Can recidivism be predicted among rapists and pedophiles during their first year of parole in the state of California?

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CAN RECIDIVISM BE PREDICTED AMONG RAPISTS AND PEDOPHILES DURING THEIR FIRST YEAR OF PAROLE IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA?

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

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Social Work

by
Michael Daniel Bogdanoff and Harvey Darnell Hamm

June 2000
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June 2000
Approved by:

Dr. Matt Riggs, Project Advisor,
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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the success or failure rate among rapists and pedophiles during their first year of parole in the state of California. The independent variables included age, ethnicity, treatment considerations, and previous criminality. By examining these variables, the goal was to analyze the predictive value that each may have in regards to recidivism. The researchers of this project utilized a univariate descriptive analysis of each variable. We then conducted a bivariate analysis of each variable to determine it's effects on recidivism. Lastly, the variables were run in combination as multiple predictors of recidivism while distinguishing if the sexual offender was a rapist or a pedophile. We conclude this study with the limitations of our data set, our data analysis, and utilize this information as a basis for further research.

This study used archival data from five hundred sexual offenders who had been terminated on parole from the period of November 1997 to February 1998. The data set was provided by Frank Williams III, criminology professor at California State University, San Bernardino and the California Division of Parole.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors of this project would like to thank Professor Frank P. Williams III, for his support, knowledge, and generosity for letting us examine his data set.

We would also like to acknowledge Professor Matt Riggs of Loma Linda University for his expertise in the field of research, his timeless efforts towards our project, and his continued encouragement throughout this arduous process.
DEDICATION

To my mother, thank you for your unconditional love, financial assistance, and most importantly, for your emotional support. To my father and his family, thank you for providing me with a “real” computer. To my girlfriend Jacque, thank you for your unselfishness, true love, and continued persistence that my “studies come first”. To Cathy and all of the social work staff at H.D.C.C.C., thank you for making me part of your family. Lastly, to Jules, Denny, and Julie at Patton State Hospital, thank you for showing me the “therapeutic” side of social work.

Michael Bogdanoff

First and utmost, I would like to thank God for giving me the inspiration to complete this program. To my wonderful and blessed family, I love you all. To my wife Rashida, and son Damani, I love you both for dedicating your time, energy, and support while I was committed to graduate school. To my mother and father, I would like to thank you for the support that you have given me throughout my life.

Harvey Hamm
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INTRODUCTION

Through out the last three decades, the incidents of sexually violent crimes perpetrated by adults upon children have been abundant. In the early 1990s, society witnessed the atrocity of Paulie Klass, the little girl who was kidnapped from her own home, sexually violated, then murdered. Also in the last decade, there was the case of Jon Benet Ramsey, the "beauty queen", the unfortunate little girl who was mysteriously sexually abused, physically tortured, then murdered. To this day, her killer has never been caught.

There have also been many incidents of sexually violent crimes perpetrated by adults upon other adults. As noted by Hare (1993), in the 1990s, society witnessed the infamous Jeffrey Dahmer, the individual who sexually molested, killed, and cannibalized many young adult males. In the early 1980s, there was the case of Richard Ramirez, "The Night Stalker", who raped, sodomized, and murdered innocent victims in their homes while they slept. Lastly, also in the 1980s, there was the case of Kenneth Bianchi, one of the assailants among the "The Hillside Stranglers", who raped, tortured, and murdered dozens of women, and left them scattered throughout the southern California hillsides.
The fore mentioned child and adult atrocities share one commonality. The offenders had at least one sexual encounter with their victim. If these perpetrators would have sought help for their pathologies beforehand, their victims may still be alive today. But often due to the stigma attached, the social taboo, and the extreme societal biases towards sexual offenders, these individuals rarely voluntarily seek help until they are caught. It is common knowledge that sexual offenders are quickly viewed as deranged, dangerous, or diseased once they are caught. When a case comes to the attention of the media, the general societal response may be, "Lock them up and throw away the key." But, the question must be addressed: "Who are they?", "Where do we put them?", "How long should they be there?", "Can they be cured?", "If so, how?", and "Is the treatment given to them effective?"
The purpose of this study was to compare, analyze, and evaluate the variables that may predict recidivism among male rapists and pedophiles during their first year of parole. Often, because confusion can arise to what constitutes a sexual offender as rapist or a pedophile, we included a definition that classified the offender as a rapist or a pedophile based on the age of his victim.

Mair (1993) was utilized to make our point. She defined the rapist as an adult who had been convicted of a sexual offense against a person 16 years of age or older, regardless of penetration. The child molester or pedophile consisted of an adult who had been convicted of a sexual offense against a victim 16 years or younger, also regardless of penetration.

This being said, the goal of this project was to examine if, why, and to what extent there may exist predictive variables associated with recidivism among rapists and pedophiles. From the information obtained, the ultimate goal was to distinguish which type of offender the rapist or the pedophile had the likelihood of success on his first year of parole.

Five variables were examined in this study to reach a means to this end. The first variable incorporated a
twofold analysis of age. For the purposes of this study, age referred to the age that the sexual offender was at the time that he was released from prison. We examined age in regards to if this variable affected the sexual offender's success after being out on parole for one year. Surprisingly, we discovered an abundance of literature that profiled sexual offenders by age in general, but minimal studies have been done on recidivism based on the age that the offender was at the time of parole. (see literature review) Thus, we examined which offenders were more likely to be successful on their first year of parole, the older offenders or the younger assailants.

The researchers of this study were also interested in which type of offender was more likely to be successful on his first year of parole in terms of age, the rapist or the pedophile. We also found many discrepancies regarding previous research on this topic. (see literature review)

Thus, due to the large amount of subjects in our sample and the contradictions in previous literature, it was our expectation and hope that we could shed new light on age and recidivism expectancy among sexual offenders in general, and in regards to rapists and pedophiles specifically.

Our second area variable focused on the ethnicity of the sexual offenders. We also observed contradictions in
previous research findings regarding this topic. For example, studies from approximately thirty years ago claimed that Caucasians were the minority in regards to committing sexual offenses, specifically in relation to rape and pedophilia. Current research contends that Caucasians are the majority of sexual offenders. We also found the current and past research conducted on the African American sexual offender to have discrepancies. (see literature review)

Thus, the researchers of this project studied the ethnicity of sexual offender in order to duplicate, reject, or expand on current and previous research regarding this topic.

The third variable addressed in this study incorporated the criminal background of the offenders. We did not examine the specifics of the convictions, but rather on the number of crimes that the offender had on his rap sheet, and if this affected recidivism. The reason that the researchers of this study focused on the criminality of sexual offenders was in the goal to profile these individuals by their criminal background as a means of deterring sexual offense and re-offense rates.

The fourth variable incorporated facets of treatment that the pedophile and/or rapist participated in, or did not partake in while in prison. Again, we did not specifically address the specific interventions or duration of the
treatment, but instead we focused on if the rapist or pedophile underwent therapy, and to what extent this had on his success on parole. Thus, our hypothesis was to decipher if therapy given to the rapist or pedophile in prison was a valuable intervention in reducing recidivism.

The fifth and final variable included the above information: age, ethnicity, criminality, and treatment, and examined each variable utilizing a bivariate analysis in the attempt to predict recidivism. A multi-regression analysis was performed utilizing the above four variables, age, ethnicity, criminality, and recidivism, but differentiated between the rapist and pedophile, and examined the variance of recidivism above and beyond the other four variables.

Thus, this study concludes by answering our first hypothesis as to whether recidivism can be predicted among pedophiles and rapists. Lastly, we conclude by answering our sub-hypothesis of which offender is more likely to succeed on his first year of parole, the rapist or pedophile.
IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK AND OTHER THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITIES

Age and Relevance

By conducting this study, our goal was to examine how our findings could benefit the profession of social work, the criminal justice system, and other therapeutic milieus. By the gained insight of this project, our ultimate goal is to drastically decrease sexually violent crimes against children and adults. To reach a means to this end, by studying the age in which sexual offenders may be more apt to offend, this study may prove to be a vital step to accurately profile at risk, current, and future predators. Because the literature is somewhat sparse regarding this topic, the hope is that our study may add to previous and current research in order to provide the criminal justice system with better profiling abilities regarding sexual offenders. Secondly, the findings of this study can benefit social workers and other therapeutic arenas in the assessment and treatment stages of their work with sexual offenders.

Ethnicity and Relevance

By examining the variable ethnicity, the ultimate goal is to gain further insight, understanding, and to have the ability to implement specifically tailored treatment to
sexual offenders who may come from a specific cultural belief system. For example, many Latin and other possess certain patriarchal ideologies that tend to normalize male pride, male domination, and/or control over women and children. In understanding the culture further, perhaps a treatment agenda could be specifically tailored to fit the therapeutic needs of ethnic sexual offender that may have this belief system.

Also by examining cultural aspects, the researchers of this study have attempted to debunk, replicate, or add to current and previous research regarding the contention that ethnicity has bearing on sexual crimes. Because most of the current literature states that Caucasians are more likely to commit sexual assaults, our intent is to be able to accept or debunk this. Although, the researchers of this project hypothesize that that due to the stereotypical ideology that many Caucasians hold in regards to the stress for individuality, material possessions, and/or egocentric and ethnocentric ideologies, these factors may contribute to the current literature.

Criminality and Relevance

By studying the previous criminality of the rapist and pedophile, the criminal justice system as well as other therapeutic communities may be able to gain a more accurate
profile of these individuals. Specifically, they may be able to discover if a correlation exists between the number of previous convictions and recidivism. If a similarity or disparity is found between the two subgroups in this study, the criminal justice system may be increasingly closer to catching the rapist or pedophile before he can offend or re-offend again.

Treatment and Relevance

By studying the area of treatment in regards to if the sexual offender was in a therapeutic program while inside prison is also of utmost importance. If this study finds that treatment considerations impact the success or failure rates among rapists and pedophiles during their first year of parole, then the goal would is to discover what exactly is the cause of the failure or success. From the gained insight of this project, perhaps examining previous interventions, adopting alternative strategies, or a combination of both may be beneficial to the therapist as well as the sexual offender. Lastly, because social workers play a very important role in the discharge process of sexual offenders, this study may be able to let the worker inside or outside of the prison system access the needed community resources or implement the most beneficial treatment modality for the rapist or pedophile.
Recidivism and Relevance

Lastly, while taking into account our set of variables, the ultimate goal of this project is to predict factors that may contribute to sexual offender recidivism. If a correlation is found between rapists and child molesters in regards to the success or failure rate of the offenders while out on parole, this study may be able to let clinicians mirror their intervention strategies with each type of offender. Thus, the ultimate goal that we have is to be able to establish a universal treatment modality for the rapist and pedophile based on the four previously mentioned variables. If the variables mentioned in this study are not found to contribute to recidivism, then this study should be a starting point for further researchers to begin where we left off.
THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS AS EXPLANATIONS OF SEXUAL DEVIANCE

There have been many attempts to explain the causalities behind the sexual offender's dysfunction. Anechiarico (1998) discussed the psychoanalytic view to assess these areas. He mentioned the implementation of the psychoanalytic perspective in the assessment and intervention stages of the sexual offender's treatment modality. The author points out that character disorders in general were originally studied using the psychoanalytic construct. Anechiarico further discussed the disparity between treating the neurotic and the sexual offender. He argued that the underlying theme of the psychoanalytic perspective in regards to treatment of the neurotic patient stems from treating the anxiety and guilt of the patient in order to engage the observed ego to form an analyzable neurotic transference. Kohut (1987) contradicts these contentions. The author believes that the sexually exploitative behavior in sexual offenders is considered a pathological condition rather than a symptom of neurosis. Because of this, Kohut contends that offenders will form a narcissistic transference where the fundamental experience of deprivation, neglect, and entitlement would overpower the
observed ego, and render the primary analytic method of transference analysis ineffective.

Thus, previous literature infers that psychoanalytic therapy is not effective in treating the characterological pathologies of the sexual offender because his urges stem from the rational that he must overpower, control, and manipulate his victims. Thus, the assumption can be further concluded that due to the sexual offender’s developed mind set, he may perceive that he has been neglected or deprived in some way, and thus is owed by society.

The literature also includes the relation or attachment theories to explain the twisted reality of the sexual offender. Prentky, Straus, Rokous, and Cerce (1983) stated that it is the inconsistencies in the attachment in significant others throughout the sex offender’s socialization experience that contributes to his sexual aggression. The character defect that arises in these individuals stems from the fact that sexual offenders develop a narcissistic self-concept. The authors further stated that it is the disruption in early formative experiences that play a key role in the motivation of the offender’s ultimate offense. The scholars concluded by stating that sex offending is not only a behavioral disorder, but also a relational disorder. It is the
extortion of intimacy in an attempt to restore damaged self-esteem that drives the sexual molester to commit his heinous acts.

Due to the previously mentioned assumptions, the researchers of this study have found limitations of implementing, understanding, and internalizing the psychoanalytic, relational, and/or attachment theories as possible causalities of the sexual offender’s pathologies.

Thus we intend to focus instead on the Social Learning Theory as an attempt to explain the sexual offender’s mindset. According to Corsini and Wedding (1989), the premise behind this theory states that “the influence of environmental events on behavior is largely determined by the cognitive process which governs what environmental influences are attended to, how they are perceived, and how the individual interprets them. The Social learning theory is based on a reciprocal determinism model of causal processes in human behavior” (p.242).

In regards to our study, the important area of concern regarding the social learning theory model is that the sexual offender may have learned his dysfunctional attributes from his environment. We are not completely rejecting the psychoanalytic and attachment theories. But, we intend to focus on the social learning modality instead.
The researchers of this project contend that due to being previously sexually abused, witnessing someone else being sexually abused, or being exposed to excessive pornographic materials during the sexual offender's socialization process, the offender might have learned his dysfunctional characteristics early on in his life. It is the further opinion of these researchers that the social learning theory is the most adequate, comprehensive, and logical theory to explain the sexual offender's mindset.

Although, we can not completely abide by the social learning theory as an absolute causality for the sexual offender's entire pathology, the limitation of this theory negates the issue of free will. The theory does not explain the incidents of rapists, child molesters, and other criminals who offend, but come from a "normal and functional" upbringing. But, for our intended purposes, limitations and all, we incorporate the social learning theory as our primary modality as the guide in our research regarding the pathological existence of sexual offenders.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Age

Surprisingly, previous research that focuses primarily on factors related to age and risk of recidivism are extremely scarce, and what little research that we were able to acquire was contradictory. For example, Marshal and Barbee (1990) reported that the age of the offender can certainly determine his success on parole, but the type of offense is more valid of a predictor in regards to recidivism. The authors summarized that being under age 40 was a powerful predictor of recidivism. Abel, Mittleman, Becker, Rathner, and Rouleau (1988) contradicted this research. They conducted a study that followed 98 pedophiles after one year’s duration. In regards to recidivistic activity, age did not make the researcher’s list of top five predictive variables. In fact, they claimed that age was not at all a significant factor among predicting recidivism. Lastly, Schwartz and Celini (1995) stated that most sex offenders, without making the distinction between rapists and pedophiles who are released from prison vary between the ages of 25 and 55, depending on the offense. Due to the inconsistent, inconclusive, and vague findings that we observed among the previous research, it is this exact reason why the researchers of this project
studied the variable of age in regards to pedophile and rapist recidivism.

The research into which offender may be older or younger, the rapist or pedophile also seems inconclusive. For example, Kuznestov & Piereson (1992) contended that rapists tend to be younger, usually under 30, while child molesters were evenly represented among all age categories. Mair (1993) contradicted these findings. She found that rapists tend to be older, with a greater age range than pedophiles. Mair also discovered those sexual offenders who committed offenses against adults were mainly committed by young men, whereas, those offenders who committed sexual acts on children were mainly perpetrated by older men. Another study conducted by Kelley (1982) found that rapists tend be young, with 80% under 30 years of age, and 75% under 25 years of age.

Due to the discrepancies in the previously mentioned research, it is this exact reason why we examined the age of the rapists and child molesters in our study.

**Ethnicity**

Previous as well as current research regarding the ethnic make up of a rapist and child molester is also inconclusive and contradictory. Menecham and Amir (1971) conducted a study that discovered both African Americans and
Caucasians had a tendency to commit forcible rape on victims 15-19 and 20-24. While African Americans (according to this study) attacked 591,000 victims of all ages, and Caucasians victimized about 42,000 people, the authors speculated that African Americans were between 3 and 45 more times likely to offend than Caucasians.

In 1979, the data regarding ethnic make up of rapists specifically made a drastic turn around. Groth (1979) found that out of 27 cases of institutional and community rape, 22 cases involved communal ties, and 5 cases were institutionally related. Twenty-one, or 77% of the offenders where Caucasian. Five, or 18% were African American, and one was offender was Puerto Rican. In 1997, a pattern again emerged. Holmes & Holmes (1997) stated that most rapists were of minority status, usually Black, and of low socioeconomic status.

The data provided by Schwartz and Celini (1995) seems to have the most validity though. They found that the racial make up of sexual offenders in general varied from geographical location. But, Frosch and Bromberg (1939), Frankel (1950), and Guttmacher (1952) all stated that a majority of sexual offenders seemed to be native-born Whites.
Because the authors of this project found the above literature very inconsistent, somewhat biased toward Blacks, contradictory, and generally unreliable, it is these exact reasons why we utilized ethnicity as an important variable in our study.

Criminality

The research on previous criminality regarding the rapist and pedophile is abundant. Mair (1993) conducted a study in which she discovered that only 17 out of 100 rapists and other types of sexual offenders whom committed sexual assaults had a previous criminal record. Mair concluded that the subjects who did not rape their victims had a higher rate of previous sexual convictions.

Schwartz and Cellini (1997) also found that incarcerated extra-familial pedophiles (those not related to the victim) as opposed to intra-familial pedophiles (those offenders biologically related to the victim) exhibited the longest criminal involvement and prior arrest history. Of their sample, it was discovered that extra-familial pedophiles had a much higher rate for both sexual and non-sexual felonies. The offenders also had a higher rate for past sexual crimes, more frequent incarcerations, and more past victims. The authors concluded that extra-familial
child sexual molesters were the most chronic of the offenders studied in the group.

Thus, according to the fore mentioned research, rapists tend to have less previous criminality and pedophiles (extra-familial) tend to have more previous convictions, prior victims, and prior sexually related criminal offenses.

Treatment Considerations

There has been a myriad of research conducted on the types, duration, and success and failure rate of treatment interventions that have been, and are currently implemented with sexual offenders. The specific importance that these studies have in relation to our current project rely on the ability to predict recidivism rates based on if the offender did or did not partake in therapy while in prison.

Quinsey, Khana, and Malcolm (1998) conducted a study very similar to our research question. They studied 483 inmates from 1976 to 1989 that were referred to a sex offender treatment center in Canada. Two hundred thirteen of the offenders received treatment, 183 were assessed as not needing treatment, 52 received treatment, 27 were judged as unsuitable for treatment due to language barriers, and the remainder of the offenders were paroled before they could be implemented in the study. Of all the subjects whom participated in the study, 38% re-offended due to crimes of
violence and sexual offenses in the first four years of parole. Not surprisingly, the inmates whom were judged not to need treatment were re-arrested significantly less and had less sexually related re-offenses than did those subjects who were treated. But contradictorily, those deemed less dangerous re-offended due to more violent offenses. The offenders who refused treatment had more re-arrests for violent offenses, but fewer re-arrests for sex related crimes. Those who were judged not feasible for treatment had more violent re-offenses but less sex related offenses.

Research conducted at Atascadero State Hospital also studied recidivism in relation to sexual offenders whom were treated and untreated. Sturgeon and Taylor (1980) studied 382 sexual offenders. Two hundred sixty of the criminals were treated in the hospital’s sexual offender program. One hundred twenty of the sexual offenders were not treated and remained in prison. Only 15% of the treated sexual offenders once released recidivated after a 1-5 year follow up. After discharge, 25% of the untreated subjects re-offended during their 1-5 year follow up. Lastly, Prentky and Burgess (1990) compared 129 child molesters treated in a sex offender treatment program in Massachusetts and untreated child molesters in Canada. After discharge, the
study examined each control group for five years. The researchers found that about 25% of the treated child molesters were charged with new sex offenses. Forty percent of the untreated offenders were charged with new sexual offenses.

Because most of the research indicates the effectiveness of treatment to only decrease recidivism between 10 and 30%, it is this exact reason why further research needs to be conducted on the effectiveness of the therapeutic programs that are implemented inside the prison systems. Because our data set consisted of over 500 pedophiles and rapists who had undergone and who did not participated in treatment, the researchers of this project have concluded with very different results in comparison to previous studies.

Recidivism

The researchers of this project discovered that recidivism of the rapist, the pedophile, and other types of sexual offenders have dominated the literature in this field. Because recidivism patterns tells so much about the effectiveness of the treatment, the characteristics of the offenders, the cost efficacy of treatment programs, and society’s optimism in relation to “curing” the sexual offender, examining recidivism of the sexual offender is
probably the most important aspect to this study. Because the field of criminology, the social work profession, and many aspects of the judicial realm lie so heavily on recidivism statistics, it is our belief that the results found in this study will prove to be beneficial and informative.

In keeping the above information in mind, specific facets of recidivism were studied by Beck (1989). He conducted a thorough study on the recidivism rate of sexual offenders. He examined 108,580 inmates whom were released from state prisons in 1983 in 11 states, including New York, Ohio, New Jersey, Texas, California, and Florida. Fifty one percent of the subjects whom originally were charged with rape were re-arrested for rape. Thirty six percent of the rapists were ultimately re-convicted of the offense. Forty seven percent of the subjects were re-arrested for various other types sexual offenses. Thirty two percent were re-convicted of those types of crimes. It was found that the rapists and the other subjects who committed various types of sexual assaults were 7-10 times more likely to recidivate in regards to their original crime. Beck further added that that 2/3 of the prisoners in his study were more likely to recidivate during their first year of parole. The author concluded that recidivism rate is undoubtedly the highest in
the first few years among sexual offenders. Thus, the general consensus is that the longer that the sexual offender is released, the less likely he will be to recidivate.

Lastly, Prentky, Knight, and Cerce (1995) conducted a study to demonstrate the specific crimes that the sexual offender may commit after being released from prison. They examined 113 child molesters and 109 rapists from the Massachusetts Treatment Center in Massachusetts. The study ran from 1959 to 1984. During the follow up period, the researchers discovered that the offenders were charged with 78 different kinds of criminal charges that were placed in four categories: serious sexual offenses, non-sexual victim involved offenses, victimless offenses, and other types of crimes. It is interesting to note that only 15 of the 78 re-offenses were due to serious sexual offenses such as rape, sodomy, attempted rape, indecent acts, etc. Thirteen of the 78 re-offenses were due to non-sexual offenses such as assault, murder, robbery, etc. Almost a third of the offenses, (22) were due to victimless crimes such as drunkenness, theft, disorderly conduct, etc. The remainder of the offenses consisted of traffic and/or motor vehicle violations.
Even though the previously mentioned study categorized the offenses that the sexual offenders committed during their follow up period, the study did not categorize the percentage of crimes that each offender committed in relation to the recidivistic activity, as pertaining to the pedophile and rapist. Two things can be deducted from the above studies. The first, each researcher came up with two different conclusions. Beck found that rapists specifically recidivated by raping again. Prenky et al. found that the propensity for the rapist and child molester to commit acts of a sexual nature is less than that of the data concluded by Beck. The second item of interest regarding the two studies is in the sample. Prentky et al. only studied about 215 offenders where as Beck studies almost 109,000 sexual offenders. Thus the differentiation in the sample size of each study may have affected the outcome.
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the rate of recidivism between rapists and child molesters during their first year of parole. The variables consisted of age, ethnicity, criminality, received treatment or non-treatment. Each was examined independently and multiply in the attempt to predict recidivism. The independent variables for this study consisted of age at release of parole, ethnicity of the offender, previous criminality, and treatment considerations. The dependent variable was whether or not the rapist or child molester re-offended in one year’s time, specifically or non-specifically related to his original offense.

The data set employed in this study was obtained from The Center for Criminal Justice Research at California State University, San Bernardino, directed by Dr. Frank Williams III. The sample consisted of over 4,000 parolees of which 2000 were from the general population, 500 of whom were females, 500 whom were sexual offenders, and 500 who were admitted gang members. The criminals included those who had just completed their terms of parole or who had been terminated on parole within the period from November 1997 to February 1998. Pursuant to a request from the Division headquarters, the “dead” case files were saved by the parole
units during the period of October through December 1997. These files would have normally been destroyed 120 days after parole termination.

For the purposes of this study, we focused on the sexual offender population as the subjects pertained to our research hypothesis and variable set. In regards to the large sample size of the sexual offenders in our study, we hope that the error of margin in the analysis will be minimal.

The data set consisted of a discrete variable criterion as well as a continuous variable set. Each variable was analyzed using a univariate description. Secondly, each variable was examined as a bivariate analysis in the attempt to predict recidivism. Lastly, a multiple regression analysis was performed utilizing the set of variables (age, ethnicity, criminality, and treatment), while differentiating between rapist and pedophiles, in the attempt to examine the variance of recidivism above and beyond the other four variables.

**Protection of Human Subjects**

This project was fully approved by the Institutional Review Board at California State University, San Bernardino as to the protection of human subjects. Because the data was archival, translated into SPSS format, and that the
identification numbers, addresses, and other identifying information regarding the subjects was removed from the dataset, confidentiality was strictly maintained.
RESULTS

The variables of age, ethnicity, criminality, treatment considerations, and type of sexual offense were examined in this study. The goal was to discover to what extent these variables could predict recidivism among sexual offenders during their first year of parole.

Univariate Analysis

Age

Of the 501 subjects in our study, the researchers of this study defined the variable age, as the age, at the time that the offender was released from prison. The mean age of the sexual offenders in our study was 37.18 with a standard deviation of 10.32. The "outliers" in our sample consisted of those sexual offenders who were 68 years or older. These individuals were three standard deviations above the mean. There were 6 individuals who were between 68-75 years of age.

Ethnicity

The next variable focused on the ethnic make up of the sexual offenders. The researchers of this project examined ethnicity to see if this was an accurate predictor of recidivism. The categories of race included Black, White, and Hispanic. The sample consisted of 213 Caucasians, 126
Blacks, and 136 Hispanics. Due to the relatively balanced sample in our study, (with the exception of the Caucasian subjects) the number of subjects in each group enabled precise estimates of group means.

Criminality

Our next variable focused on criminal history. Our definition of criminality consisted of the number of past convictions that the sexual offender had on file. The mean number of crimes among the offenders' rap sheet consisted of 7.40, with a standard deviation of 7.37. The "outliers" for this variable included 20 offenders whose previous crimes numbered 28 or more, 28 being three standard deviations above the mean.

Treatment Considerations

The next variable that we examined was treatment considerations. The definition of treatment we utilized was whether the offenders participated in treatment or not, while incarcerated. The number of subjects who obtained treatment in prison consisted of 245 individuals. Those offenders who did not obtain treatment in prison consisted of 231 subjects. Our data set consisted of an adequate representation of members of both groups.
Rapists/Pedophiles

The final predictor variable that we examined consisted of identifying the sexual offender as a rapist or a pedophile. Three hundred twelve of our subjects were rapists. One hundred seventy seven of the subjects were pedophiles. The rapists were over represented and the pedophile subjects were under represented.

Recidivism

The dependent variable in our study was recidivism. Recidivism was defined as the success or failure among the offenders during their first year of parole. Two hundred forty four of the subjects succeeded. Two hundred forty five of the subjects failed during their first year of parole.

Bivariate Analysis

In this section, we examined the bivariate association between each predictor and the criterion of recidivism. The associative value was analyzed using either a t-test (for continuous variables) or a Chi Square. (for categorical/discrete variables)

Age and Recidivism

The authors of this study examined the age of the offender at the time of his release from prison. We examined this variable as a predictor of recidivism. The
mean age of those who failed was compared to those who succeeded during their first year of parole. For the 238 sexual offenders who failed, the mean age at time of parole was 34.95 (std. dev. = 9.27). Those who succeeded consisted of 234 with a mean age of 39.41, (std. dev. = 11.36). The results of the t-test for equal variance assumed was \( t(470)=4.68, \ p<.001 \). These results indicated that younger offenders were more likely to fail during their first year of parole in comparison to older offenders. (see Appendix A)

Ethnicity and Recidivism

The next question focused on the race of the offenders to see if this had an impact on recidivism. A Pearson’s Chi-Square was run to obtain chi-square of 35.601, (df) = 2, and \( p<.001 \). Of the 213 Caucasians represented in the sample, 132 succeeded on their first year of parole. The expected success rate was 107.2. The observed failure was 81. The expected failure rate was 105.8. Of the 126 African Americans Sampled, 36 succeeded. The expected count was 63.4. The failure rate was 90. The expected failure rate was 62.6. Of the 136 Hispanic sampled, 71 succeeded. The expected count was 68.4. The failure rate was 65. The expected count was 67.6. Thus, these findings indicate that the Caucasian subjects were over-represented in the success
category and under-represented in the failure category. The opposite was true for the African American subjects. The Hispanic subjects matched the null expectation.

Criminality and Recidivism

Our next hypothesis focused if previous criminality among the sexual offenders influenced their rate of success during their first year of parole. Of the 244 offenders who failed, the mean number of prior convictions was 10.02 (std. 10.04). The offenders who succeeded had a mean of 4.75 (std. 4.69) crimes on their rap sheet. A t-test based upon equal variance assumed resulted in t(487)=7.40, p<.001. These results indicate that the more prior convictions the sexual offender has on their rap sheet, the less likely he is to succeed on his first year of parole. (see Appendix B)

Treatment and Recidivism

Our next question focused on treatment considerations and to what extent this was a valid predictor of success or failure among the offender’s first year of parole. A Pearson’s Chi-Square was run to obtain a chi-square of 12.056, (df) =1, p<.001. Out of the 245 sex offenders who received treatment, 144 actually succeeded during their first year of parole. The expected success rate was 125.1. One hundred one of the offenders actually failed with an expected count of 119.9. Out of the 231 sex offenders who
did not receive treatment, 99 succeeded. The expected count for success was 117.9. The actual failure rate for those subjects who did not receive treatment was 132. The expected count for failure among those offenders who did not receive treatment was 113.1. Thus, if the offender receives treatment while in prison, he is less likely to recidivate than the offender who did not participated in treatment.

Rapist/Pedophiles and Recidivism

Our final bivariate analysis differentiated between if the offender was rapist or a pedophile. We examined which offender was more successful on his first year of parole. A final Pearson’s Chi-Square was ran to obtain a chi-square of 20.948, (df) = 1, p< .001. The previous data can be summarized as follows. Three hundred twelve offenders were classified as rapists. One hundred seventy seven of the offenders were pedophiles. Of the 312 rapists, those who were expected to succeed during their first year of parole numbered 156.3. The actual success rate for the rapists was 132. The expected failure rate for the rapists was 155.7. The actual failure rate was 180. Of the 177 pedophiles in the study, the expected success rate was 88.7. The actual success rate was 113. The expected failure rate for the pedophiles was 88.3. The actual failure rate was 64. Thus, the findings suggest that rapists were more likely to fail
on their first year of parole, and the pedophiles in our study were more likely to succeed.

**Multiple Regression**

In the previous sections, we explored the variables of age, ethnicity, criminality, treatment considerations, and type of sexual offense individually as predictors of recidivism. Our final analysis examined the four previous variables as multi predictors of recidivism. We focused on whether the rate of recidivism changed by adding the fifth variable, or if the offender was a rapist or pedophile.

A hierarchical entry strategy was employed. Model one consisted of the first variables, age, ethnicity, criminality, and treatment considerations. The results were $F(5,462)=23.006, p<.001$. The standardized betas and their significance for individual predictor variables are reported in table 1. The variables that were significant included “age at release on parole”, the “Black” portion of ethnicity, and the “number of arrests on rap sheet”.

Model two consisted of the original variables plus adding a fifth variable to the equation, if the sexual offender was a rapist or pedophile. The results were $F_{\text{delta}}(1,461)=.604, p=.438$. The standardized betas in model two, and their significance for individual predictor variables are reported in table 1. The variables that had
some significance included "age at release on parole" the "Black" segment of ethnicity, and "number of arrests on rap sheet".

This analysis can be summarized as follows. By adding the fifth variable, (categorizing the sexual offender into rapist or pedophile) there was no meaningful change in the R square value (.001) from model 1 to model 2. The standardized betas, the t values, and the p values did not change significantly. Thus, the results from this study suggest that whether or not a sexual offender is a rapist or a pedophile does not predict their chances of recidivism above and beyond the variance explained by the "age at time of release", certain aspects of "ethnicity", and "previous criminality".
DISCUSSION

The predictor variables in our study included age and ethnicity of the offender, previous criminality, and the treatment effectiveness. The original hypothesis in this study focused on recidivism among rapists and pedophiles during their first year of parole. While analyzing our variables independently and as multi-predictors of recidivism, we discovered that certain combinations of variables resulted in some disturbing, interesting, and unanticipated findings. On the other hand, the result of combining other variables utilizing the same type of analyses proved to be mundane, insignificant, and generally uninteresting.

Age and Recidivism

One of the goals that the researchers of this project had was to discover if the age of the sexual offender influenced his success during his first year on parole. Our data analysis seemed to show this. The findings suggested that younger offenders were more likely to fail in comparison to older offenders during their first year of parole. This data seemed to coincide with previous research conducted by Marshal and Barbee (1990). These researchers stated that being 40 years or under was a powerful predictor of recidivism. We found this to be a valid assumption.
Since about 50% of the subjects that failed in our study were 40 years of age or younger, our findings seem to echo Marshall and Barbee’s contentions.

**Age of the Rapist and Pedophile**

A second sub-variable that we included made the distinction between a rapist and pedophile in regards to age. Because previous literature on this topic is very fragmented and contradictory, it is difficult to ascertain the validity of it. For example, Kuzenestov & Pierson (1992) contend that rapists tend to be younger, whereas pedophiles seem to be evenly represented among all age groups. Mair (1993) discovered otherwise. She found that rapists tend to be older, with a greater age range than pedophiles.

To our disappointment, by conducting the multiple regression analysis, our results were not quite as we expected. When categorizing the sexual offenders by age in regards to recidivism only, we had favorable results. When we made the distinctions between the age of the sexual offender, and whether or not he was a rapist or pedophile, the recidivism did not change, but equaled out.

**Ethnicity and Recidivism**

The researchers of this study were also interested in the extent that race may be able to predict recidivism among
sexual offenders during their first year of parole. Our findings proved to be very interesting.

In the result's section, we concluded that the Caucasian subjects were over-represented in the success category and underrepresented in the failure category. The opposite was true for African Americans. The Hispanic subjects reached the null expectation.

Even when correcting for age of the offender, number of arrests on rap sheet, and treatment considerations in the multiple regression analysis, the African American subjects were still more likely to recidivate than their White counterparts. In the bivariate analysis, the same held true. Of the 213 Caucasians in the study, 132 succeeded on their first year of parole. Of the 126 African Americans in the sample, only 36 succeed. In other words, almost half of the Whites succeeded, whereas only one-fourth of the African American subjects succeeded on their first year of parole. In our opinion, this is very disturbing.

In regards to previous research, these findings have been somewhat inconclusive and contradictory. For example, Holmes & Holmes (1997) contended that most rapists were minorities, usually Black, and from a lower socioeconomic status. Groth (1979) contradicted these findings. He discovered that among 22 cases of community and 5 cases of
institutional rape, 77% of his sample were Caucasian and only 18% were Black. Lastly, even more than 50 years ago, Frosch and Bromberg (1939), Frankel (1950), and Guttmacher (1952) all stated that a majority of the sexual offenders in that time seemed to be native-born Caucasians.

In comparing the previous research with our findings, we concluded that almost twice as many of our subjects were Caucasians. Our findings coincide with that of Groth, Frosch, Frankel, et al., but do not correlate with Holmes and Holmes. The most interesting aspect to our findings relates to the contentions made by Schwartz & Celini (1995). They claimed that the racial make up of sexual offenders in general varies with geographical location. Theoretically, this makes much sense. However, in regards to our study, this rational did not seem to coincide with our findings. Even though California has an abundance of minorities (Hispanics, African Americans, etc.), it was interesting that our sample had almost twice as many Caucasian sexual offenders in comparison to the other races. Thus for our purpose, we must disagree with the contentions made by Schwartz and Celini.

Criminality and Recidivism

The researchers of this study were also interested in the extent that past criminal behavior can predict
recidivism among sexual offenders. Our findings seemed to be very conclusive. We discovered that the more prior convictions that the sexual offender had on his rap sheet, the more likely he was to recidivate during his first year of parole. As concurrent with most research concerning criminal statistics in general, the best predictor for future criminality is past criminal behavior. Our findings seemed to demonstrate this contention.

In regards to previous literature regarding the specific criminality of rapists and pedophiles, we were not able to ascertain the validity of the claims due to the limitations in our findings. For example, we discovered that Beck's (1989) study found that out of 108,580 rapists whom were released from prison, 51% re-offended by committing their original offense. Prentky, Knight, and Cerce (1995) also conducted a study regarding the specific crimes that the rapist and pedophile committed while out on parole, and was for. Thus, because we did not examine specific recidivistic activity of the sexual offenders in our sample, we did not possess the correct analysis to draw an accurate conclusion. However, after we distinguished between a rapist and pedophile and utilized our variables as multiple predictors of recidivism, being a rapist or
pedophile did not seem to impact the rate of recidivism among our subjects.

Treatment and Recidivism

Our next hypothesis focused on the effectiveness of the treatment given to the sexual offender in prison and to what extent it had on reducing recidivism on his first year of parole. In the results section, we found that if the offender received treatment while in prison, he was less likely to recidivate in comparison to the offender who did not undergo treatment.

In regards to previous studies, our conclusions seemed to have about the same results, depending on what study was examined. For example, Quinsey, Khana, & Malcolm (1998) found that 38% of their subjects re-offended in the first year four years of parole. After a one to five year follow up, Sturgeon & Taylor (1980) found that 25% of the untreated subjects in their study re-offended. Lastly, Prentky & Burgess (1990) found that about 25% of treated child molesters, and 40% of the untreated offenders in their study were charged with sexual offenses after a 1-5 year follow up. Thus, most findings have concluded that treatment is only marginally effective in relation to sexual offender recidivism. However, in regards to our study, the success
rate among those subjects whom were treated was quite more than the offenders who did not obtain treatment.

Recidivism among Rapists and Pedophiles

The final hypothesis of this study asked the question as to which offender may be more likely to recidivate during his first year of parole. We discovered that there was almost an equal split of success and failure while we did not categorize the sexual offender into a rapist or a pedophile. On the other hand, when differentiating between the rapist and pedophile, we observed that rapists were more likely to fail whereas pedophiles were more likely to succeed.

Our findings seemed to coincide with Mair (1993) & Beck (1989). Both researchers stated that rapists tend to do worse on parole than pedophiles. In our sample, we found that the expected count of success and failure among rapists and pedophiles was almost equivalent. But, the observed failure for the pedophiles was twice that of the success rate. Generally speaking, the rapists were more successful than pedophiles, but the disparity between the success and failure rate was only about a third of that of pedophiles.
LIMITATIONS IN FINDINGS/NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

This section focuses on the limitations and significance of our findings. From our analysis, we delve deeper into our set of variables in the attempt to foster awareness in the reader as to the importance of conducting additional research among the age, race, criminality, and treatment considerations of the sexual offender. We then examined these variables as to how they may have affect recidivism among sexual offenders during their first year of parole.

Age and Recidivism

The mean age of the sexual offenders in our study who did not recidivate was about 40 years old. Those who failed had a mean age of about 35. Thus, it can be assumed, at least through our findings, that older offenders seemed to be more successful on their first year of parole than younger offenders.

The dilemma that these researchers face is why due to only a five year mean age disparity did the success and failure rate of the subjects in our study seem to level off. It was almost as if our findings concluded that perhaps the maturity or responsibility level between those offenders whom were 35 and those whom were 40 was different in some way. Due to our perplexities, it is the assumption of these
researchers that further studies should be analyzed and evaluated in regards to the specific age of a sexual offender at the time that he is paroled, in order to determine the long term affects that this may have on recidivism.

Lastly, because we did not find that categorizing the age of the rapist and pedophile useful in terms of predicting recidivism, perhaps we did not delve further into our set of variables. For example, by examining specifics aspects of the rapist’s and pedophile’s treatment (i.e., group therapy, psychoeducation, cognitive restructuring, etc.) regiment, perhaps additional researchers could examine the effectiveness, duration, and content of therapy that each offender received while in prison. The goal for further research is to examine if treatment given to sexual offenders is specifically tailored to the needs of the rapist and pedophile individually. As far as these researchers are aware of, there does not seem to be any previous, current, or future studies concentrating on this fact.

Ethnicity and Recidivism

Due to the results of this study and previous research, the ethnicity of the sexual offenders in relation to recidivism needs to be explored further. Questions that
puzzled these researchers stem from the fact that even after controlling for age, criminality, and treatment considerations, the results of the multiple regression analysis still found the Black subjects to be at a higher risk for recidivism. Also, among the three races examined in our study, the African American offenders were least represented in the sample, but still were almost four times more likely to fail on their first year of parole than the Caucasian subjects.

The authors of this study found the above information to be very interesting. Because the literature regarding the ethnic make up of offenders was so inconclusive, this is one reason why race of the sexual offender must be explored further. Another reason why further research is needed is to examine if institutional racism has reared its ugly head in our findings. The limitations in our set of variables stems from the fact that we should have examined the recidivistic activity by race and specific treatment considerations to observe if they were culturally sensitive to that of the minority sexual offender.

Criminality and Recidivism

Even though we discovered that there is a direct correlation between prior criminality and recidivism expectancy, we did not control, or examine specific aspects
of the sexual offender’s prior criminal history (offenses related or not related to instant incarceration) and/or facets of his most recent recidivistic activity. (offenses that resulted in the offender going back to prison) Due to the limitations in our variable selection and in our analysis, it is this exact reason why additional research should begin where we left off.

**Treatment and Recidivism**

There was another major drawback to our study. We did not examine the specifics (duration, type, content, etc.) of the offender’s treatment while he was incarcerated. Due to these limitations, the researchers of this project cannot hypothesize if the recidivistic activity observed in this study was due to the deficits of the treatment program, the lack of will and control of the offender, or some other unforeseen circumstance.

**Rapist/Pedophile and Recidivism**

The authors of this study also found limitations in our hypothesis and in our findings regarding the rate of recidivism among rapists and pedophiles specifically. The major drawback lies in the time frame in which we studied the subjects. Because we capped the study at one year’s duration from the time of parole, it is the assumption that the offender’s could have re-offended at a higher rate even
after the one-year time limit. However, our hypothesis somewhat contradicts that of Beck (1989). He discovered that 2/3 of sexual offenders who recidivate, do so during their first year of parole.

A final limitation in our variable selection was in the failure to examine specific aspects of treatment. While we focused on if the offender obtained treatment in prison, we did not examine after care considerations. We negated the possibility that the offenders may have obtained some type of individual, group, and/or supportive therapies while out on parole. It is the assumption of these researchers that the recidivism observed in this study may have decreased if we would have included these aspects in our variable selection. But, according to Quinsey, Khana, and Malcolm (1998), our assumptions may be premature. They found that after care treatment consisting of cognitive and group therapy did not seem to effect the rate of recidivism in a negative or positive fashion among sexual offenders. Although because the world of research is constantly advancing, we would like to be more optimistic than previous authors.
APPENDIX A: AGE AT RELEASE BY SUCCESS ON PAROLE

Age at Release by Success on Parole

Success on Parole (1st year -- no return to prison)
APPENDIX C: ITEM LEVEL RESULTS FROM THE MULTIPLE REGRESSION

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APPENDIX D: LETTER OF PERMISSION

Letter of Permission—February 8, 2000

This letter gives permission for the use of data derived from a larger dataset of California parolees. The permission extends only to use in an MSW project that meets degree requirements pursuant to the guidelines of California State University, San Bernardino and the Department of Social Work. No permission for other persons than the two students involved in the research project, nor for subsequent publication of any work based on the data, is implied.

Frank P. Williams III
Professor
Director, Center for Criminal Justice Research
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