Improving Practice in Child Sexual Abuse Image and Grooming Investigations through Identification of Offender Characteristics

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents ................................................................. ii
List of Figures ........................................................................ vi
List of Tables ......................................................................... viii
Certificate of Authorship ...................................................... xii
Acknowledgments ................................................................... xiii
Paid Editorial Assistance ...................................................... xiv
Ethics Approval ...................................................................... xv
Abstract ................................................................................ xvii
List of Abbreviations ............................................................ xix

Chapter 1: The Internet, Problematic Behaviour and Child Sexual Abuse .......... 1
  1.1 Background ........................................................................ 1
  1.2 Statement of the Issue under Investigation ............................ 10
  1.3 Rationale: The Internet and Sexual Abuse Images .................. 12
    1.3.1 The Multi-dimensional Nature of Child Abuse Offending .... 177
  1.4 Escalation of Child Sexual Abuse Image Preferences .............. 177
  1.5 Habituation to Child Sexual Abuse Images ............................ 199
  1.6 The Progression to Online Grooming of Children and Online Behaviour .... 20
  1.7 Online Grooming of Children ............................................ 244
  1.8 Approach to Study .......................................................... 255
  1.9 Chapter Outline .............................................................. 289
  1.10 Summary ................................................................. 30

Chapter 2: Theories for Child Sexual Abuse Offending .......................... 32
  2.1 Data-driven Explanations for Sexual Offending ....................... 32
  2.2 Theories of Child Sexual Abuse .......................................... 356
    2.2.1 Finkelhor’s (1984) Precondition Theory .......................... 366
    2.2.2 Marshall and Barbaree’s (1990) Integrated Theory .............. 377
    2.2.3 Hall and Hirschman’s (1992) Quadripartite Theory of Child Molestation .. 399
  2.3 Ward and Siegert Pathways Model of Child Offending .............. 40
  2.4 Role of Cognitive Distortions in Sexual Offending .................. 44
  2.5 Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending (ITSO) ....................... 49
  2.6 Developmental Variables .................................................. 52
  2.7 Vulnerability to Offend ..................................................... 52
  2.8 Triggering Events and Acute Risk Factors ............................. 54
  2.9 Social Problems ............................................................. 54
  2.10 Ecological Niche ............................................................ 54
  2.11 Testing the Integrated Pathways Model for Online Child Pornographers .... 55
  2.12 Summary ................................................................. 56

Chapter 3: Habituation and Escalation to Child Sexual Abuse Images .......... 57
  3.1 The Role of Pornography in Sexual Aggression ....................... 57
  3.2 The Role of Child Sexual Abuse Images in Offending .............. 60
  3.3 Escalation of Child Sexual Abuse Image Preferences ................ 69
  3.4 Habituation to Child Sexual Abuse Images ............................ 77
List of Figures

Figure 2.1: The ITSO Model (Ward & Beech, 2006) ................................................................. 499
Figure 7.1: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Education and Image Ranking .................. 1247
Figure 7.2: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Ethnicity and Image Ranking 1258
Figure 7.3: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Residential Location and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 130
Figure 7.4: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Physical Abuse and Image Ranking .......... 131
Figure 7.5: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Sexual Abuse and Image Ranking .......... 133
Figure 7.6: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Marital Status and Image Ranking .......... 134
Figure 7.7: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Contact with Other Offenders and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 136
Figure 7.8: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offenders Involved in Voluntary Activities and Image Ranking ................................................................. 137
Figure 7.9: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Callousness and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 139
Figure 7.10: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Pro-criminal Attitudes and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 140
Figure 7.11: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Victim Age and Image Ranking ............ 141
Figure 7.12: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender’s Relationship to Victim and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 142
Figure 7.13: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Victim Gender in Images and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 144
Figure 7.14: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Username and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 145
Figure 7.15: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Evidence of Online and Contact Offending and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 147
Figure 7.16: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Increased Sorting and Cataloguing and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 148
Figure 7.17: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Focus on a Series and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 149
Figure 7.18: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Time Online and Image Ranking ........................................................................................................ 150
List of Tables

Table 2.1: Risk Factors for Offline Sexual Offenders (Hanson & Babchishin, 2009) ... 34
Table 2.2: Cognitive Distortions of Offenders (Keown, 2008) ........................................ 44
Table 3.1: Typology of Online Child Pornography Offending (Krone, 2004) .................. 64
Table 3.2: Model of Escalation in Image Content and Progression to Contact
Offending (Personal Communication from Chris Lennings, January 2010) ... 70
Table 3.3: COPINE Typology of Image Preferences (Taylor, Holland et al., 2001) .... 81
Table 3.4: UK Sentencing Panel Typology of Image Preferences (UK Sentencing Panel, 2002) ... 82
Table 7.1: COPINE Typology of Image Preferences .................................................. 121
Table 7.2: Predictor Variables for Image Escalation ............................................. 123
Table 7.3: Coefficients for Occupation and Image Escalation ......................... 125
Table 7.4: Proportion within Each Occupation Group and Highest Image Level
Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........................................ 126
Table 7.5: Coefficients for Education and Image Escalation .............................. 127
Table 7.6: Proportion within Each Education Group and Highest Image Level
Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........................................ 128
Table 7.7: Coefficients for Offender Ethnicity Group and Image Escalation ........ 129
Table 7.8: Proportion within Each Offender Ethnicity Group and Highest Image
Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........................................ 129
Table 7.9: Coefficients for Residential Location and Image Escalation ............. 130
Table 7.10: Proportion within Each Offender Residential Location and Highest
Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) .................................. 131
Table 7.11: Coefficients for Physical Abuse Group and Image Escalation ........ 132
Table 7.12: Proportion within Each Physical Abuse Group and Highest Image
Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........................................ 132
Table 7.13: Coefficients for Sexual Abuse Group and Image Escalation .......... 133
Table 7.14: Proportion within Each Sexual Abuse Group and Highest Image Level
Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........................................ 134
Table 7.15: Coefficients for Marital Status Group and Image Escalation ............ 135
Table 7.16: Proportion within Each Marital Status Group and Highest Image Level
Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........................................ 135
Table 7.17: Coefficients for Contact with Other Offenders and Image Escalation ...... 136
Table 7.18: Proportion within Each Contact with Other Offenders Group and
Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........... 137
Table 7.19: Coefficients for Offenders Involved in Voluntary Activities and Image
Escalation ..................................................................................................... 138
Table 7.20: Proportion within Each Offender Involved in Voluntary Activities
Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table
7.1) .................................................................................................................. 138
Table 7.21: Coefficients for Offenders’ Level of Callousness Group and Image
Escalation ..................................................................................................... 139
Table 7.22: Proportion within Each Offender Level of Callousness Group and
Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........... 1369
Table 7.23: Coefficients for Offender Pro-criminal Attitudes Group and Image
Escalation ..................................................................................................... 140
Table 7.24: Coefficients for Victim Age and Image Escalation ......................... 141
Table 7.25: Proportion within Each Victim Age Group and Highest Image Level
Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) .................................................. 142
Table 7.26: Coefficients for Offender’s Relationship to Victim and Image
Escalation ..................................................................................................... 143
Table 7.27: Proportion between Relationship of Offender and Victim and Highest
Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ...................... 143
Table 7.28: Coefficients for Victim Gender and Image Escalation .................... 144
Table 7.29: Proportion within Victim Gender and Highest Image Level Reached in
the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ................................................................. 145
Table 7.30: Coefficients for Offender Username and Image Escalation .......... 146
Table 7.31: Proportion within Each Username Group and Highest Image Level
Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) .................................................. 1436
Table 7.32: Coefficients for Online and Contact Offending and Image Escalation .... 147
Table 7.33: Proportion within Online and Contact Offending Groups and Highest
Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ...................... 1447
Table 7.34: Coefficients for Offender Increased Sorting and Cataloguing and Image
Escalation ..................................................................................................... 148
Table 7.35: Proportion within Each Offender Increased Sorting and Cataloguing
Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table
7.1) .................................................................................................................. 149
Table 7.36: Coefficients for Offender Focus on Series and Image Escalation ....... 1469
Table 7.37: Proportion within Each Offender Focus on Series Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ......................... 150
Table 7.38: Coefficients for Offender Time Online and Image Escalation ........... 151
Table 7.39: Proportion within Each Time Online Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ................................. 151
Table 7.40: Coefficients for Offender Reduction in Social Behaviour and Image Escalation ..................................................................................................... 152
Table 7.41: Proportion within Each Offender Reduction in Social Behaviour Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ......... 153
Table 7.42: Coefficients for Offender Return to Images and Image Escalation .......... 153
Table 7.43: Proportion within Each Offender Return to Images Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ......................... 154
Table 7.44: Coefficients for Offenders Involved in Victim Age Reduction and Image Escalation ..................................................................................................... 155
Table 7.45: Proportion within Each Offender Victim Age Reduction Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) .......... 155
Table 7.46: Coefficients for Evidence of Escalation in Other Images and Image Escalation ..................................................................................................... 1536
Table 7.47: Proportion within Each Evidence of Escalation in Other Images Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) .............. 156
Table 7.48: Coefficients for Victim Ethnicity and Image Escalation ....................... 1547
Table 7.49: Proportion within Each Victim Ethnicity Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ....................................... 1547
Table 7.50: Coefficients for Victim Access and Image Escalation ......................... 158
Table 7.51: Proportion within Each Victim Access Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ........................................... 1569
Table 7.52: Coefficients for Offenders Format of Material and Image Escalation ...... 159
Table 7.53: Proportion within Each Offender Formatting of Material Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ................. 160
Table 7.54: Coefficients for Age of Offender Online and Image Escalation ............. 160
Table 7.55: Proportion within Each Age of Offender Online Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1) ................................. 161
Table 7.56: Coefficients for Offenders Volume of Material and Image Escalation ..... 162
Table 7.57: Chi-square for Level of Callousness and Image Level ............................ 163
Table 7.58: Fisher’s Exact Test for Format of Material and Image Level......................164
Table 7.59: Spearman Correlation for Post Hoc Analysis..............................................165
Table 7.60: Predictor Variables for Level of Images Reached and those Identified
with an Association to Image Preference.................................................................1646
Table 8.1: List of Themes and Identification of Victim Numbers and Gender ..........169
Table 8.2: Word Frequency in all Chat Logs...............................................................170
Table 8.3: Word Frequency on Chat Logs for Male and Female Victims...............172
Certificate of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at Charles Sturt University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgment is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by colleagues with whom I have worked at Charles Sturt University or elsewhere during my candidature is fully acknowledged. I agree that this thesis be accessible for the purpose of study and research in accordance with the normal conditions established by the Executive Director, Library Services or nominee, for the care, loan and reproduction of theses.

Signed ........................................
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Paid Editorial Assistance

This thesis was edited by Elite Editing, and editorial intervention was restricted to Standards D and E of the Australian Standards for Editing Practice.
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Publications and Conference Presentations


Abstract

Information regarding online sexual offending behaviour has been almost entirely gathered from self-report (interviews and questionnaires) methods from offenders. This thesis focuses on objective information produced as a result of a law enforcement investigation into the offending behaviour, including interviews with offenders, questionnaires completed by investigators, court reports and examination of items seized during investigations.

This study compared the characteristics of 136 (average age 46 years, range 21–79) online child sexual abuse offenders in Australia based on theories of characteristics of child sexual abuse contact offenders. Using data gleaned from Australian Federal Police investigations, characteristics that may influence offenders with a preference for increasingly graphic and violent child sex abuse images (based on the Combating Paedophile Information Networks in Europe Project (COPINE) typology of image preferences) were analysed. Important findings were the lack of significant effect of some variables expected on the basis of theoretical approaches to understanding sex offending such as Beech and Elliott (2009), and including variables such as intimacy deficits; the tendency for escalation in image preference to be associated with callousness in offenders; and a preference for images, video and written stories being associated with a preference for COPINE Levels 8, 9 and 10. Post hoc analysis investigating victim age, gender, format of material and level of deviance (as shown by the highest COPINE ratings) revealed that offenders that preferred all age groups also preferred all genders and formats of material.

This thesis further considered the nature of grooming behaviour in online offenders that progressed to contacting victims online. Previous models of online grooming behaviour suggested offenders progress from contact to grooming based on a five-stage model involving 1) friendship forming, 2) relationship forming, 3) risk assessment, 4) exclusivity and 5) sexual stage; however, some offenders did not necessarily progress directly through this linear process. Although only two of the offenders in this study progressed to contacting children online and grooming them for sexual purposes, the research was able to analyse 1,117 of their contacts with prospective victims. An NVivo analysis of these contacts suggested a more direct and non-linear path to recruiting.
potential victims with scant heed paid to strategies such as risk assessment or relationship development, and progression to the sexual stage within minutes of initial contact.

In psychology, it has been hypothesised that online child sexual abuse offenders have similar characteristics and behaviours to those of contact child sexual offenders. Clinical models hypothesise that offending can relate to intimacy and social skills deficits, distorted sexual scripts, emotional dysregulation and cognitive distortions have been used to explain the offending. The current study found that offender callousness towards the victim and indiscriminate interest in child abuse material—through preference for all victim age groups and genders—and format of material (image, video and written stories) appeared to be more important to the offender.

It has further been hypothesised that online grooming behaviour is similar to contact offending in that the offender follows a process to form an attachment with the child and to progress through risk assessment, an exclusive relationship and finally the sexual stage; although at times online offenders do not follow all stages. The current study found that some online grooming offenders did not follow a linear process and very quickly progressed to the sexual stage. It is therefore proposed that for some online groomers there is no intention to meet with the victim and the purpose of grooming online is for fantasy development.
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>anonymity, convenience and escape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>Australian Federal Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEOP</td>
<td>Child Exploitation and Online Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPINE</td>
<td>Combating Paedophile Information Networks in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>information technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITSO</td>
<td>integrated theory of sexual offending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWF</td>
<td>Internet Watch Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCMEC</td>
<td>National Center for Missing and Exploited Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSPCC</td>
<td>National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCSOQ</td>
<td>Online Child Sex Offenders Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIU</td>
<td>problematic Internet use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROMIS</td>
<td>Police Real-time Online Management Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSVP</td>
<td>Risk for Sexual Violence Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Sentencing Advisory Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM</td>
<td>structured decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
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Chapter 1: The Internet, Problematic Behaviour and Child Sexual Abuse

Chapter 1 will provide a brief overview of the history of the Internet and its relationship to problematic behaviour and child sexual abuse. The chapter will cover a statement of the issue under investigation, the rationale behind the Internet and abuse images, escalation in image preferences and habituation to images, and how offender groom online.

1.1 Background

The Internet has been described as the greatest facilitator of communication, education and social interaction; however, it is not without negative consequences. Internet technology—‘which by itself is morally neutral’—has caused the creation of criminal communities that can transcend great distances and obstacles, and affords the user accessibility, affordability, anonymity and durability (Butt, 2009; Cooper, McLoughlin & Campbell, 2000; Mercado, Merdian & Egg, 2011; Webster et al., 2012; Whittle, Hamilton-Giachritsis, Beech & Collings, 2013).

New technologies have created a number of dilemmas for society. They have eliminated national boundaries that previously hindered people’s ability to communicate with each other; distance is no longer viewed as an impediment to communication, and information exchange cannot be controlled by governments (Gottschalk, 2011a; Quayle & Taylor, 2005; Taylor, 2001). The linking of communities and cultures has also produced a growth in the sexual exploitation of children through child sexual abuse images, online contact and grooming of children for sexual purposes, information sharing among like-minded individuals, and child sex tourism (Quayle & Taylor, 2005; Taylor, 2001). The apparent limitless and expansion of the medium has also created problems in the investigation of offences of child abuse images and grooming of children online because what may be illegal in one jurisdiction may not be illegal in a second.

The Internet has become closely linked to sexuality and sexual behaviour as it provides for sexual fantasies and relationships to be forged through text and images. Quayle (2005) reported on the results of a study by Cooper and Griffin-Shelley (2002), which estimated
that 20% of Internet users engage in some form of online sexual activity that involves sexuality ‘for purposes of recreation, entertainment, exploration, support, education, commerce, efforts to attain and secure sexual or romantic partners and so on’ (Quayle, 2005, p. 127).

The Internet has influenced the potential role of persona, as it allows people the opportunity to be anonymous, change gender and age, and to express facets of themselves they would otherwise not present due to fear of disapproval or sanctions. The Internet is likely to facilitate self-expression due to the anonymity it provides, reducing social costs for those who express views outside the normally accepted views of society. There are also costs in disclosing one’s views on taboo topics to one’s family and friends in face-to-face encounters, which is likely to be met with a negative response. Consequently, disclosing the true self’s generally unacceptable views or beliefs in an online capacity to those who hold similar beliefs is likely to create bonds of empathy and understanding within the relationship, which provides the offender the support needed to pursue their interests with the belief that they are not alone (Bargh, McKenna & Fitzsimons, 2002).

It has been reported that the use of the Internet as a medium to propagate offences against children has been increasing, but due to the nature of the offence and its sheer emotiveness there has been limited research into the role of child sexual abuse images in the offending process (Taylor, Holland & Quayle, 2001). Since these comments by Taylor et al. (2001) there has been an increase in the amount of research into the Internet and offending against children online, including the research of Beech and Elliott (2012), Carr (2012), Elliott, Beech and Mandeville-Norden (2012), McAlinden (2013).

The collecting and producing of child sexual abuse images is not a new phenomenon, with information to suggest that as early as 1847 postcard albums of erotic images including those of children were produced and sold. It has been reported that in Victorian times collections were known to be very large. In 1874, London Police attended the studio of photographer Henry Hayler and seized 130,000 photographs of pornographic images, including images of child abuse. These images were on glass plates and so the size of the collection would have been significant, whereas today many more images can be stored without the need to physically maintain the item; they can be stored on very small devices such as memory sticks (Quayle & Taylor, 2005).
The International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) working group on offences against children defines child pornography as ‘the consequences of the exploitation or sexual abuse perpetrated against a child. It can be defined as any means of depicting or promoting sexual abuse of a child, including print and/or audio, centred on sex acts or the genital organs of children’ (Taylor, Quayle & Holland, 2001, p. 95).

Problems have been identified in the investigation of child abuse images as different jurisdictions do not necessarily agree on the legal age of consent, or definition of child. Within Australia different jurisdictions have different ages for consent to participate in sexual interactions. In the ACT, NSW, NT, Victoria and WA consent is given at 16 years of age, whereas in SA and Tasmania the age of consent is 17 years of age. In the Philippines and Cambodia a child is defined as below 18 years of age. These legal differences can impact on the investigation into child abuse. Cultural, religious and ethnic differences also can impact on the legal or socially acceptable age of consent. This, coupled with the difficulty in identifying victims from images or the ability to determine victim age in images, hinders investigations and determination of whether an offence has been committed.

The age of consent and the moral dilemma of what is considered an appropriate relationship are also problematic. Groups such as ‘boylover’ and ‘childlover’ believe that the use of legal definitions of age of consent is overly simplistic in determining acceptable relationships. Such groups have regularly attempted to support the notion that an adult and child can engage in an equal and meaningful relationship no matter the age difference, and that children have the ability to make these decisions for themselves. Individuals who ascribe to these beliefs are often reported to hold cognitive distortions that promote the ability of children to make decisions for themselves about when they can participate in sexual activity. The issues around cognitive distortions are considered more fully in Chapter 2.

As a consequence of confusion surrounding age, erotica, pornography and sexual abuse there has been a change in the terminology used by those in the field of children and sexual imagery. The term ‘child pornography’ was previously used in situations where individuals accessed and viewed images of children as sexual objects. However, as Quayle, Loof and Palmer (2008) and Sheldon (2011) have reflected, sexualised material relating to children is now more commonly referred to as ‘abusive images’. This change in terminology differentiates between pornography, which of itself may be legally
obtained adult pornographic material, and the abuse of children who are unable to make decisions for themselves on sexual matters.

The exploitation of children can be seen from four broad perspectives: 1) a concern with the development of empirical evidence in relation to the offending and the offence, 2) legal and law enforcement efforts to combat the offence, 3) the issues surrounding the victim and their support, and 4) the conceptual and practical understanding of the offence process and the ongoing management of the offenders (Mercado et al., 2011; Quayle & Taylor, 2005). However, as Taylor (2002) and Taylor et al. (2001) explain, child sexual abuse images are generally seen from two distinct perspectives: first, the law enforcement perspective that focuses on the legal definition, emphasising the obscene or sexual nature of the images; and second, the understanding of why child sexual abuse images are produced or collected, which are essentially psychological questions. What makes child sexual abuse images attractive to an offender with a sexual interest in children is how it is interpreted in the offender’s mind. Hence, we need to understand what it is that makes child sexual abuse images relevant in the lives of those interested in children as sexual objects, and why some of these individuals progress to contact with children online.

In recent years a number of reports have emerged that describe the growing use of the Internet in the abuse of children. These reports are based on known events, or estimates from research conducted on Internet activity relating to contact with children and child abuse images. Aiken, Moran and Berry (2011) reported that the estimated number of Internet users in 1995 was approximately 16 million, rising to 580 million in 2002 and exceeded 2 billion by 2010. Below is a summary of the existing data on online behaviour of children and offenders; over time there is likely to be substantial change in the information available and improved predictions on behaviour, as more research into this subject is performed:

- In considering the global issue of the link between the Internet and child sexual abuse images, former Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty referred to a 2004 Canadian estimate that more than 100,000 child pornographic websites existed, which resulted in US$3 billion per annum in revenue (Griffith & Simon, 2008).
- In July, 2004 one leading UK Internet service provider reportedly blocked more than 20,000 attempts per day to access child pornography on the Internet, and between 15,000 and 18,000 daily attempts to view child abuse images are blocked in Norway (Quayle, 2009).
• Middleton, Mandeville-Norden and Hayes (2009) reported that by 2005 in England and Wales, one-third of all sexual convictions were for Internet-related offences.

• The UK’s Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) reported that in its first year (1996), it received 615 reports of Internet abuse and a decade later, in 2006, it received 27,750 reports for the year (Internet Watch Foundation, 2008).

• In 2006, McKinsey Worldwide (cited in Bourke & Hernandez, 2009) estimated that commercial child pornography was a $20 billion industry worldwide, which was predominantly fuelled by the Internet. This reflects a significant increase in revenue in a very short period of time and projects a significant increase in victims and number of offenders who are accessing, distributing and producing the images for increased consumption.

• In 2007, Interpol estimated that there were between 10,000 and 20,000 child victims of sexual abuse whose images appeared on the Internet (http://www.interpol.int/public/ICPO/pressreleases/PR2007/PR200745background.asp, viewed 2 July 2010). The scale of the problem has escalated since then and in 2008, Interpol’s Child Abuse Image Database contained in excess of 520,000 separate images for which they had identified 680 victims worldwide, with a number of victims unidentified (Elliott & Beech, 2009).

• The Canadian Centre for Child Protection (CCCP, 2009) conducted an analysis of websites that had been referred to them as part of the cybertip hotline, which involved 15,662 incidents relating to websites containing child sexual abuse images and 4,110 unique images. In this analysis they reported:
  o over 35% of all images showed serious sexual assault
  o in excess of 77% of web pages had at least one child abuse image of a child less than eight years of age, with many showing infants and toddlers being assaulted
  o children under eight years of age were most likely to be sexually assaulted (37%), whereas older children were more likely to be posed nude or in a sexualised manner
  o children abused through extreme assaults with bestiality, torture, bondage and degrading acts (e.g. defecation) mostly (68%) occurred when the child was less than eight years of age
  o 83% of all images were of girls.

• Arrest for possession of child abuse images in the United States of America (USA) in 2009 had increased by three times over the number in 2000 (Wolak, Finkelhor & Mitchell, 2012a).
• In the USA between 2000 and 2009, arrests for crimes involving the production of child abuse images more than quadrupled, with the growth relating to the number of adults that solicited a minor to take pictures of themselves for the adult offender (Wolak, Finkelhor & Mitchell, 2012b).

• In the USA in 2009, law enforcement agencies made an estimated 8,144 arrests for technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation crimes, which was three times the number of arrests in 2000 (Wolak, Finkelhor & Mitchell, 2012c).

• A report by the BBC reveals that almost half of all sex offences in the UK are committed against children, despite children making up just 21% of the population. The 19,250 reported offences made up 47% of the total reported offences in 2008–9. A similar result was reported by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) in January 2010, which reported that more than 21,618 sex offences—or 60 a day—had been committed against children in 2008–9. The NSPCC further reported that one in seven victims were younger than 10 years of age, and 1,000 cases involved children aged five years or less (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk/10254922.stm, viewed on 7 June 2010).

• In 2011, the US National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) received 161,000 reports of child abuse images—a growth of 86% in reports from 2009 and 2010. NCMEC further reported that the images were increasingly violent depicting sexual abuse on very young children and infants (as cited in Webster et al., 2012).

• The IWF in 2011 reported identifying 2,755 worldwide Internet domains containing child sexual abuse, of which 80% were commercial in nature; an increase of 33% in the number of domains since 2006 (Sheldon, 2011).

• The number of referrals to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) rose 181% between April 2011 and March 2012. CEOP predicts that the number of referrals to the agency will continue to rise annually (CEOP, 2012).

The above figures suggest that the issue is a continually growing problem and will continue to be so for a considerable period of time. As has been suggested, through the medium of the Internet, child sexual offenders regularly share images of children and the industry of sharing these images is increasingly large and lucrative (Wyre, 2003).

As suggested by Mercado et al. (2011) and Tomak et al. (2009), the Internet provides a new mechanism for the commission of sex crimes through networks and resources,
exchange of pornographic material and instruction in accessing and grooming children. The nature of the problem and the escalation in the use of the Internet has also led Carr (2006) to state that the problem will continue to exist for a considerable period of time not just in relation to the number of websites or images, but as a result of an increasing number of indecent images online that are becoming more disturbing, involving greater violence and the abuse of increasingly younger children. This is further supported by a trend analysis by the CEOP (2012) in the UK that suggested sexual abuse images were becoming more extreme, sadistic and violent. CEOP (2012) reported that in a comparison of two IWF reports from 2008 and 2010, images depicting penetrative abuse rose 7.6%, and that a greater proportion of images involved younger children.

Danet (1998) suggested that the anonymity and playfulness of the Internet provides a powerful and disinhibiting effect on behaviour. According to Taylor (2002), the Internet ‘allows self-determined involvement without necessary compromise of identity’ (p. 4), provides a sense of control over the medium, and involvement can be passive such as through viewing of images, or active such as through the creation of online identities to fulfil sexual fantasies. This allows the offender to access and download images, contact like-minded individuals and children, and interact with and groom children online, with the resultant belief that they are anonymous, secure and can enjoy their sexual activities and fantasies in the knowledge that they are unlikely to be discovered (Cohen-Almagor, 2012).

The decentralised nature of the Internet may result in changes in the way we think about online participation. The Internet gives users complete control over their actions as there is no conventional hierarchy or controlling body to oversight their activity (Taylor & Quayle, 2003). Decentralisation of the Internet has created problems for law enforcement due to the confusion created as to where jurisdictional boundaries lay, where the responsibility for investigation lies and the differences across jurisdictions in the legislation surrounding online child abuse images and offending.

In an attempt to understand the attraction that individuals have for using the Internet for sexual interests, Cooper, Scherer, Boies and Gordon (1999) proposed the ‘Triple A’ engine to explain how it was viewed by users. The Triple A engine is described as facilitating the consumption of child pornography, whereby the As refer to:
• Accessibility—millions of websites are available for viewing 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
• Affordability—the use of the Internet does not require substantial financial outlay.
• Anonymity—viewing does not require contact with another person and one can consume the images in the privacy of their home (Endrass et al., 2009).

The Triple A model was further developed by the suggestion that anonymity is enhanced for the consumer, who is not required to contact a dealer or producer to obtain images, which can be easily stored with little effort required to keep illegal material hidden (Fottrell, Debrota & Hakes, 2012; Quayle, Erooga, Wright, Taylor & Harbinson, 2006; Quayle, Vaughan & Taylor, 2006).

Manning (2005) supported the concept of the Triple A engine effect as being widely accepted as a primary reason for exacerbation of pre-existing problems with other forms of pornography, and for people being drawn into using the Internet for problematic pornographic material, which has increased with the advent of the Internet. As Leiblum and Doring (1998, as cited in Manning, 2005) stated:

Personal inhibition levels, social controls, and the lack of willing partners and sexual scenes that may limit sexual activity in everyday contexts are obsolete in cyberspace. It is easy for latent desires to be realised in cyberspace. Internet sexuality may thus serve as a catalyst (p. 4).

Although the role of the Internet in deviant behaviour has been considered, it is important to identify that social conditions external to the Internet have also increased rates of social alienation and interpersonal dysfunction, and the Internet has provided the opportunity for people to meet their needs in ways that could not otherwise be achieved in contemporary society. That is, there is a synergy between external social conditions and the use of the Internet as a facilitator to achieve individual needs.

It has also been reported by Barron and Kimmel (2000) that the use of the Internet has changed the manner in which pornography, or at least adult pornography, has been distributed. They compared pornography across a range of media including magazines from the 1950s and 1960s, the introduction of adult video in the 1970s and 1980s, and pornography on UseNet in the 1990s. They reported that UseNet allowed access to the greatest number of users at the least expense, and that this led to an increase in violence from magazine to video to UseNet, with the greatest increase from video to UseNet. They
also found that Usenet showed men in dominant positions in far greater proportion than the other two media, indicating an increase in both violence and misogyny in the images.

The Internet has also been seen to provide easier access to child sexual abuse images and children due to the perceived anonymity, accessibility and affordability that the Internet provides (Cohen-Almagor, 2012; Cooper et al., 2000). Prior to the introduction of the Internet and the access it provides, those with a sexual interest in children and viewing child sexual abuse images would have been required to know where to access illegal material and either travel to locations where they could purchase it, or receive it through the postal system (Eke & Seto, 2012). Having to attend a location or being reliant on the postal system and security checks increased the risk of being discovered for those that either distributed or received the material. There would be a period of delay in obtaining the material and the storage and security of child abuse images would also be a concern for those in possession of illegal images. With the advent of the Internet, the possibility of discovery has been greatly reduced. The offender is no longer required to travel to collect child abuse material, is not required to rely on the postal system, can access the material at any time, the material may be available freely or for a minimal fee, and can be easily stored on a computer or other means of storage that can be hidden from access by others. The Internet additionally provides a means by which an offender can have contact with children or other like-minded individuals, reducing the risk of being identified, due to the perceived anonymity of the medium.

Quayle (2005) proposes that although the fascination with sexual material is not a new phenomenon, the advent of the Internet has greatly expanded the quantity and variety of available material, and all predilections can be catered for. The reasons for accessing such information online may include curiosity, feelings of isolation in their current relationship, distress, or fulfilling sexual needs that are otherwise illegal.

Young (2002) proposed a model known as ACE (anonymity, convenience and escape) to explain how the Internet provides an environment that encourages and validates deviant sexual behaviour. As can be seen, the anonymity and convenience are shared with the Triple A engine in that they provide the viewer the opportunity to access images or be online without being identified, at low cost and high ease of access. Young’s (2002) concept of ‘escape’ can be linked to the issue of lowered personal inhibitions, poor social
controls and deviant sexual scripts referred to by Leiblum and Doring (1998, as cited in Manning, 2005).

As Palmer (2005, as cited in Swedish Children’s Welfare Foundation, 2006) stated, ‘the new technology gives people who are sexually interested in children a new medium to network, share information and fantasies, explore new identities and normalise their behaviour’ (p. 9). Ward (2000) believes that offenders select environments (other offenders, and those with similar attitudes and beliefs) that support their own lifestyles and implicit theories that relate to how they see their world and the world around them, and explanations for how the world operates.

1.2 Statement of the Issue under Investigation

A number of authors have attempted to explain why those with a sexual interest in children collect pornographic images. Taylor and Quayle (2003) make the point that those who view child abuse images online are distanced from the sexual behaviour portrayed by time and space. Their involvement in the act is through their imagination resulting in sexual behaviour, at least through masturbation. As such, viewing child abuse images is not a passive act and usually involves sexual behaviour, although this is generally a solitary activity for the viewer. Pornographic images are a business whereby the Internet encourages the production of new material. This production may be considered ‘victimless’ by some as it includes photo-shopping of advertising material, online activities and video recording of the actual abuse of a child.

Taylor and Quayle (2003) develop the argument that child abuse images assist sexual behaviour in other ways, such as the grooming process for those that progress to physical contact offending, or grooming children online to sexually desensitise the victim, facilitate their seduction by breaking down inhibitions and forging relationships between the two.

Healy (1997, as cited in Quayle and Taylor, 2002a) provides the explanation that the images are used to whet the viewer’s sexual appetite and stimulate sexual arousal, and this can be achieved even with images that are considered non-sexual. This can also lead to sexual contact with children, as the images fuel sexual fantasy (Cline, 2000). It is hypothesised that psychological factors associated with exposure to child abuse images
appear to result in a process of disinhibition that leads the viewer to progress from a passive observer to an active participant, or contact offender. Such pictures are considered by the viewer as useful in validating and justifying the behaviour, and the fact that such material is available reinforces the belief that the behaviour is carried out by others and so is not abnormal or wrong. Such material is also useful for offenders in their grooming behaviour as they are able to show the images to a child to habituate them to such content—which reinforces to the child that it is not wrong as other children are involved in the activities—and to demonstrate what their sexual needs are and what they would like the child to do for them. Finally, images preserve the child at the age and stage at which the offender finds them most attractive (Cline, 2000; Quayle & Taylor, 2002a).

Tomak, Weschler, Ghahramanlou-Holloway, Virden and Nademin (2009) have proposed that the Internet has become a mechanism for the commission of sexual offences against children, allowing these individuals and groups to forge networks and build resources promoting victimisation, exchanging child sexual abuse images and providing instructions on how to go about this deviant behaviour, all in anonymity, while perfecting their craft and generally avoiding detection.

This thesis reviewed the characteristics of 136 online child sexual abuse offenders in Australia. These characteristics, established from research into child contact offenders, were analysed to determine which characteristics may influence offenders with a preference for increasingly graphic and violent images.

In exploring the connection between the use of the Internet and sexual solicitation of children, the NCMEC reported that around one in seven Internet users between the ages of 10 and 17 had been subjected to online sexual solicitation and that of these, 23% will be asked by the offender to meet face to face. This research also showed that very few children took up the offer to meet with the individual that contacted them online, but it does highlight that the attempt to contact children online was something that occurred quite frequently. What is of concern in this survey of online child victimisation is that only 5% of the solicitations were reported to law enforcement or Internet service providers, and that 56% of those solicited did not disclose the incident to anyone, including parents and friends (Wolak, Mitchell & Finkelhor, 2006).
This thesis further examined the online grooming of children for sexual purposes utilising theories of online and contact grooming of children to determine if the grooming process for contact offenders was similar to that used by online offenders.

1.3 Rationale: The Internet and Sexual Abuse Images

Kennedy-Souza (1998) proposed that the use of the Internet was a continuation of the trend in people spending increasingly more time with technology than with other human beings, and this alteration in mood resulted in an ‘addiction’. Taylor and Quayle (2003) suggested that the Internet has created a newly categorised form of sexual offender, different to that of the Victorian era, although they may have no direct contact with children. Little is known as to the relationship between online and contact offenders. Engagement with the Internet is a dynamic process that often involves escalation, and as Taylor and Quayle (2003) report from their interviews with convicted online offenders, there was frequent reference to the Internet having a compulsive quality resulting in the continuation and escalation of behaviour. However, as is often noted, the cognition of offenders with respect to their illegal behaviour is often driven by a need to rationalise the activity and minimise their responsibility for their actions. It was further suggested that prolonged use of the Internet could result in changes in mood states, where individuals could alter their mood state when feeling depressed, anxious or isolated, and that individuals turned to online activities as a means of managing these difficult emotional states (Morahan-Martin & Schumacher, 2000; Quayle, Vaughan & Taylor, 2006). As Morahan-Martin and Schumacher (2000) proposed, the Internet is able to create a private and arousing world where the individual could progress beyond normal limits: individuals found it was a means to regain control, but this changed over time and individuals reported loss of control and addiction to the behaviour.

The notion that offending behaviour online can be related to Internet addiction has been considered by some researchers in recent times. Bostwick and Bucci (2008) reported that a malfunctioning reward centre is common in compulsive behaviours such as drug abuse, overeating, gambling and excessive sexual activity. They reported that in a case study the individual compulsively used the Internet for sexual gratification including viewing adult pornography, chatting online, extended masturbation sessions and arranging meetings with women for sex. This behaviour escalated over time where many hours each day was spent online, affecting the individual’s relationships and employment. Over a period of
seven years the individual dropped in and out of treatment and was prescribed anti-
depressants and psychotherapy. Bostwick and Bucci (2008) reported that it was only
when he was prescribed naltrexone did the individual’s cyber activity decline
dramatically and his psychosocial functioning improved. However, research into the role
of dopamine receptors is still in the early stages and more research will be required to
determine their role in excessive Internet use and online offending.

Turkle (1995, as cited in Quayle & Taylor, 2002b) viewed the use of the Internet as an
opportunity for those that had difficulty interacting with others, where they could
communicate with lowered social risk and lowered inhibitions, without the demands
generally associated with friendships. Taylor (2002) referred to this as providing a virtual
community for participants, which provides the sense of involvement, intimacy and
belonging that would normally be expected in interpersonal relationships. This then
provides a non-threatening and secure means by which those with a sexual interest in
children are able to share and communicate with like-minded others. This virtual
community also provides the participant with sources of support from others, justification
for their behaviour that is not accepted by the majority of the population, self-help,
facilitation of the exchange and distribution of child sexual abuse images, and potentially
access to children in pursuit of contact offences (Fottrell et al., 2012; Taylor, 2002).

The position that the use of the Internet assists viewers in interacting with other like-
minded individuals, lowers inhibitions and provides a sense of involvement with the
community was supported by Quayle and Taylor (2002b). They reported their sample of
online offenders being able to use the Internet to escape from unpleasant realities of their
life, and through this being able to find pleasure in online sexual arousal and
masturbation. As Elliott and Beech (2009) have suggested that Internet offenders may
utilise the same strategies for dealing with their negative emotions as do contact sexual
offenders, who use sexual behaviours such as masturbation to cope with negative moods.

Granic and Lamey (2000) have suggested that the Internet is a self-organising system that
has the capacity to catalyse major shifts in the cognitive styles, values and beliefs of those
that interact online. Unlike most Western systems, which are based on modernist
principles of logical and hierarchical authority, the Internet does not follow the usual
hierarchical and centralised networks; power is spread through a decentralised model and
shared among a number of individuals and groups. As Granic and Lamey (2000) described:

How might everyday participation in such a decentralized, heterarchical system impact on modes of thinking? Experiences … may empower some people who have felt marginalized in modern society—particularly individuals who have felt oppressed due to their ethnicity, gender or physical abilities, or simply lack a voice due to their age or social class. Those who have never been able to function optimally in the ‘real world’ may feel they have a chance to do so when conventional hierarchical structures are broken down. Due to the Net’s flexibility and complexity, every individual’s idea and agenda either finds a niche or has the potential to organize one (p. 104).

The computer can become a mechanism for the metamorphosis for deviant fantasies to become more concrete and provide greater opportunities for the user to progress their general beliefs about how the world operates and their role in it (Holmes, Tewksbury & Holmes, 1998). The anonymity provided by the Internet allows those that utilise chat rooms to become less inhibited online. This loss of inhibition gives the user the opportunity to experiment with their online persona and to reveal multiple aspects about themselves, which may be either positive outlets to explore their sexuality or negative, such as the expression of sexual aggression (Hamman, 1996, as cited in Taylor & Quayle, 2003). This results in those that would normally be marginalised within society because of their deviant beliefs and attitudes becoming empowered by the Internet (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b).

Expanding on this proposal, Quayle et al. (2006) suggested that those with a propensity to use the Internet would misuse it to deal with difficult emotional states such as anxiety, stress and depression. Internet offenders themselves have reported escaping from their unpleasant realities using child sexual abuse images to ‘shut off’ from their circumstances, and find pleasure in online sexual viewing and masturbation (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b).

For those with a sexual interest in children, the Internet provides many opportunities for the user:
• the transfer of child abuse images through downloading, forwarding and producing images
• instant access to other like-minded individuals that may be viewers or producers of images of child sexual abuse
• to openly discuss their sexual desires with others
• to share ideas about gaining access to potential victims
• support from others that agree with their philosophy about adult–child relationships
• instant access to potential victims anywhere in the world
• ability to disguise identity from potential victims or to present as a child themselves
• ready access to chat rooms frequented by young people for targeting of victims
• access to personal information about potential victims
• the ability to engage with, and build the foundations for a relationship with a child or young person before engaging them in a sexual relationship (Beech & Elliott, 2012; Mahoney & Faulkner, 1997, as cited in Taylor & Quayle, 2003; Mercado et al., 2011).

When considering these ways in which the Internet provides the opportunity for offenders to satisfy their sexual interest in children, it is apparent that they allow the offender to forge an identity and find a meaning and purpose for their behaviour. Although the list may be non-psychological, the individual’s psychological needs are reinforced through access to other like-minded individuals, providing the viewer with an identity, meaning and purpose, the sharing of ideas and the philosophy of why they offend, and direct access to children.

Theories to explain the characteristics of those who are contact offenders against children are believed to also characterise those who had a preference for online child sexual abuse images and this was the basis for analysing the characteristics of the subjects in this thesis. Further, the theories to explain the grooming process for those who contact offended against children were also considered appropriate to explain the grooming process of children online, and these theories were reviewed in the analysis of the offenders who groomed children in this research.

Research has suggested that Internet child sexual offenders have similar psychological characteristics to contact child sexual offenders. Middleton et al. (2005; 2006; 2009) report congruence of dynamic risk factors between Internet and contact sexual offenders. Their research found a number of similarities between the two groups, particularly with respect to intimacy deficits and emotional dysregulation. This suggests that testing an accepted model of child contact sexual abuse offending on an Internet child sexual abuse offender population is worthwhile to determine if the identification of child sexual abuse image offenders is congruent with that of contact offenders, which will assist in the development of therapeutic models. It is hypothesised in the current research that Internet
child abuse image offenders share similarities with contact child abuse offenders and that testing a sample of Internet child abuse image offenders against an accepted model for child sexual abuse will highlight these similarities.
1.3.1 The Multi-dimensional Nature of Child Abuse Offending

Smallbone and Wortley (2000) note that it is widely agreed by most researchers in the field of child sexual abuse that the offending behaviour is a multi-dimensional and multi-determined phenomenon. However, there are differences of opinion among researchers regarding the extent to which child sexual abuse image offenders are similar to contact offenders. Tomak et al. (2009) do not consider that Internet sex offenders have profiles consistent with other sex offenders and suggest there can be no single typology for sex offenders (rapists, child molesters and incest offenders).

Research into situational approaches to sexual offending as has been reported by Wortley and Smallbone (2006), and how these criminogenic factors interact with clinical symptoms has been examined by Elliott and Beech (2009). The effect of the Internet on child sexual abuse image offending through secrecy, anonymity and isolationism are considered to be key components to resultant offending behaviour. As previously discussed, the ACE model provides an explanation for how offenders use the Internet in the belief that it is anonymous and conveniently provides cheap and immediate access to images, and escape from problems in the viewer’s life, which suggests the combination of situational factors and psychological explanations for offending. Elliott and Beech (2009) note a convergence between situational approaches and the integrated theory of sexual offending (ITSO) model of child sexual abuse (see Section 2.5), and that these environmental cues can create circumstances triggering psychological vulnerabilities, whereby the individual will behave in ways they would not normally behave (Ward & Beech, 2006).

1.4 Escalation of Child Sexual Abuse Image Preferences

Barron and Kimmel (2000) reported that in adult pornography there was evidence of satiation that led the consumer to seek out newer, more explicit and more violent sexual material in order to gain arousal. Although it is unclear if this escalation in adult pornography viewing was reflected in changes in child sexual abuse images, Taylor (2001) suggested that the emergence of new images of children being sexually abused were of younger children and showed increasing sexual and abusive victimisation.
The issue of escalation of aberrant behaviour for those with a sexual interest in children is not well understood. However, research conducted with individuals who are regular online viewers of adult pornography have reported a process of escalation in types of images viewed. Emmers-Sommer and Burns (2005) reported that in their sample, participants viewed a range of images from soft-core to hard-core pornography and coercion (e.g. victim being coerced into an unwanted sex act). Their sample admitted that the reason for consuming online pornography was in the main to masturbate, out of curiosity, boredom and to induce arousal resulting in the reduction of arousal as a result of masturbation. They suggested an increase in intensity of the pornography from soft-core, through hard-core and coercion, and that this related to an increase in rape myth acceptance. Rape myth acceptance is a notion from Burt (1980, as cited in Emmers-Sommer & Burns, 2005) that proposes that the offending individual believes that the victim is responsible for (usually) her victimisation, and that little or no responsibility for the sexual aggression lies with (usually) the man.

If, as suggested by Emmers-Sommer and Burns (2005), there is an increase in intensity of images for adult pornography viewers, then is there a possibility that those with a sexual interest in children could also increase in intensity of images? For example, if an individual commences with an interest in naturalistic non-nude images of children that could be described as indicative of a sexual interest in children, but not an illegal act, is it likely that they will escalate the intensity of their images to nudity revealing genitalia through to the more sadistic acts and/or those involving bestiality?

Mulac, Jansma and Linz (2002) reported that past research had shown that short-term exposure to non-violent sexual media stimulation can result in short-term cognitive changes in men, and that these changes also affected their behaviour towards women. This was further supported by the existence of deleterious effects from viewing violence paired with sexuality, where men became increasingly aggressive, increased in their negative attitudes towards women, or both. Mulac et al. (2002) paired males and females interacting together and found that males that had viewed sexually explicit videos were rated as more dominant towards their female partner, displayed greater anxiety, ignored the intellectual contributions of their partner, positioned themselves further from their partner, touched their partner for longer periods of time and spent less time looking at their partner, when compared with men that had viewed a non-sexual film. This suggests
that pornography can alter an individual’s cognitions and behaviour, at least in the short term, but that the viewer is likely to return to their pre-test attitudes towards women.

A further study by Golde, Strassberg, Turner and Lowe (2000) reported that when male college students viewed video vignettes of sexually explicit and non-explicit interactions that were degrading to women, they were more likely to express attitudes supportive of rape than were those that viewed non-degrading videos. However the length of time for which these effects are sustained is likely to be determined by length and frequency of observation. It is hypothesised that although single exposure to deviant material may have only a short-lived effect, constant exposure to such material may increase the underlying deviancy and promote over time a more generalised acceptance of deviant material.

A number of researchers have considered the issue of online pornographers becoming desensitised to explicit material. The viewer becomes emotionally less affected by what they view and this has been shown in those with repeated exposure to violence in other contexts (Krafka, Linz, Donnerstein & Penrod, 1997).

1.5 Habituation to Child Sexual Abuse Images

Several studies have provided evidence that pornography is a by-product of contact offending (Goldstein, 1999) and a facilitator in the seduction of new victims (Tyler & Stone, 1985), and plays a role in sexual fantasy (Lanning, 1992). Quayle and Taylor (2002b) reported that the majority of their offenders had moved through a variety of pornographies involving not just children, where they escalated to more extreme material that could be related to the age of the children in the images (victims selected were younger than before), or to the actual activities being conducted (increasing violence, sadism and bestiality).

Quayle et al. (2006) argued that ‘the most reasonable assumption is that pornography may influence, but not cause, the development of sexual offending in some men’. However, they go on to say that regardless of the relationship between individual offending and access to abuse images, the production of such images necessarily requires the sexual abuse of a child, and the demand for more images fuels more production, and therefore more abuse.
This proposition is reinforced through the work of Taylor (2002), producing concerns about habituation over time leading to progression into increasingly violent sexual images, or younger children. Wortley and Smallbone (2006) have described a corrosive effect as offenders become attracted to increasingly severe images through a process of desensitisation to the harm experienced by the victims.

For some offenders the exposure to child sexual abuse images may trigger mechanisms that support pre-existing sexual fantasies, urges and interests, and greater tolerance may develop for those immersed in pornography, leading to more deviant stimuli being required to achieve the same levels of arousal and satiation (Hernandez, 2009). As Quayle and Taylor (2003) reported, a number of offenders in their study referred to becoming bored and satiated with the material they were viewing. The cognition that supported accessing new material was to increase levels of sexual stimulation. As one offender described his behaviour:

I was actually getting quite bored as it were … erm … with the sort of child pornography … I was becoming sort of much more obsessed with bondage … and sort of torture … imagery. So … I’d kind of exhausted … the potential that it had for sexual arousal (Quayle & Taylor, 2003, p. 102).

This proposition then suggests that over time offenders, in particular those that view increasingly violent and sadistic material, will require further increases in violence and aggression to maintain the same or greater levels of arousal (Taylor, 2002). As Curnoe and Langevin (2002) have suggested, the abundance of child sexual abuse images on the Internet is likely to fuel fantasies that may exacerbate and accelerate the offending behaviour.

1.6 The Progression to Online Grooming of Children and Online Behaviour

Is there a nexus between online and physical contact sexual offending against children? In an interview with the Metropolitan Police Paedophile Unit in the UK, Davidson (2007) quoted a senior officer as saying:

I suspect that many Internet sex offenders are really just sex offenders who now have access to the Internet, with the advantages it affords in terms of access and anonymity and are not just ‘collectors’ at all. I recall a recent case for example involving an offender who claims the Internet led him to offend. He had a senior job in the IT [information technology] industry (very wealthy), he used the Internet to target and groom a family with children. He started by using indecent
images of young children but then arranged to meet the family and over a considerable period of time helped with babysitting etc. and became trusted (typical grooming behaviour) he eventually raped their young child (p. 39).

A number of studies have revealed co-occurrences of contact sexual offences in child pornographers (Bourke & Hernandez, 2009; Hernandez, 2000; Seto, Cantor & Blanchard, 2006; Wolak, Finkelhor & Mitchell, 2005). However, it is important to acknowledge the difficulty in determining the level of co-occurrence of contact offenders and viewers of images when it is likely so few contact and/or online offenders are caught (Firestone et al., 1999).

Hanson and Babchishin (2009) reported on a number of studies that showed that of 3,536 online offenders, ~18.5% were known to have committed a contact sexual offence, most likely against a child. They then considered the self-reports of 452 online sexual offenders in which 59.1% reported prior sexual contact with a child or children. Again this reinforces the concept that online sexual offenders are also offline contact offenders, but that many have never been caught or charged with such offences.

However, Hanson and Babchishin (2009) noted from other studies that online offenders had a higher level of education (Wolak et al., 2005), higher rates of paedophilia (Seto et al., 2006), higher rates of sexual preoccupation and lower rates of antisocial orientation/psychopathy (Webb, Craissati & Keen, 2007) than did offline child molesters.

Other studies, however, have provided little empirical support for the notion of viewing child pornography as co-occurring with physical contact offending. For example, Endrass et al., (2009) propose that child pornography consumers form a distinct group of sex offenders, although some may progress to contact offending.

It has been proposed that viewing child sexual abuse images is a maladaptive strategy to avoid contact offending against children, and that offender’s use the images as fantasy rehearsal and for masturbation purposes. However, it has also been acknowledged that many online offenders do express their sexual interest in children solely through images and are unlikely to commit contact offences (Ward & Hudson, 1998).

As stated, the relationship between the viewing of child abuse images and contact offending is unknown, although the number of people convicted with child sexual abuse
images continues to grow. To date, little research on reconviction rates has been conducted due to the recency of the introduction of Internet pornography legislation; however, it was reported that in 2006 the number of Internet-related sexual offences in the UK accounted for almost one-third of all sexual offence convictions (Middleton et al., 2009).

In a study by Rabun (1984, cited in CCCP, 2009), it was found that of the 1,400 cases of child molestation in Louisville, Kentucky between 1980 and 1984, pornography was related to every case and child pornography was used in the majority of cases. These findings lend support to the belief that for those with a sexual interest in children, the use of adult and child pornography in the offending process is important to the offender. The fact that these offences were recorded prior to the explosion of the use of the Internet for communication, facilitation and networking suggests that the use of pornographic images, and in particular child pornographic images, would have been more widely found if the access to such images had been easier. For example, the access to child sexual abuse images would have been more difficult during this period of time as the offender would have been required to know where to purchase the material and to collect or receive the material through the postal system, placing themselves at risk of being identified. Of interest is that an association between pornography use—including adult pornography—and aggression has been found in a number of studies. However, the type of pornography was a moderator, whereby exposure to nudity decreased aggression, but exposure to non-violent sexual behaviour and violent sexual behaviour significantly increased aggression (Kingston, Federoff, Firestone, Curry & Bradford, 2008). Kingston et al. (2008) further reported that pornography use was positively correlated with coercive sexual behaviour and was predictive of sexual aggression, and that frequency and type of adult pornography correlated with criminal and violent recidivism in sex offenders. This suggests the possibility that there has been an evolution in the way pornography has been viewed, rather than the outcomes of viewing.

Victimisation is the central topic when considering child sexual abuse images. With every viewing of an image, the victim can be described as being re-victimised. Child sexual abuse image viewing allows access to a child or children that may otherwise be difficult to obtain. Contact offending, or actual abuse is far more difficult to attain, and may often be a complex and lengthy procedure to meet a child and groom and engage with them prior to the offending act, and many offenders have reflected on this as part of their
rationale for maintaining involvement in child sexual abuse images (Taylor, Holland et al., 2001).

In order to commit offences with little or no self-censure, offenders need to disengage moral self-sanctions. Bandura (1999) stated that ‘moral agency is manifested in both the power to refrain from behaving inhumanely and the proactive power to behave humanely’ (p. 193). Disengaging self-regulatory mechanisms can allow inhumane activity through cognitive restructuring of inhumane behaviour into worthy behaviour by moral justification (e.g. redefining killing in the military), sanitising language (e.g. civilians killed during a military strike are often referred to as ‘collateral damage’) and advantageous comparison (e.g. terrorists comparing their activities as acts of martyrdom in response to perceived cruelties to people with whom they identify); through disavowal of personal agency by diffusion (e.g. group activities that are shared, such as one offender taking the photographs while another commits the assault) or displacement of responsibility (e.g. comments such as ‘I was only following orders’); disregarding or minimising the injury caused (e.g. when the injury committed is physically removed from the individual, such as when viewing child abuse images online); and attribution of blame to the victim (e.g. comments that the child instigated the abuse) or dehumanisation of the victim (e.g. adults have the right to do whatever they want and children are there to assist in fulfilling their needs) (Bandura, 1999; McAlister, Bandura & Owen, 2006; Osofsky, Bandura & Zimbardo, 2005; White, Bandura & Bero, 2009).

Bandura (1999) proposes that disengagement practices do not instantly transform the individual into a cruel offender. Rather, given appropriate social conditions, decent people can conduct extraordinarily cruel actions. Under these conditions and over time, gradual disengagement of moral self-censure occurs where they may perform aggressive acts tolerated with little discomfort. Through repeated enactments the level of ruthlessness increases until those acts previously considered abhorrent can be routinely and thoughtlessly performed. Bandura (1999) reported that gender differences in moral disengagement do not exist in the early years, but that boys become more facile moral disengagers than girls, those of lower education and older individuals (Osofsky et al., 2005).

In furtherance of moral disengagement, Bandura (1999) considered the role of telecommunications technologies to transform the mode of socio-political influence.
Mobilisation of a collective influence against injurious social policies via the Internet can be rapid, far reaching and free from social control. This concept fits within the framework that the Internet can provide an individual and groups the opportunity to influence the moral beliefs of those vulnerable to involvement in child abuse image offending and contacting of children online for sexual purposes.

1.7 Online Grooming of Children

Taylor and Quayle (2003) reported that a number of the offenders in their study furthered their sexual interest in children by progressing from accessing child sexual abuse imagery—which intensified the individual’s sexual arousal—and behaviour to engage in a relationship with a child. In one case, the individual progressed to accessing chat rooms where he presented as a young boy and over time his ‘true self’ (as an adult with an interest in boys) in an attempt to meet boys offline.

If it is the case that some or many Internet offenders are undiscovered sexual contact offenders, or have yet to progress to physical abuse themselves, then attempts by those offenders to groom children online may be similar to those attempts made by physical abuse offenders. O’Connell (2003) reported a process by which online groomers made contact with children, and through the Internet were able to progress the relationships similar to the process offline. This process was based on five stages of grooming:

- Friendship, whereby the offender attempts to get to know the child with whom they are in contact.
- Relationship forming, an extension of the friendship stage that may include discussions about school and home life.
- Risk assessment relates to the offender attempting to determine the risk of being caught by a parent or guardian.
- Exclusivity revolves around the offender instilling in the child the notion of the offender as the child’s best friend and a person they can rely on.
- Sexual stage, where the offender attempts sexual questioning and discussions with the child or young person.

As has been described, there is support for the notion that some offenders that offend online through the viewing of child abuse images, escalate their behaviour, which leads them to make attempts at contacting children online. These contacts with children are
linked to the increasing time spent online, the reduction in time spent offline in normal social activities and the moderation of emotional states, and are described in terms of cognitive distortions in order for the offender to remove themself from responsibility for morally distasteful behaviour.

1.8 Approach to Study

It is generally a truism that the best means by which to make predictions about future behaviour is by assessing past behaviour. Predicting future behaviour involves the review of an individual’s history, past behaviour in various circumstances and how they responded to any situational or environmental factors, and predictions about future behaviour in given circumstances. When attempting to predict future criminal behaviour this is no less a means for development of such predictions and it is important to review a person’s history and past behaviour under various circumstances to make such predictions. For sex offenders, various classification schemes have been developed utilising clinical judgment of risk, actuarial measurements using historical factors and structured clinical assessments of structured decision making (SDM) processes. A number of weaknesses have been identified in utilising clinical judgment or actuarial measures alone, and this has led to the emergence of SDM and dynamic needs assessment reviews, taking into account comprehensive assessments of the individual’s sexual deviance, motivation for offending and risk for future offending. This is then followed up with the development of a risk management plan for rehabilitation (treatment needs, prognosis and risk of re-offending at time of sentencing). After sentencing, offenders would receive treatment and management commensurate with their level of risk and needs, with attention being directed towards the offender’s response to treatment (Ogloff & Doyle, 2009).

Although actuarial risk assessments have been found to be better at predicting recidivism than clinical judgment or structured clinical judgment alone, there remain a number of limitations to their use in predicting future criminal behaviour. These problems include:

• Actuarial scales can only provide a probability and not a certainty of re-offending.
• As existing assessments have been developed based on official recidivism incidents, these probabilities in all likelihood underestimate re-offence rates.
• Unusual factors that may be relevant may be overlooked if not included in an actuarial assessment.
• Instruments are developed to determine long-term risk and do not consider contextual risk factors that may indicate imminent risk.
• Actuarial instruments do not highlight the clinical or dispositional factors that require treatment for reduction of risk (Beech and Ward, 2004).
• Actuarial prediction is about groups of individuals, and unless the behaviour occurs at high frequency it says little about individual differences, which indicate associations and not causation (Grubin & Wingate, 1996, as cited in Taylor & Quayle, 2003).

Additionally, previous actuarial assessments were based on contact sex offenders and were not developed for use with non-contact-only offenders. Recent research by Osborn, Elliott, Middleton and Beech (2010) assessed both a standard and revised version of actuarial assessments (RM2000 and Static 99) on 73 convicted internet sex offenders and reported that reconviction rates for internet sex offenders are lower than for contact offenders. The standard versions of the RM2000 and the Static 99 were found to overestimate the risk levels for internet offenders and the revised version for the RM2000 provided a more realistic measure of risk.

Beech and Ward (2004) suggested that to overcome some of these limitations based on pure actuarial assessment, researchers should develop schemes that further incorporated factors amenable to change, which may indicate an increased risk level for a particular individual. These ‘dynamic’ risk factors included deviant sexual interests, attitudes supportive of sexual offending, socioaffective problems and self-management/general self-regulation problems, which are then used to characterise criminogenic needs. A Risk for Sexual Violence Protocol (RSVP) was developed that identifies the risk factors for sexual offending and combines actuarial risk tests with structured clinical guidelines to determine individual risk levels (Hart et al., 2003).

Additional to this increased assessment, Hanson and Harris (2000) proposed the introduction of acute dynamic factors that may indicate when an individual is highly likely to commit an offence in the near future. Such acute/contextual risk factors are those that change and fluctuate over time; for example, substance abuse and mood states. These authors added the concepts of intimacy deficits, attitudes supportive of sexual offending and general self-regulation in their revised assessment instrument.
Thornton (2002) proposed that these acute and stable dynamic risk factors, plus factors from the literature, could be incorporated into four distinct risk domains: deviant sexual interests, pro-offending attitudes, poor socioaffective function, and self-management problems. This was also supported by the RSVP, which identified 22 risk factors for sexual offending (Hart et al., 2003). Beech and Ward (2004) support the notion of Thornton (2002) and propose that trait theory seeks to identify and understand consistency in behaviour whether genetic, physiological or cognitive in nature; knowing the traits of an individual is likely to improve the predictive validity of an assessment of future behaviour; and traits of sexual deviation and impulsivity are associated with increased risk of sexual violence.

It was suggested by Leiblum (1997, cited in Cooper et al., 1999) that excessive use of the Internet may be related to psychological difficulties stemming from social isolation. This was supported in a study of online child sexual abuse offenders in New Zealand, in which Carr (2004) reported that up to a quarter of offenders were found to show behaviours suggesting social isolation such as living alone, not working or studying, being identified as a loner, and working or studying alone. Kalichman and Rompa (1995, cited in Cooper et al., 1999) also reported that sexual compulsivity was positively associated with lack of sexual self-control, loneliness and low self-esteem.

A number of authors have referred to the use of the Internet as a means to manage the unhappiness in one’s life and for those that utilise child sexual abuse images this provides a rationale to explain the problem as not being their own fault. As one child sexual abuse offender stated:

I think it mattered to the extent that it shut out the … part of my life that I was finding difficult to deal with (Quayle & Taylor, 2003, p. 96).

Many child abuse image offenders report increasing feelings of power and control in being able to locate material online, escaping security measures and gaining credibility with like-minded individuals on the Internet. This further normalised their behaviour in collecting child sexual abuse images, and reinforced their cognition that what they were doing was ‘normal’ as others were doing the same thing. These feelings of control were often in contrast to how the offender felt in their own life, where they did not feel in control of their relationship (Quayle & Taylor, 2003). This suggests that the Internet provides a dynamic or adaptive function, although reinforcing a maladaptive intervention to retain feelings of control over one’s life.
Research has suggested that Internet child sexual offenders share similar psychological characteristics with contact child sexual offenders. Middleton et al. (2005; 2006; 2009) reported that dynamic risk factors between Internet and contact sexual offenders are congruent. Their research compared 213 Internet offenders with 191 contact sexual offenders and found a number of similarities between the two groups, in particular intimacy deficits and emotional dysregulation. Although this research compared two offender populations, it is unclear if the outcomes would have been different if comparisons had also involved a non-offending population. The research conducted by Middleton et al. (2005; 2006; 2009) suggests that testing an accepted model of child sexual abuse offending on an Internet child sexual abuse offender population is worthwhile to determine if child sexual abuse image offenders are congruent with contact offenders, which will also assist in the development of therapeutic models.

It is also interesting to consider whether multiple dynamic risk factors have a cumulative effect in terms of further offending. According to some researchers, every sexual offence incorporates arousal, intimacy, and emotional and cognitive components, but is there a cumulative effect on the more symptoms they display (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Beech & Ward, 2004; Sigurdsson, Gudjonsson, Asgeirsdottir & Sigfusdottir, 2010; Ward, 2003; Ward & Siegert, 2002). The intensity of arousal, intimacy, emotional and cognitive components of sexual offending may escalate over time and so may some of the dynamic risk factors, such as sexual deviance. However, some dynamic risk factors such as developing problems with substance abuse, loss of employment, or attitudes that condone violence—as new factors associated with the evolving deviant lifestyle—may increase risk. Allan et al. (2007) reported finding evidence that dynamic risk factors have additive and independent effects on sexual recidivism. Would this then result in the possibility that the number of characteristics an offender is reported to have would be associated with an escalation to increasingly violent and sadistic imagery in order to satiate their fantasies and desires?

1.9 Chapter Outline

This thesis will consist of a number of chapters including Chapter 1 which has provided an overview of the Internet, problematic behaviour and the role of both within child sexual abuse. The internet is considered an enabler for the commission of crimes, including
crimes against children. For those individuals who have an interest in the sexual abuse of children, the Internet provides an avenue for accessing abuse images and in the grooming of children. This chapter is an introductory chapter and issues raised here will be further developed in subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 considers theories of child sexual abuse and how the characteristics of contact and online offenders share similarities and differences in demographic and psychological characteristics. Chapter 2 poses the question ‘what characteristics differentiate between the two types of offending behaviour? These theories relate to Level 1 theories which are multi-factorial accounts of the core features of sexual offence behaviour, the causes of features and how they manifest as sexual abuse actions. Level 2 theories are single factor theories to explain single phenomena that generate sexually abusive behaviour. Level 3 theories are offense process theories that are descriptive of the offence chain or relapse processes which outline behavioural, cognitive, motivational and contextual factors. Chapter 3 considers habituation and escalation to child sexual abuse material and how offenders used the images for multiple purposes (eg. sexual gratification, managing contact offending) resulting in an escalation model for image preference. The role of child sexual abuse images in offending may assist offenders in validating and justifying their behaviour, a facilitator in the offending behaviour, play a role in sexual fantasy or as a by-product of contact offending. Chapter 4 considers online grooming of children for sexual purposes and the stages of online grooming. Research into online grooming of children suggest that although there are similarities with those who are grooming for contact purposes, there are also differences whereby the motivation to offend may differ with online offenders not intending to meet the victim, or that for online offenders they may skip stages and other stages may be worked through quicker. Chapter 5 describes the methodology used to analyse the escalation and deviance in child sexual abuse image content in the current thesis. Chapter 6 describes the methodology used to analyse online grooming behaviour in the selected participants. Chapter 7 considers the results and analysis for the characteristics of the offenders and the increasing level of image preferences for the offenders. This Chapter should be read in conjunction with Appendix ‘D’. Online offenders have similarities to contact offenders, however there are differences for some offenders who progress to increasingly graphic imagery. Chapter 8 considers the analysis of the online grooming behaviour for those offenders who attempted to groom children online. Online offenders were found to use grooming processes which had differences to contact offenders, including the motivation to groom online to satisfy sexual fantasy, and that online offenders grooming processes can progress much faster
Chapter 9 discusses the offender characteristics and the relationship to image preferences. Online offenders, similar to contact offenders, did show some intimacy deficits, emotional dysregulation, distorted sexual scripts and cognitive distortions. Chapter 10 discusses the outcomes of the analysis of the online grooming of children and the similarities and differences to current models of behaviour. Online offenders did not follow a linear process in the grooming of children and for offenders who may prefer to use the Internet to satisfy sexual fantasy little time is spent in the friendship or relationship forming, risk assessment or exclusivity stages. Chapter 11 concludes with consideration of the implications of the research and recommendations for further research in the field on online child sexual abuse offender behaviour.

1.10 Summary

It appears that over a period of time offenders may use the Internet to satisfy social and sexual needs, but that they gradually require increasing levels of access and experiences in order to maintain the level of arousal, or to escalate their arousal to their pre-offending behaviour. The Internet provides avenues for the individual to manage deviant sexual interests, attitudes supportive of sexual offending, socioaffective problems, and self-management or general self-regulation problems.

For those with an interest in the sexual abuse of children, the Internet has provided an avenue for the transfer and storage of child sexual abuse images, and the opportunity for offenders to contact children and young people, or other individuals with similar interests to themselves, online. The Internet provides the individual the opportunity to change persona and present themselves online at any time in perceived anonymity with little financial outlay. Due to the lack of barriers to utilising the Internet and differences in offence requirements across jurisdictions, social control and offender inhibitions are reduced and there is increasing ease with which they are able to offend.

It has been suggested that those that offend against children online have similar characteristics to those that physically offend against children and that the use of contact offending models may provide further insight into the behaviours of online offenders. Models that now take into account the offending as a multi-dimensional process including
psychological, situational and environmental factors are considered to have the most to offer in explaining child sexual offending.

Although it is not well understood why some offenders escalate in image preference, it is suggested that escalation to increasingly violent and sadistic images may be the result of boredom and satiation. The offender becomes habituated to the images and requires increasingly violent and sadistic images to retain their levels of stimulation and arousal. It has been suggested that Internet addiction is similar to other addictions (substance abuse, gambling); however, whereas over time some offenders do escalate their image preferences, others do not. This proposition lends support to the proposition that habituation to image levels is a more likely cause of escalation in image preference.

Further, it is largely unknown why some viewing offenders escalate to online contact with, and grooming of, young persons for sexual purposes. It is suggested that the process of grooming a child or young person online is similar to the grooming of children in close proximity.

The identification of offender characteristics, possible reasons for escalation in image content, and behaviour online for those that do escalate to contacting children and young persons would provide greater insight into the behaviour resulting in improvements in the investigation of offences and advice to the public on protecting children when they are online.
Chapter 2: Theories for Child Sexual Abuse Offending

Chapter 2 will consider the explanations for offending with particular reference to the psychological theories behind the behaviour. These explanations describe a number of factors (intimacy and social skills deficits, cognitive distortions, deviant sexual scripts and emotional dysregulation) which may explain contact offending behaviour and how these theories may parallel the behaviour of online offenders.

2.1 Data-driven Explanations for Sexual Offending

Data-driven explanations for sexual offending are based on the availability of data as the criterion for developing indicators for sexual offending. Statistical (or actuarial) approaches involve the grouping of individuals and statistical frequency of indicators for membership to outcome based on empirical research (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2007). These indicators are based on known information about offenders (e.g. criminal, relationship and deviant sexual history) and are the best predictors for future offending or re-offending.

Hanson and Bussiere (1998) conducted a meta-analysis of studies from six countries, which identified the best predictors of sexual recidivism as either static or highly stable dynamic factors:

- The strongest predictors were related to deviant sexual interests and victim selection (boys and strangers).
- Recidivism increased for offenders that had prior sexual offences, had committed a range of sexual offences, and began offending sexually at a young age.
- General criminality or lifestyle was a modest but reliable predictor.
- A small effect was found across studies for age (youth) and being single.
- Failure to complete treatment programmes increased the risk of both sexual and non-sexual recidivism.

Similar factors were identified by Prentky (1995, cited in Kemshall, 2001), who reported that the dynamic risk factors common to sex offenders were:

- lack of empathy for the victim/s
- sexual fantasy and deviant sexual arousal
• anger
• problematic relationships with adults
• impulsivity
• antisocial personality.

Hanson and Harris (2000) reviewed the static and dynamic risk factors for 208 recidivists and 201 non-recidivists categorised as either rapist, contact sex offender against boy victims or contact sex offender against girl victims. Few differences were noted between the recidivists and non-recidivists on static factors. However, dynamic variables relating to criminal lifestyle were the strongest predictors of sexual recidivism. The acute dynamic risk factors predictive of re-offending included access to potential victims, increase in psychological symptoms such as anger, and poor supervision compliance. Stable dynamic factors included poor social influences, negative attitudes and cognitive distortions, and failure to acknowledge the risk of re-offending.

Lievore (2004) reported that among those that sexually offend against children, the risk of sexual recidivism is higher for those that offend against their own sex and children outside their own family, than for those that offend against opposite sex victims and that are incest offenders. Lievore (2004) further reported that recidivist sexual offenders exhibited characteristics similar to criminal recidivists, in relation to:
• gender, age, race and marital status
• socioeconomic, educational and occupational marginalisation
• criminal lifestyle—extensive offending history and serious offences
• prior convictions and imprisonment.

and had additional characteristics such as:
• sexual deviancy
• history of sex offending, particularly if commenced at a younger age and a range of sexual offences
• diversity in offending, which includes violent and general offences
• psychological maladjustment, including substance abuse, antisocial attitudes and personality disorders
• prior sexual victimisation
• failure to complete treatment programmes.
Hanson and Babchishin (2009) reviewed a number of studies into risk factors for offline sexual offenders and found that the risk of recidivism was related to sexual deviance, antisocial orientation and problems with secure adult attachments. Generally, the risk for those that offended against children were the same as for those that offended against adults, but emotional congruence with children was an additional factor for the former. The variables providing the greatest risk of sexual recidivism are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Risk Factors for Offline Sexual Offenders (Hanson & Babchishin, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Young age</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual deviance:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior sexual offence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-contact sexual offences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse sexual crimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual preoccupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any deviant sexual interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual preference for children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexualised violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other offence-related paraphilic interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offence-supportive attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antisocial orientation:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any prior criminal history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior non-sexual criminal history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle impulsivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General self-regulation problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulsivity, recklessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment instability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance to rules and supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood behaviour problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-compliance with supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation of conditional release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grievance/hostility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problems with secure adult attachment:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts in intimate relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional congruence with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative social influences</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Studies on the risk factors for sexual offending provide consistent and concordant results. These risk factors include deviant sexual interests, pro-criminal lifestyle and problematic relationships.

Allan, Grace, Rutherford and Hudson (2007) summarised the instruments that have been used to assess risk. The most common ones that considered dynamic risk factors have generally identified domains that include:

- social competency and intimacy deficits
- pro-offending attitudes or distorted attitudes
- sexual interests
- self-management, sexual or general self-regulation.

Allan et al. (2007) reported that after an average of 5.8 years, the overall rate of reconviction rates among sex offenders was 9.9%, suggesting that the true rate of recidivism is even higher. They found that the two factors most strongly linked to recidivism were sexual interests and pro-offending attitudes and that this group identified with low levels of self-esteem, assertiveness and ability to control anger; and had high levels of anger, anger suppression, anxiety, depression, loneliness, fear of intimacy, external locus of control, hostility towards women, and distorted cognitions about children and sexuality. This is consistent with most other research that has found that child molesters have poor social and emotional functioning, and deviant sexual attitudes, in comparison with other offenders and the general population.

Beech (1998) reported that offenders assessed as having high deviancy were more likely to have offended against boys and to have significantly more victims. Beech, Friendship, Erikson and Hanson (2002) further developed this notion and found that the deviance classification contributed significantly to the variance in predicting sexual recidivism beyond actuarial measures. This supported the proposition that dynamic factors can increase the validity of risk assessment beyond the level of using static factors alone.

### 2.2 Theories of Child Sexual Abuse

Theories about child sexual abuse are generally based on one of three levels of sexual offending (Elliott & Beech, 2009; Ward & Beech, 2006; Ward & Siegert, 2002). Level 1 theories are multi-factorial accounts of the core features of sexual offence behaviour, the
causes of these features and how they manifest as sexual abuse actions. Examples include Ward and Siegert’s (2002) *pathways model of child sexual abuse* and Ward and Beech’s (2006) *ITSO*. Level 2 are single factor theories used to explain single phenomena that generate sexually abusive behaviour, such as victim empathy deficits or cognitive distortions; for example, Marshall’s (1989) *intimacy deficits* and Ward and Keenan’s (1999) *cognitive distortions* to explain sexual abuse. Level 3 are offence process theories that are descriptive models of the offence chain or relapse processes, which outline behavioural, cognitive, motivational and contextual factors, and include the theory by Ward, Louden, Hudson and Marshall (1995).

The currently most well-accepted theories of child sexual abuse are discussed below.

### 2.2.1 Finkelhor’s (1984) Precondition Theory

This was the first serious theory to explain child sexual abuse and refers to four underlying factors to offending: 1) emotional congruence—that sex with children is emotionally satisfying for the offender, 2) sexual arousal—where those that offend are sexually aroused by children, 3) blockage—whereby men have sex with children due to an inability to have sex in more socially appropriate ways, and 4) disinhibition—whereby men become disinhibited and behave contrary to their normal behaviour. Finkelhor suggested that the first three factors explain why individuals become sexually interested in children, and the fourth assists the manifestation of this interest as sexual deviance (Beech & Ward, 2004).

Four preconditions must be satisfied before sexual abuse of a child can occur, according to the Finkelhor theory:

1. The offender must be motivated to abuse a child and encompass three of four factors motivated by one or more of the following:
   - emotional congruence, identifying strongly with the child and believing the child capable of fulfilling their needs
   - sexual arousal in response to the child
   - blockage, where there is limited access to other, more appropriate, opportunities to satisfy sexual needs.
2. Resolution of internal inhibitions (such as alcohol, senility, impulse disorder, severe stress, psychosis, or social tolerance of sexual interest in children) relating to the disinhibition factor.

3. The offender must overcome external inhibitions that increase the possibility of offending (such as presence of a parent, illness, social isolation of the family, unusual sleeping conditions, or paternal abuse towards the mother).

4. Overcoming the child’s resistance to abuse (through gifts, emotional dependence, threats or violence, or desensitising the child to sex) (Drake & Ward, 2003; Keown, 2008).

2.2.2 Marshall and Barbaree’s (1990) Integrated Theory

This theory proposes that sexual abuse of children is the consequence of a number of interacting distal and proximal factors (Ward & Siegert, 2002). Sexual re-offending is mediated by a combination of aetiological and maintenance processes that may include neurological anomalies, biological influences, developmental experiences, and psychological and sociocultural variables, which may be static or dynamic factors. The static factors are generally fixed and may include race, sex, marital status, age, criminal history, relationship to victim and domestic instability. Dynamic factors are likely to change over time and are open to change through intervention or treatment. They may also be situational and intangible. These factors may also be referred to as criminogenic needs and may include substance use and abuse, motivation to offend, sexual arousal patterns, social skills, financial management, pro-criminal and antisocial attitudes, personal relationships, social environment and social networks. These dynamic factors may also be further categorised as stable dynamic (changeable, but generally enduring), and acute dynamic (predictive of the timing of offence behaviour).

According to this theory, individuals that exhibit distorted internal working models or relationships, particularly in relation to sex and aggression, are experiencing developmentally adverse events such as poor parenting, physical and sexual abuse, or inconsistent or harsh discipline. This results in poor social and self-regulation skills that render the transition into adolescence a critical period. This period of adolescence is when individuals are most receptive to sexual scripts, interests and attitudes, and the increase in sexual hormones increases the potency of these sexual cues. As such, if an individual comes from a deprived background and is predisposed to antisocial behaviour, the release
of hormones may serve to fuse sex and aggression and to enhance sexually abusive tendencies. The benefits of this model is that it is a dynamic model that integrates sexual abuse as the outcome of interacting biological, psychological, social, cultural and situational factors (Beech & Ward, 2004; Ward & Siegert, 2002).

The Integrated Theory model has been developed further by Smallbone (2006) and Smallbone, Marshall and Wortley (2008), who have incorporated attachment theory into the model based on Bowlby’s (1969, as cited in Smallbone, 2006; Smallbone et al., 2008) proposition that attachment, parental and sexual behaviour overlap. Smallbone (2006) and Smallbone et al. (2008) posited that these three behaviours are partly biologically determined, shaped by psychosocial development and highly situation dependent. Biological influences in males prepare them for sexual aggression, and sexual drive motivates humans to seek sexual contact with ‘nonspecific others’ (Smallbone, 2006, p. 98). Sexual attraction (or romantic passion) has evolved to direct sexual drive to a restricted range of genetically appropriate partners. Finally, adult attachment in the emotion–motivation system is more enduring and creates feelings of comfort, security and emotional unity. Smallbone (2006) suggests that the integration of these emotion–motivation systems maximises reproductive fitness; however, as they operate independently, in psychosocial terms the integration of the three can present developmental and social challenges. For individuals living in low-resource, early attachment environments that are rejecting, unreliable or coercive, their reproductive strategy results in early-onset puberty, opportunistic or coercive sexual behaviour, short-term and unstable pairings and low levels of parental investment. Living in the opposite conditions—high-resource environments that are safe, reliable and enduring—results in late-onset puberty, delayed overt sexual behaviour, high-quality partnerships and high levels of parental investment. The outcomes appear distinct where secure childhood attachment results in empathy and perspective taking, autonomous affect regulation, cooperative interpersonal styles, satisfactory intimate relationships, secure adult attachments and effective parenting. Insecure childhood attachment results in hostility, impulsivity, aggression, problems in regulating negative emotional states, increased risk of sexual and physical victimisation, coercive interpersonal styles, substance abuse and poor adult attachments (Smallbone, 2006).

Smallbone (2006,) Smallbone et al. (2008) and Wortley (2012) extended the Marshall and Barbaree (1990) emphasis on situational influences (e.g. unusual sleeping
arrangements) beyond the individual-level predictors (e.g. cognitive distortions, sexual preferences). It is possible that during periods of distress, attachment (care-seeking) behaviour may activate in an individual, leading to the partner (caregiver) and care-seeker coming into close physical and emotional proximity. The physical and emotional unity from the attachment may then lead to sexual feelings. Problematic behaviour may arise when normal protective behaviour is ineffectual and results in the disorganisation of the three behavioural systems. These protections involve empathy and perspective taking, cooperative interpersonal style, and the capacity for autonomous emotional regulation where powerful emotions such as distress, sexual drive and sexual attraction can be suppressed. Smallbone (2006) concludes that offending against children 1) occurs when men are in established or temporary roles of authority or care-giving to children, 2) is more likely to be a product of under-restrained behaviour, and 3) tends to occur through routine activities for the offender and victim.

2.2.3 Hall and Hirschman’s (1992) Quadripartite Theory of Child Molestation

The Quadripartite theory has four components relating to physiological sexual arousal modulated by deviant and non-deviant sexual fantasies, inaccurate cognition that justifies sexual aggression, affective dyscontrol and developmental personality problems (e.g. family dysfunction, poor social skills, history of abuse and juvenile delinquency). The first three components are primarily state and situation dependent (state factors), whereas personality problems represent enduring vulnerability factors (trait factors). Hall and Hirschman’s model suggests that personality deficits are where the vulnerabilities to sexually abuse children lie. Each of the factors is motivators to offend against children, but one factor is usually more accentuated and increases the intensity of the others (Beech & Ward, 2004; Ward & Siegert, 2002).

2.3 Ward and Siegert Pathways Model of Child Offending

Ward and Siegert (2002) developed a pathways model for child sexual abuse by knitting the best of the abovementioned Level 2 models into one Level 1 theory used to explain the psychological causes of offending. The model provided a flexible, independent etiological pathways approach that interacted with psychological mechanisms that could lead to sexual offending. Biological and cultural factors and learning and situational environments all exert proximal and distal influences on development, which created the
pathways that relate to the dynamic risk domains (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Sheldon, 2011). The notion of the interaction between biological, learning and situational environments all exerting influence on the development of offending behaviour is consistent with the model of an integrated theory for sexual offending proposed by Smallbone et al. (2008).

A core assumption of the Ward and Siegert (2002) pathways model is that the vulnerability to commit an offence is linked to cultural, learning and psychological mechanisms. It proposes that an adequate theory must be able to account for psychological (including cognitive, affective and behavioural variables), biological, cultural and situational factors. The model further proposes that every sexual offence involves the activation of all four causal mechanisms (deviant sexual preferences, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and intimacy deficits) to some degree. And finally, the model corresponds well to Thornton’s work on risk domains with sex offenders of deviant sexual interests, distorted attitudes, socioaffective functioning and poor self-management (Sheldon, 2011; Ward & Siegert, 2002).

Ward and Siegert (2002) took the description of the effects of developmental adversity in the offence process from Marshall and Barbaree, the discussions of a typology of child molesters from Hall and Hirschman, and the psychological vulnerabilities in child sexual abuse from Finkelhor (Elliott & Beech, 2009). Four psychological mechanisms generate emotional, cognitive, sexual and social phenomena that then characterise a child sex offender (Keown, 2008). By building on the work of the above models the pathways model suggests five distinct and interacting psychological mechanisms:

• **Intimacy and social skills deficits** whereby the individual has difficulty forming intimate relationships with adults. They perceive others as emotionally unavailable and are unwilling to disclose to them, have difficulty developing a sense of trust in others, and are often seen as aloof and cold. Some may have been subjected to abuse or neglect as a child, which affects their understanding of relationships. They therefore seek out children to satisfy their needs for intimacy in socially inappropriate sexual behaviour.

• **Distorted sexual scripts** that are developed in childhood as to how, where, when and with whom one can have intimate and sexual relationships. These span internal, interpersonal and cultural contexts including knowledge, norms, values, rules and beliefs. Such individuals may have a history of abuse in their past or early sexual experiences, and have a distorted understanding of relationships that may include
inappropriate partners, contexts and behaviour, that leads them to seek out children to fulfil their needs—believing children to be more trustworthy, safe and accepting of them.

- **Emotional dysregulation** whereby the individual has difficulty managing negative emotional states, which leads to problems such as the development of dysfunctional goals (ignoring feelings), inadequate coping strategies (use of substances leading to disinhibition) or poorly modulated affective states. This can result in the breakdown of disinhibition about sex with children, or may lead them to opportunistically have sex with children to improve their mood state.

- **Cognitive distortions** as maladaptive beliefs and attitudes, and problematic thinking styles. Individuals hold pro-criminal attitudes and beliefs about themselves, future victims and the world where they disregard social norms, including those about sex with children, and will exploit opportunities to satisfy their sexual needs. Alternatively cognitive distortions can also be used to rationalise, justify, minimise and excuse the offending behaviour after it has happened and are linked to self-esteem maintenance.

- **Multiple dysfunctional mechanisms** where the individual is likely to have been sexually abused as a child, have developed deviant sexual scripts and consider sexual relationships with a child as ideal (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Drake & Ward, 2003; Elliott & Beech, 2009; Elliott, Beech, Mandeville-Norden & Hayes, 2009; Keown, 2008; Sheldon, 2011; Ward, 2000; 2003; 2009; Ward & Beech, 2006; Ward & Marshall, 2004; Ward & Siegert, 2002).

Each offender pathway has a unique set of primary mechanisms and cluster of symptoms or problems, and the mechanisms interact to cause sexual offences. This means that every sexual offence incorporates arousal, intimacy, emotional and cognitive components (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Beech & Ward, 2004; Sigurdsson et al., 2010; Ward, 2003; Ward & Siegert, 2002). Elliott and Beech (2009) suggest there is evidence that Internet offenders use various online behaviours (which may include child abuse images) to address problems relating to interpersonal difficulties and emotional problems, and that child abuse images are used to fuel specific sexual fantasies.

Many Internet offenders appear to have specific clinical problems with intimacy deficits or emotional dysregulation domains and the presence of distorted attitudes (cognitive distortions) about the nature of the harm to the child. Along with a lack of empathy for
the child, this appears to primarily discriminate Internet offenders from contact offenders (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Elliott et al., 2009; Laulik, Allam & Sheridan, 2006; Middleton, Elliott, Mandeville-Norden & Beech, 2006; Middleton, Beech & Mandeville-Norden, 2005; Sheldon, 2011).

As Ward and Beech (2006) and Elliott and Beech (2009) have described, deviant sexual interests are generated from the inability to regulate mood states and sexual desire (motivation and emotion system), simultaneously interacting with problems in sexual control (action selection and control system), when there is also present pro-offence schema (perception and memory system), which leads to the creation of deviant fantasies and sexual preoccupation.

Lanning (1992; 2010) proposed that child sexual abuse images went beyond facilitating sexual arousal, and reflected on the importance of collecting and social cohesion, likening it to collecting baseball cards. Holmes et al. (1998) posited that the computer acted as a mechanism of metamorphosis whereby fantasies could become more concrete and take on a shared realism that could be shared online with others with similar interests.

Child sex abuse images are believed to play a role in sexual fantasies and deviant thinking, whereby Internet offenders select images that align with their fantasies, resulting in an increase in masturbatory behaviour and regarded as an alternative to contact offending (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b). It has further been proposed by Elliott et al. (2009) that the cognitive distortions of online offenders appear related to the idea that sexual fantasies and images were not directly harmful to the child (e.g. having thoughts and fantasies about a child sexually is not harming the child), and that children are sexually sophisticated (e.g. children are willing and eager to be involved in sexual activity with an adult).

Middleton et al. (2006; reported in Sigurdsson et al., 2010) applied the Ward and Siegert pathways model to 72 Internet offenders. They were able to assign 60% of their sample into one of four independent pathways based on self-report assessments. Of these 60% assigned, the majority was located in either the intimacy deficits or emotional dysregulation pathways. Those assigned to the intimacy deficits pathway accessed child sexual abuse images when lonely or dissatisfied, whereas those assigned to the emotional dysregulation pathway used child sexual abuse imagery to alleviate mood when they felt
they lacked control during periods of negative mood states coupled with deviant sexual desire. Despite the high assignment rate of offenders to pathways in the study, the 40% of unassigned offenders is a concern because it suggests that current models of sexual offending may not explain all pathways to sexual offending, that some offenders may cross into different pathways, and that additional explanations may need to be considered.

Ward and Hudson (1998) suggested ways to classify offenders according to routes to their offending. These routes were directed towards the offending and could be either approach goals concerning the successful attainment of a state or situation to sexually offend, or avoidant goals aimed at reducing the state or situation so as not to offend. Additionally, strategies were selected to achieve these goals that were either active (action taken) or passive (no action taken). An approach goal offender is desirous of offending that involves the active use of strategies to offend. Alternatively, the offending may activate automatic strategies of well-learnt behaviours, or behavioural scripts, leading to offending behaviour. The avoidant offender may attempt to avoid offending, but uses active but inappropriate strategies to prevent offending, such as masturbating to deviant fantasies of children. This is likely to result in a greater risk of re-offending. An avoidant offender may not engage any strategies to avoid offending and may passively do nothing to stop himself becoming involved in high-risk situations (Beech & Elliott, 2012; Elliott & Beech, 2009; Huang, Hsu, Beech & Wu, 2009).

2.4 Role of Cognitive Distortions in Sexual Offending

Cognitive distortions have often been cited as important factors in sexual abuse in general and for child sexual abuse offenders in particular. The work by Abel, Becker and Cunningham-Rathner (1984, cited in Howitt & Sheldon, 2007) argued that the concept of sexual abuse against a child was so heinous that offenders adapted cognitively in order to justify and excuse their offending against children. These distortions were not adopted after the commission of the offence, but were also found to be adapted prior to the offence. Abel et al. (1989) defined cognitive distortions in sex offenders as:

An individual’s internal processes, including the justifications, perceptions and judgments used by the sex offender to rationalize his child molestation behaviour … [that] appear to allow the offender to justify his ongoing sexual abuse of children without the anxiety, guilt and loss of self-esteem that would usually result from an individual committing behaviours contrary to the norms of society (p. 137).
Keown (2008) developed a number of cognitive distortions that appeared to cover most of the distorted beliefs of offenders, the list of which is provided in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2: Cognitive Distortions of Offenders (Keown, 2008)**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A child who does not resist my sexual advances wants to have sex with me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Having sex with a child is a good way for adults to educate them about sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Children do not tell others about the sexual activity because they secretly enjoy it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>In the future, society will begin to accept relations between adults and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>An adult who fondles a child without penetration is not harming the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>When children ask questions about sex, it is because they want sexual relations with adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>My relationship with the child is greatly enhanced through having sex with them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taylor and Quayle (2003) highlighted the role of cognition or thought processes in sexual interest in children. These cognitions include the decisions the individual made that place them at risk of offending, the high-risk situations that affect their control, and the thoughts and feelings that may lead to the behaviour. Howitt (1995) referred to cognitive distortions as the ‘sine qua non of the paedophile’ (p. 92). These cognitive distortions are essential for those with a sexual interest in children and ‘provide offenders with an interpretative framework that permits them to construe the victims and motives of others as sexual and allows them to justify and excuse themselves (and others) their offending behaviour’ (Howitt 1995, p. 93). There is debate as to whether the faulty cognitions (e.g. having sex with a child is a good way for adults to educate them about sex) are post-offence rationalisations, or exist prior to the offending behaviour (Howitt & Sheldon, 2007; Taylor & Quayle, 2003).

The focus on the role of cognitive distortions in giving the child sex offender permission to offend prior to the offence and providing justification, excuses and rationalisations post-offence has been questioned by a number of researchers (e.g. Bartels & Gannon, 2009; Gannon, 2006; Gannon, Wright, Beech & Williams, 2006; Huang et al.,2009;
Maruna & Mann, 2006). Gannon (2006) and Gannon et al. (2006) go on to report that child sex offenders do not necessarily positively endorse cognitive distortions as causal factors to offending or as post-offence rationalisations, but in fact their strength of disagreement is different to control groups.

Gudjonsson (1990) reported a significant positive relationship between cognitive distortions and external blame attribution: the more sex offenders justified their offending the more likely it was that they would blame the victim. In order to reduce anxiety and guilt for the offending, contact offenders showed a tendency to blame the victim (Blumenthal, Gudjonsson & Burns, 1999). This is consistent with the findings of Bandura (1999), McAlister et al. (2006), Osofsky et al. (2005) and White et al. (2009) that offenders will disengage moral self-sanctions in order to commit offences—with little or no self-censure.

Ward (2006) referred to cognitive distortion as a criminogenic need that related to antisocial thinking patterns through dysfunctional beliefs about sexual contact between adults and children. Ward (2000) proposed that these schemas represent implicit theories that are motivational schemas containing an individual’s beliefs and desires and those of the people around them that interact with personal and interpersonal experiences. He hypothesised that maladaptive implicit theories included general assumptions about the nature of people and the world, middle-level beliefs that deal with categories including women and children and beliefs attributed to a particular victim. These key beliefs are found at the middle and general level, are persistent and make up the conceptual foundation for offender’s interpretations and explanations of the victim’s actions and mental states (Ward, 2000).

Ward and Keenan (1999) found that child sexual abuse offenders report five underlying implicit theories about themselves, the victim and their environment. These implicit theories include:

- children are sexual objects who are motivated by a desire for pleasure and are capable of enjoying sex
- entitlement for their own desires and pleasure and the needs of the victim is ignored or of limited importance
- it is a dangerous world and other adults are viewed as abusive and/or unreliable, and are likely to reject the offender to satisfy their own needs
• the environment is uncontrollable where people are unable to exert control over their own behaviour, or the world around them
• there is no harm done as sexual activity is beneficial and does not harm the victim.

The distortions identified by Ward and Keenan (1999) are similar to those previously identified by Abel et al. (1989) and highlight the consistent rationalisations or explanations provided by offenders as to their offending behaviour.

Clancey (1993, as cited in Keown, 2008) posited that beliefs are not static representations of the world but are fluid patterns of neuronal activity that unfold in conjunction with emotional, biological, and environmental inputs. As Ward (2006) explains about the problems with some therapeutic rehabilitation programmes for offenders, many focus on offender risk profiles when there should also be a focus on contextual, ecological, social and cultural factors that may facilitate or constrain the behaviour.

When considering etiological pathways, Beech and Ward (2004), Sigurdsson et al. (2010) and Ward and Siegert (2002) hypothesised that the pathways will indicate that:
• Those with intimacy deficits and normal sexual scripts only offend at specific times (during periods of extended emotional loneliness, when a partner is not available or when they feel rejected).
• Those with deviant sexual scripts hold subtle distortions in sexual scripts that then interact with dysfunctional relationship schemas where relationships are perceived as purely sexual (Ward, Hudson, Johnson & Marshall, 1997 provide examples of these distortions where child molesters believe that children enjoy sexual contact with adults; children often initiate sex and know what they want; sex is good for children; men only commit sexual offences when they are stressed and lose control; men’s needs are more important than children’s, and; men can do what they want with children).
• Those with emotional dysregulation are individuals hypothesised to have normal sexual scripts but dysfunctional emotional regulation systems.
• Those with antisocial cognitions are individuals with distortions in sexual scripts that possess general pro-criminal attitudes and beliefs, and their offending reflects a general antisocial tendency.
• Those with multiple dysfunctional mechanisms are individuals with deviant sexual scripts that activate deviant fantasies and reflect a history of sexual abuse or access to
sexual material or activity at a young age. They will also have deficits in all other primary psychological mechanisms, dysfunctional implicit theories about sexuality in children, intimacy deficits, problematic emotional regulation and impaired relationships (Beech & Ward, 2004; Sigurdsson et al., 2010; Ward & Siegert, 2002).

Many child sex offenders, including child sexual images offenders, are believed to have deficits in cognitive distortions that may be linked to deficits in intimacy and empathy whereby they neither believe nor acknowledge that what they are doing has a consequence and affects the victims. This can then be used to overcome guilt, anxiety, and other consequences of the offending behaviour (Lievore, 2004).

In particular, those that view child sexual abuse images use the rationale that by only looking at images they are not hurting the child, as two offenders explained in Quayle & Taylor’s (2003) study:

I told them that my whole philosophy was we’re paedos … let’s look at the pics … let’s jerk off but let’s not hurt any kids (p. 98).

it wasn’t a person at all it was … it was just a flat image … it was nothing (p. 99).

A number of authors (e.g. Elliott & Beech, 2009; Kennedy-Souza, 1998; Morahan-Martin & Schumacher, 2000; Quayle & Taylor, 2001; Quayle & Taylor, 2003; Quayle et al., 2005) have referred to the use of the Internet as a means to manage the unhappiness in one’s life and for those that utilise child sexual abuse images this provides a rationale to explain the problem as not being their own fault. In the words of one child sexual abuse offender:

I think it mattered to the extent that it shut out the … part of my life that I was finding difficult to deal with (Quayle & Taylor, 2003, p. 96–98).

Many child abuse image offenders report increasing feelings of power and control in being able to locate material online, escaping security measures and gaining credibility with like-minded individuals on the Internet. This further normalised their behaviour in collecting child sexual abuse images, and reinforced their cognitions that what they were doing was ‘normal’ as others were doing the same thing. These feelings of control were often in contrast to how the offender felt in his own life where he did not feel in control of his relationship (Quayle & Taylor, 2003).
Howitt and Sheldon (2007) reported many similarities between Internet and contact child sex offenders, but there were differences in four of Ward and Keenan’s (1999) five implicit schema’s (cognitive distortions): Internet offenders reported significantly higher responses to questions relating to ‘having sexual thoughts and fantasies about a child isn’t all that bad because at least it is not really hurting the child’, ‘just looking at a naked child is not as bad as touching and will not affect the child as much’, ‘a child can make their own decision as to whether to have sexual activities with an adult or not’, and ‘some children are willing and eager to be involved in sexual activities that are with, and for, adults’.

Howitt and Sheldon (2007) further explain that although their study did not provide direct evidence for the idea, it did—like Ward’s (2000) proposal that sex offenders cognitive schema are learnt in childhood and can change—raise the possibility that cognitive distortions do reflect the early experiences of sexualisation and sexual abuse, leading to subsequent sexual offending behaviour.

### 2.5 Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending (ITSO)

Ward and Beech (2006) argued that previous models of sexual offending had been developed based on the description of clinical symptoms as underlying causal factors, and that a more neuropsychological explanation based on greater explanatory depth was required. The ITSO model (see Figure 2.1) subsumed, and unified with neuropsychological explanations, previous theories incorporating Level 1 (comprehensive multi-factorial accounts of sexual offending), Level 2 (single factors considered important to sexual offending, such as empathy deficits) and Level 3 (micro-level or offence process models that describe the offence chain or relapse process and typically specify the motivational, behavioural, cognitive and social factors associated with sexual offending) explanations of sexual abuse behaviours (Drake & Ward, 2003).
The theory requires four levels of analysis: 1) *etiological*—how genetic and environmental factors are influential, 2) *brain mechanism*—the effects of etiological factors on brain development, 3) *neuropsychological*—the psychological systems that generate behaviour and 4) *symptom based*—the clinical phenomena observed at the surface level. ITSO presents two developmental resources that interact to shape individuals’ psychological functioning: *biological* factors (genetic and evolutionary factors) and *social learning factors* (social, cultural and physical environment, and the individual’s personal circumstances). The authors referred to *ecological niche* to describe the environmental adversities that individuals may experience in their life that could affect brain and neurobiological systems, which may create clinical symptoms often observed in child sexual offenders and override the usual controls to sexual offending (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Beech & Elliott, 2012; Elliott & Beech, 2009; Ward & Beech, 2006).

Ward and Beech (2006) suggest that ITSO offers a means to knit together biological, cultural, social, individual learning and psychological traits into the reasons for the commission of sexual offending, which can result in changes to the way we think about surface clinical phenomena in sexual offenders. They argue that there are unique causes located in different functioning systems that result in sexual offending and aberrant behaviour, and that it may be worthwhile allocating individuals into groups based on the types of functioning systems affected rather than on surface symptoms.

ITSO further drew on Pennington’s (2002) description of three interlocking neuropsychological mechanisms that interact to produce the psychological processes (or
pathways/dynamic risk factors). These neuropsychological mechanisms relate to the 1) *motivational and emotional system*—where deficits manifested in problems with intimacy, 2) *action selection and control system*—manifested in self-regulation deficits and 3) *perception and memory system*—manifested as maladaptive belief systems such as pro-criminal attitudes and beliefs, and distorted sexual scripts. The ITSO then outlined that *deviant sexual arousal* in response to children resulted from a combination of deficits in these neuropsychological systems. If these systems are compromised, the result is the presentation of clinical phenomena or dynamic risk factors in failures in *self-regulatory control problems, social problems, antisocial thinking patterns* and *deviant sexual interest/arousal patterns* that increase the risk of sexually offending (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Beech & Elliott, 2012; Elliott & Beech, 2009).

Deficits in these three systems (motivational and emotional, action selection and control, and perception and memory) result in clinical symptoms associated with sexual offending:

- The motivational and emotional system functions to allow goals and values to influence the perception and action selection and to adjust the individual’s motivations to fit environmental situations. Problems in the individual’s genetics, cultural upbringing or negative experiences may result in problematic mood states. An individual with a poor experience of emotional upbringing may have difficulty identifying their emotions and in interpersonal situations may respond angrily and act in an antisocial manner, or may have difficulty in establishing appropriate interpersonal relationships due to poor early learning experiences that result in social isolation and intimacy deficits, which may lead to sexual offending.

- The action selection and control system functions in the planning, implementation and evaluation of action plans, and in the controlling of behaviour, thoughts and emotions. These plans are designed to achieve the individual’s goals. Problems in this system may manifest in self-regulation: impulsive behaviour, poor problem solving, inability to adjust plans depending on the circumstance and control of negative emotions are clinical symptoms associated with sexual offending.

- The perception and memory system processes incoming sensory information and constructs representations of objects and events, and makes them available to the other two systems. Problems in this system can lead to maladaptive attitudes, beliefs and interpretations of social interactions. These maladaptive beliefs may result in problematic goals and emotions, and the individual has difficulty controlling sexual
behaviour. These entrenched beliefs bias information processing and lead to cognitive distortions that support sexual offending (Elliott & Beech, 2009; Ward & Beech, 2006).

ITSO then attempts to further integrate the pathways model and the relationship between developmental, dispositional and triggering factors to notions of risk. By identifying risk factors that may highlight offender’s behaviour and what to consider, risk factors are likely to assist in the identification of offenders and high-risk behavioural indicators. Each of the sections below is contained in the model.

### 2.6 Developmental Variables

Developmental precursors to sexual offending relate to the individuals history of abuse, rejection and attachment issues. A number of researchers (Briere & Smiljanich, 1993; Watkins & Bentovim, 1992) have identified that abuse is a major factor in a sexual offender’s history. Rejection, as displayed through neglect, violence and disruption results in alienating children, leading to high-risk behaviour, and affectionless parenting styles as prevalent in sex offenders (Craissati, McClurg & Browne, 2002; Marshall, 1989). As described by Smallbone (2006), attachment, sexual and parenting behaviour systems serve complementary and reciprocal functions for adult bonding. These three systems are partly biologically determined, shaped by psychosocial development and highly situation dependent. Smallbone (2006) argues that negative experiences of early attachments, such as rejection by primary carers, result in poor relationship bonding and increased likelihood of attachment difficulties resulting in antisocial behaviour. Where early attachment experience is positive such as feeling safe and secure and with high parental investment, the result is positive and effective adult relationships. These early childhood experiences with primary care-givers have significant effects on an individual’s functioning and in particular on interpersonal functioning in adulthood with age-appropriate partners (Beech & Ward, 2004; Smallbone, 2006; Smallbone & Dadds, 1998).

Beech and Ward (2004) suggest that the causal relationship between poor attachment style and adult functioning resulting in intimacy deficits, combined with disinhibitors such as substance abuse, may lead some men to seek out intimacy in maladaptive ways. The type of attachment style may relate to the type of sexual offending, the use of
aggression during the offence and the relationship between the offender and victim. Offenders that commit child sexual abuse are more likely to have an anxious-avoidant attachment style than are those that rape adults. Offenders with poor attachment experiences in childhood and that develop poor interpersonal skills and age-inappropriate relationships in adulthood may display intimacy and social skills deficits that are explained as one of the clinical symptoms in the ITSO model.

2.7 Vulnerability to Offend

Vulnerability can be measured through psychological disposition risk factors and historical risk markers. The psychological markers reflect on stable dynamic factors such as sexual interests and self-regulation, attitudes supportive of sexual assault, interpersonal functioning and emotional lability (Hanson & Harris, 2001; Thornton, 2002). This concept fits within Hall and Hirschman’s ideas about sexual arousal, inaccurate cognitions that justify sexual behaviour, affective dyscontrol, and personality problems as the source of vulnerability to sexually abuse children. According to ITSO these vulnerabilities are activated under certain conditions or opportunities to offend and result in deviant sexual arousal, distorted thinking and/or affective disturbance. Where the individual is unable to manage mood states combined with distorted sexual attitudes and/or social difficulties this may result in a loss of control and the individual may become disinhibited, or may opportunistically use sex with a child to meet his sexual and emotional needs. For individuals with distorted beliefs about sex with children, combined with sexual desire, the opportunity to offend may result in the offending providing a positive emotional state (Beech & Ward, 2004).
2.8 Triggering Events and Acute Risk Factors

Triggering, or contextual events (e.g. victim access, substance abuse or antisocial peers) interact with vulnerability factors that generate states likely to lead to sexual offending. Such incidents may include sexual preoccupation, victim access behaviour, anger and hostility, and emotional collapse. Acute anger or intense sexual desire can be triggered by underlying traits—for example, where an individual has interpersonal functioning issues and problematic attachment styles are activated in times of stress and lead to a need for intimacy and control (Beech & Ward, 2004). According to ITSO it is the potential combination of developmental variables, vulnerability to offend and a triggering event that is likely to lead to sexual offending (Beech & Ward, 2004).

2.9 Social Problems

As Ward and Beech (2006), Beech and Elliott (2009) and Elliott and Beech (2009) have described, social difficulties and problems initiating and maintaining intimate relationships with adults are a reflection of the motivational and emotional systems and clinical symptoms for offenders within the ITSO model.

For individuals with difficulty with face-to-face intimate relationships and sexual contact, intimacy deficit may lead to the development of online (e.g. adult pornography, and contact with others) and offline (e.g. magazines and video) sexual habits, and for those with an interest in children as sexual beings, this may lead them into accessing child sexual abuse images online (Putnam, 2000). The increasing development of technology, the ease of access and the amount of material online has enabled those with a sexual interest in children to utilise the Internet to access child abuse images.

2.10 Ecological Niche

The ecological niche can have a significant effect on neuropsychological mechanisms that support an individual’s psychological functioning. This ecological niche can act both distally where childhood experiences affect both psychological and social development of the individual, and proximally, where circumstances are created that enhance the likelihood of offence behaviour (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Beech & Elliott, 2012; Elliott & Beech, 2009; Ward & Beech, 2006). This suggests that a number of factors, both internal
and external to the individual, can result in offending behaviour. Along with developmental variables, triggering events and acute risk factors and social problems, and the ecological niche can result in offending behaviour.

2.11 Testing the Integrated Pathways Model for Online Child Pornographers

Taylor (2002) further expands on the nature of involvement with the Internet and increasingly risky and sexualised behaviour by the viewer. He proposes that the Internet creates circumstances that enhance and sustain increasing involvement. Quayle and Taylor’s (2003) model of problematic Internet use (PIU, as detailed further in Chapter 3) describes problematic cognitions and escalation in online behaviour. PIU relates to disinhibition as a motivating factor and makes distinctions between the motivations of fantasy only (sexually attracted to children) and the periodically prurient (disinhibited or impulsive) offender. PIU involves socio-cognitive factors and cyclical descriptions of the offence process, specifically increased fantasy, increased sexual activity, validation and normalisation of the behaviour (cognitive distortions to justify the behaviour), and potentially the presence of guilt in inhibited offenders (Elliott & Beech, 2009).

The Internet has compulsive qualities where individuals spend more time interacting online, and provides an opportunity for an outlet for the intense and suppressed sexual feelings of the viewer. This leads to those that would normally be marginalised within society because of their deviant beliefs and attitudes, becoming empowered by the Internet (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b).

Expanding on this proposal, Quayle et al. (2006) proposed that those with a propensity to use the Internet would misuse it to deal with difficult emotional states such as anxiety, stress and depression. Internet offenders themselves have reported escaping from their unpleasant realities using child sexual abuse images to ‘shut off’ from their circumstances, and find pleasure in online sexual viewing and masturbation (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b).

However, Tomak et al. (2009) do not believe that Internet sex offenders have profiles consistent with other sex offenders and suggest there can be no single typology for sex offenders (rapists, child molesters and incest offenders).
2.12 Summary

Theories for sexual offending have considered the role of dynamic and static risk factors including deviant sexual interest, prior history of sex offending, lack of empathy for the victim, cognitive distortions and problematic relationships with adults. Theories about child sex offending usually refer to one of three levels of behaviour. Level 1 theories are multi-factorial accounts of the core features of sexual offence behaviour, the causes of these features and how they manifest as sexual abuse actions such as Ward and Siegert’s (2002) *pathways model of child sexual abuse*. Level 2 are single factor theories used to explain single phenomena that generate sexually abusive behaviour, such as victim empathy deficits or cognitive distortions such as Marshall’s (1989) *intimacy deficits* theory. Level 3 theories are offence process theories that are descriptive models of the offence chain or relapse processes, which outline behavioural, cognitive, motivational and contextual factors, and include the theory by Ward, Louden, Hudson and Marshall (1995). The Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending (ITSO) model subsumed and unified neuropsychological explanations with previous theories at levels 1, 2 and 3 explanations of sexual abuse behaviours. Research (Middleton et al, 2005; 2006; 2009) suggests the Internet child sexual offenders have similar psychological characteristics to contact child sexual abuse offenders. Quayle et al (2006) for example, have argued that the role of the Internet has been to facilitate access to child abuse material and to support the offender in their offending behaviour through misuse to manage difficult emotional states.
Chapter 3: Habituation and Escalation to Child Sexual Abuse Images

Chapter 3 will focus on the role of pornography in sexual aggression generally and the role that child abuse images play in offending. The chapter will further discuss the escalation in image preferences and how offenders become habituated to images at lower levels. Finally, the chapter will consider the development of typologies to explain image levels which have been used by law enforcement and the Courts to identify the images viewed by the offenders.

3.1 The Role of Pornography in Sexual Aggression

A number of studies have reported on the relationship between pornography and sexual aggression (e.g. Allen, D’Alessio & Emmers-Sommer, 2000; Malamuth, Addison & Koss, 2000; Oddone-Paolucci, Genuis & Violato, 2000; Vega & Malamuth, 2007). It has generally been found that exposure to pornography is associated with acceptance of violence and aggression towards women, and rape myth acceptance (Emmers-Sommer & Burns, 2005). Rape myth acceptance is a notion from Burt (1980, as cited in Emmers-Sommer & Burns, 2005) that proposes that the offending individual believes that the victim is responsible for (usually) her victimisation, and that little or no responsibility for the sexual aggression lies with (usually) the man. Vega and Malamuth (2007), however, clarify that the association between pornography and aggression to women was only the case for men that scored highly on general (e.g. delinquent tendencies in adolescence) and specific risk characteristics (e.g. attitudes supporting sexual aggression and hostility towards women).

Kingston et al. (2008) and Malamuth et al. (2000) reported that although there is an association between pornography and aggression, this was moderated by the type of pornography: exposure to nudity decreased aggression but exposure to non-violent sexual behaviour and violent sexual behaviour significantly increased aggression. Kingston et al. (2008) further reported that pornography use was positively correlated with coercive sexual behaviour and predictive of sexual aggression, and that frequency and type of adult pornography correlated with criminal and violent recidivism in sex offenders.
As pointed out by Mulac et al. (2002), research has shown that short-term exposure to non-violent sexual media stimulation can result in cognitive changes in men, and that these changes can affect their behaviour towards women. Mulac et al. (2002) paired males and females interacting together and found that males that had viewed sexually explicit videos were rated as more dominant towards their female partner, displayed greater anxiety, ignored the intellectual contributions of their partner, positioned themselves further from their partner, touched their partner for longer periods of time and spent less time looking at their partner, in comparison with men that had viewed a non-sexual film. Further, Golde et al. (2000) found that when male college students viewed video vignettes of sexually explicit and non-explicit interactions that were degrading to women, they were more likely to express attitudes supportive of rape than were those that viewed non-degrading videos.

Meta-analyses (e.g. Paolucci et al., 2000) have identified that exposure to pornography produced a variety of negative outcomes including increased aggression, impulse gratification, and sexual flexibility, and that objectification in pornography reinforced and/or justified similar attitudes and behaviours in everyday human contact. Paolucci et al. (2000) proposed that this led to the individual engaging in inappropriate activities and contributed to the development of sexually dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours; and that exposure to pornographic material increases the risk of the individual developing sexually deviant tendencies, committing sexual offences, experiencing difficulty in intimate relationships and accepting the rape myth.

Ramasubramanian and Oliver (2003) supported the notion that greater exposure to both violent and non-violent pornography is associated with increased aggression towards women and acceptance of violence against women. Although some studies have suggested that violent, but not non-violent, pornography has negative effects, other studies have shown that even non-aggressive pornography may be associated with increased risk of sexual aggression (Vega & Malamuth, 2007).

Zillmann and Bryant (1986) randomly assigned 160 male and female students and non-students to groups that were exposed to one hour per week either of common, non-violent pornography or of innocuous material, over a six-week period. Two weeks later subjects were provided with an opportunity to watch G-rated, R-rated and X-rated programmes
privately. Subjects from the common, non-violent pornography exposure group showed little interest in common, non-violent pornography, preferring to watch uncommon pornography including bondage, sadomasochism and bestiality. Also, male non-students exposed to pornography consumed uncommon pornography almost exclusively. Male students were similar in their viewing preferences, although somewhat less extreme, and female consumption preference was also reported, but was far less pronounced, especially among female students. This suggests that even those that may not have convictions for sexual or violent offences can still hold deviant fantasies but do not act on them. In support of this, other studies have shown that non-offending individuals can have deviant fantasies (e.g. Malamuth et al., 2000), and a preference for deviant and violent pornography, but do not offend. This suggests that only a minority of individuals that view pornography progress to violence and this may be related to a relaxation of the inhibitions that for the majority of individuals cause them to withhold from acting out their fantasies.

Zillman and Bryant (1984; 1988) further reported that repeated exposure to standard, non-violent and often available pornography in a sample of male and female students and non-students led to:

- increased callousness towards women
- distorted perceptions about sexuality
- trivialisation of rape as an offence
- increases in deviant and bizarre types of pornography
- decreased satisfaction with a partner’s sexual performance, affection and appearance
- doubts about the value of marriage
- decreased interest in having children
- devaluation of monogamy
- beliefs that non-monogamous relationships were normal and natural behaviour.

Rice-Hughes (2001, as cited in Harris & Bezuidenhout, 2010) supported the notion that habitual long-term use of pornographic material reduces the satisfaction for the viewer of soft-core pornography and increases the desire for increasingly sexually deviant, humiliating, dehumanising and violent forms of pornography.

Laws and Marshall (1990, as cited in Seto, Maric & Barbaree, 2001) suggested that pornography reinforced sexual response of individuals and that such conditioned
responses may shift into increasingly deviant interests as individuals view minor variations in content such as progressively more violence. Alternatively, individuals seek out more ‘intense’ content due to a habituation effect to the content regularly being viewed. However, Seto et al. (2001) suggested that there is no direct causal link between sexual aggression and pornography. They suggested that individuals predisposed to sexual offending were more likely to show a response to pornography use, and those not predisposed to sexual offending were unlikely to show a response to pornography use.

Although the above studies have indicated a connection between exposure to pornography and increased sexual aggression and acceptance of violence towards women, there are a number of issues that may influence the results. Several of the studies are based on self-report (e.g. consumption of pornography), which may result in either over or under reporting of consumption. Many involved the subjects viewing pornography for a specified period of time (e.g. one hour a week over a six-week period), which was then followed by testing immediately or within a short period of time (e.g. two weeks later). It is unknown if the immediate effects of increased pornography viewing continue or if the effects fade over a period of time and how long this may take.

3.2 The Role of Child Sexual Abuse Images in Offending

Collecting child sexual abuse images is not accidental. Individuals make deliberate choices about the images they view, store, transmit or produce. These choices relate to the quality of the images and how these images are perceived in the mind of the offender, and the value of these images to the offender (Taylor, Holland et al., 2001; Taylor, Quayle et al., 2001).

Lanning (2010) suggests that collecting child abuse images and paraphernalia may have a number of causes, which include:

- compulsive collecting behaviour that helps to satisfy, deal with, or reinforce persistent sexual fantasies
- validation of behaviour through collecting academic and scientific information in an effort to understand and justify it. Of interest is that often the information supportive of such behaviour has been provided and written by other offenders in an effort to justify and validate their own behaviour.
• saving of material that is considered a souvenir or trophy of the relationship that the offender had with the victim, and that can be savoured long after the child is no longer at the sexually attractive age to the offender.

Taylor and Quayle (2003) believe that a basic issue in the psychological function of pictures is the relationship between child sexual abuse images and contact offending. Although the relationship between child pornography and contact sexual offences against children remains largely unknown, some consider pornography to:
• be a by-product of contact offending (Goldstein, 1999). This was supported in a study by Riegel (2004, as cited in Seto, 2010) who found that 95% of 290 self-identified homosexual paedophiles when responding to an anonymous online survey acknowledged using child pornography at some point, with 59% admitting using pornography frequently.
• be a facilitator in the seduction of new victims (CEOP, 2012; Tyler & Stone, 1985),
• be an inevitable part of the process of organised abuse (Itzin, 1997, as cited in Taylor & Quayle, 2003)
• play a role in sexual fantasy (CEOP, 2012; Lanning, 1992).

Kingston et al. (2008) studied criminal recidivism for 341 child molesters assessed up to 15 years after release, reporting that pornography use (frequency and type) added significantly to the prediction of recidivism. Additionally, Endrass et al. (2009) reported in their study of 231 Internet child pornography offenders that the consumption of child pornography alone was not a risk factor for contact offending, at least not for those that had never committed a contact offence. They reported that during a six-year follow-up of these offenders, 2.6% (six individuals) were convicted of a non-contact sex offence (viewing illegal pornography), and only one individual was convicted of a violent offence (bodily harm). Other researchers (e.g. Quayle & Taylor, 2002b) have suggested that the use of pornography reduces the risk of contact offending in some individuals. Their subjects admitted to deliberately seeking out child abuse images and deviant pornography in order to satiate their sexual thirst and to substitute the images for contact offending. However, it is acknowledged that this is based on offenders’ self-reporting and could be used as a justification for offending online as a better outcome than contact offending. Thus it is acknowledged that pornography may serve different purposes for different offenders; for example, as a sexual stimulant, to aid in the offending process or as a substitute for contact offending.
Krone (2004) developed a typology to describe online pornography offending (see Table 3.1), which ranged from the accidental browser making a decision to save the material viewed, through to the distributor that may distribute to known associates or for financial gain. Each level described the progression of each individual through networking with other like-minded offenders, security of the images or their activities, and nature of the abuse (indirect for the accidental browser up to direct abuse by the contact offender).

Since the Krone (2004) typology was published, other options in the production of images have been developed. A producer may crop the photo of a known child onto pornographic images, airbrush away clothing from a child’s photograph or otherwise manipulate images in some way where the producer is not directly involved in contact offending. However, typologies such as that of Krone (2004) do not provide an explanation as to why this type of behaviour occurs. For such an explanation we need to turn to theories of sexual offending (Sheldon, 2011).

It has been suggested that child abuse images are used to stimulate sexual arousal, or as an aid to sexual fantasy and masturbation, a prelude to sexual activity, a validation and justification for the behaviour as others are also doing it, or as a means to groom children and to lower a child’s inhibitions (Quayle & Taylor, 2002a). A further reason may include using images as a substitution for contact offending (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b).

Taylor, Holland et al. (2001) suggest that the Internet has been used for many types of sexual interest. For many cybersex users this becomes a significant part of their lives, but remains a legal aspect of their activities. For others, their use of the Internet for sexual activity may become problematic. A number of authors have referred to the Internet having compulsive and addictive features that lead to problematic behaviour (e.g. Cooper et al., 2000; Orzack & Ross, 2000; Stein, Black, Shapira & Spitzer, 2001).

Quayle and Taylor (2001) suggest that:

The function of online resources such as child pornography is to heighten sexual arousal and disinhibition, and to aid in the seduction of children through fantasy manipulation and masturbation … What is of relevance to this study is that the use of pornography, like engagement with the Internet, is not a static process, but has a function within a range of offending activities (p. 599).
Table 3.1: Typology of Online Child Pornography Offending (Krone, 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of involvement</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Level of networking by offender</th>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Nature of abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Browser</td>
<td>Response to spam, accidental hit on suspect site—material knowingly saved</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private fantasy</td>
<td>Conscious creation of online text or digital images for private use</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trawler</td>
<td>Actively seeking child pornography using openly available browsers</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-secure collector</td>
<td>Actively seeking material often through peer-to-peer networks</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure collector</td>
<td>Actively seeking material but only through secure networks; collector syndrome and exchange as an entry barrier</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groomer</td>
<td>Cultivating an online relationship with one or more children; the offender may or may not seek material in any of the above ways; pornography may be used to facilitate abuse</td>
<td>Varies—online contact with individual children</td>
<td>Security depends on child</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuser</td>
<td>Abusing a child who may have been introduced to the offender online; the offender may or may not seek material in any of the above ways; pornography may be used to facilitate abuse</td>
<td>Varies—physical contact with individual children</td>
<td>Security depends on child</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>Records own abuse or that of others (or induces children to submit images of themselves)</td>
<td>Varies—may depend on whether becomes a distributor</td>
<td>Security depends on child</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributor</td>
<td>May distribute at any one of the above levels</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Tends to be secure</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taylor, Holland et al. (2001) reported that collecting pictures led to an increase in sexual activity and fantasy for the offenders in their study. Prior to collecting child sexual abuse images, offenders often had a low level of sexual engagement, even those with a sexual partner. However, once their collecting of images began their solitary sexual activity increased, and for some this increase was dramatic.

Six main discourses have been presented by Quayle and Taylor (2002b) to explain the role of child sexual abuse images to offenders. The first includes child sexual abuse images being utilised to achieve sexual arousal, where viewers were often selective in the images used (e.g. specific age of victim, gender, physical appearance or a particular sexual activity) in order to masturbate. The images supported the sexual fantasies of many offenders: they were able to masturbate while viewing images that acted out these fantasies. It was also found that for some online offenders they did escalate to abusing children and producing photographs of the abuse consistent with their online fantasies. This discourse is consistent with the notion of distorted sexual scripts in the model of Ward and Siegert (2002).

The second discourse relates to child sexual abuse images as being collectables. This was particularly pertinent when the images were part of a series: offenders often took great interest in obtaining the full series (Taylor, Holland et al., 2001) of an incident and drew an increased sense of power and credibility from offender groups online by possession of such series. Many offenders in the study by Quayle and Taylor (2002b) compared the possession of child sexual abuse images as similar to collecting baseball cards and offenders dispassionately discussed their behaviour and normalised the activity, including one offender who described the pictures as:

    We were trading pictures … as much as it pains me to say … kinda like trading baseball cards (p. 11).

A second offender stated:

    and there was also the thrill in collecting them. You wanted to get complete sets so it … was a bit like stamp collecting as well (p. 11).

The third discourse proposed by Quayle and Taylor (2002b) on the role of child sexual abuse images is that child sexual abuse images facilitate social relationships. This was found almost exclusively for offenders that traded images and communicated online with others, which enabled social cohesion for the individual and a sense of power: one
offender who had located a full series of images and traded these with others described himself as ‘deeply grateful’ and referred to himself as ‘It’s kinda like an art collector who finds a lost Picasso’ (p. 15). Once a member of the group had been accepted, his status was elevated and this resulted in an increase in online exchanges and access to special images not readily available. Many of the offenders viewed the online social connection as a means of supporting each other and sustaining friendships. This discourse is considered to be similar to the Ward and Siegert (2002) model of intimacy and social skills deficits being assisted through online behaviour, where the individual can alleviate deficits through accessing child abuse images online and developing relationships with like-minded individuals.

The fourth discourse of Quayle and Taylor (2002b) related to child sexual abuse images as a means to avoid real life, and the social support obtained online replacing unsatisfactory relationships in the real world of the individual. This secret life shared with others was separated from their real world, and allowed them to escape from unpleasant realities. Again, this discourse could be considered to be consistent with Ward and Siegert’s (2002) model of intimacy and social skills deficits, where the offender is able to replace unsatisfactory relationships with online relationships that are more satisfying to them.

The fifth discourse of Quayle and Taylor (2002b) related to the accessing of child sexual abuse images as therapy. A number of offenders described using images as a way of controlling their interest in child pornography and one that could be used for dealing with emotions such as anger—ensuring the safety of children because they were not committing contact offences. There is a close link between accessing images as therapy and addiction explanations. A number of offenders refer to being ‘ill’ with problems outside their control, and that by accessing images they are attempting to understand their problem and manage it. However, this may simply be an excuse used by offenders when apprehended. This discourse could be consistent with the Ward and Siegert (2002) model of child sexual abuse, where the offender is able to regulate emotional states through accessing child abuse images to alleviate emotional symptoms (e.g. anger).

Finally, Quayle and Taylor (2002b) revealed a discourse about the connection between the Internet and child sexual abuse images. Offenders believed that the responsibility for their crimes lay with the Internet as the medium to their offending, because of the speed
with which they were able to access images, distancing themselves from offending and
portraying themselves as different to contact offenders as they did not commit a contact
offence against a child. This discourse could be considered consistent with the Ward and
Siegert (2002) model of child sexual abuse where the individual has developed cognitive
distortions to explain their behaviour, which alleviates any shame or regret they may have
for their offending.

Quayle (2009) provided an insight into the types of collections that child sexual abuse
image offenders prefer, which can range from images of clothed or naked children, to
erotically posed images and those of sexual assault. These images can be considered as a
continuum of ‘increased deliberate sexual victimisation’, which indicate the offender’s
preferences in image selection, and the value and meaning of each particular image to the
offender. Taylor et al. (2001) propose that image selection relates more to the extent to
which the image can be sexualised and fantasised over by the individual, rather than its
objective content.

Quayle and Taylor (2003) developed a model of Problematic Internet Use (PIU), which
has been used to describe the escalation in online behaviour. This model suggested that
distal factors—such as poor socialisation, attachment problems or early sexualisation, and
problems from difficulties in psychological functioning such as cognitive problems,
disinhibition, or loneliness—when coupled with proximal Internet factors such as ease of
access to material online or perceived anonymity (they may later discover they were never
anonymous), causes the escalation of PIU. Social cognition factors (increased risk taking,
increased empowerment, validation, normalisation of the behaviour and reduction in
offline contact with others) when coupled with Internet process factors (increase in online
skills) lead to online sexual behaviour. Once online and engaged with like-minded
individuals that assist the offender in developing skills for avoidance of detection and
reinforcement of distorted beliefs and behaviour, the offender may increase their deviant
activity (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Elliott & Beech, 2009).

Quayle et al. (2006) and Taylor, Holland et al. (2001) report that use of the Internet avoids
negative emotional states (e.g. boredom, anxiety and depression) and that obtaining
images online aids sexual arousal, which helps alleviate dissatisfaction in the offender’s
life. This online activity is highly rewarding to the offender and they are able to continue
to avoid their problems. The intensity of the behaviour has properties described by
offenders as being like an addiction. Quayle et al. (2006) go on to explain that the use of terms such as problematic, maladaptive or excessive when applied to Internet use may be more beneficial than expressions within the addiction framework. They suggest that escalation of Internet use is better related to the function the Internet plays in meeting other emotional needs.

Many child abuse image offenders report increasing feelings of power and control in being able to locate material online, escaping security measures and gaining credibility with like-minded individuals on the Internet. This further normalised their behaviour in collecting child sexual abuse images, and reinforced their cognitions that what they were doing was ‘normal’ as others were doing the same thing. These feelings of control were often in contrast to how the offender felt in his own life where he did not feel in control of his relationship. As one offender stated:

Well … yeah … erm … then it was the case of … well, the whole world just sort of fell to pieces … because I was then completely out of … I was … I’d lost control … completely … of the situation … there was nothing I could do … to take control back again (Quayle & Taylor, 2003, p. 118).

As Quayle and Taylor (2003) posit, child abuse image offenders move through stages of involvement with the Internet that are maintained by problematic cognitions about the self and the material being viewed. These cognitions may facilitate and increase in problematic behaviour (moving into contact offending), or may allow the individual to move into sexually exciting but legal behaviour. Those that joined larger social networks and communicated with other like-minded individuals were able to learn new skills such as increased computer skills, avoidance of detection and justification of behaviour and distorted cognitions that remain unchallenged as the network sites are closed to outsiders. This increased Internet usage led to a decrease in social engagement with others and the real world, resulting in a decline of interaction with family and social networks and increases in depression and loneliness (Beech & Elliott, 2012).

For those wishing to access increasingly extreme material, the Internet assists with these searches as each website links to other, more extreme websites. These often are displayed as being illegal and Taylor and Quayle’s (2003) offenders found this a discriminative stimulus that helped with searching for new material. Taylor and Quayle reported that the speed at which habituation occurs is exaggerated by the Internet due to the volume of material available, and the amount of time that offenders spend on the Internet.
An individual’s interest in, and engagement with both child sexual abuse images and the Internet is believed to change over time. The motivations for viewing child abuse images and using the Internet, and the individual’s behaviour, may therefore change over time in relation to the development of a sexual interest in children and in the specific processes related to Internet use (Taylor, 2001). Taylor et al. (2001) reported that all their subjects that downloaded images increased their Internet activity, which resulted in a decrease in social engagement in the ‘real world’.

As Taylor and Quayle (2003) have suggested, once an Internet user becomes linked to the Internet as a means to solve many of their problems, their online time increases to the detriment of offline social behaviour. This was found to be particularly relevant for offenders that moved from pictures to seeking out opportunities to ‘chat’ with others. As one offender in Taylor and Quayle (2003) stated:

> er it was a little … it was a fantasy world for me … and it was so different from the mundane existence I’d been leading. Here was something that was dangerous … it was exciting … it was new (p. 98).

Longer time spent online resulted in an increase in the number of images downloaded and an expansion and/or focus in collecting, whereby the collecting generated cognitions that distanced the offender from the content of the images and objectified the children within the images. For the offender, the longer they stayed online the increase in the likelihood that they would display their preference for images, which they would sort and catalogue in new groups of images. This led the individual to withdraw further from the real world and their problems increased (e.g. increased isolation from social relationships) (Quayle & Taylor, 2003).

### 3.3 Escalation of Child Sexual Abuse Image Preferences

Escalation has been used to explain multiple increases in sexual behaviour. Some researchers may refer to escalation in image content where the offender progresses from viewing images that may show an interest in children for sexual purposes, to images of naked children, sexually posed images of children, sexual intercourse with a child and sadistic images of child sexual abuse (e.g. Quayle & Taylor, 2002b; Taylor, Holland et al., 2001). Other researchers when considering the model of escalation in sexual abuse are referring to the escalation where an offender may progress from viewing child abuse
images online to contact offending (e.g. Seto et al., 2001; Taylor, 2002). This chapter will use these two definitions of escalation interchangeably: some online offenders escalate in the content of the images to increasingly graphic and sadistic images of child sexual abuse, and some progress from viewing images online to contact offending.

Table 3.2 shows one hypothesised model to explain the escalation in both image content and progression to contact offending, the method utilised for accessing child sexual abuse material and contact, and the nature of the relationship with the victim. This table identifies the progression (across) from no recognised victim to a known victim for the offender, and the progression (down) from passive viewing of images to predatory behaviour seeking out a young person for sexual abuse. The model explains how offenders can progress from lower level images to higher level images and progress to contact offending.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of escalation</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Victim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy: escalating use of increasingly deviant and/or violent material</td>
<td>Image and sound files only</td>
<td>Not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact-driven use of Internet from observation of picture or sound files to seeking contact through chat rooms, social media</td>
<td>Images and Internet contact (text, voice, webcam)</td>
<td>Identified victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact offending against a young person</td>
<td>Physical contact</td>
<td>Identified victim</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of researchers have considered the issue of online pornographers becoming desensitised to explicit material. The viewer becomes emotionally less affected by what they view, as has been shown following repeated exposure to violence in other contexts (Krafka et al., 1997).

Research conducted with individuals that are regular online viewers of adult pornography have reported that there is a process of escalation in types of images viewed. Emmers-Sommer and Burns (2005) reported that their study participants viewed a range of images from soft-core to hard-core pornography and coercion (e.g. victim being coerced into an
unwanted sex act). Their sample admitted reasons for consuming online pornography were in the main to masturbate, out of curiosity, boredom and to induce arousal.

Emmers-Sommers and Burns (2005) research was supported by the work of Jenkins (2001, as cited in Russell & Purcell, 2005) and Tate (1990, as cited in Russell & Purcell, 2005) who reported that those that viewed child sexual abuse images demanded increasingly hard-core images, as previous images became too routine for the viewers. Linz and Imrich (2001) suggested that viewing child sexual abuse images can desensitise the viewer to the pathology of the sexual abuse or exploitation of children insofar as it becomes acceptable behaviour to the viewer. Russell and Purcell (2005) advanced the argument that viewers become desensitised to the pain and damage to the child victim and that viewers’ inhibitions are reduced until they have a preference for increasingly deviant and severely abusive child abuse images.

Middleton (2008) reported on an escalation model (Sullivan & Beech, 2004) that suggested that viewers of child sexual abuse images reported that the images normalised the fantasy and ‘disinhibited’ them. Therefore, they soon became bored with the pornography viewed and sought more ‘intense’ images for viewing. The model suggests that this combination of disinhibition, increased risk taking and the need to seek out more intense images may lead to escalating into real-life experiences and contact offending.

This idea is supported by research of Webster et al. (2012) undertaken as part of the European Online Grooming Project. Webster et al. (2012) interviewed 33 offenders convicted of online grooming offences and found that some viewed adult pornography and indecent child images as part of maintaining or supporting online offending. They further reported that viewing images played a role in escalating deviant behaviour in four ways:

- **Saturation**—although there were differences in the trajectories depending on type of image first accessed (adult v. child), the effect was described as the same. Offenders became bored viewing particular images, or were not as easily aroused by the images they had once found stimulating. For groomers that began viewing adult pornography, some began to seek out films and images showing younger subjects, or ‘models’ bordering on legal age. Some offenders described how they moved from ‘mild’ or ‘more acceptable’ images to material that was more explicit and arousing. One offender described his escalation in image content:
[at first] it was the odd pornographic image I was looking at, and by the time I was arrested my computer could be on 24 hours a day downloading off file share software … I think I was looking for higher level images, to get the same satisfaction, you’d start off at level one, two images, then it progressed to images of three and four and the odd level five image, just to be able to get the same kick that I was getting at the beginning (Webster et al., 2012, p. 68).

- **Denial of harm to the child**—some offenders used offence-supportive beliefs to justify their behaviour, and some focused on particular features (e.g. the child appeared happy or was smiling) to continue the sexual abuse and support the belief that children enjoy sexual contact with adults. Some offenders described images and films of young people showing pain, crying or other signs of distress and they modified their search to alleviate conflicting beliefs about harm to the child. One offender described how he sought only images that justified his behaviour:

  If I saw a facial look which looked as if, they were uncomfortable in what they were doing … Not enjoying it, so to speak … I would filter that out and to begin with [one] that was (Webster et al., 2012, p. 68).

- **Fantasy**—indecent images were used as a means to make real the young person being groomed online, and were particularly relevant to those offenders that did not use webcams as part of their offending behaviour. One offender described asking the young person to describe themselves in detail so that he could match an image he had to the young person, and this image was used to masturbate while chatting to the person online. One offender described his behaviour as:

  The images helped make real what was going on in my head—it was great (Webster et al., 2012, p. 70).

- **Demand-fuelling status**—some offenders continued to capture images while offending, and the continuation of collecting images was their preferred outcome. Not only did the continued collection of images satisfy the individual, for those that communicated with other offenders online, their credibility was enhanced and they received positive reinforcement for providing material to others, which made them feel important. As one offender described:

  I felt powerful and important knowing that people wanted access to my images. It was exciting and gave me a kick. When I logged on I would get a stream of requests ‘do you have something new for us’. I then began to abuse more frequently to meet the request for more pictures (Webster et al., 2012, p. 71).

The relationship between the viewing of child abuse images and contact offending is unknown, although the number of people in the UK convicted with child sexual abuse images continues to grow. To date, little research on reconviction rates has been conducted due to the recency of the introduction of Internet pornography offences.
However, it was reported that in 2006 the number of Internet-related sexual offences accounted for almost one-third of all sexual offence convictions (Middleton et al., 2009). Although little empirical research to date has confirmed a link between viewing child abuse images and contact offending (Carr, 2012; Elliott, Beech & Mandeville-Norden, 2012), some researchers claim the absence of a causal link between sexual aggression and pornography (e.g. Seto et al., 2001). The increase in the number of convictions for Internet-related offences is likely to be the result of the increase in law enforcement targeting of Internet offences and offenders, the number of individuals using the Internet and the availability of websites distributing child abuse images. Additionally, the issue of escalation of image preferences and escalation to contact offending must be considered.

Some researchers refer to escalation as the progression from viewing child abuse images to contact offending against a child. Other researchers refer to escalation in image preference from nudity to sexual assault and sadism (e.g. the COPINE scale). Little empirical research has been conducted to determine what drives the escalation in image preference; however, it has been suggested that only some offenders will progress to increasingly extreme images (e.g. Baartz, 2008). Some research (e.g. Quayle & Taylor, 2002b) has concluded that some Internet offenders are less likely to progress to contact offending, as they use the viewing of images as a substitute for contact offending.

The ITSO explains the escalation of sexual offending online as the influence of the ecological niche of the offender and their psychological functioning. Through the commission of a sexual crime the offender may become further isolated from their usual social supports, which results in a reduction in their likelihood of forming appropriate sexual relationships. If the individual also has problems with regulating their emotional states, then sex becomes an increasingly influential means to regulate problematic emotional states (Ward & Beech, 2006). As Elliott and Beech (2009) explain, the aberrant behaviour can modify, worsen, or entrench personal circumstances, which maintains or exacerbates the offending behaviour.

Quayle et al. (2006) argued that ‘the most reasonable assumption is that pornography may influence, but not cause, the development of sexual offending in some men’. However, they go on to say that regardless of the relationship between individual offending and access to abuse images, the production of such images necessarily requires the sexual abuse of a child, and the demand for more images fuels more production, and therefore more abuse.
Quayle and Taylor (2002b) further report that a number of the convicted Internet offenders in their study admitted to viewing pornography as a substitute for contact offending. This suggests that contact offending may be a risk factor for viewing pornography. Other research (e.g. Lanning, 2010; Taylor & Quayle, 2003) has suggested that contact offenders use pornography as a means to prime, prepare and desensitise the child for abuse.

CEOP (2012) reported on an assessment conducted on 97 offenders that were both contact and online offenders: in 90% of cases they were able to ascertain the size of the offenders’ collections of images, which ranged in number from a ‘handful’ of still images to 2.5 million still and moving images. They further reported that in the majority of cases, offenders possessed the most serious images—rated as Level 4 and Level 5 on the Sentencing Council scales, which are based on the COPINE scales (explained in detail later in this chapter).

The issue of escalation in image preference has also been considered by some researchers to identify why some offenders will progress to increasingly violent and graphic images. Although some Internet offenders will progress to increasingly graphic images, many remain at the lower levels of the COPINE scale (e.g. see Baartz, 2008; Taylor & Quayle, 2003). Further, Quayle (2009) refers to an unpublished master thesis cited by Middleton (2008) that reviewed 74 Internet offenders using the Risk Matrix 2000 and correlated the risk level with possession of images rated against the Sentencing Advisory Panel (SAP) guidelines. This research indicated that offenders rated as the highest risk actually viewed images at the lower levels of the SAP scale, than did lower risk offenders. However, this may be the result of being apprehended prior to progressing to more extreme images, or that images were used as part of a contact offender’s behaviour.

Quayle and Taylor (2001) refer to the escalation for some offenders from passive viewing of images to actively seeking out images and this may include contact with other like-minded individuals and the trading of images with another individual or an online group. They refer to the use of the Internet to develop online communities where isolated individuals can communicate with others about sexual topics or information on accessing images and security issues, and provide information that is aimed at reducing the perceived responsibility, and provide justification for illegal activity.
This proposition is reinforced through the work of Taylor (2002) where there are concerns about habituation over time leading to progression into increasingly violent sexual images, or those involving younger children. The IWF (2008) reported that victims range from babies through to teenagers and that the children in images they assessed in 2007 were very young: 80% were under 10 years of age, 10% under two, 33% between three and six, and 37% between six and ten years of age. Wortley and Smallbone (2006) describe a corrosive effect as offenders become attracted to increasingly severe images through a process of desensitisation to the harm committed to the victims.

Emmers-Sommer and Burns (2005) extrapolate the idea of desensitisation and habituation to increasingly explicit images due to the ‘limitlessness’ and ‘lack of boundaries’ (p. 13) that the Internet offers for pornographers. Emmers-Sommer and Burns (2005) believe this may lead to the process of desensitisation being amplified online, with the viewer holding less empathy for the victim and less responsibility for the perpetrator. For consideration is the issue of the role of the Internet in desensitising the individual to the harm caused by child abuse. It could be that individuals are already less empathic to the harm to children and the Internet simply provides an avenue to access images.

For some offenders the exposure to child sexual abuse images may trigger mechanisms that support pre-existing sexual fantasies, urges and interests, and that greater tolerance develops for those immersed in pornography, leading to the requirement for more deviant stimuli to achieve the same levels of arousal and satiation (Hernandez, 2009). As Quayle and Taylor (2003) have reported, a number of offenders in their study referred to becoming bored and satiated with the material they were viewing. The motivation to access new material was to increase levels of sexual stimulation:

I was actually getting quite bored as it were … erm … with the sort of child pornography … I was becoming sort of much more obsessed with bondage … and sort of torture … imagery. So … I’d kind of exhausted … the potential that it had for sexual arousal (Quayle & Taylor, 2003, p. 102).

This proposition then suggests that over time, offenders, and in particular those that view increasingly violent and sadistic material, will require further increases in violence and aggression to maintain the same or greater levels of arousal. As Curnoe and Langevin (2002) suggest, the volume of child sexual abuse images on the Internet is likely to fuel fantasies that may exacerbate and accelerate the offending behaviour.
Carr (2006) reported on the increasing number of indecent images online that are becoming more disturbing, involving greater violence and revealing the abuse of increasingly younger children. This appears consistent with the findings of Barron and Kimmel (2000) that in adult pornography there was evidence of satiation within the individual, which led them to seek out newer, more explicit and violent sexual material in order to gain sexual arousal. Although it was unclear if this escalation in adult pornography viewing was reflected in changes in child sexual abuse images, Taylor (2001) suggested that the emergence of new images of children being sexually abused was of younger children, and showed increasing sexual victimisation. This lends support to the proposition that individuals can become habituated to images and require increasingly graphic images to sustain arousal.

Taylor and Quayle (2003) reported that their offender subjects moved through a variety of pornographic material, each time progressing to more extreme material. Offenders when interviewed described their behaviour as:

and er it just progressed from there … it would go having a look at the teenage sites and then these teenage sites would point you to younger things and then it would say like illegal site … you’d think oh what’s that … you’d have a look at the site and the girls are obviously getting younger and it was a steady … downward trend (pp. 84–85).

it seemed to be getting younger and younger … as the more I got into the sites and more I diversified the more you could … you know … the harder the pornography got … seemed to be getting harder and harder (p. 91).

As can be seen by the responses of the offenders they used the passive voice when discussing the Internet, as if they were trying to blame the Internet for their behaviour (Taylor & Quayle, 2003). This may reflect cognitive distortions to avoid accepting responsibility for the criminal behaviour, or may be an attempt at post-offence justification for the behaviour (Quayle & Taylor, 2001).

Quayle and Taylor (2002b) and Taylor and Quayle (2003) reported that the majority of their offenders had moved through a variety of pornographies and not just children. A number had progressed from the initial search for adult pornography to increasingly graphic pornography and extreme activities. Those that escalated to more extreme material involving children were in possession of images that could be related to the age of the children in the images (where it was reported the images of children sought were
younger) or to the actual activities being conducted, such as sexual assault, or bestiality—as one offender described:

well there was like full penetration from animals erm … dogs, donkeys … think there’s a zebra at one point so …. I don’t think you could actually get more extreme without changing the subject area (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b, p. 342).

Taylor and Quayle (2003) report on the outcomes of interviews with child abuse image offenders and their increasing desensitisation to the images viewed. They reported that viewers sought out new and more sexually extreme material, described by one offender as:

a slippery … slope erm a very unhealthy slope that I was going down … erm I suppose in a lot of ways I was becoming desensitised to it … the more I was seeing the less it was bothering me … and the more I was seeing the more I was thinking this is er perfectly acceptable behaviour because … there’s so much of it there you know it can’t be that bad (p. 26).

3.4 Habituation to Child Sexual Abuse Images

Habituation has been used as an explanation for escalation in image content in viewing images of child sexual abuse. Habituation is the result of a reduction in arousal to sexual stimuli over repeated exposure, and the individual requires more extreme and novel stimuli to continue to maintain, or increase arousal to the sexual stimuli. Early research into adult pornography reported a drift towards the consumption of viewing different and more extreme pornography, including ‘uncommon or unusual sexual practices’ (Zillman & Bryant, 1980, p. 577, as cited in Elliott & Beech, 2009) such as bondage, sadomasochism and bestiality. Taylor (2001) reported that this was the case in Internet child abuse image viewing whereby the images are showing increasingly younger children and more graphic and increasingly violent abuse of children. However, it is also important to note that Internet offenders typically have in their collections selections of images that show specific age groups, gender, physical features and sexual activities (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b).

As Taylor (2002) posits, child sexual abuse images are used by those holding a sexual interest in children to facilitate sexual arousal and fantasy generation. However, over time the capacity of particular images or series of images, to continue to stimulate arousal diminishes. As such, offenders are driven to seek out new sexual abuse images to sustain arousal and generate fantasy about sexual activity involving children. Taylor (2002) refers to one offender who described becoming bored with his collection and desiring to seek
out newer images or to ‘experience’ sexual activity with a child. This particular offender believed this to be a natural progression like stealing, where a thief starts out stealing on a small scale but over time escalates to larger scale thefts.

Quayle (2008) and Quayle and Taylor (2002b; 2003) propose that for some offenders the escalation in accessing images relates to the desire for newness, or the pleasure in obtaining missing pictures that complete a series of images. They reported that the categorising of pictures could either be simple or complex, and was determined by whether the images were for personal use or for exchange. Those that obtained images for personal use were found to sort in a more rudimentary way than those that used them for trading purposes. It was further reported that once an offender had sorted his catalogue, the sorting took second place to seeking out new material. The ability to provide new material to others was seen as increasing the individual’s power, and resulted in feelings of worth due to the admiration of others provided with the new images. Quayle and Taylor (2002b) go on to explain that for their offenders, collecting behaviour was not solely confined to collecting child abuse images. For many participants (even those that identified as primarily paedophiles), the collecting behaviour was seen as a progression through collecting other forms of pornography. They reported that the majority of their participants moved through a variety of pornographies and each time they moved to accessing increasingly extreme material (with respect to the age of the children or the activities occurring). As one offender described his behaviour:

yeah I mean it’s like … very poor analogy but it’s like when you drink some beers you I mean you might like Caffrey’s you might love it but after a while you go off it and you go to Guinness and you might go on to something else (Quayle & Taylor, 2002, p. 13).

Quayle and Taylor (2002b) further reported that as the offenders progressed in their search for new material they began to access sites that were flagged as illegal and this they believed acted as a prompt for the offender, and each prompt acted as a discriminative stimulus to move on to the next site. They suggested that the quest for new and different material and the rapidity of habituation was exacerbated by the Internet because of the volume of material available and the increasing amount of time offenders spent downloading.

Pornography has often been cited as an aid to masturbation and that through masturbation the viewer is reinforced to use pornography as a sexual stimulant (Quayle, 2008). This
increases the likelihood that pornography will be used again to seek sexual satisfaction. Taylor (2002) and Taylor and Quayle (2003) suggest that as the viewer becomes habituated to the images they will seek out increasingly intense content, and this intensity is along a continuum such as increasingly violent images, or decreasing age of the child. One offender interviewed by Taylor and Quayle (2003) stated that:

I think it was more a progression from the adult stuff … I think … it’s very one dimensional you know it’s just pictures there’s no feedback there so I think you try I think I tried to look for more and more extreme stuff … you know just to get more and more … excited … or stimulated … trying to push the boundaries (p. 71).

Some offenders over time become habituated to the images they are viewing and require an increasing level of violent and sadistic images to continue to maintain their sexual arousal. Quayle and Taylor (2002b) referred to collecting of online child abuse images as a continuation of previous interests in magazine images and videos of adult pornography, and that one of their subjects had previously collected legitimate ‘nude art’ photographs of children.

It is difficult to determine the role of habituation in pornography use as some studies have reported that non-offending males do exhibit habituation effects after repeated exposure to sexually arousing stimuli and that they return to the same arousal levels with the introduction of a single novel stimulus (e.g. Elliott & Beech, 2009). Other studies have reported that sexual offenders do not exhibit habituation in sexual arousal and that the introduction of novel stimuli did not increase arousal levels. However, these researchers (Palk & O’Gorman, 2004) found that the offenders reported an increase in absorption in fantasy and the vividness of the images and suggested that this indicated that for sexual offenders particular erotic fantasies retained a strong valence for them despite repeated viewing and that pornographers are a heterogeneous group.

As has been reported, Internet child abuse offenders have been found to seek out children and opportunities that fit with their specific fantasies and that over time they become more discerning in the images they seek out (e.g. Quayle, 2008; Quayle & Taylor, 2003; Quayle & Taylor, 2002b). For some Internet offenders this results in a progression to increasingly extreme images (Baartz, 2008) and yet for others this is not the case. The concept of habituation to images, resulting in a progression to more extreme and deviant images, has been used to explain the progression; however, this has only been reported for some offenders and not others. It is possible that offenders that use pornography for maintaining
sexual arousal, or as part of the offending process with victims, may be less habituated to
the images than are offenders that are more fantasy driven and use the images as an end
in itself. This suggests that the issue of escalation in image preferences may be the result
of a combination of habituation to images, psychological and situational factors (refer to
Chapter 2), and the effect of the Internet on the offender’s behaviour.

If offenders do become habituated to different graphic levels of images and escalate their
preference in child sexual abuse images, there is a need for a typology of images that
escalate in violence and harm to the child as a continuum. As a result of this need, the
COPINE was founded in 1997 in the Department of Applied Psychology, University
College Cork, Ireland. Taylor and Quayle (2003) applied a continuum of image content
and stated that ‘Conceptualising picture collections and child pornography in terms of
this continuum emphasises the sense in which sexualisation of pictures is a psychological
process’ (p. 34). As Taylor and Quayle (2003) posit, pictures generally are part of a series,
with the series having an explicit or implicit narrative quality, or thematic link. COPINE
has reported on the state of child sexual abuse images based on their search of the Internet
and through liaison with government and non-government agencies (Taylor, 2002).
COPINE developed the grading system for categories of child sexual abuse material
shown in Table 3.3.

The COPINE Project typology has become influential in clinical and legal circles,
although as it was developed from a psychological perspective, elements were found not
to be relevant to law enforcement and the legal field. A further consideration of the scale
was related to the validity of the scale, which until recently had not been analysed.
Merdian, Thakker, Wilson and Boer (2011) tested the construct validity of the scale using
a sample of 84 New Zealand Department of Corrections psychologists and university
postgraduate psychology students to assess the rating of the scales. They reported a highly
significant correlation between the original ranking of increasing image content and the
ranking by their sample, although this was based on a small sample size. Of interest,
however, was that COPINE Level 4 (‘posing’) was ranked lower (Level 2) in their study
and COPINE Level 8 (‘assault’) and Level 7 (‘explicit sexual activity’) were reversed in
their sample’s rankings. They reported that this difference between Levels 7 and 8 could
be explained by the ranking explanations given for the study, which are different from
the explanations in the COPINE scale (Merdian et al., 2011).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description of picture qualities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indicative</td>
<td>Non-erotic and non-sexualised pictures showing children in their underwear, swimming costumes, etc., from either commercial sources or family albums; pictures of children playing in normal settings, in which the context or organisation of pictures by the collector indicates inappropriateness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nudist</td>
<td>Pictures of naked or semi-naked children in appropriate nudist settings, and from legitimate sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Erotica</td>
<td>Surreptitiously taken photographs of children in play areas or other safe environments showing either underwear or varying degrees of nakedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Posing</td>
<td>Deliberately posed pictures of children fully, partially clothed or naked (where the amount, context and organisation suggests sexual interest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Erotic posing</td>
<td>Deliberately posed pictures of fully, partially clothed or naked children in sexualised or provocative poses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Explicit erotic posing</td>
<td>Emphasising genital areas where the child is either naked, partially or fully clothed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Explicit sexual activity</td>
<td>Involves touching, mutual and self-masturbation, oral sex and intercourse by child, not involving an adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>Pictures of children being subject to a sexual assault, involving digital touching, involving an adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Gross assault</td>
<td>Grossly obscene pictures of sexual assault, involving penetrative sex, masturbation or oral sex involving an adult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 10    | Sadism/bestiality  | a. Pictures showing a child being tied, bound, beaten, whipped or otherwise subject to something that implies pain  
b. Pictures where an animal is involved in some form of sexual behaviour with a child                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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### 3.5 UK Sentencing Panel Typology of Image Preferences
In 2002 the UK Sentencing Panel revised the COPINE Project classification and removed Level 1 (Indicative {non-erotic/non-sexualised images}), which it deemed would not constitute an offence, and collapsed Levels 2–6 into the first of five levels for sentencing purposes (see Table 3.4). This proposal aimed at providing an objective standard for assessing the nature of child pornography material in terms of degree of harm to the child or children.

Table 3.4: UK Sentencing Panel Typology of Image Preferences (UK Sentencing Panel, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Equivalent COPINE typology level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Images depicting nudity or erotic posing, with no sexual activity</td>
<td>Levels 2–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sexual activity between children, or solo masturbation by child</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Non-penetrative sexual activity between adult(s) and child(ren)</td>
<td>Level 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Penetrative sexual activity between child(ren) and adult(s)</td>
<td>Level 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sadism or bestiality</td>
<td>Level 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These typologies generally list the characteristics of the offender based on the images viewed, and not necessarily the characteristics of the offender themself. However, it does give the researcher a sense of the level, and possible escalation trajectory, of deviancy in those that view child sexual abuse images.

In 2002, COPINE reported that the preceding year had seen a decrease in the age of the children being abused, with many disturbing images of children under 5 or 6 years of age, in particular females. It was further reported that there had been an increase in the sadistic qualities of the images with which they had been provided (Taylor, 2002). The CCCP (2009) reported that in their analysis between 2002 and 2009 the severity of abuse and level of dehumanisation had increased in the images. They gave as examples of the increasing severity of images, incidents of increasing prevalence of images of babies and toddlers (given that children in this age range are lacking in verbal skills or access to adults outside their own home, this is likely to result in less reporting of child sexual abuse), images of children with demeaning words or phrases written on their bodies,
children holding signs with messages greeting individuals by their online pseudonyms, or praising their abusers. This supports the notion that over time, some offenders are likely to require increasingly graphic images to continue to satiate their needs.

It has been reported that over time, online offenders report increasingly more time spent online accessing child abuse images, progressing from viewing images to seeking out children for sexual conversations in chat rooms and attempting contact with children (Burke, Sowerbutts, Blundell & Sherry, 2002). Taylor and Quayle (2003) refer to this as focusing the attention for the viewer on the significant qualities and image preference that provides meaning and value for the viewer.

Glasgow (2007, as cited in Quayle, 2009) postulated that there is a dynamic relationship between available stimulus material and sexual interest in the downloading of pornographic files and that those files that the individual stores for later use more closely reflect the deviant interests for the individual than a review of all files downloaded. It was also reported that preferred sexual activities, coercion, distress and harm, and the preferred age and gender of sexual partners, was a reflection of changing sexual interests (Quayle, 2009). This may reflect the role of habituation with the escalation of deviant sexual abuse images whereby the escalation relates either to maintaining or increasing sexual arousal for the offender.

The model proposed by Ward and Siegert (2002) for child sexual abuse, and considered appropriate for child sexual abuse image offenders, suggests that offenders have a number of deficits in intimacy and social skills, emotional states, distorted sexual scripts and cognitive distortions. These combine with cultural and environmental factors to increase the likelihood of the offender becoming increasingly reliant on the Internet to provide for their social and sexual needs. It is hypothesised that as these needs are no longer met online due to habituation to images, the offender’s deviant behaviour results in an escalation to increasingly extreme images to satisfy this ongoing desire for child abuse images.

This proposition is reinforced through the work of Taylor (2002) where there are concerns about habituation over time leading to progression into increasingly violent sexual images, or younger children. Taylor (2002) reported on a comment placed online by an individual with an interest in child sexual abuse images, who stated that:
with this hobby we get bored after a while with the usual and we risk a bit to get new stuff or actual experience. It’s a natural progression. Like stealing. You start small. Get bored. Go for bigger stuff (p. 6).

In a case study by Quayle and Taylor (2001) involving an individual arrested for Internet child sex offences, they reported that the subject (QX) began downloading child sexual abuse images when he first purchased a computer. Within a short period of time he acknowledged he became bored (sexually satiated) downloading from newsgroups, so entered chat rooms where he was able to converse with like-minded individuals and began to portray himself as a 13-year-old boy who engaged in conversations and sexual activities with what he believed were other boys. As QX said in his interview:

Well … I actually got bored with the pornography side really … in terms of pictures … I was more interested in getting hold of movies … once you’ve seen a sexual image, a thousand … hundreds of times … it loses its novelty (p. 601).

QX became increasingly involved in his online life and this led him to seek out an actual relationship with a child. He introduced a personality online with himself playing the 13-year-old boy and engaging in conversations, including sexual conversations and activity, with other boys. He was later to learn that the three persons he engaged with over the following year were all adult males and he felt betrayed by their behaviour, although acknowledging that he himself had been also pretending to be an adolescent. After several broken online relationships and feelings of betrayal at being duped by adult men presenting online as adolescents, he had a period of several months where he did not utilise the Internet. However, he agreed his decision to return to his online sexual behaviour was as a result of boredom and loneliness, although now he made the conscious decision to present himself as an adult. As an adult he did progress to online sexual relationships with boys, had a sexual conversation with a boy on the telephone, and arranged to meet another (however, he missed the meeting). In one of his final online conversations with a boy, QX did discuss taking photographs of the boy, but this never eventuated as the boy reported him and QX was arrested. Of interest is that QX stated that he had no intention of taking photos of the boy, although he admitted to a desire to abuse the boy. The story of QX demonstrated that he progressed from initial downloading of child pornography, which escalated his sexual arousal and behaviour, to progress to chat rooms in a child’s persona, to his adult persona, and finally access to children offline, which is likely to have escalated further to contact offences if he had not been arrested (Quayle & Taylor, 2001).
Burke et al. (2002) reported that in an Australian population referred for sexual offender treatment and assessment there was a concern that the individuals had escalated in behaviour and the possibility for contact offences increased in some. They found that in the offending cycle some offenders described escalation in offending that included increased time accessing child pornography, progressing from viewing child pornography to seeking out children online in chat rooms for sexual conversations, and attempting to telephone children met online. Clients also reported experiencing an increase in child sexual fantasies and fantasising about children they knew or encountered in everyday life.

Baartz (2008) reported on the offenders in her study, where there was support for the idea that these offenders over time progress to more extreme image content with depictions of naturalist style nudity, through sexual abuse, to dehumanising and degrading acts of bestiality.

Very few studies (Baartz, 2008; Carr, 2004; Sullivan, 2007) have considered image content as part of the offending behaviour and process. Quayle (2009) suggested that analysing the preferred content for individuals may result in new ways of thinking about risk in relation to deviancy. Some offenders that prefer extremely devious images may use these images as a substitute for contact offending. Whereas prior to the introduction of the Internet offenders had to actively seek out their preferred pornography, the advent of the Internet has now made it far simpler to search, access, contact others, produce and distribute—all in the belief that security and anonymity is guaranteed. This holds well with the previous work of Seto et al. (2006) who found that online offenders were more sexually aroused by children as sexual objects (fantasy) than were contact offenders. This suggests that the fantasy offenders may be more likely to progress to escalate in image content than those who were contact offenders. The opportunity created by the Internet allows for the access and availability of the child abuse material, and through habituation, the progression to increasingly graphic images is achieved for some offenders. Ultimately, offenders may join with others that hold similar beliefs about child abuse and through this support and habituation the offender becomes increasingly disinhibited. The offender may overcome the taboo of hurting or abusing children by commencing with the lower level images, and as they develop cognitive distortions or justifications for their behaviour, their empathy for the child is reduced and this may lead to increasingly deviant behaviour. This leads to an increase in computer use and a reduction in ‘normal’ social interrelationships that may have supported acceptable behaviour to address sexual and
intimacy needs. The increasing reliance on the Internet (images and communities) to address problems may result in a reduction in empathy for the abused children, leading to an increase in image content, and potentially contact offending.

3.6 Summary

Internet offenders are not all the same in the manner in which they offend. Typologies (e.g. Krone, 2004) have been developed to explain the difference between offenders that view images and have no contact with other like-minded individuals, and those that progress to increasingly graphic images, producing and distributing images, or contact offending (e.g. Quayle & Taylor, 2002b).

The escalation to increasingly graphic and extreme images has been suggested to relate to offenders’ habituation to lower level images. For many offenders, this has also been suggested as a means to manage intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation and increasingly deviant sexual scripts. The more time an offender spends online, the more habituated they become to the images and the more their psychological functioning is impaired. Some offenders have a desire to increase the graphic and violent nature of the images to maintain sexual arousal, but other offenders do not escalate in image preference, or at least do not progress to the COPINE Level 10 scale or to contact offending. Habituation to lower levels of image classification has been suggested as an explanation for escalation in image content, and the need to regulate psychological deficits is hypothesised to result in some offenders escalating image preferences. However, caution needs to be maintained given that habituation has not been reported in a number of studies.
Chapter 4: Grooming of Children Online

Chapter 4 will consider the grooming of children for sexual purposes. There has been debate in relation to previous explanations for grooming behaviour of those who went on to contact offend, and the similarities and differences between contact and online grooming. The stages of grooming for contact offenders has been tested against the stages for online groomers, and there have been inconsistencies between the two groups.

4.1 Grooming of Children for Sexual Purposes

The role of grooming children for sexual purposes has been considered by researchers (e.g. Davidson & Gottschalk, 2010; Gottschalk, 2011a; McAlinden, 2013; O’Connell, 2003; Quayle & Taylor, 2003; Seto, 2012; Webster et al., 2010; 2012; Whittle et al., 2013), who reported that the grooming process (sometimes referred to as seduction, enticement or entrapment) involves the offender having access to a child, time to invest in the process and interpersonal skills. This can involve a combination of affection, attention, kindness, privileges, recognition, gifts, alcohol, and drugs or money, in order to gain the child’s cooperation and compliance. This is further dependent on the developmental stage of the child, their needs and vulnerabilities. For younger victims this may require the grooming of the parents or guardian of the child to gain their trust, and then the offender may rely on techniques of fun, games and play to manipulate younger children into a sexual relationship. For older children, the offender may rely on the child’s rebelliousness, inexperience, sexual arousal and curiosity to manipulate the child into a sexual relationship (Lanning, 2010).

Lanning (2010) goes on to explain that the grooming of children for sexual abuse involves identifying targets for abuse, gathering information about interests and vulnerabilities, accessing the child (e.g. through sport, education or online), satisfying the child’s physical and emotional needs, lowering the child’s inhibitions, and gaining and maintaining control (e.g. through bonding, sympathy and threats).

Geer, Estupinan and Manguno-Mire (2000) reported on a study of interviews with sex offenders and how they showed empathy in order to select a child for abuse, demonstrated in the comments of one offender:
In the past I’ve always targeted my victims very carefully. Am … picked victims who were vulnerable from one way or another … mm … out of a lack of love … mm … maybe even with two parents you weren’t getting the attention or … mm … children who were vulnerable. I always targeted them very very carefully. Went through a long period of getting to know the parents … or parent, getting to know the child (p. 24).

Another offender explained his grooming behaviour by stating:

This is what I said if I’d had met him at ten (okay) there have been no contest … mm … but no he was … too independent you see I needed to create a dependency in my victims … mm … I needed to have them dependent on me … mm … in every way that I could get them dependent (p. 39).

4.2 Online Grooming of Children for Sexual Purposes

It has been proposed that viewing child sexual abuse images is a maladaptive strategy to avoid contact offending against children, and that offenders use the images as fantasy rehearsal and for masturbation purposes. However, it has also been acknowledged that many online offenders do express their sexual interest in children solely through images and are unlikely to commit contact offences (Ward & Hudson, 1998). Rheingold (1993) described the use of computer-mediated communication as being:

all about people communicating with other people, in any way they can and for many purposes: exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, exchange knowledge, share emotional support, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, find friends and lose them, play games, flirt, create a high art and a lot of idle talk (p. 3).

Davidson et al. (2011), Egan, Hoskinson and Shewan (2011) and Webster et al. (2012) discuss the use of the Internet as a social networking opportunity where those with similar interests can communicate, get to know each other better and may ultimately move into private domains for ongoing contact. This may intensify the relationship and may lead to the use of web cameras, which may result in sexual relationships.

However, the Internet has also enabled an increase in the potential use of the medium for illegal and inappropriate behaviour, including cybersex, masturbation and the grooming of children for sexual purposes (Briggs et al., 2010; CEOP, 2009; Mercado et al., 2011). CEOP (2009) reported grooming of children online as being the most frequently reported activity to their department and that contact with youth was made predominantly through Facebook, MSN and MySpace. CEOP described grooming of children as involving:

- inciting a child to perform a sexual act
• suspicious contact
• inciting a child to watch a sexual act
• suspicious online contact with a child—social networking
• making arrangements to meet a child
• suspicious online contact with a child—inappropriate chat
• suspicious online contact with a child—instant messaging
• suspicious online contact with a child—gaming site
• suspicious contact with a child—mobile phone.

Wolak, Finkelhor and Mitchell (2009) reported that between 2000 and 2006 there was a 21% increase in number of arrests for those soliciting youth online for sex. They further reported that during this period there was a 381% increase in arrests of offenders soliciting undercover police presenting online as children. However, during this same period the number of sex offences against young people had declined. Wolak et al. (2009) further explain that they believe the Internet was not facilitating an ‘epidemic’ of sex crimes against youth, but rather the increase in arrests was linked to the increasing number of youth online, a migration of crime from offline to online, and the increase in law enforcement activity against online offending.

Due to the increase in the number of youth online and the multiple sites offering the opportunity of social media, adults with an interest in children for sexual purposes use the Internet to befriend and make an emotional connection with the child whom they then can groom, which may result in a meeting (Gottschalk, 2011a). As Dombrowski, Gischlar and Durst (2007) have found, the Internet provides a medium to groom and solicit young people for sexual purposes:

It provides access to countless children in a relatively anonymous environment. An online predator can masquerade as a young person with similar background, age and interests. Further, the cyber predator can join with the young person in the disinhibition process and encourage discussion of sexual fantasies at too early an age. The purpose of this dialogue might be to play out sexual deviant fantasies. However, the purpose might also be to desensitize the young person to child-adult sexual activity, with the ultimate goal of perpetrating offline (p. 155).

This proposes that there are differences among online offenders in their motivation to offend. Some have the intention of progressing to a contact offence and may be upset to find that the youth with whom they thought they were in contact turns out to be another adult (e.g. Quayle & Taylor, 2001). Others contact a child for the purposes of interaction
and gain pleasure from the online interaction. Still others believe the person they are in contact with is an adult but their motivation is fantasy development and role playing and meeting with the child is not the intention. Although there are different motivations for offending, all behaviour is illegal and offenders are treated the same within the legal field and the corrections domain.

Tomak et al. (2009) proposed that the Internet has become a mechanism for the commission of sexual offences against children, allowing these individuals and groups to forge networks and build resources promoting victimisation, exchanging child sexual abuse images and providing instructions on how to go about this deviant behaviour, all in anonymity while perfecting their craft and generally avoiding detection.

Child sexual abuse offending online is considered a dynamic rather than static process, where individuals move along continua that relate to satiation of sexual arousal, engagement with collecting images and communicating with others, and potentially the exploration of online personas (Quayle & Taylor, 2003).

In considering the dynamics of criminal activity and virtual crime scenes, O’Connell (2003) suggested that communication technologies had the potential to alter parameters of victimology on three levels through:

• accessibility—children are more accessible through the Internet than in person
• opportunity—more children are using the Internet and mobile communication systems more frequently and this allows easier access to children during unsupervised periods
• vulnerability—children are likely to become more vulnerable online due to exposure to graphic child abuse images used to lower their inhibitions and coercion.

Given the nature of online offending as a dynamic process it has been suggested that sexualised relationships developed on the Internet can result in superficial erotic contact that can lead to accelerated, eroticised pseudo-intimacy (Cooper et al., 2000). McKenna, Green and Gleason (2002) suggest that Internet-initiated romantic attachments generally are in isolation and secrecy, away from oversight by responsible adults or peers. This may lead to relationships forming more quickly, involving greater disclosure and greater intensity than face-to-face relationships.
Advances in technology have provided greater opportunity for adults to contact children online and to engage in sexual activity with children in real time. As a result of this opportunity, individuals with a sexual interest in children are a threat to the safety of children (Choo, 2009). It has been reported that offenders use social network venues (e.g. chat rooms) that cater to children and adolescents as a way to contact and converse with potential victims (Armagh, 1998; Gottschalk, 2011a). Developments in technology now provide opportunities to contact children and young people online through multiple media including Facebook, MySpace, Coolbox, Bebo, Hi 5, Skyblog, Faceparty, MSN, Wap chat rooms, Chatavenue, Ladslads, gaming sites, blogs, messaging and chat rooms specifically for young people (Davidson & Gottschalk, 2010; Gottschalk, 2011a; Martellozzo, 2011; Webster et al., 2012). Although technology has provided offenders greater access to children than in real life, Wolak, Finkelhor and Mitchell (2006) reported that 13% of their sample of youth Internet users received ‘unwanted sexual solicitations or approaches’ on the Internet. Later research by Mitchell, Finkelhor and Wolak (2007) reported that of the 1,500 youth Internet users in their study, only 4% had received requests to send sexual pictures of themselves in the preceding year.

Webster et al. (2010; 2012) explained that police have reported an increase in the number of offenders grooming young people online, and in the use of online social networks and Internet chat rooms. These authors further stated that although there was increasing knowledge around the use of the Internet for those accessing abuse images, little is known about online groomers and the manner in which they select and engage with their victims. Grooming has been described as:

a process of socialisation during which an offender seeks to interact with a child (and sometimes the child’s family) possibly sharing their hobbies, interests and computer slang in an attempt to gain trust in order to prepare them for sexual abuse. The process may also involve an attempt to persuade a child that sexual relations between adults and children are acceptable (Davidson & Gottschalk, 2010, p. 29).

Davidson (2007), Egan et al. (2011) and Webster et al. (2012) stated that little research (but, see Martellozzo, 2006; O’Connell, 2003; Strano, 2004) has been undertaken into understanding the behaviour of offenders that target and groom children online. In a review of research describing the interactions of those that communicate with boys online for sexual purposes, Grosskopf (2010) reported that even less research had been conducted into boys as victims, with most offenders contacting girls. Davidson (2007) believes that such research should be a priority given that police have acknowledged the
increasing number of offenders being identified as grooming children online. This has been supported by the increase in the number of reports of online child exploitation (including online child grooming): in the USA, the number of reports increased from 4,560 in 1998 to 76,584 in 2006 (Choo, 2009).

It has been well documented that child sex offenders can spend a considerable period of time grooming children for sexual abuse. This grooming can take the form of interacting with the child and even the families of the children, in order to build a relationship of trust, whereby they share hobbies and interests in preparation for the abuse (Briggs, Simon & Simonsen, 2010; Davidson, 2004; Finkelhor, 1984; Gottschalk, 2011b). Grooming can be a slow and deliberate process and this process, identified in contact sex offenders, has also been identified in online child sex offenders where offenders adopt the online language of children, share hobbies and interests online, converse with them and build a level of trust (Davidson & Martellozzo, 2005; Wolak, Finkelhor, Mitchell & Ybarra, 2008). The benefit to the online offender is that grooming can occur in secret with requests that no-one is told of the online relationship (O’Connell, 2003), whereas face-to-face grooming of a child may be a more difficult and lengthy procedure due to the necessity to groom parents or carers before gaining trust and access to the child.

For victims and their protectors (e.g. parents) it is difficult to determine if an individual online is a child communicating with other children or is an adult presenting as a child for illegal purposes (Malesky, 2007). The Internet provides the medium for adults with a sexual interest in children to groom and solicit potential victims.

Berson (2003) posits that the Internet provides a particular challenge to young people and that because of their naiveté and trust they are particularly vulnerable to child sexual abuse predators. The Internet provides anonymity for these predators that can hide their age and gender from the child. Children are too young to interpret cues that an adult may identify as problematic in meeting a person online and the Internet removes many of the cues that may indicate an inappropriate relationship is being developed. Berson (2003) and Briggs et al. (2010) further explain that the process of grooming is the result of the predator manipulating the victim through a process of lowering the child’s inhibitions, and building trust in the offender. The child or young person shares personal information with the offender that the offender uses to build profiles of victims and build a relationship and trust with them. The offender may prey on the child’s apparent loneliness, isolation
and emotional neediness in order to increase the intensity of the communication—offering friendship, attention and gifts. Once trust has been established, the offender is likely to expose the child to pornography to lower their inhibitions, desensitise them to nudity and validate adult–child sexual relations. The offender is then likely to request a meeting with the victim.

As with the process proposed by Berson (2003), Brown (2001) explained the type of evidence law enforcement officers needed to present at the trial of offenders to prove grooming had occurred. He proposed that online offenders followed the same grooming process as offline offenders including building trust and exposing the child to pornography to lower inhibitions before sexually offending (Kim, 2004). Brown (2001) and CEOP (2009) suggested that the Internet offered offenders the opportunity to groom multiple victims at the same time without being identified themselves. If one child withdrew from the offenders attempts to engage with them, the offender had other children to focus upon. Gottschalk (2011a) reported from interviews with online offenders that they easily moved on from one young person to the next if they were unable to quickly achieve their needs. As some offenders stated, ‘there are plenty of fish—you’ll catch one eventually. I wasn’t the type to harass to no end. When there was nothing more to do, I gave up’, ‘sometimes they’d hang up and I’d be, I’d just forget it, wipe their number and carry on somewhere else’, and ‘anyway, girls on the web, there’s no shortage of them’ (Gottschalk, 2011a, p. 453).

Webster et al. (2010; 2012) reported that some offenders in their study were engaging with 30–50 young people (some up to 200 and one offender admitted to having about 750 young girls 14–15 years of age on his MSN) at the same time and at different stages of the grooming process. In interviews with stakeholders, they reported that offenders refined the grooming process based on what had worked well in previous contacts. They found that movement through different stages of grooming was neither unitary nor linear, but cyclical involving patterns of adoption, maintenance, relapse and re-adoption over time. Offenders adopt a grooming style that may be either a conscious or unconscious decision, but is related to an underlying goal and self-regulation style that are either targeted/planned or opportunistic. These relate closely to Ward and Hudson’s (1998) approach-explicit or approach-automatic explanations for offending. Maintenance of the behaviour relates to the individual being aware of public views on child sexual abuse: some offenders may find their own behaviour abhorrent, in which case they need to find
a way to motivate themselves and give themselves permission to continue the grooming of children. This, the researchers believe, corresponds well with the theory of *deindividuation* proposed by Zimbardo (1969) and a loss of individual responsibility resulting in disinhibition to the behaviour and harm caused to the child. Once offenders have adopted a grooming style and attitudes and behaviours have been maintained, the offender begins to prepare for the grooming to commence. This results in an assessment of the young person’s vulnerability and the gathering of data about the youth. The offender then moves through stages dependent on the young person’s responses to the online contact and the offender can re-adopt different styles over time (O’Brien & Webster, 2011; Webster et al., 2010).

Egan et al. (2011) refer to the perceived anonymity of the Internet as the reason that online offenders take increasing risks to engage with a child or young person. In their study of 20 chat room logs between an adult offender and an adult (authorised *agent provocateur*) assuming the identity of a female under the age of 16 years, they reported that the sex offenders appeared more direct and less subtle than in ‘real world’ grooming situations, which are more devious and deceitful.

According to Olson (2007), a core component of the grooming of children for sexual purposes is the development of trust. Offenders then attempt to desensitise the child to the abuse, which may be achieved through conversations about sex or providing sexual abuse material for the child to view (Cohen-Almagor, 2012).

Some research findings demonstrate that online child sexual abuse victims are more likely to be under 12 years of age and more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorders, and that youths vulnerable to Internet sexual exploitation are children in poor domestic situations, with a history of physical or sexual abuse, or that question their sexual orientation and gender identity and use the Internet to make contact with other like-minded individuals (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT), 2009). This makes the youth vulnerable to approach or contact by an offender offering support, understanding, trust and the opportunity for the youth to express their poor domestic or social situation, or identity crisis.

Within the virtual world of the Internet, offenders can enter sites and either interact with others or simply observe participants online. During this period they may identify
children vulnerable to abuse by virtue of them being lonely, isolated, alienated, awkward or confused about identity and sexuality. Alternatively they may focus on a child that presents as outgoing, as anonymity masks their intentions (ECPAT, 2005).

Quayle (2006, as cited in Davidson, 2007) identified a number of possible types of Internet groomer when she stated:

It’s much more difficult to categorise offenders in terms of risk here as little is known about this group and few cases have been brought under the new legislation. They probably fall into several categories:
- those who enjoy talking online and interacting with children but don’t meet them
- those interested in child cybersex but who don’t meet
- those targeting and grooming children to meet for sex (p. 41).

Quayle (2005) proposed that the increase in the availability of child pornographic images has influenced both online and offline sexual behaviour and that previously the focus was on the role of viewing pornographic images and sexually violent or coercive acts. Although a causal relationship between viewing pornographic images and the commission of offences has yet to be established, it has been suggested that viewing is likely to increase the risk of contact offending.

Taylor and Quayle (2003) believe that child sexual abuse images can act as a learning instrument in the grooming process of offenders in order for the child to become desensitised to the images and sexual demands of the offender, and that it also acts as a means to normalise inappropriate activities. Of interest is a study by Krone (2005) involving police assuming the online persona of a male child. In contrast with other research on this topic, interactions between offenders and male children did not contain highly sexualised conversations, whereas those between offenders and female children did. However, Grosskopf (2010) conducted interviews with police that assumed the persona of a male child online and the results indicated that offenders that contacted boys online showed similar behaviour to those that contacted girls online. Many of the suspects that engaged in overt sexual activity, including direct sexual exchanges, discussed sexual activity or wanted to meet the child offline for sex.

The escalation to contact with children online can be linked to Ward’s (2000) notion of offender’s cognitive distortions relating to maladaptive beliefs and attitudes and problematic thinking styles. Ward developed the concept of implicit theories used to explain people’s actions (see Chapter 2). Within Ward’s (2000) implicit theories he
discusses the proposition that boys who had unusual or adverse experiences during childhood may develop beliefs about the social world that unify with other implicit theories. These implicit beliefs, or cognitive distortions, are applied to sexual behaviour and they become part of the offence-supportive thinking of the individual. This may result in, for example, a child being physically or emotionally abused with the developing schema being that the world is a hostile place (dangerous world implicit theory) in which the adult would find solace in children being safe intimate partners. This model hypothesised four further implicit theories that male child molesters view children as sexual beings (e.g. a belief that children can be sexually provocative), the nature of harm (child sexual abuse is not harmful), sense of entitlement (belief that some individuals are entitled to sexually abuse) and uncontrollability (a belief that actions are controlled by external forces).

For a number of offenders, the establishment of online relationships is important in the provision of social support and often is used to replace unsatisfactory offline relationships (Quayle, 2008). Quayle and Taylor (2003) propose that there is a progression for offenders as they move through stages of Internet involvement and this is heavily influenced by incorrect cognitions that the individual has about self and the material they are accessing. These problematic cognitions may facilitate the increase in problematic behaviour from accessing child abuse images to the commission of contact offences, and may also include attempts at contacting and grooming children online for the purposes of sexual gratification. Additionally, Bourke and Hernandez (2008) suggest that cultural and technological contexts have normalised child–adult sexuality, dehumanised children and desensitised the offender to the harmful consequences of the abuse to children. The ease with which a viewer can access child abuse images, and the content of the images, has played a part in normalising interactions between adults and children. The volume of images available can justify the illegal behaviour as it suggests many other people are involved in child abuse. The images also aid in desensitising the offender to the harm to the child, and the offender can dehumanise the child by considering the image as a picture on a screen and not perceiving the child as a human. This supports Ward’s (2000) notion of implicit theories held by offenders to justify and minimise their responsibility for the criminal acts they undertake.

Briggs, Simon and Simonsen (2011) reported that their research participants utilising chat rooms to sexually offend were found to be socially isolated and suffered dysphoric moods
and increased social isolation due to their increasing involvement in online activities. They reported that the Internet allowed the offender an impersonal social and sexual outlet without the risk of face-to-face rejection. They further suggested that online relationships with teenagers were less threatening for the adult, and the adult could act as a confidante to the child.

However, not all offenders are isolated and socially lonely. Many are able to operate in the real world, hold down high-level employment and maintain a family life. For others there is a link between child abuse images and engagement on the Internet with like-minded others. Quayle and Taylor (2002b) propose that this communication relates to the exchange of fantasy accounts (at times real accounts), and that they use this communication to fantasise, and learn security measures and information-gathering strategies.

It is also reported that not all Internet communication with a child is related to relationship formation and building trust. Gottschalk (2011a) and Martellozzo (2011) report on research that indicates that some Internet offenders can be quite brutal when online with a child. Such individuals were found in possession of extensive collections of child sexual abuse and extreme adult pornography, had significant online contact with other sex offenders, adopted different identities, or had an identity picture of their genitals rather than their face. These individuals were likely to hold extreme fantasies upon which they developed their online sexual behaviour. Individuals that rely more on fantasy to aid in their sexual satisfaction may more likely be socially isolated.

4.3 Online Grooming Process

So how is it that offenders are able to groom children online, either to arrange a meeting with the child or to engage the child in sexual activity online without the express purpose of eventually meeting the child?

Malesky (2007) reported in his study of 31 men convicted of attempted contact offences or contact sex offences against children they had met on the Internet, that chat rooms were the most frequent method used to identify and contact potential victims. Offenders identified children online that appeared needy or submissive and would target these children for contact. One offender described identifying neediness when a child would do
anything to keep talking with the offender; if the child was always online, as this would indicate low parental oversight or interest in the child; or if the child’s screen name indicated age. This supported Egan et al.’s (2011) proposition that troubled teenagers with high levels of depression, peer victimisation, and parental alienation are more likely to form online relationships.

ECPAT (2005) refers to the progress of soliciting a child online whereby the adult may encourage a child to move out of public domains to talk with them privately, and attempt to build a trusting relationship with the child seeking to lower their inhibitions in order to draw the child into intimate discussions, online activities and/or physical contact. This grooming process can be gradual, but the Internet is known to have increased the speed at which grooming takes place (McAlinden, 2013; Webster et al. 2010). Reducing inhibitions may be achieved by showing the child images of abuse so that the child will accept that this behaviour is not unusual. This may lead the child into producing images of themselves on request from the adult, using a webcam to show the adult what they are doing, or engaging in sexual discussions. Once the adult has access to images or conversations by the child this information can be used to blackmail the child into not divulging what they have been doing, to ensure security for the adult.

4.4 Stages in Online Grooming of Children

Whittle et al. (2013), Webster et al. (2010; 2012) and Gottschalk (2011a) proposed that offender’s behaviour is dynamic, multi-faceted and complex; based on interviews with stakeholders, they proposed a nine-phase hypothetical model for online grooming, which included:

• Vulnerability factors—some event that makes the offender vulnerable, which triggers the desire to groom a young person. These vulnerability factors were either i) situational factors (e.g. being made redundant or losing their home) that motivated the offender to contact a young person online to help with marital problems, consistent with Ward and Hudson’s (1998) dysregulation of emotional states, or ii) self-management ability such as feelings of loneliness, addiction to the Internet or the desire to act out fantasies. The individual may believe that the virtual world within which they operate allows them to discard social norms and rules, and gives them permission to groom young people online.
• Grooming style—which resulted in either targeted/planned or opportunistic styles involving skills in attracting young people and managing conversations to move towards their planned sexual encounters. An opportunistic offender was found to be less subtle and sophisticated and made little effort to mask their intentions.

• Preparation and scanning—where a targeted offender will commence a plan to engage with the young person. The research outcomes were less specific about the preparation conducted by opportunistic offenders that wasted little time getting to the point of engaging in sexual conversations.

• Identity assumed 1—where the offender would take on a persona that he felt would have the greatest chance of success in contacting with a young person. This may include changing their appearance, lying about their age, or adding interests, hobbies and music tastes that they believed would entice a young person to contact them. The purpose of this identity change was to present as an engaging, safe and trustworthy person; some offenders presented as women, believing this to be a safe identity for children to contact.

• Initial contact—where first contact is made and may be through the avenues of computers, webcams, game platforms and mobile telephones. The motivation during this stage was to identify the young person as unique and the offender as the best person to meet their unique needs: for example, where it has been identified that the young person has feelings of being ugly, the offender will post flattering remarks about their beauty. However, the opportunistic offender did not spend such time engaging with the young person and would often initiate discussions about sex within a matter of minutes.

• Identity assumed 2—where the offender may switch from the initial identity to one that is more closely linked to their own: for example, one offender presented as a young woman and initially had contact with a young girl in this persona. As the young woman he then introduced a ‘male friend’ (himself) who wanted to have contact with the girl, and later did.

• Desensitisation—the researchers identified two forms of desensitisation to the concept of sex, nudity and sexual contact. The first was visual where the offender sent explicit images and film to the young person—evidence of planned approach-explicit behaviour similar to Ward and Hudson’s (1998) model. The second form of desensitisation was language where the offender may send a child who feels unloved pornographic images with language that reassures the young person that they (the offender) can ‘love you like this’ (p. 27).
• Offence maintenance and intensity—where the offender intends to continue the grooming process such as by sending gifts (e.g. phone credits or even a mobile phone about which the parents are not aware), or explicitly incentivising (e.g. sending money) to make the young person feel special and unique, and enticing them to remain in contact.

• Outcomes—for the offender.

McAlinden (2013) and Webster et al. (2010; 2012) referred to Ward and Hudson’s (1998) self-regulation model of the sexual offence process to discuss the differing self-regulation styles of offenders that underpin sexual offending. They referred to the approach and avoidant pattern of behaving whereby an approach-focused offender is intent on obtaining the goal. These offenders are more likely to include on their online profile items that will attract a young person. The model for an avoidant offender is a person that attempts to avoid a particular state; for example by masturbating to abuse images in order to suppress the desire to make contact with a young person online.

Briggs et al. (2010) and Webster et al. (2010; 2012) also reported that online grooming can be much faster than physical grooming and the process can take minutes, hours, days or months, with groomers remaining at different phases for various lengths of time depending on the inter-relationship between goals, needs and reaction of the young person with whom they are in contact. Taylor (2011), in his role as an undercover investigator, reported that the rapport stage of grooming had reduced and this was the result of introductions being made without awkwardness or embarrassment, less chance of rejection and a lowered risk of arrest.

As proposed by Gottshchalk (2011), the use of the term ‘model’ to describe the online grooming process has been replaced with the term ‘features of online grooming’ as ‘model’ implies a linear pathway through phases. He reported from his research (with Webster et al. 2010) from interviews with online groomers, that groomers do not follow a linear pathway. Instead they enter and exit phases according to their objectives and the needs of the target. Additionally not all groomers progressed through all phases and some made random approaches to young people online with little planning.
Based on the results of Webster et al. (2010; 2012), Gottschalk (2011a) developed a typology for groomers and found that not all grooming resulted in physical meetings. The typology developed for online groomers were referred to as the:

- **Intimacy seeking or distorted attachment** offender who held beliefs that contact with a young person was part of a ‘relationship’. These offenders did not involve themselves in other online behaviour that suggested they were sexually offending (e.g. were not in possession of indecent images of children and did not have contact with other offenders). They spent considerable time online chatting with the young person and all in this group went on to meet with the young person to further progress the relationship.

- **Adaptable online** groomer who held supportive beliefs about their own needs and that young people were mature and capable of making decisions for themselves. In this particular research some of this group of offenders possessed indecent images of children, but not a large number, and had little contact with other offenders online. This group of offenders were adept at a grooming style that was adaptable depending on the young person online, and contact could be either fast or slow depending on the young person’s reactions.

- **Hyper-sexualised** group of men with extensive collections of child sexual abuse and significant online contact with other sex offenders, or offender groups. Some offenders in this group were also found in possession of extensive collections of extreme adult pornography, adopted different identities, or had an identity picture that was of their genitals rather than their face. Contact with young people was highly sexualised and escalated very quickly. These offenders held offence-supportive beliefs that dehumanised their online contact and did not have personalised contact. This group of offenders held little interest in seduction, advancing the relationship or entering into discussions with the young person. They focused on their immediate needs and applied abusive tactics such as manipulation, exploitation, deception and devious behaviour (Gottschalk, 2011a; Martellozzo, 2011).

In earlier research conducted on online groomers, O’Connell (2003) refers to stages that individuals may progress when online with children and these stages closely relate to their motivations for online activity. Some adults will stay in stages longer than others, and some may skip stages, which may reflect their motivation to contact children online. O’Connell et al. (2004) refer to online grooming that may extend beyond one conversation and may require scheduling meetings with the victim. O’Connell et al.
(2004) further proposed that online groomers are very patient and have communicated with victims over days, weeks, months and sometimes over a year before arranging to meet with the child. O’Connell (2003) reported that some stages in the grooming process could be considered to have specific goals (e.g. the risk assessment stage) whereas the goals of other stages may be more psychological, relating to the aims of the offender and their perceptions, such as how malleable the child may be to meet the adult.

O’Connell (2003) and O’Connell et al. (2004) described the five stages of grooming a child online:

• Friendship—this stage is where the offender attempts to get to know the child with whom they are in contact. The period of time varies and is dependent on the level of contact the offender maintains with the child. During this period the offender may request a photograph of the child, in part to ensure they are really in contact with a child but also to ensure the child fits with their specific interests (age, gender and looks).

• Relationship forming stage—this is an extension of the friendship stage and may include discussions about school, home life and attempts to convince the child that the offender is their best friend. During conversations with the child the offender will seek to assess the risk of involvement with the child.

• Risk assessment—this stage relates to the offender attempting to determine the risk of being caught and there are likely to be questions relating to the location of the computer the child uses in the home, the number of others who use the computer, and the level of oversight by a parent or guardian.

• Exclusivity—this stage revolves around the offender instilling in the child the notion of him as the child’s best friend and a person they can rely on who understands what they are going through. They develop lines of mutual respect where they can share secrets not disclosed to others. They focus on getting the child to acknowledge trust in them, which ultimately leads to increasingly intimate and sexual topics of conversation.

• Sexual stage—this stage is where the offender attempts to question the child about their sexual knowledge and activities, for example, ‘have you ever been kissed’ or ‘do you ever touch yourself’ (p. 9). Due to the development of trust and understanding in previous stages these topics may appear quite innocuous to a child.
During the sexual stage there is developed the most distinctive differences in conversational patterns. For offenders that intend to develop and maintain a relationship with the child there is a need to continue the level of trust and ‘love’ between the two. The offender attempts to frame the relationship in terms of the adult as a mentor and possibly future lover. If the adult senses the child has been pushed too far he is able to ease the pressure with demonstrations of regret. This is likely to prompt forgiveness from the child and this can deepen the relationship between the two. The adult continues to guide the child to understanding their own sexuality through requests for photographs of the child touching themselves, or sexual conversations. It has been reported that this type of online conversation is characteristic of relationships that progress to requests to meet face to face (O’Connell, 2003).

Of interest, in Martellozzo’s (2011) study of 23 online suspects that had attempted to groom an undercover investigator presenting as a ‘girl’, it was reported that nine offenders did attend the meeting planned, a further five had arranged to meet the ‘girl’ but had not turned up to the meeting location or cancelled at the last minute. This suggests that many online groomers do intend to meet with the young person groomed online, but some do not. It may be that those that meet with the young person have used the Internet for the express purpose of arranging a meeting and contact offending. Those that arrange a meeting but do not attend may do so because of fear of apprehension, or they may prefer the fantasy of acting out a role and grooming a child (even if they suspect the contact is with an adult or investigator) may be part of the fantasy.

Another activity developed by an adult online with a child is to request the exchange of child erotic images, which may be precipitated by the adult sending images to the child in order to rationalise his behaviour and to lower the child’s inhibitions about providing such material to the adult. The adult may also request the child to enact his sexual fantasies where the adult may invite, or coerce the child into engaging in cybersex as an extension of the loving relationship they have (O’Connell, 2003).

Although O’Connell (2003) reported that her study identified online groomers as following similar patterns to those of offline groomers, Davidson and Gottschalk (2010) reported a different process after interviews with police that had assumed child personas online. They reported that police described a different process where online groomers rarely followed the O’Connell pattern, and their experience showed that offenders were
more likely to make direct and swift approaches to youth regarding the possibility of sex. This may be explained by research that indicates that online relationship formation can be faster than face-to-face relationship formation. The differences in outcomes of studies may also be the result of small sample sizes, which are likely to identify more differences than if a larger sample had been identified. It is also to be expected that what offenders report to researchers is likely to be different to what they report to police in interview, as the context of the situations are quite different.

McKenna et al. (2002) report that intimate relationships have an increased intimacy when self-disclosure and partner disclosure increases. Generally this only occurs after trust and liking have been established. However, McKenna et al. (2002) report that when a relationship is formed online the relative anonymity reduces the risk of such self-disclosures, reduces fear of disapproval and rejection, reduces the lack of usual ‘gating features’ (e.g. attractiveness, stigma, shyness or social anxiety) and speeds up the relationship formation stage. Relationship formation can also be part of the fantasy for some offenders, who may prefer to progress a relationship slowly and find the ‘chase’ to be the most satisfying part of the interaction. Some offenders do not progress to arranging a meeting with the young person and this suggests that they prefer the online interaction and do not want to meet as this might affect the fantasies they have developed. As previously described by Quayle (2006, as cited in Davidson, 2007), some offenders enjoy interacting with children online but do not meet with the child, some are interested purely in cybersex and do not meet with the child, and others specifically target children to meet for sexual purposes.

Some offenders do not see the need for a lengthy relationship formation stage and given the anonymity of the Internet, and the large numbers of young people online, they are able to quickly give up on a child if it appears their intended aim will take too long (CEOP, 2013; Gottschalk, 2011a; McAlinden, 2013). Unlike the face-to-face groomer, who requires more time to groom the child, these Internet offenders are able to achieve their goals with minimal effort and investment and reduced risk of being identified; if they see the investment taking too long they can easily move on to other youth.

4.5 Summary
As has been described, there is some support for the notion that offenders that offend online through the viewing of child abuse images escalate behaviour that leads them to make attempts at contacting children online. These contacts with children are linked to the increasing time spent online, the reduction in time spent offline in normal social activities and the moderation of emotional states, and are described in terms of cognitive distortions in order for the offender to remove himself from responsibility for morally distasteful behaviour.

It has been proposed that online offenders that progress to attempts at contacting and grooming children online will use diverse methods (similar to those proposed by O’Connell (2003) and Webster et al. (2010)) to engage with the child in order to escalate the relationship to one involving online sexual activity, and possibly arranging meetings. It is hypothesised in the current research that these models for grooming children online will be reflected in an Australian sample of online groomers, and that they will escalate their conversations with the child to increasingly sexualised activity in order to develop a cybersexual relationship, and that some of these offenders will progress to contact offending.
Chapter 5: Methodology—Escalation and Deviance in Image Content

Theories as to why child sex offenders abuse children have included intimacy deficits, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and deviant sexual preferences (e.g. see Ward & Siegert, 2002). Additionally, learning and situational factors exert proximal and distal influences on the individual and this increases the individual’s vulnerability to offend. It is hypothesised that those that offend against children through the viewing, trading, distributing, or producing child abuse images online will display deficits in one or more of the above functions.

5.1 Hypotheses

It has been reported that some online child abuse image offenders remain viewing ‘low content’ images (e.g. clothed or naked children) and others will have a preference for a range of images they view to increasingly graphic images (e.g. sexual assault and sadism) as described in the COPINE scale (Taylor, Holland et al., 2001), or to contact offending. Theoretical models suggest that contact offenders are likely to have intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and deviant sexual scripts and this thesis will assess online offenders, and their image preference level, against these models for contact offenders. It is hypothesised that those that prefer a range of images, including increasingly graphic ones, are likely to have become habituated and desensitised to lower content images of child sexual abuse online. Comparison between those that have a preference for higher level images and those that do not is likely to reveal variables that identify the desensitisation and habituation to images at the lower end of the scale. Having a preference for higher levels of images suggests an escalation in deviance from those located at the lower levels of image preference. For offenders that spanned multiple categories of images, the higher the deviance level of the image, the greater the escalation (Taylor et al., 2001). However, some offenders did not range across multiple image categories, and this may suggest they held a particular deviance preference at the lower levels.

5.2 Participants
The 187 individuals that made up the study population were all online child sexual abuse offenders that had been convicted for offences relating to the possession, viewing, distribution, trade or production of child sexual abuse images. Due to the lack of information for a number of offenders the final number used in this study was 136. Of the 136 offenders, 135 were males and one was a female convicted of accessing, transmitting, publishing, distributing, advertising, promoting or soliciting child pornography material. The sample size for this study was small (187) as the legislation is relatively new and this sample was the total number of persons convicted of offending online against children.

The subjects were arrested between 1 March 2005 and 31 December 2011 by the Australian Federal Police Hi-Tech Crime Operations under commonwealth legislation: Section 474 of the *Criminal Code Act* 1995. The subjects were identified through the interrogation of the Australian Federal Police’s (AFP) case management application known as the Police Real-time Online Management Information System (PROMIS).

Section 473 of the *Criminal Code Act* 1995 provides legal definitions and Section 474 states offences and punishment relating to online offences against children (see Appendix A).

### 5.3 Materials

The AFP data were collected from multiple sources made available by the AFP, including:

- The AFP standardised questionnaire known as the Online Child Sex Offenders Questionnaire (OCSOQ), which was completed by investigating case officers for offences related to child sexual abuse imagery and grooming of children.
- The OCSOQ is a survey structured to ask a series of questions with a set of given responses, and also includes questions that allow the case officer to provide free text comment (see Appendix B). A number of questions allow for multiple responses. The survey is divided into seven parts that seek information on demographics, offender history and associates, offender detection, nature of child (and other) exploitation material, computer use and skills, apprehension and prosecution (Baartz, 2008).
• Review of AFP individual offender case files to code additional variables selected for this research on offender psychological characteristics and offence behaviour. Each file contained the following information that was accessed for the research:
  o Review of electronic interview material or transcripts of interviews conducted with offenders that have agreed to participate in an interview. Each offender was interviewed by a police investigator and each interview consisted of demographic questions about the offender (e.g. date of birth, residential address, marital status), questions relating to the suspected offences (e.g. did the offender search online for images of child sexual abuse; did the offender distribute child sexual abuse images to others), and explanations for possession of child sexual abuse images or contact with a young person online (e.g. mental health issues or admitted sexual interest in a child or young person).
  o Review of pre-sentencing reports (e.g. psychiatric or psychological) held on AFP files and completed on behalf of the offender suggesting explanations for offending.
  o Review of judges’ summations held on AFP files in relation to the offences of which the offender was convicted and possible explanations for offending.

5.4 Study Design

The study design is based on utilising unobtrusive measures sourced from police information as proposed by Webb, Campbell, Schwartz and Sechrest (1966, as cited in Canter & Alison, 2003; Alison, Snook, & Stein, 2001). Unobtrusive measures refers to ‘data gathered by means that do not involve direct elicitation of information from research subjects’ (Lee, 2000, p.1, as cited in Canter & Alison, 2003).

Unobtrusive measures include documentary, content and archival analysis (Robson, 1999). Document reviews have become an important measure that can be used to identify elements of behaviour of an individual at the time. Documents reviewed can include a written document such as a magazine, newspaper, letter or book, but have also been extended to include films, television and photographs (Robson, 1999). According to this definition a document review therefore can include an electronic interview with an offender, OCSOQ, pre-sentencing reports and court summations. This unobtrusive measure is something that has been produced for another purpose (e.g. interview of
offender to gather information about the offender or the offence) as opposed to being produced for the purposes of research about the offender or offending behaviour.

The use of unobtrusive measures created for another purpose other than research creates a problem with analysis in that the material is unstructured, or not structured with the observer (researcher) in mind. This means the ‘document’ has been made with a particular purpose in mind and this is unlikely to reflect the needs of the researcher. It is important to understand the purpose of the document when conducting the analysis—for example, in the case of an offender’s interview, the offender may attempt to impart incorrect information in order to distance himself from responsibility for his actions, or to make himself look better to the investigator or the Courts. This may result in a loss of accurate information about the offender or offence process.

Variables were selected based on previous extensive research by Finkelhor (1984), Marshall and Barbaree (1990), Hall and Hirschman (1992), Ward and Siegert (2002) and Quayle and Taylor (2001) on the domains and characteristics of those that offend against children and/or those that have offended through the access, trade, distribution, or possession of child sexual abuse images, and those that have become habituated to pornographic material. Additionally, stable and dynamic risk factors for criminal sexual behaviour will be considered as part of the analysis.

5.5 Procedure

Relevant details of all subjects were gathered from the police case files and additional information provided by individual case officers through completion of the OCSOQ questionnaire. The files typically held information about the offender, synopsis of the offence, hand-written and/or transcribed notes and interviews, a videotape or DVD of the police interview with the offender,¹ forensic computer analysis focusing on the child sexual abuse imagery, reports completed on the offence or offender and other relevant information.

Coding was based on the responses to questionnaires completed by police officers and the responses of offenders to explain their offending behaviour. Offenders’ comments to

¹ The term ‘offender’ will be used as all subjects have been convicted of Internet child sexual abuse imagery offences, although at the time of interview they would have been described as suspects.
police in relation to the victim or their offending behaviour, was noted by the officer and the coding was based on their responses. As the information is obtained from investigations the response by offenders and police is operationalised from the potentially subjective responses.

The data held for each investigation contains material that identifies the offender, demographics, offence behaviour and contact with others. In order to maintain confidentiality of the information, each offender was provided with an identifiable code in order to maintain continuity of information for each offender and the information available on that offender. The code did not relate to the offenders name, location, employment, or other identifying information.

Data were gathered on each individual’s background, offending and psychological characteristics. Background variables include age, gender, criminal history, occupation, educational level, residential location and known abuse history. Offending variables included victim characteristics, age and gender preferences, source of image (video, text, cartoon, photograph, virtual), access to victims (viewing only, online contact with children), volume of images, explanations for offending and security of images. Variables related to psychological characteristics included intimacy and social skills deficits (eg. Marital status, loneliness and social isolation, voluntary activities with children), emotional dysregulation (eg. mentioning self-harm, feelings of shame, substance abuse, psychological history), cognitive distortions (eg. Admitted offences, tried to shift blame, minimised offence) and distorted sexual scripts (eg. Age of victim, gender of victim, other pornography). Additional variables related to habituation: increasing time online, escalation in other pornographic image content, progression to younger victims and time spent viewing images were selected. Lists of variables selected for data extraction to identify demographic, psychological and behavioural elements are attached at Appendix D.

In order to determine an individual’s range in image content, the images located on each offender’s computer were compared by AFP computer forensic experts against the COPINE scale devised by Taylor, Holland et al. (2001), which has been accepted in a number of countries including Australia as the most suitable typology for assessing and determining the level of graphic and indecent detail in each image of child sexual abuse online. This typology was explained in depth in Chapter 3. Each image seized has been
forensically analysed by AFP computer forensic experts and these images have been graded for each offender using the COPINE scale.

A review was also conducted on all police interview transcripts and relevant comments and explanations provided by offenders to justify or rationalise their behaviour while online, and attitudes towards sexual activities involving children were noted. These comments were expected to provide information about psychological deficits (intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and distorted sexual scripts) that the offenders may have and that explained their offending behaviour. Unexpected observable relationships were found in the data and post-hoc analysis was utilised to investigate these relationships.

5.6 Analysis

The data gathered by means of the OCSOQ and AFP file reviews were electronically collated using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) statistical software package. The data was then transferred from SPSS to R software. This software is suitable for identifying variations and correlations between variables.

Regression techniques were also utilised to evaluate the progression in child sexual abuse imagery. Regression analysis is an integral tool in data analysis that compares and describes the relationships between variables (response variables and one or more explanatory variables; Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). It allows for the researcher to determine the effect of one variable on another. Data are assembled on the variables of interest and regression estimates the quantitative effect of the causal variables upon the variable they are believed to influence; for example, increasing time online viewing child abuse images and progression to increasingly graphic image content. The uses of regression include that it can (Quinn & Keough, 2001):  
• predict a categorical dependent variable using continuous and/or categorical independent variables
• determine the effect size of independent variables on the dependent variable
• rank the importance of independent variables for the dependent variable
• assess interaction effects
• understand the effect of covariate control variables.
In the case of the dependent variable (escalation in image content), regression is the most appropriate technique to determine the influence of independent (predictor) variables, which may be either categorical or continuous.

Regression analysis has the following additional benefits (Quinn & Keough, 2001):

- it does not assume a linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables and can manage non-linear effects
- the dependent variable need not be normally distributed
- the dependent variable need not be homoscedastic for each level of the independent variables, and variances need not be the same within categories
- normally distributed error terms are not assumed
- it does not require that the independent variables be intervals
- it does not require that the independent variables be unbounded.

The image levels initially analysed were Levels 5–10. As date stamping was not available the density and spread of the images were used as a proxy for escalation in image preference. Regression analysis determined that a number of variables had little influence on the image preference of offenders when the levels were individually analysed. A concern was identified due to the small number of the sample, however according to Long (1997) a minimum of 100 subjects are required to conduct a logistical regression, which was suitable for the current study with 136 subjects. It was desirable to have continuous measures however this was not possible in the current study. The current study used only ordinal variables and due to the absence of continuous variable data, this limited the application of techniques available. Variables that showed a significant difference between the variables and the highest image preference were then analysed using chi-square analysis. In order to use chi-square analysis for a test of independence, sample sizes in all cells in a table must be greater than five. If this requirement was not met a Fisher’s exact test was used, as this does not have a minimum cell size requirement.

5.7 Ethical Considerations

Information on each offender was obtained from the files made available by the AFP Hi-Tech Crime Operations. Access to the files of these individuals, and case officers as required, was provided through an agreement between Charles Sturt University and the
AFP. All procedures and materials were approved by the Charles Sturt University Human Research Ethics Committee and the AFP Research Committee.

As the data were taken from police files and information, which required the de-identification of the subjects, this study did not obtain informed consent from the individuals. However, the information provided is the property of the police department (AFP) and released by the AFP for research purposes. All individuals were coded by an identification number to ensure that all information on each individual remained intact, but did not identify them. This ensured anonymity for each individual, and confidentiality of any information relevant to them.

The data used in this research were originally collected during the course of police investigations into offenders that went online for the purpose of accessing, distributing, producing, or soliciting child sexual abuse images. As such, the data were not developed for research purposes and the individual offenders did not provide information about themselves or the offence/s with the intention of participating in research into child abuse images. Although this resulted in data being extracted for a purpose different from the purpose for which they were originally gathered, the data can provide rich information about the offence process and behaviour of offenders for the benefit of law enforcement investigators, the education and support of children and carers, and offender therapy.
Chapter 6: Methodology: Online Grooming Behaviour

Some child sexual abuse offenders utilise the Internet to contact children online for the purpose of sexual activity with the child by themselves or others, or to groom a child for sexual activity. Researchers such as Gottschalk (2011a), O’Connell (2003) and Webster et al. (2010) have reported differences in the grooming process between those that groom children face to face and those that groom children online. These differences have included the time spent attempting to groom a child, multiple children being groomed at one time and the speed with which offenders progress to sexual conversation or activity with a child online. These diverse methods for grooming children online reflect differences in the way in which contact is made by an offender with a child and the manner in which they groom, or attempt to groom a child. The process of online behaviour and motivation, including language and thematic indicators that lead to the grooming of children less than 18 years of age for sexual purposes is hypothesised to consist of a diverse range of behaviours and communication styles.

6.1 Participants

The two male individuals that made up the study population were online child sexual abuse offenders convicted of offences relating to the online grooming of a child, or procuring a child for sexual purposes via the Internet. These were the only two complete chat logs made available to the researcher by the AFP.

The offenders were arrested by the AFP Hi-Tech Crime Operations under commonwealth legislation: Section 474 of the *Criminal Code Act* 1995 between 1 March 2005 and 31 December 2011. The participants were identified through the interrogation of the AFP’s case management application, the PROMIS.

Although there were initially 335 victims identified, 12 were removed as they self-identified as either a mother or father that wanted to discuss the abuse of their own children and the abuse of the known offenders’ children, or self-identified as an adult interested in role play, or age play as a child for sexual purposes. This left a total of 323 chat logs with victims.
6.2 The *Australian Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995* (as Amended)

Sections 474.25A–474.27A of the commonwealth’s *Criminal Code Act 1995* refers to offences involving the use of a carriage service (Internet or telephone) for sexual activity with a person under 18 years of age (or believed by the offender to be under 18 years of age), causing a child to engage in sexual activity with another person, procuring a person to engage in sexual activity, ‘grooming’ a child for sexual activity, or transmitting indecent communication with a child. An offender must be at least 18 years of age to be charged with such an offence and the maximum penalty ranges between 7 and 15 years imprisonment. A copy of the legislation is provided as Appendix A.

6.3 Materials

The AFP data were collected from the review of transcripts of chat logs of offenders that contacted children online, resulting in attempts to groom the child for sexual purposes.

6.4 Study Design

Qualitative data focuses on ‘naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10), which reflect real-life events. Miles and Huberman (1994) also refer to this as providing confidence in the material as it has *local groundedness*, being collected in close proximity to a specific situation, as opposed to mail or phone. It focuses on a specific case, is rich with information, has complexity and is nested in a real context. This allows for obtaining information about people’s lives, the meanings they place on events and situations, and connecting these meanings to the social world (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Qualitative data can be sourced from document reviews, which have become an important measure to identify elements of behaviour. A document is typically a written document such as a letter or book, but can also include television and photographs (Robson, 1999). Accordingly, a document can also include an online chat log of conversations between two or more individuals. Such a document is an unobtrusive measure of something that has been produced for some other purpose (e.g. grooming children online for sexual
purposes) as opposed to being produced for the purposes of research about the offender or offending behaviour. The document can then be subjected to content analysis: ‘a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context’ (Krippendorff, 1980, as cited in Robson, 1999). Content analysis has been described by Robson (1999) as being akin to structured observation, in particular when the observation is taken from a recording of the situation being observed (e.g. online chat logs). Chat logs therefore are a means of communication between an offender and a child and reflect ways in which an offender attempts to groom a child for sexual purposes.

6.5 Procedure

The AFP data held for investigations contained identifiable material that may identify the offender, child, and contact with others. In order to maintain confidentiality of the information:

- Each offender was provided with an identifiable code in order to maintain continuity of information for each offender and the information available on that offender. The code did not relate to the offender or child’s name, location, employment, or other identifying information.
- The conversations were downloaded from the AFP computer system and saved in word documents as text files. The conversations were then transferred for analysis to a computer software program known as NVivo10 (see Section 6.6).
- The researcher became familiar with the content of each conversation through repeated reading, which assisted with the coding of the text. The codes were categorised to display emergent themes and the repetition of emergent themes identified those themes that were more regularly displayed by the offender.

6.6 Analysis

Qualitative data analysis software is based in grounded theory approaches to data analysis where theory will emerge from the data. As Welsh (2002) suggested, grounded theory approaches to data analysis allow the data to ‘speak to themselves’ rather than approaching the data from a pre-existing theoretical framework. With little research and analysis into the grooming of children online the use of qualitative analysis identifying the themes in chat logs between offenders and victims, and allowing the themes to
develop without pre-existing frameworks was considered the most appropriate approach to analyse the chat logs in this thesis.

The study analysed data utilising social science packages suitable for identifying relational content analysis. NVivo 10 (QSR International) is a computer software package designed to remove rigid divisions between data and interpretation. The program connects and integrates data and is able to manage and synthesise ideas as data, which are linked and coded (Egan et al., 2009).

NVivo 10 allows the researcher to import documents directly from a word processing package and to code these documents on screen. These coding strips can be placed in the margins of the document so the codes used can easily be seen by the researcher. NVivo 10 also allows for memos to be written about aspects of the document and to link these memos to pieces of text in different documents (Welsh, 2002). NVivo 10 supports qualitative data analysis through:

- management of data—organises and keeps track of records including raw data from interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, field observations, documentary sources, notes and ideas
- management of ideas—organises and provides rapid access to conceptual and theoretical knowledge generated in the study and data that support it, and at the same time provides easy access to the context from which the data is derived
- query data—through asking simple or complex questions, the program can retrieve relevant information to answer the question. Results can be saved for further investigation at a later time resulting in an ongoing enquiry process
- graphical modelling—showing cases, ideas and concepts built from the data and the relationships between them in a visual display using models and matrices
- reporting from the data—using contents of the qualitative database of the ideas and knowledge developed and the process leading to the outcomes (Bazeley, 2011)
- use of computer software to manage large amounts of raw data provides rigour in the process of analysis, and provides a more complete set of data for analysis than manual analysis may allow. As Bazeley (2011) has suggested, the use of a computer to manage data allows for a more methodical, thorough and attentive research project. However, the use of computer software in itself will not provide the analysis without the human factors’ input and the analytic skills of the researcher.
Online conversations were analysed for recurrent themes that were believed to reflect strategies used by child sex offenders to groom a child, or to procure a child for sexual purposes. The researcher for this thesis has been a serving Police Officer with the AFP for 29 years, a departmental Psychologist for the past 17 years, and has been involved in the investigation of multiple offenders across a number of crime types. Relational analysis through affect extraction focuses on the semantic or meaningful relationships between identified concepts in a text. Relational analysis is able to make emotional and/or psychological evaluation of the individual’s state (Egan et al., 2011). According to Gottschalk (1995), the emotional and/or psychological state of an individual can be determined by verbal or written content attributed to the individual.

### 6.7 Ethical Considerations

Although research in the area of child sexual abuse can result in difficult or uncomfortable feelings in the researcher, support from supervisors and colleagues was provided and the matter was dealt with professionally, taking into account that investigators manage such investigations on a daily basis.

None of the chat log conversations were the result of covert police investigations where an investigator portrayed themselves as a child under 18 years of age for the purpose of investigating a potential offender.
Chapter 7: Results and Analysis—Offender Characteristics and Image Preference

7.1 Demographic Information

The characteristics and demographic variables (Appendix B) relating to a total of 136 offenders were analysed. Only one offender was identified as female and remained in the analysis in order to consider all offenders characteristics. The age of offenders ranged between 21 and 79 years of age, with a mean of 46.39 years.

The main aim of the analysis was to determine if there is a relationship between image escalation and any of the predictor variables. The predictor variables were selected based on the theoretical models proposed in chapters 1 to 3 which suggested that online offender characteristics included intimacy and social skills deficits (variables identifying this include marital status, social isolation and voluntary activities with children), emotional dysregulation (variables identifying this include self-harm, substance abuse and psychological history), cognitive distortions (variables identifying this include response to Warrant and pro-criminal attitudes), and distorted sexual scripts (variables identifying this include age of victim, relationship to offender and online user name). A generalised linear model, which makes no assumptions about the linearity of escalation, was used to analyse the data using R software (R Development Core Team, 2010). The model can symbolically be written as:

Images $\equiv$ mean + predictor variable. Utilising a generalised linear model provides analysis through ordinal regression, which provides $t$-values and significance levels.

7.2 Image Preference

The images selected by the offenders identified the progression, across different image levels, in image preference using the COPINE scale as shown in Table 7.1. The COPINE scale is a continuum of image content that emphasises the sense of sexualisation of pictures as a psychological process (Taylor & Quayle, 2003). The first four levels in the COPINE scale are not considered an offence, and so all offenders have committed offences relating to Level 5–10 images. All offenders were in possession of Level 5
images, but not all offenders progressed to Level 10 images. It is difficult to determine if all offenders would have progressed to Level 10 images as they may have been arrested prior to progression in image preference and escalation. It was also impossible to determine the order in which offenders accessed images as accessing may have resulted in viewing a Level 8 image, followed by a Level 6 image and then a Level 9 image, for example. This study categorised offenders according to the highest level of image preference they had reached.

Thirty-five predictor variables were selected for testing with highest image preference (see Table 7.2). Each variable is listed in Appendix D in the Codebook for Offender Characteristics. Each variable was analysed to determine the significance of any relationship between the predictor variable and highest image preference. When considering the progression in image preference it was found that offenders located in each highest image preference were also located in the lower image preferences. For example, an offender that accessed Level 8 images also accessed Level 5–7 images. However, this study was not able to determine the order in which images were accessed, so it is possible that an offender initially viewed Level 8 images, but then found a preference for Level 6 images.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description of picture qualities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indicative</td>
<td>Non-erotic and non-sexualised pictures showing children in their underwear, swimming costumes, etc., from either commercial sources or family albums; pictures of children playing in normal settings, in which the context or organisation of pictures by the collector indicates inappropriateness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nudist</td>
<td>Pictures of naked or semi-naked children in appropriate nudist settings, and from legitimate sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Erotica</td>
<td>Surreptitiously taken photographs of children in play areas or other safe environments showing either underwear or varying degrees of nakedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Posing</td>
<td>Deliberately posed pictures of children fully, partially clothed or naked (where the amount, context and organisation suggests sexual interest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Erotic posing</td>
<td>Deliberately posed pictures of fully, partially clothed or naked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1: COPINE Typology of Image Preferences
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Explicit erotic posing</td>
<td>Emphasising genital areas where the child is either naked, partially or fully clothed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Explicit sexual activity</td>
<td>Involves touching, mutual and self-masturbation, oral sex and intercourse by child, not involving an adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>Pictures of children being subject to a sexual assault, involving digital touching, involving an adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Gross assault</td>
<td>Grossly obscene pictures of sexual assault, involving penetrative sex, masturbation or oral sex involving an adult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|10 | Sadistic/bestiality    | a. Pictures showing a child being tied, bound, beaten, whipped or otherwise subject to something that implies pain.  
                            b. Pictures where an animal is involved in some form of sexual behaviour with a child |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offender demographics</th>
<th>Victim characteristics</th>
<th>Offender online behaviour and characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of offender</td>
<td>Victim age</td>
<td>Response to warrant by offender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of offender</td>
<td>Victim gender</td>
<td>Offender responded to allegations in a callous manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation of offender</td>
<td>Relationship between offender and victim</td>
<td>Offender pro-criminal attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level reached by offender</td>
<td>Victim age reduction over time as identified by investigator</td>
<td>Offender possessed other pornography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender ethnicity</td>
<td>Victim ethnicity</td>
<td>Offender possessed series of images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential location of offender</td>
<td>Time online by offender prior to arrest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender claimed physical abuse</td>
<td>Reduced social behaviour by offender prior to arrest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender claimed sexual abuse</td>
<td>Offender returned to certain images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status of offender</td>
<td>Escalation in other pornographic images as identified by investigator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary activities: e.g. scouts</td>
<td>Offender access to victim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender claimed substance abuse history</td>
<td>Format of images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological history of offender</td>
<td>Offender online user name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Online and contact offending apparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased sorting and cataloguing of images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Age of offender online in images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Volume of material in offenders possession</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consideration was given to which variables may influence image escalation by offenders. A number of variables were found to identify variation among offenders that escalated in
their image preference. After analysis, several predictor variables regarding offenders (comments made during and post-warrant, history of substance abuse, psychological history and possession of other pornography) were found to occur too infrequently to provide meaningful analysis and were removed from the results.

When considering the ANOVA for the relationship between images and age, the model assumptions are that the residuals are normally distributed, have a constant variance and are independent. The Shapiro–Wilk test of normality is used to determine if the residuals are normally distributed. In this case, the residuals are not derived from a population that is normally distributed, as the Shapiro–Wilk $p$-value was zero. However, regression techniques are robust against departures from normality, so this would not be considered a serious problem.
7.3 Occupation and Image Escalation

Sixteen occupation groups were analysed to determine their relationship to image escalation. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model for occupation and image escalation are shown in Table 7.3. The coefficients confirm that there is a significant difference among occupation groups in image escalation ranking \((p < 0.05)\).

### Table 7.3: Coefficients for Occupation and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.467</td>
<td>0.720</td>
<td>0.648</td>
<td>0.517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.606</td>
<td>1.264</td>
<td>1.270</td>
<td>0.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.606</td>
<td>1.264</td>
<td>1.270</td>
<td>0.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.025</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>1.447</td>
<td>0.148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.550</td>
<td>0.696</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>0.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>−0.349</td>
<td>1.094</td>
<td>−0.319</td>
<td>0.749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>−0.932</td>
<td>2.223</td>
<td>−0.419</td>
<td>0.675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.321</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td>0.450</td>
<td>0.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>−0.070</td>
<td>0.851</td>
<td>−0.083</td>
<td>0.934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.873</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>143731450.229</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>0.887</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>0.425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.673</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>0.895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.035</td>
<td>0.511</td>
<td>2.023</td>
<td>0.043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occupation 13 (law enforcement) appears to be very different from the other occupations and resulted in escalating to Level 10 images \((p < 0.05; \text{Table } 7.3)\); however, as there was only one offender in this group interpretation of this result should be made with caution. Occupation 16 (labourer) also appears to be different with 30 offenders categorised as labourers, and 50% of these progressing to Level 10 images \((p < 0.05)\) as shown in Table 7.4. Occupations 3 (health sector) and 5 (engineering), although not significant, were also groups that had more than 60% of offenders escalating to Level 10 images (see Table 7.4), although both groups had very few offenders.
### Table 7.4: Proportion within Each Occupation Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.210</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>0.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.185</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>0.355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.142</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>0.239</td>
<td>0.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.196</td>
<td>0.195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td>0.267</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.235</td>
<td>0.322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>0.118</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>0.411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.207</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>0.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.492</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportion of each occupation that progressed to Level 10 revealed that all occupations progressed to the top level of image preference, however Occupations 8 (sciences) and 9 (arts) revealed a lower proportion of offenders progressing to level 10. Those offenders employed in the sciences were more likely to prefer images at Level 8, followed by Levels 9 and 10. Offenders employed in the arts held preferences for Level 6, followed by Levels 8 and then 7.

### 7.4 Education and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of education is shown in Figure 7.1.
Figure 7.1: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Education and Image Ranking

There appears to be little difference between education groups: the coefficients from the ordinal regression model (see Table 7.5) confirm that there is no difference between the image rankings for the education groups \((p > 0.05)\). However, Groups 4 (advanced diploma and diploma level) and 5 (certificate level) have only three observations each so these results should be interpreted with caution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>(t)-value</th>
<th>(p)-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.937</td>
<td>1.494</td>
<td>0.627</td>
<td>0.531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.390</td>
<td>142.397</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>1.670</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>1.466</td>
<td>0.424</td>
<td>0.672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.580</td>
<td>1.513</td>
<td>1.044</td>
<td>0.296</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each education group are shown in Table 7.6, which reveals that Groups 3 (bachelor degree), 4 (advanced diploma and diploma level), 6 (secondary education) and 7 (primary education) had the highest proportions in the Level 10 images group; education Group 7 held more than 50% of offenders progressing to Level 10
images prior to arrest. Education groups 1 (postgraduate) and 5 (certificate) held the highest proportion in Level 8, followed by Levels 10 and 9 image preferences.

Table 7.6: Proportion within Each Education Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.5 Offender Ethnicity and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking with separate curves for the levels of offender ethnicity is shown in Figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Ethnicity and Image Ranking

There appears to be little difference in image rankings in relation to offender ethnicity. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model (see Table 7.7) confirm that there is
no significant difference between the image rankings for the offender ethnicity groups ($p > 0.05$).

**Table 7.7: Coefficients for Offender Ethnicity Group and Image Escalation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.979</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.729</td>
<td>0.953</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td>0.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.092</td>
<td>1.263</td>
<td>0.865</td>
<td>0.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.128</td>
<td>0.645</td>
<td>1.749</td>
<td>0.080</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each offender ethnicity group and image ranking are shown in Table 7.8. This table reveals that all offender ethnicity groups preferred the highest level images, although caution must be given to interpreting this outcome as the majority of offenders were Caucasian (115 of a total of 136 offenders in Group 1).

**Table 7.8: Proportion within Each Offender Ethnicity Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.230</td>
<td>0.337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.230</td>
<td>0.340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.193</td>
<td>0.602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.611</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.6 Offender’s Residential Location and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of residential location is shown in Figure 7.3.
There appears to be little difference between the residential location groups in image ranking. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.9, and confirm that there is no difference between the image rankings for the residential location groups (\( p > 0.05 \)).

Table 7.9: Coefficients for Residential Location and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.435</td>
<td>0.378</td>
<td>1.152</td>
<td>0.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.563</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>0.931</td>
<td>0.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.724</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>1.228</td>
<td>0.219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each residential location group are shown in Table 7.10, revealing that offenders in all residential locations were more likely to be found in possession of the highest level of images.
Table 7.10: Proportion within Each Offender Residential Location and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.229</td>
<td>0.416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.142</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>0.487</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.7 Physical Abuse and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of physical abuse (history of physical abuse or not) is shown in Figure 7.4.

![Figure 7.4: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Physical Abuse and Image Ranking](image)

There appears to be little difference between the two physical abuse groups in image rankings. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.11. This confirms that there is no significant difference between the image rankings for the two physical abuse groups ($p > 0.05$).
Table 7.11: Coefficients for Physical Abuse Group and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.872</td>
<td>0.919</td>
<td>-0.948</td>
<td>0.343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions in each physical abuse group are shown in Table 7.12. This table reveals that more than 50% of those who claimed to have suffered physical abuse (Group 1) progressed to the highest level of images viewed. If Level 9 and 10 image preferences are combined for the groups this reduces the difference between groups.

Table 7.12: Proportion within Each Physical Abuse Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.198</td>
<td>0.577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.363</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.8 Sexual Abuse and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of sexual abuse (claimed a history of sexual abuse or not) are shown in Figure 7.5.
There appears to be little difference between the two sexual abuse groups in image preference. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.13. This confirms that there is no significant difference between the image rankings for the two sexual abuse groups ($p > 0.05$).

![Cumulative Percentage Plot for Sexual Abuse and Image Ranking](image)

**Figure 7.5: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Sexual Abuse and Image Ranking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.969</td>
<td>1.259</td>
<td>-0.769</td>
<td>0.442</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each sexual abuse group are shown in Table 7.14, which indicates that for those offenders that claimed to have a history of sexual abuse as a victim (Group 1), more than 60% escalated to the highest level of image preferences. However, few offenders claimed a sexual abuse history and so interpretation of the results may be problematic. For those with no history of sexual abuse as a victim, it was found that almost 80% escalated to Levels 8–10 in their image preferences, with the largest proportions in the Level 10 image preference.
Table 7.14: Proportion within Each Sexual Abuse Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.9 Marital Status and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of marital status is shown in Figure 7.6.

![Figure 7.6: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Marital Status and Image Ranking](image)

There appears to be little difference between marital groups in image ranking. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.15. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the marital status groups ($p > 0.05$).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.098</td>
<td>0.685</td>
<td>1.603</td>
<td>0.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>–0.715</td>
<td>0.709</td>
<td>–1.008</td>
<td>0.313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.086</td>
<td>1.286</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td>0.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.263</td>
<td>0.372</td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td>0.480</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each marital status group are shown in Table 7.16. This table reveals that all marital status groups had the highest proportion of offenders in the Level 9 and 10 image preference groups. It was found that of offenders in Group 2 (living in a de facto relationship), 80% were located in Level 9 and 10 for accessing images. Group 4 (separated) offenders were also more likely (80%) to be accessing Levels 9 and 10, the highest level of images.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>0.602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>0.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>0.599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>0.397</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.10 Contact with Other Offenders and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of contact with other offenders (1 being no online contact and two being online contact to trade and communicate) is shown in Figure 7.7.
There appears to be little difference between the two groups of contact with other offenders in their image preferences. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.17. This confirms that there is no significant difference between image rankings for the ‘contact with other offenders’ groups ($p > 0.05$).

Table 7.17: Coefficients for Contact with Other Offenders and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.307</td>
<td>0.331</td>
<td>0.928</td>
<td>0.354</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each contact with other offenders group are shown in Table 7.18. This table shows that both groups (contact with other offenders and no contact with other offenders) escalate to the highest level of image accessing and viewing. Both groups were found to have more than 70% of offenders accessing images at Levels 8–10.
Table 7.18: Proportion within Each Contact with Other Offenders Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level 5</th>
<th>Image level 6</th>
<th>Image level 7</th>
<th>Image level 8</th>
<th>Image level 9</th>
<th>Image level 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.398</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.11 Involved in Voluntary Activities and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of involvement in voluntary activities is shown in Figure 7.8.

Figure 7.8: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offenders Involved in Voluntary Activities and Image Ranking

There appears to be little difference between the voluntary activities groups in terms of image preferences. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.19. This confirms that there is no significant difference between the image rankings for the ‘involved in voluntary activities’ groups ($p > 0.05$).
Table 7.19: Coefficients for Offenders Involved in Voluntary Activities and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-0.730</td>
<td>1.256</td>
<td>-0.581</td>
<td>0.561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.609</td>
<td>1.276</td>
<td>1.261</td>
<td>0.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>1.094</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.901</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each involved in voluntary activities groups are shown in Table 7.20. This table shows that offenders that become involved in community groups (Group 5) are likely to progress to the highest level (10) of image accessing, with more than 70% of these offenders in the top level, and nearly 90% accessing Level 9 and 10 images. Those involved in voluntary activities including scouts and cadets (Group 1) and coach of a sporting team (Group 4) were most likely to be found to access Level 8–10 images. However, it should be noted that those with no involvement in voluntary activities (Group 7) also were most likely to access Level 8–10 images where nearly 80% of offenders were located.

Table 7.20: Proportion within Each Offender Involved in Voluntary Activities Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.234</td>
<td>0.322</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.185</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>0.704</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.237</td>
<td>0.353</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.12 Callousness and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of callousness is shown in Figure 7.9.
Figure 7.9: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Callousness and Image Ranking

There appears to be a significant difference between the two callousness groups (either callous or no indications of callousness). The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.21. This confirms that there is a significant difference between the image rankings for the two callousness groups ($p < 0.05$). Both have the highest proportion of offenders accessing Levels 8–10 images as shown in Table 7.21.

Table 7.21: Coefficients for Offenders’ Level of Callousness Group and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.140</td>
<td>0.460</td>
<td>–2.479</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each callousness group are shown in Table 7.22.

Table 7.22: Proportion within Each Offender Level of Callousness Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.236</td>
<td>0.417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.231</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.13 Pro-criminal Attitudes and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of pro-criminal attitudes is shown in Figure 7.10.

![Figure 7.10: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Pro-criminal Attitudes and Image Ranking](image)

There appears to be little difference between the pro-criminal attitudes groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.23. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the pro-criminal groups ($p > 0.05$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.955</td>
<td>1.281</td>
<td>0.745</td>
<td>0.456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>0.450</td>
<td>0.984</td>
<td>0.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>–0.277</td>
<td>0.374</td>
<td>–0.739</td>
<td>0.460</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.14 Victim Age and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of victim age is shown in Figure 7.11.

Figure 7.11: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Victim Age and Image Ranking

There appears to be a difference between the victim age groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.24. This confirms that there is a significant difference between the image rankings for the victim age group 7 (baby, child and teenager) \((p = 0.001)\). This suggests a group of offenders do not have a victim age preference, and are interested in the sexual abuse of all victim age groups.

Table 7.24: Coefficients for Victim Age and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.216</td>
<td>0.722</td>
<td>1.684</td>
<td>0.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>0.456</td>
<td>1.918</td>
<td>0.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.888</td>
<td>0.572</td>
<td>3.299</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each victim age group are shown in Table 7.25. Where the victim age in group 7 (baby, child and teenager) a large proportion of the images are level 10 images,
with the second largest group at level 10 images being victim age group 4 (baby and child), followed by victim age group 5 (child and teenager).

### Table 7.25: Proportion within Each Victim Age Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>0.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>0.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.154</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>0.446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>0.364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 7.15 Relationship between Offender and Victim and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of relationship between offender and victim (1 being intrafamilial and two being extrafamilial) is shown in Figure 7.12.

![Figure 7.12: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender’s Relationship to Victim and Image Ranking](image-url)
There appears to be little difference between the two relationships between offender and victim groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.26. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the two relationships between offender and victim groups (p-value > 0.05).

### Table 7.26: Coefficients for Offender’s Relationship to Victim and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>−0.468</td>
<td>1.123</td>
<td>−0.417</td>
<td>0.677</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each relationship between offender and victim group are shown in Table 7.27. This shows that both groups held a preference for level 8, 9 and 10 images.

### Table 7.27: Proportion between Relationship of Offender and Victim and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.16 Victim Gender and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of victim gender in images is shown in Figure 7.13.
There appears to be a difference between the victim gender groups in image preference. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.28. This confirms that there is a significant difference between the image rankings for the three victim gender groups ($p = 0.009$). This suggests that Group 3 (male and female victims in images) are more likely to hold a preference for more abusive imagery and may be a more deviant group than those that prefer male or female only victims.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>–0.167</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td>–0.391</td>
<td>0.696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.940</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>2.417</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each victim gender group are shown in Table 7.29: more than 50% of images in the Level 10 image category have both male and female victims. All gender groups were predominantly located in Levels 8, 9 and 10 image rankings.
Table 7.29: Proportion within Victim Gender and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.17 Username and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of username is shown in Figure 7.14.

![Figure 7.14: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Username and Image Ranking](image)

There appears to be little difference between the username groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.30. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the username groups ($p > 0.05$).
Table 7.30: Coefficients for Offender Username and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.259</td>
<td>0.670</td>
<td>-0.386</td>
<td>0.699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-0.182</td>
<td>0.472</td>
<td>-0.385</td>
<td>0.700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each username group are shown in Table 7.31, revealing that username Groups 1 (child abuse oriented), 2 (sex oriented, but not specific to children) and 3 (non-sexualised) were predominantly located in the Levels 8–10 image ranking.

Table 7.31: Proportion within Each Username Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.18 Evidence of Online and Contact Offending and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of online and contact offending is shown in Figure 7.15.
Figure 7.15: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Evidence of Online and Contact Offending and Image Ranking

There appears to be little difference between the two online and contact offending groups in image level preference. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.32. This confirms that there is no significant difference between the image rankings for the two online and contact offending groups ($p > 0.05$).

Table 7.32: Coefficients for Online and Contact Offending and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.488</td>
<td>0.432</td>
<td>1.131</td>
<td>0.258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each online and contact offending group are shown in Table 7.33. Again, the preferences for both groups were located in Levels 8–10.

Table 7.33: Proportion within Online and Contact Offending Groups and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.215</td>
<td>0.281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.19 Increased Sorting or Cataloguing and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of increased sorting and cataloguing is shown in Figure 7.16.

![Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Increased Sorting and Cataloguing and Image Ranking](image_url)

Figure 7.16: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Increased Sorting and Cataloguing and Image Ranking

There appears to be little difference between the two increased sorting and cataloguing groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.34. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the two increased sorting and cataloguing groups ($p > 0.05$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.421</td>
<td>0.884</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>0.634</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.34: Coefficients for Offender Increased Sorting and Cataloguing and Image Escalation

The proportions for each increased sorting and cataloguing group are shown in Table 7.35. Both groups (1 being evidence of sorting and two being no evidence of sorting behaviour) held a preference for Level 8, 9 and 10 images.
Table 7.35: Proportion within Each Offender Increased Sorting and Cataloguing Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.199</td>
<td>0.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.226</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.20 Focus on Series and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of focus on a series is shown in Figure 7.17.

![Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Focus on a Series and Image Ranking](image)

There appears to be little difference between the two series groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.36. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the two series groups ($p > 0.05$).

Table 7.36: Coefficients for Offender Focus on Series and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>−0.748</td>
<td>0.418</td>
<td>−1.790</td>
<td>0.074</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proportions for each series group are shown in Table 7.37: Group 1 (those focusing on a series of images) had more than 50% at Level 10, and more than 80% at Levels 8–10. Group 2 had more than 70% of offenders accessing Level 8–10 images.

Table 7.37: Proportion within Each Offender Focus on Series Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>0.515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.186</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.21 Time Online and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of time online is shown in Figure 7.18.

There appears to be little difference between the time online groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.38. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the time online groups ($p > 0.05$).
Table 7.38: Coefficients for Offender Time Online and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.410</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>1.149</td>
<td>0.251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td>0.471</td>
<td>1.211</td>
<td>0.226</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each time online group are shown in Table 7.39. All groups (1 being <10 hours, 2 being 10–30 hours and 3 being >30 hours per week) were found to hold a preference for Level 8, 9 and 10 images with in excess of 70% of offenders accessing these image levels.

Table 7.39: Proportion within Each Time Online Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.196</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>0.307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.439</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.22 Reduction in Social Behaviour and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of reduction in social behaviour is shown in Figure 7.19.
Figure 7.19: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Reduction in Social Behaviour and Image Ranking

There appears to be little difference between the two reduction in social behaviour groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.40. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the two reduction in social behaviour groups ($p > 0.05$).

Table 7.40: Coefficients for Offender Reduction in Social Behaviour and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.594</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>-0.949</td>
<td>0.343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each reduction in social behaviour group are shown in Table 7.41. Again, both groups preference was for Levels 8, 9 and 10 images with in excess of 70% of offenders preferring these image levels.
Table 7.41: Proportion within Each Offender Reduction in Social Behaviour Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.042</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.23 Return to Images and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of return to images is shown in Figure 7.20.

![Cumulative Percentage Plot](image)

Figure 7.20: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Offender Return to Images and Image Ranking

There appears to be little difference between the two return to images groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.42. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the two return to images groups ($p > 0.05$).

Table 7.42: Coefficients for Offender Return to Images and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>−0.421</td>
<td>1.303</td>
<td>−0.323</td>
<td>0.747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proportions for each return to images group are shown in Table 7.43. This reveals that in excess of 70% of offenders accessed Level 8, 9 and 10 images.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.24 Progression in Victim Age Reduction and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of victim age reduction is shown in Figure 7.21.

There appears to be little difference between the two victim age reduction groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.44. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the two victim age reduction groups ($p > 0.05$).
Table 7.44: Coefficients for Offenders Involved in Victim Age Reduction and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.865</td>
<td>1.388</td>
<td>-0.623</td>
<td>0.533</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each victim age reduction group are shown in Table 7.45: a higher percentage of offenders are located accessing Level 8, 9 and 10 images.

Table 7.45: Proportion within Each Offender Victim Age Reduction Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>0.428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.349</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>0.240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.25 Evidence of Escalation in Other Images and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of escalation in other images is shown in Figure 7.22.

Figure 7.22: Cumulative Percentage Plot for Evidence of Escalation in Other Images and Image Ranking
There appears to be little difference between the two escalation in other images groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.46. This confirms that there is no difference between the image rankings for the two escalation in other images groups (\( p > 0.05 \)). Interpretation of these results should be made with caution as there was only one offender in Group 1 (did escalate in other pornographic image content), as shown in Table 7.47.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>–12.159</td>
<td>115.137</td>
<td>–0.106</td>
<td>0.916</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7.47: Proportion within Each Evidence of Escalation in Other Images Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.26 Victim Ethnicity and Image Escalation

The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.48. This confirms that there is a significant difference between the image rankings for the victim ethnicity groups (\( p < 0.05 \)). Victim ethnicity Group 3 (Asian) and 12 (all ethnicities) appear to be very different, but there are only two records for each of these groups.
Table 7.48: Coefficients for Victim Ethnicity and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.942</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>433593795.968</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.319</td>
<td>1.100</td>
<td>0.290</td>
<td>0.772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.663</td>
<td>0.435</td>
<td>1.522</td>
<td>0.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>−0.199</td>
<td>1.483</td>
<td>−0.134</td>
<td>0.893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.094</td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>2.010</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.293</td>
<td>1.214</td>
<td>1.888</td>
<td>0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.942</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>433592677.614</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.624</td>
<td>0.969</td>
<td>1.676</td>
<td>0.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.849</td>
<td>1.501</td>
<td>0.566</td>
<td>0.572</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each victim ethnicity group are shown in Table 7.49.

Table 7.49: Proportion within Each Victim Ethnicity Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.234</td>
<td>0.235</td>
<td>0.195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>0.259</td>
<td>0.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.199</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.236</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>0.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>0.276</td>
<td>0.362</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.27 Victim Access and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of victim access is shown in Figure 7.23.
There appears to be a difference between the victim access groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.50. This confirms that there is a significant difference between the image rankings for the victim access groups ($p < 0.05$). However, victim access Group 9 (online viewing, telephone contact with a victim and online contact with a victim) only has one observation and therefore the result should be interpreted with caution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.316</td>
<td>1.309</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>−0.935</td>
<td>0.530</td>
<td>−1.764</td>
<td>0.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.728</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>−0.554</td>
<td>0.908</td>
<td>−0.610</td>
<td>0.542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.254</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>637740170.728</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each victim access group are shown in Table 7.51. As reported for other variables, the groups held a preference for Level 8, 9 and 10 images.
Table 7.51: Proportion within Each Victim Access Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>0.232</td>
<td>0.390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.210</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>0.232</td>
<td>0.393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.203</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.28 Format of Material and Image Escalation

The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are provided in Table 7.52, and show that there is a significant difference between the image rankings for the format groups ($p < 0.05$). Groups 7 (images and video), 8 (images, video and cartoons), 9 (images, video and written stories) and 10 (images and written stories) were found to be significantly different.

Table 7.52: Coefficients for Offenders Format of Material and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.749</td>
<td>1.174</td>
<td>1.489</td>
<td>0.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.244</td>
<td>1.540</td>
<td>0.808</td>
<td>0.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.524</td>
<td>0.557</td>
<td>4.532</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.412</td>
<td>0.928</td>
<td>2.600</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.440</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td>3.699</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.889</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td>2.756</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.346</td>
<td>1.519</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.256</td>
<td>1.552</td>
<td>1.454</td>
<td>0.146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions for each format group are shown in Table 7.53. It can be seen that Groups 7 (images and video), 8 (images, audio and virtual), 9 (images, video and stories) and 10 (images and written stories) had high proportions of offenders accessing Level 10 images. All groups had a high proportion accessing Level 7, 9 and 10 images.
Table 7.53: Proportion within Each Offender Formatting of Material Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Image level</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.345</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.239</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.249</td>
<td>0.438</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>0.252</td>
<td>0.411</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>0.417</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.231</td>
<td>0.529</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.297</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>0.118</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.373</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.29 Age of Offender Online in Images and Image Escalation

The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.54, revealing a significant difference between image rankings for the age of offender online groups ($p < 0.05$). Groups 10 (child and adult over 25 years) and 13 (teenager and young adult) appear to be very different, but there is only one record in each of these groups. Groups 5, 6 (baby and child), 9 (teenager and young adult) and 11 (child, teenager and young adult) had significant differences from the others.

Table 7.54: Coefficients for Age of Offender Online and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.689</td>
<td>2.068</td>
<td>0.817</td>
<td>0.414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.302</td>
<td>1.662</td>
<td>1.987</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.250</td>
<td>2.034</td>
<td>2.090</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.533</td>
<td>2.090</td>
<td>1.690</td>
<td>0.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.912</td>
<td>1.738</td>
<td>1.676</td>
<td>0.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.262</td>
<td>1.652</td>
<td>1.974</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>35.133</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>76102029459352.781</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.504</td>
<td>1.765</td>
<td>1.986</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.241</td>
<td>2.178</td>
<td>1.029</td>
<td>0.304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>35.133</td>
<td>77032364137885.469</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proportions for each age of offender online group are shown in Table 7.55. This reveals that Groups 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11 escalated to Level 10 images. Groups 2 and 4 had a higher proportion of offenders in Level 6 images, and Group 12 had a higher proportion of offenders in Level 8 images.

### Table 7.55: Proportion within Each Age of Offender Online Group and Highest Image Level Reached in the COPINE Scale (Table 7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.247</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>0.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>0.394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>0.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>0.450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.196</td>
<td>0.252</td>
<td>0.305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.257</td>
<td>0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.252</td>
<td>0.443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>0.208</td>
<td>0.183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.30 Volume of Material and Image Escalation

The cumulative percentage plot of the image ranking, with separate curves for the levels of volume of material is shown in Figure 7.24.
There appears to be a difference between the volume groups. The coefficients from the ordinal regression model are shown in Table 7.56. This confirms that there is a significant difference between the image rankings for the volume groups ($p < 0.05$). Group 4 (possessed $\geq 20,000$ images) are significantly different.

Table 7.56: Coefficients for Offenders Volume of Material and Image Escalation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.744</td>
<td>0.392</td>
<td>1.895</td>
<td>0.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.193</td>
<td>0.856</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>0.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.224</td>
<td>0.613</td>
<td>3.625</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.31 High and Low Image Preferences

As the cell sizes for several of the variables selected was small, additional analysis was conducted by collapsing several of the cells into high and low image preferences. Offenders located at the lower levels (5, 6 and 7) of image preference and those located in the higher levels (8, 9 and 10) were compared to determine if collapsing the groups into high and low image preference and increasing the cell sizes would assist with
determining which variables were dependent on image preference. Chi-square and Fisher’s exact tests were conducted on the variables, with only two—callousness and format of material—being found to be dependent on the image level. Therefore, only these two variables will be reported on from now.

### 7.31.1 Callousness

The callousness variable was differentiated by those that presented either as callous towards their victims, or showed no callousness towards their victims, as determined by their comments to investigators and the investigators assessment on their responses. Chi-square analysis revealed that callousness is dependent on image level when grouped into two levels: 1) low (Levels 5, 6 and 7) and 2) high (Levels 8, 9 and 10) image preference ($p = 0.03$). This result showed that Group 2, those with a preference for Level 8–10 images, were more likely to be callous towards their victims. Table 7.57 shows the chi-square results for the callousness variable with Group 1 being callous and Group 2 not callous towards the victim, 1 being low-level and 2 being high-level images.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image level</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.31.2 Format of Material

Format of material was differentiated by the manner in which the offender preferred the material (e.g. images, video, audio or cartoons). A Fisher’s exact test revealed that format of material is dependent on image level when grouped into two levels: 1) low (Levels 5, 6 and 7) and 2) high (Levels 8, 9 and 10) preference ($p = 0.004$). Format 7 (images and video) is the highest occurring format, followed by formats 9 (images, video and written stories) and 1 (images). Formats 7 and 9 were more likely to be associated with Group 2 (Levels 8, 9 and 10) whereas Format 1 is more likely to be associated with Group 1 (Levels 5, 6 and 7). Formats 3, 4, 10 and 12 were only used by Group 2. Format 11 was only used by Group 1. Table 7.58 shows the Fisher’s exact test results for the format of material variable.
Table 7.58: Fisher’s Exact Test for Format of Material and Image Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.32 Additional Analysis

*Post hoc* analysis was conducted on the variables of victim age, victim gender and format of the material accessed, to investigate if any specific relationships existed between these variables and level of deviance—as shown by highest COPINE rating—or whether they were simply a function of time spent online. *Post hoc* analysis investigates the data after the experiment has completed in order to look for patterns not previously specified. The purpose of *post hoc* analysis is to identify patterns between subgroups. Spearman correlations are used in this analysis as they are a non-parametric measure of statistical dependence between two variables, and the variables used are categorical rather than numerical.

Victim age, victim gender and format of material were re-coded so that all ages of victims could be compared against any other single or pairing of age and victim gender could be assessed for preference for male only or female. Format of material was re-coded into three levels: single format, two formats (i.e. images and video) and three formats (i.e. images, video and written stories). These three re-coded variables were then analysed with respect to time online and highest image rating scale (COPINE). The resultant Spearman correlation matrix (see Table 7.59) demonstrates that a preference for all ages
was positively correlated with a lack of gender preference \((r = 0.22, p < 0.05)\) and that those that prefer all ages of victims also have higher COPINE scores \((r = 0.23, p < 0.05)\). Similarly, those with no gender preference have preferred images \((r = 0.28, p < 0.05)\). Further, there is a positive correlation between those that prefer all genders and those that prefer material in multiple formats \((r = 0.22, p < 0.05)\). Finally, preference for multiple formats for accessing material is correlated with COPINE level \((r = 0.27, p < 0.05)\). Time online was not significant in any correlation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.59: Spearman Correlation for Post Hoc Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variable</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format of material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.33 Qualitative Information

Presentence reports and judges comments were used within the study to assist in the compilation of the data categories for the statistical study such as diagnosis of a mental health issue. These reports were prepared in relation to sentencing and mitigating factors in their offending behaviour and as such were not assessed as part of the qualitative material.

After review of 48 police interview transcripts and noting comments made by offenders with respect to the justification and rationale for their offending behaviour, it was identified that a number of offenders did attempt to justify their behaviour, for example:

- one offender was found in possession of a number of research papers justifying child sexual abuse
- one offender had accessed websites justifying child sex as necessary for healthy sexual development in children
- a number of offenders described the accessing as accidental, experimentation just like smoking marijuana, needing money for a sick parent, not hurting anyone, it was his right, did not think it was an offence, images are freely available and so there is no
harm in accessing, claimed an addiction, thrill seeking; one stated ‘I don’t do anything really nasty or hurt or offend against anyone’ and another considered the behaviour ‘harmless and victimless since the material was out there’.

7.34 Summary

Thirty-five predictor variables were selected for analysis to determine if there was any association between the variables and the highest level of images viewed by the offender. Regression analysis identified that a number of variables were found to be significantly associated with image preference when the analysis was run on Level 5–10 images. Predictor variables marked with an * in Table 7.60 identify those characteristics which predict image preference. Those predictor variables marked with # in Table 7.60 identified those variables that predicted image preference when the groups were collapsed into high and low image preference.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offender demographics</th>
<th>Victim characteristics</th>
<th>Offender online behaviour and characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of offender</td>
<td>*Victim age</td>
<td>Response to warrant by offender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of offender</td>
<td>*Victim gender</td>
<td>*#Offender responded to allegations in a callous manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation of offender</td>
<td>Relationship between offender and victim</td>
<td>Offender pro-criminal attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level reached by offender</td>
<td>Victim age reduction over time</td>
<td>Offender possessed other pornography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender ethnicity</td>
<td>Victim ethnicity</td>
<td>Offender possessed series of images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential location of offender</td>
<td>Time online by offender prior to arrest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender claimed physical abuse</td>
<td>Reduced social behaviour by offender prior to arrest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender claimed sexual abuse</td>
<td>Offender returned to certain images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status of offender</td>
<td>Escalation in other pornographic Images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary activities, e.g. scouts</td>
<td>*Offender access to victim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender claimed substance abuse history</td>
<td>*#Format of images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological history of offender</td>
<td>Offender online user name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online and contact offending apparent</td>
<td>Increased sorting and cataloguing of images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Age of offender online in images</td>
<td>*Volume of material in offender’s possession</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* characteristics influencing image preference; # variables that were dependent on image preference.
Chapter 8: Results and Analysis—Grooming Online

8.1 Demographic Information

The two offenders involved with attempts to groom children online were male and were convicted of online child sexual abuse offences relating to a child under the age of 16 years: the age stipulated in the Australian legislation for the purposes of this offence. There was no further official information in relation to the two offenders; however in their chat logs both declared they were in their forties, and were parents to children (male and female) in their teens. Both offenders declared in chat logs that they had some sexual contact with their children, but this contact had been limited to touching and caressing, but no contact with genitalia.

8.2 Themes in Chat Logs

The analysis of the data utilised NVivo 10, which is suitable for identifying themes and content in documents.

The offenders displayed all stages of O’Connell’s (2003) five-stage model for grooming (friendship forming, relationship forming, risk assessment, exclusivity and sexual stage), but in only one chat log did an offender seek to assure himself that the victim was not a police officer intent on entrapment, by asking questions relating to whether the person was a police officer. Although the O’Connell model was displayed by the offenders, the progression was largely unrecognisable due to the speed at which the offender moved to engage in sexual conversation with the victim. In only two chat logs did an offender attempt to establish exclusivity in a discussion about an ongoing relationship and arranging to meet both victims. It was identified that 323 victims were engaged in sexual conversations, 107 in friendship forming and 230 in relationship forming attempts by the offenders. It was difficult to determine the difference between friendship forming and relationship forming as for many of the chat logs there was limited discussion prior to the offender engaging in sexual dialogue with the victim.
Additional features were identified in the chat logs such as multiple fantasy scenarios, sexual preferences and whether the victim was male or female. These additional themes and identification issues are listed in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: List of Themes and Identification of Victim Numbers and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified feature</th>
<th>No. of victims</th>
<th>Male victim</th>
<th>Female victim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy—uncle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy—snuff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy—victim in movie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy—dog-boy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy—rape</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusivity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy—bondage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy—father–daughter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadomasochism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged a meeting with the victim</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bestiality</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy—master–servant</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship forming</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male victims</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female victims</td>
<td>211</td>
<td></td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship forming</td>
<td>230</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual stage</td>
<td>323</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.3 Word Frequency

A word frequency analysis was conducted for all chat logs that included words that were similar to each other (e.g. the word ‘getting’ also identified ‘gets’ and ‘get’; the word ‘start’ also included ‘starts’, ‘starting’ and ‘started’). This analysis revealed the top 50 words across all chat logs (see Table 8.2). Removed from this list were those words that related to a name, online identity, or year, leaving 43 words commonly used across all chat logs.
A word frequency analysis was then conducted on male and female victims to identify whether there were differences in the words used for male and female victims. As before, any words that related to names, identity or year were removed. As can be seen in Table 8.3, the words used when offenders were chatting with male victims varied considerably.
from those used when chatting to a female victim. The language used with male victims appears to be more friendly and engaging (e.g. thanks, fine and sun) whereas the language used with female victims appears to be more sexual (e.g. slut, anal, take and used). Although it appeared that males were chatted to in a more friendly manner than females, the term ‘fist’ or ‘fisting’ was used more with male (79 victims) than female (55) victims. It was used more than 10 times with each of 24 male victims (and on up to 61 occasions with one male victim) and more than 10 times in chat logs with each of seven of the victims, and as many as (up to 15 times).

8.4 Word Similarity

A review of high- and low-frequency words used in the chat logs revealed differences between words used with male and female victims and the cluster analysis in Figure 8.1 shows how these words were clustered within each node.

When the cluster analysis was viewed in a distance matrix format as in Figure 8.2, a line could be drawn that separated the male and female victim nodes. It was evident that the offenders that predominantly portrayed themselves as an uncle online, assessed risk with the victim, and discussed father–daughter sexual topics and bestiality were more likely to have female victims (see left-hand side of Figure 8.2). Discussions about dog-boy, rape, sadomasochism and fantasising about a victim in a movie, were more likely to be had with a male victim. However, all nodes for both male and female victims were found with very few chat logs and victims. Nodes closest to the mid-line—discussions about sex, relationship and friendship forming, and arranging to meet with the victim—were consistent across male and female victims (Figure 8.2).
### Table 8.3: Word Frequency on Chat Logs for Male and Female Victims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>session</td>
<td>lil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ident</td>
<td>deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close</td>
<td>girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>start</td>
<td>mom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sun</td>
<td>sling</td>
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#### Figure 8.1: Cluster Analysis of Nodes with Word Similarities
When themes relating to fewer than four victims were removed from the analysis, a different clustering of themes by word similarity was revealed, as shown in Figure 8.3.

When this information was graphed in a distance matrix format (see Figure 8.4), very few differences were apparent between the themes for male and female victims, suggesting
that the offenders generally used common words across all victims. The difference in the words used was most marked for the less identified themes.

Figure 8.4: Themes for Male and Female Victims

8.5 Summary

The two offender chat logs with 323 victims were analysed and it was found that these offenders did follow a linear process of grooming as proposed by O’Connell (2003; 2004), however only superficially. Rather than clearly progressing through the stages, the offenders very quickly progressed to the final, sexual stage of grooming in order to satiate their sexual fantasies and preferences. Further, the offenders varied the language they used depending on whether the victim was male or female. When chatting with male victims, the words used were more friendly and engaging than when the victims were female, in which case the words were more sexual.
Chapter 9: Discussion—Offender Characteristics and Image Preference

This study considered the characteristics of online child sexual abuse offenders based on theories that have attempted to describe and explain contact and online offending behaviour. The methodology required accessing law enforcement (AFP) files held on 136 convicted online child sexual abuse offenders. Information obtained from the files included the OCSOQ completed by case officers, electronic interview transcripts, police reports, digital forensic analysis and pre-sentencing reports (e.g. psychological and psychiatric) completed on behalf of the offender. Information obtained from the files related to demographic information (e.g. gender, age, residential location, employment and education), background, offending, and psychological characteristics that may explain offender behaviour based on theories relating to online sexual offender behaviour. Consideration was also given to the characteristics that may influence offenders with a preference for the highest levels of images based on the COPINE typology of image preferences (see Table 7.1).

9.1 Clinical Explanations

Theories about child sexual abuse have generally been described based on three levels of sexual offending (Elliott & Beech, 2009; Ward & Beech, 2006; Ward & Siegert, 2002). These levels include Level 1 multi-factorial theories accounting for core features of sexual offence behaviour, the causes of these features, and how they manifest as actions (e.g. Ward & Siegert, 2002; Ward & Beech, 2006). Level 2 theories are single factor explanations based on phenomena that generate sexually abusive behaviour, such as victim empathy deficits or cognitive distortions (e.g. Marshall, 1989; Ward & Keenan, 1999). Level 3 theories are offence process theories that are descriptive models of the offence chain or relapse processes that outline behavioural, cognitive, motivational and contextual factors (e.g. Ward et al., 1995).

Ward and Siegert’s (2002) pathways model of child offending knitted the best of the Level 2 models with one Level 1 theory to explain the psychological causes of offending. The model developed was a flexible, independent etiological pathways approach that
interacted with psychological mechanisms that could lead to offending. Biological and cultural factors and learning and situational environments exert proximal and distal influences on development, which created pathways that relate to dynamic risk domains (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Sheldon, 2011). A core assumption of the Ward and Siegert (2002) model is that the vulnerability to commit an offence is linked to cultural, learning and psychological mechanisms. The model proposed that sexual offending involved the activation of all four causal mechanisms (deviant sexual preferences, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions, and intimacy and social skills deficits) to some degree. The current study, in considering the behaviour of online child abuse offenders, examined variables that may support the four causal factors in identifying differences in image level preference. For those whose offending may have been linked to deviant sexual preferences, variables that included the age and gender of the victim, and online and contact offending were considered to identify the activation of this causal mechanism. For those whose offending may have been linked to emotional dysregulation, variables that included substance abuse, psychological history and comments made during or after warrant execution were considered to identify the activation of this causal mechanism. For those whose offending may have been linked to cognitive distortions, variables including their response to the execution of the warrant, pro-criminal attitudes and callousness towards the victim were considered to identify the activation of this causal mechanism. Finally, for those offenders linked to intimacy and social skills deficits, variables including marital status, voluntary activities and contact with other offenders were considered to identify the activation of this causal mechanism.

To advance understanding of online sexual offending, a number of researchers (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Elliott et al., 2009; Laulik et al., 2006; Middleton et al., 2005; 2006; Sheldon, 2011) have suggested that the primary discrimination between Internet and contact offenders lies in Internet offenders having specific clinical problems in intimacy deficits, or emotional dysregulation and the presence of distorted attitudes about harm to children. Added to this is a lack of empathy for the child and this leads to harm to children by Internet offenders.

A model of PIU was developed by Quayle and Taylor (2003) to describe how the escalation in online behaviour—through distal factors such as poor socialisation, attachment problems or early sexualisation; and problems in psychological functioning such as cognitive problems, disinhibition, or loneliness—coupled with proximal Internet
factors such as ease of access to material online or perceived anonymity causes the escalation of PIU. This resulted in increasing Internet use, which also relieved the individual of having to deal with their daily problems and negative emotional states (Quayle et al., 2006; Taylor et al., 2001).

The current study found that online offenders did show some intimacy deficits: only 39% \((n = 53)\) were married or in a defacto relationship; the other 61% \((n = 83)\) either lived alone, or with other family members or non-related adults. This differs from the picture presented by Australian demographic statistics—that 61% of the population lives with a partner (www.abs.gov.au). Interestingly, four offenders had been diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome, consistent with their intimacy and social skills deficits. Additionally, with respect to voluntary activities involving children, only 15% \((n = 20)\) of offenders were involved with activities including coaching, cadets, community and church functions. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2010) figures on volunteering reveal that 36% of the general population participate in voluntary activities in sport, community activities, and religious and children groups. When compared to the general population, online child abuse offenders reveal isolated patterns of living, low levels of community participation and low levels of relationship intimacy or social support. These findings provide support for the mechanism of intimacy and social skills deficits as being a factor in online child sexual abuse offending.

A further finding in this study related to emotional dysregulation: 35% \((n = 48)\) of the offenders expressed feelings of shame about their behaviour and a desire to hide their activities from family members, and 10% \((n = 14)\) asked for help from the arresting officers with regard to their problem behaviour. A further 22% \((n = 30)\) of offenders claimed to have a psychological history that included predominantly anxiety and depression, although approximately half of these offenders were not diagnosed until after their arrest and so it is difficult to determine if the anxiety and depression existed prior to arrest, or was the result of being arrested. These results lend some support to the proposition that online child abuse offenders do have difficulties with emotional dysregulation and that offending helps them manage their emotional state, as suggested by Quayle et al. (2006). However, as the likelihood of a male experiencing an anxiety or mood disorder in their lifetime is respectively 20% or 12% (www.abs.gov.au), it is difficult to conclude that emotional dysregulation is a factor in online offending: the
proportion of online offenders diagnosed with an anxiety disorder was the same as that among males in the general population.

This study also found that 21% (n = 28) viewed all age groups from baby to 17-year-old victims, 40% (n = 54) of offenders held a preference for the victims in the images to be between 2 and 17 years of age, demonstrating that 61% of offenders held cross-over interests in child ages. Also, 24% (n = 32) preferred 13–17-year-old victims, demonstrating hebephilic interests, and 16% (n = 22) of offenders preferred 2–12-year-old victims in the images, which demonstrated paedophilic interests. No offenders in this study viewed only baby (up to two years of age) victims in the images located on their computers. The fact that all offenders accessed illegal images of victims less than 18 years of age suggests that they have distorted sexual scripts about sex with children. In addition, of the 136 offenders, 23 were reported to have a history of both online and contact offending. However, these figures are likely to be an underestimate of the true number of the offenders that had committed contact offending as they are based on convictions or, in the case of some offenders, the disclosure to police of a previously unknown history of contact offending.

Finally, when considering the mechanism of cognitive distortions causing offenders to view child abuse images it was found that 40 offenders attempted to minimise their offending to police and a further 17 tried to shift the blame for their offending to others—usually the Internet and the easy availability of the material. These findings suggest that a number of online child sexual abuse offenders attempt to justify and rationalise their behaviour and shift the responsibility for their behaviour on to others, or to downplay their responsibility. Offenders tried to rationalise their behaviour, minimise their offending, or shift the blame, as exemplified by:

All the sites are foreign to Australia … I just flick or browse is the technical term and I’ve never considered that I contribute in any way. It’s like when you read the paper and see a horrific accident or something like that. It’s there. Now in my case it’s illegal to see what I’ve seen but in other cases it’s not illegal but the access to it is just as free (Offender 036).

and the following comments, all attributed to Offender 117:

I am just an Internet user.

What I have done, and I have it in my mind that I haven’t contributed in any way to the misfortune that many of these people have undergone. I have accessed a free domain, ah websites. I’ve used public search engines and I’ve stumbled across stuff that is illegal and it seems that I have stored them on
occasions and that’s where I’m at now. I’m not trying to justify what I’ve done. I’m just trying to give you how I have seen it in my own mind.

I find the Internet a great wealth of information and unfortunately I’ve got into an area where … I like looking at. I persist a bit in looking at various porn sites and there have been links on there to all sorts of actions on porn and unfortunately I’ve come across child pornography.

For some reason there’s a download and then there’s no going back. I don’t go back. I just delete the whole thing. The whole file will just go bang and then you know I surf again sometime later.

I’m not providing a market cause I don’t pay for anything. I don’t communicate with anyone. It just happens to be free domain material that’s out there and I come across it.

A number of researchers have proposed that online child sexual abuse offenders are likely to have deficits in a number of areas of their life, including intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and distorted sexual scripts (Beech & Elliott, 2009; Quayle & Taylor, 2003; Ward & Beech, 2006; Ward & Siegert, 2002). This study provided support for these causal mechanisms where many of the offenders were found to have deficits in multiple areas that influenced their offending behaviour. For example, 61% of offenders demonstrated intimacy and social skills deficits through marital status, few had contact with other offenders suggesting poor social skills and few were involved with voluntary activities involving children; 22% demonstrated emotional dysregulation through psychological history and comments made to investigating officers, although few claimed substance abuse histories. Further, 28% of offenders used cognitive distortions through displaying callousness to the victim, and others minimised or blamed others for the offence and all offenders with distorted sexual scripts.

9.2 Increasing Deviance in Image Preference

In grading the deviant image preferences for offenders, Australian authorities relied on the COPINE scale for image escalation. This scale identified the level of graphic and abusive images found in the possession of online child abuse offenders (see Table 7.1).

Taylor (2001) and Taylor et al. (2001) reported that an individual’s interest in and engagement with child abuse images and the Internet changed over time, and this may result in changes in motivation for viewing child abuse images. Taylor and Quayle (2003)
suggested that for those that wished to access increasingly extreme material, the Internet provided the conduit for searches linking websites to more extreme websites.

The findings in this study supported those of Merdian et al. (2011) that COPINE Levels 7 and 8 should be transposed, which resulted in a more consistent and fluid ranking in the escalation of increasingly graphic and violent images. When this was done, several characteristics were found that were associated with the preference for higher level COPINE-rated images (Level 5–10). These characteristics were offender callousness, victim age, victim gender, victim access, format of material and volume of material accessed. This outcome is likely to be the result of small subject numbers in the cells when Levels 5–10 were analysed separately. In order to make the analysis more powerful, the six levels were collapsed into two groups of high (Levels 8–10) and low (Levels 5–7) image preference. Although this process led to larger numbers in each cell, effect size decreased and significance for most variables was not observed: only callousness and format of material were found to be significant.

9.3 Desensitisation and Habituation to Images

Several researchers have reported that online pornography viewers become desensitised to explicit material and less emotionally affected by the material, and that this has also been found for those with repeated exposure to violence in other contexts (Krafka et al., 1997). For some viewers of pornography, regular viewing resulted in escalation in the types of images they viewed (Emmers-Sommer & Burns, 2005). Several researchers (Jenkins, 2001, as cited in Russell & Purcell, 2005; Linz & Imrich, 2001; Russell & Purcell, 2005) reported that those that viewed child sexual abuse images became desensitised to the images, leading to increasingly deviant and severely abusive images. Middleton (2008) suggested that viewers found that the images normalised the fantasy and disinhibited them so that they sought more ‘intense’ images. This was supported by Webster et al. (2012), who reported that offenders became saturated by the images viewed, that there was an increase in denial about the harm caused to the child, that the images assisted fantasy, and that their status in the environment was increased due to the demand from others to access their material. As the current study does not include longitudinal data, and it is impossible to determine the order in which images were viewed, any conclusions drawn about offender behaviour over time would be speculative. However, there is reason to believe that the greater saturation of images found in the
higher COPINE levels suggest a pattern of progressive stimulation seeking by the offenders.

Quayle and Taylor (2001), Taylor (2002) and Wortley and Smallbone (2006) refer to escalation as involving progression from passive viewing to actively seeking out images; habituation over time leading to increasingly violent sexual images, or younger children; and describing a corrosive effect as offenders become attracted to increasingly severe images through a process of desensitisation. One offender (Offender 146) in this study, when describing his accessing and viewing child abuse material, made reference to feeling disgusted at the images he viewed initially, but that over time he became desensitised to the images. Another offender (Offender 136) referred to the thrill of searching for increasingly graphic images and this suggested the offender had become desensitised to the harm he was inflicting on his victims. There was a large spread of deviant images accessed by the offenders in the current study, with a significant number demonstrating callousness towards the victims. With respect to offenders that displayed callousness towards their victim, 72% held a preference for high-level images (Levels 8–10) whereas of offenders that did not display callousness, only 38% had a preference for high-level images. This demonstrates that offenders that displayed callousness towards their victims were associated with higher COPINE-rated images.

9.4 Offender Characteristics and Image Preference

Consideration was given to the offender characteristics that may influence an offender to prefer increasingly deviant images of child abuse online. The data used in this study is assumed to be a proxy for the psychological mechanisms postulated by the theories, with the assumption being that the variables are testing what they are meant to test. Offender characteristics may include demographic characteristics such as occupation, education and ethnicity; however they may also include criminal history, online behaviour and attitudes towards their behaviour and their victims. Some support for occupation as distinguishing between offenders’ preference for deviance was found; however little inference can be made about other demographic characteristics resulting in an interest in child sexual abuse. As discussed earlier in this chapter, online behaviour and attitudes (intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and distorted sexual scripts) were found to be associated with online offending behaviour.
Limited research has investigated the link between occupation and image preference, or progression in image preference. This study considered the relationship between occupation and image rating, or progression based on the COPINE scale, and identified that those assigned to the category of labourer were more likely to view increasingly graphic and abusive images, with half of the labourers in the study (15 of 30) progressing to accessing and viewing COPINE Level 10 images. Offenders from the health sector and engineering showed a trend for a preference for the highest level of deviant images, although this result was not significant. Arts offenders were found to have the lowest level of preference for high-level images and were more likely to be located in Levels 5–7. To test this finding, further analysis was conducted that collapsed the six image abuse levels considered in this study (COPINE Levels 5–10). Image preference was collapsed into two groups with Group 1 being offenders whose highest image preference was Level 5, 6 or 7, and Group 2, Level 8, 9 or 10. This provided greater power to the analysis, which showed that occupation was not a factor determining which offenders progressed to holding a preference for increasingly graphic and brutal images. It is likely that the initial analysis of the six separate image preference levels created a spurious statistical association between occupation and image preference.

Additional demographic characteristics were also considered for their role in image preference and increasingly deviant image preference. Education level, offender ethnicity and residential location had little influence on the level of image preferences held by offenders and did not result in a preference for increasingly deviant images. This supported previous research that did not find that some demographic explanations of offending against children were important. Previous studies reported that explanations for offending against children were either static or highly stable dynamic factors such as deviant sexual interest in children, lack of empathy for children and problematic relationships with adults (Hanson & Babchishin, 2009; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; 2000). With respect to the importance of problematic relationships with adults, or in Ward and Siegert’s (2002) language, intimacy deficits, it could be expected that marital status would be associated with increasingly deviant images; however this was not found in the current study. It is possible that intimacy deficits, as shown through marital status, are important to offending against children, but do not influence image preference.

The age of the offender online was also found to significantly influence the preference for increasingly deviant images; however cell numbers were low for some groups and so
the results should be treated with. Groups 5 (adult over 25 years), 6 (child and teenager), 7 (teenager and adult over 25 years), 8 (teenager and all adults), 9 (all adults over 18 years) and 11 (child and above) had preferences for Level 10 images. Groups 2 (child) and 4 (young adult under 25 years) had preferences for Level 6 images and Group 12 (all age groups) had a preference for Level 8 images. In other words, images where the offenders were children aged 2–12 or adults aged 18–24 years of age were more likely to be located in a low image preference group (Level 6). When the groups were collapsed for further analysis into high (Levels 8–10) and low (Levels 5–7), the age of the offender was not found to significantly influence image preference. It is possible that for the age of online offender may not influence their image preferences. The importance to the offender of the images may relate more to their activities with the child and not their age or the age difference between them and the victim.

Whether the offender had been subjected to physical or sexual abuse in their past was also considered based on offenders reporting any history of physical or sexual abuse. Almost 60% of such offenders, and 40% of those that did not claim an abuse history, held a preference for Level 10 images. However, when considering the top three levels (8–10) together, the difference between the two groups was reduced: 90% of those claiming an abuse history reached the top three levels, as did 80% of those with no such history. Thus, a history of physical and/or sexual abuse was not considered significant in determining deviant image preferences in this study.

When considering offenders’ social behaviour through contact with other offenders, involvement in voluntary activities and reduction in social behaviour to focus more on their online behaviour, it was found that these variables did not have a significant effect on an offender’s preference for increasingly deviant images. This suggests that an offender’s social behaviour had little association with their preference for increasingly graphic images of child abuse. As discussed earlier in this chapter, intimacy and social skills behaviour deficits, as proposed by Ward and Siegert (2002) to explain offending against children, has received some support in the current study, but intimacy and social skills behaviour did not appear to be associated with accessing increasingly deviant images in this study. As with marital status, it would have been expected that an offender’s social behaviour through contact with other offenders, involvement in voluntary activities and reduction in social behaviour to focus on online behaviour, would have been associated with image preference. There may have been problems with the measures used, as the
investigators that completed the questionnaire may have estimated or been unaware of the correct answer to a question. For example, the question in relation to voluntary activities may not have been a common question asked of the offenders and so when responding to the questionnaire the investigator may have responded ‘none’ if they were unaware of the offender’s involvement in voluntary activities. Additionally, responses to the question relating to reduction in social behaviour over time, requiring a yes or no answer, may have also required a guess as to whether the offender had reduced their social behaviour or not.

With respect to the attitude of offenders towards their victims, callousness and pro-criminal attitudes were the variables selected for the current study. Offenders’ pro-criminal attitudes (joined an online group of like-minded individuals, had criminal associates or peers that facilitated access to abuse images) were not found to be influential in image preference. However, callousness was found to influence the image preference of offenders. Offenders that were not callous towards their victims had a preference for Level 8 images, whereas those that were callous had a preference for increasingly deviant images, with 80% of callous offenders preferring Level 8–10 images. When image level preferences were collapsed into two groups (Levels 5–7 and Levels 8–10), it was found that callousness was related to image level.

Offenders that demonstrated callousness or lack of emotion about the harm to victims of child sexual abuse create parallels with the notion of cognitive distortions. Cognitive distortions may amplify callousness in the offender as they are used to minimise the culpability of the offender in their behaviour and in dehumanisation of the victim. Offenders demonstrated cognitive distortions through narratives relating to their offending behaviour: for example, by claiming they did not harm any child themselves. Therefore, it may be that the types of distortion used were relevant to the callousness in the offender’s behaviour. Most offenders in the current study attempted to externalise blame for their offending onto either the victim, or more generally onto the computer, such as accidental downloading or availability. Ward and Siegert (2002) describe cognitive distortions as maladaptive beliefs and attitudes about themselves, the victim and the world, and these maladaptive thinking styles can be used to rationalise, justify, minimise and excuse the offending behaviour. Cognitive distortions in sex offenders allow them to cognitively adapt to explain their behaviour and this can be adopted either after the commission of the offence or prior to the offence (Abel et al., 1989). Taylor and
Quayle (2003) and Howitt (1995) state that cognitive distortions are necessary for those with a sexual interest in children to provide an interpretive framework for the victims and motives behind the offending. In the current study, a number of offenders provided justifications for their behaviour or attempted to minimise their offending such as:

- Offender 044 was found in possession of a number of research papers justifying child sexual abuse.
- Offender 023 accessed websites justifying child sex as necessary for healthy sexual development in children.
- Offender 125 claimed to be doing research into female paedophiles and their activities as he intended to use the information in a literary work—either a book or stage play.
- A number of offenders described the accessing or distribution as accidental (Offender 024); experimentation, just like smoking marijuana (Offender 031); needing money for a sick parent (Offender 039); not hurting anyone, it was his right and did not think it was an offence (Offender 048); images are freely available and so there is no harm in accessing, claimed an addiction and thrill seeking (Offender 136); ‘I don’t do anything really nasty or hurt or offend against anyone’ (Offender 43); and the behaviour is ‘harmless and victimless since the material was out there’ (Offender 136).

The above examples suggest that a number of offenders may have deliberately or inadvertently attempted to rationalise, justify and/or minimise their behaviour that contributed to the apparent callousness they developed in dealing with their victims. A number of researchers (e.g. Blumenthal et al., 1999; Gudjonsson, 1990) reported that many sex offenders will externalise blame and attempt to blame the victim as responsible for the offending, or, in the case of online offenders blame the Internet for their behaviour (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b). This could further be considered as consistent with research showing that offenders will disengage moral self-sanctions to commit offences with little or no self-censure (Bandura, 1999; McAlister et al., 2006; Osofsky et al., 2005; White et al., 2009). As Webster et al. (2012) reported, many offenders deny harm to the child and hold offence-supportive beliefs to justify their behaviour. Denying harm and holding offence-supportive beliefs may be a protective factor for offenders in order to mitigate their behaviour, and to what Ward (2000; 2006) referred to as a criminogenic need related to antisocial thinking patterns through dysfunctional beliefs about sexual contact between adults and children, representing what he referred to as implicit theories to justify the behaviour.
The offenders’ online behaviour was also considered in relation to increasingly deviant image preferences. Variables included online username, online and contact offending, increased sorting and cataloguing, focus on image series, time online, return to images and increase in other images as options for increasing image preference. It was found that none of these variables influenced increasingly deviant image levels. The lack of significance with respect to the online and contact offending group is supportive of the suggestions of Carr (2012) and Elliott et al. (2012), that there is little empirical research to support an association between online and contact offending. Quayle and Taylor (2002b) also suggested that the lack of progress to contact offending is that online offenders utilise the images as a substitute for contact offending. Additionally, the lack of association may relate to the small number of offenders with convictions for both online and contact offending, or that few admit to contact offending unless caught, producing an underestimate of the number of offenders that progress to contact offending, as suggested by Carr (2004).

Little empirical research has been conducted into the behaviour of offenders while online (increased sorting and cataloguing, focus on image series and return to images) and so the findings in the current study—that these factors have little influence in image preference—are novel. The low number of offenders in the current study that were found to focus on a series of images, had increased their sorting and cataloguing or returned to images may suggest that these factors contribute little to an increase in deviant image preferences.

9.5 Victim Characteristics and Image Preference

Consideration was given to victim characteristics that may influence an offender to prefer increasingly deviant images of child abuse online. With respect to victim age, it was found that offenders that viewed images involving all age ranges held a preference for higher deviance in their images: 90% of such offenders held a preference for Level 8–10 images. The current study found that 40% ($n = 54$) of offenders had a preference for victims between 2 and 17 years of age, and a further 20% ($n = 28$) viewed all age groups. This finding appears inconsistent with the grouping of offenders into categories such as paedophile (sexually attracted to pre-pubescent children, generally less than 13 years of age) and hebephile (sexually attracted to children older than 13 years of age). It would
have been expected that offenders with a preference for paedophilic images would have exhibited more deviancy than those that viewed images across the entire span of childhood. It is possible that offenders that sample images across all age ranges and across deviance levels are higher in sensation seeking, whereas those with a preference for a particular age range do not exhibit more deviancy than the omnivorous offenders. Of course, it also must be considered that the investigators determining age of the victim are making a subjective judgment on age, as generally the identity of the victim is unknown.

The gender of the victim was also found to influence the image level preference for offenders. Offenders with a preference for images involving male and female victims also had a preference for Level 10 images. In the current study, 32% \( (n = 44) \) of offenders preferred female images only, 23% \( (n = 31) \) preferred male images only and 45% \( (n = 61) \) had images with both male and female victims. This finding was inconsistent with those of Beech (1998), who reported that contact offenders with a higher deviancy were more likely to have offended against boys and to have significantly more victims. In the current study, it is impossible to determine if offenders that viewed images involving both male and female victims had a preference for one gender, but the images consisted of both genders and so they viewed images with both genders. Danet (1998) suggested that the anonymity and playfulness of the Internet provides a powerful disinhibiting effect on behaviour. This may explain why offenders are indiscriminate in their behaviour due to their becoming increasingly disinhibited and able to seek out increasingly deviant material. Therefore, the outcomes of the current study may suggest that online offenders are different in a number of characteristics to contact offenders. The differences between online and contact offenders appear to lie in demographic characteristics such as marital status (online offenders displaying intimacy deficits through marital status do not appear to exhibit increasing deviance in image preferences); voluntary activities (contact offenders are more likely than online offenders to be involved); victim age range (online offenders that prefer to sample across age ranges may be more sensation seeking than those with a preference for paedophilic or hebephilic victims); and victim gender (contact offenders with higher deviancy are more likely to prefer male victims).

This study did find a significant influence for victims that were Asian or all ethnic groups; however there were only two subjects in each group and so this result needs to be interpreted with caution. The majority of victims were Caucasian, as were the majority of offenders. According to the Office of the Attorney General, State of California
most sexual assaults against children are committed by someone of the same ethnicity as the victim. The current finding that online offenders had a preference for offending within their own ethnic group supports this trend.

Access to victims through online viewing only, online, mail and/or telephone contact with a child, or face-to-face contact was predicted to have an association with image preferences. It was expected that those offenders that used all forms of access to victims were more likely to hold more deviant image preferences. Access to victims had a significant influence in deviant image preference as offenders with a preference for increasingly deviant images accessed images through all access opportunities. However, again, there were limited numbers of subjects in the cells and so results must be taken with caution. When the data were collapsed into high- and low-level image groups, the significance of the association was lost and access to victims was not associated with increasingly deviant image preferences.

9.6 Material and Image Preference

Consideration was given to the material characteristics that may influence an offender to prefer increasingly deviant images of child abuse online. Variables examined for their influence on the child abuse material included format of material and volume of material.

The format of the material was found to significantly influence image preference: offenders with a preference for images, video, cartoons and written stories also had a preference for Level 10 images. All of these variables related to the effect of visual exposure to the images on increasingly deviant image preference. Audio and virtual images (eg. animated) were not considered influential in an offender’s preference for increasingly deviant images. This suggests that the use of sound did not have an association with image preference, and virtual images, although visual, did not influence an offender to higher image levels. When the image levels were collapsed into the low- and high-level image groups, it was confirmed that format of material influenced image level. Among offenders that viewed images only, 63% \(n = 10\) remained at the lower image level preference. However, of the 60 offenders that viewed both images and video, 82% preferred the highest level of image. Of those that viewed images and video and read or wrote stories, 89% \(n = 17\) held a preference for the highest level of images, and all offenders that viewed images and read stories held a preference for the highest level of
images (although note that there were only four offenders in this group). This suggests that offenders that viewed images only were unlikely to progress to the highest level of image preference. However, it is further suggested that as other formats of material are accessed by the offenders, their preference for graphic and explicit material increases.

The offenders in the current study that accessed the more deviant images were those that preferred all age groups of victims, did not hold a preference for one gender over the other and used all methods to access the material. These findings are inconsistent with the findings for contact offenders, among which it would be expected that those that preferred paedophilic age for the victims and male-only victims would prefer more deviant images. It may be that offenders that access all age, gender and material groups are more sensation seeking and are not as discriminating as those with specific preferences to satisfy their needs. The availability, accessibility and perceived anonymity of the Internet may encourage those high in sensation seeking to be indiscriminate in their seeking behaviour.

9.7 COPINE Scale, Deviance in Victim Age, Victim Gender and Format of Material

A *post hoc* analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between the above variables (all ages, all gender and multiple image types) and time online or deviancy, as assessed by the highest COPINE level. The more deviant images, as identified through the COPINE scale, are associated with offenders that preferred all genders, all ages and multiple formats for accessing material. Although it might have been expected that those that spend longer time online might simply access more material indiscriminately and hence have multiple ages and both genders in their collections, this was not identified in the current study. Rather it is deviance as assessed by COPINE level—not time online—that dictates choice of gender, age of victim and format of material accessed.

9.8 Summary

Clinical explanations for online child abuse offending, such as Ward and Siegert’s (2002) Level 1 theory to explain the psychological causes of offending were considered within the current study. There was some support for the model where mechanisms including intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and deviant sexual preferences influenced the behaviour of the online offender. A number of
factors were considered that may affect the image level preference of online child abuse offenders. When these factors were analysed in the current study it was found that occupation, callousness, victim age, victim gender, victim access and format of material were associated with deviant preference for increasingly graphic and explicit child abuse material based on the COPINE rating of Levels 5–10. As a number of cells were found to have few subject numbers and analytic power was therefore compromised, the levels were collapsed into high (Levels 8–10) and low (Levels 5–7) image preference. When this was done, the analysis identified that callousness and format of material were found to have an association with preference for higher image levels. This resulted in the finding that offenders that held callous perceptions of their victims had a preference for high-level images. A second significant result was that offenders that viewed only images were more likely to remain at lower levels of image preference, but as additional stimuli were added (video and then reading or writing stories), the offenders progressed to more extreme and explicit material. Post hoc analysis revealed that deviance as assessed by the COPINE scale appears to dictate the offender’s choice of age of victim, gender of victim and format of the material.
Chapter 10: Discussion—Grooming of Children Online

10.1 Grooming of Children for Sexual Purposes

Webster and colleagues (2010, 2012) reported that although there has been an increase in the number of offenders grooming children online, very little is known about online groomers and the manner in which they select and engage with victims. Researchers have reported that the grooming, or seduction, process involves the offender having access to a child, time to invest in the process and interpersonal skills. This process may involve a combination of affection, attention, kindness and gifts in order to gain the child’s cooperation and compliance (Davidson & Gottschalk, 2010; Gottschalk, 2011a; O’Connell, 2003; Quayle & Taylor, 2003; Seto, 2012; Webster et al., 2010; 2012). Lanning (2010) further reported that the offender needed to gather information about the child’s interests and vulnerabilities and to satisfy their physical and emotional needs, in order to lower the child’s inhibitions and gain control. However, this process can take considerable periods of time in order for the offender to ensure they are in control of the child and that the child will not disclose their activities to parents, guardians or others. In the online world, however, many offenders believe that they are anonymous and thus can dispense with a number of the stages, with the intention of progressing to sexual conversations much sooner than a contact offender is likely to progress (Berson, 2003; CEOP, 2013; Egan et al., 2011; Gottschalk, 2011a; McAlinden, 2013; Tomak et al., 2009).

10.2 Online Grooming of Children for Sexual Purposes

It has been suggested that for some, the viewing of child abuse material is a maladaptive strategy to avoid contact offending against children, that the images are used for masturbation purposes and that few offenders progress to contact offending (Ward & Hudson, 1998). The current study acknowledges that two subjects may not be representative of the population of those who groom children online, however as these two offenders had 323 online victims it did provide an insight into how some online offenders interacted with their victims. It was noted that both offenders did arrange meetings with several victims, but did not actually meet with them. Although it is
acknowledged that the sample only consisted of two offenders and any conclusions drawn need to be considered with caution. Failure to meet with the victim might have resulted from concerns about being apprehended or that the offender was apprehended prior to meeting with the victim. Alternatively, discussing a meeting may simply have been a ploy used by the offender to have the victim believe that they were special so that they would continue to engage in online sexual conversations, or the proposed meeting may have been part of the fantasy aspect for the offender.

10.3 Online Grooming Process

The current study reviewed the online grooming of two offenders that participated in online conversations with 323 victims. A total of 1,177 conversations were held with the 323 victims, with a mean of 3.65 and a range of 1–17 conversations per victim. For victims that were contacted on more than one occasion, the time to a second or subsequent conversation ranged from one day to ten months.

10.4 Friendship Forming

Much has been written about the grooming process for contact offenders, and how there are some similarities with online offenders. It has been reported that offenders online, as with contact offenders, conduct a slow process to engage with the young person, build rapport and commence a relationship before progressing to more risky behaviour such as sexual chat. Other offenders are known to quickly progress to sexual discussion with little time spent on building rapport with the child, and this has been attributed to the large number of children online, such that many offenders do not waste time building a relationship if it is not going to progress to the sexual stage: if a child does not move quickly enough to sexual discussion, the offender can move on to other targets (Davidson et al., 2011; Gottschalk, 2011a). Both offenders in this study very quickly progressed to sexual discussion and there were occasions when the young person wanted assurances that what they were discussing was acceptable, but the offender continued to discuss sexual matters and ignored such questions. This behaviour echoes Ward and Hudson’s (1998) approach-explicit or approach-automatic explanations for offending. The behaviour was very much opportunistic in that whoever was online at any given time was targeted for engagement. This was also found to be the case by Webster et al. (2010; 2012) and Gottschalk (2011a), who reported that offenders that were opportunistic in their
approach to children online were less subtle and sophisticated, made little effort to hide their intentions and rapidly progressed to sexual conversations.

The current study found that on all occasions the offenders stated they were in their forties and had a great deal of experience as an adult with a child. The offenders used their age as a means to engage with young persons; for example, using the opening line of ‘do you like older men?’. They then used the experience that comes with age to portray themselves as very experienced with younger persons and able to provide a pleasurable sexual experience for the child, guiding them through sexual discussion and fantasies. This was also reported in the study by Williams et al. (2013), but is unlike the finding of O’Connell (2003) that groomers presented themselves as a similar age, or younger to the victim. As Williams et al. (2013) reported, offenders highlighted the age barrier and presented the child as a child. Offenders in the current study may have been enacting their fantasy to be the older, experienced mentor for a young and sexually immature victim.

10.5 Relationship Forming

Chat rooms are the most frequently used avenue to identify and meet young people (Malesky, 2007) and offenders often use an identified age in the username of the victim to target those that may fit within the offender’s preferred age range. Many of the victims in this study had a username that indicated their age, with many being in the 12–14-year age range. Attempts to reduce the child’s inhibitions to sexual discussion often proceeded via offenders discussing how many other young people they had engaged with sexually, and the positive experience the child had from that opportunity. This had the aim of reducing the victim’s inhibitions and the offender was able to quickly progress to sexual discussions with the victim. These offenders were opportunistic offenders that approached young persons online and quickly progressed to sexual content. Of the 1,177 conversations, 1,077 were repeat conversations and the other 100 represented single conversations with the victim. For 18 of these 100 victims, the offender did try to re-contact, but no conversation ensued. The reason for this is unknown, but may have been due to the victim not being available online to chat, or chose not to respond to the offender’s attempts to converse.

Dombrowski et al. (2007), when referring to the Internet as a medium to groom children, suggested that offenders portray themselves as a young person to disinhibit and encourage
the victim to engage with them, but they also refer to the intention of the dialogue to play out deviant sexual fantasies. In the current study it was apparent the intention of the offenders was not to portray themselves as a young person engaging with other young persons, but clearly was to engage, as quickly as possible, in sexual discussions with the victim. The offenders clearly stated their age as being in their forties and focused on their experience as an adult with a child. The offenders used their age as a means to engage with young persons, for example by using the opening line ‘do you like older men?’.

The Dombrowski et al. (2007) research suggests that there are multiple motivations for offenders to groom children online, and multiple manners in which they groom. Some offenders groom online solely to engage in a sexual discussion with the child, some may participate in cybersex, others may groom with the specific intention of arranging a meeting for contact offending, and others may be satisfied with interaction with the child. It was apparent that the offenders in this study could be categorised in two of the groups as they enjoyed engaging with children online with no apparent intention to meet, and were interested in cybersex. Although the offenders did discuss with some victims the possibility of meeting, in fact no meetings occurred and it is impossible to determine if there was any real intention to meet the young person as only one of the young persons resided in the same city as the offender, with the others residing in other countries.

It has also been reported that some offenders believe they are in contact with an adult but as their intention is role or age play for fantasy development they do not care that the ‘victim’ is a willing accomplice (Dombrowski et al., 2007). It was found in the current research that both offenders were knowingly in contact on occasion with adults portraying themselves as children for the purposes of sexual discussion and that both offender and ‘victim’ gained satisfaction from the interaction. However, not all victims were adults and it is also important to acknowledge that in the eyes of the law there is no difference to an offender grooming a child online, and engaging in sexual fantasy play with an adult portraying themselves as a child.

The current study showed that the offenders did attempt friendship and relationship forming, but this very quickly progressed to sexual discussions, and at times the friendship forming was little more than a question such as ‘Hi, how are you?’, which then progressed to ‘do you like older men?’ Attempts to form a friendship or relationship with the victim were very limited. This finding is in contrast with that of Gupta, Kumaraguru
and Sureka (2012) who reported that relationship forming was the most prominent stage in the grooming process; far more dominant than the sexual stage.

10.6 Risk Assessment

In the current study, the risk assessment strategy was found to have been used in relation to only one victim, suggesting that these offenders had little interest in ensuring they were not identified, possibly because they believed that being online provided them anonymity. The finding that all victim conversations progressed to sexual content supported the difference between the conclusions of O’Connell (2003)—who reported online groomers following a similar pattern to contact offender grooming processes—and Davidson et al. (2011), Davidson and Gottschalk (2010) and Whittle et al. (2013), who reported that offenders rarely followed such a process, and were swift in their approach to youth regarding the possibility of sex whereby highly sexualised conversations between the offender and young person could commence within two minutes. The current study therefore supported findings that some online offenders spend little time in the early (friendship and relationship forming and exclusivity) O’Connell (2003) stages of grooming and rapidly progress to sexual content (Davidson et al., 2011; Davidson & Gottschalk, 2010; Williams et al., 2013; Whittle et al., 2013).

10.7 Exclusivity

In the current study, the offenders attempted to develop an exclusive relationship with only two of the 323 victims. One of these two victims was the male victim with whom one offender used the term ‘fist’ or ‘fisting’ the most (61 occasions), and arranged to meet (although the meet did not occur). Both offenders progressed rapidly to sexual discussions and exclusivity was not a theme in which they were interested.

10.8 Sexual Stage

Quayle and Taylor (2003) refer to the online process being dynamic rather than static and that offenders move along a continuum that includes exploration of their online persona. In the current research, it was found that the offenders did engage in changing persona, which was linked to sexual fantasy. On occasion the offenders portrayed themselves as an uncle abusing a niece, a master abusing a servant, father abusing his daughter, and
sadomasochism activities. This allowed them to practice different personas and engage with fantasies that supported their sexual interests.

Tomak et al. (2009) suggested that online activity allows individuals and groups to forge networks, exchange images and instruct on abuse techniques. This research identified that not only do offenders exchange images and instructions online, but they also may engage in sexual fantasies about abusing their own or each other’s children. Some offenders obtain great satisfaction from discussing the abuse of their own children by another while they observe. The offenders in the current study engaged with other parents with whom they discussed the abuse they would enjoy inflicting on each other’s children. It was difficult to determine in the current study how much of the discussion about abusing each other’s children represented fantasy and how much was real. Both offenders acknowledged some inappropriate contact with their own children, but this had not progressed to sexual abuse, as discussed with the victims. This suggests that the offenders did view their own children as sexual but had not progressed to contact offending with them. It is possible the offenders gained additional excitement from discussing the abuse of their own children by another person, and the abuse they would inflict on their online contact children, with no intention to follow through with a meeting to carry out the abuse. This suggests a distinction between online grooming offenders. There may be a group that enjoys grooming online for the purpose of sexual satiation, and for some this may lead to meeting the victim to progress to contact offending. A second group may follow a similar path to grooming online, but the purpose of this is to satisfy sexual fantasies without any intention of meeting the victim or progressing to contact offending. It is likely these two offenders were satisfied with sexual fantasy conversations with either a young person as the victim, or with an adult role playing as a child, and as such they did not follow the process of grooming as outlined in O’Connell’s (2003) model.

10.9 Linear Progression in Grooming Online

The increasing use of technology by young people to communicate with others, whether young persons like themselves or adults with the intention of forming sexual relationships, has made access to children much easier and quicker. For contact offenders there is the very real possibility that they will be identified and arrested for abusing a child. However, offenders that access children online believe they have anonymity, which results in their communicating with children in a sexual manner more quickly than would
a contact offender. In the current study, both offenders very quickly progressed to conversations with sexual content and there was no linear progression through the process of grooming that had been reported for contact offenders, or in the research conducted by O’Connell (2003).

The current study had similarities to the recent study of Williams, Elliott and Beech (2013), in which the researchers qualitatively analysed eight transcripts using thematic analysis. The eight offenders were males that believed the victims were females aged 12–14 years; however, they were in fact adults from the Perverted Justice Foundation presenting as young females in chat rooms. They reported that O’Connell references seven stages of grooming including 1) friendship forming, 2) relationship forming, 3) risk assessment, 4) exclusivity, 5) sexual stage, 6) fantasy re-enactment and 7) damage limitation, and that three themes were apparent within the first hour of chat involving their subjects:

- rapport building, which was a combination of the friendship and relationship forming referred to by O’Connell (2003), as it was difficult to separate the two stages
- sexual content, which related to the introduction of sexual content into the conversation and the maintenance and escalation of sexual conversation. The maintenance and escalation of sexual content was a key component for the offender for their sexual gratification. This also included fantasy re-enactment, and sexual themes were repeatedly introduced over a short duration: for example, one offender stated ‘Proper uniform wearing, or professor/student relations. What other lessons would you like to have?’ It was also reported that all offenders, at some point and to varying degrees, used forceful techniques to successfully make a child participate in the sexual conversation, with little interest shown to the child, and
- assessment, which parallels O’Connell’s (2003) risk assessment stage, but further develops this stage to include assessing the child (trust, vulnerability and receptiveness) and the environment (opportunity and information) (Williams et al., 2013).

Also of interest in the current study was that the offenders at times were aware they were conversing with other adults role playing as a child. These conversations were removed from the study, leaving only victims that were believed by the offenders to be children, with whom conversations related to the offender conversing with them as a child. For conversations where the ‘victim’ identified themselves as an adult, the early part of the
conversation revolved around what age they liked to play and what age the offender wanted them to portray themselves. In these cases the ‘victim’ enjoyed playing a four- to eight-year-old child. In other chat logs, the ‘victim’ either did not state their age or stated they were between 12 and 16 years of age.

The current study also found that there were 323 victims that the offenders were able to progress to sexual conversations, but it is unknown how many children refused to converse with them once they quickly progressed to sexual content. This supported the findings of Brown (2001), CEOP (2009), Gottschalk (2001) and Webster et al. (2012, 2010) that many online offenders attempt to groom multiple victims at any one time, and if one victim withdraws from them there are many other victims still being groomed.

The current study had further similarities to the Williams et al. (2013) study in that neither study found themes occurring in any specific order or sequence. This supported the views of Gillespie (2002, as cited in Williams et al., 2013) that the grooming process is transient and it is difficult to locate the start and end points of the process. This also contrasted with O’Connell’s (2003) process, which was described as systematic and sequential.

Not all Internet communication with a child is about relationship formation and building trust. The contact with a child online can be at times very brutal (Gottschalk, 2011a; Martellozzo, 2011). Both offenders in the current study were found to be brutal in their conversations with some children, disregarding the child’s concerns as to whether it was okay to talk about sex, and introducing sexual discussion about hurting the child during sex, causing injury to the child and forcing the child to have sex against their will. This brutal conversation form identified that these offenders had little interest in building a relationship with the young person, had little concern about what they were saying to the victim, and that their intentions were purely to satiate their own needs while online. The offenders showed little interest in meeting their victim or forming an ongoing, exclusive relationship and it is likely these offenders were fantasy offenders satisfying their needs at the time through opportunistic online conversations.

Webster et al. (2012) reported that online groomers fell into one of three groups:

- **Intimacy seeking or distorted attachment** offenders held beliefs that contact with a young person was part of a ‘relationship’. They did not have contact with other
offenders and spent considerable time online chatting before going on to meet the young person.

- **Adaptable online** groomers held supportive beliefs about their own needs and that young people were mature and capable of making decisions for themselves. They had little contact with other offenders and were adept at a grooming style that was adaptable, and contact could be either fast or slow depending on the young person’s reactions.

- **Hyper-sexualised** men that held extensive collections of child sexual abuse and had significant online contact with other sex offenders or offender groups. Contact with young people was highly sexualised and escalated very quickly. This group of offenders had little interest in seduction, advancing the relationship or in discussions with the young person. They focused on their immediate needs and applied abusive tactics such as manipulation, exploitation, deception and devious behaviour (Gottschalk, 2011a; Martellozzo, 2011).

The current study found that the two offenders could be classified as hyper-sexualised offenders as neither spent a lengthy period of time online with any one young person and usually they progressed to chatting about sexual topics within two minutes. The content of the chat logs was highly sexualised and this was evident in the language used by the offenders, who quickly commenced discussions with sexual content, although the words used with male victims was more engaging and friendly (e.g. thanks and fine) than those used with female victims (e.g. slut and anal). Unlike offenders in some other studies, these offenders did not have the intention of forming a friendship, or forging an ongoing relationship leading to the potential for a meeting, and approached many young persons online—conversing online with a victim only long enough for sexual gratification. Their intention was purely to progress to the sexual stage with conversations driven by their desire for sexual fantasy and presumably satiation.

**10.10 Summary**

Although there were only two offenders in the current study that groomed children online, it was strongly apparent that neither offender followed a linear path to progress from initial contact to sexual conversation. Both offenders spent little time in the friendship or relationship forming, risk assessment, or exclusivity stages. Both progressed very quickly to sexual discussion with the victim and had multiple sexual conversations with 223 of
the 323 victims. This finding was in contrast to that of O’Connell (2003) that offenders progressed through linear stages in the grooming process. The current results had more similarities with the research of Williams et al. (2013), which identified that no particular themes occurred in any specific order or sequence. This also accorded with the findings of Webster et al. (2012): offenders were identified as hyper-sexualised individuals focusing on their own needs with little interest in the needs or concerns of their victims.
Chapter 11: Conclusions, Implications of Research and Recommendations

11.1 Overview

This chapter summarises the key findings from the current study of online child abuse offenders regarding their characteristics, similarities to contact offenders and online grooming behaviour. The chapter will then consider the limitations of the study and how these may have influenced the outcomes. Finally, recommendations will be considered from the findings and for future research in the field.

11.2 Research Questions

The effect of the Internet on problematic behaviour and child abuse has become an important area of study in recent years. Although the Internet has facilitated improved communication and interaction through immediate access at any time of the day or night every day of the year, this has also resulted in the improved ability of criminals to progress their criminal activity. The global nature of the Internet has resulted in the facilitation of fraudulent behaviour, illegal financial transactions, identity theft, access to child abuse material and direct access to communicating with children for the purpose of grooming children for abuse.

To date, child sexual abuse images have been considered from two distinct perspectives: the law enforcement perspective that considers the legal definition of the behaviour, and the psychological perspective that attempts to understand why the images are produced and/or accessed by some individuals. The scale of the problem from the law enforcement perspective, and the perception that the problem has increased as a result of the increasing access to and use of the Internet, has resulted in the need to study offending behaviour in order to understand and manage it, and identify those at risk of offending against children.
11.2.1 Escalation of Child Sexual Abuse Image Preferences

Research on the characteristics that result in an individual offending against children has focused on the similarities that may present between contact offenders and those that offend against children online. To date, little empirical research has been conducted that considers the increasing preference in deviant images of child sexual abuse. Some research has considered habituation to images over time that may result in a progression to increasingly graphic sexual images and/or younger children.

11.2.2 The Progression to Online Grooming of Children and Online Behaviour

There have been competing theories about the role of online abuse material in the offending of contact child abusers. It has been proposed that online offending is a maladaptive strategy to stop contact offending, that the images are used as part of the grooming behaviour and/or that the online behaviour is part of the fantasy for offenders.

11.3 Key Findings of the Research

11.3.1 Escalation of Child Sexual Abuse Image Preferences

As discussed in Chapter 2, theories of child sexual abuse are generally described as being either Level 1 multi-factorial theories, which consider the core features of sexual offence behaviour, the causes of the features and how they manifest into offending (e.g. Ward & Siegert, 2002), Level 2 single factor theories to explain single phenomena that generate sexually abusive behaviour such as intimacy deficits (e.g. Marshall, 1989), or Level 3 offence process theories—descriptive models of the offence chain that outline behavioural, cognitive, motivational and contextual factors (e.g. Ward et al., 1995). As suggested by Level 1 theories some offenders do display intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and distorted sexual scripts leading to offending online, with some offenders displaying more than one deficit in their offending behaviour. This suggests that online child sexual abuse offenders do have a number of similarities in characteristics and psychological behaviour with contact child sexual abuse offenders.
A number of researchers have reported that online pornographers become desensitised to explicit material and over time require increasingly graphic and explicit material to satisfy their needs (Rice-Hughes, 2001, as cited in Harris & Bezuidenhout, 2010; Zillman & Bryant, 1984; 1988). This explanation for pornographers has been extended to explain the behaviour of online child sexual abuse offenders, who also require increasingly explicit child abuse material to satisfy their needs (Quayle & Taylor, 2002b; Taylor, 2002; Wortley & Smallbone, 2006). The offenders become desensitised to the harm to the victim, and the images become normalised for them. The COPINE scale was developed for demonstrating the increase in graphic images. The viewing of images, and habituation to those images, is a means by which the offender can manage their intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation and increasingly deviant scripts.

Meridian et al. (2011) reported in their study of New Zealand Corrections psychologists and postgraduate psychology students that COPINE Level 7 (explicit sexual activity) ranked higher than Level 8 (assault), so they reversed the two levels. This outcome was also noted in the current study and thus Levels 7 and 8 were transposed. As discussed in Chapters 7 and 9, offenders with a preference for higher levels of graphic imagery of sexual abuse of children (as based on the COPINE scale Levels 5–10) were callous towards their victims and indiscriminate with respect to victim age and gender, access to victims online, volume of material and format of material accessed. As the six levels were collapsed into high (Levels 8–10) and low (5–7), the characteristics of callousness and format of material were the most powerful characteristics associated with increasing deviancy in images.

Offenders that reported a global interest in child abuse material as related to deviancy based on the COPINE scale were also those with a preference for all ages and genders for their victims and that accessed all formats of material.

11.3.2 The Progression to Online Grooming of Children and Online Behaviour

As discussed in Chapter 4, a proportion of online child sexual abuse offenders are also contact offenders. Online activity provides the opportunity for the offender to communicate with and groom a child for sexual purposes. Offenders may groom children online with the express purpose of meeting with the child for sexual contact, for cybersex and masturbation purposes, or to fulfil their fantasy. For offenders with the intention of
forming a relationship with the child, the online behaviour is likely to go through several stages including friendship and relationship forming, risk assessment of being caught, building an exclusive relationship and finally the sexual stage (Davidson & Gottschalk, 2010; Gottschalk, 2011a; O’Connell, 2003). For other offenders whose intention is for masturbation and fantasy development, these stages are less likely to be observed.

11.4 Implications of the Findings and Contributions to the Literature

The current study provided support for theories about the similarities between online and contact offenders in that some online offenders displayed intimacy and social skills deficits, emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortions and distorted sexual scripts, and some displayed multiple deficits in their offending against children. Therefore, the outcomes of the current study may provide greater understanding of the behaviour of online offenders and assist in the future development of treatment options, the management of offenders and knowledge by law enforcement to investigate the criminal behaviour.

The current study also found that offenders with a preference for high levels of graphic imagery were more callous towards their victims, and indiscriminate in relation to gender, age of victim, volume of material and format of material accessed. The most powerful characteristics for increasing deviancy in images were found in offenders with a global interest in child abuse material that were indiscriminate when considering age and gender of victim and that accessed all formats of material. This outcome suggested that some online offenders may be different to contact offenders, that the use of the Internet allowed them to access all groups of victims and that accessing was through multiple formats of material.

Contact offenders may have a diverse range of motivations for their offending behaviour, but have a final common goal: the abuse of a child. Online offenders also have diverse motivations, and not all will progress to actually grooming children for the purpose of sexual gratification. There is no specific trajectory from viewing child abuse material to contact offending. Some offenders may not progress to contact offending and this may be due to a number of reasons such as their arrest prior to the contact offence for grooming offences, lack of opportunity to offend against a child, or for some other reason they do not contact offend. However, online offenders appear to vary in their motivations for
grooming behaviour; in the current study, only two online offenders went on to commit contact offences. Some online offenders groom victims online for the express purpose of meeting with them and committing contact offending, some groom victims online for cybersex and masturbation purposes and others groom online for fantasy development and without the intention of meeting with the victim. The outcomes of the current study tentatively suggest an important difference between contact and online offenders: contact offenders have a single motivation, whereas online offenders appear to have multiple motivations to offend against children, and this motivation may influence their online grooming behaviour. Offenders that are motivated to offend online for fantasy development and satisfaction are more likely to quickly progress through stages of grooming to the final sexual stage, whereby they do not follow a linear process for their grooming behaviour as the intention is to satisfy their fantasy, rather than to commit contact offending. Although the current study highlighted the online grooming behaviour of only two offenders, both were concerned with fantasy development rather than meeting with the victim. These two offenders displayed brutality in their online interactions with their victims and were opportunist in their contact online. This appears in contrast to the more traditional view that those that groom online are similar to contact offenders in their grooming activities despite the fact that online groomers are somewhat quicker to progress through the grooming stages than are contact offenders.

11.5 Limitations of the Research

A number of limitations were encountered in this research. The information obtained was collected for the purposes of law enforcement, and as such is unlikely to have been collected based on scientific criteria for collection (Alison et al., 2001). It may be subject to problems in accessing the data and making assumptions from the information provided. The information provided may be lacking or incomplete for the purposes of this study and access to the offenders was not possible to clarify any information that may be missing or incomplete.

Information provided in the AFP OCSOQ includes free text information and perceptions of the individual case officers, and as such is subject to vulnerabilities that may include human judgment errors, subjective assessment and memory recall problems. The questionnaires were completed for operational purposes and therefore no inter-rater
reliability assessments were undertaken and there is no control over idiosyncratic completion of the questionnaires.

As this study was a retrospective file review, there is likely to occasionally be substantial amounts of missing data necessary for scientific research, as the quality and detail of notes may not be consistent across all cases, and is determined by the foci of the interviews and investigation (Seto, Reeves & Jung, 2010).

Information provided in AFP files is often the result of interviews between investigators and offenders, who at the time of interview were suspects. These reports are reliant on self-report by the offender and are vulnerable to social desirability bias. They are also based on information provided by the subject about their personal history (e.g. sexual or physical abuse, possible contact offending or additional offences), and rationale for their behaviour, which is likely to be minimised by the offender to reduce their perceived culpability or responsibility (Seto et al., 2010). As such, the veracity of the information provided by the individual and reported by the investigator, cannot be determined.

A further limitation of this study was that the subjects are those that have been arrested for offences in relation to Internet child sexual abuse, which is expected to represent only a small proportion of those involved in Internet child sexual abuse offending. It is impossible to determine how many other offenders have been or are involved in child sexual abuse imagery, and those that are arrested may be those that are more vulnerable to capture through the lack of skill in deception and security, or those involved in information or image sharing that led to their arrest. It is also possible that the individuals referred to in this research have been involved in other offending, sexual abuse of children and adults, or violent or general offences, but have not been caught, and have not admitted to such offences when questioned by police.

Finally, it is possible that other unknown domains or variables are responsible for the offending behaviour, and as such were not found in this research.

11.6 Recommendations for Future Research

The current study identified a number of similarities, but also differences between online and contact offenders, based on the literature, and it is recommended that further research
be conducted into the behaviour of online offenders as more online offenders are identified and convicted. As further research is conducted, the similarities and differences between online and contact offenders may become more apparent and this will assist in the development of treatment options, management of the behaviour and investigation of offenders. It may become apparent that online offenders should have different treatment programs and support options than those provided to contact offenders. For investigation teams the greater the understanding of the behaviour and motivation, and the differences to contact offenders may assist in the development of interview strategies. The development of training programs for investigators, which informs on the characteristics, behaviour and motivation of offenders may assist in improvements in practice for the management of suspects and offenders.

Further research into the hypothesised characteristics that may identify offenders likely to progress to increasingly graphic imagery may also identify characteristics that influence habituation and satiation at the lower levels of imagery, and the need by the offender to progress to increasingly graphic imagery. A focus of this research should be online offenders that are indiscriminate in relation to the age and gender of the victim and the format of the material accessed. This could be achieved through more detailed analysis of the images date stamping and length of time viewing each level of image to determine if there is an increasing length of time in viewing increasingly graphic imagery. This was not practical in the current study as date stamping on several hundred thousand images was not available to the researcher, or ability to time how long the offender viewed each image. There is a tension between this current study which used density and spread of images as a proxy for escalation, and this may have impacted on the interpretation of the results. Although date stamping and time viewing each image would have been a preference this was not possible in the current study. Future research should seek to obtain samples that provide date stamping and time online in order to investigate escalation in image preference in a linear manner.

Further research should also be conducted in relation to the grooming behaviour of online offenders, to identify their differing motivations. Online offenders present with multiple motivations to groom online and those that intend to meet with the victim may follow a process similar to contact offenders in their grooming, whereas offenders expressly interested in fantasy development and satisfaction do not follow a linear process, and quickly progress to the final, sexual stage. Further research may identify those more
likely to attempt to meet with their online victims, and provide practical information for investigators to prioritise those victims who may be at greater risk of sexual abuse.

In closing, the current study is part of an ongoing global research effort aimed at understanding online sexual offenders. It is important to conduct research on operational material as it is based on real-world outcomes in the investigation and sentencing of offenders. This study considered the characteristics of online child abuse offenders, their similarities and differences from contact offenders in accessing child abuse material and grooming, and the preference for increasingly graphic material. Some online offenders are similar to contact offenders in their psychological characteristics; online offenders that are more indiscriminate in their victim age and gender are more likely to prefer increasingly graphic child abuse material; and some offenders that groom online do so quite brutally to support their fantasies.
References


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R Development Core Team. (2010). R: A language and environment for statistical computing [Computer software manual]. Vienna


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Appendices

Appendix A: The Australian *Criminal Code Act 1995* (as Amended)


*child abuse material* means:

(a) material that depicts a person, or a representation of a person, who:

(i) is, or appears to be, under 18 years of age; and

(ii) is, or appears to be, a victim of torture, cruelty or physical abuse;

and does this in a way that reasonable persons would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive; or

(b) material that describes a person who:

(i) is, or is implied to be, under 18 years of age; and

(ii) is, or is implied to be, a victim of torture, cruelty or physical abuse;

and does this in a way that reasonable persons would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive.


*child pornography material* means:

(a) material that depicts a person, or a representation of a person, who is, or appears to be, under 18 years of age and who:

(i) is engaged in, or appears to be engaged in, a sexual pose or sexual activity (whether or not in the presence of other persons); or

(ii) is in the presence of a person who is engaged in, or appears to be engaged in, a sexual pose or sexual activity;

and does this in a way that reasonable persons would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive; or

(b) material the dominant characteristic of which is the depiction, for a sexual purpose, of:
(i) a sexual organ or the anal region of a person who is, or appears to be, under 18 years of age; or

(ii) a representation of such a sexual organ or anal region; or

(iii) the breasts, or a representation of the breasts, of a female person who is, or appears to be, under 18 years of age;

in a way that reasonable persons would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive; or

(c) material that describes a person who is, or is implied to be, under 18 years of age and who:

(i) is engaged in, or is implied to be engaged in, a sexual pose or sexual activity (whether or not in the presence of other persons); or

(ii) is in the presence of a person who is engaged in, or is implied to be engaged in, a sexual pose or sexual activity;

and does this in a way that reasonable persons would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive; or

(d) material that describes:

(i) a sexual organ or the anal region of a person who is, or is implied to be, under 18 years of age; or

(ii) the breasts of a female person who is, or is implied to be, under 18 years of age;

and does this in a way that reasonable persons would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive.

Sections 474.19–474.24B of the Criminal Code Act 1995 (as amended) provide for offences relating to child pornography or child abuse material using a carriage service (internet or telephone). These offences relate to the accessing, transmitting, publishing, distributing, advertising, promoting or soliciting child pornography material. The maximum penalty for all Commonwealth child pornography and child abuse material offences is fifteen years imprisonment.

Section 474.26 Using a carriage service to procure persons under 16 years of age

(1) A person (the sender) commits an offence if:

(a) the sender uses a carriage service to transmit a communication to another person (the recipient); and

(b) the sender does this with the intention of procuring the recipient to engage in sexual activity with the sender; and
(c) the recipient is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 16 years of age; and

(d) the sender is at least 18 years of age.

Penalty: Imprisonment for 15 years.

(2) A person (the **sender**) commits an offence if:

(a) the sender uses a carriage service to transmit a communication to another person (the **recipient**); and

(b) the sender does this with the intention of procuring the recipient to engage in sexual activity with another person (the **participant**); and

(c) the recipient is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 16 years of age; and

(d) the participant is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, at least 18 years of age.

Penalty: Imprisonment for 15 years.

(3) A person (the **sender**) commits an offence if:

(a) the sender uses a carriage service to transmit a communication to another person (the **recipient**); and

(b) the sender does this with the intention of procuring the recipient to engage in sexual activity with another person; and

(c) the recipient is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 16 years of age; and

(d) the other person referred to in paragraph (b) is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 18 years of age; and

(e) the sender intends that the sexual activity referred to in paragraph (b) will take place in the presence of:

(i) the sender; or

(ii) another person (the **participant**) who is, or who the sender believes to be, at least 18 years of age.

Penalty: Imprisonment for 15 years.

Section 474.27 Using a carriage service to 'groom' persons under 16 years of age

(1) A person (the **sender**) commits an offence if:

(a) the sender uses a carriage service to transmit a communication to another person (the **recipient**); and
(c) the sender does this with the intention of making it easier to procure the recipient to engage in sexual activity with the sender; and

(d) the recipient is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 16 years of age; and

(e) the sender is at least 18 years of age.

Penalty: Imprisonment for 12 years.

(2) A person (the **sender**) commits an offence if:

(a) the sender uses a carriage service to transmit a communication to another person (the **recipient**); and

(c) the sender does this with the intention of making it easier to procure the recipient to engage in sexual activity with another person (the **participant**); and

(d) the recipient is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 16 years of age; and

(e) the participant is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, at least 18 years of age.

Penalty: Imprisonment for 12 years.

(3) A person (the **sender**) commits an offence if:

(a) the sender uses a carriage service to transmit a communication to another person (the **recipient**); and

(c) the sender does this with the intention of making it easier to procure the recipient to engage in sexual activity with another person; and

(d) the recipient is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 16 years of age; and

(e) the other person referred to in paragraph (c) is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 18 years of age; and

(f) the sender intends that the sexual activity referred to in paragraph (c) will take place in the presence of:

(i) the sender; or

(ii) another person (the **participant**) who is, or who the sender believes to be, at least 18 years of age.

Penalty: Imprisonment for 15 years.

Section 474.27A Using a carriage service to transmit indecent communication to person under 16 years of age
(1) A person (the *sender*) commits an offence if:

(a) the sender uses a carriage service to transmit a communication to another person (the *recipient*); and

(b) the communication includes material that is indecent; and

(c) the recipient is someone who is, or who the sender believes to be, under 16 years of age; and

(d) the sender is at least 18 years of age.

Penalty: Imprisonment for 7 years.
Appendix B: Online Child Sex Offender Questionnaire (Questions Taken from the OCSOQ)

Part 1: Demographics

1. Gender
   a. Male
   b. female
2. Age
   a. ____ years
3. Ethnicity
   a. Caucasian
   b. Aboriginal
   c. African
   d. Asian
   e. Hispanic
   f. Mediterranean
   g. Middle Eastern
   h. Pacific Islands
   i. Other (specify)
4. Type of residence
   a. Unit/townhouse/terrace house
   b. House/detached dwelling
   c. Other (specify)
5. Location of home address
   a. Capital city
   b. Secondary urban area—e.g. Townsville, Newcastle, Fremantle, Geelong
   c. Regional town—e.g. Dubbo, Lismore, Katherine, Richmond
   d. Semi-rural/lifestyle block
   e. Rural
6. Household composition
   a. Living alone?
   b. Yes
   c. No (tick all that apply)
      i. Living with partner
      ii. Living with own children
      iii. Living with step-children
      iv. Living with other (non-family) children (specify)
      v. Living with parents or grandparents
      vi. Living with other (non-family) adults (specify)
7. Other factors
   a. No identified health problems
   b. Clinically identified physical health problems (specify)
   c. Clinically identified mental health problems (specify)
Part 2: Detection

8. Method of offending (tick all that apply)
   a. Digital images
   b. Digital movie files
   c. Digital audio box
   d. Text—e.g. stories, email content, chat logs
   e. Printed images (specify)
   f. Other movies (specify)
   g. Other (specify)

9. What was the actual quantity of child exploitation material (images, movie files, stories) in the offender’s collection
   a. ______

10. Nature of offending (tick all that apply)
    a. Collecting child exploitation material containing specific themes (e.g. gender of victim, images of very specific age groups, images where subjects appear obviously distressed)
    b. Collecting a wide range of child exploitation material (no particular themes)
    c. Distribution/trade of child exploitation material
    d. Production of child exploitation material (e.g. records own abuse or that of others)
    e. Developing websites or selling CD-ROMS of child exploitation material for financial gain
    f. Grooming/procuring for sexual purposes with a child
    g. Other (specify)

11. Estimate the length of time the offender has engaged in offending behaviour
    a. _____ Number of years

12. Was there evidence of the offender engaging in offline (real life) child sex offending?
    a. No
    b. Yes

13. What type of role did the offender have in any network? (tick all that apply)
    a. No involvement in any network
    b. Participant
    c. Provider of images
    d. Financier
    e. Procurer of children
    f. Producer of images
    g. Management/administrative (e.g. webmaster, security, membership secretary)

14. Altogether, approximately how much time each week would you estimate the offender spent involved in acting in these roles?
    a. _____ Number of hours

15. Offence-related activities (tick all that apply)
    a. Collection is indexed and well organised
b. Offender deletes/disposes of child exploitation material after viewing  
c. Offender hides child exploitation material after viewing  
d. Offender secures collection (e.g. encryption, secretion of removable  
   device/s, stored offsite or on external server)

e. Other (specify)

16. Details of detection (most applicable)
   a. Trade of child exploitation material on the Internet  
   b. Identified as producing child exploitation material  
   c. Identified from another offender’s online activity  
   d. Public complaint  
   e. Identified by another government agency (specify)  
   f. Other (specify)

17. Offenders online user name
   a. Overtly child sex oriented  
   b. Overtly sex oriented  
   c. Non-sexualised

Part 3: Nature of child exploitation material

18. In the majority of the images, the children or young people appeared to be  
    engaged in the following activities or actions (tick all that apply)
   a. Indicative (non-erotic and non-sexualised pictures showing children in  
      their underwear, swimming costumes, etc. from either commercial  
      sources or family albums; pictures of children playing in normal settings,  
      in which the context or organisation of pictures by the collector indicates  
      inappropriateness)
   b. Nudist (pictures of naked or semi-naked children in appropriate nudist  
      settings, and from legitimate sources)
   c. Erotica (surreptitiously taken photographs of children in play areas or  
      other safe environments showing either underwear or varying degrees of  
      nakedness)
   d. Posing (deliberately posed pictures of children fully, partially clothed or  
      naked)
   e. Erotic posing (deliberately posed pictures of fully, partially clothed or  
      naked children in sexualised or provocative poses)
   f. Explicit erotic posing (emphasising genital areas where the child is either  
      naked, partially or fully clothed)
   g. Explicit sexual activity (involves touching, mutual and self-masturbation,  
      oral sex and intercourse by child, not involving an adult)
   h. Assault (pictures of children being subject to a sexual assault, involving  
      penetrative sex, masturbation or oral sex involving an adult)
   i. Gross assault (grossly obscene pictures of sexual assault, involving  
      penetrative sex, masturbation or oral sex involving an adult)
   j. Sadistic/bestiality (pictures showing a child being tied, bound, beaten or  
      otherwise subject to something that implies pain/pictures where an  
      animal is involved in some form of sexual behaviour with a child)
19. Were the children or young people shown (tick all that apply)
   a. Alone
   b. With other children or young people
   c. With adults
   d. Other (specify)
20. Were series of related images identified
   a. No
   b. Yes (number of series)
21. Individuals portrayed in the images (tick all that apply)

Part 4: Non-child exploitation material

22. Nature of non-child exploitation material: please indicate what, if any, other images or material was obtained from the offender that could not be classified as child exploitation, but which were considered suspicious in the context of the offending?
   a. Other images of children
   b. Children’s toys, appliances and/or articles of clothing
   c. Adult pornography/erotic images
   d. Images of autopsies or dissection of body parts
   e. Articles indicating an interest in weaponry, martial arts and/or bondage (specify)
   f. Erotic/pornographic material other than images (specify)
   g. Other (specify)

Part 5: History, occupation and associates

23. Previous child sex related offences
   a. Previous online child sex exploitation convictions
   b. Previous detection by law enforcement officers without conviction
   c. Any other previous contact with OCSE-type law enforcement
24. Criminal history
   a. None
   b. Non-violent, non-sexual offences (theft, burglary, etc.)
   c. Minor offence of sexual nature (stealing underwear/peeping Tom, offensive behaviour, etc.)
   d. Sexual offence with girl under 16 yrs
   e. Sexual offence with boy under 16 yrs
   f. Sexual offence against an adult
   g. Other violent offence
   h. Involvement with sex industry
   i. Not known
   j. Other (specify)
   k. Associations with suspect individuals (specify)
   l. Association with suspect organisations (specify)
25. Occupation
   a. Student (specify course)
b. Information technology (specify job)
c. Education/training profession (specify job)
d. Medical professional (specify job)
e. Other caregiver (specify job)
f. Manual worker (specify job)
g. Other professional/administrative (specify job)
h. Clergy (specify job)
i. Law enforcement officer (specify job)
j. Politician (specify job)
k. Defence force personnel (specify job)
l. Retail (specify job)
m. Tradesperson (specify job)
n. Unemployment beneficiary (specify how long they have been a beneficiary and what their usual occupation would be if they were employed)
o. Sickness beneficiary (specify what their usual occupation would be if they were not a beneficiary)
p. Retired/superannuant (specify former occupation)
q. Other (specify)

26. Does the offender engage in any voluntary activities?
   a. No
   b. Yes (specify)

Part 6: Computer use and skills

27. Estimate how much time the offender spent on the Internet during the week prior to the warrant being served
   a. Less than 10 hours
   b. 10–30 hours
   c. More than 30 hours (specify)

28. Security of child exploitation material
   a. None
   b. Saved to inconspicuously named directory
   c. Password protected
   d. Encrypted application (specify)
   e. Other (specify)

29. Security of online communication
   a. None
   b. Use of Internet service provider email product (e.g. Bigpond, Optus)
   c. Use of web-based email (e.g. Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail)
   d. Use of secure email (e.g. Hushmail)
   e. Anonymisers
   f. Other (specify)

Part 7: Apprehension and prosecution

30. Reaction to warrant (most applicable)
a. Freely admitted offence  
b. Partly admitted offence/admitted but minimised offence  
c. Completely denied offence/admitted but minimised offence  
d. Completely denied offence/tried to shift blame  
e. Refused to answer questions/not prepared to admit skill level or provide details  
f. Other (specify)  

31. Notable offender activities during or since executing the warrant (tick all that apply)  
a. Mentioned self-harm/suicide  
b.Expressed feelings of shame and/or desire to hide activities from loved ones  
c. Asked for help/said that they had a problem  
d. Became physically threatening and/or intimidating  
e. Attempted/completed self-harm/suicide  
f. Other (specify)  

32. Other comments
### Appendix C: Demographic Variables for Offenders and Victims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offender</th>
<th>Victim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ethnicity:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender:</strong></td>
<td>o Caucasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Male</td>
<td>o Aboriginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Female</td>
<td>o Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation:</strong></td>
<td>o Middle Eastern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Unemployed</td>
<td>o European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Student</td>
<td>o South American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Health sector</td>
<td>o African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Social sciences</td>
<td>o African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Engineering</td>
<td>o European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Information technology</td>
<td>o South American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Public service</td>
<td>o African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Sciences</td>
<td>o African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Arts</td>
<td>o South American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Education</td>
<td>o African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Military</td>
<td>o European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Clergy</td>
<td>o South American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Law enforcement</td>
<td>o African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Retired</td>
<td>o South American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education (highest level completed):</strong></td>
<td>** Victim access:**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Postgraduate degree level</td>
<td>o Online viewing only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Graduate diploma and graduate certificate level</td>
<td>o Online contact with children/adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Bachelor degree level</td>
<td>o Telephone contact with child/adolescent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Advanced diploma and diploma level</td>
<td>o Mail contact with child/adolescent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Certificate level</td>
<td>o Face-to-face contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Secondary education</td>
<td>o Images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Primary education</td>
<td>o Audio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Pre-primary education</td>
<td>o Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Other education</td>
<td>o Cartoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity:</strong></td>
<td>o Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Caucasian</td>
<td>o Stories/written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Aboriginal</td>
<td>o Security of images/items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Asian</td>
<td>o Unsecure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Middle Eastern</td>
<td>o Deleted after use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o European</td>
<td>o Saved under innocuous title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o South American</td>
<td>o African</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- African

- Residential location:
  - City
  - Regional city
  - Small community
  - Rural

- Household:
  - Living alone
  - Living with spouse/partner
  - Living with other (non-family) adults
  - Living with biological children
  - Living with step-children
  - Living with other (non-family) children
  - Living with parents or grandparents

- History of physical abuse (y/n)

- History of sexual abuse (y/n)

- Offence history (number):
  - Previous online offence
  - Previous sexual offence against a child
  - Previous sexual offence against an adult
  - Previous violent offence
  - Previous general offence
  - Online offence since index offence
  - Sexual offence against a child since index offence
  - Sexual offence against an adult since index offence
  - Violent offence since index offence
  - General offence since index offence
  - Total number of prior convictions

- Saved on internal drive
- Saved on external drive
- Password
- Encryption of image files
- Encryption of email
- P2P networks

244
## Appendix D: Codebook for Offender Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full variable name</th>
<th>SPSS variable name</th>
<th>Coding instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification number</td>
<td>id</td>
<td>Subject identification number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>age</td>
<td>in years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>sex</td>
<td>1=male, 2=female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>occupation</td>
<td>1=unemployed, 2=student, 3=health sector, 4=social sciences, 5=engineering, 6=information technology, 7=public service, 8=sci</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
against a child, 3=previous sexual
offence against an adult,
4=previous violent offence,
5=online offence since index
offence, 6=sexual offence against a
child since index offence, 7=sexual
offence against an adult since
index offence, 8=violent offence
since index offence, 9=general
since index offence, 10=index only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital</th>
<th>marital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1=married, 2=defacto, 3=divorced, 4=separated, 5=single</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact with other offenders</th>
<th>conother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1=no online contact, 2=online
  contact with others (trade and
  communication) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Removed from home prior to 16yrs</th>
<th>remhome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1=yes, 2=no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loneliness/social isolation</th>
<th>lonely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1=friends online, 2=friends offline,
  3=same sex friends, 4=opposite sex
  friends |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1=home, 2=work, 3=friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voluntary activities</th>
<th>voluntary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1=scouts or cadets, 2=caregiver,
  3=babysitter, 4=coach,
  5=community group, 6=sporting
  group, 7=none |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>During/post-warrant</th>
<th>durwarrant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1=mentioned self-harm,
  2=attempted or completed self-
  harm, 3=expressed feelings of
  shame and/or desire to hide
  activities from loved ones,
  4=asked for help as they had a
  problem, 5=threatened/intimidated
  investigator |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance abuse</th>
<th>subabuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1=alcohol, 2=drugs, 3=alcohol and
  drugs, 4=none |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological history</th>
<th>psychhist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1=anxiety, 2=depression,
  3=_self-harm or threats,
  4=mental illness,
  5=personality disorder,
  6=none |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anger</th>
<th>anger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1=investigator advised, 2=offender comment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claimed boredom</th>
<th>bored</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1=yes, 2=no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to warrant</td>
<td>resw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callous/unemotional</td>
<td>callo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-criminal attitudes</td>
<td>procr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of victim</td>
<td>vicag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to offender</td>
<td>rel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of victim</td>
<td>vicsex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessed other pornography</td>
<td>otherporn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online user name</td>
<td>user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of online and contact offending</td>
<td>onandcontact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased sorting or cataloguing</td>
<td>increasedsort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on series</td>
<td>series</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

247
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Short Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time online</td>
<td>timeonline</td>
<td>1=less than 10 hours per week, 2=10–30 hours per week, 3=more than 30 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in social behaviour over time</td>
<td>reducesoc</td>
<td>1=yes, 2=no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level in child image</td>
<td>images</td>
<td>1=indicative, 2=nudist, 3=erotica, 4=posing content, 5=erotic posing, 6=explicit erotic posing, 7=explicit sexual activity, 8=assault, 9=gross assault, 10=sadistic/bestiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continual return to image or set of images</td>
<td>returnimage</td>
<td>1=yes, 2=no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progression in victim age reduction</td>
<td>agereduction</td>
<td>1=yes, 2=no investigator comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escalation in other pornography image content</td>
<td>esimages</td>
<td>1=yes, 2=no investigator comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time viewing child abuse images</td>
<td>timeview</td>
<td>1=less than 15 sec, 2=15–less than 30sec, 3=30–less than 45sec, 4=45sec–less than 1min, 5=1–less than 2min, 6=2–less than 5min, 7=5–less than 10min, 8=10–less than 15min, 9=15min or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim ethnicity</td>
<td>vicethnicity</td>
<td>1=Caucasian, 2=Aboriginal, 3=Asian, 4=Middle Eastern, 5=European, 6=South American, 7=African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim access</td>
<td>vicaccess</td>
<td>1=online viewing only, 2=online contact with children/adolescents, 3=telephone contact with child or adolescent, 4=mail contact with child or adolescent, 5=face-to-face contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format of material</td>
<td>format</td>
<td>1=images, 2=audio, 3=video, 4=cartoon, 5=virtual, 6=stories written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of offender online</td>
<td>ageoffonline</td>
<td>1=baby, 2=child, 3=teenager, 4=young adult, 5=adult over 25yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>volume</td>
<td>1=up to 1,000 items, 2=1000–10,000, 3=10,001 to 19,999, 4=20,000 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security of images</td>
<td>imagesec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1=unsecure, 2=deleted after use, 3=saved under innocuous name or external drive, 4=password or encryption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix E: Psychological and Behavioural Elements for Offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intimacy/social skills deficits</th>
<th>Emotional dysregulation</th>
<th>Cognitive distortions</th>
<th>Distorted sexual scripts/sexual deviance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital status:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Age of victim:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Married</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Baby (up to 2 yrs of age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Defacto</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Child 2–2yrs of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Divorced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Teenager 13–18yrs of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Separated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Baby and child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Single</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Child and teenager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with other offenders:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Baby and teenager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o No online contact with others (download only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Baby, child and teenager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Online contact with others (trading and communication)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removed from home prior to 16 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship to offender:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Intrafamilial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Extrafamilial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loneliness/social isolation (y/n)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender of victim:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o No. friends online</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Female images only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o No. friends offline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Male images only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o No. same sex friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Both male and female images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o No. opposite sex friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Possessed other pornography:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Legal adult pornography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Text material describing sexual abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Sexual assault of adult victim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary activities with children (emotional identification with children):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Sadism—adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o scouts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Bestiality—adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o caregiver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Online user name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o babysitter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Child abuse oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o coach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Sex oriented (not specific to children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Non-sexualised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of online and contact offending (y/n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased sorting/cataloguing indicated (y/n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on series of images (y/n)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Marital status:**
  - Married
  - Defacto
  - Divorced
  - Separated
  - Single

- **Contact with other offenders:**
  - No online contact with others (download only)
  - Online contact with others (trading and communication)

- **Removed from home prior to 16 yrs:**
  - Yes
  - No

- **Loneliness/social isolation (y/n):**
  - No. friends online
  - No. friends offline
  - No. same sex friends
  - No. opposite sex friends

- **Conflict in:**
  - Home
  - Work
  - Friends

- **Voluntary activities with children (emotional identification with children):**
  - scouts
  - caregiver
  - babysitter
  - coach

- **During or post-warrant:**
  - Mentioned self-harm
  - Attempted or completed self-harm/suicide
  - Expressed feelings of shame and/or desire to hide activities from loved ones
  - Asked for help as they had a problem
  - Threatened/intimidated investigator

- **Substance abuse:**
  - Alcohol
  - Drugs
  - Alcohol and drugs

- **Psychological history:**
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Self-harm or threats
  - Mental illness
  - Personality disorder

- **Anger:**
  - Investigator advised
  - Offender comment

- **Claimed boredom (y/n):**

- **Response to warrant:**
  - Admitted offence
  - Partial admissions, or minimised offence
  - Denied offence or tried to shift blame
  - Refused to answer questions

- **Callous/unemotional (y/n):**

- **Pro-criminal attitudes:**
  - Joined online group
  - Criminal associates
  - Peers who facilitated access to children/abuse images

- **Evidence of online and contact offending (y/n):**
- Increased sorting/cataloguing indicated (y/n)
- Focus on series of images (y/n)
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>community group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>sporting group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>