An empirical examination of an offender x situation interaction typology of male adolescent sexual offending

Mr Christopher Gerard Dowling
BPsySc, BCCJ (Hons)

School of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Arts, Education and Law
Griffith University

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
April, 2016
Abstract

This thesis empirically examined the validity of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation interaction typology of sexual offending, using a sample of male adolescent sexual offenders. Driven primarily by applied concerns with the situational prevention of sexual offending, this typology draws on the ideas that have emerged from interactional psychology to emphasise the interdependent influence of internal (dispositional) and external (situational) factors on sexual offending. It proposes the existence of three sexual offender types (‘Predatory’, ‘Opportunist’, and ‘Situational’), distinguished based on the strength of their predisposition towards sexual offending, and three offence situation types (‘Challenged’, ‘Tempted’, and ‘Precipitated’), that vary in the extent to which they allow/encourage sexual offending. It highlights that those with stronger predispositions towards sexual offending will do so across a wider range of situations, including those that inhibit/discourage such behaviour, while those with weaker or ambivalent motivations will limit their sexual offending to situations that are perceived to encourage such behaviour, or make it easy and safe to engage in.

The clinical files of 247 male adolescent sexual offenders referred to the Griffith Youth Forensic Service in Brisbane, Queensland between 2000 and 2014 were accessed for the purposes of data collection. Given the interaction typology’s applied concern with prevention, it was empirically examined in relation to participants’ first sexual offence. The first sexual offence was defined as the first identifiable incident of illegal sexual behaviour perpetrated from 10 years of age against a human victim that involved the threat/use of force, a lack of clearly expressed willingness on the victim’s part to participate in sexual activity, and/or a victim who was prepubescent/notably younger than the participant.

First, the validity of this typology’s offender component was examined. Participants were classified into one of the three offender groups based on their histories of non-sexual
offending and sexually deviant thoughts/behaviours prior to their first sexual offence, and compared on theoretically relevant variables. ‘Predatory’ offenders began sexually offending at an earlier age than both ‘Situational’ and ‘Opportunist’ offenders, while ‘Situational’ offenders exhibited weaker antisocial predispositions and a stronger connection to social controls than both ‘Predatory’ and ‘Opportunist’ offenders.

Second, the validity of this typology’s situational component was examined. Participants’ first sexual offences were classified into one of the three situational groups based on the degree of risk/effort involved, and whether the intention to commit the offence was formed during their encounter with the victim, and again compared on theoretically relevant variables. Offences in the ‘Challenged’ group were more likely to have been committed against an unknown and older victim, in a non-residential location, and overnight or during the morning than offences in the ‘Tempted’ and ‘Precipitated’ groups. The cross-tabulation of these groups with a situational cluster solution based on the characteristics of participants’ first sexual offences further indicated that the ‘Challenged’ group encompassed a greater proportion of offences characterised by higher levels of risk and effort.

Finally, the offender and situational groups were cross tabulated to examine whether the pattern of dispersal of participants in each offender group across the situational groups matched that hypothesised by Wortley and Smallbone (2006). ‘Situational’ and ‘Predatory’ offenders were dispersed across the situational groups in a manner consistent with Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) predictions, while ‘Opportunist’ offenders were not. The further crosstabulation of offender groups with the situational clusters provided somewhat stronger but still limited support for the validity of the interaction typology. A series of instrumental case studies were used to explore the interaction of offender and situation in more depth, and in particular examine the dynamic and less tangible situational characteristics neglected in quantitative analyses.
These findings highlight a number of avenues for theory advancement and further research. In particular, it is suggested that improvements be made to the conceptualisation of the situational component of this typology, and that future attempts to operationalise it move beyond basic situational characteristics. Additionally, once the validity of this typology is established, the need to examine its effectiveness as a tool for the application of situational crime prevention measures is emphasised. Methodological limitations are also discussed.
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.

09/03/2016

Christopher Gerard Dowling

Date
# Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ i
Statement of Originality ............................................................................................................... iv
List of Tables .......................................................................................................................... viii
List of Figures ........................................................................................................................ ix
Acknowledgments .................................................................................................................. x
List of Presentations ................................................................................................................ xii
Chapter One: Introduction ...................................................................................................... 1
  1.1 Research Rationale and Aims ....................................................................................... 1
  1.2 Chapter Overview ........................................................................................................ 5
Chapter Two: Literature Review ............................................................................................ 7
  2.1 Dispositional Approaches to Studying Adolescent Sexual Offending ..................... 7
    2.1.1 The problem of adolescent sexual offending ....................................................... 7
    2.1.2 Understanding the focus of research on adolescent sexual offending .............. 8
    2.1.3 Dispositional research on adolescent sexual offending ...................................... 19
    2.1.4 Summary ............................................................................................................ 29
  2.2 Situational Approaches to Studying Adolescent Sexual Offending .......................... 30
    2.2.1 Situational approaches to studying crime .......................................................... 30
    2.2.2 Theoretical perspectives on the situational context of adolescent sexual offending ........................................................................................................ 37
    2.2.3 Empirical research on the characteristics of adolescent sexual offences .......... 45
    2.2.4 Summary ............................................................................................................ 50
  2.3 Integrating Dispositional and Situational Approaches ............................................... 51
    2.3.1 An interdependent interactional model of human behaviour .............................. 52
    2.3.2 Criminological applications of the interdependent interactional model ............. 56
    2.3.3 The interdependent interactional model and adolescent sexual offending ........ 61
    2.3.4 Implications for assessment, treatment and prevention ...................................... 65
List of Tables

Table 2.1: Typology of SCP Techniques ......................................................... 38
Table 3.1: Offender Group Classification ......................................................... 81
Table 3.2: Situational Group Classification ....................................................... 84
Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics ........................................................................ 90
Table 4.2: Bivariate Comparisons of Offender Groups ...................................... 93
Table 4.3: MANOVA Post-Hoc Comparisons ..................................................... 96
Table 4.4: Bivariate Comparisons of Situational Groups ................................... 98
Table 4.5: TSCA Situational Clusters ................................................................. 99
Table 4.6: Crosstabulation of Situational Groups and Situational Clusters ............. 101
Table 4.7: Crosstabulation of Offender and Situational Groups .......................... 102
Table 4.8: Crosstabulation of Offender Groups and Situational Clusters .......... 102
List of Figures

Figure 2.1: The convergent elements of a direct contact predatory offence opportunity......32

Figure 2.2: Hypothetical Cross-Situational Patterns in the Probability of Behaviour............56

Figure 2.3: Cross-Situational Patterns in the Probability of Offending for Cornish andClarke’s (2003) Offender Groups.................................................................................60

Figure 2.4: Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation interaction typology of sexual offending..........................................................62
Acknowledgments

It is with both a sense of excitement and trepidation that I conclude this thesis, and prepare to take my first steps beyond it. I do so deeply indebted to a number of people, whose contributions were critical to both its completion and, more broadly, my own professional and personal development.

First, to my principle supervisors A/Professor Benoit Leclerc and Professor Stephen Smallbone; thank you for your patient guidance and selfless investment in my development as a researcher. It has been a privilege to work with you throughout my candidature, and draw on your wealth of experience and knowledge. Thank you also to my secondary supervisor Dr Jesse Cale. The intensive professional and personal guidance you provided in the early stages of my candidature was invaluable, and I am extremely grateful for your ongoing support and friendship.

I thank my colleagues and fellow PhD students in the Griffith Criminology Institute. I especially acknowledge the clinical and administrative staff of the Griffith Youth Forensic Service (past and present); Sue Rayment-McHugh, Shiralee Ransley, Helene Wells, Janene Bosa, Sam Bosa, Dr Danielle Schumack, Dimity Smith, James Ogilvy, Sam Kilby, Ben Evans and Ellie Woodford. I hope that this thesis contributes in some small way to the important and challenging work that you do. I am also grateful to Zoe Bromham, Karina O’Malley and Dr Nadine McKillop, with whom I worked in data collection and collation, and to Dr Tara McGee and Professor Richard Wortley, who generously provided insightful advice and feedback at critical points in my candidature.

Finally, thank you to my family and friends. While most of you will never read beyond this point, please know that you contributed more to this thesis than you could ever understand. To my friends; thank you for your patience and support, and for offering a much needed escape from the stresses of being a PhD student. To my partner Meg, I extend my
love and deepest gratitude for sharing so selflessly in the final (and toughest) stages of this thesis, and encouraging me to persevere. And to my family; thank you for your unconditional love and encouragement in everything I have undertaken. All that I am and have achieved I owe to you. I love you.
List of Presentations

Findings associated with this thesis have been disseminated in the following forums;


Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Research Rationale and Aims

This thesis, to the author’s knowledge, constitutes the first empirical examination of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006; see also Smallbone & Cale, in press; Smallbone, Marshall & Wortley, 2008) offender x situation interaction typology of sexual offending, using a sample of male adolescent sexual offenders (ASOs). More broadly, it explores the relevance of interactional psychology, specifically the interdependent interactional model of human behaviour (Mischel, 2004), to the study and prevention of adolescent sexual offending.

Research on adolescent sexual offending has historically focused on understanding the developmental and psychological factors that predispose adolescents towards this behaviour. This focus coincides with that in much of the research on adult sexual offending, and stems from early medical research that conceptualises this behaviour as symptomatic of some underlying sexual pathology (e.g., Bloch, 1906/1909; Ellis, 1936; Freud, 1905/1956; Hirschfield, 1932; Von Kraft-Ebbing, 1886/1969). A number of developmental and psychological factors have been identified as potentially predisposing adolescents towards sexual offending, drawing attention to their dispositional heterogeneity (Epps & Fisher, 2004; Hempel, Buck, Cima & van Marle, 2013; Leversee, 2010; 2011; McCann & Lussier, 2008; Seto & Lalumière, 2010; van Wijk et al., 2006).

Critically, while this dispositional research has greatly informed efforts to identify who is more likely to sexually offend and why, it pays comparatively little attention to explaining the differential occurrence of sexual offences across situations. However, this has been the focus of an emerging area of research that draws on situational approaches to the study and prevention of crime (e.g., routine activities approach, Cohen & Felson, 1979; rational choice approach, Clarke & Cornish, 1985; situational crime prevention (SCP), Clarke, 1983) in order to understand the situational factors (e.g., time, location, interpersonal...
context) that influence the commission of adolescent sexual offences (e.g., Kaufman, Hilliker & Daleiden, 1996; Leclerc, Beauregard & Proulx, 2008; Leclerc & Felson, 2014; Leclerc & Tremblay, 2007). While still in the early stages, this research suggests that, like any other form of offending, adolescent sexual offences have a tendency to occur in situations where the perceived risks and effort involved are minimal, and where there are anticipated personal benefits.

These distinct lines of research on adolescent sexual offending mirror those in psychology at large that focus on either the internal (dispositional) or external (situational) factors influencing human behaviour. Over the last few decades an interdependent interactional model of human behaviour has been put forward as a means of integrating these perspectives. This model posits what is essentially a statistical interaction between dispositional and situational factors, in which the influence of one on behaviour is dependent on the other. Specifically, ‘predisposition’ is conceptualised as a characteristic style of cognitively processing and behaviourally responding to particular situational stimuli (Mischel & Shoda, 1995; 1998; Shoda & Mischel, 2000). In other words, the strength of an individual’s predisposition towards a certain behaviour is said to constitute their susceptibility to the influence of situations that allow or encourage it. Furthermore, situations will vary in the extent to which they allow or encourage certain behaviours, with some exerting such a strong influence to exhibit a given behaviour that even those with a weak predisposition towards it will do so (Mischel, 1973; Marshall & Brown, 2006; Cooper & Withey, 2009).

The interdependent interactional model has historically received little attention among researchers or practitioners interested in crime, including sexual offending (but see Cornish & Clarke, 2003; Smallbone & Cale, in press; Smallbone et al., 2008; Wortley, 2012). The interaction typology that is empirically examined in the current thesis constitutes Wortley and
Smallbone’s (2006) adaptation of this model to sexual offending. It proposes the existence of three types of sexual offender that vary on the basis of their predisposition towards sexual offending: 1) ‘Predatory’ sexual offenders with deviant sexual interests and a strong motivation to sexually offend; 2) ‘Opportunist’ sexual offenders with a more general predisposition towards crime, including sexually offending, when it is convenient; and 3) ‘Situational’ sexual offenders with no predisposition towards sexual or general offending who succumb to the overwhelming influence of specific situations to do so. This interaction typology also specifies three types of offence situation that vary in the extent to which they allow/encourage sexual offending. In line with the interdependent interactional model, Wortley and Smallbone (2006) contend that those with a strong predisposition towards sexual offending (i.e. ‘Predatory’ sexual offenders) will sexually offend across the widest range of situations, including those in which they are ‘Challenged’ while engaging in this behaviour. Meanwhile, those with a more ambivalent predisposition towards sexual offending (i.e. ‘Opportunist’ sexual offenders) will limit their engagement in such behaviour to situations in which they are ‘Tempted’ to do so by the presence of easy and safe sexual offence opportunities. Finally, those with no predisposition towards sexual offending (i.e. ‘Situational’ sexual offenders) will only sexually offend when situationally ‘Precipitated’ to do so by contextual factors that actively encourage or motivate the behaviour.

Importantly, while this interaction typology theoretically adapts the interdependent interactional model to sexual offending, it purposely does so in a simple, easily communicable way so as to be useful to practitioners in the assessment, treatment and prevention of this behaviour. Indeed, the impetus for this typology’s development was an applied concern with prevention, as opposed to concerns with theoretical clarity. In relation to risk assessment, it suggests that estimates of recidivism risk in ASOs should consider both dispositional and situational factors, and move beyond situationally-invariant recidivism risk
scores. Furthermore, while treatment and prevention measures targeted at adolescent sexual offending have more recently come to incorporate situational considerations and SCP measures (e.g., relapse prevention, Gray & Pithers, 1993; Thakker, Ward & Tidmarsh, 2006; multisystemic treatment, Borduin, Henggeler, Blaske & Stein, 1990; Bourduin & Schaeffer, 2001; Letourneau et al., 2009; Letourneau, Henggeler, McCart, Borduin, Schewe & Armstrong, 2013; school- and community-based education programs, Kaufman, Mosher, Carter & Estes, 2006; Sanderson, 2004) the interaction typology contains an implicit warning against the indiscriminate application of these measures, suggesting that they will be differentially effective with different ASOs. Specifically, those with a weaker predisposition towards sexual offending may only require less restrictive SCP measures that minimise situational precipitators (e.g., household rules ensuring private bathing and dressing/undressing) and remove opportunities to sexually offend easily and safely (e.g., teaching potential victims protective strategies). Conversely, those with a stronger predisposition towards this behaviour may require additional measures that involve constant supervision and the complete removal of access to certain potential victims.

Of course, the utility of the interaction typology to the assessment, treatment and prevention of adolescent sexual offending is contingent on the accuracy with which it captures the actual differences between ASOs, and between the situations within which they sexually offend. With this in mind, the current thesis empirically examines the validity of this interaction typology. Given the applied concerns with prevention that were the impetus for this typology’s development, it is empirically examined in relation to participants’ first sexual offence. Three specific research aims are addressed. First, the validity of this typology’s offender component is examined. Next, its situational component is examined. Finally, the cross tabulated interaction of these two components is examined, with a series of instrumental
case studies used to explore the interactions of participants with the situations in which they committed their first sexual offence in greater depth.

1.2 Chapter Overview

The current thesis is comprised of five chapters. This, the first chapter, outlines the research aims, and provides a brief overview of the rationale underlying these aims.

Chapter two elaborates on this rationale, reviewing the theoretical work and empirical research that has emerged from dispositional and situational approaches to the study of adolescent sexual offending. It also outlines the interdependent interactional model of human behaviour that integrates these approaches, and explores its application to crime, culminating in a detailed examination of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation interaction typology of sexual offending. Finally, the potential implications of this interaction typology for the assessment, treatment and prevention of adolescent sexual offending are discussed. It concludes with a brief summary of the information presented, and a reiteration of the research aims.

Chapter three outlines the methods used to address these research aims. It specifies the sampling method, and the demographic features of the sample. It also describes the data collection instruments and procedure, and outlines the variables used to operationalise and examine the validity of the interaction typology, before concluding with an overview of the analytic strategy.

Chapter four presents the results pertaining to each research aim. It begins with a descriptive overview of the dataset, and the presentation of results that address the assumptions of multivariate analyses. Results regarding the offender and situational components of the interaction typology, along with their cross tabulated interaction, are outlined. It concludes with the in-depth exploration of a series of cases drawn from each
offender group, which are used to further illustrate the interaction of dispositional and situational factors.

Chapter five summarises and interprets the results presented in the previous chapter, in doing so addressing each of the original research aims. It highlights the implications of these results for the interaction typology, along with their broader implications for theory, and the assessment, treatment and prevention of adolescent sexual offending. It concludes with an outline of the limitations inherent to the current thesis, and potential avenues for further research.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Dispositional Approaches to Studying Adolescent Sexual Offending

This section reviews theoretical work and empirical research that takes a dispositional approach to studying adolescent sexual offending. It begins with an overview of the prevalence of adolescent sexual offending, and accounts for its emerging recognition as a problem deserving specialised research attention. Next, the historical trends that focused this attention on the factors that predispose adolescents towards sexual offending are discussed. Finally, contemporary theories and research that carry on this focus are reviewed.

2.1.1 The problem of adolescent sexual offending

Arrest and conviction data indicate that approximately one quarter of all sexual offenders, and one half of all sexual offenders against children specifically, are adolescents (e.g. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2015; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2014; Statistics New Zealand, 2015). It must, of course, be remembered that sexual offences are among the most underreported, with around two-thirds going undetected by criminal justice systems across Australia (ABS, 2013). Critically, it has been demonstrated that many consider violent/sexual assaultive behaviours perpetrated by young people to be inherently less severe than those perpetrated by adults, and are reluctant to involve the authorities when they occur (Finkelhor & Wolak, 2003; Finkelhor, Wolak & Berliner, 2001). Furthermore, many younger victims of this behaviour in particular do not report it due to fear, embarrassment or confusion regarding what has happened to them. As such, it is likely that the true number of adolescent sexual offenders (ASO)s, and the frequency of their sexual offending, greatly exceeds official figures.

Adolescent sexual offending has historically received little specialised research attention. Its extent and severity were arguably obscured throughout much of the twentieth
century by the welfarist policies of Western youth justice systems, including those in Australia. Under these systems, courts typically construed adolescent offenders as victims of social or familial disadvantage, and emphasised their future well-being and protection over determining their guilt for specific charges (Chrzanowski & Wallis, 2011). It was in this context that uninformed perceptions of adolescent sexual offending as harmless sexual experimentation were allowed to emerge and influence youth justice practices (Finkelhor, 1979; Grant, 2000; Reiss, 1960). Many ASOs in Australia did not even proceed into the justice system for their sexual offending (Advisory Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, 1956). Indeed, in some states and territories, adolescents below a certain age (normally 14 years) were considered legally inculpable of rape, despite being culpable for other forms of offending.

It was not until the late 1970s and early 1980’s that specialised research on adolescent sexual offending started to emerge (e.g., Becker, Cunningham-Rathner & Kaplan, 1986; Fehrenbach, Smith, Monastersky & Deisher, 1986; Groth, 1977; Wasserman & Kappel, 1985). This occurred alongside a waning obfuscation of the problem as the emphasis of Western youth justice systems shifted from welfarism towards openness, transparency, individual accountability, and the establishment of guilt. This period also saw a rise in political and media discourse regarding child sexual abuse in general, which intensified efforts to understand its perpetrators. These efforts, in turn, generated two important findings that brought further attention to the problem of adolescent sexual offending; that adolescents are responsible for a substantial proportion of sexual offences against children (e.g., Showers, Faber, Joseph, Oshins & Johnson, 1983), and that a notable proportion of adult sexual offenders against children have histories of adolescent sexual offending (e.g., Groth, Longo & McFadin, 1982).

2.1.2 Understanding the focus of research on adolescent sexual offending
Research on adolescent sexual offending has predominately focused on understanding the developmental and psychological factors that predispose adolescents towards this behaviour. In essence, it has concentrated on identifying who is at greater risk of sexually offending and why. In this regard it has been heavily influenced by a similar focus in much of the research on adult sexual offending, which in turn has its origins in the broader clinical research on deviant sexual behaviour that emerged in the late nineteenth century. Given the physiological underpinnings of sexual behaviour, scientific interest in it initially came from within the field of medicine. Understandably, a medical paradigm was used to understand deviant sexual behaviours, which formed the basis of their conceptualisation as symptomatic of some pathological distortion in sexual urges towards less reproductively fruitful stimuli or behaviours (e.g., fetishes, homosexuality, sado-masochism, paedophilia). For example, Von Kraft-Ebbing’s (1886/1969) pioneering study on deviant sexual behaviour attributes it to a series of hypothesised cerebral disorders, in turn the result of some genetic disorder in the central nervous system. Additionally, Freud (1905/1956) pinpoints the underlying causes of deviant sexual behaviour in pathologies of the unconscious mind, stemming from unresolved conflicts in one of his five proposed stages of childhood psychosexual development. These works stand out as the earliest, and arguably most important, examples of a period of research (including Bloch, 1906/1909; Ellis, 1936; Hirschfield, 1932) that established the now long standing dispositional emphasis in contemporary research on sexual offending.

During the mid to late twentieth century sexual offending was increasingly conceptualised as a form of crime instead of a symptom of pathology, and examined separately from other, legal deviant sexual behaviours. These changes coincided with two broader trends in psychological and criminological research. The first was an emerging awareness of the criminal versatility of sexual offenders, (e.g., Apfelberg, Sugar & Pfeffer, 1944), which contributed to a growing emphasis on the criminal component of sexual
offending in addition to its sexual component. The second was a general shift away from biological theories of human behaviour towards those that highlighted the influence of developmental factors and learning processes. Nevertheless, a dispositional emphasis was by this stage entrenched, and the research agenda largely retained its clinical focus on personality and psychopathological factors, along with the developmental/learning experiences thought to influence their emergence. Freud’s work inspired a number of refined psychoanalytic theories of sexual offending, which continued his emphasis on the influence of early childhood experiences and the consequent operation of unconscious psychological forces (e.g., Fenichel, 1946; Gillespie, 1956). Behavioural theories (e.g., McGuire, Carlisle & Young, 1965) also emerged around this time, advocating the importance of classical and operant conditioning processes in the development of deviant sexual interests, typically facilitated by early masturbatory and sexual experiences. Meanwhile, sociological and feminist theories (e.g., Brownmiller, 1975; Russell, 1975) focused on the role played by sexist social and cultural norms in the development of young males, fostering enduring attitudes of acceptance towards forceful sexual behaviour.

Importantly, researchers’ and practitioners’ views on the predisposition towards sexual offending have broadened over time. While early research emphasised a variety of biological and developmental influences, these were almost invariably assumed to underlie either stable deviant sexual interests that existed in place of a preference for conventional and consensual heterosexual activity, or some other form of non-sexual psychopathology. However, with the proliferation of research demonstrating the criminal versatility of sexual offenders came the acknowledgment of individuals for whom sexual offending was not a deviant preference, but an illegal expression of otherwise normal sexual desires. For these individuals, sexual offending came to be recognised as part of a broader pattern of self-interested, unrestrained behaviour centred on satisfying their desires impulsively, and with a
disregard for the rights of others. Gradually, clinical and descriptive research has also
identified further sexual offender types, including those for whom sexual offending
constitutes a misguided attempt to satisfy unmet social and emotional needs, a misplaced
expression of transitory anger, and an assertion of power to alleviate pervasive feelings of
inadequacy. As a testament to this growing recognition of the dispositional heterogeneity of
sexual offenders, the mid to late twentieth century saw a steady increase in the number of
offender typologies which sought to make sense of it, and facilitate the accurate targeting of
treatment and prevention measures (e.g., Apfelberg et al. 1944; Cohen, Garofalo, Boucher &
Seghorn, 1971; Ellis & Brancale, 1956; Finkelhor, 1984; Gebhard, Gagnon, Pomeroy &
Christenson, 1965; Groth, Burgess & Holmstrom, 1977; Groth, 1979; Groth, Hobson & Gary,

### 2.1.3 Dispositional theories of adolescent sexual offending

Contemporary theories that have been used to understand adolescent sexual offending
typically draw on the ideas and perspectives generated by a century of research on adult
sexual offending, and have thus adopted its historically dispositional focus. There is also a
continuation in the general emphasis given to many of the major dispositional factors that
emerged from this earlier research. Importantly, while many of the following theories were
not developed specifically for adolescent sexual offending, they have nonetheless been
widely applied to it by researchers and practitioners.

**Single factor theories**

A number of single factor theories have examined the role of specific dispositional
factors or developmental processes in sexual offending. Behavioural theories (e.g., Laws &
Marshall, 1990) have continued to emerge, further considering the influence of
classical/operant conditioning and social learning processes on the development of deviant
sexual interests. A number of theories have also examined factors thought to increase one’s
likelihood of deciding to satisfy normal sexual desires illegally. Cognitive theories emphasise the erroneous thought patterns and attitudes, or cognitive distortions, that sexual offenders use to justify their decisions to sexually offend (e.g., ‘All women/children want sex’, ‘Sexual urges are uncontrollable’; Mann & Beech, 2003; Polaschek & Ward, 2002; Ward, 2000). Similarly, theories have identified empathic deficits which are thought to inhibit sexual offenders’ ability to anticipate, perceive and vicariously experience victims’ negative reactions to a sexual offence (e.g., Marshall, Hudson, Jones & Fernandez, 1995). Attachment problems have also been highlighted as potentially important developmental influences (e.g., Marshall, 1989; Marshall, Hudson & Hodkinson, 1993; Smallbone, 2006; Smallbone & Dadds, 1998; 2000; 2001). They link sexual offending to poor childhood relationships with caregivers, which fail to impart the skills necessary to form conventional and consensual sexual relationships later in life, in turn fostering a predisposition towards forming these relationships forcefully and/or with younger, less socially intimidating partners. Finally, re-emergent biological theories have examined structural and functional aspects of the brain believed to underlie or exacerbate many of these dispositional factors, such as an increased sex drive, deficits in the mechanisms that restrain aggressive/impulsive behaviour, and the distorted emotional experience of intimacy (e.g., Beech & Mitchell, 2005; Blanchard, Cantor & Robichaud, 2006; Kafka, 2003).

While these theories identify a variety of potentially important dispositional factors and developmental processes, they similarly focus on explaining sexual offending specifically. In contrast, general theories of crime attribute all forms of offending and other analogous antisocial behaviours (e.g., intoxicant abuse, gambling, antisocial associations, school misbehaviour, chronic unemployment) to a single latent. Applied to sexual offending (e.g., Lussier, LeBlanc & Proulx, 2005; Lussier, Proulx & LeBlanc, 2005) general theories of crime contend that this behaviour is but one manifestation of a predisposition towards a wide
range of criminal and antisocial behaviours. The most well-known and widely examined of these is Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) general theory of crime. It highlights the criminal versatility of most offenders, and contends that all forms of criminal and antisocial behaviour are similarly impulsive, opportunistic and focused on the procurement of short-term benefits at the potential cost of long term consequences. As such, it is argued that a single factor explanation for this behaviour is justified, which it identifies as low self-control. Those low in self-control will be less able to appreciate the long term consequences of various antisocial behaviours over its short term benefits, and will thus more regularly succumb to the momentary temptations offered by these short term benefits, be they material, psychological, or indeed sexual. Various other terms have been used to label this general predisposition towards antisocial behaviour, such as psychopathy (Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985) and antisocial tendency (Farrington, 1996). However, all similarly attribute criminal and antisocial behaviour of every variety to a single dispositional factor.

**Multifactorial and typological theories**

In contrast to single factor theories, multifactorial and typological theories incorporate a variety of dispositional factors and developmental processes into more sophisticated explanatory frameworks, attempting to capture the dispositional heterogeneity and developmental complexity underlying sexual offending. While a few theories concentrate on both of these phenomena (Cale & Lussier, 2012; Seto & Barbaree, 1997; Lalumière, Quinsey, Harris & Rice, 2005; Ward and Beech, 2006; 2008), others focus predominately on accounting for the former (O’Brien & Bera, 1986; Hall & Hirschman, 1991; 1992) or the latter (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Stinson, Sales & Becker, 2008). Furthermore, as with the single factor theories already discussed, many of the following theories were not developed specifically for adolescent sexual offending. Nevertheless, they have been widely used to understand and address it.
Earlier typological theories focused rather narrowly on identifying and describing dispositionally distinct groups of sexual offenders in order to inform the accurate targeting of different treatment measures. O’Brien and Bera’s (1986) typology is unique in that it is one of the few theories to focus specifically on ASOs. Drawing on their own clinical experience, they hypothesized the existence of seven types of ASO. ‘Naïve Experimenters’ are normal, well-adjusted but sexually naïve ASOs whose sexual offences constitute impulsive and isolated lapses of judgment. ‘Group Influenced’ ASOs similarly exhibit no notable psychological or behavioural problems, and sexually offend in response to peer pressure. ‘Undersocialised Child Exploiters’ exhibit low self-esteem and difficulties socialising with same-aged peers, consequently turning to younger children to fulfil their social and sexual needs. ‘Pseudo-Socialised Child Exploiters’ similarly turn to children to fulfil their sexual needs, but more as a consequence of their own history of sexual victimisation. ‘Sexually Aggressive’ and ‘Disturbed Compulsive’ ASOs are highly antisocial, and their sexual offences occur as part of a broader pattern of antisocial behaviour, although the offences of those in the former group will typically be more violent. Finally, ‘Sexually Compulsive’ ASOs come from emotionally distant and repressed families, and sexually offend to satisfy the intense, persistent and deviant sexual interests that are thought to develop in this familial context.

In contrast to O’Brien and Bera’s (1986) clinically-derived typology, Hall and Hirschman’s (1991; 1992) quadripartite model utilises the four factors they argue have emerged from empirical research as the most likely foundations for a predisposition towards sexual offending. Three of these (inappropriate sexual arousal, cognitive distortions, and affective dyscontrol) are conceptualised as transitory psychological or emotional states that facilitate the temporary activation of the fourth, involving an enduring predisposition towards antisocial behaviour generally. It is argued that more than one of these factors working in
synergy can predispose someone towards sexual offending, although one will typically be
dominant. Some are thought to sexually offend due primarily to inappropriate sexual arousal,
constituting a sexual preference for children or other deviant stimuli, or intense and persistent
sexual urges. Cognitive distortions that support or justify sexual offending as a means of
satisfying sexual urges are also identified. Finally, affective dysregulation is thought to
underlie the sexual offending of some, comprising problems with identifying or confusing
emotions (e.g., associating loneliness with sexual arousal), and/or the use of problematic
strategies to manage emotions (e.g., resorting to sexual acts to relieve anxiety or depression).

A number of more recent multifactorial and typological theories delve further into the
developmental origins of sexual offending, and conceptualise it as an aggressive mating
strategy for which all human beings (particularly males) have an inborn or evolved biological
potential. This biological component should not be interpreted as a throwback to earlier
medical research that treated sexual offending as symptomatic of some biologically-based
pathology. Rather, it constitutes a re-acknowledgment of the powerful reproductive concerns
that underpin sexual urges, and give human beings (particularly males) the flexibility to
satisfy them in a variety of aggressive and non-aggressive ways. Broadly speaking, these
theories contend that developmental processes, rather than creating or preventing this
potential for sexual aggression, serve either to restrain or disinhibit it. As such, they
predominately view sexual offending as an expression of normal sexual urges that individuals
with low self-restraint and/or poor social skills are particularly likely to resort to, although
they also discuss the gradual development of deviant sexual interests, particularly in
adolescents.

Marshall and Barbaree’s (1990) integrated theory of the aetiology of sexual offending
focuses specifically on explaining why individuals begin sexually offending. It contends that
an individual’s biological potential for sexual aggression can develop into a predisposition
towards sexual offending if inhibitory controls over it are not fostered during childhood and adolescence. Specifically, poor early attachment relationships with caregivers, characterised by abusive/neglectful caregiving, disinhibit this potential by failing to impart the self-restraint and social skills necessary to interact with the outside world in an empathic, non-aggressive manner. A broader social atmosphere of aggression, male dominance and/or derogatory attitudes towards females may also accentuate or constitute the primary contributor to this process. These allow or encourage the development of a predisposition towards aggression and unrestrained self-interest when interacting with others, which can extend into sexual interactions. This is particularly likely in adolescence, when the hormones underpinning both sex and aggression are at their most active in pubertal males. Initial engagement in sexual offending at this stage of life, if positively or negatively reinforced, may also condition it as a preferred means of satisfying sexual urges, and increase the likelihood of persistence.

Seto and Barbaree (1997), Lalumière et al. (2005) and Cale and Lussier (2012) also draw on the conceptualisation of sexual offending as an aggressive mating strategy in their adaptation of Moffitt’s (1993) dual developmental typology of general offenders. Two possible trajectories in the development and manifestation of a predisposition towards sexual offending are specified, each corresponding to one of the general offender types specified by Moffitt (1993). ‘Adolescent-Limited’ offenders are thought to sexually offend due to the increase in sexual competitiveness that occurs as a normal part of adolescence. Like their non-sexual offences, their sexual offences tend to be limited to this developmental phase, and are largely the result of a general (but temporary) pubertal exacerbation of their predisposition towards risky, impulsive and aggressive behaviour, directed at asserting their independence and competing successfully for sexual partners. ‘Life-Course Persistent’ offenders, by contrast, are characterised by early neurodevelopmental deficits and disadvantaged childhood environments. These, in turn, lead to intellectual difficulties, low
self-restraint, and poor social skills, which come to constitute a stable predisposition towards antisocial behaviour that is manifested consistently before, during, and after adolescence. In relation to sexual offending, it is argued that these offenders are at a disadvantage in attracting and engaging with sexual partners conventionally due to these problems, and will thus regularly resort to doing so aggressively and with more vulnerable individuals. Lalumière, et al. (2005) also specify a third offender type, ‘Psychopaths’, who are similarly persistent and versatile in their antisocial behaviour, but do not present with the developmental or neuropsychological disadvantages of life-course persistent offenders. Their sexual offending does not arise out of a temporary adolescent increase in sexual competitiveness or an inability to adopt conventional mating strategies, but a distinct preference for aggressive sexual behaviour.

Stinson, Sales and Becker’s (2008) multimodal self-regulation theory of sexual offending argues that poor self-restraint is the basis of a predisposition towards sexual offending. It draws on the fact that individuals are born with certain, biologically-based psychological characteristics that influence their early interactions with the surrounding environment, and thus the course of their development. Maladaptive interactions, caused by an inborn tendency towards emotional sensitivity/negativity and over-reactivity, elicit hostile, frustrated or neglectful reactions from others in the environment (i.e. caregivers and early peers). This can have important implications for the development of self-restraint, social skills, and enduring attitudes and beliefs about the world. Specifically, caregivers and peers will potentially be unable or unwilling to model effective self-restraint and interpersonal strategies for an individual due to these inborn tendencies. This hostility or neglect may also foster the development of cognitive distortions regarding the world (e.g., ‘The world and other people are hostile’, ‘Aggression and self-interest are necessary to get what I want’). Consequently, individuals remain unable and/or unwilling to restrain their emotions or urges,
and frequently resort to impulsive, self-interested and aggressive behaviours, including sexual
behaviours, to get what they want. Additionally, it is argued that this poor self-restraint may
also fail to inhibit the internal association of sexual arousal with deviant stimuli, leading to
the further development of deviant sexual interests.

Ward and Beech (2006; 2008) have attempted to incorporate what they consider to be
the best elements of many of these theories into an integrated model of sexual offending. This
model does not highlight a specific aetiological pathway or set of pathways to sexual
offending, but instead provides a more general outline of causal links between broader
categories of biological, developmental, social and neuropsychological factors, which they
argue can be used as a template in the development of more focused dispositional theories. It
is premised on the interaction of biological and developmental processes in the emergence of
a predisposition towards sexual offending. Biological factors, ranging from an evolved male
potential for sexual aggression, to the problematic functioning of certain hormones and
neurotransmitters, are thought to lay the foundation for problems in one or more of the three
neuropsychological systems underlying human behaviour; the motivational/emotion system,
the action selection and control system, and the perception and memory system. Certain
features of the developmental and social environment, such as caregiver abuse/neglect,
exposure to the antisocial or deviant sexual behaviour of others, and/or an atmosphere of
male dominance, interact with this biological foundation and allow or encourage the
development of problems in these systems. It is argued that these problems, in turn, manifest
as four clusters of psychological symptoms, which together (albeit in different
configurations) are thought to constitute a predisposition towards sexual offending. Three of
these symptom clusters (deviant sexual interests, emotional dysregulation, and cognitive
distortions) reflect those identified in Hall and Hirschman’s (1991; 1992) quadripartite
model, and are thought to operate in a manner similar to what they propose. A fourth
symptom cluster, social problems, is added, comprising poor social skills and low self-esteem, underpinned by poor attachments to early childhood caregivers.

2.1.3 Dispositional research on adolescent sexual offending

Single factor, multifactorial and typological theories of sexual offending have implicated a number of factors in predisposing individuals towards this behaviour. However, three dispositional factors have emerged with perhaps the greatest consistency across these theories, and arguably warrant the greatest attention; (1) Deviant sexual interests, encompassing distinct sexual preferences for children and/or aggression; (2) A more general predisposition towards antisocial behaviour, characterised by poor self-restraint, aggression, and self-interest; and (3) Social problems that inhibit the formation of conventional and consensual intimate relationships. Given that the majority of these theories were not developed specifically to explain adolescent sexual offending, it becomes especially important to examine the extent to which the dispositional factors they identify with such consistency are relevant to this problem. Over the last 30 years a sizeable body of empirical research has examined the link between these proposed dispositional factors and adolescent sexual offending (for reviews of this research see Epps & Fisher, 2004; Hempel et al., 2013; Leversee, 2010; 2011; van Wijk et al., 2006; for meta-analyses see McCann & Lussier, 2008; Seto & Lalumière, 2010). This has been achieved through comparisons of ASOs with adolescent non-sexual offenders (ANSOs) and adolescent non-offenders (ANOs), examinations of the accuracy with which these factors predict sexual recidivism, and typological research.

Comparative and recidivism research

The deviant sexual interests of ASOs have been measured in a number of ways, including clinical judgment, self-report techniques, viewing times for sexually normal and deviant stimuli, prior histories of sexual offending/deviant sexual behaviour, and erectile
responses to normal and deviant sexual stimuli (i.e. penile plethysmography) (Becker & Harris, 2004; Mackaronis, Byrne & Strassberg, 2012). Together, these measures have generated evidence suggestive of a link between deviant sexual interests and adolescent sexual offending. ASOs have reported more frequently engaging in deviant sexual fantasising and behaviour than ANSOs and non-offending young adult males (Daleiden, Kaufman, Hilliker & O’Neil, 1998; Zakireh, Ronis & Knight, 2008). ASOs are also more likely to have been previously diagnosed with a paraphilia than ANSOs (van Wijk, Blokland, Duits, Vermeiren & Harkink, 2007; Zakireh et al., 2008). In what is, to the author’s knowledge, the only penile plethysmographic study comparing the arousal patterns of ASOs and non-ASOs to date, Rice, Harris, Lang and Chaplin, (2012) found that ASOs on average exhibited greater erectile responses to deviant sexual stimuli depicting children and aggression than adult male non-offenders, although these were lower than those exhibited by adult male sexual offenders. Seto and Barbaree’s (2010) meta-analysis of empirical studies comparing ASOs and ANSOs found that ASOs scored significantly higher on measures of deviant sexual interests than ANSOs, with a strong effect size. Additionally, physiological and self-report indicators of deviant sexual interests have been found to significantly, but modestly, predict sexual recidivism in ASOs (Clift, Gretton & Rajlic, 2007; Clift et al., 2009; Rice et al., 2012; Worling & Curwen, 2000), as have the frequency of prior sexual offences and deviant sexual experiences (Epperson & Ralston, 2015; Kenny, Keogh & Seidler, 2001; Hagan, Gust-Brey, Cho, Dow, 2001; Nisbet, Wilson & Smallbone, 2004; Långström, 2002; Sipe, Jensen & Everett, 1998). In their meta-analysis of recidivism studies regarding ASOs, McCann and Lussier (2008) found that indicators of deviant sexual interests predicted sexual recidivism, although they note that the effect size was small.

However, caution is warranted in the examination of ASOs’ deviant sexual interests. Adolescence is a volatile period in the sexual development of males characterised by a
sudden increase in the frequency and intensity of sexual urges (Bancroft, 2002; DeLamater & Friedrich, 2002). As a number of theories argue (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Stinson et al., 2008), a key developmental challenge for (particularly male) adolescents is to channel these urges into consensual, non-aggressive sexual interactions with peers, and inhibit their potential for sexual aggression. Therefore, the extent to which adolescent sexual offending can be attributed to deviant sexual interests, which arguably have yet to crystallise, is potentially limited. Indeed, what appear to be deviant sexual interests in most ASOs may in fact reflect a broader, adolescent-limited preoccupation with sex generally. ASOs have been shown to be more generally preoccupied with sex than ANSOs as measured by exposure to sexual and pornographic stimuli (Seto & Barbaree, 2010), although there is still uncertainty as to whether sexual preoccupation predicts sexual recidivism (Hempel et al., 2013). Erectile responses to both conventional and deviant stimuli have been found to decrease with age both within adolescence (Kaemingk, Koselka, Becker & Kaplan, 1995) and into adulthood (Blanchard & Barbaree, 2005). Kaemingk et al. (1995) also found that the younger ASOs in their sample exhibited, on average, greater erectile responses to a larger variety of stimuli, including deviant stimuli, than older ASOs. Similarly, Rice et al. (2012) report that the ASOs in their sample exhibited an indiscriminate pattern of high arousal across stimuli depicting persons of different ages compared to adult sexual offenders and non-offenders, who in contrast exhibited clear preferences. An additional issue concerns the direction of the relationship between deviant sexual interests and sexual offending in ASOs. Given that studies in this area measure the sexual interests of ASOs who already have a history of sexual offending, it is possible that sexual offences have by this point conditioned some of them with a preference for this behaviour. In other words, deviant sexual interests may be a consequence of sexual offending, and an underlying factor in its persistence, rather than an initial cause that influences ASOs to start doing it.
Despite these uncertainties surrounding the relationship between deviant sexual interests and adolescent sexual offending, it is an intuitively appealing catch-all explanation for practitioners, policy makers and the general public. Its widespread and unqualified acceptance has, in turn, cultivated the perception of ASOs, indeed all sexual offenders, as persistent and specialised sexual deviants. Of course, this idea conflicts with the now considerable body of research demonstrating that many ASOs are criminally versatile and non-persistent in their sexual offending. For example, ASOs have been shown to commonly engage in non-sexual offending and other forms of antisocial behaviour prior to and during their involvement in sexual offending, often at a much higher frequency (Becker, Kaplan, Cunningham-Rathner & Kavoussi, 1986; Cale, Smallbone, Rayment-McHugh & Dowling, 2015; Dennison & Leclerc, 2011; Fehrenbach et al., 1986; Kahn & Chambers, 1991; Lussier, Van Den Berg, Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2012; McCuish, Lussier, Corrado, 2015; Netland, 2010; Richardson, Kelly, Bhate & Graham, 1997; van Wijk, Mali & Bullens, 2007; Vizard, Hickey & McCrory, 2007; Way & Urbaniak, 2008). Furthermore, less than 15% of ASOs recidivate sexually once detected for their sexual offending, in contrast to the almost 50% who recidivate non-sexually (Aebi, Plattner, Steinhäusen & Bessler, 2011; Bullen, van Wijk & Mali, 2006; Caldwell, 2010; Carpentier, Leclerc & Proulx, 2011; Chu & Thomas, 2010; Caldwell 2002; Kemper & Kistner, 2007; Nisbet et al., 2004; Parks & Bard, 2006; Vandiver, 2006; van Wijk, Mali & Bullens et al., 2007; Waite et al., 2005; for reviews see Hempel et al., 2013; McCann & Lussier, 2008; Worling & Långström, 2006). Finally, some studies have shown that, for many ASOs, sexual offending occurs within an escalating pattern of antisocial behaviour, involving a progression from less severe to more severe forms of offending (Cale, Smallbone et al., 2015; Lussier et al., 2012; van Wijk, Mali, Bullen & Vermeiren, 2007).
These findings have stimulated research into the antisocial predispositions of ASOs. A number of studies have compared ASOs and ANSOs/ANOs on psychological (diagnosed conduct disorders and psychopathy, self-centredness, impulsivity and hyperactivity, aggression, emotional regulation problems, e.g. Cale, Lussier, McCuish & Corrado, 2015; Margari et al., 2015; van Wijk, Loeber, Vermeiren, Bullens & Doreleijers, 2005; van Wijk, Vreugdenhil, van Horn, Vermeiren & Doreleijers, 2007), attitudinal (negative opinions of authority and school/work, pro-criminal views, e.g., Butler & Seto, 2002; Miner & Munns, 2005) and behavioural (intoxicant use, antisocial peers, childhood behaviour problems, risk- and sensation-seeking behaviours, non-sexual criminal involvement, e.g., Bullen et al., 2006; Butler & Seto, 2002; Kempton & Forehand, 1992; McCuish, et al., 2015) indicators of this predisposition, with mixed results. Many have found that ASOs are just as if not more antisocial than ANSOs, and more antisocial than ANOs (Barham, 2001; Butler & Seto, 2002; Cale, Lussier et al., 2015; Davis & Leitenberg, 1987; Freeman, Dexter-Mazza & Hoffman, 2005; Jacobs, Kennedy & Meyer, 1997; McCuish et al., 2015; Miner & Munns, 2005; van Wijk, Vreugdenhil et al., 2007; Veneziano, Veneziano, LeGrand & Richards, 2004; Wanklyn, Ward, Cormier, Day & Newman, 2012; Zakireh et al., 2008), while a number suggest that ASOs are less antisocial than ANSOs (Blaske, Bordin, Henggeler & Mann, 1989; Flores, 2003; Margari et al., 2015; Ness, 2001; Freeman, et al., 2005; Kempton & Forehand, 1992; van Wijk, van Horn, Bullens, Bijleveld & Doreleijers, 2005; van Wijk, Blokland et al., 2007). Seto and Barbaree’s (2010) meta-analysis reports similarly mixed results, with ASOs rating significantly lower on indicators of intoxicant use, antisocial peers, and antisocial attitudes and beliefs (not including those regarding females and sex), but relatively equal to ANSOs on indicators of childhood behaviour problems, age at first contact with the criminal justice system, and antisocial psychological traits. Furthermore, while McCann and Lussier’s (2008) meta-analysis found that indicators of general antisociality significantly predicted sexual
recidivism, there is substantial variation in the findings of later studies, with some suggesting that indicators of an antisocial predisposition adequately predict sexual recidivism (Aebi et al., 2011; Epperson & Ralston, 2015; McCoy, 2007; Parks & Bard, 2006) and others noting their poor predictive accuracy (Martinez, Flores & Rosenfield, 2007; Prentky et al., 2010; Rajlic & Gretton, 2010; Viljoen, Elkovitch, Scalora & Ullman, 2009; Viljoen et al., 2008).

Social problems are also regularly identified in samples of ASOs, along with related emotional problems such as depression, anxiety and low self-esteem. Research demonstrates that ASOs are more likely than ANSOs and ANOs to report being lonely and socially isolated (Blaske et al., 1989; Katz, 1990; Miner & Munns, 2005), and to exhibit poor social skills and social anxiety (Blaske et al., 1989; Katz, 1990; Jacobs et al., 1997), along with broader indicators of depression, anxiety and low self-esteem (Johnson-Reid & Way, 2001; Katz, 1990; but see Butler & Seto, 2002). Seto & Lalumière’s (2010) meta-analysis, however, again demonstrates mixed findings, reporting that ASOs scored significantly higher than ANSOs on indicators of social isolation, general and social anxiety, and low self-esteem, but were comparable on indicators of depression, neuroticism, general social and heterosocial skills deficits, and other social problems such as bullying. Social isolation and social skills deficits have also been identified as reliable predictors of sexual recidivism in ASOs, although there is a surprising dearth of research examining this (Kenny et al., 2001; Långström & Grann, 2000; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998).

However, as with deviant sexual interests, caution is warranted in the interpretation of this empirical relationship between social problems and adolescent sexual offending. These problems are generally thought to make it more difficult for adolescents to comfortably engage in normal peer interactions, through which opportunities for sexual activity are naturally encountered or created. In other words, they incline adolescents away from opportunities to satisfy their sexual urges conventionally and consensually, which may in turn
make them more susceptible to the influence of opportunities to fulfil these unsatisfied urges aggressively or with younger, more vulnerable individuals. As such, the influence of social problems on adolescent sexual offending is likely indirect and facilitative, as opposed to directly causal. A number of theories (e.g., Finkelhor, 1984; O’Brien & Bera, 1986; Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Lalumière et al., 2005; Seto & Barbaree, 1997) have drawn attention to the potential for sexual deprivation to compel some, even law-abiding individuals with normal sexual interests, to sexually offend under certain circumstances. Indeed, one might expect the acceleration of biological mechanisms underpinning sex, aggression, and impulsivity/risk-taking in (particularly) males during adolescence to intensify their experience of this deprivation, and further increase their susceptibility to sexual offence opportunities.

**Typological research**

The empirical research reviewed thus far provides some support for the role played by deviant sexual interests, general antisociality and social problems in adolescent sexual offending, although findings regarding the latter two especially are somewhat mixed. It should be noted, however, that this research makes broad comparisons of ASOs with other adolescents, and utilises samples that vary widely in terms of age, treatment/conviction status, and prior offending. Consequently, the heterogeneity that characterises this population has largely been obscured, arguably explaining the inconsistent findings that have emerged. Typological research on ASOs has sought to better understand this heterogeneity by distinguishing different types of ASO. These types are often based on easily observable, clinically and theoretically relevant points of distinction, such as temporal offending patterns and sexual offence characteristics, which are then used to explore underlying dispositional differences. A number of studies have also taken a more exploratory approach, using various
cluster analytic techniques to derive empirical typologies, and examine the nature and structure of this dispositional heterogeneity more directly.

Sexual offence characteristics are a popular basis of distinction in typological research on ASOs, due no doubt to the ease with which they can be observed, and the ostensibly logical idea that they offer some insight into the motivations and preferences of ASOs. Victim age is the most widely used sexual offence characteristic in this regard. Various victim age and ASO-victim age difference cutoffs have been used to distinguish those who offend against child/younger victims, peers and older/adult victims. Nevertheless, results have consistently demonstrated that ASOs who sexually offend against children/younger victims more often present with social problems, while those who sexually offend against peers or older/adult victims, or victims across all age groups, tend to rate higher on indicators of general antisociality, and in fact are largely indistinguishable from ANSOs (Cale, Smallbone et al., 2015; Glowacz & Born, 2013; Gunby & Woodhams, 2010; Ford & Linney, 1995; Hart-Kerkhoffs, Doreleijers, Jansen, van Wijk & Bullens, 2009; Hendriks & Bijleveld, 2004; Hunter, Figueredo, Malamuth & Becker, 2003; Kemper & Kistner, 2007; Lussier et al., 2012; Miner & Munns, 2010; Seto & Lalumière, 2006; van Wijk et al., 2005). Research has also examined differences between groups of ASOs based on the sex of their victims, typically reporting that those who only sexually offend against male victims more often present with deviant sexual interests than those who only or also sexually offend against female victims (Clift, Rajlic & Gretton, 2009; Hunter, Goodwin & Becker, 1994; Seto, Lalumière & Blanchard, 2000). Finally, ASOs who use force during the commission of their sexual offences tend to rate comparably on indicators of general antisociality to violent ANSOs (van Wijk, et al., 2005; van Wijk, Mali, Bullens & Vermeiren, 2007).

ASO typologies based on offence history patterns most often distinguished between ASOs who have only committed sexual offences (specialists or ‘sex-only’), and those who
have also committed non-sexual offences (versatiles or ‘sex-plus’) (e.g., Butler & Seto, 2002). Unsurprisingly, ‘sex-plus’ ASOs have been found to rate higher on various indicators of general antisociality, although perhaps counter-intuitively, ‘sex-only’ ASOs do not typically present with indicators of deviant sexual interests (Butler & Seto, 2002; Carpentier et al., 2011; Chu & Thomas, 2010; Kempton & Forehand, 1992; van Wijk, Mali & Bullens, 2007; Zeng, Chu, Koh & Teoh, 2015). Rather, these ASOs more closely resemble O’Brien & Bera’s (1986) ‘Naïve Experimenter’ and Lalumière et al.’s (2005) ‘Adolescent-Limited’ offender types in that their sexual offences appear to constitute an atypical lapse in largely prosocial behavioural profiles. Aside from distinctions based on criminal versatility and specialisation, Carpentier et al. (2011) and Vizard et al. (2007) found that ASOs who had an earlier onset of sexual offending (i.e. prior to 12 and 11 years of age respectively) were more likely to exhibit both generally antisocial and deviant sexual behaviours in childhood than those with a later onset.

Recent studies in this area move beyond simple dichotomisation and employ group-based trajectory modelling (Nagin, 2005) to identify latent empirical groups of ASOs with similar temporal patterns in their frequency of prior offending. Lussier et al. (2012) utilise this technique to isolate groups of ASOs based on distinct patterns in their non-sexual and sexual offending histories separately into early adulthood, while Cale and Smallbone et al. (2015) focus their analysis on total (i.e. sexual and non-sexual combined) adolescent offending histories. In relation to non-sexual offending histories, Lussier et al. (2012) isolate five groups of ASOs; those who rarely offend non-sexually (‘Rare’ ASOs), those who persistently and frequently offend non-sexually from early adolescence (‘High-Rate Chronic’ ASOs), those who begin offending non-sexually in mid-adolescence before escalating in frequency (‘Late Bloomer’ ASOs), those who slowly increase the frequency of their non-sexual offending into late adolescence (‘Late Starters’ ASOs), and those whose non-sexual
offending peaks in late adolescence before declining rapidly (‘Adolescent-Limited’ ASOs). Cale, Smallbone et al. (2015) also isolate ‘Rare’, High-Rate Chronic' and ‘Late Bloomer’ groups with comparable offence history patterns, but additionally identify a group of ‘Low-Rate Chronic’ ASOs who begin offending in early adolescence and continue to do so at a persistently low frequency. After cross-tabulating their non-sexual and sexual offending history typologies, Lussier et al. (2012) report that while a pattern of late onset, adolescent-limited sexual offending was the norm across their sample, those in the less generally antisocial non-sexual offending groups (‘Rare’ and ‘Late Bloomer’ ASOs) were the most likely to exhibit sexual offending patterns consistent with deviant sexual interests (i.e. an early onset of sexual offending and persistence into early adulthood), and vice versa. Conversely, Cale, Smallbone et al.’s (2015) ‘Rare’ group exhibited little persistence in sexual offending and a comparatively prosocial demographic profile. However, ASOs in their ‘Late Bloomer’ group were among the youngest when first charged with a sexual offence, were the most likely to sexually recidivate, and after the ‘Rare’ group, contained the highest proportion of ‘sex-only’ ASOs.

Cross-sectional cluster analyses of scales drawn from widely used psychometric assessments, specifically the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Smith, Monastersky & Deisher, 1987), the Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory (Grant et al., 2009; Oxnam & Vess, 2006; 2008; Richardson, Kelly, Graham & Bhate, 2004) and the California Psychological Inventory (Worling, 2001), have also been used to uncover latent groups of ASOs with similar psychological profiles. Importantly, all of these typologies isolate a group of ASOs characterised by abnormal scores indicative of general antisociality, alongside at least one group with similarly abnormal scores indicative of social problems. Interestingly, with the exception of Grant et al. (2009) these typologies also isolate at least one group of ‘normal’ ASOs with comparatively moderate scores on the particular scales analysed. The
remainder of the groups that have emerged from these studies largely represent an eclectic mixture of ASOs characterised by emotional instability, narcissism, and severe psychopathology.

Building on empirical research comparing ASOs with other adolescents, typological research illustrates the variable role played by deviant sexual interests, general antisociality and social problems in the sexual offending of different ASOs. Importantly, these factors are supported as fundamental points of distinction between ASOs, which have emerged consistently across psychologically-based empirical typologies, and have been shown to at least partially account for differences in offending histories and offence characteristics. Of course, one must not ignore the consistency with which groups of ASOs who exhibit no enduring predisposition towards sexual offending (i.e. psychologically ‘normal’ ASOs, and those with a very low frequency of sexual and non-sexual offending) in particular have been isolated. Nevertheless, the current state of research provides formidable empirical support for the role played by each of these three dispositional factors in adolescent sexual offending.

2.1.4 Summary

Recent decades have seen a notable increase in research devoted to the problem of adolescent sexual offending. This has arguably been driven by widespread moves away from welfarist practices across Western youth justice systems, along with an intensified political and public focus on the problem of sexual offending generally. Importantly, the direction this research has followed largely extends from that entrenched in over a century of research on adult sexual offending, which emphasises the importance of understanding the developmental and psychological factors that predispose individuals towards this behaviour. Contemporary research on adolescent sexual offending considers a variety of dispositional factors, although three (deviant sexual interests, general antisociality, and social problems) have received the most extensive empirical support. Additionally, this research also highlights the existence of
seemingly normal ASOs, although minimal effort has been made to explain their sexual offending in the absence of any obvious predisposition towards it.

Critically, research regarding the dispositional characteristics of ASOs is important in that it informs the identification of adolescents who are generally at greater risk of sexually offending. However, this research is comparatively ill-suited to addressing questions regarding how, when, where and against whom they will commit sexual offences. Resolving such questions requires an understanding of the circumstances that influence the commission of adolescent sexual offences. In the following section the focus is shifted away from the dispositional characteristics of ASOs, and towards the situations within which they sexually offend.

2.2 Situational Approaches to Studying Adolescent Sexual Offending

This section reviews theoretical work and empirical research that adopts a situational approach to studying adolescent sexual offending. It begins with an overview of situational approaches to the study of crime, specifically the routine activities and rational choice approaches, along with situational crime prevention (SCP) measures. Next, the extent to which theories used to explain adolescent sexual offending have examined the influence of its situational context is explored. Finally, empirical research on the situational characteristics of adolescent sexual offences is reviewed.

2.2.1 Situational approaches to studying crime

Situational approaches to studying crime focus on understanding offence incidents and how they are influenced by the immediate environments, or situations, within which they occur (Andresen, 2014; Wortley & Mazerolle, 2008). They stand in contrast to much of the research on adolescent sexual offending in that they are not concerned with what predisposes individuals towards crime. Rather, their focus is on understanding the processes through
which offences are actually committed, along with the situational factors that facilitate and motivate them. Specifically, the situational context of crime is considered important in that it provides the opportunities and inducements necessary for individuals to offend (e.g., an available victim or target, an absence of security or surveillance), and strongly influences the behaviours and strategies they employ to do so, or their modus operandi (MO). Two complementary approaches form a substantial part of the basis of this area of research.

**Routine activities approach**

The routine activities approach considers the manner in which offence opportunities arise and are encountered by potential offenders (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson, 1986; 1995; 2006; Felson & Cohen, 1980; Felson & Eckert, 2016). The conceptual foundations for this approach derive primarily from the field of human ecology, specifically Hawley’s (e.g., 1950) work on the interdependent relationships between people and their surrounding environments, and how these shape the spatial-temporal distribution of human activities. It links crime with the legitimate activities of individuals as they move recurrently between home, school/work and other frequented locations. These activities, it argues, influence the distribution of crime by facilitating the spatial-temporal convergence of components necessary for its occurrence in the absence of components required to prevent it.

The routine activities approach has been used to explain large scale national and international crime trends, and indeed was originally conceived as a macro-level explanation for crime. However, this approach’s micro-level operationalisation of an offence opportunity makes it suitable for application to the understanding of specific offence incidents (see Figure 2.1). Opportunities for direct-contact predatory offences\(^1\) are said to emerge from the convergence of a motivated offender and a suitable target (i.e. object or victim) in the absence of a capable guardian (Cohen & Felson, 1979). A motivated offender

\(^1\) Illegal acts involving direct contact with an object or person in space and time, that cause damage or displacement to that object or person.
Figure 2.1. The convergent elements of a direct contact predatory offence opportunity (adapted from Eck, 2003, p.89).

can be anyone with a predisposition towards antisocial behaviour and the ability to act on this predisposition against a target that satisfies a particular need or desire. Guardians are anyone with the potential to prevent an offence from occurring against a target, be it through some form of intervention or even by their mere presence. As such, they need not be police officers or other formal security personnel, and indeed more often than not are ordinary people. The variety of individuals with crime preventing potential considered by this approach (or crime supervisors) has expanded since its inception. Felson (1986) discusses how handlers prevent crime via their exercise of informal social control over potential offenders (e.g. parents and other caregivers), while Eck (1994) examines the role place managers play in preventing crime at specific locations and times (e.g. teachers, custodial staff).

Importantly, the routine activities approach argues that, because the spatial-temporal distribution of people’s routine activities is non-random, crime too will be non-randomly
distributed. On this basis, it predicts the emergence of crime ‘hot spots’, or locations that experience a disproportionate number of crimes, by virtue of the fact that they facilitate the routine convergence of larger numbers of potential offenders and targets in the absence of supervisors, particularly at certain ‘hot times’ (e.g., Braga, Papachristos & Hureau, 2014; Weisburd, Groff & Yang, 2012). It also predicts the repeat victimisation of certain targets perceived as more suitable to be offended against (e.g., Weisel, 2005). Four general characteristics have consistently been identified as increasing the suitability of a potential target for crime (Clarke, 1999; Felson & Clarke, 1998; Finkelhor & Asdigian, 1996; Hough, 1987; Steinmetz, 1979; van Dijk & Steinmetz, 1983), and have received extensive empirical support (e.g., Meithe & Meier, 1990; Tseloni & Pease, 2003; 2015). First, offenders will prefer targets they are familiar with and encounter throughout the course of their routine activities to targets they must exert some effort to locate (proximity). Second, targets will typically conform to the preferences of an offender, and be capable of satisfying a particular desire or motive (value). Third, offenders will prefer targets that are poorly supervised and offer little resistance, which ensures that they are easier to approach, make contact with and overcome/control (vulnerability). Finally, offenders will prefer targets that can be left or moved on easily and with little chance of their offending behaviour being subsequently revealed (discardability).

**Rational choice approach**

The offence opportunity structure encompassed in the routine activity approach’s ‘crime triangle’ on its own provides an incomplete picture of how offences occur. Individuals do not reflexively commit an offence every time they encounter a potential opportunity to do so. The routine activities approach is contingent on the assumption that situational factors exert an influence on the decision-making processes that precede and run parallel to an offence. The assertion that offenders predominately act upon offence opportunities which
allow them to offend quickly and easily against a valued target implies a hedonistic, rational decision-making process which seeks maximum personal benefit at minimum personal cost. Thus, underlying the routine activities approach is the assumption of a ‘free-willed’, purposive offender who rationally appraises a situation prior to committing an offence. Although the idea of a rational offender was prevalent in early schools of criminological thought (e.g., Beccaria, 1764/1995), it was not until the early 1980s, a time of growing pessimism towards the offender rehabilitative model (Martinson, 1974; Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985), that it saw a revival in criminological literature.

The rational choice approach consolidates and elaborates on the idea of a rational offender, providing an ideal complement to the routine activities approach (Clarke, 1997; Clarke & Cornish 1985; 2003; Cornish, 1994; Cornish & Clarke, 1986; 2008; Clarke & Felson, 1993; Clarke & Homel, 1997). This approach derives mainly from economic models of decision-making (e.g., Becker, 1968), along with cognitive psychological research on information processing, and was initially proposed as a conceptual framework for SCP measures (e.g., Clarke, 1980; 1983; Jeffery, 1971; Newman, 1972). It contends that people invariably select the best available means of satisfying their desires. Decisions regarding whether and how to act on different opportunities to satisfy these desires rest on a cost-benefit analysis of the situations from which they emerge. Offences will typically occur in situations where the benefits of such behaviour are anticipated to outweigh the perceived risks and effort involved. In deciding whether to shoplift, for example, a potential offender might examine various situational factors, or choice-structuring properties, as part of their cost-benefit analysis, such as the perceived vigilance of sales staff, the ease with which the desired item can be concealed and removed, the monetary value of the item, and the likely consequences if caught. Additionally, situational factors will also serve as an ongoing, dynamic influence at multiple stages of the offence commission process itself, as offenders
maintain or modify their MO where necessary to minimise perceived risks/effort and
maximise anticipated benefits (Cornish, 1994).

The terms ‘perceived’ and ‘anticipated’ are emphasised in relation to benefit and
risk/effort respectively as the rational choice approach recognises that offenders, like all
people, are far from perfectly rational. Offence-related decisions are constrained by time, a
lack of available information, limitations in cognitive ability, and transitory
psychological/affective states. As such, this approach argues that offenders operate within a
framework of limited or bounded rationality (Simon, 1990). Specifically, when individuals
encounter an offence opportunity, the decisions they make in response to it are contingent on
the time they have to make them, the information available to them, and their subjective
perception of this information. Importantly, this explains why many good offence
opportunities (i.e. situations in which the probability of obtaining some benefit through
offending is objectively high, the probability of being detected/stopped while offending is
objectively low, and the amount of effort required to offend is objectively low) often go
unrecognised and unused. Most individuals who encounter them may lack the time or
cognitive capacity necessary to recognise and act upon them, or they may overestimate the
risks and effort involved. Additionally, some individuals may be so motivated to offend that
they act upon very poor offence opportunities, or go to great lengths to create opportunities
where there were previously none.

In a series of papers critiquing and expanding on the rational choice approach,
Wortley (1996; 1997; 1998; 2001; 2002; 2008) notes that situational factors can do more than
simply offer opportunities to offend. This approach, he argues, assumes that offenders
encounter offence opportunities with some pre-existing motivation or predisposition towards
offending before rationally appraising them, but this is not always the case. He contends that
the situational context of an offence may additionally induce, or precipitate, it by creating the
motivation to offend in individuals who would not previously have considered doing so. Specifically, he argues that situations can prompt individuals to offend by activating certain thoughts, feeling or desires (e.g., sight of a weapon triggering feelings of aggression), pressure individuals into offending (e.g., peer pressure), permit individuals to offend by making it easier to morally justify or excuse (e.g., exceeding the speed limit to keep up with traffic) and provoke individuals to offend (e.g., responding with physical aggression to an insult). Critically, these situational precipitators of crime are viewed as functioning alongside, rather than instead of, rational choice processes, although Wortley (2008) points out that the relative importance of each may vary across offences. As such, the significance of this work is not in its refutation of the rational choice approach, but its expansion of the role situations play in offences beyond informing rational choice processes. It suggests that situations not only facilitate offending, but can also induce individuals with little prior motivation or predisposition for offending. In essence, it argues that motivation, in addition to opportunity, may sometimes be situationally-dependent.

**Situational crime prevention**

As mentioned, the routine activities and rational choice approaches provide the conceptual foundation for SCP measures (Clarke, 1980; 1983; 1992; 1997; 2008; Cornish, 1994; Cornish & Clarke, 1987). These measures aim to prevent crime by modifying situations in ways that minimise the number and quality of offence opportunities they contain, along with potential situational precipitators. In essence, they constitute an attempt to manipulate the offence-related decisions of potential offenders by targeting tangible situational factors that have the most proximal influence on these decisions. This stands in contrast to offender-focused treatment and prevention measures that target intangible dispositional factors, which have a more indirect influence on offending, and are comparatively more difficult to modify.
Clarke (2008) is careful to stress that the specific situational influences on any offence incident and type of offence are likely to differ, and that SCP measures must therefore be tailored to the prevention of specific offences. However, he has proposed a typology of more general SCP techniques (Clarke, 1992; Clarke & Homel, 1997; Cornish & Clarke, 2003) suitable for customisation and application to a wide range of different offences (see Table 2.1). In its original form (Clarke, 1992) it focused on situational modifications that increase the risk and effort inherent to offending, and reduce its potential benefits. Subsequent developments (Clarke & Homel, 1997; Wortley, 2001; Cornish & Clarke, 2003) incorporate measures for the reduction of potential moral justifications and situational precipitators, which have been summarised into situational modifications that make offending more difficult to excuse, and those that eliminate factors capable of motivating (or provoking) an individual to offend.

2.2.2 Theoretical perspectives on the situational context of adolescent sexual offending

The explanatory and preventative utility of situational approaches to crime has received empirical support across many different forms of offending (e.g., Clarke, 1996; Ekblom, 2012; Freilich & Newman, 2009; Painter & Tilley; 1999). However, despite the concurrent growth of research interest in these situational approaches and adolescent sexual offending over the last three decades, there has historically been minimal crossover between them. Situational approaches have predominately been applied to the volume crimes (e.g., vandalism, burglary) they were initially developed to explain and prevent. Meanwhile, research on sexual offending, including adolescent sexual offending, has largely continued along a well-established, dispositionally-focused trajectory. Despite evidence to the contrary, the idea that sexual offending constitutes a pathologically persistent pattern of behaviour driven solely by dispositional factors has generally endured among many practitioners, policy makers, and the general public. This idea understandably leaves little room for its
Table 2.1

**Typology of SCP Techniques**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase Effort</th>
<th>Increase Risk</th>
<th>Reduce Rewards</th>
<th>Remove Excuses</th>
<th>Reduce Provocations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target hardening</strong></td>
<td><strong>Extend guardianship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conceal targets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Set rules</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reduce frustration</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make targets more difficult to offend against</td>
<td>Increase presence of guardians</td>
<td>Make targets less visible or obvious</td>
<td>Set clear rules to remove ambiguity regarding how people are expected to behave</td>
<td>Reduce barriers to people achieving their goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g., steering column locks in cars</td>
<td>e.g., going out in a group</td>
<td>e.g., unmarked armoured trucks</td>
<td>e.g., corporate codes of conduct</td>
<td>e.g., shorter queues at pub/nightclub entrances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control access to facilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assist natural surveillance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Remove targets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post instructions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Avoid disputes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclude offenders from certain places</td>
<td>Make certain places more visible to the public</td>
<td>Remove potential targets from situations</td>
<td>Clearly post instructions governing certain behaviours</td>
<td>Prevent individuals from coming into conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g., access cards</td>
<td>e.g., improve street lighting</td>
<td>e.g., keeping less cash in store safes</td>
<td>e.g., ‘No Parking’ signs</td>
<td>e.g., reduce crowding in and around pubs/nightclubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Screen entry/exits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reduce anonymity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identify property</strong></td>
<td><strong>Alert conscience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reduce temptation and arousal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor and detect persons/goods not meant to be entering or leaving a particular location</td>
<td>Make potential offenders easier to identify</td>
<td>Indicate ownership of property</td>
<td>Alert individuals to the immorality of illegal behaviour</td>
<td>Inhibit certain physiological responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g., product tagging</td>
<td>e.g., school uniforms</td>
<td>e.g., vehicle registration numbers</td>
<td>e.g., ‘Shoplifting is Stealing’ signs in stores</td>
<td>e.g., controls on violent pornography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Effort</td>
<td>Increase Risk</td>
<td>Reduce Rewards</td>
<td>Remove Excuses</td>
<td>Reduce Provocations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deflect offenders</strong></td>
<td><strong>Use place managers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disrupt markets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assist compliance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neutralise peer pressure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divert offenders away from targets</td>
<td>Increase presence and capability of place managers</td>
<td>Controlling markets for illegal and illegally obtained goods</td>
<td>Make following the rules easier</td>
<td>Reduce the impact of peer pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g., public transport at closing times of nightclubs</td>
<td>e.g., multiple clerks in a store</td>
<td>e.g., monitoring pawn shops</td>
<td>e.g., shorter queues at store checkout counters</td>
<td>e.g., dispersal of troublemakers at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control facilitators</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strengthen formal surveillance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Deny benefits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Control drugs and alcohol</strong></td>
<td><strong>Discourage imitation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove or regulate objects that facilitate crime</td>
<td>Increase presence and capability of security mechanisms</td>
<td>Reduce benefits of an offence for an offender</td>
<td>Reduce capacity of drugs/alcohol to influence illegal behaviour</td>
<td>Discourage copying of illegal behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g., nightclubs serving alcohol in plastic cups instead of glasses</td>
<td>e.g., CCTV cameras</td>
<td>e.g., graffiti cleaning programs</td>
<td>e.g., breathalysers in pubs/nightclubs</td>
<td>e.g., rapid repair of vandalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Adapted from Cornish and Clarke (2003, p. 90).*

conceptualisation as a rational behaviour, or the consideration of anything other than dispositional influences in understanding and preventing it.

This being said, many dispositional theories of sexual offending have included some minimal acknowledgement of the role played by its situational context. As previously mentioned, many ASO typologies highlight the existence of those with no apparent predisposition towards sexual offending, and briefly describe their offences as ‘situational’. O’Brien and Bera (1986) allude to the importance of situational precipitators such as peer pressure in their outline of the ‘Naïve Experimenter’ and ‘Group Influenced’ ASOs, while
additionally arguing that ‘Sexually Aggressive’ ASOs are likely to plan their sexual offences, and threaten or use force. Hall and Hirschman (1991; 1992) also briefly acknowledge that situational factors such as watching pornography or encountering a potential victim might precipitate a sexual offence by activating one’s existing predisposition towards it. Marshall and Barbaree (1990) highlight a number of what they call ‘transitory situational factors’ that similarly weaken the internal restraints on an individual’s predisposition towards sexual offending. These include intoxicants, pornography, anxiety-, anger- and arousal-inducing factors, and conditions that justify or excuse sexual offending (e.g. war). Ward and Beech (2006; 2008) also devote a portion of their theory to exploring the ‘ecological niche’ of sexual offending, encompassing both its broader socio-cultural and immediate situational contexts. They contend that these contexts are important in that they contain both potential offence opportunities and situational precipitators. Importantly, while they view situational factors as serving a similarly activating function to that described by Hall and Hirschman (1991; 1992) and Marshall and Barbaree (1990), they also briefly acknowledge that these factors can induce individuals with no predisposition towards sexual offending to engage in it. Clearly then, there is some recognition of the role situational factors play in many dispositional theories of sexual offending. However, these factors are considered important primarily in terms of the activating effect they have on individuals’ existing predisposition towards this behaviour. Furthermore, those few theories that acknowledge the necessity of opportunity to the occurrence of sexual offences typically only do so in passing, with no examination of what constitutes a sexual offence opportunity or why. As such, they ultimately subsume situational factors into dispositionally-focused explanations.

Interestingly, Finkelhor’s (1984) model of child sexual abuse, a precursor to these theories, examines in some detail the role played by situational factors in sexual offences against children. He acknowledges that, for a child sexual abuse incident to occur, motivated
offenders require opportunities to physically interact with victims, and must overcome or avoid external barriers that might prevent them from doing so (e.g. adult supervisors of the victim, peers, other third parties). He also argues that the probability and intensity of victim resistance figures prominently in the decision-making processes of offenders, who will typically choose victims that are perceived as easier to overcome by virtue of their youth, physical weakness, immaturity and/or isolation. As such, while it makes no actual reference to the rational choice or routine activities approaches, Finkelhor’s (1984) theory nonetheless outlines a number of the situational factors that influence the offence-related decisions of sexual offenders against children, and provide opportunities for child sexual abuse.

Tedeschi and Felson’s (1994) social interactionist theory of physically and sexually aggressive behaviour constitutes a more explicit application of the routine activities and rational choice approaches to sexual offending. While they acknowledge that some individuals will more readily resort to sexual offending to satisfy their sexual desires, their theory is contingent on the assertion that sexual offences are sexually-motivated, opportunity-dependent, and governed by the overarching concerns of risk, effort and benefit. They argue that the tendency of sexual offenders to disproportionately target young females reflects a subconscious reproductive preference for victims of higher sexual value (i.e. increased attractiveness and fertility). The convergence settings and situational factors that facilitate these offences are also discussed. They note that sexual offences predominately involve victims known to the offender due to the relative frequency and ease with which they can be accessed, while sexual offences involving stranger victims will occur primarily in public and semi-public (e.g., cars) places where large numbers of young males and females unknown to each other readily congregate in the absence of supervisors (e.g., the street, entertainment districts, parties).
While Lalumière et al.’s (2005) developmental typology does not specify situationally-relevant differences between its offender groups, the authors do examine the facilitative and motivational role of situational factors in sexual offending generally. They similarly argue that young females are disproportionately targeted due to their higher sexual value, while additionally noting that single, unescorted, and/or intoxicated young females are at particular risk of sexual victimisation due to their reduced capacity for resistance and the absence of supervision. In terms of situational precipitators, Lalumière et al. (2005) acknowledge the impact of intoxicants and pornography. However, they additionally highlight some of the broader interpersonal contexts within which sexual offences frequently occur, and discuss some potential reasons for their apparent conduciveness to sexual offending. Of particular relevance to ASOs are sexual offences that occur in the context of a close or romantic relationship (i.e. acquaintance or date rape). Lalumière et al. (2005) argue that the frequency with which sexual offences occur in these relationships is likely attributable to the common misinterpretation of non-sexual physical affection as an invitation to sexual contact, along with their provision of frequent and easy access to potential victims. Also discussed are the male-dominated social and recreational groups that many adolescent males belong to (e.g., sports teams). Often characterised by hierarchy, dominance and intra-group competition, Lalumière et al. (2005) argue that these factors exacerbate the already intense sexual competition among adolescent males, and contribute to a further erosion of the norms against pursuing sex aggressively by providing them with a contextual means of morally excusing it.

A number of offence-process models go further in their focus on sexual offence incidents than the theories discussed thus far. These models give detailed sequential

---

2 This discussion deals only with offence process models that were developed or modified for adolescent sexual offences. Other offence process models for sexual offences have been developed (e.g., Carich & Stone, 1995; Freeman-Longo & Pithers, 1992; Salter, 1995), although to the authors’ knowledge these have only been applied to adult sexual offences, and therefore are not discussed.
accounts of the sexual offence process, encompassing the pre-offence period, the incident itself and its immediate aftermath, while also outlining the situational, cognitive, emotional and behavioural components of this process. They are typically descriptive and do not often provide a theoretical account of why sexual offence incidents occur, or the more distal influences on these incidents. Rather, they serve primarily as a template for practitioners to understand the sexual offence processes of ASOs in their care, and as such are of primarily applied value. Perhaps the earliest example of these models is drawn from theoretical work on relapse prevention (Marlatt & Gordon, 1985). Originally developed for intoxicant abuse, this model provides a framework for outlining and intervening in the process by which someone relapses back into a habitual problematic behaviour after a period of (often treatment-induced) abstinence. Applied to adolescent sexual offending (Gray & Pithers, 1993; Thakker et al., 2006) it emphasises the influence of ‘high risk’ situations, or situations within which ASOs have a high probability of sexually recidivating, due either to the presence of offence opportunities or situational precipitators. Relapse prevention plans are designed to help ASOs identify and avoid these high risk situations, and thus interrupt the process through which they sexually recidivate. While this model acknowledges the multiple pathways through which ASOs might encounter a high risk situation, it says nothing about how or why ASOs begin sexually offending in the first place. Furthermore, it fails to specify what typically constitutes a high risk situation, or how specific situational factors might influence MO decisions.

Lane and Ryan (2010) have developed a more detailed offence process model specifically for ASOs that, while atheoretical and sequentially invariable, provides a more comprehensive explanation of the role played by situational factors in the sexual offence process. Their model splits this offence process into three broad phases. During the precipitating phase, ASOs react in an unhealthy or maladaptive way to an often misperceived
stimulus (e.g., an argument or insult). They take steps to alleviate their feelings of powerlessness and inadequacy in response to this stimulus during the compensatory phase, eventually culminating in sexual fantasies, sexual offence planning, and ultimately a sexual offence. Finally, the integration phase involves the ASO justifying the sexual offence to themselves and suppressing any negative thoughts or feelings they have regarding it. Lane and Ryan’s (2010) outline of the compensatory stage in particular contains an extensive discussion of the situational context of sexual offences. It details that victim selection will often be determined by factors relevant to effort, such as victim availability and likelihood of resistance. Specifically, it is argued that ASOs will typically choose victims they are related to or know, and thus have regular and easy access to, and will choose younger victims who lack the physical capacity, confidence and sexual maturity to resist. It also notes that victims of higher sexual value to the ASO, based on age, sex and personality preferences, will more often be targeted. Furthermore, locations that facilitate the regular convergence of potential ASOs and victims, and minimise the probability of detection and interruption (i.e. the ASO’s or victim’s home) will generally be exploited or sought out.

Evidently there is some variation in focus on the situational context of sexual offences across these theories. Those that do discuss it in any detail, however, typically make assertions that are in line with the routine activities and rational choice approaches, although this link is rarely explicated. Specifically, they suggest that, dispositional factors aside, most ASOs will utilise offence opportunities that allow them to sexually offend easily against a victim of high sexual value, and with minimal probability of detection and interruption. Younger, known, female victims will more often be targeted as they are routinely encountered and thus easy to access, vulnerable and easy to overcome, and more sexually desirable to most ASOs. Residential offence locations will more often be chosen as they routinely facilitate the convergence of potential ASOs and victims, offer ASOs a degree of
familiarity, and minimise the probability of detection and interruption. Finally, third parties with the potential to discover and intervene in sexual offences (e.g., caregivers) will be avoided. Possible situational precipitators of this behaviour are also discussed, covering intoxicants, misinterpreted victim behaviours, situationally-induced emotional states, pornography, and social milieus that normalise or excuse it. While in need of further development, these assertions provide fertile theoretical ground for empirical research testing situational approaches in relation to adolescent sexual offending.

2.2.3 Empirical research on the characteristics of adolescent sexual offences

At present, descriptive statistical overviews of basic offence characteristics constitute the primary source of knowledge on adolescent sexual offences. Although informative, these findings are not without important limitations that should qualify any conclusions drawn from them. The samples used to generate these findings are regularly composed of fewer than 100 ASOs/sexual offence incidents. Furthermore, the large number of studies that analyse the index sexual offences of arrested/adjudicated ASOs has resulted in the potential overrepresentation of more serious and/or less competently executed sexual offences that are more likely to come to the attention of youth justice systems. Such limitations impose restrictions on the extent to which results can be generalised, and as such, caution is warranted in their interpretation.

Victim characteristics have received the most attention in empirical research. It has consistently been reported that around three quarters of adolescent sexual offences involve a victim who is younger than the ASOs offending against them, with an average victim age of seven to nine years, and an average age discrepancy between ASOs and victims of four to seven years (Fehrenbach et al., 1986; Rasmussen, 1999; Schorr, Speed & Bartelt, 1966; Smith & Monastersky, 1986; Vandiver, 2006; Wasserman & Kappel, 1985; Way & Urbaniak, 2008; Wieckowski, Hartsoe, Mayer & Shortz, 1998; Wood, Welman & Netto, 2000). Less
than a quarter of adolescent sexual offences involve older or adult victims. A similar proportion of adolescent sexual offences are committed against female victims (Fanniff & Kolko, 2012; Fehrenbach et al., 1986; Groth, 1977; Longo, 1982; Rasmussen, 1999; Righthand, Welch, Carpenter, Young & Scoular, 2001; Rojas & Gretton, 2007; Smith & Monastersky, 1986; Vandiver, 2006; Wasserman & Kappel, 1985; Wieckowski et al., 1998), although males constitute around half of victims in younger, prepubescent age groups (Aebi, Vogt, Plattner, Steinhausen & Bessler, 2012; Hunter, Hazelwood & Slesinger, 2000; Hendriks & Bijleveld, 2004; Kemper & Kistner, 2007; Richardson et al., 1997; Worling, 1995). Finally, over 80% of adolescent sexual offences are committed against a victim known or related in some way to the ASO (Fanniff & Kolko, 2012; Fehrenbach et al., 1986; Righthand et al., 2001; Smith & Monastersky, 1986; Rasmussen, 1999; Rojas & Gretton, 2007; Vandiver, 2006; Wasserman & Kappel, 1985; Wieckowski et al., 1998), although this too varies by age, with a higher proportion of offences against unknown victims involving an older/adult individual (Awad & Saunders, 1991; Fehrenbach et al., 1986; Fanniff & Kolko, 2012; Groth, 1977; Gunby & Woodhams, 2010; Hsu & Starzynski, 1990; Hendriks & Bijleveld, 2004; Hunter et al., 2000; 2003; Kemper & Kistner, 2007; Richardson et al., 1997; Vinogradov, Dishotsky, Doty & Tinklenberg, 1988; Way & Urbaniak, 2008).

A smaller number of studies have extended their focus beyond victim characteristics. It is typically reported that over 80% of adolescent sexual offences occur in a residential setting, often either the home of the ASO and/or victim (Righthand et al., 2001; Rojas & Gretton, 2007; Wasserman & Kappel, 1985). However, around half of adolescent sexual offences against older/adult victims specifically occur in public or semi-public (e.g., cars) locations (Hunter et al., 2000; Richardson et al., 1997; Hsu & Starzynski, 1990; Vinogradov et al., 1988). Leclerc and Felson’s (2014) findings also suggest that sexual offences against
unrelated (including unknown) child victims are more likely to occur in public/semi-public and institutional (e.g., school) settings than sexual offences against related victims.

Very little research considers the timing of adolescent sexual offences. A peak in general adolescent offending in the mid-afternoon and evening has been well documented (e.g., Sickmund & Puzzanchera, 2014), and the few studies that look at the timing of adolescent sexual offences specifically report a comparable trend (Hsu & Starzynski, 1990; Sickmund & Puzzanchera, 2014; Vinogradov et al., 1988). Felson & Eckert (2016) attribute this to a relative lack of supervision and structured activities for young people at this time of day, specifically in the few hours following the end of school when the supervisory duties of some adults (e.g., teachers) end, and the supervisory duties of others (e.g., parents and other caregivers) are delayed by work or distracted by routine evening activities. This implies that adolescents generally engage in at least some minimal consideration of the risk of detection or interruption when sexually offending, having a tendency to sexually offend at times when this risk is lower. Leclerc et al.’s (2008) findings further suggest at least some awareness of the risk of detection among ASOs. They found that the three quarters of their sample who sexually offended with someone else in the residence were more likely to use less obvious, covert strategies to engage child victims in sexual contact (e.g. using love and attention), while overt and direct strategies (e.g., talking about sex, bribery, blackmail) were more often used when no one else was around.

Beyond the basic situational factors that facilitate adolescent sexual offences, a small number of studies have also examined their situational precipitators. The relationship between intoxicants and a wide range of aggressive behaviours, including sexual aggression, has received extensive empirical support (e.g., Abbey, Zawacki, Buck, Clinton & McAuslan, 2004; Boles & Miotto, 2003; Exum, 2006; Swartout & White, 2010). The influence of peer pressure and social group norms on adolescent offending generally has also been widely
demonstrated (e.g., Warr, 2002). Extant research, however, suggests that less than a quarter of adolescent sexual offences involve an intoxicated ASO (Aebi et al., 2012; Awad & Saunders, 1991; Groth, 1977; Hunter et al., 2000; Marini, Leibowitz, Burton & Stickle, 2014; Righthand et al., 2001; Rojas & Gretton, 2007). Contexts in which peer pressure and social group norms might exert an influence are similarly uncommon, with again less than a quarter of adolescent sexual offences involving one or more co-offenders (Groth, 1977; Hunter & Figueredo, 1999, Hunter et al., 2000). However, both intoxicants and co-offenders are far more prevalent in adolescent sexual offences involving older/adult and unknown victims (Hsu & Starzynski, 1990; Van Ness, 1984; Vinogradov et al., 1988; Woodhams, 2004).

Adolescent sexual offences against younger victims in particular are reported as often occurring in the context of some routine social interaction or caregiving activity, such as babysitting, game-playing, bathing or watching television (Fehrenbach et al., 1988; Leclerc & Felson, 2014; Righthand & Welch, 2001; Righthand et al, 2001; Rojas & Gretton, 2007; Smith & Monastersky, 1986). Kenny et al. (1999) also reports that around half of the ASOs against younger victims in their sample perceived their victim as having been willing to engage in sexual behaviour, although they do not specify the victim behaviours that were considered indicative of this willingness.

There are, of course, those ASOs who do not offend impulsively in response to situational precipitators, and instead form a prior intention to commit their sexual offences. This process of forethought is conceptualised differently across the few studies that have examined it, ranging from ‘premeditation’ to ‘deviant sexual fantasies’, ‘prior decisions’ and ‘offence planning’, and as such, findings too tend to vary. Prior sexual fantasising and somewhat vague decisions to sexually offend at some point are common precursors to adolescent sexual offences. Van Ness (1984) indicates that over three quarters of ASOs in his sample decided in advance to commit their index sexual offences sometime on the day they
occurred. The proportion of premeditated index sexual offences in Vinogradov et al.’s (1988) sample is a more modest 21%, while around half of Carpentier, Leclerc and Proulx’s (2005) sample reported having deviant sexual fantasies, either in general or about their victim, 48 hours prior to their index sexual offences. However, while some degree of prior forethought appears to be common, be it in the form of a sexual fantasy or a conscious decision to commit the offence, Van Ness (1984) reports that less than 10% of his sample reported engaging in any offence planning. This suggests that even ASOs with a prior intention to sexually offend may rarely go to much effort to encounter or create opportunities to do so.

A small number of studies have also examined how the strategies and behaviours ASOs’ exhibit during sexual offences are influenced by their situational context. Threats and/or use of force in securing compliance with sexual activity are more commonly used by ASOs in sexual offences against peer-aged and older/adult victims, while less forceful strategies, such as giving gifts or love and attention, are typically used against younger and child victims (Awad & Saunders, 1991; Boyd, Hagan & Cho, 2000; Becker & Kaplan, 1986; Davis & Leitenberg, 1987; Fehrenbach et al., 1986; Hsu & Starzynski, 1990; Hunter et al., 2000; Kaufman et al., 1996; Righthand & Welch, 2001). Leclerc and Felson’s (2014) findings also indicate that ASOs most often use legitimate and non-forceful interactions to get time alone with child victims and sexually offend against them (e.g. game-playing, babysitting, watching television, bathing), with only a small number using more direct and forceful strategies (e.g., showing the victim pornography, bribing the victim with treats, performing sexual acts in front of the victim). Such findings have been attributed to the fact that child victims tend to be weaker, more vulnerable and more easily manipulated than peer-aged and older/adult victims, making the use of more effortful, forceful and risky strategies unnecessary. Indeed, Leclerc and Tremblay’s (2007) findings suggest that ASOs will typically only resort to such strategies with child victims when other, less difficult and risky
strategies fail. However, Leclerc et al.’s (2008) findings suggest that this could also be due to the frequency with which adolescent sexual offences against child victims are committed with someone else in the general vicinity, necessitating the use of less obvious and overtly forceful strategies in order to minimise the risk of detection/interruption.

The characteristics of adolescent sexual offences clearly exhibit trends that are consistent with the routine activities and rational choice approaches. Specifically, these trends suggest that ASOs generally act upon routinely encountered offence opportunities that allow them to sexually offend easily and safely against victims of higher sexual value. This is particularly evident in the tendency of ASOs to target younger, known, female victims who are easily accessible, vulnerable, and sexually preferable, in residential locations that offer a degree of familiarity and privacy. It is also tentatively demonstrated that rational choice considerations extend to other aspects of the situational context, such as timing and the avoidance of adult supervisors. In relation to the strategies employed to commit their sexual offences, extant research suggests that ASOs will tend towards those that are less risky and require less effort, only resorting to more direct and forceful strategies when necessary.

Finally, this research has examined the motivational role of situational factors, with intoxicants, peer influences, routine social interactions and misinterpreted victim cues emerging as potentially important situational precipitators. While research that explicitly approaches adolescent sexual offending from a situational perspective is lacking, the current evidence clearly suggests that the situational context of this behaviour constitutes a useful source of information for understanding and preventing it.

2.2.4 Summary

Situational approaches to studying crime offer a relatively novel perspective on the problem of adolescent sexual offending. In contrast to dispositional research, which informs the identification of adolescents who are at greater risk of sexually offending, the routine
activities and rational choice approaches highlight the importance of concurrent efforts to identify how, where, when and against whom adolescent sexual offences typically occur. While still in its comparatively early stages, extant research on the situational context of adolescent sexual offences nonetheless offers important insights into their occurrence. Specifically, this research suggests that ASOs generally utilise opportunities that allow them to sexually offend easily and safely, against victims of sexual value. These insights, in turn, open up new avenues for the prevention of adolescent sexual offending that target its situational contexts, and minimise their capacity to facilitate and motivate it.

So far two seemingly disparate approaches to studying adolescent sexual offending have been examined; one focused on understanding ASOs and their predisposition towards sexual offending, the other on the situational contexts of their sexual offences. Although there is a tendency in much of the research regarding adolescent sexual offending to emphasise or assume the primacy of one approach, they need not be seen as conflicting. The main point of difference between these approaches is not in the answers they offer to the same question, but in their attempts to address different yet equally important questions regarding who is likely to sexually offend and under what circumstances they are likely to do so. As such, the research reviewed thus far can be said to support the role of both internal (dispositional) and external (situational) factors in adolescent sexual offending. In the following section, efforts to integrate these approaches to achieve a more complete understanding of adolescent sexual offending, and inform the development of more effective assessment, treatment and prevention measures, are examined.

2.3 Integrating Dispositional and Situational Approaches

This section introduces the interdependent interactional model of human behaviour, which provides a means of integrating dispositional and situational approaches to studying adolescent sexual offending. It begins with an examination of this model’s origins in the
interactional psychological movement of the 1970’s, before outlining the mechanisms through which it contends dispositional and situational factors interact to influence human behaviour. Next, its incorporation into criminological theory is explored, and its recent application to crime in the form of an offender x situation interaction typology is highlighted. The adaptation of this typology to sexual offenders by Wortley and Smallbone (2006) is then examined, before concluding with a discussion of its potential implications for the assessment, treatment and prevention of adolescent sexual offending.

2.3.1 An interdependent interactional model of human behaviour

While dispositional and situational approaches to studying adolescent sexual offending are not, in essence, conflicting, they have been used to support competing views on one important issue. Dispositional approaches, having historically ignored the situational context of adolescent sexual offences, foster the assumption that enduring developmental and psychological factors make certain adolescents uniformly more likely than others to sexually offend across all situations. This assumption, as discussed, has done much to fuel the popular view of ASOs as young sexual deviants who will persist in going to great lengths to sexually offend, even where it is difficult and risky to do so, into adulthood. Conversely, situational approaches argue that the occurrence of any offence will be contingent on the presence of an opportunity and/or precipitator to commit it. As such, and in contrast to dispositional approaches, situational approaches imply that the probability of sexual offending varies greatly across different situations for all adolescents, being far more likely in situations in which it is easy and safe to do so. Critically, this disparity mirrors that between broader psychological perspectives on human behaviour. Indeed, there are few issues of greater significance to psychological and social scientific researchers than that concerning the relative importance of internal and external influences on behaviour. On the one hand, personality and biological psychology emphasise stable internal factors, which are commonly
assumed to underlie situationally invariant tendencies towards certain behaviours. On the other hand, behavioural and social psychology implicitly advocate the situational variance of behaviour through their focus on its similarly varying external influences, ranging from specific conditioning stimuli to broader socio-cultural contexts and processes.

While a number of early prominent psychological researchers (e.g. Kantor, 1924; 1926; Lewin, 1936; Murphy, 1947; Murray, 1938) discussed and attempted to resolve this disparity, it otherwise received little explicit attention until Mischel’s (1968) seminal book *Personality and Assessment*. His review of personality research at the time concluded that dispositional factors account for only around 10% of the variance in human behaviour; a finding further supported in subsequent research reviews (Bowers, 1973; Nisbett, 1980; Sarason, Smith & Diener, 1975). However, these and other reviews (Funder & Ozer, 1983) also noted the similarly low proportion of variance in human behaviour explained by situational factors. While this initially fuelled open debate between dispositionally- and situationally-inclined researchers (e.g., Alker, 1972; Bem, 1972), it ultimately served to highlight the inadequacy of both perspectives as singular explanations of human behaviour.

In time, the work of earlier psychological researchers on the interactive influence of internal and external factors was used as the basis of a new, ‘interactional’ psychological perspective (e.g. Bowers, 1973; Endler, 1973; 1975; Mischel, 1973; 1977).

The term ‘interaction’ has a number of meanings within psychology and social science (Pervin & Lewis, 1978). In its most basic form it refers to a reciprocal interaction in which an individual influences their immediate environment, which in turn influences the individual, and so on. This definition on its own is largely descriptive, at most implying that situational factors exert a uniform influence on behaviour, and thus does little to incorporate dispositional and situational factors into a single explanatory model. The simplest means of doing this is via an additive model, in which the variance explained by dispositional and
situational factors is added together in the prediction of behaviour. However, this model again lacks any real consideration of the interaction between dispositional and situational factors, which are considered independent and connected solely through their relationship with the behaviour being predicted. Furthermore, the low proportions of variance accounted for by each set of factors separately suggests that a model which simply adds these together would not on its own account for a substantial degree of variance in behaviour.

In conceptualising the interaction of dispositional and situational factors, interactional psychological researchers have typically adopted an interdependent interactional model. This model proposes what is essentially a statistical interaction between dispositional and situational factors in which the influence of one set of factors on behaviour is dependent on the other. It locates this interaction in the cognitive processes underlying decisions to engage in particular behaviours, which facilitate the intersection of internal and external influences (Mischel & Shoda, 1995; 1998 Shoda & Mischel, 2000). Enduring dispositional characteristics are said to be comprised of an individual’s characteristic style of cognitively processing and affectively responding to specific stimuli, their expectations of the likely outcomes of different behavioural responses to these stimuli, the subjective value they attach to these outcomes, and their ability to exhibit different behavioural responses. In effect, an individual’s disposition towards a behaviour constitutes their susceptibility to the influence of situations that allow or encourage it. Furthermore, while certain situations will generally increase or decrease the probability of a given behaviour, individuals will differ in their susceptibility to the influence of these situations. To illustrate, being bumped into in a nightclub increases the probability of an aggressive response for most people, but much more so for an individual who is highly predisposed towards cognitively processing and behaviourally responding to such a stimulus in an aggressive manner. While this individual may be considered dispositionally ‘aggressive’, they are much more likely to behave
aggressively in this situation than in another, less provocative one (e.g. purchasing groceries).
As such, the interdependent interactional model accounts for both within-individual variance in behaviour across situations (something typically neglected by dispositional approaches to studying human behaviour) and between-individual variance in behaviour within the same situation (something typically neglected by situational approaches to studying human behaviour).

While the operationalisation of dispositional factors draws on extensive research into cognition and the measurement of personality, there is far less to inform the operationalisation of situations (Ekehammar, 1974; Hogan, 2009; Magnusson, 1971; Reis, 2008). Consequently, situations have been defined with reference to a variety of different physical (e.g., location, people present, activities undertaken) and psychological (e.g., salience, novelty) features, and spatial and temporal boundaries. One important dimension on which situations are assumed to differ is the strength with which they exert an influence on human behaviour (Mischel, 1973; Marshall & Brown, 2006; Cooper & Withey, 2009). This is illustrated graphically in Figure 2.2. The relative probabilities of two diametric, mutually exclusive behaviours are gauged for three dispositionally different individuals across situations that vary in the extent to which they allow/encourage each behaviour. While the existence of stable dispositional differences between individuals is recognised, the actual probability of exhibiting a given behaviour and the magnitude of between-individual differences in this probability will vary across situations of different strength. Strong situations are those that lead a large number of individuals to perceive and interpret them in the same way, providing clear expectations/incentives and opportunities to exhibit a certain behaviour. In other words, they strongly encourage a particular behaviour while discouraging and inhibiting diametric behaviours. In contrast, weak situations are ambiguous and do not provide clear, uniformly interpretable behavioural expectations or incentives, allowing a
range of different behaviours. As the strength with which a situation influences a given behaviour increases, so too does the probability of exhibiting it for all individuals. Relatedly, the magnitude of between-individual differences in the probability of a given behaviour will be lower in strong situations that encourage it, and greater in weak situations that allow but do not encourage or discourage it. Put simply, situational factors will exert a stronger influence on behaviour in strong situations, while dispositional factors will exert a stronger influence on behaviour in weak situations.

2.3.2 Criminological applications of the interdependent interactional model
The interdependent interactional model has until recently received little explicit attention in criminological theory. This is despite the fact that such a model accounts in equal measure for both stable between-individual variation in predispositions towards offending (e.g., Nagin & Farrington, 1992a; 1992b) and within-individual variation in offending across situations (e.g., Bernasco, Ruiter, Bruinsma, Pauwels & Weerman, 2013). However, calls for its application to understanding and preventing crime (e.g., Horney, 2006) have paralleled more recent efforts to explicitly incorporate it into criminological theory.

Criminological applications of symbolic interactionism have highlighted the differences in how situations are interpreted and reacted to by offenders. This perspective emphasises the unique meanings ascribed to situations by different individuals, who derive these meanings from interactions with others and use them to determine the behaviours they exhibit (Blumer, 1969). Examples of its criminological application can be found in labelling (e.g., Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1951) and neutralisation (e.g., Skyes & Matza, 1957) theories, both of which focus on how offenders rationalise offending with reference to their characteristic interpretations of it and its situational context (e.g., ‘I was being attacked, so it’s not assault’, ‘I’m not a thief, I’m just poor and need to steal to survive’). Additionally, cognitive and social learning theories have also emphasised the thought processes that colour offenders’ perceptions and interpretations of situations, and underlie their decisions to offend (e.g., Akers, 1973; Sutherland, 1947). Indeed, Sutherland’s (1947) differential association theory explicitly acknowledges that:

The tendencies and inhibitions at the moment of criminal behaviour are, to be sure, largely a product of the earlier history of the person, but the expression of these tendencies and inhibitions is a reaction to the immediate situation as defined by the person. (p.5).
However, these theories are ultimately dispositional in that they focus on the nature and development of stable cognitive processing styles relevant to offending, while ignoring the influence of the stimuli being processed. As such, while they seek to account for between-individual variation in the probability of offending, they fail to elaborate on its within-individual variation across different situations.

Situational approaches to crime have had somewhat more to say about the interaction of dispositional and situational factors. Implicit in the offence opportunity structure specified by the routine activities approach is the assumption that one must be predisposed towards interpreting and acting upon these offence opportunities (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Furthermore, the rational choice approach contends that decisions to initially become involved in offending are distally influenced by offenders’ values, attitudes and personality traits, which contribute to ongoing processes of learning and experience that influence their interpretation of certain situations as offence opportunities, along with the benefits, risks, and effort involved in acting upon them (Clarke & Cornish, 1985). Its acknowledgment of the bounded rationality of offenders additionally hints at the individual differences that exist in cognitive processing styles and capacities, along with the consequent variation in perceptions of benefits, risks and effort involved in offending. Nevertheless, situational approaches have historically resisted any further incorporation of dispositional approaches on the basis that SCP measures are unable to anticipate the nature and strength of one’s antisocial predisposition. It has instead been considered more pragmatic to simply assume an invariably strong and stable antisocial predisposition in all individuals so as to maximise the effectiveness of these measures (Cornish & Clarke, 2008).

However, this assumption has been qualified as the rational choice approach and SCP measures have developed. Cornish & Clarke (2003) outline three working offender models that have driven different phases in this process of development. The initial assumption that
all offenders are highly antisocial, and proactive in their creation of and search for offence opportunities, adheres to what they call the ‘Antisocial Predator’ offender model. Situations were originally thought to serve a purely facilitative function, providing opportunities to act out this antisocial predisposition easily, safely and beneficially. It was for this reason that the earliest SCP measures focused solely on the maximisation of risk and effort, and the minimisation of benefits. With the later addition of SCP measures focused on removing excuses for offending came an acknowledgment of the existence of the ‘Mundane Offender’. This model recognises the existence of offenders with a somewhat weaker antisocial predisposition who ambivalently engage in occasional, opportunistic and low-level offending (e.g., speeding, underage drinking, vandalism) where they perceive it to be morally excusable. While their basic motivations for offending are the same as ‘Antisocial Predators’, their moral scruples mean they only offend in morally ambiguous situations that provide few cues or inducements for prosocial behaviour, and easy opportunities for antisocial behaviour. Furthermore, they do not actively create/seek out these opportunities, although once encountered they rationally appraise them in a similar manner to the ‘Antisocial Predator’.

Finally, Wortley’s (1996; 1997; 1998; 2001; 2002; 2008) work on situational precipitators is premised on a ‘Provoked Offender’ model. This model acknowledges individuals with a non-existent antisocial predisposition who are motivated to offend purely by the situations in which they do so. Given the impulsive and emotive nature of their offences, situations that encourage offending are not created/sought out or even anticipated, but reacted to with little prior forethought.

These three offender models are distinguished on the basis of both their antisocial predispositions and their likely interaction with the situations within which they offend. As such, it has been suggested that they can be interpreted and expanded upon with reference to the interdependent interactional model (see Figure 2.3) (Wortley, 2012). ‘Antisocial
Figure 2.3. Cross-Situational Patterns in the Probability of Offending for Cornish and Clarke’s (2003) Offender Groups (adapted from Marshall and Brown, 2006, p.1102).

Predators’ will be the most likely to offend across all situations due to their strong antisocial predispositions. Indeed, their persistence in uncovering offence opportunities means they are the most likely to actively create/seek out such opportunities even in situations that strongly discourage/inhibit it. Meanwhile, ‘Mundane Offenders’ will typically restrict their offending to situations that lack clear expectations or incentives for prosocial behaviour, and provide opportunities to offend easily, safely and beneficially. Finally, ‘Provoked Offenders’ will generally restrict their offending even further to situations that strongly encourage, or precipitate, offending. Importantly, when interpreted in this manner, these offender groups are not generally limited to offending in the type of situation by which they are defined. ‘Antisocial Predators’, for example, will also offend in situations that allow or precipitate such behaviour, and in fact are the most likely to do so given their strong antisocial
predispositions. Furthermore, ‘Mundane Offenders’ will offend where the situation makes it easy, safe and excusable to do so, but are also susceptible to the influence of situations containing one or more offence precipitators.

2.3.3 The interdependent interactional model and adolescent sexual offending

There have been few comprehensive attempts to integrate dispositional and situational approaches in the study of adolescent sexual offending. As discussed, most theories leave the within-individual variance in sexual offending unaccounted for, and focus on stable dispositional factors. The few theories and offence process models that do examine the situational context of sexual offending (Gray & Pithers, 1993; Lane & Ryan, 2010; Tedeschi & Felson, 1994) in turn either leave between-individual dispositional variation unaccounted for, or make no attempt to link it to the within-individual variation in this behaviour. Rather, situations are predominately conceptualised as offering opportunities for invariably motivated individuals to sexually offend easily, safely and beneficially. As mentioned, typologies that identify groups of dispositionally ‘normal’ ASOs have often distinguished them from groups with stronger predispositions towards sexual offending in part by describing their sexual offending as situationally motivated (e.g., peer pressure, sexually arousing stimuli) (O’Brien & Bera, 1986; Oxnam & Vess, 2006; 2008; Richardson et al., 2004; Smith et al., 1987; Worling, 2001). However, these descriptions have often been brief, speculative, and based purely on the empirical absence of any obvious predisposition towards sexual offending.

More recently, Smallbone et al. (2008) have proposed an integrated theory of the aetiology of sexual offending which incorporates the interdependent interactional model. It does this by expanding on Marshall and Barbaree’s (1990) integrated theory, specifically on the influence of broader social ecological and immediate situational factors on sexual offending. They maintain the original theory’s views on the interactive contribution of biological and developmental factors to one’s predisposition towards sexual offending, which
is conceptualised as a susceptibility to the influence of situations that allow or encourage such behaviour. They further argue that the frequency with which these situations are encountered is determined by the various nested systems that compose an individual’s social ecology, with more proximal systems (e.g., family, peers) having a more direct and powerful influence than more distal systems (e.g., school/work, neighbourhood, broader socio-cultural). Critically, individuals will vary in their susceptibility to the influence of these situations, and it is here that Smallbone et al. (2008) elucidate their views on the interdependent interaction of dispositional and situational factors underlying sexual offending. To do this, they use an offender x situation interaction typology of sexual offending first proposed by Wortley and Smallbone (2006) that conceptually adapts Cornish and Clarke’s (2003) offender typology, and adds three offence situation types distinguished based on the extent to which they allow/encourage sexual offending (see Figure 2.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offender</th>
<th>Offence Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Situational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Predatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges Offender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manipulates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempts Offender</td>
<td>Exploits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exploits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precipitates Offender</td>
<td>Reacts to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reacts to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reacts to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2.4. Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation interaction typology of sexual offending (adapted from Wortley & Smallbone, 2006, p.42).*

‘Predatory’ sexual offenders have stable deviant sexual interests, and are thus strongly predisposed towards sexual offending. Of the three sexual offender groups, they are likely to
begin sexually offending the earliest and do so with the greatest persistence, even after
detection. They may also be strongly predisposed towards other antisocial behaviours, and
exhibit similarly persistent patterns of non-sexual offending. Importantly, as with Cornish
across many different situations, and regularly engage in a substantial degree of prior
forethought and offence planning. Indeed, the strength of their motivation to sexually offend
means they will even actively manipulate situations that challenge their attempts to sexually
offend in order to create or seek out offence opportunities. This could include, for example,
convincing an unknown child to follow them away from adult supervisors in a park, or
stalking a female on the street until she arrives at a concealed location suitable for sexual
contact.

‘Opportunists’ sexual offenders encompass those who sexually offend as part of a
broader, versatile pattern of antisocial behaviour. They will typically have an official record
of prior non-sexual offending, and/or a history of acting impulsively, oppositionally, and
selfishly. In other areas of their life they may have some stake in conformity, although their
tumultuous relationship with social controls (e.g., caregiver conflict/neglect, poor
attendance/engagement in school, regular unemployment) renders them largely ineffective as
behavioural regulators. Since their sexual offences usually constitute an escalation in the
severity of a gradually unfolding pattern of antisocial behaviour, their first sexual offence is
typically committed at a later age. Ultimately, their sexual offences resemble their non-sexual
offences in that they involve the impulsive, unplanned exploitation of opportunities to satisfy
their own needs at the expense of others as they are encountered. As such, sexual offending
represents an acceptable but not preferable means of satisfying sexual urges where it is easy
and safe to do so. They typically limit their sexual offending to offence situations that allow
them to engage in it with minimal risk and effort, such as being left home alone with a child,
although they are also highly susceptible to situations that encourage, or precipitate, this behaviour.

‘Situational’ sexual offenders encompass otherwise law-abiding individuals with no sexually deviant or generally antisocial predisposition, whose sexual offences represent anomalous lapses in otherwise unremarkable histories of prosocial behaviour and strong connections to social controls. They sexually offend in an impulsive, unplanned manner, but unlike ‘Opportunist’ sexual offenders, they are not constantly on the lookout for opportunities they can exploit to easily and safely do so. Indeed, they are likely to view sexual offending as abhorrent, and desist after their initial sexual offence due to the shame and guilt they feel. Their sexual offences are restricted to offence situations that contain one or more precipitators, such as catching a glimpse of a nude child or misinterpreting the affection of a child/peer as sexual interest, which momentarily overwhelm their self-restraint and motivate them to sexually offend. In keeping with the literature on situational precipitators (Wortley, 1996; 1997; 1998; 2001; 2002; 2008), the impulsive and emotive nature of this reaction means that ‘Situational’ sexual offenders may not always engage in a rational appraisal of the risks and effort inherent to sexually offending to the extent that their ‘Predatory’ and ‘Opportunist’ counterparts do. As such, their sexual offences could potentially occur in a variety of situations, although the factors precipitating these offences will most often arise from situations that allow them to offend with little risk/effort due simply to the frequency with which they are encountered (e.g., within their homes, during interactions with related/known individuals).

A few points are worth noting in relation to Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology. First, in line with the interdependent interactional model, offender groups vary in the extent to which their sexual offences are limited to a particular type of situation. This is reflected in the hypothesised pattern of dispersal of each offender group
across the three situational groups in Figure 1.4, highlighted in black. ‘Predatory’ sexual offenders will sexually offend in highly challenging situations, but are also highly susceptible to situations that tempt or precipitate sexual offending. ‘Opportunist’ and ‘Situational’ sexual offenders, by contrast, will only sexually offend when it is easy and safe to do so and/or in response to situational precipitators. Second, while situations play an equally important role in the sexual offences of all three offender groups, the nature of this role varies. Offence situations that challenge or tempt already-motivated sexual offenders serve to inform their rational appraisal of the risks and effort inherent to sexually offending, and are thus important in terms of their provision and obstruction of offence opportunities. Meanwhile, offence situations that precipitate sexual offending will also facilitate and obstruct this behaviour to varying degrees, but nonetheless serve an additional motivational role. Finally, it must be emphasised that Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology represents the most comprehensive and explicit attempt to incorporate the interdependent interactional model into a theoretical account of sexual offending. While its validity has yet to be empirically examined in relation to ASOs, or indeed any type of sexual offender, it nonetheless accounts for the empirically supported points of distinction between ASOs regarding their predisposition towards sexual offending, and its empirically demonstrated situational variance.

2.3.4 Implications for assessment, treatment and prevention

One could argue that, although Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology highlights the interdependent interaction of dispositional and situational factors underlying adolescent sexual offending, its representation of this interaction is oversimplified. While it is acknowledged that a continuous as opposed to typological model (see Figures 1.2 and 1.3) would likely have increased validity, it must be noted that applied concerns with prevention were the major impetus for this typology’s development (Wortley & Smallbone, 2006).
While it theoretically adapts the interdependent interactional model to sexual offending, it purposely does so in a simple, easily communicable way so as to be a useful methodology for practitioners in the assessment, treatment and prevention of this behaviour. It therefore becomes important to examine this typology’s potential usefulness, along with the changes it suggests to current practices with adolescent sexual offenders.

**Risk assessment**

Risk assessment instruments have determined the probability of sexual recidivism in ASOs predominately with reference to dispositional and broader ecological factors (Hempel et al., 2013; Rich, 2011). Specifically, they rate ASOs on items reflecting historical behavioural trends, demographic and familial characteristics, and enduring attitudes/thoughts/beliefs relevant to sexual offending, which are used to calculate situationally-invariant risk estimates. Rich (2011) notes that one of the major limitations of risk assessment instruments used for ASOs is their persistent failure to incorporate items indicative of situational influences. While some of these instruments do include items pertaining to sexual offence characteristics (e.g., degree of planning, complexity of MO, threats/use of force, public location, child/unknown/male victim), these items are not used to situationally qualify ASOs’ probability of sexually recidivating. Rather, they are interpreted as indicators of the strength of ASOs’ enduring interest or motivation to engage in sexual offending, and are thus ultimately dispositional in emphasis.

The interdependent interactional model implies that the probability of sexual recidivism in ASOs will depend on both their predisposition towards it and the opportunities/precipitators they encounter. As such, the application of this model to risk assessment would entail a closer examination of the situational context of ASOs’ previous sexual offence(s), and its interaction with dispositional factors. This may include the incorporation of items measuring the frequency with which ASOs encounter situational
factors that have served as opportunities for and/or precipitators to prior sexual offending into overall risk estimates. It may also include the calculation of situationally-specific risk estimates. For example, ASOs with a weak/non-existent predisposition towards sexual offending may nonetheless exhibit an elevated probability of sexually recidivating in a small number of highly specific situations. Furthermore, ASOs with a strong predisposition towards sexual offending may nonetheless exhibit a lower probability of sexually recidivating in some situations than others. In this regard the interaction typology may be particularly useful, assisting in the classification of ASOs based on dispositional factors, and identifying the offence situations within which their probability of sexually recidivating is highest.

**Treatment and prevention**

Efforts to minimise the probability of sexual recidivism in ASOs have typically involved individually-oriented treatment targeting their predisposition towards this behaviour. As with research on adolescent sexual offending, these treatment approaches have been heavily influenced by those developed for adult sexual offenders, and primarily employ cognitive-behavioural strategies to challenge the cognitive distortions ASOs use to justify sexual offending, improve their perspective-taking and empathic abilities, alter deviant sexual fantasies and arousal, and sex education (Brown, 2005; Burton, Smith-Darden & Frankel, 2006; Rich, 2011; Ryan, Leversee & Lane, 2010). Given the frequent co-occurrence of sexual and non-sexual offending, ASOs are also often taught general social, communication and self-regulatory skills. Psychoeducational methods are typically used to achieve these treatment goals, which involve teaching ASOs about problematic thought patterns, emotions and behaviours, and training them in new thought patterns and skills. Additionally, many ASOs also undergo further psychological treatment for comorbid psychopathology, often some form of conduct (e.g., Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Antisocial Personality Disorder),
affective (e.g., depressive and anxiety disorders) and/or neurodevelopmental (e.g., intellectual and autistic spectrum disorders) disorder.

Many of these cognitive-behavioural treatments devote a significant portion of time to altering ASOs’ perception of certain situations as sexual offence opportunities/precipitators, while also teaching them more effective strategies to cope with the situationally-induced affective states that precede their sexual offending. These techniques are designed to make ASOs more resistant to the influence of offence opportunities and precipitators they will no doubt encounter during and subsequent to treatment, and thus can be said to address the dispositional side of the interdependent interactional model. Meanwhile, techniques that address the situational side of this interaction figure in most contemporary treatment programs for ASOs due primarily to their widespread incorporation of the relapse prevention model (Rich, 2011; Thakker et al., 2006). As mentioned, this model emphasises the importance of helping ASOs to identify and manage their exposure to situations that facilitate and motivate sexual offending. Treatment providers achieve this through the development of relapse prevention plans, which outline the steps ASOs can take to avoid encountering or succumbing to these situations and sexually recidivating. Although initially used to maintain reductions in the probability of sexually recidivating subsequent to treatment, relapse prevention plans now constitute an important component of the treatment process itself within many programs.

The increasing utilisation of multisystemic therapy (MST) with ASOs has also generated increased attention to situational considerations and SCP measures among treatment administrators (Borduin et al., 1990; Bourduin & Schaeffer, 2001; Letourneau et al., 2009; 2013). Developed in the early 1990’s, MST extends beyond linear, mechanistic conceptualisations of the causes of antisocial behaviour in young people, viewing it instead as the result of numerous dynamic interactions between and within the various systems of a
young person’s social ecology (Henggeler, Schoenwald, Borduin, Rowland & Cunningham, 1998). As such, while MST often incorporates an individually-focused, cognitive-behavioural treatment aspect, social ecological interventions are also implemented by members of its different components (e.g., caregivers, teachers, employers, case workers), who work in a multisystemic team with the primary treatment provider. Importantly, and in line with Smallbone et al.’s (2008) integrated theory, MST interventions regularly focus on reducing the opportunities/precipitators for sexual offending that ASOs encounter frequently within their social ecology, and increasing opportunities for prosocial behaviour. These include measures to increase caregiver/supervisor monitoring, structure out-of-school hours with work, activities and recreational pursuits, minimise association with antisocial peers, and inhibit unsupervised movement around the community.

Outside of these treatment-based measures, school-based programs that educate large numbers of children on how to recognise and protect themselves against abusive behaviour, and to disclose such behaviour when it occurs, are now widespread (Kaufman et al., 2006; Sanderson, 2004). These programs play an important role in target hardening by making potential young victims of sexual offending, including adolescent sexual offending, more difficult to offend against, while also increasing the probability of disclosure, and thus detection. Additionally, similar community-based programs that target or include families (e.g., National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) programs; see NAPCAN, 2015) are also prevalent, and additionally focus on increasing the capacity of adult supervisors to recognise and intervene in situations that can facilitate and motivate sexual offending.

However, while situational factors evidently receive at least some attention in many contemporary treatment and prevention programs, the interdependent interactional model highlights the need for careful and individualised assessment of these factors. Rich (2011)
argues that many treatment administrators indiscriminately implement generic measures to ensure ASOs’ avoid or are resilient to offence opportunities and precipitators. Additionally, there is the potential for people to assume that the prevention measures taught in school- and community-based programs will be equally effective across all offenders and situations. This largely conforms to earlier situationally-focused work on understanding and preventing crime which, as discussed, largely ignored the dispositional heterogeneity of offenders. The danger in doing this, as suggested by the interdependent interactional model, lies in the potential implementation of overly excessive or lenient SCP measures, and the consequent over- or under-investment of resources in these measures. For example, an ASO may be subjected to stringent restrictions on unsupervised contact with all prepubescent children at all times, despite exhibiting a weak predisposition towards sexual offending and having only sexually offended previously under very specific circumstances. Conversely, an ASO with a strong predisposition towards sexual offending may nonetheless be allowed to continue spending unsupervised time in certain public or institutional locations. Furthermore, potential victims and adult supervisors may come to believe that simple supervisory and resistance strategies will defend against all sexual offending, leaving them ill-prepared to deal with more determined, predatory ASOs.

In terms of treatment and prevention then, the potential usefulness of the interaction typology is as a methodology to inform the accurate targeting of SCP measures so as to maximise their effectiveness. Wortley and Smallbone (2006) highlight the measures they believe will be effective for different types of sexual offenders, drawing on Clarke and colleagues’ generic SCP measures (see also Smallbone et al., 2008). With regards to increasing effort, they argue that target hardening measures involving basic sexual education (e.g., appropriate and inappropriate touching) and teaching potential victims protective strategies (e.g., assertiveness, showing signs of distress) may be sufficient to deter the sexual
offending of ‘Situational’ and ‘Opportunist’ sexual offenders, along with less excessive measures to control access (e.g., ensuring privacy of potential victims at bedtime). Conversely, measures that restrict access to potential victims in all locations may be necessary to inhibit the sexual offending of ‘Predatory’ sexual offenders. Additionally, it is pointed out that the risk of detection plays perhaps the biggest part in sexual offenders’ decision-making. This is particularly likely to be true for ASOs due to their age and the consequent level of supervision they are routinely subjected to. Measures to extend guardianship (e.g., caregivers not leaving potential victims alone with ASOs) and increase natural surveillance in the home (e.g., encouraging play in common-use rooms) are therefore expected to inhibit the sexual offending of ‘Situational’ and ‘Opportunist’ sexual offenders. ‘Predatory’ sexual offenders, meanwhile, might require constant adult supervision, along with more formal methods of surveillance in public locations (e.g., CCTV, security personnel) and informal methods of supervision for potential victims (e.g., walking home from school with friends or an adult escort). Given their concern with situational precipitators, it is argued that SCP measures to control prompts and reduce permissibility will generally be more effective at inhibiting the sexual offending of ‘Opportunist’, and especially ‘Situational’ sexual offenders. Of particular relevance to sexual offending are measures to reduce temptation and arousal (e.g., ensuring privacy for potential victims while bathing or dressing/undressing), setting rules (e.g., educating ASOs on consent), and controlling intoxicants.

Of course, the ideal outcome of SCP measures such as these is to prevent sexual offending in the first place. In their aetiological theory, Smallbone et al. (2008) argue that understanding an individual’s first sexual offence is particularly important due to its preventative potential. Stopping or interrupting this first sexual offence not only prevents it, but very likely all of the sexual offences an individual may go on to commit if not detected.
This outcome (i.e. primary and secondary prevention) is preferable to deterring those who have already sexually offended (i.e. tertiary prevention) not only because it prevents any harm coming to potential victims, but also because it hinders the possible conditioning of treatment-resistant deviant sexual interests. However, a major obstacle to employing the interaction typology towards this end arises from the difficulty in assigning adolescents who have not sexually offended to offender groups. There is also the related problem of subjecting the very large number of adolescents who will never engage in sexual behaviour outside the norm for their age to overly restrictive prevention measures. As such, its implementation would need to rely heavily on the knowledge that caregivers and other adult supervisors have of the adolescents they are responsible for. Specifically, it suggests that most ASOs may be deterred by basic household rules that facilitate natural surveillance and prevent bad behaviour in general, such as those mandating unlocked/unclosed doors at all times, and those encouraging play in common-use areas of the home. Rules requiring private bathing and dressing/undressing, along with early and ongoing sexual education, may also minimise the number and impact of potential situational precipitators. In contrast, stricter measures that inhibit unsupervised public travel, and access to potential victims and intoxicants, might be better targeted at adolescents with more persistent histories of childhood antisocial and/or deviant sexual behaviour.

Unfortunately, due to ethical and practical difficulties, there is little empirical evidence to support the individualised application of SCP measures to prevent adolescent sexual offending, or indeed, to support their effectiveness in preventing sexual offending at all. It has been found that children who participate in school- and community-based initiatives successfully acquire the concepts being taught, and are more likely to demonstrate protective behaviours and disclose sexual abuse (Davis & Gidyez, 2000; Finkelhor, Asdigian & Dzuiba-Leatherman, 1995a; 1995b; Hébert & Tourigny, 2004 & Zwi et al., 2007).
However, it has also been found that victims who physically or verbally resist during an already forceful sexual offence are more likely to be subjected to further force in response (Balemba, Beauregard & Mieczkowski, 2012; Finkelhor et al., 1995a; 1995b). This suggests that SCP measures focused on encouraging victim assertiveness and resistance may be less effective at deterring more motivated ASOs who are willing to use force to overcome it.

Leclerc et al.’s (2008) findings also demonstrate that some ASOs will sexually offend in situations with a higher probability of detection, and take steps to minimise this probability by altering their MO to conceal it from nearby adult supervisors. SCP measures to increase surveillance and extend guardianship may therefore also be differentially effective with different types of ASOs. These findings provide very tentative empirical support for the individualised application of SCP measures to adolescent sexual offenders. In this regard, the interaction typology potentially constitutes both a conceptual foundation and a convenient methodology to assist practitioners in accurately targeting these measures at different types of sexual offenders. Of course, a necessary precursor to its implementation to adolescent sexual offending is an empirical examination of the accuracy with which it captures the interdependent interaction of disposition and situation underlying this behaviour.

2.3.5 Summary

Dispositional and situational approaches to studying adolescent sexual offending have each generated knowledge crucial to understanding, treating and preventing this behaviour. While these approaches have historically pursued distinct lines of inquiry, the interdependent interactional model provides a solid theoretical basis for their integration. Furthermore, as Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology demonstrates, this model potentially has important implications for the assessment, treatment and prevention of sexual offending. As such, it is highly relevant not just to researchers attempting to resolve apparent points of
conflict between two theoretical perspectives, but also to practitioners tasked with addressing this behaviour in their clients.

2.4 Summary and Research Aims

This chapter has reviewed the research extending from two distinct approaches to studying adolescent sexual offending. Dispositional approaches have focused on understanding the factors that predispose individuals towards this behaviour, informing efforts to identify who is likely to sexually offend and why, while situational approaches have focused on understanding the factors that facilitate and motivate sexual offences, informing efforts to identify how, when, where and against whom these offences are likely to occur. The interdependent interactional model, which has emerged from interactional psychological research attempting to incorporate dispositional and situational explanations for human behaviour, provides a means of combining these two approaches in order to gain a more complete understanding of adolescent sexual offending. Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation interaction typology constitutes perhaps the most comprehensive attempt to theoretically apply this model to sexual offending, while also drawing attention to its potential implications for assessment, treatment and prevention practices.

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to provide the first empirical examination of the validity of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation interaction typology of sexual offenders, focusing on adolescent sexual offending. More broadly, it explores the relevance of the interdependent interactional model to adolescent sexual offending. Given the applied concerns with prevention that were the impetus for this typology’s development, and the potentially enhanced effectiveness of prevention measures targeted at earlier sexual offences, it is empirically examined in relation to participants’ first sexual offence. Additionally, in keeping with this typology’s intended purpose as a methodology for practitioners, caregivers and other adult supervisors, groups will be operationalised simply
and with reference to easily available information where possible. Favourable empirical findings will support this typology’s use as both a means of theoretically incorporating the interdependent interactional model into the study of adolescent sexual offending (and indeed, sexual offending generally), and as a guide to the individualised application of SCP measures to prevent this behaviour.

Three specific research aims are addressed. First, the validity of the interaction typology’s offender component is empirically examined. To achieve this, a number of hypotheses derived from Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) description of each offender group are tested. It is hypothesised that significant differences will emerge between offender groups regarding the age at which they committed their first sexual offence, their predisposition towards antisocial behaviour, and their connection to social controls. Specifically, it is expected that ‘Predatory’ offenders will have committed their first sexual offence at a significantly younger age than ‘Situational’ and ‘Opportunist’ offenders, and that ‘Situational’ offenders will have a significantly weaker antisocial predisposition, and a significantly stronger connection to social controls, than both ‘Opportunist’ and ‘Predatory’ offenders. Second, the validity of the interaction typology’s situational component is empirically examined. Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) description of these situational groups lacks the detail included in their outline of the offender groups, although this is understandable given the dearth of prior research on which to base a typology of offence situations. As such, no specific hypotheses can be derived, and the empirical examination of these groups is largely exploratory. However, it is broadly expected that ‘Precipitating’ and especially ‘Tempting’ offence situations will encompass sexual offences that involve a known, younger victim in a residential location, during an unstructured time period, and in the absence of adult supervisors, than ‘Challenging’ offence situations. Finally, the cross tabulated interaction of these offender and situational components is empirically examined. It
is hypothesised that there will be a significant relationship between these two components, and that the pattern of dispersal of each offender group across the situational groups will adhere to that proposed by Wortley and Smallbone (2006). A series of brief instrumental case studies will also be used to further illustrate the interaction of dispositional and situational factors, drawing on individual cases from each offender group.
Chapter Three: Methods

3.1 Participants

The clinical files of adolescent sexual offenders (ASOs) referred to the Griffith Youth Forensic Service (GYFS) were accessed for the purposes of data collection. GYFS is an offence-specific psychological service based at Griffith University in Brisbane that conducts pre-sentence assessments and post-sentence treatment of court-referred young people between the ages of 10 and 17\(^3\) found guilty of at least one sexual offence in the state of Queensland, Australia. While Queensland’s criminal code outlaws any sexual activity involving individuals younger than 16 years of age (Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)), cases referred to GYFS are serious enough to have proceeded through the youth justice system up to the point of sentencing. As such, they typically involve the threat and/or use of force or manipulation, a clear lack of expressed willingness on the victim’s part to participate in sexual activity, and/or a victim who is prepubescent or notably younger than the ASO. At the finalisation of data collection and entry in March 2014, a total of 415 ASOs had been referred to GYFS since it began operating in 2000. Data were only collected from the clinical files of male ASOs who had been assessed and/or treated by a psychologist working for GYFS as of the beginning of 2013, or were referred to and not accepted by GYFS from 2006 onwards. This was done for two reasons; 1) the strict deadlines under which the research team were working meant that the collection of data from every GYFS client was not feasible; and 2) to ensure that the sample would be composed of clients with whom the psychologists assisting in data collection were more familiar. ASOs whose sexual offences did not involve direct contact with at least one identifiable human victim were also excluded from all analyses. This left a sample of 247 male ASOs.

\(^3\) The age of criminal responsibility in Queensland is 10 years. While offenders 17 years of age and over are dealt with as adults by the Queensland criminal justice system, GYFS will consider referrals of 17 year olds if they were between 10-16 years of age when they committed their referral sexual offence(s).
The mean age at which participants were first referred to GYFS was 15.7 years (\(SD = 1.39\) years). Just under a third of the sample identified as Indigenous Australian (29.6%), and resided in an area classified as geographically remote based on dichotomised Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) scores\(^4\) (25.2%) at their time of referral (Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, 2001). Just under half of the sample resided in a suburb classified among Australia’s 25% most socio-economically disadvantaged at their time of referral (44.6%), as measured by Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) rankings\(^5\) (Pink, 2013). The majority of participants in the sample were accepted for assessment and/or treatment by GYFS (81.1%). There were no significant differences between participants included in the sample and clients excluded from the sample regarding age at first referral (\(t(414) = -0.6, p = .540\)), Indigenous status (\(\chi^2(1, 398) = 0.3, p = .593\)), residence in a rural/remote location (\(\chi^2(1, 398) = 0.0, p = .950\)), or residence in a low socio-economic suburb (\(\chi^2(1, 375) = 1.1, p = .294\)). However, those included in the sample were significantly less likely to have been accepted for assessment and/or treatment by GYFS than those not included in the sample (91.2%) (\(\chi^2(1, 397) = 7.7, p = .006\), Cramer’s \(V = .27\)). This is likely an artefact of the exclusion of clients referred to GYFS prior to 2006 from the sample, when there were generally fewer referrals and thus fewer non-acceptances due to workload capacities.

\(^4\) The ARIA uses road accessibility to services to form a 12-point scale measuring the remoteness of a particular region, with 12 indicating highly remote regions. It also provides a method for classifying scores on this scale into one of five remoteness categories. 3.52 was used as a cut-off to dichotomise ASOs into geographically non-remote (encompassing the ‘Accessible’ and ‘Highly Accessible’ categories) and remote (encompassing the ‘Moderately Accessible’, ‘Remote’ and ‘Very Remote’ categories) regions. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (2001) indicates that a score of 3.52 and above indicates at least ‘…significantly restricted accessibility of goods, services and opportunities for social interaction.’ (p. 19).

\(^5\) The SEIFA were developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), and encompass a range of indices for ranking areas of Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and/or disadvantage (Pink, 2013). An index score for a given area summarises weighted indicators of the average income, education, occupation and assets of inhabitants of that area. These index scores are then standardised to a distribution with a mean of 1000 and a standard deviation of 100. Areas are divided into 100 equal sized, ranked percentile groups based on their standardised scores, with percentile group one encompassing the 1% most socio-economically disadvantaged areas and so on. In this thesis, the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage for suburbs was used. Suburbs were dichotomised based on whether or not they placed in the bottom 25 percentiles on this measure.
3.2 Procedure

Data were collected as part of the Australian Research Council Discovery Project *Understanding and Preventing Youth Sexual Violence and Abuse* (YSVA), investigating the developmental origins of adolescent sexual offending, its onset and progression. This project was approved for funding in October 2010. A National Ethics Application Form for this project was submitted for full ethical review by Griffith University (GU Ref No: CCJ/07/11/HREC). Conditional ethical approval was obtained in April 2011 and full ethical approval was obtained in January 2012. Separate approvals were also obtained from the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Department of Communities (subsequently the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General) for the collection and dissemination of certain information. Data were collected from GYFS clinical files in compliance with the Information Privacy Principles in s. 8.1 of the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld). No direct communication with participants was required. GYFS psychologists coded data from their current and former clients’ clinical files. Researchers coded data from the files of participants who were not accepted for assessment/treatment by GYFS, with assistance from psychologists. Twenty-five files were randomly selected to be dual-coded for the purposes of examining inter-rater reliability. In line with ethics protocols, participant data were de-identified during the data collection and entry process to ensure confidentiality.

3.3 Measures

The clinical files used for data collection purposes contain information from a variety of sources relevant to the assessment and treatment of ASOs. These include police and court materials regarding referral sexual offences, and where present non-sexual offences (e.g., victim and witness statements, interview and court transcripts, sentencing documents, police statements of fact), official records of prior charges, records of involvement with other government and non-government agencies (e.g., child protection records), psychological
assessment/treatment reports, psychometric testing materials, and other assessment and treatment materials. Two structured checklists were used to quantitatively and qualitatively code the data collected from the files of participants.

3.3.1 Developmental histories

A Developmental History Checklist (see Appendix A) was used to record data regarding the characteristics of participants and their familial, educational/occupational, social, organisational, and neighbourhood backgrounds that have been identified as risk factors for sexual offending and/or general antisocial behaviour. To facilitate examination of the possible relationship between these developmental characteristics and the initiation of sexual offending specifically, they were coded as 0 = absent or partially/possibly present prior to first sexual offence, or 1 = definitely present prior to first sexual offence.

Classification and comparison of offender groups.

Items from the Developmental History Checklist were used to classify participants into the offender groups specified by Wortley and Smallbone (2006) (see Table 3.1) and examine their validity. First, participants were dichotomised based on whether they exhibited at least one of the following three indicators of deviant sexual interests/sexual preoccupation (collectively referred to as deviant sexuality) prior to their first sexual offence: 1) ‘childhood sexual behaviour problems’ (<10 years of age), 2) ‘inappropriate use of pornography; and 3) ‘deviant sexual fantasies/interests’. These indicators demonstrated a high level of internal consistency (Tetrachoric Ordinal $\alpha = .86$) and fair to excellent inter-rater reliability ($\kappa = .41$).
Table 3.1

*Offender Group Classification*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deviant Sexuality</th>
<th>Official Non-Sexual Offending History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situational</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunist</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predatory</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-.87). Those who exhibited at least one of these indicators were classified into the ‘Predatory’ offender group. Remaining participants were again dichotomised based on whether they had an official history of non-sexual offending prior to their first sexual offence. Those with such a history were classified into the ‘Opportunist’ offender group, while those without one were classified into the ‘Situational’ offender group. Official criminal histories were used in the classification of these groups over undetected antisocial behaviour (see below) since, as discussed, the intended purpose of this interaction typology is primarily applied. As such, it was of interest, where possible, to examine the validity of these offender groups when classified using officially recorded information that is easily and readily available to practitioners.

The validity of these groups was assessed by comparing them on the age at which they committed their first sexual offence (in years; ‘Age at First Sexual Offence’), their predisposition towards antisocial behaviour (‘Antisocial Predisposition’), and their connection to social controls (‘Social Controls’). ‘Antisocial Predisposition’ was defined

---

7 Based on the thresholds suggested by Cicchetti (1994) for inter-rater reliability coefficients; .00-.40 = poor, .40-.59 = fair, .60-.74 = good, .75-1 = excellent.
based on the extent to which participants’ had a demonstrated tendency towards
‘…behaviours that violate the rights of others (e.g., aggression, destruction of property)
and/or that bring the individual into significant conflict with societal norms or authority
figures.’ (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, p. 383). Based on this definition, seven
behavioural indicators were selected to form a summative scale measuring participants’
predisposition towards antisocial behaviour at the time of their first sexual offence, with
higher scores indicative of a stronger antisocial predisposition; 1) ‘damage/destruction of
property’; 2) ‘lying, theft, dishonesty’; 3) ‘fighting, bullying, intimidation’; 4) ‘oppositional,
defiant’; 5) ‘trespassing, loitering, disturbing peace’; 6) ‘aggression, violence’; and 7)
‘intoxicant use’ (including alcohol and tobacco). Seven indicators of participant’s lack of
investment/participation in socially conventional groups and activities (e.g. Hirschi, 1969) at
the time of their first sexual offence were selected to form a summative ‘Social Controls’
scale; 1) ‘lack of caregiver warmth/affection’; 2) ‘lack of caregiver involvement/availability’
3) ‘poor engagement in school’; 4) ‘school dropout’; 5) ‘poor academic achievement’; 6)
‘poor conventional social ties’; and 7) ‘antisocial peer group/networks’. Items were reverse
coded prior to summing for ease of interpretation (i.e. higher scores indicate a stronger
attachment to social controls). Indicators on both the ‘Antisocial Predisposition’ (Tetrachoric
Ordinal $\alpha = .95$) and ‘Social Controls’ (Tetrachoric Ordinal $\alpha = .93$) scales demonstrated high
levels of internal consistency. ‘Antisocial Predisposition’ indicators generally exhibited good
to excellent inter-rater reliability ($\kappa = .61$-$1.00$) with the exception of ‘intoxicant use’, which
exhibited fair inter-rater reliability ($\kappa = .57$). ‘Social Controls’ indicators generally exhibited
fair to excellent inter-rater reliability ($\kappa = .44$-$86$), with the exception of ‘lack of caregiver
involvement/availability’ and ‘poor engagement in school’, which exhibited poor inter-rater
reliability ($\kappa = .33$ and $\kappa = .22$, respectively).

3.3.2 Situational context of the first sexual offence
A Situational Inventory was used to record data regarding participants’ first, and where present, their second and most recent sexual offences. It includes items pertaining to victim (age, sex, relationship with participant) and participant (age, co-offenders where present) characteristics, the details of others present in the offence setting, offence time and location, and situational precipitators. It also includes a narrative of the offences, detailing the strategies used by participants to engage victims in sexual activity, the sexual acts performed/attempted, the immediate reactions of victims (and others where present) during the offence, and post-offence behaviours.

**Classification and comparison of situational groups**

The first sexual offence was defined as the first identifiable incident of illegal sexual behaviour perpetrated against a human victim from 10 years of age\(^8\), regardless of whether a formal charge resulted, that involved the threat/use of force, a lack of clearly expressed willingness on the victim’s part to participate in sexual activity, and/or a victim who was prepubescent/notably younger than the participant. The first sexual offence of participants was classified into one of the three situational groups specified by Wortley and Smallbone (2006) (see Table 3.2). First, the sample was dichotomised based on whether their first sexual offence was situationally precipitated. Unfortunately, the presence and quality of data regarding situational precipitators varied substantially across GYFS clinical files, leading to unacceptably large amounts of missing and incomplete data. As such, a dichotomous variable indicating when ASOs formed the intention to commit their first sexual offence was used for this purpose. The first sexual offences of those who reported forming the intention to commit this first sexual offence during their encounter with the victim were distinguished from the sexual offences of those who formed the intention to commit it prior to encountering the victim, and classified into the ‘Precipitated’ situational group. While the conceptual problem

---

\(^8\) The cut-off was set at 10 years of age as this is the minimum age of criminal responsibility in Queensland. Equivalent behaviours exhibited prior to 10 years of age were considered indicative of sexual behaviour problems <10 years of age (see 3.2.1 ‘Developmental histories’).
Table 3.2

*Situational Group Classification*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intention to Offend</th>
<th>Offence Difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Precipitated</td>
<td>Formed during encounter</td>
<td>High or Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempted</td>
<td>Formed prior to encounter</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenged</td>
<td>Formed prior to encounter</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

with classifying an offence situation based on a behaviour of the participant is acknowledged, it must be emphasised that, in this thesis, the intention to offend is being used as an indicator of situational precipitation. Specifically, if an ASO formed their intention to sexually offend prior to encountering the offence situation, including the victim, then by definition the offence could not have been precipitated by this situation. It must also be noted that the classification of an offence situation as precipitative is necessarily done with some reference to the participant anyway, since its precipitative status is contingent on whether it motivates them to sexually offend. This item exhibited excellent inter-rater reliability ($\kappa = .79$).

The remainder of the sample were dichotomised based on the difficulty of their first sexual offence. Two Likert scales measuring the effort participants expended to commit their first sexual offence and the risk involved in committing this offence were used in the measurement of offence difficulty, with 1 = low risk/effort, and 5 = high risk/effort. Ratings were based on the judgments of coders as opposed to the participants themselves, but were justified with reference to offence-related information derived from participants’ clinical files. The effort scale exhibited excellent inter-rater reliability (Intra-Class Correlation = .83, 95% CI = .54-.93) while the risk scale exhibited fair inter-rater reliability (Intra-Class Correlation = .52, 95% CI = -.30-.89). Both scales also correlated significantly, positively and
moderately with each other \((r = .44, p = <.001)\). The means of these two scales were calculated for the first sexual offence of each remaining participant, and dichotomisation achieved with a median split. Those with a mean score \(\leq 2.5\) were coded as 1 = low offence difficulty, and classified into the ‘Tempted’ situational group, while remaining participants were coded as 2 = high offence difficulty, and classified into the ‘Challenged’ situational group.

Differences in the opportunities used to commit the first sexual offence between these three groups were explored using indicators on the Situational Inventory. These indicators reflect the convergent elements of offence opportunities specified by the routine activities approach (Cohen & Felson, 1979), and were used to further examine and validate the differences in risk and effort inherent to the first sexual offence of participants in each group. Indicators include characteristics of the victim (‘participant-victim relationship’, coded as 0 = related/known, 1 = unknown, and ‘participant-victim age difference’\(^9\), in years), ‘offence location’ (coded as 0 = residential, 1 = non-residential), ‘offence time’ (coded as 0 = afternoon/evening, 1 = overnight/morning) and ‘adult supervisor’ (coded as 0 = not present anywhere in offence location, 1 = present somewhere in offence location). All exhibited good to excellent inter-rater reliability (\(\kappa = .79-1.00\); Intra-Class Correlation = 1.00, 95% CI = .99-1.00).

### 3.4 Analytic Strategy

All analyses were performed in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22, and Stata Version 13. Subsequent to data screening, assumption checking, and the calculation of univariate descriptive statistics for all variables, participants were classified into one of the offender groups specified by Wortley and Smallbone (2006). Preliminary comparisons of these groups on demographic variables, and individual indicators of

---

\(^9\) In multiple victim sexual offences, this variable was coded based on the oldest victim
‘Antisocial Predisposition’ and ‘Social Controls’, were conducted using a series of chi-square analyses and a one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA). The validity of these groups was then examined using a one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), with ‘Age at First Sexual Offence’, and ‘Antisocial Predisposition’ and ‘Social Controls’ scores, entered as dependent variables. Post-hoc comparisons of all three groups on each dependent variable were conducted using one-way between-group ANOVA’s, each with a Bonferroni correction of $p = .017$. Pairwise post-hoc comparisons on each dependent variable were conducted using Scheffé tests due to unequal group sizes.

Next, participants were classified into one of the situational groups specified by Wortley and Smallbone (2006). To gain further insight into the opportunities participants in each group used to commit their first sexual offence, a series of 3 x 2 chi-square analyses and a one-way between groups ANOVA were first run to compare these groups on ‘participant-victim relationship’, ‘participant-victim age difference’, ‘offence location’, ‘offence time’ and ‘adult supervisor’. A Two-Step Cluster Analysis (TSCA) was then conducted to uncover latent groupings of these situational factors and examine the offence opportunities used by participants to commit their first sexual offence. TSCA was chosen as it is the only procedure that facilitates clustering with combinations of continuous and categorical variables. It automatically identifies the optimal number of clusters by sequentially forming pre-clusters of cases, and then performing an agglomerative hierarchical procedure on these pre-clusters to produce a final cluster solution. Between-cluster distance was measured based on the decrease in log-likelihood as clusters were combined. Automatic selection of the optimal cluster solution was based on the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC).

The internal validity of the cluster solution was examined in a number of ways. As cluster solutions may be dependent on case ordering in the dataset, cases were randomly ordered prior to analysis. Additionally, TSCA was performed on cases in 10 different random
orders, and the results compared to the original solution. Cases were also again randomly ordered and divided into two groups, before being run separately through a TSCA. These cluster solutions were each compared to the original cluster solution. A silhouette measure of cohesion and separation was used to assess the fit of the original cluster solution to the data (Kaufman & Rousseeuw, 2005). This measure summarises the average distance of cases from each clusters’ centre compared to their average distance from the centre of the nearest cluster. Silhouette coefficients range from -1 to +1, with +1 indicating a perfect fit to the data (i.e. within-cluster variation is minimised and between-cluster variation is maximised), 0 indicating no fit to the data (i.e. within- and between-cluster variation are equal) and -1 indicating a completely imperfect fit to the data (i.e. within-cluster variation is maximised and between-cluster variation is minimised). This cluster solution was cross tabulated with the theoretical situational groups to examine the offence opportunities encompassed in each of these groups.

The final step of the analytic strategy was to examine the dispersal of participants in each offender group across the situational groups, and determine whether this pattern of dispersal corresponded to the pattern proposed by Wortley and Smallbone (2006). Groups were cross tabulated, and a 3 x 3 chi-square analysis was run to examine the degree of association and the nature of the interaction between these two components. First, an inspection of the chi-square statistics was conducted to determine whether the association between these two components was significant. Next, observed cell frequencies were visually inspected to examine the comparative dispersal of each offender group across situational groups. To confirm this pattern of dispersal, the adjusted standardised residuals in each cell were examined to determine which cells contained observed frequencies that differed significantly from expected frequencies, as indicated by adjusted standardised residuals beyond 2.0 or -2.0. To facilitate a more in-depth examination of the interaction of these two
components, instrumental case studies were conducted, using individual cases illustrative of each offender group and their predominant situational pattern of sexual offending\textsuperscript{10}. The developmental backgrounds, first sexual offence characteristics, and where present later sexual offences, of each case are discussed in relation to Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) theoretical outline of each group.

\textsuperscript{10} To protect the confidentiality of participants, all case descriptions were de-identified, and certain features of their developmental histories and sexual offences were obscured.
4.1 Data Screening and Assumption Checking

Prior to analyses being conducted, screening for out of range and missing data was conducted. Out of range data were corrected with reference to the original checklists. Only a small proportion of cells in the database (7.1%) were missing data. However, a very large number of variables (81.8%) were missing data for at least one case, and cases missing data for at least one variable constituted almost a quarter of the sample (23.1%). Unique patterns of missing data in the sample were categorised, and the ratio of missing data patterns to the number of participants with at least one missing value was 0.84. This indicates a very large number of unique patterns of missing data, which according to McKnight, McKnight, Sidani & Figueredo (2007), is suggestive of data missing completely at random.

All continuous variables were checked for violations in the assumptions of ANOVA. Modest violations of normality were found regarding ‘Antisocial Predisposition’ and ‘participant-victim age difference’. Given the robustness of ANOVA to violations of normality, particularly where the sample size is above 30-40 (e.g. Kahn & Rayner, 2003), these variables were left untransformed for all analyses. ‘Antisocial Predisposition’, ‘Social Controls’, and ‘Age at First Sexual Offence’ were also checked for violations in the assumptions of MANOVA. The minimum cell size (46) was greater than the number of dependent variables. Tabachnick and Fidell (2012) argue that a minimum cell size of 20 should also ensure robustness against violations of normality. Inspection of standardised values and Mahalanobis distances revealed no univariate or multivariate outliers. All variables were linearly related. Bivariate correlations and Variance Inflation Factors indicated no multicollinearity. Homogeneity of covariance matrices was assumed based on Box’s Test, $F(12, 113273.7) = 1.5, p = .121$, Box’s $M = 18.3$. 
Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 4.1. Unsurprisingly, many of the ‘Antisocial Predisposition’ and ‘Social Controls’ indicators were exhibited by around half of the sample, although notably fewer participants (36.8%) actually had an official history of non-sexual offending. Indicators of deviant sexuality were also exhibited by substantially fewer participants. Around a third of the sample (35.6%) formed the intention to commit their first sexual offence prior to their encounter with the victim, while a high degree of difficulty was inherent to the first sexual offence of around half of the sample (46.2%). However, trends in the characteristics of participants’ first sexual offence generally highlight their preference for offence opportunities involving low levels of risk and effort. A notable exception to this is the comparatively high number of participants who committed their first sexual offence with an adult supervisor present somewhere in the offence location (55.9%).

Table 4.1

*Descriptive Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offender component variables</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official history of non-sexual offending</td>
<td>91 (36.8)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood sexual behaviour problems</td>
<td>51 (20.6)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate use of pornography</td>
<td>34 (13.8)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviant sexual fantasies/interests</td>
<td>29 (11.7)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage/destruction of property</td>
<td>94 (38.1)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lying, theft, dishonesty</td>
<td>112 (45.3)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting, bullying, intimidation</td>
<td>121 (49.0)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppositional, defiant</td>
<td>143 (57.9)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trespassing, loitering, disturbing peace</td>
<td>76 (30.8)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression, violence</td>
<td>135 (54.7)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intoxicant use</td>
<td>101 (40.9)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial Predisposition</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.44 (2.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of caregiver warmth/affection</td>
<td>102 (41.3)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of caregiver involvement/availability</td>
<td>118 (47.8)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor engagement in school</td>
<td>139 (56.3)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School dropout</td>
<td>75 (30.4)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor academic achievement</td>
<td>125 (50.6)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor conventional social ties</td>
<td>117 (47.4)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial peer group/networks</td>
<td>126 (51.0)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Controls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.61 (1.99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at First Sexual Offence</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14.00 (1.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational component variables</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior intention to offend</td>
<td>88 (35.6)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High offence difficulty</td>
<td>114 (46.2)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-victim age difference</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.55 (13.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-victim relationship (Unknown)</td>
<td>38 (15.4)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offence location (Non-residential)</td>
<td>56 (22.7)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offence time (Overnight/morning)</td>
<td>64 (25.9)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult supervisor (Present)</td>
<td>138 (55.9)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 204-247 due to variation in missing data. Depending on level of measurement, either means and standard deviations, or frequencies and percentages are presented. Frequencies are presented for non-reverse coded scores on ‘Social Controls’ items for ease of interpretation.*

### 4.2 Offender Component

Missing values prevented the classification of 40 participants into one of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender groups. Of the remaining 207 participants, 76 (36.7%) were classified into the ‘Predatory’ offender group and 52 (25.1%) were classified into the ‘Opportunist’ offender group, leaving 79 (38.2%) participants in the ‘Situational’ offender group. Comparisons of these groups on demographic variables (see Table 4.2) revealed significant differences regarding residence in a remote location and Indigenous status. ‘Opportunist’ offenders were far more likely than ‘Predatory’ and ‘Situational’ offenders to be Indigenous and to reside in a remote location. Additionally, there was a significant overall difference between groups regarding age at first referral. Post-hoc comparisons using Scheffé tests revealed that ‘Opportunist’ offenders were significantly older at referral than ‘Predatory’ offenders. Significant differences also emerged regarding all but one (‘poor academic achievement’) of the indicators of an ‘Antisocial Predisposition’ and ‘Social Controls’. ‘Situational’ offenders were the least likely to exhibit any of these indicators, and with the
Table 4.2

*Bivariate Comparisons of Offender Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic variables</th>
<th>Situational n (%) / M (SD)</th>
<th>Opportunist n (%) / M (SD)</th>
<th>Predatory n (%) / M (SD)</th>
<th>$\chi^2$/F(df, n), $V/\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>20 (25.3)</td>
<td>34 (65.4)</td>
<td>21 (27.6)</td>
<td>25.6*** (2, 207), .35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote residence</td>
<td>12 (19.1)</td>
<td>25 (48.1)</td>
<td>13 (17.1)</td>
<td>21.8*** (2, 207), .32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low socio-economic suburb</td>
<td>34 (44.7)</td>
<td>24 (52.2)</td>
<td>30 (44.8)</td>
<td>0.8 (2, 207)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral accepted</td>
<td>71 (89.9)</td>
<td>47 (90.4)</td>
<td>69 (90.8)</td>
<td>0.4 (2, 207)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at referral</td>
<td>15.7 (1.5)</td>
<td>16.1b* (1.1)</td>
<td>15.4a* (1.4)</td>
<td>5.2** (2, 131.8)†, .04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial predisposition indicators</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage/destuction of property</td>
<td>12 (15.4)</td>
<td>32 (64.0)</td>
<td>43 (56.6)</td>
<td>39.0*** (2, 204), .44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lying, theft, dishonesty</td>
<td>15 (19.2)</td>
<td>41 (80.4)</td>
<td>48 (63.2)</td>
<td>53.6*** (2, 205), .51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting, bullying, intimidation</td>
<td>21 (26.6)</td>
<td>38 (73.1)</td>
<td>51 (67.1)</td>
<td>36.6*** (2, 207), .42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Situational</td>
<td>Opportunist</td>
<td>Predatory</td>
<td>$\chi^2/F(df, n), \eta^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n (%)/$M$ ($SD$)</td>
<td>n (%)/$M$ ($SD$)</td>
<td>n (%)/$M$ ($SD$)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppositional, defiant</td>
<td>28 (35.9)</td>
<td>43 (82.7)</td>
<td>59 (77.6)</td>
<td>40.3***(2, 206), .44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trespassing, loitering,</td>
<td>3 (3.8)</td>
<td>32 (62.7)</td>
<td>36 (48.0)</td>
<td>56.9***(2, 205), .53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disturbing peace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression, violence</td>
<td>28 (35.9)</td>
<td>39 (75.0)</td>
<td>57 (75.0)</td>
<td>30.9***(2, 206), .39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intoxicant use</td>
<td>24 (30.8)</td>
<td>39 (78.0)</td>
<td>36 (48.0)</td>
<td>27.2***(2, 203), .37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social control indicators</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of caregiver</td>
<td>29 (36.7)</td>
<td>20 (39.2)</td>
<td>47 (61.8)</td>
<td>11.3**(2, 206), .23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warmth/affection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of caregiver</td>
<td>28 (35.4)</td>
<td>27 (52.9)</td>
<td>52 (68.4)</td>
<td>16.9***(2, 206), .29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involvement/availability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor engagement in school</td>
<td>34 (43.0)</td>
<td>41 (82.0)</td>
<td>53 (69.7)</td>
<td>22.6***(2, 205), .33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School dropout</td>
<td>16 (20.3)</td>
<td>27 (54.0)</td>
<td>25 (32.9)</td>
<td>15.7***(2, 205), .28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor academic achievement</td>
<td>37 (47.4)</td>
<td>28 (54.9)</td>
<td>45 (60.0)</td>
<td>2.5(2, 204)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor conventional social ties</td>
<td>28 (35.4)</td>
<td>34 (65.4)</td>
<td>46 (61.3)</td>
<td>15.0***(2, 206), .27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial peer</td>
<td>27 (35.1)</td>
<td>45 (86.5)</td>
<td>47 (62.7)</td>
<td>34.7***(2, 204), .41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group/networks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. Depending on the level of measurement, either chi-square or ANOVA results are presented. Statistics are presented for non-reverse coded scores on ‘Social Controls’ items for ease of interpretation.

*\( p < .05 \).

**\( p < .01 \).

***\( p < .001 \).

Welch test used due to significant heterogeneity of variances.

* Differed significantly from ‘Opportunist’ participants.

* Differed significantly from ‘Predatory’ participants.
exception of ‘lack of caregiver warmth/affection’ and ‘lack of caregiver involvement/availability’, ‘Opportunist’ offenders were the most likely to exhibit all of them.

Missing values prevented a further 12 participants from being included in multivariate analyses, leaving a sample of 195 participants (‘Situational’ = 75; ‘Opportunist’ = 46; ‘Predatory’ = 74). MANOVA results revealed a significant overall difference between offender groups on a linear combination of ‘Age at First Sexual Offence’, ‘Antisocial Predisposition’, and ‘Social Controls’ $F(6, 382) = 15.0, p = <.001$; Pillai’s Trace = .38, partial $\eta^2 = .19$. Post-hoc ANOVAs and pairwise comparisons (see Table 4.3) revealed a number of important differences. Significant overall differences were found between the groups on all three dependent variables. ‘Predatory’ offenders were significantly younger when they committed their first sexual offence than both ‘Situational’ and ‘Opportunist’ offenders, who began sexually offending at a comparable age. ‘Situational’ offenders scored significantly lower on the ‘Antisocial Predisposition’ and ‘Social Controls’ scales than ‘Opportunist’ and ‘Predatory’ offenders, who scored comparably on both.

### Table 4.3

*MANOVA Post-Hoc Comparisons*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Situational M(SD)</th>
<th>Opportunist M (SD)</th>
<th>Predatory M (SD)</th>
<th>$F$(df, n), $\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age at First Sexual Offence</td>
<td>14.2^* (1.4)</td>
<td>14.5^{**} (1.2)</td>
<td>13.6^{a*b**} (1.3)</td>
<td>7.9^{***}(2, 192), .08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial Predisposition</td>
<td>1.7^{b***} c^{***} (2.0)</td>
<td>5.0^{***} (2.1)</td>
<td>4.3^{***} (2.5)</td>
<td>39.3^{***}(2, 192), .29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Controls</td>
<td>4.4^{b***} c^{***} (1.9)</td>
<td>2.7^{***} (1.7)</td>
<td>2.8^{a***} (1.8)</td>
<td>17.1^{***}(2, 192), .15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p = <.05. **p = <.01. ***p = <.001. ^Differed significantly from ‘Situational’ offenders. ^Differed significantly from ‘Opportunist’ offenders. ^Differed significantly from ‘Predatory’ offenders.*
4.3 Situational Component

Missing values prevented classification of the first sexual offences of six participants into one of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) situational groups. Of the remaining 241 participants, the first sexual offences of 159 (66.0%) were classified as having been ‘Precipitated’ by the offence situation. The first sexual offences of a further 34 (14.1%) participants were classified as having been ‘Tempted’ by the offence situation, while the remaining 48 (19.4%) were classified as having been ‘Challenged’ by the offence situation. These situational groups differed significantly on all but one of the situational variables (see Table 4.4). Well over half of offences in all situational groups involved victims who were known to the participant in some way, although offences in the ‘Challenged’ group were the most likely to involve an unknown victim. Offences in the ‘Challenged’ group also involved significantly older victims than offences in both the ‘Precipitated’ and ‘Tempted’ groups, and were the most likely to occur in a non-residential location, and overnight or during the morning. While no significant difference emerged regarding the presence of an adult supervisor somewhere in the offence location, it is notable that such a large proportion of offences across all three groups, particularly the ‘Precipitated’ and ‘Tempted’ groups, were committed in the presence of these supervisors.

Missing values prevented a further eight participants from being included in the cluster analysis, leaving a sample of 233 participants. TSCA run on the five situational variables resulted in a five cluster solution (see Table 4.5). The number, size and qualitative characteristics of clusters encompassed in this solution remained consistent when TSCA was run on cases in 10 different random orders. Perfect Kappa results (κ = 1.00 for all clusters) and classification accuracy were also observed. Comparisons of this original cluster solution with those returned by TSCA run on a split dataset also revealed excellent Kappa results (κ = .80-.97), and high classification accuracy (over 85% for both split-dataset solutions). A
### Table 4.4

**Bivariate Comparisons of Situational Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant-victim age difference</th>
<th>Precipitated M (SD)/n (%)</th>
<th>Tempted M (SD)/n (%)</th>
<th>Challenged M (SD)/n (%)</th>
<th>$\chi^2/F$(df, n), $V/\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown victim</td>
<td>-1.4*** (11.8)</td>
<td>-3.9*** (3.9)</td>
<td>4.9*<strong>b</strong> (19.7)</td>
<td>6.2**(2, 99.9)$^+$, .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential</td>
<td>24 (15.1)</td>
<td>1 (2.9)</td>
<td>12 (25.0)</td>
<td>7.5*(2, 241), .18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overnight/morning</td>
<td>31 (19.5)</td>
<td>6 (17.6)</td>
<td>18 (37.5)</td>
<td>7.4*(2, 241), .17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults' supervisor</td>
<td>34 (22.1)</td>
<td>7 (20.6)</td>
<td>22 (45.8)</td>
<td>11.3**(2, 236), .22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults' supervisor</td>
<td>92 (60.9)</td>
<td>20 (58.8)</td>
<td>23 (48.9)</td>
<td>2.1(2, 232)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Depending on the level of measurement, either chi-square or ANOVA results are presented.  
*<p> = <.05. **<p> = <.01. *Welch test used due to significant heterogeneity of variances. *Differed significantly from ‘Precipitated’ participants. bDiffered significantly from ‘Tempted’ participants. cDiffered significantly from ‘Challenged’ participants.

silhouette coefficient of .7 indicated that this cluster solution was a very good fit to the data (Kaufman & Rousseeuw, 2005).

The first cluster, ‘Known Child Abuse (High Risk)’ (n = 80, 34.3%) encompassed sexual offences committed against substantially younger child victims who were related or known to the participant. All of these offences occurred in residential locations, during the afternoon/evening and with an adult supervisor present somewhere in the residence. Sexual offences in the ‘Known Child Abuse (Low Risk)’ (n = 43, 18.5%) cluster were largely similar to those in the first, aside from the fact that none of them occurred with an adult supervisor present. ‘Known Child Abuse (Overnight)’ (n = 40, 17.2%) offences similarly involved child/younger victims who were related or known to participants and occurred in residential locations, usually with an adult supervisor present. However, these sexual offences occurred either at night or in the early hours of the morning. ‘Non- Residential Known Young Person
Table 4.5

_TSCA Situational Clusters_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Known Child Abuse (High Risk) n (%)</th>
<th>Known Child Abuse (Low Risk) n (%)</th>
<th>Known Child Abuse (Overnight) n (%)</th>
<th>Non-Residential Young Person Assault n (%)</th>
<th>Unknown Adult Assault n (%)</th>
<th>Unknown Victim n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-victim age</td>
<td>-6.4</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difference</td>
<td>Unknown victim</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>37 (88.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>28 (100)</td>
<td>25 (61.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overnight/morning</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>40 (100)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>21 (50.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult supervisor</td>
<td>80 (100)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>30 (75.0)</td>
<td>10 (35.7)</td>
<td>15 (35.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assault’ (n = 28, 12.0%) offences involved victims closer to participants in age who were again related or known to them, and occurred in non-residential locations during the afternoon/evening, generally in the absence of an adult supervisor. Finally, ‘Unknown Adult Assault’ (n = 42, 18.0%) offences encompassed those committed against substantially older and predominately unknown victims. These sexual offences occurred across different locations and times, although generally in the absence of other adults.

Crosstabulation of the situational groups with these situational clusters revealed a significant association $\chi^2(8, 229) = 21.5, p = .006$, Cramer’s $V = .22$. The largest proportion of ‘Precipitated’ and ‘Tempted’ offences were ‘Known Child Abuse (High Risk)’ (see Table 4.6). Interestingly, the remaining ‘Precipitated’ offences were dispersed quite evenly across the other four situational clusters. A comparatively large proportion of ‘Tempted’ offences were Known Child Abuse (Low Risk), while gradually smaller proportions of these offences fell within the remaining three situational clusters. ‘Challenged’ offences exhibited a somewhat converse pattern of dispersal across the situational clusters. The largest proportion of these offences were ‘Unknown Adult Assaults’, followed closely by ‘Known Child Abuse (Overnight)’. The remainder were spread relatively evenly across the remaining three situational clusters. Notably, ‘Challenged’ offences were the least likely to be either high or low risk ‘Known Child Abuse’.

**4.4 Interaction of Offender and Situational Components**

**4.4.1 Crosstabulation of offender and situational components**

Surprisingly, there was no significant association between the offender and situational components $\chi^2(4, 203) = 7.2, p = .125$, and the pattern of dispersal across the situational
Table 4.6

*Crosstabulation of Situational Groups and Situational Clusters*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Precipitated</th>
<th>Tempted</th>
<th>Challenged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>n (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known Child Abuse (High Risk)</td>
<td>59 (39.9)</td>
<td>12 (35.3)</td>
<td>7 (14.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known Child Abuse (Low Risk)</td>
<td>26 (17.6)</td>
<td>10 (29.4)</td>
<td>6 (12.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known Child Abuse (Overnight)</td>
<td>21 (14.2)</td>
<td>6 (17.6)</td>
<td>13 (27.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Residential Young Victim Assault</td>
<td>18 (12.2)</td>
<td>4 (11.8)</td>
<td>6 (12.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown Adult Assault</td>
<td>24 (16.2)</td>
<td>2 (5.9)</td>
<td>15 (31.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

groups was proportionally similar for all three offender groups (see Table 4.7). Specifically, the first sexual offence of participants in all three offender groups was by far the most likely to have fallen within the ‘Precipitated’ situational group, and the least likely to have fallen within the ‘Tempted’ situational group. The first sexual offence of a surprisingly large number of ‘Opportunist’ offenders fell within the ‘Challenged’ situational group. Given the strong validity exhibited by the offender component of the interaction typology, and its comparatively solid foundation in prior empirical research, it was decided to further examine its cross tabulated interaction with the situational clusters.

A significant association was found between the offender groups and the situational clusters $\chi^2(8, 197) = 35.7, p = .001$, Cramer’s $V = .30$. An inspection of the dispersal of offender groups across these clusters revealed that the first sexual offence of over two thirds of ‘Situational’ offenders fell within the ‘Known Child Abuse (High Risk)’ and ‘Known Child Abuse (Low Risk)’ clusters (see Table 4.8). Less than a quarter fell within clusters
Table 4.7

*Crosstabulation of Offender and Situational Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational</th>
<th>Opportunist n (%)</th>
<th>Predatory n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenged</td>
<td>11 (14.3)</td>
<td>17 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempted</td>
<td>9 (11.7)</td>
<td>5 (9.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precipitated</td>
<td>57 (74.0)</td>
<td>29 (56.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8

*Crosstabulation of Offender Groups and Situational Clusters*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational Clusters</th>
<th>Situational n (%)</th>
<th>Opportunist n (%)</th>
<th>Predatory n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Known Child Abuse (High Risk)</td>
<td>30 (39.5)</td>
<td>5 (10.2)&lt;***</td>
<td>30 (41.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known Child Abuse (Low Risk)</td>
<td>22 (28.9)&gt;*</td>
<td>8 (16.3)</td>
<td>6 (8.3)&lt;*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known Child Abuse (Overnight)</td>
<td>12 (15.8)</td>
<td>10 (20.4)</td>
<td>11 (15.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Residential Young Victim Assault</td>
<td>8 (10.5)</td>
<td>9 (18.4)</td>
<td>8 (11.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown Adult Assault</td>
<td>4 (5.3)&lt;***</td>
<td>17 (34.7)&gt;**</td>
<td>17 (23.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p = <.05. **p = <.01. ***p = <.001. >Adjusted standardised residual beyond 2.0. <Adjusted standardised residual beyond -2.0

Involving older/adult victims and non-residential locations. This pattern of dispersal was confirmed to an extent upon inspection of adjusted standardised residuals. A significantly greater proportion of first sexual offences in this group fell within the ‘Known Child Abuse (Low Risk)’ cluster than expected by chance, while a significantly lower proportion fell within the ‘Unknown Adult Assault’ cluster. Surprisingly, while the first sexual offences of
‘Opportunist’ offenders were significantly less likely to have fallen within the ‘Known Child Abuse (High Risk)’ cluster, they were not significantly more likely to have fallen within the ‘Known Child Abuse (Low Risk)’ cluster, arguably encompassing the safest and easiest offence opportunities. In fact, their first sexual offences were significantly more likely to have fallen within the ‘Non-Residential Unknown Adult Assault’ cluster. The remainder were dispersed relatively evenly across the other three situational clusters. Close to half of the first sexual offences of ‘Predatory’ offenders fell within the ‘Known Child Abuse (High Risk)’ cluster, although this was not a significantly higher proportion than expected by chance. Furthermore, while almost a quarter of their first sexual offences fell within the ‘Non-Residential Unknown Adult Assault’ cluster, this too was not significantly more likely than expected by chance. Again, the remainder were quite evenly spread across the other situational clusters, with a significantly lower proportion falling within the ‘Known Child Abuse (Low Risk)’ cluster than expected by chance.

4.4.2 Instrumental case studies of offender x situation interactions

Compared to the ‘Opportunist’ and ‘Predatory’ offenders in this sample, ‘Situational’ offenders exhibited significantly fewer indicators of antisociality and a stronger connection to social controls prior to their first sexual offence, and began sexually offending at a significantly later age. Their first sexual offences are also predominately limited to situations involving a younger victim in a residential location. For example:

Case ‘M’

M was referred to GYFS for a sexual offence he committed when he was 16 years of age. This was his first and only officially recorded offence, sexual or otherwise, during adolescence. M exhibited no notable sexual or behavioural problems in childhood or adolescence. He did however report an ongoing lack of motivation to engage socially with peers. He was enrolled in school and employed at the time of his referral sexual offence. The victim of this offence was a female friend of the family under the age of 10 with whom M had been spending a significant amount of time in the months prior. He
fondled the victim’s face and body in a sexualised manner, kissed her on the neck and rubbed her hands on his genitals. This offence took place in the victim’s residence while M and the victim were conversing in the absence of the victim’s caregivers. It involved no force on M’s part, or resistance on the victim’s part.

In this case, the sexual offence clearly constitutes an isolated lapse in an otherwise unremarkable history of prosocial behaviour, occurring during a routine and unsupervised visit to a family friend’s residence. No amount of planning or effort is reported, and the sexual contact is notably non-forceful and comparatively affectionate in nature.

However, it must be remembered that a substantial number of ‘Situational’ offenders committed their first sexual offences in the presence of one or more adult supervisors and/or potential witnesses:

Case ‘D’

D was referred to GYFS for a sexual offence he committed when he was 14 years of age. This was his first and only officially recorded offence, sexual or otherwise, during adolescence. D exhibited no notable sexual or behavioural problems in childhood or adolescence. He was enrolled in school and employed at the time of his referral sexual offence. The victim of this offence was a female friend of the family under the age of 10. The offence occurred during a family visit to the victim’s residence. The victim was sitting on D’s lap in the family room, and both were watching her siblings play a video game while their caregivers conversed in an adjacent room. The victim asked D to give her a hug. While hugging the victim he inserted his hand underneath her underpants and fondled her genitals for a few seconds, before telling her not to inform either of their caregivers. No force was used by M, and the victim did not resist.

As with case ‘M’, this sexual offence similarly occurred during a routine visit to the victim’s residence. The participant’s extended physical contact with the victim, along with the victim’s request for further physical contact, could arguably have generated urges that overwhelmed his recognition of the inordinate risks involved in proceeding with the sexual contact, at least momentarily. This is evident in the fact that the participant did not attempt to conceal the sexual contact from others in the immediate vicinity, such as taking the victim to
a more isolated area of the residence, although he did subsequently tell the victim not to tell anyone about it.

‘Opportunist’ offenders, in contrast, are the least likely to have committed their first sexual offence in these high risk situations. Their sexual offences predominately occurred across situations where the probability of detection was somewhat lower, and constituted part of a broader pattern of exploitative and opportunistic antisocial behaviour:

Case ‘V’

V was referred to GYFS for two sexual offences committed when he was 16 years of age. He exhibited no notable sexual or behavioural problems until late childhood and early adolescence, when he started displaying oppositional and aggressive behaviour such as truancy, absconding from home, and getting into fights. It was around this time also that he began associating with antisocial peers and using intoxicants. He was not in school or employed at the time of his sexual offences, and had an extensive official history of property, public order and violent offending. Both sexual offences were committed at the residence of a male peer against this peer’s female sibling, who was under the age of 10. In relation to the first offence, V told his peer that he was going to the bathroom late one night, but instead went into the bedroom of the victim, who was in there alone. He rubbed his exposed genitals against her clothed body, inserting an item of clothing into her mouth to ensure she made no noise. There were no adult supervisors present in the residence. In relation to the second offence, V entered the victim’s bedroom on another night when she was in bed, and performed oral sex on her exposed genitals while holding her legs apart. The offence was interrupted when the victim’s mother awoke and entered the room.

Both of the sexual offences in this case were committed in situations containing pre-existing opportunities to do so easily and with minimal risk, which the participant would arguably have routinely encountered or known were present. In relation to the first sexual offence, a younger victim was already alone in an area of the residence offering some degree of privacy. Furthermore, there were no adult supervisors present. Additionally, while the second sexual offence was interrupted by an adult supervisor, it was initiated late at night when the victim was alone in her bedroom, and it was reasonable to assume that any adult supervisors were asleep in their own bedrooms.
However, there are a substantial number of ‘Opportunist’ offenders who committed their first sexual offences within seemingly more challenging situations. In fact, these participants are the most likely to have committed a sexual offence that fell within the ‘Unknown Adult Assault’ situational cluster, arguably encompassing the most difficult offence opportunities. In many cases, however, these sexual offences could have involved participants impulsively exploiting sexual offence opportunities that emerged during engagement in non-sexual offences or other antisocial behaviours:

Case ‘F’

F was referred to GYFS for a sexual offence he committed when he was 16 years of age. He exhibited no notable sexual or behavioural problems until early adolescence, when he started displaying oppositional behaviour, including truancy and disobedience at school. He also started associating with antisocial peers and using intoxicants around this time, and was the victim of bullying. F was not in school or employed at the time of his referral sexual offence, and had an official history of property and public order offending. His sexual offence was committed during the course of a late night burglary. After entering the victim’s residence and searching for money, he came across the victim asleep alone in her bedroom. Upon discovering the victim, F moved her legs apart, inserted his hand underneath her pants and fondled her genitals. The victim, awoken by F’s fondling, immediately started screaming and kicking at him. F briefly tried to hold her down on the bed, but decamped soon after.

Clearly, the participant capitalised on an opportunity to sexually offend against a victim who at the time was easily accessible and vulnerable with no prior forethought or planning. Furthermore, the participant decamped soon after the victim awoke and made the sexual offence more difficult to continue with by resisting. As such, while on the surface it appears that the participant went to some degree of effort to sexually offend, in fact the sexual offence constituted a brief, impulsive and opportunistic act committed during the course of a non-sexual offence.

Given their strong predispositions towards sexual offending, it is expected that ‘Predatory’ offenders will sexually offend across a wide range of different situations, including those that challenge such behaviour:
Case ‘H’

H was referred to GYFS for two sexual offences committed when he was 15 and 16 years of age. H began exhibiting severe behavioural problems when he was five years of age. He frequently displayed highly aggressive and sexualised behaviours, self-isolated, demonstrated poor self-care and engaged in deviant sexual fantasies. He switched schools frequently, and regularly exhibited socially inappropriate behaviours. He had few friends and was often bullied. H was not in school or employed at the time of his referral sexual offences, and despite his behavioural problems, had no official history of offending. The victim of H’s first sexual offence was his step-sister, who was under five years of age. While playing in a bedroom of the victim’s residence, the two performed oral sex on each other. There were other adults present in the residence when the offence occurred. H did not use force, and the victim did not resist. The victim of H’s second sexual offence was a female under the age of 10 who was unknown to him. After approaching and talking to the victim in a park, H forced her into an alley a short distance away and, while choking her, attempted to vaginally rape her. The victim resisted verbally and physically throughout the offence, and H eventually decamped before any sexual acts were completed.

The escalation in this participant’s sexually offending is notable. After committing his first sexual offence in a situation one would equally expect to see ‘Opportunist’ and especially ‘Situational’ offenders sexually offending within, the participant subsequently went to substantial effort to seek out and sexually offend against an unknown victim in a public location. Of course, there are also those ‘Predatory’ offenders who persistently went to some degree of effort to sexually offend:

Case ‘T’

T was referred to GYFS for two sexual offences committed when he was 14 years of age. T frequently exhibited oppositional and hyperactive behaviour from very early childhood. This pattern of behaviour escalated over time to include fighting, intoxicant use, truancy and antisocial peer association before he entered high school. Frequent masturbation and pornography use are also evident from mid-childhood onwards. T was not in school or employed at the time of his referral sexual offences, and he had an extensive official history of property, public order and violent offending. The victim of T’s first sexual offence was a young adult female unknown to him. T observed the victim leaving her car late at night, and followed her for a time before pushing her to the ground and forcing her to an empty construction site. Over an extended period of time he removed the victim’s clothes, fondled her body, orally and vaginally raped her, and attempted to anally rape her. The victim resisted verbally and physically throughout the incident, and T used substantial and sustained force against her. The victim of T’s second sexual offence was an
adult female unknown to him. He approached the victim from behind on the street during the day and pushed her to the ground between two parked cars, before sitting on top of her and straddling her chest. The victim resisted verbally and physically, and T eventually decamped before any sexual acts were attempted.

In summary, these case studies provide further insight into the interaction of offender and situation during the commission of adolescent sexual offences. They elaborate on the characteristics that typify participants in each offender group, and the situational context of their first, and where present, subsequent sexual offences. Importantly, they facilitate examination of the dynamic and less tangible situational characteristics neglected in quantitative analyses, such as the state of the victim, the proximity and alertness of adult supervisors, and the interpersonal context of sexual offences. These case studies complement many of the quantitative results, while also highlighting potential explanations for the inconsistencies that emerged between these results and Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) conceptualisation of their interaction typology.
Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

The purpose of this dissertation was to conduct (to the authors’ knowledge) the first empirical examination of the validity of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation interaction typology of sexual offenders, focusing on adolescent sexual offending. Specifically, it empirically examined the validity of its offender and situational components, and the crosstabulation of these components. This section summarises the results pertaining to each of these research aims, and interprets them with reference to Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) conceptualisation of their interaction typology.

5.1.1 Offender component

The results largely validate the offender component of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology. ‘Predatory’ offenders began sexually offending the earliest of the three groups, but were similar to ‘Opportunist’ offenders in their antisocial predispositions and their weak connection to social controls. These findings are consistent with the descriptions offered by Wortley and Smallbone (2006), although they do suggest that ‘Predatory’ ASOs are perhaps more likely to be generally antisocial than originally thought. Indeed, the similarity of ‘Predatory’ and ‘Opportunist’ offenders in this regard suggests that deviant sexual interests may be the only real point of distinction between them. ‘Situational’ offenders were by far the least antisocial, and exhibited much stronger connections to social controls, than both ‘Opportunist’ and ‘Predatory’ offenders. They also began sexually offending at a comparatively later age. This again reflects the description offered by Wortley and Smallbone (2006), who depict these offenders as otherwise law-abiding, prosocial individuals with no enduring deviant sexual interests.
5.1.2 Situational component

The validity of the interaction typology’s situational component received some support. It is perhaps not surprising that over half of the sexual offences in the sample were classified as ‘Precipitated’, especially given the focus on participants’ first sexual offences. In keeping with the description offered by Wortley and Smallbone (2006), these offences generally involved little effort, typically occurring against younger, known victims who were highly accessible and vulnerable, in residential locations offering a degree of familiarity and privacy, and during afternoons/evenings with comparatively fewer structured activities. However, over half occurred with at least one adult supervisor present in the location, and there was a large degree of variation in victim ages. This is likely a reflection of the impulsive and emotive nature of these offences, which Wortley (1996; 1997; 1998; 2001; 2002; 2008) argues can preclude a rational appraisal of offence opportunities and lead one to offend across many different, even challenging, situations. Indeed, this is evident in the relatively even dispersal of ‘Precipitated’ sexual offences across most of the TSCA situational clusters. The higher proportion of sexual offences in the ‘Known Child Abuse (High Risk)’ cluster may simply reflect the greater frequency with which these opportunities are routinely encountered (i.e. being at home with other young people and caregivers in the afternoon/evening) rather than the result of a conscious decision to specifically pursue or exploit the offence opportunities that emerge from these situations.

‘Tempted’ sexual offences adhere more closely to the ideal sexual offence opportunities suggested by Wortley and Smallbone (2006), along with a number of other theories and offence process models (Finkelhor, 1984; Lalumière et al. 2005; Lane & Ryan, 2010; Tedeschi & Felson, 1994). They typically occurred against younger, known victims, but unlike ‘Precipitated’ sexual offences, there was much less variation in victim ages, and only one of the victims in this group was unknown to the participant. Most also occurred in
residential locations and during afternoons/evenings, although as with ‘Precipitated’ sexual
offences, slightly over half occurred with at least one adult supervisor present somewhere in
the offence location. Additionally, these sexual offences were less evenly dispersed across
situational clusters, with fewer falling into clusters encompassing more difficult sexual
offence opportunities (i.e. ‘Non-Residential Young Victim Assault’ and ‘Unknown Adult
Assault’), and a somewhat greater proportion falling into clusters encompassing easier sexual
offence opportunities (i.e. high and low risk ‘Known Child Abuse’). Unfortunately, given the
lack of data on adult supervisors beyond their mere presence (e.g., number of adult
supervisors, relationship with participant and victim, where they were in relation to the sexual
offence, what they were doing when the sexual offence occurred), it was impossible to further
investigate the large proportion of ‘Tempted’ sexual offences that occurred in situations with
a seemingly higher probability of detection. As discussed, it is unreasonable to expect that
adult supervisors unceasingly monitor the young people in their care, and as such, it is
possible that many of these sexual offences occurred during temporary lapses of supervision,
when participants knew that any adult supervisors were preoccupied. Of course, this is purely
speculative, and further research is needed to test this claim.

In line with the work of Wortley and Smallbone (2006), ‘Challenged’ sexual offences
encompassed a higher proportion of sexual offences against older, unknown victims who
were less easily accessible and vulnerable, that occurred in non-residential locations outside
of afternoon/evening hours. Furthermore, these sexual offences accounted for the highest
proportion of ‘Unknown Adult Assault’ incidents, and the lowest proportions of ‘High Risk
Known Child Abuse’ and ‘Low Risk Known Child Abuse’ incidents. Interestingly, this group
also accounted for the largest proportion of ‘Overnight Known Child Abuse’ incidents. Given
the high probability of their being at least one adult supervisor present in the location during
these sexual offences, it is possible that some of these participants were forced to go to a
substantial degree of effort to conceal their behaviour, although again, without access to further data on these supervisors, this is impossible to verify.

5.1.3 Crosstabulation of offender and situational components

Interestingly, the crosstabulation of these offender and situational components revealed no significant association. One possible reason for this is the fact that this thesis only examines participants’ first sexual offence. Given their presumed inexperience with sexual offending at this point, it is possible that the majority of participants in all three offender groups lacked the skill and confidence to recognise ideal sexual offence opportunities when they were encountered, or to create/seek out offence opportunities in challenging situations. This appears to be the case in the present sample, as the largest proportion of first sexual offences across all three offender groups were ‘Precipitated’, while equally lower numbers were ‘Tempted’ and ‘Challenged’. Differences between offender groups in their situational pattern of sexual offending may only emerge after this first sexual offence, as ‘Opportunist’ and especially ‘Predatory’ offenders acquire the skills and confidence to recognise and create/seek out sexual offence opportunities, while ‘Situational’ offenders either persist in a pattern of precipitated sexual offending or desist entirely. Another possible reason for this non-significant association is measurement error in the situational component. As discussed, data on situational precipitators were unable to be used in the classification of ‘Precipitated’ sexual offences. Furthermore, the risk and effort ratings used to dichotomise ‘Tempted’ and ‘Challenged’ sexual offences ultimately reflected the subjective perceptions of coders. While the effort scale nonetheless exhibited strong inter-rater reliability, there were greater discrepancies in ratings on the risk scale.

The crosstabulation of offender groups with the situational clusters did reveal a significant association. The dispersal pattern of ‘Situational’ offenders across these clusters
arguably adhered most closely to that proposed by Wortley and Smallbone (2006), with over two thirds of their first sexual offences falling within the high and low risk ‘Known Child Abuse’ clusters, and a significantly lower proportion falling within the ‘Unknown Adult Assault’ cluster. It must also be remembered that the cluster within which the greatest proportion of their first sexual offences fell, ‘Known Child Abuse (High Risk)’, also encompassed the greatest proportion of ‘Precipitated’ sexual offences. Again, the concentration of ‘Situational’ offenders’ first sexual offences in these two situational clusters is likely a reflection of the comparative frequency with which they routinely encounter these situations, and thus, the higher probability of their sexual offences being precipitated by some aspect of them.

A significantly lower proportion of the first sexual offences of ‘Predatory’ offenders fell within the situational cluster arguably constituting the ideal sexual offence opportunity, ‘Known Child Abuse (Low Risk)’, while almost a quarter fell within the ‘Unknown Adult Assault’ situational cluster. Similar to ‘Situational’ offenders, the highest proportion of their first sexual offences fell within the ‘Known Child Abuse (High Risk)’ situational cluster. As discussed, this is not entirely surprising given that many probably lacked the skill and confidence to exploit or create/seek out sexual offence opportunities at this point. The greatest divergence from the pattern of dispersal proposed by Wortley and Smallbone (2006) was exhibited by ‘Opportunist’ offenders, whose first sexual offences were the least likely to fall within either the high or low risk ‘Known Child Abuse’ situational clusters, and significantly more likely to fall within the ‘Unknown Adult Assault’ situational cluster.

The instrumental case studies further illustrate the interactions of participants in different offender groups with the situations in which they sexually offended, while also providing some insight into divergences from the pattern of dispersal proposed by Wortley and Smallbone (2006). Cases ‘M’ and ‘D’ illustrate the typically impulsive and emotive
nature of the sexual offences of ‘Situational’ ASOs. In line with Wortley and Smallbone (2006), these sexual offences appear to have been precipitated by some aspect of the immediate situation; in the former case during a verbal interaction with the victim, and in the latter case during extended, non-sexual physical contact with the victim. Both sexual offences were perpetrated during routine social interactions with substantially younger, known victims in residential locations, and involved no force or overcoming of victim resistance. Indeed, case ‘M’ in particular could be said to constitute what Wortley and Smallbone (2006) refer to as an impulsive moment of intimacy, possibly precipitated by some misinterpreted cue of romantic or sexual interest. The participant in this case presented with a history of social difficulties with peers, and thus may have felt compelled to resort to sexual contact with a younger substitute to fulfil unsatisfied intimacy needs. Case ‘D’, meanwhile, appears to be more the result of unrestrained sexual arousal resulting from non-sexual physical contact with the victim. Additionally, this sexual offence occurred in the same room as other young people, and immediately adjacent to a room with adult supervisors. As such, it demonstrates the potential of situational precipitators to temporarily overwhelm rational thought processes, and induce ASOs to sexually offend in situations entailing some degree of risk and/or effort.

Cases ‘V’ and ‘F’ illustrate the typically exploitative and opportunistic nature of the sexual offences of ‘Opportunist’ offenders. Both involved participants acting upon opportunities allowing them to sexually offend easily and with minimal risk. In the former case, the participant repeatedly exploited opportunities to sexually offend against a younger, known victim late at night in a residential location. Furthermore, these sexual offences were initiated while adult supervisors were either absent from this location or, given the time of night, could reasonably expected to have been asleep. Interestingly, while the latter case appears to involve the participant going to a substantial degree of effort to sexually offend, closer examination reveals it to be similarly opportunistic. First, the sexual offence was
committed after finding the victim alone and asleep in her bedroom during the course of a non-sexual offence. Second, once the victim awoke and offered some resistance, the participant was quick to cease the sexual offence and decamp from the residence. This serves to illustrate the argument put forward by a number of researchers (e.g., Felson, 2006; Knight & Prentky, 1990) that sexual burglaries often emerge from regular burglaries after an opportunity is suddenly encountered and exploited. As such, while Case ‘F’ was classified as ‘Challenged’, and fell within the ‘Unknown Adult Assault’ situational cluster, closer examination indicates that it is arguably more consistent with Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) outline of a ‘Tempted’ sexual offence. This case provides some insight into the comparatively large proportion of ‘Opportunist’ offenders who committed their first sexual offence under seemingly difficult circumstances. In many cases, this may have been a consequence of the sexual offence occurring opportunistically while engaged in non-sexual offending or antisocial behaviour. Additionally, given the comparatively large proportion of ‘Opportunist’ offenders who reported regularly engaging in intoxicant use, some may have committed their first sexual offence while under the influence of one or more of these intoxicants, when their ability to rationally appraise risk and effort was distorted.

In line with Wortley and Smallbone (2006), case ‘H’ illustrates the tendency of ‘Predatory’ offenders to sexually offend across situations of varying difficulty. After committing their first sexual offence in a situation one would equally expect to see ‘Opportunist’ and especially ‘Situational’, offenders sexually offending within, this participant went to substantially greater effort to forcefully offend against an unknown younger victim in a public location. This lends credence to the argument discussed previously that many ‘Predatory’ offenders will lack the skill and confidence to commit sexual offences in ‘Challenging’ situations early on, and will generally only begin doing so in subsequent sexual offences. It is also consistent with the broader assertion of the interdependent
interactional model that individuals with a strong predisposition towards a behaviour will be
the most susceptible to situations that allow and/or encourage it. Of course, there are also a
small but notable proportion of ‘Predatory’ ASOs who committed their first sexual offences
in ‘Challenging’ situations. Case ‘T’ certainly illustrates this; the participant’s first and
second sexual offences both involved stalking and forcefully offending against unknown
adult victims in public locations.

5.1.4 Summary

Overall, the results of this dissertation provide mixed support for the validity of
Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation interaction typology in relation to
adolescent sexual offending. Specifically, results pertaining to its offender component are
largely consistent with the predictions of Wortley and Smallbone (2006). However, while
results also provide some support for its situational component, the crosstabulation of these
two components, along with subsequent quantitative and qualitative analyses, highlight the
need to better conceptualise and operationalise this situational component. Although these
results will no doubt be of use in informing future attempts to theoretically refine this
interaction typology, and incorporate the interdependent interactional model into research on
sexual offending more broadly, they also allude to some preliminary implications for
practice. These are discussed in the following section.

5.2 Theoretical and Applied Implications

This section elucidates the broader implications of the current thesis’s results for
theory, research and practice pertaining to adolescent sexual offending. It begins with an
examination of the results pertaining to the offender and situational components of Wortley
and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology separately. These results are discussed in
relation to prior dispositional and situational research respectively. Next, results of the
crosstabulation of these offender groups with the situational groups and clusters, along with their theoretical and research implications, are discussed. Finally, the implications of these results for risk assessment and the situational prevention of adolescent sexual offending are examined.

5.2.1 Implications for theory and research

Broadly speaking, the results of the current thesis add to the already strong evidence base for dispositional heterogeneity among ASOs (e.g., Epps & Fisher, 2004; Hempel et al., 2013; Leversee, 2010; 2011; McCann & Lussier, 2008; Seto & Lalumière, 2010; van Wijk et al., 2006). Specifically, they support the fundamental distinction between ASOs with deviant sexual interests and those with a general predisposition towards antisocial behaviour. However, the similarities that emerged in the antisocial tendencies and weak link to social controls of ‘Opportunistic’ and ‘Predatory’ offenders suggest that a predisposition towards antisocial behaviour might somehow facilitate or encourage the development of deviant sexual interests in some adolescents. This would be consistent with dispositional theories of sexual offending that conceptualise it as an impulsive and forceful mating strategy for which individuals can, with experience, acquire a distinct preference (Hall & Hirschman, 1991; 1992; Lalumière et al., 2005; Seto & Barbaree, 1997; Stinson et al., 2008). The results also isolate participants with no apparent enduring predisposition towards sexual or non-sexual offending, consistent with prior research identifying similar groups of ‘Situational’ or dispositionally ‘normal’ ASOs (O’Brien & Bera, 1986; Oxnam & Vess, 2006; 2008; Richardson et al., 2004; Smith et al., 1987; Worling, 2001). While it could be argued that the offender component of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology neglects many of the more subtle differences that have emerged in empirically derived typologies of ASOs (Cale, Smallbone et al., 2015; Grant et al., 2009; Lussier et al., 2012; Oxnam & Vess, 2006;
2008; Richardson et al., 2004; Smith et al., 1987; Worling, 2001), it must be remembered that typological development is governed as much by theoretical orientation and practical considerations as by empirical concerns with validity. The differences highlighted in these empirically-derived typologies very likely exist, and are of relevance to, say, developmental and lifecourse criminologists, along with those interested in developmental prevention or dispositionally-focused treatment. What the current results suggest is not that the offender component of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology captures the dispositional differences between ASOs with complete accuracy, but that it captures these differences accurately enough for the purposes of situationally-focused assessment, treatment and prevention. This ‘good enough’ approach is consistent with the predominantly applied concerns underpinning the interaction typology, along with Cornish and Clarke’s (2008) emphasis on the importance of pragmatism and parsimony over theoretical complexity in research and crime prevention.

Results pertaining to the interaction typology’s situational component highlight additional heterogeneity in the situational characteristics of ASOs’ sexual offences. While this heterogeneity has also emerged in prior empirical research, there have been few comprehensive attempts to theoretically capture and account for it outside of Smallbone et al.’s (2008) integrated theory. Rather, theories and offence process models that discuss the situational context of sexual offending in any detail have tended to focus more on the tendency of ASOs, and sexual offenders in general, to utilise offence opportunities entailing the least amount of risk and effort (Lalumière et al. 2005; Lane & Ryan, 2010; Tedeschi & Felson, 1994). This trend is consistent with the assertions of the routine activities and rational choice approaches, and it is certainly evident in the results of the current thesis. However, there was also a small but notable proportion of participants who appeared to go to some degree of risk and effort to commit their first sexual offence. As such, just as theories of
sexual offending have evolved to recognise and explain variation in ASOs, so too must they comprehensively account for variation in the lengths to which ASOs are willing to go to sexually offend.

Beyond this demonstration of heterogeneity in the situational characteristics of adolescent sexual offences, the present results also highlight the need for further refinement in the conceptualisation, and especially operationalisation, of the situations in which sexual offences occur. Although in the current dissertation there was a significant association between the situational component of the interaction typology and the situational clusters, the dispersal of these situational clusters across situational groups was far from clear cut. One might expect this to be the case for ‘Precipitated’ sexual offences, but the argument could be made that clearer differences should have emerged between ‘Tempted’ and ‘Challenged’ sexual offences. As mentioned, development of the interaction typology’s situational component has been disadvantaged in large part by the lack of a consensus among researchers and practitioners with regards to conceptualising situations (Ekehammar, 1974; Hogan, 2009; Magnusson, 1971; Reis, 2008). Indeed, Hogan’s (2009) scathing critique of interactional psychological research bluntly states that ‘…there is little agreement about how to define situations, there is no widely accepted taxonomy of situations, and social psychologists have no idea how to measure them in a standardised manner.’ (p. 249). The situational component classifies offence situations on the basis of their motivational (i.e. precipitators) and facilitative (i.e. risk and effort) characteristics, but beyond the provision of basic examples as to what these situations might look like, it does not provide a clear and specific means of operationalising them. While the routine activities approach does provide a means of doing this in its offence opportunity structure, the current thesis’s qualitative analyses suggest that future attempts may need to go deeper, and examine more dynamic, less
tangible contextual features such as the state of the victim, the proximity and alertness of adult supervisors, and interpersonal context.

As discussed, the failure to find a significant association between the offender and situational components could be due to measurement error in the situational component, or to the fact that only the first sexual offence was examined. While the former explanation suggests the need for refinement in the operationalisation of the situational component, the latter proposes that the pattern of dispersal predicted by Wortley and Smallbone (2006) might become clearer in subsequent sexual offences. Mischel and Shoda (1995; 1998; Shoda & Mischel, 2000) contend that the likelihood of an individual exhibiting a particular behaviour in a given situation is contingent not just on their predisposition towards it, but also their ability to do so. In relation to crime, Clarke and Cornish (1985) also argue that an offender’s abilities will improve with every subsequent offence, eventually giving them the skill and confidence to offend in situations that might entail greater effort and risk. Similarly, Wortley and Smallbone (2006) themselves acknowledge that some offenders may only exploit or create/seek out opportunities to sexually offend after their first few sexual offences, once their motivation and ability to do so has reached a sufficient level. Unfortunately, no research to date has examined the degree of continuity and change in the characteristics of adolescent sexual offences over time, so this argument currently has little empirical support.

Furthermore, the significant association between the offender component and the situational clusters demonstrates that different types of ASOs are indeed more likely to commit even their first sexual offence in different situations, hinting at the relevance of the interdependent interactional model to this offence. Future research incorporating a refined operationalisation of the interaction typology’s situational component might generate results more in line with Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) predictions.

5.2.2 Implications for practice
Broadly speaking, the results of the current thesis provide further support for the use of SCP measures in the prevention of adolescent sexual offending. There was a general tendency towards sexually offending impulsively and in situations entailing a low degree of effort across all three offender groups. Less stringent SCP measures centred on basic household rules and practices, sexual education, and victim protective strategies that increase the effort of sexually offending may therefore be sufficient to deter the majority of adolescents from beginning to do so. Interestingly, around half of the participants across all three offender groups committed their first sexual offences in the proximity of at least one adult supervisor. While no further data were available on adult supervisors to examine the reasons for this finding, it does suggest that SCP measures should attempt to make use of these adult supervisors by increasing their capacity for surveillance, particularly in the home. Such measures are no doubt easily communicable through the school- and community-based education programs that are now prevalent throughout Australia and elsewhere, alongside other mediums (e.g., media).

However, the significant association between the interaction typology’s offender component and the situational clusters suggests that more restrictive SCP measures may be required to deter certain ASOs from beginning to sexually offend. There was a tendency for some ‘Opportunist’ and ‘Predatory’ offenders to commit their first sexual offences in somewhat more challenging situations. Additional measures to deter these ASOs might include the restriction of unsupervised contact (or any contact) with potential victims, and of unsupervised movement in public places. These measures would likely have the added benefit of preventing many of the other antisocial behaviours ASOs in these two offender groups frequently engage in. Indeed, the findings of the current thesis tentatively suggest that the opportunities and precipitators that facilitate/motivate the first sexual offences of these offenders regularly emerge while they are engaged in other antisocial behaviours (e.g., during
the commission of non-sexual offences, intoxicant use), making them especially important to prevent.

Results also suggest that, while the interaction typology shows promise for practitioners, further research is needed to confirm the existence and nature of an interdependent interaction between the dispositional and situational factors underlying adolescent sexual offending, and further refinement to the typology itself will be required to more accurately capture this interaction if it does exist. Most importantly, practitioners will require a clearer operationalisation of its situational component that allows them to easily and accurately classify offence situations. While the risk and effort scales used in the current thesis might prove useful for this purpose, these scales should clearly specify the offence characteristics to be considered when estimating the degree of risk and effort inherent to an offence situation. In relation to the assessment of recidivism risk, results suggest that certain situations increase the likelihood of a sexual offence more than others by facilitating and/or motivating it, and thus provide broad support for the further integration of situational characteristics into risk assessment instruments for ASOs. However, given that this thesis did not examine rates of sexual recidivism in each offender group, or the pattern of dispersal of subsequent sexual offences across situational groups, it is difficult to highlight any further implications for risk assessment at this stage.

5.2.3 Summary

Results pertaining to the offender component of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology are largely consistent with prior research adopting a dispositional approach to studying adolescent sexual offending, lending further support to the existence of sexually deviant, generally antisocial, and situationally motivated ASOs. Those pertaining to the typology’s situational component are similarly consistent with prior research adopting a
situational approach to studying adolescent sexual offending in that they highlight the
tendency of ASOs to sexually offend in situations entailing minimal risk and effort. However,
they also demonstrate heterogeneity in the situational characteristics of adolescent sexual
offences which, while consistent with prior research, draws attention to the failure of most
theories to account for this variation. These results, along with those that emerged from the
crosstabulation of the offender groups with the situational groups and clusters, highlight the
need for further refinement in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of situations in
research on adolescent sexual offending, and indeed, human behaviour generally.
Additionally, they draw attention to the possible relevance of ability and experience
alongside predisposition in examining situational patterns of sexual offending for different
types of ASOs. Regarding practical implications, the results broadly support the use of SCP
measures in the prevention of adolescent sexual offending, and the individualised application
of these measures, in line with the interaction typology. However, it is recommended that
further research on the interdependent interaction of dispositional and situational factors
underlying adolescent sexual offending, and further refinement to the interaction typology
itself, be undertaken before implementation by practitioners.

5.3. Conclusion, Limitations, and Directions for Future Research

The current thesis constitutes (to the author’s knowledge) the first empirical
examination of the validity of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) offender x situation
interaction typology of sexual offenders, using a sample of male adolescent sexual offenders.
More broadly, it has explored the relevance of the interdependent interactional model to
adolescent sexual offending, albeit in a simplified form, and evaluated its potential as a
means of integrating dispositional and situational approaches to the study and prevention of
this behaviour. Results provide mixed support for the validity of this interaction typology,
highlighting the need for further refinement of its situational component in particular. They also allude to a number of important implications for the assessment, and especially treatment and prevention, of adolescent sexual offending, specifically in relation to the targeted application of SCP measures. While informative, these conclusions should be interpreted in the context of a number of important limitations to the current thesis, along with a recognition of the need for further research to validate and expand on them.

Sampling issues pervade research on adolescent sexual offending. Samples have typically been small and non-representative, containing only detected ASOs with potentially more serious and/or less competently executed sexual offences. While the sample used in the current thesis is comparatively large by present standards, it too is a convenience sample of detected ASOs. As such, it is similarly at risk of over-representing ASOs whose sexual offences, by virtue of their severity and/or incompetence, are more likely to have come to the attention of the youth justice system. The unique cultural and demographic features that characterise the state of Queensland should also be kept in mind when making cross-jurisdictional generalisations. Importantly, the northern region of Queensland contains one of the highest concentrations of Indigenous Australians in the country, many of whom reside in remote Indigenous communities (Regional Development Australia, 2015). Endemic socio-cultural problems have been identified in many of these communities, which have been shown to contribute to unique trends in the routine activities and sexual offence characteristics of ASOs residing in them (Smallbone, Rayment-McHugh & Smith, 2013). Given the notable proportion of Indigenous participants in the current sample (29.6%) it is possible that results were partially influenced by these regionally unique trends, which should qualify any attempts at cross-jurisdictional generalisation. Finally, the inclusion of only male ASOs in the current sample should be kept in mind when generalising these results to female ASOs and adult sexual offenders.
There are also a number of limitations inherent to the data collection strategy utilised in the current thesis, which are largely a by-product of the applied as opposed to research concerns underlying the GYFS clinical files. Since these files are intended to serve primarily as records of assessment- and treatment-relevant information, there was some variation in their focus on certain variables based on the unique problems and needs of clients. This made the consistent and detailed coding of data regarding certain variables (e.g., situational precipitators) difficult. Additionally, a marked difference in the quality of information present in the clinical files of participants whose referrals were accepted and not accepted by GYFS was also noted, with the former typically containing more reliable information from a greater variety of sources (e.g., psychological assessment and treatment reports, session notes, psychometric results). This is due to the thorough assessment/treatment process those who are accepted by GYFS undergo, which facilitates the validation or correction of information provided at referral, while also uncovering new information about participants and their sexual offences. Finally, there were differences between earlier and later clinical files in the quality of situationally-focused information they contained, which correspond with changes in the importance ascribed to this information for assessment and treatment purposes by GYFS psychologists.

While potential shortcomings in Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) conceptualisation and operationalisation of the situational component of their interaction typology have been identified, limitations in its operationalisation in the current thesis must also be noted. The absence of consistent and reliable data on situational precipitators noted previously made it impossible to utilise in the classification of situational groups. Furthermore, while the risk and effort ratings pertaining to participants’ first sexual offences were assigned by experienced researchers and psychologists, and exhibited acceptable levels of reliability, these concepts were not clearly defined in the context of the YSVA research project. As such,
there was the potential for variation in each coder’s interpretation of these concepts, along with their emphasis on certain situational factors over others when assigning ratings. In relation to the offender component, the current thesis’s focus on participants’ first sexual offences precluded the utilisation of prior sexual offending in the classification of the ‘Predatory’ offender group, in line with its operationalisation by Wortley and Smallbone (2006). Its reliance on more ambiguous data regarding deviant sexual fantasies, inappropriate pornography use, and childhood sexual behaviour problems was arguably inconsistent with this thesis’s stated intention of utilising clear and easily available information to classify groups.

Given that the current thesis constitutes (to the author’s knowledge) the first empirical examination of Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology, it serves as an empirical foundation from which several potential avenues for future research extend. First, and perhaps most obviously, research should attempt to validate this typology with samples of male ASOs across different jurisdictions, along with sexual offenders more broadly, and make use of alternative data sources. Refinement of the interaction typology’s situational component also necessitates the trialling of additional methods of operationalising it, incorporating clearer definitions of risk and effort. One potential avenue of refinement involves the development of more objective risk and effort indices that facilitate the rank-ordering of offence situations, using a prescribed combination of empirically-supported, and possibly weighted, situational risk factors for sexual offending. Relatedly, while empirical research has identified a number of stable situational risk factors for adolescent sexual offending (e.g. victim characteristics, location and time), future research should empirically examine dynamic and less tangible situational risk factors (e.g. state of the victim, the proximity and alertness of adult supervisors, aspects of the interpersonal context of the sexual offence) that could contribute to these risk and effort indices. Finally, future research
examining this typology should make use of data directly pertaining to situational precipitators.

Future research should also extend the validation of this typology beyond ASOs’ first sexual offence to determine whether the pattern of dispersal across situational groups hypothesised by Wortley and Smallbone (2006) crystallises with subsequent sexual offending. This could include an analysis of the degree of temporal continuity and change in the sexual offence characteristics of ASOs’ across each of the offender groups. Importantly, the applied concerns underpinning the development of this typology demand an empirical examination of its potential to inform the assessment, treatment and prevention of adolescent sexual offending. In terms of risk assessment, such research would necessarily entail not only a comparative analysis of sexual recidivism rates across offender groups, but also the situational groups within which incidents of sexual recidivism are the most likely to fall. Additionally, research should also analyse the relative effectiveness of different SCP measures at preventing sexual recidivism, or the initiation of sexual offending, across these offender groups.

Finally, the current thesis highlights the need for further research on the interdependent interaction of dispositional and situational factors underlying adolescent sexual offending. As mentioned, Wortley and Smallbone’s (2006) interaction typology represents an attempt to simplify the interdependent interactional model, and highlight its tangible implications for sexual offending for the benefit of practitioners. Future research should examine this interdependent interaction more directly by examining the cognitive mechanisms that facilitate it. Admittedly, this would be difficult to achieve with a retrospective research design, and the obvious ethical and practical difficulties with employing an experimental or quasi-experimental design are acknowledged. However, studies of adult males (e.g., Bouffard & Bouffard, 2011; Bouffard & Exum, 2003;
Greendlinger & Byrne, 1987) have examined the influence of dispositional and situational factors on participants’ reported likelihood of sexually offending in hypothetical scenarios describing different opportunities to sexually offend. Limitations to the external validity of this research aside, it could nonetheless be extended to examine the interactive contribution of dispositional and situational factors to decisions to sexually offend in adolescent samples.
AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISCOVERY PROJECT
2011 - 2013

UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING YOUTH SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE:
AN INVESTIGATION OF OFFENDER DEVELOPMENT,
OFFENDING ONSET AND PROGRESSION

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY CHECKLIST
&
SITUATIONAL INVENTORY

CHIEF INVESTIGATORS:
Professor Stephen Smallbone
Dr. Benoit Leclerc
Dr. Troy Allard
# Referral Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date file accessed</th>
<th>/</th>
<th>/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GYFS ID</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Justice ID</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (a)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is one of the sexual offences for which the young person has been referred their onset offence?</td>
<td><strong>Y</strong></td>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Please complete surveys for this incident</td>
<td>Refer to 1(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (b)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the case file contain information pertaining to a known onset sexual offence?</td>
<td><strong>Y</strong></td>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Please complete surveys for this incident (not the referral offence)</td>
<td>Please use first incident described in the GYFS referral to complete surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Onset Offence</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at Onset</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GYFS Involvement</strong></td>
<td>Referral only / Assess only / Assess &amp; Treat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY CHECKLIST
### SECTION 1: INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Age Bracket (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antisocial attitudes and behaviours</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Destruction of property; graffiti and / or vandalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Lying; theft; dishonesty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Fighting, bullying or intimidating others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Oppositional / defiance; noncompliance and rule-breaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Trespassing, loitering; disturbing the peace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aggression and / or violence</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Callous and unemotional traits</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attention deficits</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impulsivity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual behaviour problems (pre-10 yrs.)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Specify: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inappropriate use of pornography</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Substance use</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) cigarettes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) alcohol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) marijuana; hash; hashish; Yandli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) speed, cocaine, heroin or ecstasy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) glue, aerosols, petrol or other inhalants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internalising problems</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Specify: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Externalising problems</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Specify: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mental health diagnosis</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Diagnosis 1: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Diagnosis 2: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Diagnosis 3: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Diagnosis 4: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental milestone delays</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Type: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intellectual impairment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### INDIVIDUAL FACTORS (CONT’D)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Age Bracket (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth complications (Type:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foetal alcohol effects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head injury (requiring hospitalisation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unusual illnesses or injuries (Specify:)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement in self-harming behaviours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicidal ideation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide attempts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SECTION 2: FAMILY FACTORS

Who does the young person consider as their primary caregiver(s)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the young person have any siblings?</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Younger</th>
<th>Same age</th>
<th>Older</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Age Bracket (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child abuse and neglect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Neglect (Perpetrator/s:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Physical abuse (Perpetrator/s:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Emotional maltreatment (Perpetrator/s:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Sexual abuse (Perpetrator/s:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Contact with child safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Child protection notification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of 1st contact (  /  /  ; Age:  )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of last contact (  /  /  ; Age:  )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Out-of-home placement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Factor</td>
<td>Age Bracket (years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family conflict and disruption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) High levels of family conflict</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Witnessing family violence (Perpetrator/s: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Caregiver inconsistency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Long-term separation from significant family member(s) (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Death of significant family member/s (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable family environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Exposure to pornography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Exposure to sexualised environment / poor boundaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Residential instability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Residential overcrowding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Single parent living environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver history</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Caregiver substance abuse / dependence (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Caregiver victim of sexual abuse (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Caregiver has history of mental health problems (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Caregiver a victim of domestic violence (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor family management practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Poor supervision / monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Harsh and inconsistent discipline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Lack of caregiver involvement / availability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Lack of caregiver warmth and affection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminogenic family environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Anti-social / pro-criminal attitudes (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Incarceration (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Sexual offending history (who: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 3: SCHOOL FACTORS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School status</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the YP currently (or was prior to detention) attending school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(if not, why: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School name: ______________________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the YP currently working?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Position: ______________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Age Bracket (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Disruptive behaviour in class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Opposition / defiance towards teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Verbally aggressive to teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Physically aggressive to teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Physically aggressive to students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor academic achievement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor engagement in school (including truancy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School drop-out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent school changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Total no.: _____)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspensions</td>
<td>Pre-onset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Total no.: _____)</td>
<td>(Total no.: _____)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expulsions</td>
<td>Pre-onset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Total no.: _____)</td>
<td>(Total no.: _____)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim of bullying (verbal / physical)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying other children (verbal / physical)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SECTION 4: RELATIONSHIPS / PEER FACTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship history</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has young person ever had a girl/boyfriend?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the young person sexually active?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age when young person first chose to have sexual intercourse: ______ yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the offence the young person's first sexual encounter?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Age Bracket (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor social skills; peer isolation / rejection</td>
<td>Under 12 12 - 16 Pre Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-social peer group / networks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor conventional social ties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang membership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate use of pornography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerning sexual attitudes / beliefs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor sexual knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of formal sex education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviant sexual fantasies / interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive distortions surrounding sexual behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SECTION 5: NEIGHBOURHOOD FACTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Bracket (years)</th>
<th>Suburb</th>
<th>Postcode</th>
<th>ARIA</th>
<th>SEIFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk factor</th>
<th>Age Bracket (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low socio-economic status</td>
<td>Under 12 12 - 16 Pre Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community disorganisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of weapons and drugs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to violence and crime</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AREAS OF CONCERN (RISK FACTORS)</td>
<td>INTERVENTIONS (IF NO INTERVENTIONS, PLEASE WRITE NONE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School / Organisational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SITUATIONAL INVENTORY
### PART A:
OFFENCE ONSET

### PRE-OFFENCE PERIOD

#### SECTION 1: SYSTEMIC FACTORS (PRESENT AT THE TIME OF THE ONSET OFFENCE INCIDENT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>OFFENDER</th>
<th>VICTIM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RISK</td>
<td>PROTECTIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School / Organisational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## INCIDENT DETAILS

### SECTION 1: INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

#### VICTIM(S):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Victim-offender relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M / F</td>
<td></td>
<td>[ ] Known (Relative) (_______)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ ] Known (Non-relative) (_______)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Victim-offender relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M / F</td>
<td></td>
<td>[ ] Known (Relative) (_______)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ ] Known (Non-relative) (_______)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Victim-offender relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M / F</td>
<td></td>
<td>[ ] Known (Relative) (_______)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ ] Known (Non-relative) (_______)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### OFFENDER(S):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YP's Age</th>
<th>Were there any co-offenders?</th>
<th>Number of co-offenders</th>
<th>Co-offender details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(at time of offence)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y / N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SECTION 2: OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES

### RATIONAL CHOICE

#### Risk

How much risk did the offender take?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) ________________________________

#### Effort

How much effort did the offender invest in order to carry out the offence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) ________________________________

#### Reward

How did the offence benefit the offender? (Tick all that apply)

- [ ] Sexual gratification / alleviation
- [ ] Care-seeking
- [ ] Care-giving
- [ ] Exploration / curiosity
- [ ] Peer Status
- [ ] Need for power / control
- [ ] Grievance / victim blaming
- [ ] Sadistic
- [ ] Other: ________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convergence settings</th>
<th>How did offender and victim first encounter one another?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Living in same home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Out-of-home placement / care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Peer group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Recreational / social club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Incident was first encounter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Other (specify: ________ )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What was the offender doing in the moments prior to the offence?**

---

**What was the victim doing in the moments prior to the offence?**

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of offence OR Date range (format date month)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day of the week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Remote**

- Urban
- Rural
- Remote

- Domestic
- Offender’s home
- Victim’s home
- Someone else’s home
  (who: ____________)
  *Where within the home did it occur:*
  - Bedroom
    (specify: ____________)
  - Living room
  - Kitchen
  - Bathroom/toilet
  - Outside in the yard / shed
  - Somewhere else
    (specify: ____________)

- Institutional
- School
- Church
- Sports club
- Workplace
- Residential
  (e.g., youth hostel, care facility)
- Somewhere else
  (specify: ____________)

- Public
- Street
- Park
- Shopping Centre
- Public toilet
- Bush land
- Car
- Swimming
  pool/hole
- Somewhere else
  (specify: ____________)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Routine Activities (Cont'd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guardians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who would normally have primary responsibility for welfare and supervision of the victim at the time of the offence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where were they at the time of the offence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for reduced commitment / capacity at the time of the offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handlers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who would normally have primary responsibility for welfare and supervision of the offender at the time of the offence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where were they at the time of the offence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for reduced commitment / capacity at the time of the offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who would normally have primary responsibility for supervision and safety of the place at the time of the offence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where were they at the time of the offence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for reduced commitment / capacity at the time of the offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural surveillance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Features of setting that reduced routine surveillance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived provocations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social pressures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SECTION 4: WHAT HAPPENED?

**How long had victim and offender known each other prior to the incident?**

- ☐ Had not met prior to incident

  _______ Years _______ Months _______ Weeks _______ Days _______ Hours (before offence)

**At what point did the offender form the intention to commit the offence?**

- ☐ Intention formed before offender met victim
- ☐ Intention formed while offender knew victim but before encounter took place
- ☐ Intention formed during encounter with victim

**Narrative of offence (how offence initiated, victim-offender interactions, sexual behaviours, how offence ended)**
## POST-OFFENCE PERIOD

### SECTION 1: IMMEDIATE REACTION

**What was the offender’s immediate response to the incident?**

### SECTION 2: DISCOVERY

**How did the incident first come to the attention of a third party?**

- [ ] Offender disclosed to someone
- [ ] Victim disclosed to someone
- [ ] Incident directly witnessed
- [ ] Discovered indirectly by a third party (e.g., doctor)
- [ ] Other: ________________

**When did the incident first come to the attention of a third party?**

- [ ] At the time of the offence – it was directly witnessed

- [ ] [Number of] Years [Number of] Months [Number of] Weeks [Number of] Days [Number of] Hours (after offence)

**Who was the third party?**

- [ ] Parent / guardian
- [ ] Other adult (related)
- [ ] Other adult (unrelated)
- [ ] Sibling
- [ ] Other child (related)
- [ ] Friend(s)
- [ ] Professional (teacher, nurse; councillor; doctor: ________________)
- [ ] Other (who: ________________)

**How did the offender react to the allegations (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?**

**How did significant others of the offender react to the allegations (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?**

**How did significant others of the victim react to the allegations (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?**

### SECTION 3: INITIAL POLICE CONTACT

**How did the police first become involved?**

- [ ] Victim called police
- [ ] Victim had third party call police on their behalf
- [ ] Person who witnessed the offence informed authorities (Who: ________________)
- [ ] Third party informed authorities (e.g., teacher, parent; nurse; counsellor)
- [ ] Offender apprehended as part of a wider investigation by police
- [ ] Police found out about it in some other way

(give details: ________________)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>POST-OFFENCE PERIOD (CONT'D)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>When did the police become involved?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ Years ____ Months ____ Weeks ____ Days ____ Hours (after offence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How did the offender react to initial contact with police (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How did significant others of the offender react to the allegations (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SECTION 4: COURT

| **What was the outcome for the sexual offence(s)?** |
| Detention Order: |
| Supervised Release Order |
| Conditional Release Order |
| Probation |
| Intensive Supervision Order (Under 13 yrs.) |
| Community Service Order |
| Caution / Reprimand / Fine |
| Other (Specify: ____________________________) |

**Conviction recorded:** Yes  No

| **What was the outcome for other non-sexual offences finalized at the same time?** |
| Detention Order: |
| Supervised Release Order |
| Conditional Release Order |
| Probation |
| Intensive Supervision Order (Under 13 yrs.) |
| Community Service Order |
| Caution / Reprimand / Fine |
| Other (Specify: ____________________________) |

**Conviction recorded:** Yes  No

| **How did the offender react to court outcome (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?** |
| **How did significant others of the offender react to court outcome (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?** |

### SECTION 5: INITIAL GYFS CONTACT

| **How did the offender initially respond to GYFS involvement (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?** |
| **How did significant others of the offender react GYFS involvement (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?** |
### PART B: 2nd SEXUAL OFFENCE INCIDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has the young person committed another sexual offence since the onset sexual offence incident?</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time between onset incident and this incident</td>
<td><strong>Years</strong> <strong>Months</strong> <strong>Weeks</strong> <strong>Days</strong> <strong>Hours</strong> (after offence)</td>
<td><strong>Y</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please complete PART A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did the YP offend against the same victim?</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did the YP offend in the same context?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please complete PART A)

If not completing Part A, please list any notable differences between the first incident and this incident (if applicable).

### PART C: MOST RECENT SEXUAL OFFENCE INCIDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has the young person committed any other sexual offences since the second sexual offence incident?</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time between onset incident and the most recent incident</td>
<td><strong>Years</strong> <strong>Months</strong> <strong>Weeks</strong> <strong>Days</strong> <strong>Hours</strong> (after offence)</td>
<td><strong>Y</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please complete PART A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Was this offence against the same victim as incident two?</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did the YP offend in the same context?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please complete PART A)

If not completing Part A, please list any notable differences between the second incident and this incident (if applicable).
### YOUTH SEXUAL OFFENDING SUMMARY

Please answer the following questions for all known sexual offences committed by the person by age 17:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many sexual offences has the person committed in total (incl. onset offence)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many victims in total has the young person offended against (incl. onset offence)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many times did the young person sexually offend against each victim?</th>
<th>V1</th>
<th>V2</th>
<th>V3</th>
<th>V4</th>
<th>V5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For how long did they offend against each victim? (e.g. 1 day, 6 months)</th>
<th>V1</th>
<th>V2</th>
<th>V3</th>
<th>V4</th>
<th>V5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Further comments:

---

Data entered: ______/______/______

Initials: [___] [___] [___] [___]


Group.


Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (2001). Measuring remoteness:


American Journal of Psychiatry, 134(11), 1239-1243.


Letourneau, E. J., Henggeler, S. W., Borduin, C. M., Schewe, P. A., McCart, M. R.,


Psychology Bulletin, 32(8), 1110-1113.


McGuire, R. J., Carlisle, J. M. & Young, B. G. (1965). Sexual deviations and conditioned


Murphy, G. (1947). *Personality: A biosocial approach to origins and structure*. New


Salem: Department of Human Resources, Children’s Services Division.


Sexual Abuse in Australia and New Zealand, 11(1), 69-85.


Shoda, Y. & Mischel, W. (2000). Reconciling contextualism with the core assumptions of


