RESEARCH ON CONTACT AND NON-CONTACT SEXUAL OFFENDERS FROM THE DUNKELFELD PROJECT

Psychological and Social Characteristics of Non-Pedophilic and Pedophilic Child Sexual Abusers in a "Dark Field" Sample

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The Prevention Project Dunkelfeld (PPD) is aimed at preventing child sexual abuse by targeting men who fear to sexually abuse a child and who seek therapeutic help concerning this matter. Furthermore, it was initiated to specifically reach (potential) child sexual abusers in the Dunkelfeld. Dunkelfeld (‘dark field’) refers to those cases of child sexual abuse that are unknown to the legal system.

Approximately 40-50% of child sexual abuse offenses have been committed by men who were not diagnosed with pedophilia (Seto, 2009). These offenders are primary interested in sexual interaction with age-appropriate partners. They sexually assault children as a surrogate, mainly due to unrealizable sexual intercourse with an adult partner. It is assumed that this offender group, in particular, refers to offenders who tend to be either young offenders (< 25ys) or old offenders (> 50ys), offenders who display antisocial personality traits, and offenders who suffer from mental retardation (Beier, Bosinski & Loewit, 2005). Further, mental disorders such as impulse control disorders as well as insufficient problem-solving strategies and lack of social skills are associated with child sexual abuse, committed by nonpedophilic offenders (Bosinski, 1997).

Only few studies have focused on samples of offenders who were left undetected by the criminal justice system (Neutze, Grundmann, Scherner & Beier, 2012). Much less is known about nonpedophilic child sexual offenders. In the presented study we analyzed data from the Dunkelfeld project including n = 18 nonpedophilic child sexual abusers and n = 38 pedophilic child sexual abusers so far, with an extension of the sample during the future course of the study. The aim of the study is to compare both groups with regard to descriptive data as well as psychological and social characteristics. Furthermore, the study focuses on differences concerning sexual preferences and pornography consumption. Results will be presented.

Goals of the Paper:

1. To provide descriptive data of child sexual abuse offenders from a very specific sample (Dunkelfeld, ‘dark field’)
2. Exploring differences of nonpedophilic and pedophilic child sexual abusers regarding psychological and social characteristics
3. Focussing on differences regarding sexual preferences and pornography consumption in nonpedophilic and pedophilic child sexual abusers

**Online Solicitation of Minors as Contribution for Risk Assessment in a “Dark Field” Sample of Child Pornography Users**

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The Prevention Project Dunkelfeld (PPD) in Germany is aimed at preventing child sexual abuse by targeting men who fear to sexually abuse a child and who seek therapeutic help concerning this matter.

There are a number of studies suggesting that there is a link between pedophilia, internet offending against minors and child sexual abuse. Meanwhile, it is well-established that there are additional risk factors which play an important role in the crossover between pedophilia, child pornography and child sexual abuse. In the presented study we analyzed data from the Dunkelfeld (“dark field”) project including up to now 53 child pornography users (CP group) and 40 child pornography users who additionally abused a child (mixed group) with the “Questionnaire for Assessment of Child Pornography Criteria rev.” (Schuhmann & Osterheider, 2010). Data analyses were focused on quantity, quality and frequency of (child) pornography consumption, production of child pornography, organisation of the child pornography collection, software and hardware equipment, online communication networks with other offenders and online solicitation of minors. Data about new recidivism rates within both examined groups from the Dunkelfeld project will be also presented. Moderate recidivism rates of online offending and low recidivism rates of offline contact offending are expected due to former studies from the Dunkelfeld project (Konrad, Kuhle, Scherner & Beier, 2013; Kuhle, Konrad, Scherner & Beier, 2013).

In summary, the study illustrates important findings about additional risk factors for child sexual abuse within child pornography users. These findings can have relevant implications in the distinction between low risk and high risk child pornography users.

Goals of the Paper:
1. Providing information regarding our work in research at the “Dark field” project in Germany
2. Comparing low risk and high risk child pornography offenders in the dark field
3. Illustrating online solicitation and digital evidence as additional risk factors for child sexual abuse within child pornography users and their implications for police work, child sexual abuse prevention and sexual offender therapy