

How Much Safer are Older Offenders

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Hanson & Bussiere (1998)

- Meta-analysis of studies of sexual recidivism
- Found average negative correlation with age of 0.13
- Provided little information about the shape of the relationship

Hanson (2001)

- Combined 10 samples to give a total N of 4,673.
- Found age-trend separately for incest offenders, extra-familial child-molesters, and rapists.
- Trend appears to be absolute rather than proportionate. Similar absolute effect for Rapists and Child-Molesters
- Markedly low recidivism rate for age 60+
- Diverse outcome criteria and follow-ups

Barbaree (2002)

- Re-analysis of Hanson's results suggesting an orderly, linear decline in sexual recidivism across the age range from age 25 onwards.
- He also presented analysis of new Canadian data that suggested that this effect wasn't due to a confound with risk factors contained in RRASOR or Static-99

The Old

- Hanson's graphs indicate a very low reconviction rate for those aged 60 or older on release – under 5%
- This rate is so low that it raises questions about whether any offender of this age can appropriately be considered "high risk"
- This would seem to have implications for civil commitment decisions
- Doren has noted that these implications are unclear because we don't know what risk categories the old offenders in Hanson's samples were from.

The Young

- Barbaree's re-analysis of Hanson's data suggests that the 18 to 24 age group are distinct and that the linear age trend he identifies only began after that

Issue

- Does the decline in sexual recidivism with age hold for sexual offenders whose record would normally imply high risk
- Need to ask this question in relation to (a) major age categories
 - 18 to 24
 - The middle years (25 to 59)
 - 60 +
- And within the Middle Years category

Operationalizing Age

- Age on release (banded)
- Note Youngest and Oldest bands are different width
- Coded 2,3,4 etc up to 10 = 60+ for analyses

Age Groups for Analysis

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| • 18-24 | • 40-44 |
| • 25-29 | • 45-49 |
| • 30-34 | • 50-54 |
| • 35-39 | • 55-59 |
| | • 60+ |

Defining High Risk

- The phrase “high risk sex offender” is used here to refer to a category of sex offenders that have a long term (15 year+) sexual reconviction rate comparable to the Static-99 high risk category.
- In practice this seems to be the risk threshold used in civil commitment decision-making in several States

Operationalizing High Risk

- For this study we operationalized risk on the basis of the number of occasions for which the offender had been sentenced for sexual offenses.
 - Sentenced once
 - Sentenced twice (so re-offended sexually after having been punished)
 - Sentenced three times (so re-offended sexually after having been punished, was punished again, and then offended again)

Why not use an actuarial predictor?

- The data sets being analyzed here didn't have the right variables to score Static-99 or similar predictors for all cases
- Sexual appearances
 - Theoretically plausible
 - Central to one of the factors in actuarial predictors
 - Those with repeated appearances are relatively high risk some with only 1 or 2 appearances are also risky

So how risky is that?

- 10 year recidivism rates
- One appearance
 - X% = 14%
- Two appearances
 - X% = 23%
- Three appearances
 - X% = 46%
- 46% is comparable to the 10 year rate for the Static-99 High Risk Category (45%)

Methodological Strengths

- Homogeneous Sample
- National sample
- Untreated
- Standard follow up
- Long follow up

Data

- National samples of imprisoned sex offenders from England & Wales
- Adult males serving a prison sentence of at least 4 years following a sexual conviction and released in 1980
- Adult males serving a prison sentence and released in 1979
- Follow up of 10 years
- Combined to give N=724
- Note partial overlap with Hanson & Thornton

Preliminary Analysis

- Logistic regression analysis
- Dependent variable = 10 year sexual reconviction rates
- Independent variables
 - Age in years from 18 up
 - Sexual Appearances (1,2,3+)

IV: ^{age} sex offenders DV: dichotomous =

Logistic Regression Analysis

	B	SE	p
Sex App	+0.910	0.114	<0.001
Age Bands	-0.137	0.009	<0.005

Comparison of Major Age Categories

- Compare
 - 18 to 24
 - Middle Years
 - 60 +

Logistic Regression Analysis Using Broad Age Bands and Appearances

	B	SE	p
Sexual Appearances (Linear)	1.29	0.16	<0.001
Broad Age (Linear)	-1.84	0.75	<0.02

Sexual Recidivism by Appearances and Age



Comment-1

- The non-linear effects of Age and Appearances weren't significant
- Nor was the age by appearances interaction
- Note: the power of these analyses is not high because so few cases fall in the extreme age categories

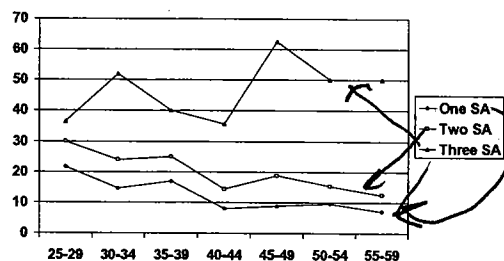
Comment-2

- Recidivism is low for those aged 60+, regardless of Appearances
- For those with 2 or 3 sexual appearances those in the 18-24 age band seem twice as risky as those in the Middle Years
- This effect appears to be proportionate rather than absolute
- Effect of Age seems small for those with only one sexual appearance, possibly suggesting the role of rate of offending

Effect of Age in the Middle Years

- Discard 18-24 and 60+ groups, analyze age trends in the middle years
- In overall sample, testing for interaction with sexual appearances
 - [tests whether relationship of age to recidivism is the same regardless of number of appearances]
- Separate descriptive analyses for each level of appearances

Sexual Recidivism Rates by Age & Sexual Appearances



Logistic Regression for the Middle Years

	B	SE	p
Sexual Appearances	0.840	0.124	<0.001
Age bands	-0.094	0.061	NS

This might suggest that age has no effect in the middle years. But we need to look at the interaction effect.

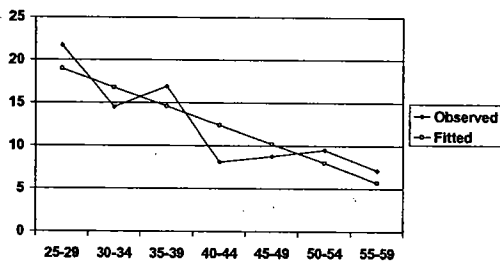
Interaction Effect

	B	SE	P
[Sexual Appearances]	-0.038	0.390	NS
[Age band]	-0.275	0.101	<0.01
Interaction	+0.173	0.074	<0.02

Simplifying the Graphs

- To explore the interaction effect
 - OLS Regression analysis with reconviction rate as dependent variable and age group as the predictor.
 - Linear model
 - Separate analysis for each level of Sexual Appearances

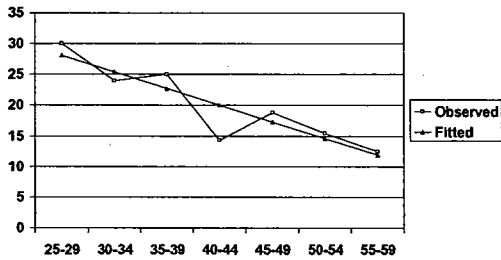
Sexual Recidivism Rates by Age for those with One Sexual Appearances



OLS Regression for those with One Appearance

- Beta = -0.87
- P = 0.01

Sexual Recidivism Rates by Age for those with Two Sexual Appearances

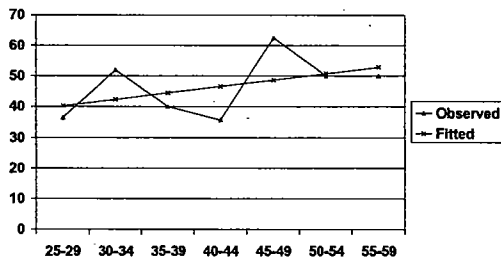


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OLS Regression for those with Two Appearances

- Beta = -0.90
- P = 0.005

Sexual Recidivism Rates by Age for those with Three + Sexual Appearances

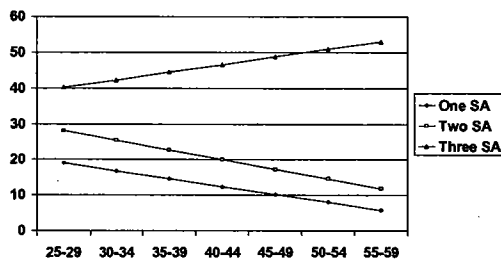


no decline

OLS Regression for those with Three + Appearances

- Beta = +0.47
- NS

Fitted Sexual Recidivism Rates by Age Graphs



Summary of Trends in the Middle Years

- Sexual Recidivism declines with age during the Middle Years for those at the two lower risk levels
- For those in the high risk category, there is no such decline. In fact the trend is for sexual recidivism to increase with age!

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Putting these Results Together

Conclusions for Those with Three or More Sexual Appearances

- Present a higher risk than those with fewer sexual appearances
- Risk is comparable to Static-99 High Risk category
- Risk increases markedly for the 18 to 24 band and decreases markedly for the 60+ band
- Risk does not change substantially in the Middle Years and remains comparable to the High Risk category. If anything it increases with age in the middle years

Conclusions for those with Two Sexual Appearances

- Generally present an intermediate level of risk
- When combined with Youth (18 to 24) they have recidivism rates nearly comparable to the Static-99 High Risk category
- Risk declines steadily during the Middle Years and then even further after age 60.
- Future research should break this group down by distinguishing a group that combines sexual appearances with markers for general anti-sociality to see how that "high risk" group is affected by age

Conclusions for Those with One Sexual Appearance

- Generally a low sexual recidivism rate regardless of age
- This rate does decline still further during the middle years
- Future research should further examine the behavior of offenders in this category who are released aged 60 or older

Final Comment

- It is the age at which the risk period begins that seems to matter.
- Being released aged at least 60 is associated with a different recidivism rate than being released aged 50 to 59 even though this group would enter their 60s during the follow up period.

Implications of Premature Treatment Termination for Sexual Recidivism

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Risk Assessment & Tx Participation

- How should we modify risk assessments in the light of different kinds of Tx participation?
- The recidivism estimates associated with Static-99 risk categories were derived from samples that (by modern standards) are best regarded as untreated.
- Earlier in this symposium we looked at how recidivism rates for those completing Tx differ from those for untreated offenders
- This paper looks at how recidivism rates for those who have experienced Incomplete Tx differ from those for untreated offenders

Treatment Completion is a Complex Concept

- Completed prescribed clinical tasks
 - e.g. attended sessions, learnt offense cycle, developed RP plan etc
- Tx needs met
 - e.g. Stages of change on personal psychological risk factors
- At least X months participation in Tx
 - e.g. At least 12 months participation
- Definitions tend to be program specific

Evidence from ATSA Meta-Analysis (Hanson et al, 2002)

- Completers compared to Non-Completers
 - Large significant difference
 - Odds ratio = 0.47
 - But wrong comparison to inform us about how to modify risk estimates derived from Untreated samples
- Non-completers compared to Refusers
 - Non-completers have higher recidivism
 - Odds ratio = 1.67
 - But not significant

We need more evidence

- Two strategies
 - Indirect comparison
 - Integrating available comparisons
 - Broaden comparison group
 - Untreated broader concept than refusers and so get more data
- Together create more evidence, allowing more reliable estimate

Indirect Comparison

- Indirect comparison of Non-Completers to Non-Participants
 - Compare
 - the Completers vs Untreated
 - To
 - Completers vs Non-Completers
- By comparing size of effects we can get an indication of the size and direction of the difference between Untreated and Non-Completers

Broadening the Comparison Group

- In addition to Refusers can consider those who didn't participate in Tx because it was denied to them
- SOTEP has a group who volunteered for Tx but were randomly assigned to the control (untreated) condition

Results of Indirect Comparison – Reconviction Rates

	Compl	DO	Compl	Untreated
Completers vs DO	12	21		
Completers vs Untreated			12	17

Implied Comparison

- Fortunate that Mean Recidivism Rate for Completers (of all Tx) is the same in both comparisons (though they are different treated samples). Matches samples on risk and follow up etc
 - Untreated Average Recidivism = 17%
 - Drop-Out Average Recidivism = 21%
- Obviously there is a margin of error on these estimates. So how do they compare to estimates derived a different way?

Individual Studies

- Comparing Refusers to Drop-Outs (4 studies – from ATSA comparison)
- Comparing Untreated to Drop-Outs (1 study - SOTEP)

Comparisons of DO & Untreated

Study	DO Recidivism	Untreated Recidivism
Hall	0% of 7	17% of 6
Perkins	28% of 43	12% of 67
SAFE-T	26% of 27	18% of 17
Minnesota	22% of 27	19% of 159
SOTEP 2002	36% of 14	20% of 225
Mean	22%	16%

Alternative Estimates of DO vs Untreated Recidivism Rates

	DO	Untreated
Indirect Method	22%	17%
Individual Studies	22%	16%

Comment

- Remarkable consistency of results
- Absolute effect
 - Non-completion = add 5 points
- Proportionate effect = add just over a quarter
- Not enough data to choose between these characterizations

Making Sense of Non-Completion Effects: Possible Mechanisms

- Lack of treatment effect
 - Predicts DO recidivism \leq Untreated Recidivism
- Drop-out predictors are also risk indicators for recidivism (e.g. psychopathy)
 - Deterioration see Last slide*
- All three may operate

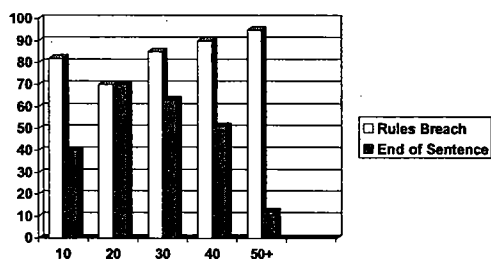
Some Evidence for Deterioration

- From general correctional treatment literature
- Lawrence Jones (1997) study of the Max Glatt TC
 - Personality disordered sex offenders & addicts serving prison sentences
 - TC combines small group meetings, community meetings, and cognitive-behavioral programs
 - Recidivism study
 - Change in psychological functioning

Reconviction Study

- Recidivism rate by weeks in treatment
- For those who were terminated due to breach of unit rules
- For those who ran out of sentence and had to be released

Reconviction by Weeks in Treatment



Comment

- Those who left because of a rules breach showed a high flat or rising line
- Suggest
 - High risk and low responsiveness
- Those who left because ran out of time show an inverted U curve with recidivism rising early in treatment, peaking at 20 weeks, then declining notably after 50 weeks
- Suggest a pattern of getting worse before getting better

Psychological Changes Tracking Reconviction

- Jones (1989) found a similar non-linear effect with self-esteem first falling in treatment and the image of self-as aggressive increasing. Then later in treatment, self-esteem increased and the image of self-as aggressive declined.

Concluding Comments

- Incomplete Tx commonly means no reduction in recidivism relative to untreated i.e. no treatment benefit
- We need to develop robust criteria for Completion
- Rates being worse than Untreated probably fully accounted for by High Risk characteristics plus deterioration
- Deterioration can be understood in terms of self-esteem and aggression/resentment
- So if self-esteem high and aggression low then risk unlikely to be above untreated Static-99 risk category rate
- We need more studies comparing drop-outs to refusers.

