

Towards identification of the true sexual murderer

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Objectives

- What is meant by the term 'sexual murder', and is the generally accepted definition too broad?
 - Who is the true sexual murderer?
- Should sexual murder be conceptualised within a continuum of sexual aggression, or is it a unique type of offending?
- What are the factors that predict fatal and non-fatal sexual aggression?

What is really meant by the term sexual murderer?

- Three consistently observed subtypes

(Higgs, Carter, Tully, & Browne, 2017)

- Rape murder
 - Indirect association between sexual aspect and killing
- Grievance murder
 - Driven by angry schemas/excessively aggressive response style
- Sexualised murder
 - Sadistic/deviancy driven

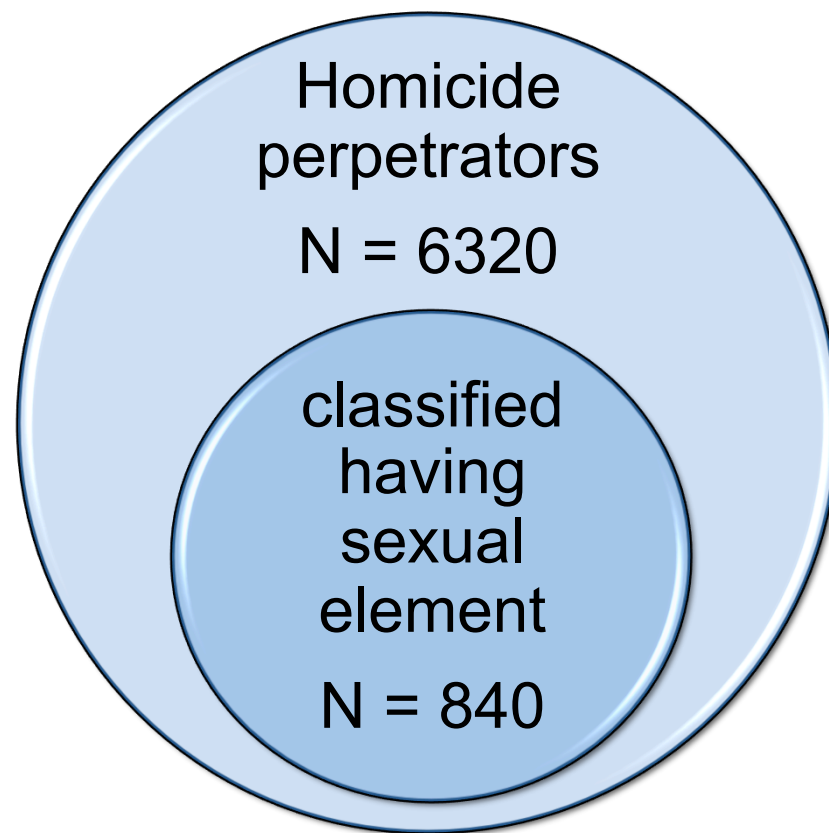
Is sexual murder a discrete type of sexual offence?

- Sexual murderers are not qualitatively different from sexual aggressors (Stefańska, Beech, & Carter, 2016)

But...

- There is a subgroup of sexual murderers who appear to represent a unique type of offender with lethal intent demonstrated in their offending (Healey, Beauregard, Beech, & Vettor, 2016)
- Between group differences do predict escalation from sexual aggression to murder (Nicole & Proulx, 2007)
 - e.g. inappropriate childhood & adolescent behaviour

Sexual murder in England & Wales



June 2012 estimates (NOMS, Aug 2013)

- an increase from an earlier estimate by Beech, Fisher, & Ward (2005)

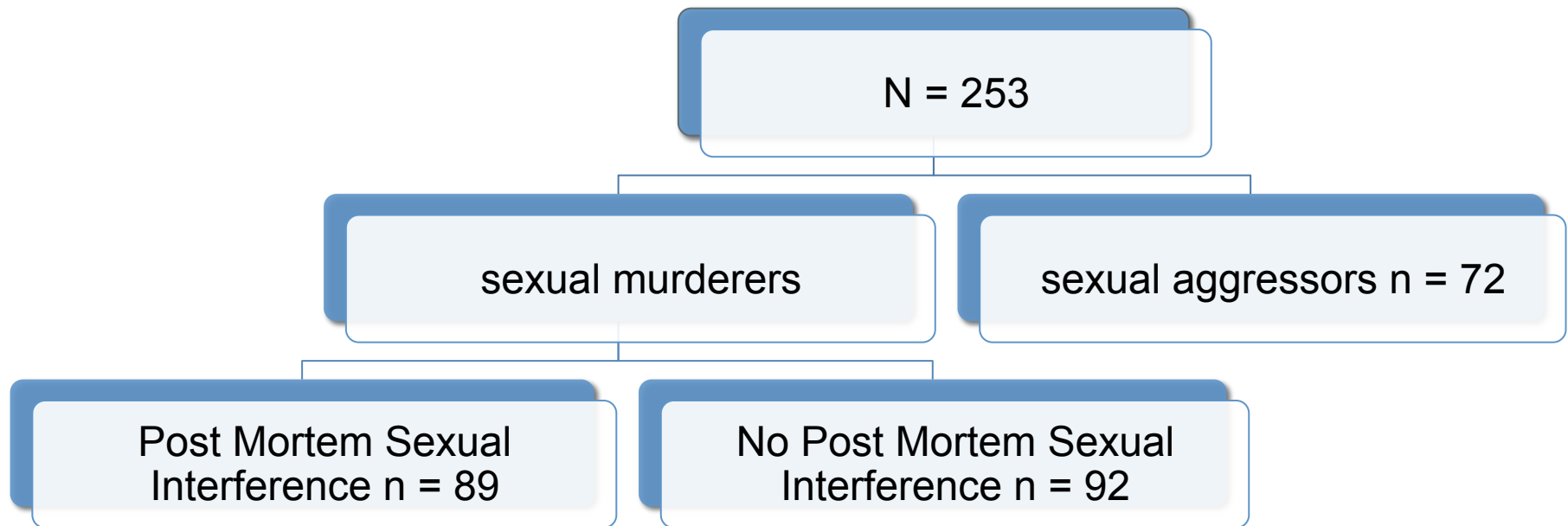
Development of a dataset comprising 350 cases of sexual murder

- Inclusion criteria
 - Sexual murder (NOMS): Sexual element and/or sexual motivation was evidenced, suspected or admitted
 - Non-serial: One or two victims, no cool off (Proulx, Cusson, & Beauregard, 2007)
 - Female victims age 14 or older (Carter & Hollin, 2010)
 - Sexual aggressors: Life or indeterminate sentence for rape
- Data

Public Protection Unit Database: Trial reports, social enquiry, psychiatric/psychological assessments, criminal records

Developmental and criminal histories of sexual aggressors (Higgs, Stefańska, Carter, & Browne, 2017)

- Post mortem sexual interference
 - ‘proxy’ for those sexual murderers for whom there is a direct link between killing and sexual arousal



Sample of variables

	PMSI Sexual murderers	Non-PMSI Sexual murderers	Rapists		
	%			χ^2	<i>p</i>
Large family	51	57	66	3.37	.19
Parent psychiatric history	11	5	3	4.92	.09
Parent criminal history	14	10	7	1.88	.39
Disrupted caregiving	8	14	10	1.96	.38
Taken into public care	38	37	35	.21	.90
Anger towards mother	3	1	4	1.61	.45
Sexual aggression <18	21	17	25	1.43	.49
Antisocial behavior <18	53	64	65	3.40	.18
Learning disability	10	13	18	2.18	.34
Employment problems	64	57	51	2.63	.27
Alcohol misuse	57	47	44	2.96	.23
Drug use	46	41	56	3.34	.19
Head injury	15	15	10	1.21	.55
Adult social isolation	63	49	44	6.23	.04
Paraphilia	38	15	28	12.20	.00
Sexual sadism	24	1	8	24.05	.00
Disclosed rape fantasies	22	17	29	3.27	.20
Major mental disorder	10	10	11	.08	.96
Personality disorder	15	16	11	.91	.64
Autism Spectrum Disorder	1	2	0	1.63	.44

Scale variables

	PMSI Sexual murderers		Non-PMSI Sexual murderers		Rapists		<i>F</i> or χ^2	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Negative Childhood Experiences Scale ($\alpha = .74$)	.97	1.10	.90	.96	1.06	1.12	.42	.42
Developmental Inadequacies Scale ($\alpha = .78$)	2.93	2.19	2.63	1.81	2.06	1.70	4.19	.02

Criminal history variables

	PMSI Sexual murderers		Non-PMSI Sexual murderers		Rapists		<i>F</i> or χ^2	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Age at first conviction	18.40	5.50	17.23	6.08	19.75	10.14	3.99	.14
Previous violent offenses	1.33	2.04	2.24	3.49	4.24	6.26	23.43	.00
Age at first violent conviction	19.24	5.35	18.40	4.32	21.75	6.87	8.35	.02
Previous sexual offenses	.38	.83	.83	1.67	2.58	5.12	27.19	.00
Previous rape/attempted rape	.10	.30	.20	.60	.54	.90	22.14	.00
Sexual offenses against children	.12	.50	.13	.62	.25	.78	.71	.71
Age at first sexual conviction	20.70	5.29	20.83	6.44	23.07	6.72	2.45	.29
Non-violent non-sexual offenses	12.07	19.89	20.98	33.87	29.86	50.68	12.79	.00
Age first non-violent non-sex conviction	16.61	3.53	15.81	4.13	17.84	6.72	3.58	.17
Age at time of index offense	26.64	6.96	26.42	8.01	39.03	8.66	64.98	.00
Age of index offense victim	33.85	19.16	35.36	22.29	31.76	17.83	.64	.53

Multinomial regression: Final model

Non-PMSI sexual murderers and rapists versus PMSI sexual murderers.

	Odds Ratio	95% C.I. for Odds Ratio	
		Lower	Upper
Non-PMSI sexual murderers			
Antisocial behavior <18	1.55	.75	3.20
Developmental inadequacy	.95	.79	1.15
→ Sadism**	.04	.01	.29
Sexual contact with sex workers	.99	.29	3.36
Never long-term co-habiting partner	.69	.34	1.39
Previous violent offenses	1.11	.97	1.27
Previous sexual offenses	1.24	.94	1.65
Rapists			
Antisocial behavior <18	1.60	.68	3.78
→ Developmental inadequacy*	.76	.59	.98
Sadism	.46	.14	1.49
→ Sexual contact with sex workers*	4.02	1.32	12.30
→ Never long-term co-habiting partner**	.29	.13	.64
→ Previous violent offenses**	1.24	1.08	1.42
→ Previous sexual offenses**	1.54	1.16	2.04

Note: $R^2 = .35$ (Cox & Snell), $.40$ (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2 = 110.36$, $p < .001$

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Key features of PMSI sexual murderers

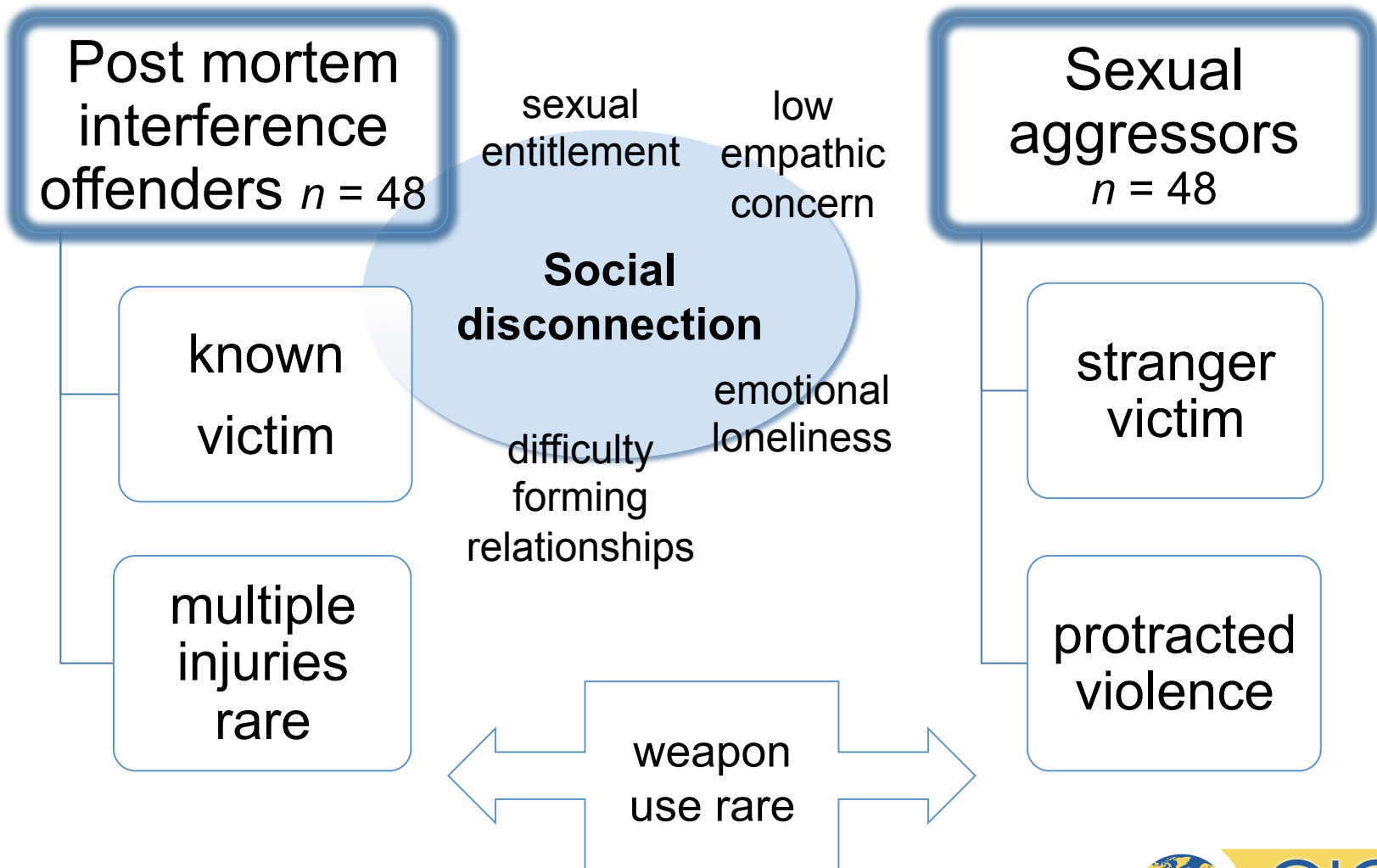
- Early social inadequacy (e.g. isolation, cruelty to animals, self-harm, violence to others)
- Adulthood social and sexual isolation
- Sexual deviancy (sadism)
- Low frequency of violent and sexual crimes

Key features of non-homicide sexual aggressors

- Lifelong anti-sociality
- Adulthood sexual promiscuity
- High frequency of all types of crime (sexual, violent, property etc.)

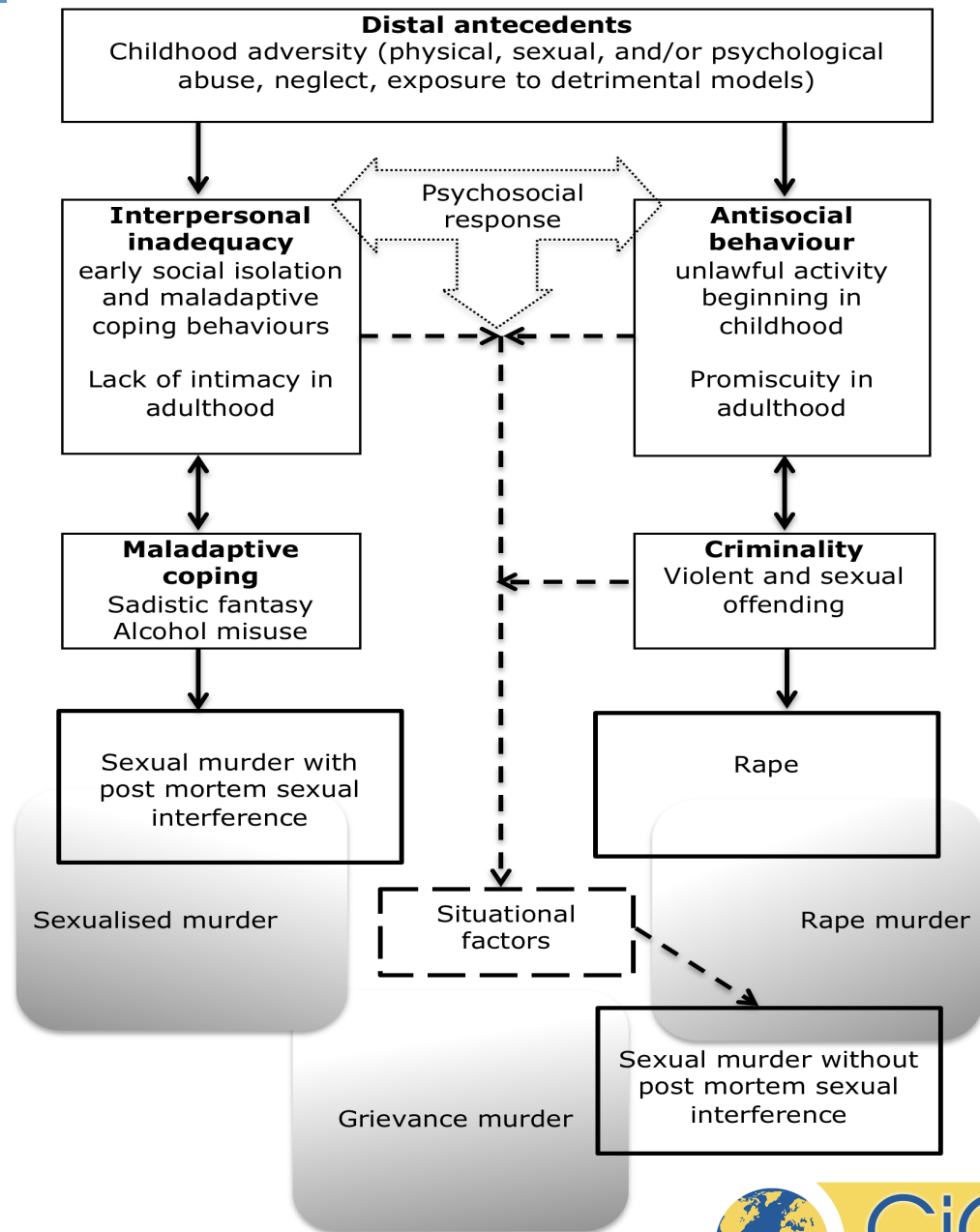
Criminal event and psychometric assessment

(Higgs, Carter, Stefańska, & Glorney, 2015)



Multi-trajectory model with fatal and non-fatal outcomes

(Higgs & Stefańska, in press)



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