Family-of-origin and current family styles of adults molested as children

Randal Taylor
FAMILY-OF-ORIGIN AND CURRENT FAMILY STYLES
OF ADULTS MOLESTED AS CHILDREN

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Psychology

by
Randall Taylor
March 1995
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Approved by:

Kelly R. Morton, Chair, Psychology
Joanna S. Worthley, Psychology
Michael G. Weiss, Psychology

Date 1-20-95
ABSTRACT

Childhood sexual abuse is a symptom of longstanding family dysfunction. Harter, Pamela, and Neimeyer (1988) report that abusive families are less cohesive and adaptable than nonabusive families. To understand the specific patterns involved, adults molested as children (AMACs) subjects, who were currently involved in therapy, reported their family-of-origin and current family adaptability and cohesion patterns. In addition, the subjects described their families based on Larson and Maddock's (1986) four incestuous family types: affection-exchange, erotic-exchange, aggression-exchange, and rage-expression. The present investigation found that families-of-origin adaptability and cohesion influenced current family adaptability and cohesion and all family's-of-origin were described as disengaged. In addition, the revised incest typology subscales of self-blame and aggression were moderately supported.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Kelly Morton for her help with the completion of this thesis. Her patience, guidance and knowledge have been invaluable during my entire graduate career. I would like to thank Dr. Joanna Worthley and Dr. Michael Weiss for their assistance as committee members. In addition, I would like to recognize the support and understanding my family and friends continually offered when I felt like giving up. Finally, James Veign and Mitzi Brown were supportive and helpful friends who always gave me advice and editorial comments when I most needed them.
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INTRODUCTION

Selby, Calhoun, Jones, and Matthews (1980) wrote that in dysfunctional families: "A picture emerges of a family of unhappy people in which family members are unable to establish socially appropriate and satisfying relationships with one another. This climate provides the milieu for the development of father-daughter incest" (p. 14). In fact, Hiems and Kaufman (1963) theorized that the pattern of family dynamics can determine whether a parent will engage in incest. It is likely that incest is a symptom of longstanding family dysfunction and is not simply the result of psychopathology in a parent or a child (Browning & Boatman, 1977; Hersko, Halleck, Rosenberg, & Pacht, 1961).

The Effect of Family Styles

The developmental impact of the family system on a child varies according to the functional status of the family. Harter, Pamela, and Neimeyer (1988) found that sexually abused children reported perceptions of significantly less cohesion and adaptability than nonabused children within their families of origin. Several researchers (Alexander & Luper, 1987; Hoagwood, 1990; Olson, Sprenkly, & Russell, 1979; Ribordy, 1986) report these two features, cohesion and adaptability, as germane to the classification of incestuous families.

Cohesion refers to boundaries that are confused (enmeshment) or not established (disengagement). When a family is too cohesive, boundaries become confused and the individuals across the generations tend to become enmeshed. This is the opposite of a family which lacks cohesiveness and subsequently becomes disengaged. Typically, sexually abusive families are characterized by disengagement because the family members have difficulty establishing real emotional bonds (Burgess & Conger, 1978). With no real emotional bonding, individuals are seen as objects, and physical boundaries
are not respected by other members of the family.

Adaptability is the second feature of family style. A family that is too adaptable has little structure and few systematic rules. Generally, this results in a chaotic environment where boundaries are not recognized or established, and the possibility of sexual abuse with multiple family members and with individuals outside the family exists (Courtois, 1988). Conversely, a family lacking adaptability is not able to adjust to environmental changes or to the development of family members. Sexually abusive families often lack adaptability. When adaptability is restricted, the family becomes rigid. Waterman (1986) has identified this type of inflexibility during puberty within incestuous families.

The Intergenerational Impact of Sexual Abuse

According to Bowlby, "Violence breeds violence, violence in families tends to perpetuate itself from one generation to the next" (1988, p.77). Bowlby (1988) further stated that many adults experience problems because of the adverse influences from childhood. For example, adults molested as children (AMACs) often report that their parents experienced, as children, similar maltreatment at the hand of their own parents. Bowlby (1988) identified direct links between AMAC's childhood dysfunctional familial patterns and the dysfunctional social behavior expressed in their adult familial patterns.

Furthermore, Bowlby (1988), postulated that human nature dictates that we tend to treat others the same way we have been treated. More specifically, he addressed the concern that early family experiences have a profound affect on the development of certain aspects of social behavior. Thus, dysfunctional parents or caregivers create a dysfunctional environment in which each family member is affected and which may subsequently lead to similar dysfunctional patterns in their future family styles.
Similarly, Faller (1989) suggested that sexual abuse, whether intra- or extrafamilial, is intergenerationally transmitted through parental modeling. She conducted a study which explored the intergenerational characteristics of adults molested as children. She sampled 154 intrafamilial sexual abuse cases categorized by three subgroups of the victim's relation to the offender: 1) biological father, 2) stepfather/live-in partner (LTP), and 3) non-custodial father cases. Her results indicated that non-protective mothers of victimized children have a higher frequency of sexual abuse histories in comparison to the perpetrators. Of the mothers who responded "yes," 49% indicated experiencing sexual abuse, of which 86% reported being directly molested, while the remaining 14% experienced indirect sexual abuse (i.e., siblings were abused). The remaining 51% of the mothers either reported experiencing no sexual abuse (35%), or withheld information (15%). On the other hand, 39% of the offenders, less than half admitted to being sexually victimized as children.

When the three subgroups of paternal caretakers were evaluated, it was found that there were several partner combinations. Of the 55 biological father situations, both parents had often experienced sexual abuse as children (35%). Of the stepfather/LTP situations, 87.2% of the mothers and 69.6% of the stepfather/LTPs had experienced childhood molestation. Of the non-custodial father situations, 23% of the non-custodial fathers were victims of sexual abuse. Based on these results, Faller states that sexual abuse was reported by more victims' mothers than offenders; it follows that researchers should study the family-of-origin when trying to understand sexual molestation.

Furthermore, Faller's (1989) work also suggests that modeling may be the mechanism of transmission of sexual abuse messages. For example, mothers may develop relationships with men consistent with their model of masculinity.
they may choose men who resemble their childhood abuser(s); or, they may choose men who have similar characteristics to boyfriends/husbands who have previously molested their children (Kelly, 1955). In addition, based on their own childhood molestation, they may select men who will place sexual demands upon their own children rather than upon them as the adult partners. It may follow that an abuse victim will seek to re-create his or her family-of-origin's dynamics in adulthood either because of familiarity or because of their own dysfunctional interaction styles.

Carson, Gertz, Donaldson, and Wonderlich (1990) conducted a study which explored the intergenerational patterns associated with childhood victimization. They focused on family-of-origin incestuous patterns manifested in the victim's current family situations. The sample consisted of 40 women currently seeking therapy for childhood and/or adolescent incest. Their results indicated that most females felt disengaged (64%) from their current family. Second, the average score for how "cohesive and adaptable" they judged their family-of-origin tended to fall within the disengaged/rigid type of family style. Third, they felt their families were significantly lower on activities, recreation, expressiveness, overall family health, and had a higher level of intergenerational triangulation (i.e., when an older child becomes involved in interactions with the parents which prevents healthy interactions within the family) than the normed group.

Thus, Carson, et al. (1990) concluded that their results indicated that subjects' family-of-origin experiences dramatically affected their perceptions and performances in their current family interactions. More specifically, they suggested that negative effects of the victimization and adverse dynamics of their family-of-origin often transfer to the next generation, resulting in lower intimacy and greater conflicts. This may imply setting
a "stage" for another generation of adults who may victimize their children or who will be victimized themselves, or who become involved with abusive partners.

**Familial Characteristics of Sexual Abuse Victims**

Whether the sexual abuse was intrafamilial (i.e., a familial relationship between offender and victim) or extrafamilial (i.e., no familial relationship between offender and victim), Pelletier and Handy (1986) described family dysfunction as having significant independent psychological consequences above and beyond the sexual trauma. Thus, a primary contributor to the causes and effects of intra- and extrafamilial child sexual abuse is family pathology (Heims & Kaufman, 1963).

Sexually abused victim's families are generally characterized by unstable and traumatic marital and parental relationships (Dadds, 1987; Ribordy, 1986; Stern & Meyer, 1980). In fact, there seemed to be several similarities between Larson and Maddock's (1986) four types of incestuous father-daughter relationships and Stern and Meyer's (1980) three types of marital dyads in incestuous families. It has not yet been determined how these marital and parent-child relationships correlate within the same family.

Larson and Maddock's (1986) first type of incestuous father-daughter relationship is affection-exchange. This type of relationship is characterized by substituting love and attention with an inappropriate degree of physical affection. Similarly, Stern and Meyer (1980), described a passive husband and a dominant wife in which the wives are mothers to both their husbands and their children. Thus, parental and spousal roles became merged. The father and daughter begin to interact as spouses; the wife and husband become parent-child like. Eventually, the wife becomes tired of mothering and subsequently withdraws both emotionally from the family and sexually from the marital relationship. At this point, she is unable to protect her children. The father will often
exert his dominance in the family by abusing drugs, or engaging in sex with his children with the hope of regaining feelings of power and control. The child in Larson and Maddock's (1986) affection-exchange model fulfills the mother's marital role in exchange for the father's affection.

Larson and Maddock's (1986) aggression-exchange and rage expression are both characterized by the father's expression of anger and hostility toward a vulnerable family member, the victim. Similarly, Stern and Meyer (1980) identify the possessive-passive type as the most common incestuous marital pattern. In this situation, the husband is the absolute authority and the wife is therefore powerless to protect her children. Children living in this environment often become victims of sexual abuse because they become disengaged enough to be seen as the father's possession. Additionally, the father will feel anger and rage when his possession (the victim) does not meet his needs.

Larson and Maddock's (1986) erotic-exchange is a type in which the children are exposed to free sexual play and open eroticism within the family. This resembles Stern and Meyer's (1980) "incestrogenic" type. In the incestrogenic parental dyad, both the husband and wife are dependent. Since neither parent can satisfy the other's needs, they both expect emotional support and nurturing from their children. Often, sexual satisfaction is only one of the needs the husband will require his daughter to fulfill. When the daughter assumes both the wife and mother roles, her role in the family becomes confused. She is not protected from harm. Because the child in the erotic-expression type of family is involved in eroticism or "free sexual play" the expectation for sex is not uncommon.

Intrafamilial Sexually Abused Victims and Their Families

Most research has focused on intrafamilial abuse. Characteristics of perpetrators
and victims of incest vary according to their respective positions in the family and their relationships to one another (Pelletier & Handy, 1986). The highest incidence of abuse occurs between fathers and daughters. Faller (1989) hypothesized that the closeness of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator will impact the degree of sexual abuse in four ways:

1) frequency or number of instances; more availability and more unsupervised access to the victim;
2) duration; the age of onset to cessation;
3) level of coercion; the victim may be accustomed to being touched, obedient, and trusting;
4) length of time before the victim reports the sexual abuse; the victim may love the perpetrator and not want to get him in trouble, or the victim may be afraid that the perpetrator will harm her.

Faller's (1989) study consisted of 171 reported and substantiated cases of sexual abuse. Of these cases, 35% of the victims were sexually abused by the biological father, 36% by a stepfather or long-term partner (LTP), and 29% by a noncustodial father after a divorce or separation. Her study indicated that biological fathers in a nuclear family abused the victims more frequently, and had the longest duration of abuse. Moreover, victims waited significantly longer to report abuse by their biological fathers than that perpetrated by a stepfather or a mother's live-in boyfriend. For all groups, the level of coercion was similar.

Due to their relationships to the victim, biological fathers from an intact family were 10 times more likely to molest than a stepfather or a mother's LTP. When compared to intrafamilial sexual abuse, Faller (1989) suggested that a nonrelative
perpetrator generally has a limited number of convenient situations in which molestation can occur, ranging from once to a few incidents. Thus, there may be restricted opportunities available with a victim. Furthermore, he may have to use more coercion to gain cooperation. The victim may also be more likely to report the abuse sooner because of less familial/emotional attachment.

Father-daughter incest is the most investigated type of intrafamilial sexual abuse. Lipovsky, Sauders, and Hanson (1992) addressed the significance of parent-child relationships within incestuous families using a select group of cases. They assessed the quality of such relationships by comparing 36 victims to 41 non-molested siblings from a different incestuous family. They examined whether victims would have greater parent-child (especially father/perpetrator) problems than nonabused siblings. In addition, they hypothesized that victims would have more problematic relations with their fathers/perpetrators than with their mothers. Secondly, the differences between emotional and behavioral difficulties for abused and nonabused children were examined. In each situation, fathers acknowledged their perpetrating behavior. Each subject met five specified criteria: 1) a father or a relatively reliable parental caretaker who had sexually abused the victim under the age of 18 while being romantically involved with the child's female caretaker, 2) the appropriate child protective service agency had been notified, 3) the child protective service confirmed the sexual abuse, 4) the perpetrator recognized his inappropriate sexual behavior, and 5) the perpetrator was involved in counseling for this behavior.

Lipovsky, Sauders, and Hanson (1992) measured parent-siblings' and victims' relationships, as well as child adjustment. Significantly more victims had relational problems with their mothers and fathers/perpetrators than nonvictims. However, parents
and siblings of victims did not rate their relationship with the victims as problematic. Multiple regression analyses revealed that victims' depression, anxiety, and self-esteem were associated with their mother's view of the mother-child relationship and to the victim's own view of their father-child relationship. Nonabused siblings' depression and anxiety related only to their own view of the mother-child relationship. Thus, the relationship with the offender, especially if it was the father or a close paternal caretaker, became the important factor in determining the victim's level of distress. Furthermore, the child may be in a state of distress because she/he fears re-victimization because the mother-child relationship is not strong.

When a parent-child role reversal occurs such as in affection and erotic-exchange families, the familial, psychological, and social impact devastates the child's developmental and overall adjustment. Ribordy (1986) defined role-reversal as the child's assumption of parental responsibilities. These responsibilities generally include taking care of the siblings, the house, the father and/or the mother. As the daughter begins to assume the everyday responsibilities of the mother, the sexual boundaries between the father and the daughter become blurred. The father may eventually treat his daughter as a wife and sexual partner. The daughter's role as "mother" is a double bind. On the one hand, she may appear capable of fulfilling the homemaker role, yet she lacks the developmental maturity to understand her role as a sexual partner.

Pelletier and Handy (1986) reported that the level of responsibility, achievement, and loyalty demanded from the daughter is tremendous and is referred to as "developmental exploitation." In addition, the child is under pressure to keep the family from falling apart. There is great anxiety because the child fears both abandonment and violence. As a result, hostility is felt toward the mother for not preventing this situation
and toward the father for his demands. If this anger is internalized the effects include depression and psychosomatic symptoms. If this anger is externalized, the effects include aggression, school problems, substance abuse, and/or juvenile delinquency. Furthermore, the child may feel that her family cannot be trusted and she may generalize this distrust to all children and adults, including anyone that could help.

The victim ultimately becomes isolated and does not engage in developmentally appropriate activities or behaviors (Pelletier & Handy, 1986). Eventually, the child becomes adultless and peerless. This isolation, along with the pseudomature behavior, leaves the child vulnerable for further victimization (Pelletier & Handy, 1986).

Ribordy (1986) describes another characteristic of an incestuous family as the "closed system" communication pattern. This dysfunctional pattern of communication alienates the family from others in their environment. In addition, a closed communication pattern constrains expressing independence and discussing developmental changes. Conformity, loyalty, and secrecy within an incestuous family are demanded. Abused children are likely to lie about the abuse in order to appear stable to others (Harter, Alexander, & Neimeyer, 1988). In fact, it may be difficult for them to stop lying in order to disclose the abuse or to keep from recanting after disclosure. This pattern may even allow them to repress the memory of the truth.

**Extrafamilial Sexually Abused Victims and Their Families**

Abuse occurring outside the family is referred to as extrafamilial. The limited literature on extra-familial sexual abuse suggests that families of the victims have dysfunctions similar to those of incestuous families (Finkelhor, 1979). Gruber and Jones (1983) compared delinquent adolescent females who had been molested by acquaintances to their non-molested delinquent peers to establish variables
characteristic of extrafamilial abuse. They found that three significant variables differentiated the two groups: 1) poor parental and marital relations, 2) poor child-mother relations, and 3) living with a step- or foster-parent. Of the three, poor parental and marital relations were the most powerful discriminating variables. Finkelhor (1979) also found that extrafamilial child sexual abuse is strongly related to family disruption and marital conflict. Girls from families of unhappy marriages had a higher incidence of sexual experiences with older persons. These girls were 50% more likely to be victims of extrafamilial sexual abuse if they had never known their fathers before age 16. Girls were 200% more likely to be victims of extrafamilial abuse when they had not known their mothers before age 16. Additionally, the presence of a step-father increased the risk of extrafamilial sexual abuse in either case.

The impact of an absent parent, especially the mother, affects the functioning of both the parent and the child (Finkelhor, 1979; Pelleteir & Handy, 1986). This impact is exacerbated when the length of parental discord following the loss is longer. This could be because the child has no protection or because they have no early attachment figure.

Alexander and Lupfer (1987) investigated the long-term consequences and family characteristics relating to childhood victimization. Their results indicated that women who were victimized by a close family member (intrafamilial) depicted their family as significantly more traditional in terms of parent-child relationships than extrafamilial victims. Second, regardless of relations to perpetrator, all abused women reported their families as being significantly less adaptable and less cohesive than the nonabused women. In conclusion, Alexander and Lupfer (1987) suggested that family values and characteristics were more predictive of abuse than demographic variables (e.g., age, race, educational level of parents, marital status, number of marriages, and age at first
marriage). Second, both intra and extrafamilial abuse families were found to be rigid and unresponsive to change. Third, regardless of the perpetrator, victimized women reported having significantly lower familial and physical self-concept than nonabused women. The fact that abused women in both situations had lower familial self-concept may indicate the importance of the role of family dynamics in sexual abuse.

The Present Investigation

A child who experiences either intrafamilial (within the family) or extrafamilial (outside the family) sexual abuse before the age of 16 has been subjected to longstanding family dysfunction. The proposed study will explore the following hypotheses:

1) Subjects who experience intrafamilial sexual abuse will have lower cohesion and adaptability scores than those who experienced extrafamilial sexual abuse. An ANOVA will be employed to compare intrafamilial and extrafamilial abuse groups on family-of-origin cohesion and on adaptability.

2) Cohesion and adaptability scores of current family and family-of-origin will be significantly correlated. Current family ratings will relate to family-of-origin rage-expression and aggression-exchange scores. Family-of-origin adaptability and cohesion scores will correlate with family-of-origin erotic-exchange and affection-exchange scores. A correlation matrix will be utilized to determine these relationships.

3) The family sexual abuse typology scale will be factor analyzed and four factors will be produced: a) Rage-expression, b) aggression-exchange, c) affection-exchange, and d) erotic-exchange.

4) Subjects with more severe ratings of sexual abuse will have lower family-of-origin cohesion and adaptability scores. Thus, the correlations between sexual abuse
severity, family-of-origin cohesion, and family-of-origin adaptability will be examined.

5) Intraminial and extraminial victims will be compared on Rage-expression, aggression-exchange, affection-exchange, and erotic-exchange. The relationships will be explored. An ANOVA will be conducted to compare the groups.
METHOD

Subjects

Participants for this study included 41 females. All subjects were recruited from two counties (San Bernardino and Riverside) in Southern California and were currently attending various AMAC groups (treatment groups for adults molested as children).

Independent Variables

Demographic Variables. Each subject was given a questionnaire consisting of six demographic questions: age, marital status, ethnicity, income, and education (see Appendix B).

Sexual Abuse Scale. The remainder of the questionnaire will address specific abuse-related questions: age subject was abused, perpetrator's relationship to subject, and the sexual act(s) experienced (Finkelhor, 1979; see Appendix B).

Dependent Variables

Family Sexual Abuse Typology Scale. In order to investigate Larson and Maddock's (1986) four types of incestuous families, a 28-item checklist was comprised based on the five overall characteristics common to the four theoretical incest family typologies. The checklist allowed subjects to generally typify their family-of-origin. The four overall types are as follows: affection-exchange (showing and receiving affection without love and attention), erotic-exchange (early exposure to free sexual play and open eroticism within the family), aggression-exchange (impulsive hostility and anger expressed to a vulnerable family member), and rage-expression (the expression of hostility and anger stemming from the perpetrator's childhood abuse history). Factor analytic patterns were examined, and the scale was revised to include the following subscales:
1) affection-exchange
2) erotic-exchange
3) aggression-exchange
4) rage-expression

Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale.

In order to obtain data on cohesion and adaptability of family-of-origin, subjects completed the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale II (FACES II). This scale is a 30-item standardized self-report measure designed to evaluate cohesion and adaptability within a family (Olson, Sprenkly, & Russell, 1983; see Appendix C). The scale consists of a five-point Likert format rating scale. There are 16 cohesion and 14 adaptability items. The internal consistency scores for cohesion and adaptability are .87 and .78, respectively. The test-retest reliability for cohesion and adaptability is .83 and .80, respectively.

All subjects completed the FACES II scale a second time to assess current family cohesion and adaptability.

Procedure

All the data in this study was gathered through questionnaires. Various AMAC group leaders were contacted by telephone by the experimenter. Each leader was given a description of the study and confidentiality of all participants was ensured. Questionnaires were then distributed by the leaders. All the questionnaires included a self-addressed stamped envelope, consent form (see Appendix A), and a debriefing statement (see Appendix F). Questionnaires were returned by mail to the experimenter. At no time did the experimenter have contact with the participants of this study. All subjects were treated in accordance with the APA ethical principles.
RESULTS

The present study investigated whether cohesion, adaptability, and the four incest typologies correlated with sexual abuse severity, and whether these dependent measures differed for intra- and extrafamilial abuse groups. First, descriptive statistical analyses were employed to provide the means, standard deviations or percentages for the all variables (demographics, the sexual abuse characteristics, family functioning and incest typology scores). Second, a factor analysis was performed to create the revised typology subscales from the items written by the author, (e.g. aggression, affection, self-blame, violence, and intended harm). Third, MANOVA’s were employed to compare intrafamilial and extrafamilial abuse groups on family-of-origin and current family cohesion and adaptability, as well as on the revised incest typology subscales. Fourth, a correlation matrix was utilized to determine the relationship between cohesion and adaptability scores of current family and family-of-origin and aggression/rage, affection, self-blame, violence, intended harm, and the scores on the sexual abuse severity scale.

Demographics and the Sexual Abuse Scale

Table 1 indicates the frequencies of the following demographic variables: marital status, ethnicity, education, and age. Overall, the majority of the subjects were married, white, and high school graduates. Their ages ranged from 19 to 56 years (M = 32.20, SD = 8.95). Some of the subjects checked more than one item in each category; thus, the scores for each category may total greater than 41.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARITAL STATUS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Married</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabitating</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ETHNICITY</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
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<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican American</td>
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<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Graduated</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduated High</td>
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<td>School</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working on AA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed AA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working on BA/BS</td>
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<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed BA/BS</td>
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<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working on Graduate</td>
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<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Graduate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the 41 adult female participants, 22 (53.7%) experienced intrafamilial sexual abuse, 11 (26.8%) experienced extrafamilial sexual abuse, 8 (19.5%) experienced both intra- and extrafamilial sexual abuse. Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 provide data from the sexual abuse scale. An examination of the percentages revealed that acquaintances were most often the extrafamilial abusers and biological fathers were most often the intrafamilial abusers. Twenty three (56%) participants reported having at least two or more abusers. The ages-of-onset were reported to be between the ages of 5 and 8 years old by 15 (36.6%) victims; 6 between 3 and 5 years (14.6%); and below age 3 years by 3 (7.3%) victims. The older ages-of-onset were reported to be between 8 and 12 years by 8 (19.5%) victims and between 12 and 16 years by 8 (19.5%) victims. Lastly, 13 (31.7%) of the subjects reported having anal intercourse, 9 (24.4%) and 10 (22.0%) victims reported attempted intercourse and vaginal intercourse, respectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintances</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend of Sibling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend of Father</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Sibling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepfather</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for the Age of the Abuser

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 3 Years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 5 Years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 8 Years</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 - 12 Years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 16 Years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for the Type of Abuse Experienced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abuser Fondling Victim</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Performed Oral Sex on Abuser</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuser Orally Stimulated Victim</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercourse Without Penetration</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaginal Intercourse</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anal Intercourse</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5

**Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Abusers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Abuser</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Abusers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Abusers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Abusers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Factor Analysis of the Incest Typology Measure

Table 6 shows the results of a factor analysis that was performed on the 28 items of the Family Sexual Abuse typology scale. Of the 28 items hypothesized, only 14 items had loadings over .50.

In order to identify the underlying relationships between these 28 items, principal factors extraction with quartimax rotation was employed. The specific goal of the Quartimax Rotation is to maximize the numbers of large and zero loadings and minimize the numbers of intermediate loadings (Morrison, 1976).

The factor analysis produced five factors whose eigenvalues were greater than 1.7. Quartimax rotation was used to make the factors easier to interpret by maximizing the variance of the loadings within the factors. Loading matrix correlations of .50 or higher were selected to identify a specific component of a factor. Typology items' loadings are shown in Table 6; the factors were relatively well defined. An examination of the pattern of loadings reveals evidence of five factors.

The first factor, accounting for 17.7% of the variance, had 6 items loading above .59. Aggression items and rage items were reported within the same factor. This suggests that aggression and rage are not two separate typologies, but one dimension. Therefore, item 15 ("I felt powerless..."), item 17 (I was seen as the "weakest, most vulnerable family member"), item 18 ("My family rarely confronted feelings of conflict..."), item 19 ("Family disputes were never negotiated or resolved"), item 23 ("I was the least threatening and least resistant"), and item 28 ("As a family, we 'learned to live with it'"") were summed to form an aggression subscale.

The second factor, accounting for 13.3% of the variance, included five items loading above .63. These measures were affection item 1 ("I was coaxed or seduced..."),
item 2 ("My sexual partner was a close friend...")), item 3 ("I was jealous of my sexual partner's relationship...")), item 4 ("My sexual partner was hostile of my relationships...")), item 5 ("I felt uncomfortable reporting the abuse...")), and item 6 ("My relationship was basically affectionate"). Unlike the first factor, where two typologies were combined, affection measures seemed independent of other dimensions. These items were summed to create an affection subscale.

Factor three accounted for 9.7% of the variance with loadings above .70 on 3 variables. These three variables, aggression item 13 ("I exhibited seductive behavior"), erotic item 12 ("The experience was rarely violent"), and aggression item 21 ("After the experience, I felt suicidal or self-destructive"), were summed to create a self-blame subscale. This subscale suggests that the victim felt she somehow caused the abuse and felt guilty afterwards.

The fourth factor accounted for 7.1% of the variance and had loadings greater than .87 on only aggression item 16 ("The molestation was often violent"). This item will be used to indicate a violent incest type.

The fifth factor accounted for 6.1% of the variance with loadings greater than .58 on two variables. One of the measures was erotic item 7 ("sexual meanings were attached to everyday situations and behaviors within my family") and the other aggression item 20 ("I felt the abuser meant to hurt me"). These items suggest that the victim was exposed to some level of harm everyday and that the pain inflicted was perceived as intentional. These two items were summed to create an intended harm subscale.

The five revised incest typology subscales included: aggression, affection, self-blame, violence, and intended harm. The means and standard deviations for the group
## Table 6

### Quartimax Rotation Component Analysis Factor Matrix of Typology Measure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology Measures</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Communality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect1</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.68</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.75</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affect3</td>
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<td>.74</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect4</td>
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<td>.72</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect5</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eroti7</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-.07</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eroti9</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
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<td>.80</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.34</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.56</td>
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<td>.31</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.86</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-.11</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.31</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggr15</td>
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<td>.82</td>
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<td>.88</td>
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<td>.83</td>
</tr>
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<td>.11</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
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<td>.21</td>
<td>-.46</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
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<td>.18</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggr21</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rage22</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rage23</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rage24</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rage25</td>
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<td>-.37</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.31</td>
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<td>.77</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.20</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rage28</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EIGENVALUE:** 4.9 3.70 2.70 1.98 1.70

**% of Variance:** 17.7 13.3 9.7 7.1 6.1

**FACTOR NAMES:**

1. Aggression
2. Affection
3. Self-blame
4. Violence
5. Intended Harm
Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations for the Five Incest Typology Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-blame</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended Harm</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
are shown in Table 7. These scores will be used in group comparisons.

**Abuse Group Differences**

A MANOVA was computed to determine differences between intrafamilial, extrafamilial, and intra/extrarfamilial groups on family-of-origin and current family adaptability and cohesion, $F(8,16) = .87$, $p > .05$. The groups were not significantly different; hypothesis 1 was not supported. Victims of intrafamilial sexual abuse did not experience lower cohesion and adaptability than victims of extrarfamilial sexual abuse or than those who experienced both types of abuse in family-of-origin or in their current families.

A second MANOVA was computed to compare intrafamilial, extrarfamilial, and intra/extrarfamilial groups on the five revised incest typology variables (self-blame, affection, aggression, violence, and intended harm), $F(10,16) = 1.09$, $p > .05$. The overall MANOVA was not significant. An examination of univariate statistics, however, reveals that the extrarfamilial group described their family-of-origin as significantly more aggressive ($M = 4.00, SD = 1.14$) than the intrafamilial ($M = 2.22, SD = 1.85$), or the intrafamilial/extrarfamilial ($M = 3.00, SD = 2.14$) groups, $F(2,37) = 3.33$, $p < .05$.

A MANOVA indicated significant differences between age of onset groups on cohesion and adaptability for both family-of-origin and current family, $F(4,17) = .04$, $p < .05$. The post hoc ANOVA’s revealed that cohesion for the family-of-origin in younger victims ($<3$ to 8 years; $M = 34.83, SD = 6.46$) was significantly lower than the family-of-origin cohesion scores in the older age of onset group ($M = 39.88, SD = 6.67$), $F(1,39) = 5.92$, $p < .02$. The age of onset groups’ family-of-origin cohesion scores are shown in Figure 1.

The adaptability of family-of-origin ($M = 27.71, SD = 7.11$) was significantly lower
than the adaptability of the current families (M = 43.37, SD = 7.31) F (2, 38) = .94, p < .05. The cohesion of family-of-origin (M = 37.00, SD = .70) F (2, 38) = 1.20, p > .05, cohesion of current family (M = 54.00, SD = 10.54).

Scores on adaptability yield four levels. At the lowest level, rigid, scores are between 15 and 39; structured 40-45, flexible 46-50, and very flexible or chaotic, 55-70. The adaptability of family-of-origin for almost all subjects (38 of the 41) was rigid (92.7%); 2 (4.9%) were structured; and 1 (2.4%) was flexible. In contrast, the adaptability of current family was structured for 14 (34.1%), flexible for 14 (34.1%); rigid for 10 (24.4%) subjects; and chaotic for 3 (7.3%) subjects (see Figure 2).

Cohesion can also be categorized on four levels. At the lowest level, disengaged, scores are between 15 and 50, separated 51-59, connected 60-70, and very connected or enmeshed 71-80. All 41 subjects (100%) rated their families-of-origin as disengaged. Ratings of current families varied. A total of 14 of the 41 (34.1%) were disengaged; 13 (31.7%) were separated; 13 (31.7%) were connected; and 1 (2.4%) was enmeshed (see Figure 3).

Table 8 shows the correlation matrix between adaptability and cohesion of current families with the adaptability and cohesion of families-of-origin. Here it can be seen that hypothesis 2 was partially supported. First, the adaptability of family-of-origin positively correlated with the adaptability of current family. In addition, the adaptability of the family-of-origin positively correlated with the cohesion of the family-of-origin. Third, the adaptability of the current family correlated with the cohesion of the family-of-origin. Last, the adaptability of current family correlated with the cohesion of current family. Thus, the adaptability of current families may have been influenced by adaptability and cohesion of the victims' families-of-origin.
Figure 1

Family-of-Origin Cohesion by Age of Onset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohesion</th>
<th>8 to 16 years</th>
<th>&lt;8 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age of Onset of Abuse
p < .05
Figure 2

Family-of-Origin by Current Family Adaptibility

Current Family
- Rigid
- Structured
- Flexible
- Chaotic

Family of Origin

Percent
Figure 3
Current Family Cohesion

Note: Family of Origin was Disengaged for all Subjects
Table 8

**Intercorrelations Between Adaptability and Cohesion with Family-of-Origin and Current Family**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AdCF</th>
<th>AdFOO</th>
<th>CohCF</th>
<th>CohFOO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AdCF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AdFOO</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CohCF</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CohFOO</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* * p<.05  ** p<.05

Note:

- AdCF = Adaptability of Current Family
- AdFOO = Adaptability of Family-of-Origin
- CohCF = Cohesion of Current Family
- CohFOO = Cohesion of Family-of-Origin
Table 9 indicates a second correlation matrix of current families and families-of-origin on aggression, affection, self-blame, violence, and intended harm typology scores. These correlations were intended to establish whether aggression, violence, and intended harm possibly facilitated intergenerational transmission of familial dysfunction by significantly correlating with current family functioning. The correlations were not significant; thus, the second part of hypothesis 2 was not supported.
### Table 9

**Intercorrelations Between Current Family and Family-of-Origin with Aggression, Affection, Self-blame, Violence, Intended Harm**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aggr</th>
<th>Affec</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Viol</th>
<th>Inthrm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cohesion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Family</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.12</td>
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<td>Current Family</td>
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<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family-of-Origin</strong></td>
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<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* * p<.05    ** p<.05

**Note:**
- Aggr = Aggression
- Affec = Affection
- Self = Self-blame
- Viol = Violence
- Inthrm = Intended Harm
Table 10 illustrates three separate intercorrelations. The first correlation was between the sexual abuse severity scale and the cohesion and adaptability of current families and families-of-origin. Sexual abuse severity did not correlate with either cohesion or adaptability of current family or of family-of-origin; thus, hypothesis 4 was not supported.

A second correlation matrix included the following variables: aggression, affection, self-blame, violence, intended harm, age, and age of onset. Age of onset correlated negatively with self-blame and family-of-origin cohesion.

The third correlation revealed that sexual abuse severity positively correlated with aggression \((r = .41, p < .01)\). Current age is positively correlated to the adaptability of the current family \((r = .43, p < .01)\). In addition, the older the current age of the subject the more cohesive the family-of-origin \((r = .35, p < .05)\), and, the more cohesive the current family \((r = .32, p < .05)\).
Table 10

Interrelations Between Cohesion and Adaptability of Current and Family-of-Origin and the Typologies with the Sexual Abuse Severity, Age of Onset, and Current Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SAB</th>
<th>Age of Onset</th>
<th>Current Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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* p<.05  ** p<.05

Note:

AdapCF = Adaptability of Current Family
AdapFOO = Adaptability of Family-of-Origin
CohCF = Cohesion of Current Family
CohFOO = Cohesion of Family-of-Origin
DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to ascertain whether cohesion, adaptability, and certain incestuous typologies were indicators of the intergenerational transmission of dysfunctional family patterns of adults molested before the age of 16. It was hypothesized that victims of intrafamilial sexual abuse would have lower cohesion and adaptability scores than victims of extrafamilial sexual abuse and that cohesion and adaptability scores of current family and family-of-origin would be similar. We also hypothesized that certain incest typologies would relate more to current family functioning because they were more likely to cause intergenerational transmission of dysfunction. In addition, we sought to determine whether severity of the sexual abuse and levels of function for the family-of-origin correlated with certain incest typology subscales. Overall, intrafamilial, extrafamilial, and intra/extrafamilial sexually abused victims were not different on levels of cohesion and adaptability of their families-of-origin. However, there were differences on cohesion and adaptability of family-of-origin and current families; for the abuse groups, though, sexual abuse severity did not seem to impact current family functioning.

Lipovsky, Sauders, and Hanson (1992) stated that father-daughter incest is the most investigated type of intrafamilial sexual abuse. This is not surprising considering that father-daughter incest is the most frequent type of sexual abuse (Faller, 1989). In fact, over half of the participants in this study reported father-daughter incest. Thus, this supports Pellitier & Handy’s (1986) study which stated that the father usually abuses the victim more frequently and for a longer duration than an extrafamilial abuser.

About 30% of the victims in our sample experienced extrafamilial sexual abuse. This is significantly fewer than those in the intrafamilial sexual abuse groups. This lower
incidence of extrafamilial abuse is supported by Faller's (1989). She reported that nonrelative perpetrators generally have a limited number of convenient situations in which molestation can occur, ranging from once to a few incidents. Thus, there may be fewer opportunities to abuse a victim outside the family.

The 8 victims who experienced both intrafamilial and extrafamilial sexual abuse described more harm and violence in their families as well as more affectionate relations with their abusers. We think these victims may subsequently equate love and pain and may therefore be vulnerable to revictimization.

More victims reported experiencing anal intercourse (32%) than vaginal intercourse (22%). This is particularly disturbing when one considers that the abuse occurred between the ages 5 and 8 years for almost 37% of our sample. Such a high percentage of penetration under age 8 may relate to the descriptions of the families-of-origin as aggressive and disengaged. As pointed out by Burgess and Conger (1978), a disengaged family has difficulty establishing real emotional bonds. Thus, the abuser typically disregards the physical pain he/she inflicts upon their victim. This could be because the victim is thought of as an object or possession and because the abuser's own anger is out-of-control.

The most often reported age of onset of abuse for the participants was between 5 and 8 years of age. Perhaps a child of this age is seen by the abuser as making a transition from infancy to independence and therefore better able to meet the abuser's needs. The female may be seen as able to take on "adult" roles in the family. However, at age 5 a child is very defenseless, vulnerable, easily coerced, and egocentric. It may be that as the victim develops, the abuser expects them to fulfill more and more parental or spousal responsibilities. These responsibilities may include taking care of younger
siblings, the house, and the father/or the mother. As Ribordy (1986) reported, when the
daughter begins to assume the everyday responsibilities of the mother, the father may
eventually treat his daughter as a wife and a sexual partner. Such early sexualization and
parentification of a child within a disengaged family environment will not allow the child to
develop normally.

Findings from this study regarding family characteristics and abuse are consistent
with other research that suggests families of extrafamilial and intrafamilial victims are not
significantly different in their level of cohesion and adaptability (Burgess & Conger, 1978;
Dadds, 1987; Finkelhor, 1979; Stern & Meyer, 1980; Waterman, 1986). All types of
sexual abuse victims have families that are characterized by unstable and emotionally
disconnected marital and parental relationships. In fact, all 41 subjects in this study
reported their family-of-origin as disengaged, and 90% of the subjects rated their families­
of-origin as rigid, which is the lowest form of adaptability. This reported form of
adaptability is consistent with Waterman's (1986) findings that incestuous families are
typically rigid.

When the typology scale was factor analyzed 5 typologies were created and two
were predictive of family functioning: aggression and self-blame. Aggression was clearly
hostility- based. The victim reported feeling vulnerable and powerless because they
perceived themselves to be the least threatening family member. The perpetrator was
described as using anger and fear to intimidate the victim. Overall, these families are not
confrontational about the abuse and were over accommodating with the abuser.

Self-blame was the second significant typology. This variable combined two
aggression items and one erotic item. It was labeled self-blame because it included self­
oriented statements concerning the cause of the abuse and guilt afterwards. For
example, victims reported "I exhibited seductive behavior" and "I felt suicidal or self-destructive." In addition, they never felt that the molestation was violent. Subjects who experienced extrafamilial sexual abuse reported their families as being more aggressive than the other two groups. Perhaps the extrafamilial sexual involvement was made more likely because the children were alone within their families. They had to seek an adult outside their families for solace and this made them vulnerable to abusers.

Several correlational results supported Bowlby's (1988) statement, "Violence breeds violence, violence in families tends to perpetuate itself from one generation to the next". Bowlby (1988) further identified a direct link between dysfunctional familial patterns in AMACs' childhoods and the level of expressed dysfunction in their adult familial patterns. The fact that adaptability and cohesion within family-of-origin correlated with current family adaptability and cohesion suggests that AMACs' adult family patterns were influenced by their families-of-origin.

In addition, the age at victimization correlated with the cohesion of the family-of-origin; thus, more disengaged families began abusing the children earlier. However, there is some hope that AMAC's continue to heal after their experiences because the older subjects had higher current family adaptability scores and more family cohesion.

We did not find a correlation between current and family-of-origin adaptability or cohesion scores and revised sexual abuse typologies. This may suggest that our typology instrument was not accurate in distinguishing the victimization issues or that the constructs are not valid. We think the former. The aggression and self-blame subscales seem to add information beyond general family functioning and should be pursued by other researchers.

One limitation of our study is the small sample size. Unfortunately, due to the
sensitive nature of our topic, several AMAC groups were unwilling to participate. Some group leaders refused to assist because they felt it would jeopardize the progress of their group members. One leader said, "This questionnaire is too black and white for my members; it would not help them deal with their issues." Other group leaders denied participation because the group had already participated in other research studies. One leader said, "This is an emotional support group to help them, not exploit them." The limited sample allowed us to see general trends supporting the first, fourth, and fifth hypotheses. However, a larger more diverse sample may be needed to fully examine these issues.

It is important to consider that all the subjects were currently in AMAC support groups when they participated in the study. Since the goal of therapy is to improve your psychological and emotional self, most subjects wrote that therapy had a profound impact on how they raise their children. In fact, a subject wrote, "These answers are after years of therapy, they have not always been the case." Another subject wrote, "I have been to parenting classes and my answers do reflect the changes I/we have made in our family. Before this, my current family was not so great. I have had some great difficulties because of the molest 2X by an uncle and once by an older cousin." This illustrates that therapy had a positive impact on how they parent their children and their current relationship. By having a control group of AMAC's who are not in therapy would allow researchers to distinguish more specific intergenerational patterns and to assess the effectiveness of AMAC therapy groups.

Despite the significance found in this study, future research is necessary to more clearly identify the ramifications cohesion and adaptability has on the intergenerational transmission of family patterns. In addition, the fact that therapy had such a positive
impact on the subjects suggests the necessity for further investigation.
Appendix A

Dear participant:

We invite you to participate in a study which explores your family-of-origin (the family in which you grew-up) and your present family relationships by filling out these questionnaires. This study has been approved by the Human Subjects Review Board, Department of Psychology California State University, San Bernardino.

Some of the questions are very personal and may cause some discomfort. Please understand answering such personal questions will help us know more about social issues like child abuse, adults molested as children and the effects such events have on families.

The highly personal questions involve early sexual experiences and family relationships. We understand that some of your answers are not information that other people should know about. For example, some questions may be embarrassing or painful. Therefore, we are providing you with complete confidentiality. We assure you that none of the questions can directly or indirectly identify you. All the questionnaires will be kept private and only the researchers will have access to them.

You are under no obligation to participate in this study. The entire questionnaire will take about 30 minutes to complete. We appreciate any information that you chose to disclose. If any question makes you feel distressed or uncomfortable, skip the question. You may wish to discuss those feelings in your group or with your group leader.

If you have any further questions contact either of us at (909) 880-5597.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Sincerely,

Randall Taylor
Master's Degree Candidate

Kelly R. Morton, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Appendix B

Demographic Information

1. Present Age ______

2. What is your current marital status?

   (1) ______ single (never married)
   (2) ______ married
   (3) ______ divorced
   (4) ______ widowed
   (5) ______ never married (separated)
   (6) ______ cohabitating

3. What race do you consider yourself?

   (1) ______ White
   (2) ______ African-American
   (3) ______ Mexican-American
   (4) ______ Hispanic/Latino
   (5) ______ Asian-American
   (6) ______ Multicultural
   (7) ______ Other

4. Within which of the following categories did your parents' total family income fall during your childhood?

   (1) ______ under 5,000
   (2) ______ 10,000 - 14,999
   (3) ______ 15,000 - 19,999
   (4) ______ 20,000 - 24,999
   (5) ______ 25,000 - 29,999
   (6) ______ 30,000 - 34,999
   (7) ______ 35,000 - 39,999
   (8) ______ 40,000 - 44,999
   (9) ______ 45,000 - 49,999
   (10) ______ 50,000 - 59,999
   (11) ______ 60,000 - 69,999
   (12) ______ 70,000 - 79,999
   (13) ______ over 80,000
   (14) ______ Don't know
5. Have you sought therapy? Yes ____ No ____

6. What level of education have you achieved?

   (1) _____ never graduated high school
   (2) _____ graduated high school
   (3) _____ working on two year degree (A.A.)
   (4) _____ completed two year degree
   (5) _____ working on Bachelor degree (B.A. or B.S.)
   (6) _____ completed Bachelor degree
   (7) _____ working on graduate degree
   (8) _____ completed graduate degree
   (9) _____ other ____________________________

Sexual Abuse Scale

The following questions apply to adults survivors of sexual abuse. Please answer the following questions about sexual experiences you may have had before the age of 16 with someone at least 5 years older than you were. These experiences could include family members (e.g., cousins, uncles, brothers, sisters, mother, father) and/or outside the family (e.g., friends of siblings, parents, neighbors, acquaintances, and strangers) that was unwanted by you.

7. Did you have any of the following experiences (check all the apply)?

   (1) _____ An invitation or request to do something sexual
   (2) _____ Kissing and hugging in a sexual way
   (3) _____ Other person showing his/her sex organs to you
   (4) _____ You showing your sex organs to other person
   (5) _____ Other person fondling you in a sexual way
   (6) _____ You fondling other person in a sexual way
   (7) _____ You orally stimulating the other person's sex organs
   (8) _____ Other person orally stimulating your sex organs
   (9) _____ Attempted intercourse, without penetration
   (10) _____ Vaginal intercourse
   (11) _____ Anal intercourse
   (12) _____ Other ____________________________  
               ____________________________

   (13) _____ I had none of the above experiences. Skip to question #19
8. About what age did you have an unwanted sexual experience with someone older?

(1) _____ 12 - 16
(2) _____ 8 - 12
(3) _____ 5 - 8
(4) _____ 3 - 5
(5) _____ below 3 years

9. Who did you have the above sexual experience with?

(1) _____ Stranger
(2) _____ Acquaintance
(3) _____ Neighbor
(4) _____ Friend of Sibling
(5) _____ Friend of Father
(6) _____ Friend of Mother
(7) _____ Older sibling
(8) _____ Uncle
(9) _____ Aunt
(10) _____ Grandfather
(11) _____ Grandmother
(12) _____ Stepfather
(13) _____ Stepmother
(14) _____ Mother
(15) _____ Father
(16) _____ other __________________________

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Appendix C

FACES II

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Describe Your Current Family:

- (1) Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times.
- (2) In our family, it is easy for everyone to express his/her opinion.
- (3) It is easier to discuss problems with people outside the family than with other family members.
- (4) Each family member has input regarding major family decisions.
- (5) Our family gathers together in the same room.
- (6) Children have a say in their discipline.
- (7) Our family does things together.
- (8) Family members discuss problems and feel good about the solutions.
- (9) In our family, everyone goes his/her own way.
- (10) We shift household responsibilities from person to person.
- (11) Family members know each other's close friends.
- (12) It is hard to know what the rules are in our family.
- (13) Family members consult other family members on personal decisions.
- (14) Family members say what they want.
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<td>We have difficulty thinking of things to do as a family.</td>
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<td>(16)</td>
<td>In solving problems, the children's suggestions are followed.</td>
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<td>(17)</td>
<td>Family members feel very close to each other.</td>
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<td>(18)</td>
<td>Discipline is fair in our family.</td>
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<td>(19)</td>
<td>Family members feel closer to people outside the family than to other family members.</td>
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<td>(20)</td>
<td>Our family tries new ways of dealing with problems.</td>
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<td>(21)</td>
<td>Family members go along with what the family decides to do.</td>
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<td>(22)</td>
<td>In our family, everyone shares responsibilities.</td>
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<td>(23)</td>
<td>Family members like to spend their free time with each other.</td>
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<td>(24)</td>
<td>It is difficult to get a rule changed in our family.</td>
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<td>(25)</td>
<td>Family members avoid each other at home.</td>
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<td>(26)</td>
<td>When problems arise, we compromise.</td>
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<td>(27)</td>
<td>We approve of each other's friends.</td>
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<td>(28)</td>
<td>Family members are afraid to say what is on their minds.</td>
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<td>(29)</td>
<td>Family members pair up rather than do things as a total family.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>Family members share interests and hobbies with each other.</td>
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Appendix D

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Describe Your Parent(s), Sibling(s), and Family Structure:

____ (1) Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times.
____ (2) In our family, it is easy for everyone to express his/her opinion.
____ (3) It is easier to discuss problems with people outside the family than with other family members.
____ (4) Each family member has input regarding major family decisions.
____ (5) Our family gathers together in the same room.
____ (6) Children have a say in their discipline.
____ (7) Our family does things together.
____ (8) Family members discuss problems and feel good about the solutions.
____ (9) In our family, everyone goes his/her own way.
____ (10) We shift household responsibilities from person to person.
____ (11) Family members know each other's close friends.
____ (12) It is hard to know what the rules are in our family.
____ (13) Family members consult other family members on personal decisions.
____ (14) Family members say what they want.
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1. (15) We have difficulty thinking of things to do as a family.
2. (16) In solving problems, the children's suggestions are followed.
3. (17) Family members feel very close to each other.
4. (18) Discipline is fair in our family.
5. (19) Family members feel closer to people outside the family than to other family members.
6. (20) Our family tries new ways of dealing with problems.
7. (21) Family members go along with what the family decides to do.
8. (22) In our family, everyone shares responsibilities.
9. (23) Family members like to spend their free time with each other.
10. (24) It is difficult to get a rule changed in our family.
11. (25) Family members avoid each other at home.
12. (26) When problems arise, we compromise.
13. (27) We approve of each other's friends.
14. (28) Family members are afraid to say what is on their minds.
15. (29) Family members pair up rather than do things as a total family.
16. (30) Family members share interests and hobbies with each other.
Appendix E

Family Typology Scale (FTS)

Please complete this scale if you experienced a sexual relationship with someone within your family. Place a checkmark next to each statement which describes an event which happened in your family. The term "family member/sexual partner" is meant to describe the adult you had a sexual experience with as a child. Please note: none of the items assume that you consented to or were responsible for the sexual activity you experienced as a child.

____ (1) Overtime, I was coaxed (persuaded, sweet-talked, enticed, or encouraged) into having a sexual relationship by a family member.

____ (2) The family member who I had a sexual experience with was a close friend/confidant to me within my family.

____ (3) I was jealous of my "family member/sexual partner's" relationship with his/her adult partner.

____ (4) My "family member/sexual partner" was jealous and hostile toward my dating partners and peer relationships.

____ (5) I felt uncomfortable reporting my sexual abuse as a child because I felt emotionally connected to my "family member/sexual partner".

____ (6) My relationship with my "family member/sexual partner" was basically affectionate.

____ (7) Many times, sexual meanings were attached to everyday situations and behaviors within my family.

____ (8) Many of the photo albums, home movies, or pictures in my family were sexual or seductive in some way.

____ (9) I was involved in watching sexual activity or exposing myself in sexual ways with a family member.

____ (10) I had a sexual experience with more than one family member and/or with a close family friend(s).

____ (11) I was involved in sexual games with family members and/or with close family friends before I reached adulthood.
(12) The sexual relations I experienced as a child or as an adolescent were rarely, if ever, violent.

(13) I often exhibited seductive and sexual behaviors with peers and family members as a child or as an adolescent.

(14) My family member/sexual partner was often frustrated or disappointed with other events before a molest experience.

(15) I felt powerless in my relationship with my "family member/sexual partner".

(16) The sexual molestation I experienced as a child or as an adolescent was often violent.

(17) I think that my "family member/sexual partner" saw me as the weakest, most vulnerable family member.

(18) My family rarely confronted feelings of conflict or difficult situations directly.

(19) Family disputes were never negotiated or resolved.

(20) I think my "family member/sexual partner" meant to hurt me.

(21) After the experience, I have felt suicidal or self-destructive (e.g., skin peeling, cutting, slapping).

(22) My "family member/sexual partner" was also abused as a child.

(23) I was the least threatening and least resistant member of my family.

(24) My "family member/sexual partner" often seemed out-of-control (e.g., uncontrolled rages, drinking, drug use, etc).

(25) My "family member/sexual partner" abused me as a consequence of something I did.

(26) During the abusive episodes, I often felt my life was threatened.

(27) When my abuse became obviously violent, other family members reported the incident to the authorities.

(28) As a family, we "learned to live with it (e.g., abuse)" and rarely if ever spoke of the problem directly.
Appendix F

Debriefing letter

Thank you for participating in this study. Any information that you have given is greatly appreciated. By sharing your experience we can begin learning more about the intergenerational affects of sexually abusive families.

We wanted to explore whether experiencing sexual abuse within the family (intrafamilial) or outside the family (extrafamilial) effected the level of family-of-origin cohesion and adaptability.

In addition, we hypothesized that certain family characteristics (based on the checklist) will influence the current family more than others. In addition, the checklist provided a general way of characterizing the family you grew up in (i.e., would you describe your family as overall aggressive, explosive anger, affectionate, or erotic).

Furthermore, we wanted to investigate the levels of cohesion and adaptability in the family-of-origin of abused victims.

Although individual results of the study will not be available to insure anonymity, a summary of the findings will be obtainable in June. If you desire the results of this study or have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact Dr. Morton or myself at (909) 880-5597.

Sincerely,

Randall Taylor
Master's Degree Candidate

Kelly Morton, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
REFERENCES


