were more likely to report having been sexually abused outside the home and to have engaged in sexual activity with a man. Unlike other participants, there appears to be no relationship between their age at the time of their first offence, and the level of moral emotions
they reported after that offence. They did not appear to be more antisocial, having no
greater history of non-sexual offending and admitted delinquency.

Hypotheses 2.1-2.3 investigated whether the findings from Hypotheses 1.1-1.3 could
be explained by pre-existing differences in the tendency to experience moral emotions
between intra/extra-familial offenders and male/female victim offenders. This analysis
found no differences in the tendency to experience moral emotions, whether the
participants were grouped by relationship to the victim, victim gender or the
participant’s age at the time of their first offence.

As the post-hoc analysis of Hypotheses 1.1-1.3 identified extrafamilial offenders
against boys as being significantly different to other participants, the next logical step
is to compare this group to the others for their tendency to experience Shame + Guilt
and Pride. This analysis produced no statistically significant differences for either trait
Shame + Guilt, t(97) = 1.10, p = .27, or trait Pride, t(96) = -1.03, p = .31. Hypothesis
2.3 examined the relationship between the tendency to experience moral emotions and
the participants’ age at the time of their first offence. While there was no significant
finding, based on previous research, which found guilt-proneness increases with age
(Orth, Robbins, & Soto, 2010), an examination of the interaction between the current
measures of the tendency to experience moral emotions and the age of the participant,
at the time they completed the questionnaire, is worthwhile. This shows no significant
relationship between age and either trait-Shame + Guilt, r(110) = .07, p = .48, or trait-
Pride, r(108) = -.11, p = .28.

In summary, Hypotheses 2.1-2.3 show little evidence that the tendency to experience
moral emotions as measured by the trait-Shame + Guilt and trait-Pride scales, is
Hypotheses 3.1 and 3.2 directly tested the association between SSGS-M scales measuring moral emotions and two different measures of recidivism – progressing to a second incident or a second victim. When a second victim was the criteria, Hypothesis 3.1 was supported for both Shame + Guilt and Pride. When a second incident was the criteria, neither were significant if we rely only on the participants’ responses to the particular question, but after cross checking with other data in the study, Shame + Guilt was significantly associated with reoffending, but Pride was not.

As this project also collected official information, it is possible to compare participants’ responses on the SSGS-M to their official history of offending. This shows that while Shame + Guilt is not significantly associated with an official reconviction for sexual offences, t(83) = 0.93, p = .36, Pride is, t(84) = -3.59, p < .01. These results are shown in Table 44 below. However, the data collected does not allow us to distinguish child sexual assault from sexual offences against adults.
Table 44

Shame, Guilt, and Pride, after First Offence for Single- and Multiple-Victim offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No prior</td>
<td>Prior</td>
<td>No prior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>38.38</td>
<td>35.83</td>
<td>12.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Guilt</td>
<td>7.31</td>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, when comparing SSGS-M scales after the first offence with recidivism, the relationship between the Shame + Guilt and Pride scales was inconsistent. Depending upon how recidivism was measured both, neither or either of the scales was related to recidivism.

During the literature review, this thesis described how a focus on the concept of low self-control had diverted sexual offence research away from a focus on moral emotions. It was argued that what appears to be a deficit in self-control ability, may simply be a preference for a particular course of action. As participants completed a copy of Grasmick’s (1993) measure of low self-control, it is possible to compare this to the SSGS-M trait measures.
Firstly, low self-control should be associated with a wide variety of offending (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), meaning that the participants with a history of non-sexual offending should score higher on Grasmick’s measure than those without this history. While it trended in this direction, low self-control was not significantly higher among participants with a history of non-sexual offending, t(86) = -1.93, p = .06. The trait-Pride measure did achieve statistical significance, t(91) = -2.27, p = .03, while trait-Shame + Guilt appears unrelated to this, t(93) = 0.40, p = .69. These results are shown below in Table 45.

Table 45

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait-Shame + Guilt, trait-Pride and Low Self-Control for participants with and without a history of non-sexual offences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No prior non-sexual offences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Self-Control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The low self-control measure, t(86) = -2.72, p < .01, outperformed the SSGS-M trait measures in predicting a history of past sexual offending. Neither trait-Shame + Guilt, t(93) = -0.61, p = .54, nor trait-Pride, t(91) = -1.70, p = .09, were significantly
predictive of having a history of past sexual offending. These results are shown below in Table 46.

Table 46

<p>| Trait-Shame + Guilt, trait-Pride and Low Self-Control for participants with and without a history of prior sexual offences |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No prior sexual offences</td>
<td>Prior sexual offences</td>
<td>No prior sexual offences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame + Guilt</td>
<td>32.23</td>
<td>33.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>8.09</td>
<td>9.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Self-Control</td>
<td>51.76</td>
<td>58.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This may be a reflection of the fact that the scenario used in the trait measure of the SSGS-M is more closely related to general offending patterns than sexual offending patterns. It was reported earlier that the Pride scale after the first offence, was associated with an official history of past sexual offending, suggesting that the Pride scale is associated with the likelihood of repeating behaviour similar to that measured. Pride after an imagined negligent driving incident predicts a history of general offending and Pride after an initial sexual offence predicts further sexual offending. However, Pride after an initial sexual offence does not predict a history of general
offending, nor does Pride after an imagined negligent driving incident predict repeat sexual offending.

The final part of this post hoc analysis assesses whether the differences between intrafamilial/extrafamilial, boy victim/girl victim offenders and older/younger offenders can be attributed to differences in self-control. This essentially replicates Hypotheses 1.1-1.3.

Firstly, there are no significant differences in self-control between intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders, \( t(92) = 0.09, p = .93 \). Secondly, there are no significant differences between offenders whose first offence is against a boy or girl, \( t(93) = 0.87, p = .39 \). Finally, self-control is unrelated to the participants’ age at the time of their initial offence, \( r(94) = -.16, p = .13 \). Table 47 below summarises the findings of this study, including the notable findings from the post hoc analysis. The results relating to Hypotheses 2.1-2.3 are not included as there were no significant or contradictory results for the trait-based measure of moral emotions. Findings marked “?” indicate results where a definitive outcome is not possible, mainly due to violations of the assumptions underpinning the MANOVA analyses. Other findings indicate either the degree of statistical significance, or the lack of a finding at \( p < .05 \). The following chapter discusses these results.
**Table 47**

Summary of findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Shame + Guilt</th>
<th>Pride</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victim Gender</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim-offender relationship</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender age</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>p &lt; .01, but not for intrafamilial offenders against boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one victim</td>
<td>p &lt; .05</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admitted single incident</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed single incident</td>
<td>p &lt; .05</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior official history of sexual offending</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change from first to most recent offence</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrafamilial offenders</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(? = inconsistent or unconfirmed effects, n.s. = no significant effect)
CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION

Interpretation of SSGS-M Scales

The Shame and Guilt Scales

Before interpreting the results of these three studies, it is necessary to return to the earlier analysis of the meaning of the SSGS-M Shame, Guilt and Pride scales (page 141). In all instances in this thesis the Shame and Guilt scales were highly correlated, whether measuring shame and guilt as a trait or at a specific point in time. This thesis found correlations between Shame and Guilt scales ranging from \( r = .81 \) to \( .91 \). This appears to be higher than any of the correlations reported by other researchers.

Tangney and Dearing (2002) found correlations between shame and guilt of around \( r = .5 \) using various versions of the TOSCA, suggesting a degree of independence between shame and guilt. However, they didn’t report the correlation between shame and guilt when using the SSGS. Similar to the current studies, Hopfensitz (2006) found that the Shame and Guilt scales of the SSGS were highly correlated. She did not report the magnitude of that correlation, but it was high enough that she considered the two scales to be interchangeable – most likely her correlation is similar to the current result. Sanftner and Crowther (1998) found a correlation of \( .72 \) between the Shame and Guilt scales of the SSGS, whereas Fedewa, Burns and Gomez (2005) found a more modest correlation of \( .62 \).

This calls into question what is actually being measured by the Shame and Guilt scales – is it shame, guilt or some amalgam of the two? The totality of the current results and previous studies, suggest that the Shame and Guilt scales of the SSGS are
sometimes almost perfectly correlated and sometimes show a degree of independence. This raises the question as to whether there is any pattern to this variability and the implications for this thesis.

As noted earlier, the correlations between the Shame and Guilt scales of the SSGS and SSGS-M reported above, are all higher than the correlations between the Shame and Guilt scales of the TOSCA reported by Tangney and Dearing (2002). The key difference between the TOSCA and the SSGS is that the former is measuring the tendency to feel a particular emotion, across a range of situations, whereas the latter is measuring the actual emotions being experienced at the time the instrument is completed. Additionally, the TOSCA is comprised of phenomenological descriptions of shame and guilt, and does not use the words ‘shame’ and ‘guilt’ in the questions. The SSGS-M used in this study, asked the subjects to answer questions about their emotions at a particular point in the past and in a hypothetical scenario. Hence, the higher correlation for the SSGS is suggestive of the concept of fusing (Lewis, 1971), where the two emotions merge when high levels of one are experienced.

An alternative conceptualisation proposed by Harris (2003) is that shame and guilt are the same construct, which he called Shame-Guilt. The current result adds some credibility to that argument, as the items of the Shame and Guilt scales combine nicely to form a single scale with acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .93$ after the first offence).

However, Harris’ proposition flies in the face of other studies reviewed earlier in this thesis, which have demonstrated a degree of independence of shame and guilt scales. This leaves two possibilities: measurement error, or a fusing of shame and guilt.
caused by them being triggered by the same event, or as a result of shame overshadowing guilt.

Earlier, Lewis’ (1971) proposition that shame and guilt can “fuse” when they are evoked by the same behaviour was highlighted. Similarly Vallonga (1997, p. 141) noted:

While being disappointed in oneself [guilt] is qualitatively different from being ashamed, the difference is subtle and most often obscured. It is obscured because both phenomena frequently occur together and because the pain of being ashamed tends to overshadow that of being disappointed in oneself when they do occur together.

Vallonga also suggested that guilt and shame may be experienced differently during the course of the same episode:

... my research demonstrated that each [shame and guilt] can be a constituent in the fuller experience of the other. Thus, being ashamed may be part of the getting-over phases of being guilty, while being guilty may be part of the becoming phase of being ashamed. One is frequently ashamed on account of moral failures, but one is also ashamed on account of other, nonmoral failures. Thus, one’s being guilty frequently, but not always, develops into being ashamed (Vallonga, 1997, p. 152).

This suggests a methodological issue within the current thesis – one without an obvious solution. Because participants were asked to respond how they felt at a particular time, generally years ago, it is possible that they amalgamated their feelings from a range of times in that vicinity. Hence, a subject responding about his feelings
after his offence may be reporting a time period from immediately after that offence
to as long as several days or a week afterwards. If this is the case, then it is possible
that subjects answered each question on the SSGS-M by considering if it was true at
any time during that period.

As an example, consider Question 2: “I wanted to sink into the floor and disappear”
(from the Shame scale) and Question 3: “I felt remorse, regret” (from the Guilt scale).
Following Vallelonga’s logic a number of participants who had indicated high scores
for both of these items may have felt remorseful initially, then after reflecting on what
they had done felt the more extreme shame associated with wanting to disappear. It is
difficult to conceive of an alternative methodology that would avoid this problem. In
this scenario the action motivations associated with each emotion would occur
sequentially. The person may initially feel driven to apologise and confess, but once
shame becomes the dominant emotion they feel driven to hide.

A slightly different proposition relates to the finding that shame tends to be hidden
and not as accessible to people. Lindsay-Hartz (1984) noted that her subjects were
reluctant to talk about their experiences of shame, although they “eagerly” described
an experience of guilt (p. 691). A possible explanation of the current findings is that
the subjects are denying the shame aspects of their experience. Consequently, while
they may have experienced shame at the time, when they think about that event now
they may focus on the guilt aspects, because those memories are less painful.

Returning to the theoretical concept of fusing where both emotions occur
simultaneously, it is unclear whether the measured state will behave like shame, guilt
or something else. Given the different action motives of shame and guilt, it is hard to
conceive that the two scales could both accurately reflect shame and guilt and
simultaneously be almost perfectly correlated. A possible solution to this dilemma could be a situation where both shame and guilt are high (fused), but one is stronger and dominates the action motivation. However, a third option, measurement error cannot be excluded.

Considering the two SSGS-M questions again, if a participant endorsed Question 2 it seems logical he would also score high on Question 3, even if or especially if Question 2 is a much more accurate description of how he felt at that time. While this could be suggestive of fusing, it is also possible that the difficulty relates more to measurement of these emotions and the difficulty in separating the subtle differences between them.

In the post-hoc analysis of Hypotheses 1.1-1.3, it was noted there was a ceiling effect for both the Shame and Guilt scales after the initial offence, with the modal response in both cases being the maximum possible score. As was noted earlier, it is likely that there is a degree of variation among participants who scored the maximum scores for Shame and Guilt, raising the possibility that the items on the SSGS-M are not extreme enough to capture variations in higher levels of shame and guilt.

This instrument was designed to measure shame, guilt and pride among the general public, in everyday situations and laboratory simulations. The levels of shame and guilt felt by many of the participants in the current study are, most likely far greater than the levels contemplated by the developers of the instrument.

It may be that, for use in situations such as child sexual abuse, the instrument requires more extreme measures of both shame and guilt such as “I felt like killing myself” (shame) or “I realised I had destroyed the victim’s life” (guilt). The current findings
suggest that the SSGS-M may not be sensitive to variations in shame and guilt at higher levels.

However, the results from this thesis demonstrated that the Shame and Guilt scales were measuring something and that this produced some meaningful effects. The earlier analysis of the trait measure of the SSGS-M on page 141, showed that the Shame and Guilt scales were both associated with participants’ reports of feeling guilty and feeling ashamed about their current offence when they were interviewed by police. This is consistent with Lewis’ (1971, p. 37) claim that “Shame and guilt states are thus easily confused with one another by the experiencing person”.

Out of all the action motives associated with shame and guilt, the two most diametrically opposed of these are confession and denial – if one is faced with competing pressures to confess and deny, both cannot be satisfied. Four questions addressed confession (p. 145), a trait associated with guilt and diametrically opposed to the deny/hide aspect of shame. The results showed a moderate correlation with both trait-Shame and trait-Guilt with the question “Did you feel you needed to talk to someone about what you had done?”. Trait-shame had a small correlation with the question “Did you think you would have a sense of relief if you told?”. Trait-guilt had a correlation of similar magnitude with this question, but it fell short of statistical significance. The other two confession questions (“Did you want to get it off your chest?” and “Did you admit the offence?”) both failed to reach significance) with either trait-Shame or trait-Guilt, although they did trend it the same direction. As discussed earlier (p. 147) a confession scale comprised of these four questions correlated with trait-Shame, trait-Guilt and trait-Shame + Guilt. For participants whose current offence was their first, that is the one they were interviewed by police about, their Shame and Guilt scores after their offence was also correlated with the
confession scale. In no instances did the trait-Shame or trait-Guilt scales produce results suggestive of shame, such as denial. This suggests that the trait-Shame and trait-Guilt scales may be tapping into guilt-proneness more than they measure shame-proneness. This suggests that the state measure is similarly associated with a drive to confess.

An alternative interpretation springs from the fact that the questions used to test shame and guilt-proneness, all relate to a time when the participant was being interviewed by police. It is possible that the denial and withdrawal pathways are less available/feasible when one is being challenged with details of the transgression by a police officer. In this scenario, the participant may be motivated to withdraw or deny, but these are not practical strategies in the situation.

Consequently, it is likely albeit far from certain that the SSGS-M Shame and Guilt scales are measuring guilt, rather than shame. Before further exploring the results of the studies, it is necessary to examine the SSGS-M Pride scale.

The Pride Scale

While shame and guilt have been extensively studied in relation to moral transgressions, pride has not been examined in anywhere near this amount of detail. Firstly, it should be noted that participants generally scored low on the Pride scale after their first offence – their mean score was 8.37, on a scale that has possible scores between 5 and 25. Hence, even subjects such as extrafamilial offenders against boys had an average score of only 10.86 – an average response of 2, indicating they were half way between “Didn’t feel this way at all” and “Felt this way somewhat” in relation to Pride items.
To describe this as pride seems somewhat of a misclassification, as while their scores were higher than other participants, they were still mostly rejecting the sentiments expressed in the Pride scale. Earlier in this thesis, the concept of detachment was examined. This may be a good descriptor for the Pride scale – while the participants who scored higher on this scale than others weren’t generally feeling good about themselves, they did report some degree of positive emotion.

It was suggested during the examination of the psychometrics of the Pride scale that it is possibly composed of two factors – feeling good, and a positive view of the self. The former of these two factors would appear to be the one most representative of detachment – to the extent that a participant does not rate themselves as “Did not feel that way at all” they have achieved a degree of detachment, compared to other participants. This subscale was the major factor responsible for the higher Pride scores of extrafamilial offenders against boys compared to other participants.

Consequently, the Pride scale as used in this thesis may be measuring detachment – an absence of moral emotion. It was noted earlier (p. 94) that detachment can be achieved in two different ways, as a result of successful strategies to reduce the pain of shame or guilt, or when one’s actions are not seen as inconsistent with one’s beliefs. It is not possible to separate these two processes here, but the absence of moral restraint removes a major barrier to continuing that behaviour. The next section compares detachment to the construct of low self-control.

**Detachment and Low Self-Control**

It was postulated earlier in this thesis (p. 94) that much of the explanatory power attributed to low self-control could be more elegantly explained by the concept of
motivational balance. Low self-control explanations such as Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), posit that higher risk offenders have lower self-control than non-offenders or low risk offenders. While Gottfredson and Hirschi avoided categorising self-control as an ability, others such as Tittle, Ward and Grasmick (2004), have interpreted the concept as an ability and have drawn a distinction between the ability to restrain from an activity (an enduring trait) and the desire to restrain from that activity. Evaluating this research, Piquero (2008) concluded that it moves “…the research away from considering self-control as an enduring personal characteristic that is fixed and stable over the life course – and importantly – across situations” (p. 36).

Akers (2008) took this one step further:

The process is one in which the balance of learned definitions, imitation of criminal or deviant models, and the anticipated balance of reinforcement produces the initial delinquent or deviant act. The facilitative effects of these variables continue in the repetition of acts (p. 80).

A situational view of offending such as this considers all the various drives that are in operation. The focus of this thesis has been on one aspect of that situation – the restraint offered by moral emotions. An absence of internal restraint (i.e., detachment) skews the balance towards a contemplated action, whereas a restraining emotion such as guilt, pushes the balance in the other direction.

The results of this thesis are consistent with a motivational balance model. While Grasmick’s low self-control measure was predictive of repeat sexual offending, participants’ ratings of their level of detachment (Pride) following their initial sexual offence, was similarly predictive of further sexual offending, even though the trait-Pride measure did not predict repeat sexual offending. However, the trait-Pride
measure was predictive of a history of non-sexual offending. This suggests that the
trait-Pride scale may be specific to the type of situation the participant has
experienced, or imagined. How one feels, or imagines one would feel after an
experience of negligent driving does not readily predict how one would react after a
sexual offence, although it does have some predictive power about general offending
– a situation with which it shares some similarity. This is one of the reasons the
TOSCA uses a variety of situations, rather than just one situation to measure the
tendency to experience moral emotions.

Post-hoc analysis on the low self-control scale found that it did not differentiate
between intrafamilial/extrafamilial offenders, offenders against boys/girls, and
offenders who are older/younger at the time of their first offence. In contrast, the
measures of moral emotion showed a general pattern of results consistent with the
notion that factors associated with higher risk or reoffending (extrafamilial offences,
offences against boys, younger age at first offence) were associated with lower levels
of guilt.

This is seen in the range of results throughout the primary and post hoc analyses.
While the primary analysis (Hypothesis 1.1) found an unclear result for victim gender,
combining this with victim/offender relationship in the post hoc analyses
demonstrated a clear finding for both Shame + Guilt and Pride. Additionally, both the
primary analyses and the post hoc analyses showed a relationship between Pride and
age, although not for extrafamilial offenders against boys. This is consistent with the
notion that guilt can restrain socially proscribed behaviour (Tangney, Stuewig,
Mashek, & Hastings, 2011).
It was noted earlier that the links between victim gender, victim-offender relationship and offender age had not been well explained by the main theories of sexual offending. Grasmick’s measure of low self-control was unrelated to these three factors, suggesting that intrafamilial offenders, offenders against girls, and older offenders, do not have a greater ability to refrain from further sexual offending than their counterparts. Yet they clearly reoffend less (Gelb, 2007). Consequently, the concept of low self-control provides little assistance in understanding these differences. In contrast, moral emotions may help explain these findings. This is the topic of the next section of this discussion.

**Moral Emotions and Child Sexual Abuse**

This thesis has provided evidence that moral emotions may help explain some of the empirical findings about child sexual abuse – specifically why extrafamilial offenders, offenders against boys and younger offenders are more likely to reoffend. Through this, we may also be able to help explain why some people offend in the first place – and others do not. This thesis was unable to directly address that question, as it would require a sample of people who contemplated sexually abusing a child for the first time and then did not. While such people must certainly exist, finding them for the purposes of such a study would be an extremely difficult task.

However, the findings of the current thesis can provide some clues as to why people offend in the first place. It was postulated that moral emotions had received scant attention in the sexual abuse literature, because the concept of low self-control appeared to explain the missing gaps. The current findings showed that moral emotions vary in accordance with three well-known predictors of sexual recidivism,
yet these factors appear to be unrelated to a self-report measure of low self-control. Additionally, the measures of moral emotions were also directly related to official measures of sexual recidivism and some self-report measures of sexual recidivism. It is logical to suggest that an understanding of moral emotions will add some greater depth to theories of onset.

The results of this thesis support the contention that moral emotions are involved in the processes that lead an offender to desist after the first offence (Hypothesis 3.2), or first victim (Hypothesis 3.1). While Hypothesis 3.2 was only supported for the Shame + Guilt scale, and only after adjustment for responses that clearly conflicted with the official record, the Pride scale failed to significantly differentiate those who had committed only one incident of child sexual assault from those who had multiple incidents. This may be partly due to small numbers – only 15 participants indicated they had only committed one incident of child sexual abuse and did not have a prior history of sexual offending that would suggest that claim is untrue. Consequently, the possibility that moral emotions may play a role in the progression, from the first incident to the next, cannot be dismissed.

Hypothesis 3.3, which examined the changes in moral emotions from the first to the most recent offence, was not supported. Even with a much larger sample, Hypothesis 3.3 would require a dramatic difference in trend for these results to be statistically significant. Consequently, this result suggests that moral emotions do not significantly change with subsequent offending.

The predominant moral emotion identified in this thesis appears to be guilt, through both the Shame and Guilt scales of the SSGS-M. The absence of shame and guilt, detachment, was identified through the Pride scale of the SSGS-M. The finding that
what appears to be measured by the SSGS-M does not correspond with the labels assigned to them (apart from the Guilt scale) is problematic.

The issue of shame and guilt in the treatment of sexual offenders has been identified as an important consideration (Marshall W. L., Marshall, Serran, & O'Brien, 2009) and an instrument that can identify these would be useful. However, the tactics outlined in Nathanson’s (1992) Compass of Shame tactics suggest that many of the offenders who are feeling ashamed may not accurately report this, limiting the usefulness of self-report methods. For example, the tactic of avoidance involves a denial-to-self aspect – the ashamed person is unaware he/she is feeling ashamed.

Consequently, shame in offenders may need to be measured through behavioural observation. This would involve converting Nathanson’s Compass of Shame into a list of features that a trained observer could code into indices of shame, guilt and detachment. For example, even the initial response to being offered treatment taps into the shame and guilt dimensions.

At one extreme, the offender feeling mostly guilt enthusiastically offers himself up for treatment: “I need to do this”, even though he may express some reservations about the process. When an offender is feeling mostly shame, he may actively try to avoid treatment. His verbalisations may indicate issues of identity: “I’m not going in a room with those people” (I’m not one of those people), or may have withdrawal (“Leave me alone”) or avoidance (“I don’t need treatment”) facets. Some offenders may utilise externalisation scripts, attacking the system or therapists, while others may present with an attack-self script, verbalising that they are a hopeless person.

A coding scheme utilising these measures would need to take account of both the variety of shame and guilt tactics and their intensity. Enthusiasm/reluctance to engage
in treatment could be coded along a scale to gauge the degree to which the offender engages in that tactic. This measure could be combined with a self-report measure such as the SSGS.

The TOSCA-SD as used by Tangney, Stuewig, Mashek and Hastings (2011) did appear to accurately identify the tendency to experience shame and guilt in an offender sample. The TOSCA-SD was identified as a useful instrument, prior to this thesis being conducted, but was rejected due to space demands in the questionnaire and due to the overall project (of which this thesis is one small part) having a focus on situational variables. It would be helpful to know how the TOSCA-SD relates to the SSGS-M measures of moral emotions obtained in this thesis. Further research should examine the relationship between the SSGS-M and the TOSCA-SD in offender samples.

In any case, this thesis has established that some sexual offenders against children feel worse than others do after their initial offence and that this feeling is directly associated with official measures of recidivism and with factors known to be predictive of officially detected recidivism. This raises the question why some participants would feel worse than others.

One obvious answer for this lies in the trait research of Tangney and colleagues, which was outlined in the literature review – early in life, people develop a tendency to react to their moral shortcomings with a particular combination and intensity of shame and guilt. Despite the absence of a measure that separates the tendency to feel shame and guilt in this thesis, it seems fair to speculate that this is part of the equation. However, some of the results of this thesis suggest that there are some situational variables that add to whatever variance is explained by a tendency to feel
shame and/or guilt. A likely mediating factor between a situation and the experienced emotion is cognition. The next section explores the role cognitions may play in this equation.

**Cognition and Moral Emotions**

A clear difference between shame and guilt is whether the behaviour is attributed to a global, stable feature of the self – shame arises when the behaviour has implications for the person’s identity and guilt arises when the behaviour is perceived as wrong, but not in a way that implies the person is bad. This perception has to be cognitive, as it involves attributing meaning to a particular behaviour.

The first stage of this attribution has to do with whether the behaviour is perceived as bad/wrong in the first place. While child sexual abuse is generally acknowledged as wrongful, even among criminal populations (Schwaebe, 2005; Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008), this does not imply that every person who commits such an offence perceives it as wrong.

Thakker, Ward and Navathe (2007) noted that:

*A growing body of research since the mid-1980s has explored the role of cognition in the genesis and maintenance of child sexual abuse. This research indicates that child sexual abusers often harbor beliefs that justify sexual offending and appear to precipitate and maintain behavior (p. 11).*

They point out that these beliefs can function in two broad ways – they can play a role in enabling a particular behaviour, or may simply serve to reduce the guilt and shame
felt after that behaviour, without necessarily playing an enabling role. Some beliefs could easily serve both functions.

As noted earlier in this thesis there are many behaviours which are perceived as wrong by some people, but not by others. The eating of pork was given as an example of a behaviour that would be a source of shame or guilt for some, but others would have no objection to. Consequently, it seems likely that some of the people who commit child sexual abuse will not feel any appreciable levels of shame and guilt afterwards, but others will.

This is seen in the current results. Figure 3, on page 152 showed that the median response for the Shame scale was the maximum possible score, but also showed that some respondents recorded the minimum possible score. Assuming these participants answered in a truthful manner, there are two possible interpretations of the minimum and very low scores.

The first is that the participant genuinely did not feel bad after he committed the offence. This would suggest that the participant did not perceive he had broken his own code of conduct – either because he really did not breach his own code of conduct, or because he viewed/interpreted his actions in a manner so that they appear to be consistent with his code of conduct. Thakker, Ward and Navathe (2007) identified a number of implicit theories held by child sexual offenders. If the offender strongly held either the *Children as sexual beings* or *Entitlement* implicit theories, it is likely he would feel little shame or guilt, as he would not view the offence as wrong.

The second possibility is that the participant did feel bad after the offence, but then employed a range of neutralising cognitions, which had the effect of removing that bad feeling. Thinking back about that behaviour, the person may not recall feeling
bad, particularly if the process is rapid. The other three implicit theories identified by Thakker, Ward and Navathe – Dangerous world, Uncontrollable and Nature of harm – all could be capable of producing such an effect.

A possibility not tested by this thesis, is that these implicit theories mediate the moral emotion felt by the participant after he sexually assaulted a child. In this scenario, a person who molests a child (or commits any offence) views that behaviour through the schema/implicit theories they have developed throughout their life. This leads to an appraisal of their behaviour – if the behaviour is viewed as wrong, then shame and/or guilt are likely outcomes. Earlier in this thesis (page 115) the various strategies people use to resolve shame and guilt, and the ways these could lead to offending were explored. The particular strategies chosen could lead towards, or away from, further offending.

One issue is whether these strategies develop over time or whether they are well developed at the time of the first sexual offence against a child. One of the findings of the current thesis was that, for participants who continued to offend, their reported levels of moral emotion after their most recent offence was not significantly different from the levels after their initial offence. Consequently, while the level of moral emotion after a first sexual offence may be predictive of whether the offender continues to offend, among those who do continue to offend the current findings suggest that the intensity of their moral emotions may not change with repeated offending.

This has implications for research into cognitive distortions and schemas underpinning offending. The fact that shame and guilt did not decrease with each subsequent offence suggests that the tactics used to deal with shame and guilt were
already established before the first offence, or were established very quickly after that
offence, rather than becoming more entrenched over time. If these beliefs or schemas
were in place before the first offence, it does not necessarily follow that they are
causal or even criminogenic, although they well may be.

These results do suggest that, regardless of the specific tactics employed, the vast
majority of subjects in the current research already possessed, or were able to quickly
develop some cognitive mechanisms to reduce their guilt and shame below the
threshold where it might restrain them from further offending. They did this quickly
enough that their ratings of the shame and guilt after the first offence were already
lower, albeit not statistically significantly, than those who reported they did not offend
again. They also reduced their shame and guilt to the level at which it would remain
throughout their offending career.

Of particular importance for this thesis, are the cognitions responsible for the lower
levels of guilt felt by extrafamilial offenders against boys, compared to other
participants. There are a number of possible mechanisms which could explain such a
finding, including general societal beliefs that males welcome all sexual contact and
are therefore less harmed by these actions, or perhaps more specific beliefs which
may be held only by the perpetrators.

Briggs and Hawkins (1996) noted that child sexual offenders who had also been
victims of child sexual abuse, were more likely than other victims to regard their own
abuse as normal and report few adverse effects, contrary to the opinion of the
researchers that these men had obvious psychological difficulties. In this thesis,
extrafamilial offenders against boys were more likely to report having been a victim
of sexual abuse outside the home. If Briggs and Hawkins’ findings are true for the
current sample, this would suggest that part of the reason that extrafamilial offenders against boys are less likely to feel guilty about their behaviour, is because they do not view it as harmful – or at least less harmful than other participants.

It was noted earlier that people feel higher levels of guilt when they transgress against people they like or respect. This may also explain part of the differences between extrafamilial offenders against boys and other participants. Explanatory mechanisms for this are likely to relate to the difficulty in blaming or demonising someone the perpetrator cares about (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1995).

The one remaining puzzle in this concerns age. While there is an expected relationship between age and guilt for intrafamilial offenders and for extrafamilial offenders against girls, this relationship does not exist for extrafamilial offenders against boys. Why would this be so? It is possible that these participants hold cognitions that are not affected by the age-related factors that affect other participants. These cognitions might have an internal logic that resists evidence to the contrary. In contrast, the offence-supportive cognitions of the other participants might be more easily challenged by alternative points of view. If this is true, it would suggest that extrafamilial offenders against boys might be more resistant to treatment.

This section raises the possibility of a more adequate theoretical explanation of the relationship between these characteristics and recidivism — younger offenders, offenders who molest boys, and non-family members are more likely to reoffend because they do not feel as bad about their offence as their counterparts. It also raises the possibility that extrafamilial offenders against boys might be qualitatively different from the other participants, and that this difference may be more than just their degree of risk for further offending.
The final issue for this discussion concerns shame – or more specifically, its non-detection in this thesis. The next section examines this issue.

**Where is Shame Hiding?**

It is unfortunate that the Shame scale of the SSGS-M appears to be measuring guilt rather than shame, as high levels of shame among child sexual offenders, are commonly reported by the clinicians who work with them (Marshall W. L., Marshall, Serran, & O'Brien, 2009). The SSGS was developed by Tangney and Dearing, researchers who were devoted to the distinction between shame and guilt adopted throughout this thesis; so the intent of the instrument is clearly to measure these constructs. There are a number of possible reasons why shame was not accurately measured.

Two of the main action motivations of shame, withdrawal and avoidance (Nathanson, 1992), would directly motivate participants to not talk about their shameful experiences. This may have operated in two ways in this thesis. Firstly, highly ashamed offenders may have declined to take part in the study in the first place. As noted earlier the decline rate was around 50%. Some of those who participated spontaneously gave guilt-inspired reasons for participating – such as helping prevent further sexual abuse. In contrast, a number who refused to participate were quite hostile to the researchers, consistent with a shame-based, attack-other strategy. Some other refusers were very quick to decline – not inconsistent with a strategy of withdrawal.

Secondly, even among those who agreed to participate, while they might have felt ashamed after their initial offence, they may have resolved this in a manner that
requires them to deny the existence of the shame in the first place. Strategies, such as denial and avoidance, take the focus away from the behaviour itself – in effect, reducing the meaning of the behaviour from an important, shame-inducing action, to something of little consequence. The strategy of externalisation can also reduce the magnitude of the event – while it still happened, it is not my fault and consequently not important to focus upon. This is possible for events of high shame, because the strategies used match the intensity of the shame:

Directly proportional to the degree and intensity of shame experienced by a man (regardless of it’s source) will be his tendency to blame others for it. This is one of the reasons some men are so apt to blame women for their own sexual arousal (“She did it to me”) and thereby to excuse behavior for which they might otherwise be ashamed or guilty (Nathanson, 1992, p. 294).

Hence, while it is possible, likely even, that participants experienced shame and guilt differentially, when asked to recollect an experience that may have been highly shameful, the coping strategies they used to deal with that shame make differentiation between shame and guilt very difficult. This may be a key reason that the Shame and Guilt scales of the SSGS-M were so highly correlated and more highly correlated than any of the studies covered in the literature review that had used this instrument. None of the other studies used situations as overtly shameful as child sexual abuse. The other study that had very high correlations (Hopfensitz, 2006) measured moral emotions immediately after behaviour that was likely to provoke shame and/or guilt.

It was noted earlier, that the prime function of the Compass of Shame strategies outlined by Nathanson (1992) is to reduce the discomfort of shame. To the extent they are successful, the person becomes detached about that behaviour. It is not possible to
know whether the participants became detached through shame-reduction strategies, or were never feeling ashamed in the first place.

Marshall, Marshall and Ware (2009) pointed out that many of the cognitive distortions of sexual offenders are post-hoc mechanisms to reduce shame. This thesis did not attempt to examine the cognitive distortions of the participants, so it is not known how many of the more detached participants achieved that detachment through cognitive distortions and how many did not feel as bad in the first place.

However, when used, the cognitive distortions may actually be a viable method of alleviating shame. Marshall, Marshall and Ware explained:

_Dissimulation characterises human responses to personal bad behaviour where the person attempts to present themselves as not having behaved in a harmful way and sexual offenders are no exception. As it turns out excuse-making is healthful and results in a reduction in reoffending (Marshall, Marshall, & Ware, 2009, p. 21)._.

Another possibility concerns the administration of the SSGS-M many years after the event in question – there was an average time lag of 15 years between participants’ first offence and the administration of the questionnaire. Processing and reprocessing their recollections of the events around the time of their offence may have resulted in a blurring of the distinction between shame and guilt – even if a clear distinction existed at the time.

Consequently, it is possible that when levels of shame are high enough, that self-report may not be a good method for evaluating the level of shame. Further research
could investigate the relationship between self-reports of shame and assessments by trained professionals, such as psychologists working with child sexual offenders.
CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

This thesis investigated the role of moral emotions in child sexual assault. Despite difficulties in directly identifying shame, guilt and pride, meaningful associations were found between what is likely guilt and detachment. The difficulties in measurement are probably due to a combination of ceiling effects, lapsed time and the desire to escape the discomfort of shame, which likely skewed the reports of some participants.

Future investigations of moral emotions with child sexual offenders should include observational measures of shame-related and guilt-related behaviours, to assist in distinguishing between the two. These could be based around Nathanson’s (1992) Compass of Shame – the extent to which offenders engage in externalisation, withdrawal, avoidance and attack-self strategies could be coded for both frequency and intensity.

Additionally, more extreme measures of shame and guilt may uncover separate measures of shame and guilt. This distinction is essential if the general literature on moral emotions with non-offending populations is to be integrated with the research on offenders.

This thesis found that guilt (measured by the Shame and Guilt scales) is a restraint against further offending and detachment (measured by the Pride scale) represents the relative absence of that restraint. It was found that moral emotions can help explain why some categories of child sexual offender reoffend at a higher rate than others. Younger offenders, extrafamilial offenders and offenders who molest boys have all been found to have higher rates of reoffending.
In this thesis, the measures of guilt and detachment were consistently associated with these factors in the expected direction. Younger offenders, extrafamilial offenders, and offenders against boys felt less guilt and were more detached than their counterparts. Guilt and detachment were also directly predictive of officially detected recidivism.

Post-hoc analysis found that, while the competing concept of low self-control was predictive of repeat sexual offending, it failed to distinguish between younger offenders, extrafamilial offenders, offenders against boys and their counterparts. This suggests that, while there may be differences in child sexual offenders’ ability to restrain from offending, the restraining force of guilt can help explain some of the observed differences among offenders. In particular, differences in motivational balance should be considered before assuming there are differences in ability.

One particular group, extrafamilial offenders against boys, was identified as potentially different from other participants. While this group, being composed of two intersecting risk factors, would be expected to be higher risk than other participants, it may be that it is more than the sum of its parts. The fact that age made no independent contribution to moral emotion for this group suggests that this group is worthy of further study.

Moral emotions have been studied for several decades, but it is only in recent years that this research has been applied to the study of offending behaviour. This thesis, along with other recent research, has scraped the surface of this topic. Future research should uncover much that is useful about the role of moral emotions in offending behaviour.
References


Worling, J. (2001). Personality-based typology of adolescent male sexual offenders: Differences in recidivism rates, victim-selection characteristics, and personal

### Appendix A

#### State Shame and Guilt Scale – Modified

Circle the number that best describes your feelings at that time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Didn’t feel this way at all</th>
<th>Felt this way somewhat</th>
<th>Felt this way very strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt good about myself</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to sink into the floor and disappear</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt remorse, regret</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt worthwhile, valuable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt small</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt tension about what I did</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt capable, useful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt like I was a bad person</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could not stop thinking about the bad thing I did</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt proud</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt humiliated, disgraced</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt like apologising, confessing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt pleased about what I did</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt worthless, powerless</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt bad about what I did</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Hypothetical Scenario

You are driving your car in the early evening. Recent rain has made the road surface very slippery. You know your tyres are worn and need replacing, and you have been careful to drive a little slower than usual, especially around corners. For the last minute or so there has been another car sitting right on your tail, and you think to yourself how dangerous that is. You approach a roundabout, and you notice that the other car is still very close behind you. The roundabout splits the road into two lanes and then after the roundabout, the road returns to a single lane. As you enter the roundabout, the other car tries to overtake you on the left. You increase your speed and veer a little to the left, making it difficult for them to overtake you. About half way into the roundabout, the other car slips sideways into a ditch at the side of the road. As you drive away you look into your rear view mirror and see the other driver getting out of their car to inspect the damage. No one has been hurt, but their car is obviously in trouble and the driver is obviously very angry.
Appendix C

Self-Control Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>k)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>l)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>m)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>n)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>o)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>p)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>r)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>s)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>t)</td>
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<td>u)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>v)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree Somewhat</td>
<td>Agree Somewhat</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w) When I am really angry, other people should stay away from me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x) When I have a serious disagreement with someone, it's usually hard</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for me to talk calmly about it without getting upset.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### National Youth Survey – Delinquency Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Avoided paying at restaurants, cinemas etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Knowingly bought, held, or sold stolen property</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Taken someone else’s vehicle without their permission</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Taken anything worth $5 or less from your job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Taken anything worth between $5 and $50 from your job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Taken anything worth over $50 from your job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Taken anything worth $5 or less from someone else</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Taken anything worth between $5 and $50 from someone else</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Taken anything worth over $50 from someone else</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) Damaged / destroyed property belonging to family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k) Damaged / destroyed property belonging to an employer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l) Purposely damaged / destroyed property belonging to spouse / partner / friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m) Broken into a building / vehicle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n) Stolen or attempted to steal a car</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o) Thrown objects at cars / property</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p) Drunk alcohol before the age of 18 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>Driven a car while drunk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>Bought alcohol from someone under 18 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>Had marijuana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>Used hallucinogens / LSD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>Had amphetamines (speed etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>Had heroin or cocaine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>Sold marijuana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Sold hard drugs (cocaíne, heroin)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>Been involved in a gang fight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>Used physical force to get money from family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aa</td>
<td>Used physical force to get money from someone at work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bb</td>
<td>Used physical force to get money from someone other than at work or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cc</td>
<td>Hit or threatened to hit a family member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dd</td>
<td>Hit or threatened to hit someone at work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ee</td>
<td>Hit or threatened to hit friend / partner / spouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff</td>
<td>Attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting / killing them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gg</td>
<td>Used physical force to obtain sexual favours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hh</td>
<td>Had or tried to have sex with someone against their will</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

The Griffith Longitudinal Project
INFORMATION SHEET

Who is conducting the research?

A/Prof Stephen Smallbone
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Dr Mark Rallings
Offender Programs and Services Directorate
Queensland Department of Corrective Services
3239 6505
Mark.Rallings@dcst.qld.gov.au

Why is the research being conducted?

You are being approached to take part in a research study. The study is being conducted by a group of researchers from the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and the School of Psychology, at Griffith University in Brisbane. This study is funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant and Queensland Corrective Services is an industry research partner. The aim of the research is to obtain information about sexual offending and men who are convicted of having committed sexual offences.

What will you be asked to do?
**Questionnaire and Private Interview**

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire asks about your personal history and any sexual offences you may have committed. This is likely to take about 1 ½ hours of your time but it might take a little less time or a little more time. In addition, you might be asked to take part in a private interview with the researcher after you complete the questionnaire. The interview is likely to take about an extra 1 hour of your time. The researcher who interviews you will be interested in the things that happened before the offence occurred for which you have been convicted. You will be taken to a private room to complete the questionnaire and / or take part in the interview. A separate appointment will be made if you agree to take part in an interview.

None of the information you provide will be used by anyone outside the research team. This is an independent project – no identifying information will be published or given to anyone outside the research team. If you agree to complete the questionnaire you can sign the consent form that the researcher will provide to you. If you agree to take part in a private interview with the researcher, you can indicate this by circling ‘YES’ underneath your signature.

**Re-administration of Questionnaire**

The researchers will also ask your permission to contact you within 6 months of completing the questionnaire and ask you to complete the questionnaire again. The purpose of this is to ensure that the questionnaire that we ask you to fill out reliably records your answers and comments. If you agree to this, you can circle ‘YES’, that you give permission to be contacted again within 6 months. Again, you may also wish to circle ‘NO’, that you do not wish to be re-contacted.

**Audio-Taping**

The researchers will also ask for your permission to audio-tape your interview. The researchers have requested your permission to audio-tape your interview to make sure that your answers and comments are recorded correctly. The audio-tape will only record your voice and only the Griffith University researchers will have access to the audio-tape. The audio-tape will be erased once the researchers have transcribed it (copied down what you said). Providing permission to the researchers to audio-tape your interview is completely voluntary. You can still participate in the interview if you choose not to provide permission to have it audio-taped. If you wish to give permission to the researchers to audio-tape your interview, you can circle ‘YES’, that you give permission for an audio-tape to be made. Alternatively, you may wish to circle ‘NO’, that you do not wish for an audio-tape to be made.

**Follow-up Study**
The researchers would also like to conduct a follow-up study at a later date. By agreeing to a follow-up interview, you will be allowing the researchers to keep a record of your name to enable them to contact you at a later date. This list of names will be kept in a locked cabinet at Griffith University, and will be kept separate from any other information you might agree to provide to us. To ensure your privacy, the researchers will not be able to match your name with the questionnaire that you complete. The purpose of the follow-up study is to find out what has happened in your life since completing the sentence you are now serving. We hope to be able to find out what might have gone wrong for people who have been convicted for new offences, and to find out what has gone well for those people who are not convicted for any more offences.

If you agree to participate in the follow-up study, it may be some years before we contact you again. This might involve the Griffith University research team accessing your file to find out whether you are serving a custodial sentence or community corrections order, or if you are no longer under an order the researchers will want to know your last known address. If you are serving a custodial sentence, or under a community corrections order at this time, the researchers will locate you within the custodial centre or by your community corrections officer. If you are no longer serving a sentence or under an order the researchers will send you a letter to your last known address. The researchers will identify themselves in the letter as researchers from Griffith University. To ensure your privacy, the envelope and letter will not contain any information as to what sort of research you have participated in. You can indicate by circling “YES” that you give permission for the researchers to contact you at a later date, and that you give permission for them to access your file to find out your last known address. Alternatively, you may wish to circle “NO” indicating that you do not wish to be re-contacted to participate in the follow-up study.

Access to Prison File

The researchers would also like to request permission from you to access your Prison file in order to obtain further information concerning your background and previous offences (if any). The information collected from your file will be entered into an electronic database against your Correctional Information System number in order to conduct analyses to further our understanding of sexual offending. Your name will not be recorded in this database, nor will the researchers be able to identify you through your CIS number. Remember, none of the information obtained from your file will be used by anyone outside the research team. This is an independent project – no identifying information will be published or given to anyone outside the research team. You can indicate by circling “YES” that you give permission for the researchers to access your Prison file in order to obtain this information. Alternatively, you may wish to circle “NO” indicating that you do not give permission to the researchers to access your prison file.

The expected benefits of the research
There is a lot we do not know about sexual offending. By taking part in the study and providing accurate information, you will be making a very important contribution to our understanding. Our main interest is to obtain information that could be used to try to prevent sexual offences from happening in the first place. This may involve helping men such as yourself to not commit a sexual offence in the first place.

**Risks to you**

The questions are obviously very personal, and it is possible that answering some of them could upset you. If this happens to you, the researcher who gives you the questionnaire will let you know who you can contact to talk about it. If you are serving a custodial sentence, this person will be the custodial centre psychologist / counsellor. If you are under a community corrections order, your community corrections officer will be available for you to talk to.

As part of this research you will be asked to provide details about previous undetected offences if these have occurred. It is important when answering these questions that you do not provide this information in a way that identifies the person or persons concerned (such as names, dates, specific locations). If you do provide the researchers with information that may identify a person or persons concerned, the researchers may be legally obliged to pass this information to the appropriate authorities.

**Your confidentiality**

The data collected for this research project will not contain any identifying information that might potentially identify you as a participant in this study nor will any resulting publications or reports. This is an INDEPENDENT STUDY. None of the information you provide will be used by anyone outside the research team. Your Correctional Information System number will be stored in a computer database against which the information you provide will be recorded. The Griffith University researchers will not be able to match your CIS number with your name. That is, the researchers will not be able to identify any individual who participates in this study by their name. The research database will only be accessed by the Griffith University researchers. This means that other organisations (including Queensland Corrective services) that have your name and CIS number on record will not have access to this database and will not be able to identify you as having participated in the research study. All information that you wish to provide to us is confidential and will not be discussed outside the research team. There are times however when the researchers will have to tell another organisation about what you have said. This will only occur if you tell us specifically that someone is still being hurt, if your safety is at risk, or if
you provide the researchers with information about a previously undetected offence that identifies the person or persons concerned.

The results of this study may be published in academic journals and presented at conferences. The reports that the researchers provide might contain individual case examples of a particular participant. If this occurs, the researchers will disguise all details that could possibly lead to an individual being identified as having participated in the study. This means that for those participants whose cases have received media attention, the researchers will disguise well known features of their case to prevent this person being identified. All data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at Griffith University for a period of 5 years before being destroyed.

**Your participation is voluntary**

Participation in the study is completely voluntary; there will be no penalty if you choose not to participate in the study. Even if you decide to participate, you can withdraw at any time, again without penalty.

**Questions / further information**

If you have any further questions or require more information regarding this research study please contact the Principal Researcher, Associate Professor Stephen Smallbone, whose contact details you can find at the top of this information sheet.

**Feedback to you**

Because we will not know who filled out any of the questionnaires, we will not be able to give you feedback about the information you provide. However, if you want to find out about the results of our study, again please feel free to contact the Principal Researcher at the number given below. Please note that we will not be able to report any results to you until about mid-2008.

Associate Professor Stephen Smallbone  
School of Criminology & Criminal Justice  
Griffith University, Mt Gravatt Campus  
3735 3452
Privacy statement

The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and / or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at www.gu.edu.au/ua/aa/vc/pp or telephone (07) 3735 5585.

Complaints mechanism

Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of this research project you should contact the Manager, research Ethics on 3735 5585 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au

Griffith University thanks you for your consent and participation in this research.
Appendix F

The Griffith Longitudinal Project

CONSENT FORM

Research Team

A/Prof Stephen Smallbone
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Dr Mark Rallings
Offender Programs and Services Directorate
Queensland Department of Corrective Services
3239 6505
Mark.Rallings@dcs.qld.gov.au

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information package and in particular have noted that:

Questionnaire

- I understand that my involvement in this research will include the completion of a questionnaire that asks about my background and any sexual offences that I may have committed;

Interview

- I understand that I may also indicate by circling ‘YES’ that I agree to take part in an interview with the researcher;
- I understand that a separate appointment will be made if I agree to take part in an interview;
Re-administration of Questionnaire

- I understand that I may indicate by circling ‘YES’ that I agree to be re-contacted by the researchers within 6 months of completing the questionnaire to fill out the questionnaire again;

Audio-taping

- I understand that I may also indicate by circling ‘YES’ that I am providing consent for the researchers to audio-tape my interview;
- I understand that the audio-tapes will only be accessed by the Griffith University researchers and will be erased following transcription;
- I understand that I can circle ‘NO’ indicating that I do not wish to have my interview audio-taped and that I can still participate in the interview;

Follow-up Study

- I understand that I can choose to be re-contacted within the next 5 to 6 years to participate in a follow-up study with the researchers;
- I understand that if I give consent to be re-contacted at a later date, this might involve the Griffith University research team accessing my file to find out my last known address;
- I understand that if the researchers contact me at my home address, that the envelope and letter will not contain any identifying information about what sort of research I participated in to ensure my privacy;

Prison File

- I understand that by circling ‘YES’ that I am providing consent for the researchers to access my Prison file;
- I understand that none of the information obtained from my file will be used by anyone outside the research team;

Confidentiality

- I understand that the information I provide is confidential and will not be used to identify me unless I tell the researcher specifically of someone that is in danger or if I am in danger;
- I understand that as part of this research I will be asked to provide details about previous undetected offences if these have occurred.
- I understand that if these have occurred and I provide the researchers with information that could identify the person or persons concerned, the researchers may be legally obliged to pass this information on to the appropriate authorities.
- I understand that my Correctional Information System number will be recorded in the Griffith University researchers’ database against the information that I provide;

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I understand that only the Griffith University researchers will have access to this research database and that they will not be able to match my CIS number with my name;

I understand that any publications or information presented at conferences as a result of this study will not be published or presented in a way that will identify me.

By signing this consent form I am agreeing that:

- I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction;
- I understand the risks involved;
- I understand that there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research;
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary;
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time, without comment or penalty;
- I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on 3735 5585 (or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have any concern about the ethical conduct of the project; and
- I agree to participate in the project and complete the questionnaire.

Signed ………………………………………… / ………….

Participant (Date)

…………………………………….. / …………….

Researcher (Date)

Private Interview

Please indicate below by circling ‘YES’ or ‘NO’ whether or not you wish to take part in a private interview with the researchers:
YES (I give permission to take part in an interview with the researcher)  NO (I do not wish to be interviewed by the researcher)

Re-administration of Questionnaire

Please indicate below by circling ‘YES’ or ‘NO’ whether or not you give permission for the researchers to contact you within 6 months to complete the questionnaire again:

YES (I give permission to be recontacted by the researchers within 6 months to complete the questionnaire again)  NO (I do not wish to be recontacted to complete the questionnaire again)

Audio-taping

If you agree to take part in a private interview with the researcher, please indicate by circling ‘YES’ or ‘NO’ whether or not you consent to having an audio-tape made of your interview.
YES (I give permission to audio-tape
my interview. I understand that the audio-
tape will be erased after the researchers have
transcribed it)

NO (I do not give permission
for my interview to be audio-
taped)

Follow-up Study

I hereby give permission for the researchers of this study to re-contact me at a later date for a follow-up study. I understand that after this time the researchers will destroy any record of my name and I will never be contacted personally by the researchers again unless I give a further agreement for them to do so (please circle one response):

YES (I give permission to be contacted by the researchers again at a later date to participate in a follow-up study. I understand that I will be contacted at either the custodial or community corrections centre if I am still serving a sentence, or that a letter will be sent to my address if my sentence is finished. I understand that the envelope and letter will contain no information about what sort of project I participated in)
Access to Prison File

*Please indicate by circling either ‘YES’ or ‘NO’ whether or not you wish to provide the researchers with your permission to access your Prison file.*

**YES** (I give permission for the researchers to access my Prison file)  **NO** (I do not give permission for the researchers to access my Prison file)

Signature of Participant ____________________________  Date: ___ / ___ / 2008

**NO** (I do not give permission to be contacted by the researchers again to participate in a follow-up study)