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Amanda R. Santiago  
Impulsive and Antisocial  
Personality Characteristics  
Amongst Male Adolescent  
Sexual Offenders

## ABSTRACT

Although adolescent violent crime arrests have declined over the years (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006; Sickmund 2005) the number of adolescent nonviolent and violent sexual offenses continues to peril social health. As such, empirically based treatment options are needed to meet the diverse needs of this heterogeneous group of youth. The purpose of this study was to review current literature for impulsive and antisocial personality characteristics amongst male adolescent sexual offenders. Two separate quantitative research papers were written to assess the significant relationship between these personality traits and adolescent sexual offenders. To help leverage our understanding of these youth, the first paper explored differences of impulsivity between adolescent sexual offenders and non-sexual delinquents and further investigated impulsive traits in relation to adolescent sexual acts. The assumption of insignificant difference between groups on levels of impulsivity was supported. Unexpected findings included impulsivity being significantly related to the adolescent sexual offenders' delinquent crimes rather than his sexual acts. The second paper sought to explore prominent antisocial traits, such as impulsivity, destruction of property, lifestyle instability, substance abuse, hostility, and a history of rule violation, amongst the sexual and delinquent acts of adolescent sexual offenders. The assumption that antisocial acts are related to both the adolescent sexual offenders' delinquent crimes and his sexual acts was supported.

Impulsive and Antisocial Personality Characteristics amongst Male Adolescent Sexual Offenders

A project based upon an independent investigation,  
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Social Work

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2009

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The differences between adolescent sexual offenders and non-sexual delinquent offenders on impulsivity and the relationship between impulsiveness and sexual offender characteristics

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## Abstract

Adolescent nonviolent and violent sexual offense arrests remain a societal problem (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). Given that adolescent sexual offenders tend to re-offend more non-sexually than sexually (Burton & Meezan, 2004), comparative research analysis between nonsexual delinquents and adolescent sexual offenders on varying personality traits in relation to their crimes may help inform optimal sexual offender treatment plans. Based on the literature, impulsivity is a common characteristic of delinquent crimes (Borum, 2000; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998; Palucka, 1998) and some adolescent sexual crimes (Daverson, 2005; Parks, 2004; Saunders & Awad, 1991; Smith et al, 1987). While little is known about the relationship between adolescent sexual offending and impulsivity, the literature (J-SOAP; Prentky & Righthand, 2001; ERASOR; Worling, 2001; MACI; Millon, 1993) suggests low levels of impulse control to increase sexual re-offense rates amongst adolescent sexual offenders (Epps, 1997; Lane, 1997; Prentky et al, 2000; Perry & Orchard, 1992; Rich, 2001; Ross & Loss, 1991; Worling, 2001; Worling & Langstrom, 2003; Worling 2004; Wenet & Clark, 1986; Worling & Langstrom, 2003). In a sample of 312 (n=218 for sexual offenders; and n=94 non-sexual delinquents), impulsive propensity scores, as measured by the MACI (Millon, 1993) were compared between adolescent sexual offenders and non-sexual delinquents. As supported by the literature, impulsivity was found to be a common characteristic amongst both groups. However, no significant difference was found between these offender groups. In addition, the relationship between impulsivity and sexual crime characteristics (e.g. level of force, modus operandi, and number of victims) for juvenile sexual offenders were studied. Impulsivity was found insignificantly correlated to the chosen sexual crime characteristics studied.

## Article I

The differences between adolescent sexual offenders and non-sexual offender delinquents on impulsivity and the relationship between impulsiveness and sexual offending characteristics

### Introduction

The numbers of adolescent violent crime arrests declined by 10 percent between 1999 and 2003 (i.e. 80,500 arrests to less than 70,600 arrests; Sickmund, 2005). By 2003, there were 2.2 million adolescent criminal arrests that included 4,240 forcible rapes and another 18,300 other sexual offenses committed mostly by males (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). In 2006, approximately 18% of U.S. sexual offense arrests were young males (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006). While the sexual offender rates appear low in comparison to delinquent arrests, the total number of adolescent sexual offender incarcerations remains significant. Therefore, today an increasing number of static and dynamic risk factors associated with adolescent sexual offending have been identified (Worling & Langstrom, 2003) in order to guide treatment and assess potential recidivism. A possible risk factor (Worling & Curwen, 2001; Worling & Langstrom, 2003) that is under research but remains essentially unnoticed in the literature is impulsivity. In this paper, impulsivity will be explored as a potential adolescent sex offender risk factor by measuring differences between adolescent sexual offenders and non-sexual delinquents on impulsivity and investigating the relationship between impulsivity and adolescent sexual offending characteristics.

### Literature Review

In general, adolescent development is a period in which many youth engage in various



types of risk behaviors (i.e. substance abuse, petty theft, truancy, etc.) that help them to explore adult roles and their individual identities (Galvan et al, 2007). A large portion of these acting out adolescents are males (Erickson & Chambers, 2007) who in comparison to young girls, are more likely to have less impulse control (Erickson & Chambers, 2007) and as adolescents are more likely than male adults and young boys to engage in risky behaviors (Galvan et al, 2007). Although discussed solely as research implication in this paper, these differences can vary depending on relevant biological (Erickson & Chambers, 2007; Galvan et al, 2007) and environmental vulnerabilities (Meier et al, 2008).

The literature on impulsivity and negative behaviors of adolescent males is plentiful (Burton, 2006; DiPietro et al, 1996; Emory & Noonna, 1984; Lynam et al, 2000; McCord et al, 2001; Meier et al, 2008; Palucka, 1998; Thornberry et al, 2001), and has been linked directly to a myriad of delinquent behaviors (i.e. crimes, drugs, theft, violent assaults and fighting, etc. see Borum, 2000; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998). Compared to non-adjudicated male boys and adults, and male adjudicated adults many male delinquents have been found more impulsive (Palucka, 1998) and geographically located communities impoverished by poor adult sanctioning and parental monitoring (Meier et al, 2008). In other studies, impulsive traits were found to correlate more amongst non-violent and violent delinquent acts than to similar degrees of adolescent sexual offending acts (Gretton et al, 2001; Langstrom, 2002; Langstrom & Grann, 2000; Rasmussen, 1999; Worling & Curwen, 2000; Zakireh et al, 2008).

With that said, impulsivity has been suggested a more common feature amongst non-sexual delinquents than adolescent sexual offenders (Borum, 2000; Burton, 2006; DiPietro et al, 1996; Emory & Noonna, 1984; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998; Lynam et al, 2000; McCord et al, 2001;

Meier et al, 2008; Palucka, 1998; Thornberry et al, 2001). However, impulsivity may be characteristic of many adolescent sexual offenders with similar non-sexual criminal histories (France & Hudson, 1993). However, even if impulsivity is considered a more delinquent trait, subgroups of adolescent sexual offenders have displayed varying degrees of impulsivity. For instance, mixed victim type (i.e. adult/peer and children) adolescent sexual perpetrators strongly correlated with higher levels of antisocial traits, including impulsivity, compared to adolescents who solely victimized either adult/peer or children (Daverson, 2005; Parks, 2004). Yet even less violent hands-off adolescent sexual offenders (i.e. exhibitionism and obscene phone calls) were found to have poor levels of impulse control (Saunders & Awad, 1991; Smith et al, 1987).

Based on this literature, the current study will compare rates of impulsivity between adolescent sexual offenders and non-sexual delinquents and explore the relationship between impulsivity and the characteristics of sexual offense acts (e.g. level of force, modus operandi, and number of victims) for adolescent sexual offenders.

## Methods

In this study, data collected was approved by the appropriate Human Subjects Review Board. The original sample consisted of incarcerated adolescent males of which 331 were sexual offenders and 171 were non-sexual delinquents. Sexual offenders that denied (29; 8.7%) or failed (20) to respond to survey questions regarding their number of sexually perpetrated victims were removed from the sample subject group. Thus, 283 sexual offenders remained in the sample size for further analysis. Therefore, the study's total subject pool began at 453 subjects.

Of the 453 subject pool, the number of sexual offenders (n=283) and non-sexual offenders (n=170) were assessed and further reduced for affirmative social desirability levels and

raw or missing disclosure scores (raw Scale X scores less than 202 or greater than 589) scores using the Millon Adolescent Clinical (Millon, 1993) Inventory rules, thus finalizing the sample size to 312 (n=218 for sexual offenders; and n=94 non-sexual delinquents). In terms of social desirability levels, 44 subjects (31 sexual offenders and 13 non-sexual delinquents) were removed for affirmative responses to either question 114 or 126. While 97 (34 sexual offenders and 63 non-sexual delinquents) were removed for insufficient raw Scale X scores. As such, the final sample size of 312 included 218 sexual offenders and 94 non-sexual delinquents. Due to missing data, discussed sample sizes may not always total 312 subjects.

The sample (N=306) averaged to be 16.61 years of age (SD=1.58 years) and to be in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Between both groups (n=213 sexual offenders; n=93 non-sexual delinquents), there was no significant difference in either age ( $t(304) = 0.512, p=.609$ ) or school grade (Mann-Whitney U,  $p=.69$ ).

As supported by the literature and as indicated this study, race greatly differs amongst the two groups ( $\chi^2(2) = 13.19, p < 0.001$ ). Of the 208 sexual offenders, 10 subjects did not report their race, as such they reported as Caucasian 51.4% (n=107), African American 28.8% (n=60) and other<sup>1</sup> 19.7% (n=41). Of the 94 non-sexual delinquents, 2 subjects missed reporting their race and reported as Caucasian 50.0% (n=46), African American 44.6% (n=41) and other 5.4% (n=5).

The sexual offender sample (n=217) reported a vast array of sexual perpetrations between

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<sup>1</sup> This group included several racial/ethnic groups which were combined for analysis as none of these individual groups represented more than 5% of the sample

<sup>8</sup> These questions did not offer age ranges, just simply gender/age categories such as "male children."

1 to 49 victims ( $M=2.33$ ,  $SD = 4.46$ ). Most reported between 1 and 5 sexually abused victims; 45.9% ( $n=100$ ) reported 1 victim; 40.85 ( $n=89$ ) reported 2 to 5 victims while 13.3% ( $n=29$ ) reported between 6 and 49 victims.

In terms of victim age, sexual offenders reported children victimizations (63.6%;  $n=136$ ) at a higher percentage than either teen or adult victimizations only (15.0%,  $n=32$ ), or mixed victimizations (abuse against children, teens, and adults<sup>2</sup>; 21.5%,  $n=46$ ).

### *Administration*

Paper and pencil surveys were confidentially administered to six residential facilities in Ohio State. Adolescent offenders completed surveys in small groups of 8-12 youth and were separated appropriately in order to ensure self-reported answers. An incentive was not administered to complete the survey. Trained graduate student research assistants read surveys aloud to those participants who struggled with reading ( $n=$ , 2.6%).

### Measures

The Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory (MACI) (Millon, 1993) is a twelve personality pattern scale designed for adolescents within either outpatient treatment or correctional facilities. The MACI's validity derives from two smaller cross-validation samples amongst 579 adolescents. Scales are based on 169 True-False items from the Millon's theory on personalities (Millon & Davis, 1996). As such, the MACI's twelve personality pattern scales measure, Introversive, Inhibited, Doleful, Submissive, Dramatizing, Egotistic, Unruly, Forceful, Conforming, Oppositional, Borderline Tendency, and Self-Demeaning tendencies.

Non-standardized questions about criminality in the family, before and after offenses and

planning of offenses, exposure to violence in and out of the home, and a simple yes/no question regarding sexual victimization as a child, victim age group (i.e. children, adolescents or adults), and number of victims were also used in the study.

Criminal delinquent behavior was assessed using the Self Reported Delinquency scale (SRD; Elliot et al, 1985). A 7-point frequency scale from 0 (never) to 7 (2-3 times per day) is measured across 32 questions. The instrument has several subscales including Alcohol Use, Drug Use, Felony Assault, Felony Theft, General Delinquency, Property Damage, Public Disorderly, Robbery and Selling Drugs.

The Self Report Sexual Aggression Scale (SERSAS) measures a lifespan of sexual aggressive behaviors. The instrument is a checklist of aggressive acts committed against others and has been reduced based on collapsed variables used in previous projects. The SERSAS has an 8 week test-rest reliability measure, for a small sample, of 96% (Burton, 2000).

## Results

Using a student t-test, adolescent sexual offenders ( $m = 59.51$ ,  $SD = 22.96$ ) and non-sexually offending delinquents ( $m = 54.68$ ,  $SD = 22.24$ ) did not differ significantly on the MACI impulsive propensity score ( $t = 1.70$  (299),  $p = .09$ ) although the adolescent sexual offenders were, on average, higher on this measure. In assessing correlation between impulsivity and sexual crime characteristics, no significant correlations were found. Please see Table 1.

Table 1: Correlations of Sexual Crime Characteristics with Impulsivity

Sexual Crime Characteristics	Correlations with the MACI Impulsivity Propensity Score
Total number of child victims	-.15, $p = .261$
Modus Operandi	.08, $p = .282$
Severity score	.07, $p = .340$

Spent time planning offenses	.03, p = .700
Total number of victims	-.02, p = .752

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### Discussion

As supported by the literature, impulsivity was found to be a common personality trait amongst both adolescent sexual offenders (Daverson, 2005; Parks, 2004; Smith et al, 1987; Saunders & Awad, 1991) and non-sexual offending delinquents (Borum, 2000; Gretton et al, 2001; Langstrom, 2002; Langstrom & Grann, 2000; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998; Palucka, 1998; Rasmussen, 1999; Worling & Curwen, 2000; Zakireh et al, 2008) and to be unrelated to the adolescent's sexual crimes (i.e. child victims, modus operandi, severity of crime, times spent planning offenses, total number of victims). Also noted in the literature, this finding suggests that impulsivity may correlate more with the adolescent sexual offenders' non-sexual delinquent crimes (France & Hudson, 1995). Despite these findings both groups of adolescent males commit many crimes (i.e. crimes, drugs, theft, violent assaults and fighting, etc. see Borum, 2000; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998; Santiago, 2009) and both demonstrate relatively high levels of impulsivity, yet impulsivity is not related to characteristics of sexual crimes.

Therefore, the assumption that sexual offenses are more impulse driven compared to delinquent acts is unsupported in this study. Perhaps this lack of significant difference between groups is due to the severity of norms violation and the lack of peer pressure for and on sexual aggression. As such, in comparison to his delinquent acts the adolescent sexual offender may be more cautious and careful when planning his sexual offenses.

## Implications

### *Research*

The results of this study found impulsivity amongst adolescent sexual offenders to be relatively high and yet unrelated to sexual acts. Therefore, future analysis may benefit from a comparative study on the differences of impulsivity between adolescent sexual offenders with and without general criminal histories. If adolescent sexual offenders with delinquent histories prove to have lower levels of impulse control compared to those without such histories then sexual offender treatment programs may focus on lessening delinquent impulses in order to decrease the non-sexual re-offenses common amongst most adolescent sexual offenders (Burton & Meezan, 2004). Non-sexual delinquent acts of which some researchers claim to precede and aggravate the actual sexual act of the adolescent offender (Elliot, 1994).

Further research might include studying the relationship between impulsive traits and other characteristics of sexual crimes such as victim type (i.e. child, adult, peer, stranger), subgroup type (i.e. rape versus child molestation), or interval of sexual acts. In prior research, mixed group type offenders (i.e. adult/peer and children; Daversa, 2005; Parks & Bard, 2006) and low level offenders were found to exhibit various degrees of impulsivity (Saunders & Awad, 1991; Smith et al, 1987).

Another research variable may include the relationship between childhood traumas and impulsive levels amongst adolescent sexual offenders and delinquents. Many researchers have argued that certain childhood trauma experiences (i.e. sexual abuse, physical abuse, and family violence) increase levels of impulsivity amongst adolescent sexual offenders (Zakireh, et al, 2008; Worling, 2001; Moody & Kim, 1994, Kahn & Chambers, 1991; Ryan, et al, 1987), and

amongst delinquents (Meier et al., 2008). More specific to delinquents, poor parental bonds and poor social connections have been shown to trigger predisposed impulsive and hyperactive traits causal of delinquent acts (Lynam, et al, 2000). While biological vulnerabilities such as parental psychopathology and prenatal substance exposure strongly correlated to delinquent acts, hyperactive and impulsive traits (Burton, 2006; Emory et al., 1999). These biological factors coupled with poor cognitive and verbal abilities (Burton, 2006); essential social and executive functions, may extend delinquent careers (Burton, 2006; DiPietro, et al, 1996; Emory & Noonan, 1984; McCord, et al, 2001; Moffit, 1993; Thornberry, et al, 2001) found common amongst adolescent sexual offenders (Burton & Meezan, 2004; Elliot, 2004)

### *Treatment*

Some studies suggest positive adolescent sexual offender treatment outcomes to be attributed to the increase of impulse control and maintenance of self-regulation (Feldman & Weinberger 1994; Tinklenberg et al.1996) and the provision of emotional empathy to decrease impulsive non-sexual delinquent acts amongst adolescent sexual offenders (Hunter, et al, 2007). In combination with these clinical conditions, treatment for adolescent sexual offenders with delinquent histories could benefit from groups on impulse control. Yet impulses of the adolescent sexual offender should be assessed prior to treatment in order to target the youth's specific impulse. Youth may have lower impulse levels and present the impulse differently compared to other program youth.

### *Limitations*

There are a few limitations to consider when reviewing the results of this study. First, the sample size was relatively small [of 312 (n=218 for sexual offenders; and n=94 non-sexual



delinquents)] and the participants resided within one Mid-west state. Therefore a larger sample size and a national pool of participants may have changed the results. Secondly, given that the MACI is a self report questionnaire, a reliable degree of information on impulsive sexual offenses against family/friend victimizations may be missing given that incestuous acts could be overlooked or minimized (Groth, 1977). Therefore, third parties could have been surveyed about the perpetrators levels of impulsivity on all measures.

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Antisocial Traits amongst Adolescent Sexual Offenders

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## Abstract

In general, the career of the adolescent sexual offender typically involves non-sexual delinquent acts preceding (Elliot, 1994) and following their sexual crimes (Burton & Meezan, 2004). Therefore, some researchers have found sexual adolescent offense characteristics to be very similar to delinquent behaviors, specific to antisocial traits (Seto & Lalumiere, 2004). Yet despite these between group similarities some researchers claim adolescent sexual offenders to be a unique subgroup of delinquent offenders given their antisocial sexual acts (Swenson, et al, 1989). While antisocial orientation is suggested a potential risk factor in adolescent sexual offense literature (Worling & Langstrom, 2003) more empirically based studies are needed in order to substantiate this claim. Most of the literature thus far speculates the adolescent sexual offenders' antisocial traits to be attributed mainly to their pre and post delinquent acts rather than their actual sexual offense (Elliot, 1994). In the current study 218 adolescent sexual offenders were surveyed for certain antisocial traits (impulsivity, destruction of property, lifestyle instability, substance abuse, hostility, and a history of rule violation) in relation to their sexual and delinquent crimes using the Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory (MACI) (Millon, 1993). As supported by the literature, antisocial traits were characteristic more of the adolescent sexual offenders' delinquent acts than sexual crimes. However, in general these youth reported high levels of instability and frequently committed antisocial acts and severe offenses with a number of sexual abuse victims via modus operandi of threats and force.

## Introduction

Adolescent sexual offending continues to endanger society's safety. Many etiological risk factors possibly associated with adolescent sexual offending have been recently researched in order to inform better treatment options for the considerable number of sexual offenses committed by male youth (Epperson et al., 2005; Prentky & Righthand, 1993; Smith et al, 1987; Worling, 2003). In 2006, male sexual offenders committed 4,240 forcible rapes and 18,300 other sexual crimes (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). Although many male adolescent sexual offenders tend to recidivate more non-sexually as later adolescents and adults than sexually (Parks & Bard, 2006), the percentage of adolescent criminal sex offenses remains persistent and indicative of antisocial tendencies (Seto & Lalumiere, 2004). In order to help prevent these heinous sexual acts numerous risk factors are being researched (Worling & Langstrom, 2003). One of the many potential risk factors under review in the literature is antisocial orientation (Worling & Langstrom, 2003). In this paper I will continue that exploration and further investigate antisocial traits amongst adolescent sexual offenders.

## Literature Review

As derived from the literature on conduct disorder (Awad & Saunders, 1989; Graves et al, 1996; Schram et al, 1991; Seto & Lalumiere, 2004; Kavoussi et al, 1998) and antisocial orientation (Caspi, et al, 1994; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005; Millon, 1993; Seto & Lalumiere, 2004; Worling & Langstrom, 2003) in relation to male adolescent sexual offending, this study will evaluate antisocial traits amongst this population as: impulsivity (crimes, theft, violent assaults, and fighting), destruction of property (i.e. fire-setting), lifestyle instability (i.e. multiple residential changes), substance abuse (i.e. drug and

alcohol), hostility (i.e. aggression with a weapon), and a history of rule violation (i.e. non-sexual criminality). While not a comparative study, similar features amongst conduct disorder youth and sexual offender youth have been identified and will be discussed below. As diagnostically indicated in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV TR, APA, 2000) clinical misconduct seems to precede antisocial personality disorder and may prove a behavioral antecedent to higher risk sexual offenses amongst male youth.

The age at which one can be diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder is made explicit by the DSM-IV TR (APA, 2000), and therefore rules out anyone below the age of 18 years old. However, as seen within the adult sexual offender population symptomatic antisocial traits were developed at an early age for many and were indicative of criminal conduct disorder behaviors (Knight & Prentky, 1990) with the addition of sexually aggressive acts (Caldwell, 2007; Gretton, et al, 200; Langstrom, 2002; Langstrom & Grann, 2000; Nisbet et al, 2004; Rasmussen, 1999; Sipe et al, 1998; Zakireh et al., 2008). With that said, many conduct disorder acts are descriptive of delinquent behaviors (Hastings et al, 1997), non-sexual crimes suggested as prevalent amongst many male adolescent sexual offenders (approximately 50%, France & Hudson, 1993; Elliot, 1994; Burton & Meezon, 2004) and therefore may be informative of future antisocial personality disorders amongst these youth. In particular, sex offender youth and conduct disorder youth tend to have similar destructive and aggressive features indicative of antisocial traits. For instance, both conduct disorder youth (Hastings et al., 1997) and adolescent sexual offenders have demonstrated destructive acts such as fire setting (Forehand et al, 1991; Krauth, 1998; Smith, 1998), with child sexual perpetrators being the more likely sexual offender

group to misbehave in this way compared to sexual offenses against peers or adults (Seto & Lalumière, 2004). Additionally, both conduct disorder youth and adolescent sexual offender youth have been shown to be similarly impulsive, aggressive, and socially maladaptive (Blaske et al, 1989; Davis & Leitenberg, 1987; Katz, 1990; Kempton & Forehand, 1992; O'Brien & Bera, 1986). Yet regardless of these similarities to conduct disorder youth, adolescent sexual offenders remain a distinct group with varying degrees of antisocial traits as related to their sexual offense victimizations.

As different from conduct disorder non-sexual delinquents, the adolescent (or any age group) sexual offenders display antisocial traits of violent and nonviolent sexual acts (Swenson et al, 1989). Although distinct in this way, the adolescent sexual offender represents a heterogeneous group (Harris & Jones, 1999; Moffit et al, 1996) made up of varying antisocial orientations (i.e. impulsivity, lifestyle instability, non-violent delinquency, history of nonsexual delinquency, psychopathy) found predictive of sexual recidivism (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005). For instance, researchers have reported adolescent sexual perpetrators of children, peer/adults, and mixed subtypes (i.e., those that perpetrator against children and peer/adults) to exhibit antisocial features predictive of both their non-sexual and sexual crimes (Daverson, 2005; Parks & Bard, 2006), yet found mixed subtype sexual perpetrators to be the most antisocial as measured by the JSOAP-II Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Scale (Parks & Bard, 2006). In terms of aggression, the adolescent child molester modus operandi has been suggested to be less physically forceful and more socially and psychologically luring (Groth, 1977) with those offenders who violated rules and violated their victims' rights without remorse have been considered more aggressive (Caspi et al, 1994; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). As for less

sexually deviant adolescent sexual offenders (i.e. “hands-off”; exhibitionism and obscene phone calls), their criminal non-sexual acts were considered more antisocial than their actual sexual crimes (Saunders & Awad, 1991).

Based on this literature, the current study will explore prominent antisocial traits, such as impulsivity (crimes, theft, violent assaults, and fighting), destruction of property (i.e. fire-setting), lifestyle instability (i.e. multiple residential changes), substance abuse (i.e. drug and alcohol), hostility (i.e. aggression with a weapon), and a history of rule violation (i.e. non-sexual criminality) amongst adolescent sexual offenders.

### Methods

In this study, data collected was approved by the appropriate Human Subjects Review Board. The original sample consisted of incarcerated adolescent males of which 331 were sexual offenders. Sexual offenders that denied (29; 8.7%) or failed (20) to respond to survey questions regarding their number of sexually perpetrated victims were removed from the sample subject group. Thus, 283 sexual offenders remained in the sample size for further analysis. Therefore, the study’s total subject pool began at 283 subjects.

Of the 283 subject pool, the number of sexual offenders (n=283) were assessed and further reduced for affirmative social desirability levels and raw or missing disclosure scores (raw Scale X scores less than 202 or greater than 589) scores using the Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory rules, thus finalizing the sample size to 218 adolescent sexual offenders. In terms of social desirability levels, 31 subjects were removed for affirmative responses to either



question 114 or 126. While another 34 sexual offenders were removed for insufficient raw Scale X scores. As such, the final sample size included 218 sexual offenders. Due to missing data, discussed sample sizes may not always total 218 subjects.

The sample (N=218) averaged to be 16.61 years of age (SD=1.58 years) and to be in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. This sample of youth (n=217) reported a vast array of sexual perpetrations between 1 to 49 victims (M=2.33, SD = 4.46). Most reported between 1 and 5 sexually abused victims; 45.9% (n=100) reported 1 victim; 40.85 (n=89) reported 2 to 5 victims while 13.3% (n=29) reported between 6 and 49 victims.

In terms of victim age, sexual offenders reported children victimizations (63.6%; n=136) at a higher percentage than either teen or adult victimizations only (15.0%, n=32), or mixed victimizations (abuse against children, teens, and adults<sup>2</sup>; 21.5%, n=46).

### *Administration*

Paper and pencil surveys were confidentially administered to six residential facilities in Ohio State. Adolescent offenders completed surveys in small groups of 8-12 youth and were separated appropriately in order to ensure self-reported answers. An incentive was not administered to complete the survey. Trained graduate student research assistants read surveys aloud to those participants who struggled with reading (n=, 2.6%).

### *Measures*

The Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory (MACI) (Millon, 1993) is a twelve personality pattern scale designed for adolescents within either outpatient treatment or correctional facilities. The MACI's validity derives from two smaller cross-validation samples amongst 579 adolescents. Scales are based 169 True-False items from the Millon's theory of personality's

(Millon & Davis, 1996). As such, the MACI's twelve personality pattern scales measuring, Introversive, Inhibited, Doleful, Submissive, Dramatizing, Egotistic, Unruly, Forceful, Conforming, Oppositional, Borderline Tendency, and Self-Demeaning tendencies.

Non-standardized questions about criminality in the family, before and after offenses and planning of offenses, exposure to violence in and out of the home, and a simple yes/no question regarding sexual victimization as a child, victim age group (i.e. children, adolescents or adults), and number of victims were also used in the study.

Criminal delinquent behavior was assessed using the Self Reported Delinquency scale (SRD; Elliot, et al, 1985). A 7-point frequency scale from 0 (never) to 7 (2-3 times per day) is measured across 32 questions. The instrument has several subscales including Alcohol Use, Drug Use, Felony Assault, Felony Theft, General Delinquency, Property Damage, Public Disorderly, Robbery and Selling Drugs.

The Self Report Sexual Aggression Scale (SERSAS) measures a lifespan of sexual aggressive behaviors. The instrument is a checklist of aggressive acts committed against others and has been reduced based on collapsed variables used in previous projects. The SERSAS has an 8 week test-rest reliability measure, for a small sample, of 96% (Burton, 2000).

## Results

In Table 1 subjects responses to instability questions are displayed. While no normative means are available for this question set, high rates of instability were reported.

Table 1: Instability Responses by Male Adolescent Sexual Abusers (Sorted by Percentage)

Survey Questions	Percentage (Mean) N=218
Lots of moves or homelessness	40.1% (n=85)

Frequent changes in who lives at home	31.4% (n=66)
Foster care	31.1% (n=64)
Group home	25.9% (n=53)
Foster care with relatives	17.3% (n=36)

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As can be seen in Table 2, these adolescent sexual offending youth had concerning or very near concerning scores on the MACI scales salient to antisociality. In addition, on average these youth frequently committed antisocial acts and severe offenses with a number of sexual abuse victims via modus operandi of threats and force.

Table 2: Means of Antisocial Behaviors for 218 Male Adolescent Sexual Offenders

MACI Scales (sorted by mean)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Delinquent predisposition scale	67.71	18.36
Impulsive propensity scale	59.74	23.13
Substance abuse proneness scale	58.64	30.42
Self report delinquency responses <sup>2</sup> (sorted by mean)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cigarette use	4.21	2.71
Carried weapon	3.30	2.56
Used pot	3.03	2.49
Alcohol use	2.94	2.18
Sold marijuana	2.45	2.32
Purposely damaged property not belonging to me or my family	2.40	1.92
Involved in gang fights	1.89	1.74
Purposely damaged property belonging to my family	1.78	1.36

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<sup>2</sup> 1= did not do, 2= once per month, 3= once every 2-3 weeks, 4= once per week, 5= 2-3 times per week, 6= daily, 7= 2-3 times per day

Attacked someone	1.75	1.43
Set fires	1.74	1.50
Used other drugs	1.70	1.55
Used force to get money	1.66	1.46
Inhalants	1.40	1.26
Used cocaine	1.25	.909
Sexual offense scores <sup>3</sup> (alphabetically listed)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Modus Operandi	2.48	2.14
Offense severity subscale	5.04	1.85
Total number of all victims reported	3.28	5.03

In Table 3 correlations between antisocial MACI scores and the frequency of delinquent acts can be seen. The asterisked cells indicate statistically significant correlations. Impulsivity, the delinquent predisposition and the Substance abuse proneness scales are all highly correlated with nearly every act assessed in the SRD measure indicating not only relationship between the scales and the items, but also relationship between these three concerns and antisociality. Thus, and not surprisingly, antisocial traits are related to antisocial behaviors.

Table 3: MACI and Antisocial Act Correlations

MACI Scales		Impulsive propensity scaled score	Delinquent predisposition scaled score	Substance abuse proneness scaled score
Impulsive propensity scaled score	Pearson Correlation	1	.462(**)	.592(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	213	213	213
Delinquent predisposition scaled	Pearson Correlation	.462(**)	1	.510(**)

<sup>3</sup> MO; 1= used babysitting, was nice; 2= used threats, 3= used force. Offense severity score; 1= voyeurism, 2= fondling, 3= fondling and voyeurism, 4= penetration (of any sort), 5= penetration and voyeurism, 6= penetration and fondling, 7= penetration, voyeurism and fondling.

score	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	213	213	213
Substance abuse proneness scaled score	Pearson Correlation	.592(**)	.510(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	213	213	213
MACI Scales		Impulsive propensity scaled score	Delinquent predisposition scaled score	Substance abuse proneness scaled score
Purposely damaged property that belonged to the family	Pearson Correlation	.143(*)	.063	.171(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.038	.363	.013
	N	210	210	210
Purposely damaged property that did not belong to me or the family	Pearson Correlation	.284(**)	.310(**)	.395(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	208	208	208
Set fire	Pearson Correlation	.127	.147(*)	.244(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.067	.034	.000
	N	209	209	209
Carried weapon	Pearson Correlation	.332(**)	.411(**)	.539(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	206	206	206
Attacked someone	Pearson Correlation	.133	.194(**)	.374(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.055	.005	.000
	N	207	207	207
Involved in gang fights	Pearson Correlation	.172(*)	.311(**)	.377(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013	.000	.000
	N	208	208	208
Sold marijuana	Pearson Correlation	.164(*)	.337(**)	.579(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	.000	.000
	N	207	207	207
Alcohol use	Pearson Correlation	.144(*)	.281(**)	.640(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.038	.000	.000
	N	208	208	208
Cigarettes	Pearson	-.005	.213(**)	.383(**)

	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.948	.002	.000
	N	208	208	208
Inhalants	Pearson Correlation	.114	.081	.247(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.100	.243	.000
	N	209	209	209
Used pot	Pearson Correlation	.103	.346(**)	.582(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.140	.000	.000
	N	207	207	207
Used force to get money	Pearson Correlation	.104	.251(**)	.459(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.135	.000	.000
	N	208	208	208
Used cocaine	Pearson Correlation	.061	.036	.343(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.378	.610	.000
	N	208	208	208
Used other drugs	Pearson Correlation	.079	.136(*)	.455(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.257	.050	.000
	N	209	209	209
Modus operandi	Pearson Correlation	.089	-.006	.204(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.233	.932	.006
	N	181	181	181
Offense severity subscale	Pearson Correlation	.010	-.201(**)	-.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.892	.004	.739
	N	198	198	198
Total number of all victims reported	Pearson Correlation	-.022	-.057	-.023
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.747	.412	.742
	N	212	212	212

## Discussion

The findings of this study support most adolescent sexual offender literature indicating antisocial traits as common amongst these youth (Seto & Lalumiere, 2004). Therefore the results

are not surprising. However, the frequency of these antisocial traits amongst adolescent sexual offenders adds to the literature in responding to antisociality as a potential adolescent sexual risk factor (Worling & Langstrom, 2003). In this paper, the adolescent sexual offenders clearly reported a great deal of antisocial behaviors both in their non-sexual and sexual crimes. In general, antisocial traits were reported as high, thus depicting adolescent sexual offenders as pretty antisocial.

Specific to the inquiries of this paper, a large percentage of adolescent sexual offenders experienced familial instability (i.e. lots of moves, homeless and foster care). An antisocial trait found common amongst many adolescent delinquent youth (Quinsey, et al, 2004). Also, their sexual acts reflected severely moderate levels of aggression (threats and force) used to coerce their victims. As the majority in this sample were child perpetrators such findings seem to contradict other literature indicating child perpetrators to be less aggressive and more socially and psychologically coercive in their modus operandi (Groth, 1977). Additionally, substance abuser proneness scale was positively correlated to the modus operandi. So as substance abuse proneness went up, so did the forcefulness of their sexual crimes. In addition to low levels of impulsivity as being more related to the sample's delinquent acts, this study found that the youth's delinquent predisposition negatively correlated with offense severity. That is to say, the higher the delinquency predisposition scores the lower the offenses severity. Yet other literature reports the possibility of escalating delinquent acts to precede the adolescent's sexual offense (Elliot, 1994); an antisocial act that some suggest to be the more severe differentiating antisocial factor between delinquent youth and adolescent sexual offenders (Swenson et al, 1989).

## Implications

### *Research*

Many antisocial traits relative to adolescent sexual offenses have been found similar to psychopathic personality traits (Sikorski & Auburn, 2006). Therefore, this similarity raises inquiry as to whether the degree of antisocial personality characteristics varies across sexual offender subtypes. As indicated in the literature, antisocial characteristics tends to be common across all subtypes (adults/peers and children, mixed type) yet is found most significant in mixed subgroup offenders (Parks et al, 1994). With that said, future research analysis may benefit from studying the degrees of antisocial traits between sexual offender subtypes in comparison to psychopathic youth.

### *Treatment*

Based on this study and the literature, treatment considerations include placing priority on more in-depth clinical assessments in order to sift through the different levels of antisocial traits amongst adolescent sex offenders. As suggested in this study, child perpetrators may display antisocial traits differently compared to adolescents who sexually assault adults and peers.

### *Limitations*

The limitations to consider when reviewing the results of this study include a few. Although multiple facilities were surveyed, the pool of participants reflected a small sample size (n=218) from only one Mid-west state. Therefore a larger sample size and a national pool of participants may have changed the results. In addition, given that the MACI is a self report questionnaire, a reliable degree of information on impulsive sexual offenses against family/friend



victimizations may be missing given that incestuous acts could be overlooked or minimized (Groth, 1977). Surveying relatives, friends, and victims on these antisocial measures may have affected the results. Lastly, even though comparison groups have been conducted in the literature, this study may have benefited from a comparison group between adolescent sexual offenders and conduct disordered youth.

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