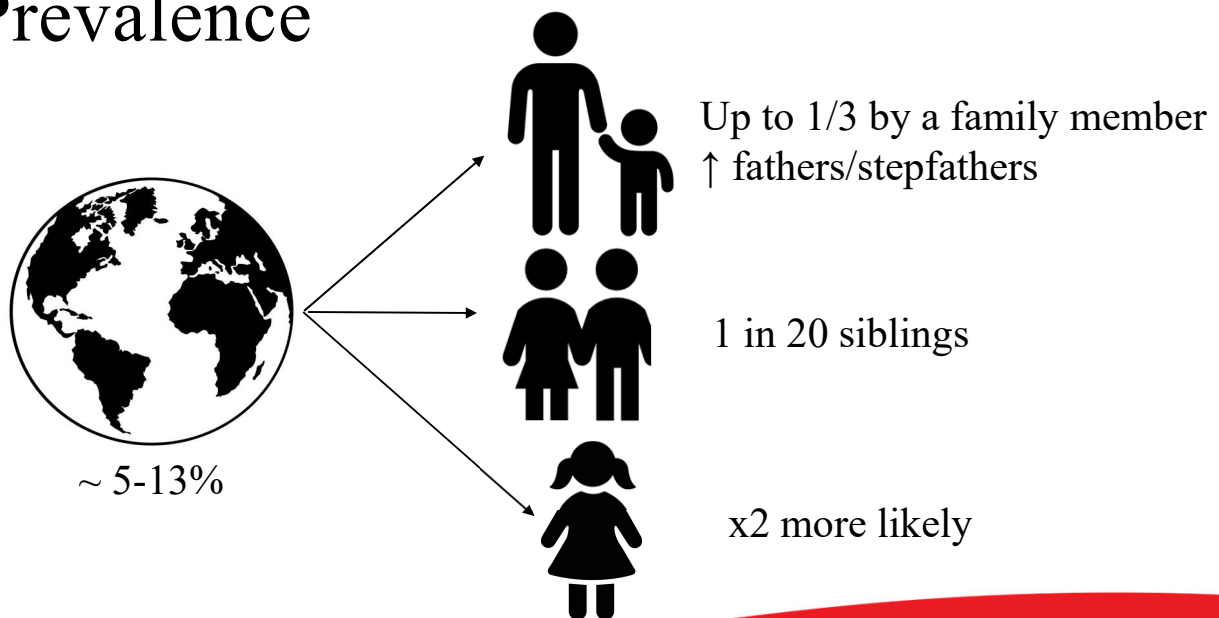# Exploring the risk factors for sibling- and father-perpetrated sexual abuse

Chair: Kelly M. Babchishin

SEXUALLY HARMFUL BEHAVIOURS
Research Lab

Carleton University

1

Prevalence

~ 5-13%

Up to 1/3 by a family member
↑ fathers/stepfathers

1 in 20 siblings

x2 more likely

2

Why?

Pedophilia and Sexual Offending Against Children

THEORY, ASSESSMENT, AND INTERVENTION

Second Edition

Michael C. Seto

3

Today's Symposium

Brazil and India Fathers (Madison)

1

North American and German Fathers (Abiraam)

2

3 Siblings (Emma)

Sibling Relationships (Myles)

4

5 Risk assessment (Natasha)

4

Today's Symposium

Brazil and India Fathers (Madison) — 1

North American and German Fathers (Abiraam) — 2

Siblings (Emma) — 3

Sibling Relationships (Myles) — 4

Risk assessment (Natasha) — 5

5

Madison McAskill, Kelly M. Babchishin, Abiraam Samithamby, & Michael C. Seto

Testing explanations for incest among a large sample of fathers from Brazil and India

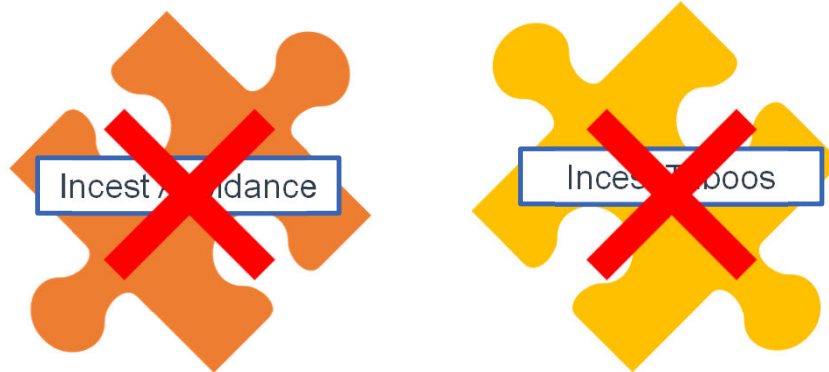University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research
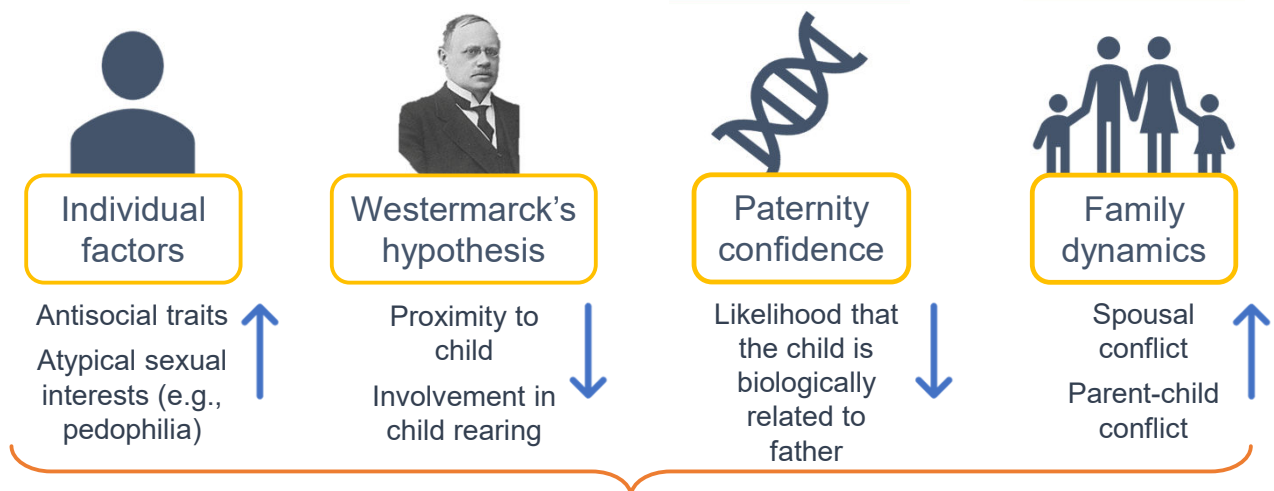
Carleton University

SSHRC CRSH

6

THE PUZZLE OF INCEST

Occurs despite evolutionary mechanisms meant to prevent it:

Incest Avoidance

Incest Taboos

7

EXPLAINING FATHER-DAUGHTER INCEST

Individual factors	Westermarck's hypothesis	Paternity confidence	Family dynamics
Antisocial traits ↑ Atypical sexual interests (e.g., pedophilia)	Proximity to child ↓ Involvement in child rearing	Likelihood that the child is biologically related to father ↓	Spousal conflict ↑ Parent-child conflict

Can these factors explain propensity for incest among fathers?

8

METHOD

- Online survey of two market panel samples:
  - IPSOS Brazil (*N*=1200)
  - IPSOS India (*N*=1325)
- Eligibility = fathers with **at least one daughter**

- Items based on **explanations for incest**
- Questions about **vignette** depicting father-daughter incest (**outcome variable**)
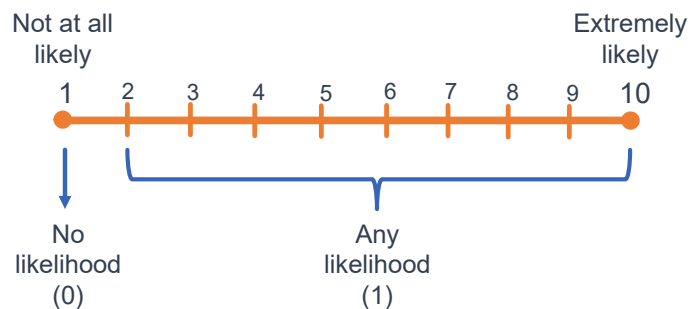- **Viewing time** (VT) task

Ipsos

9

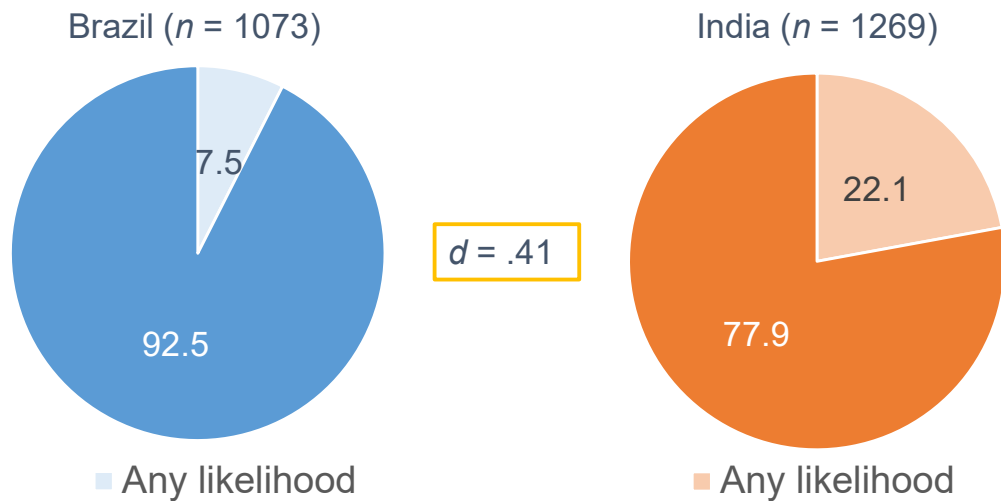## FATHER-DAUGHTER INCEST PROPENSITY

Incest vignette

"Marcio/Jitesh is alone with his 10 year old [step]daughter, Carolina/Meeta, in their home on a Friday evening. They are sitting next to each other on the couch and watching a movie. Márcio/Jitesh has a bowl of popcorn in his lap. Carolina/Meeta reaches her arm with the intention of grabbing some popcorn from the bowl. **Instead, she touches his genitals and starts caressing them.**"

"If you were in a similar situation, how likely would you be to encourage continued sexual contact with your daughter?"
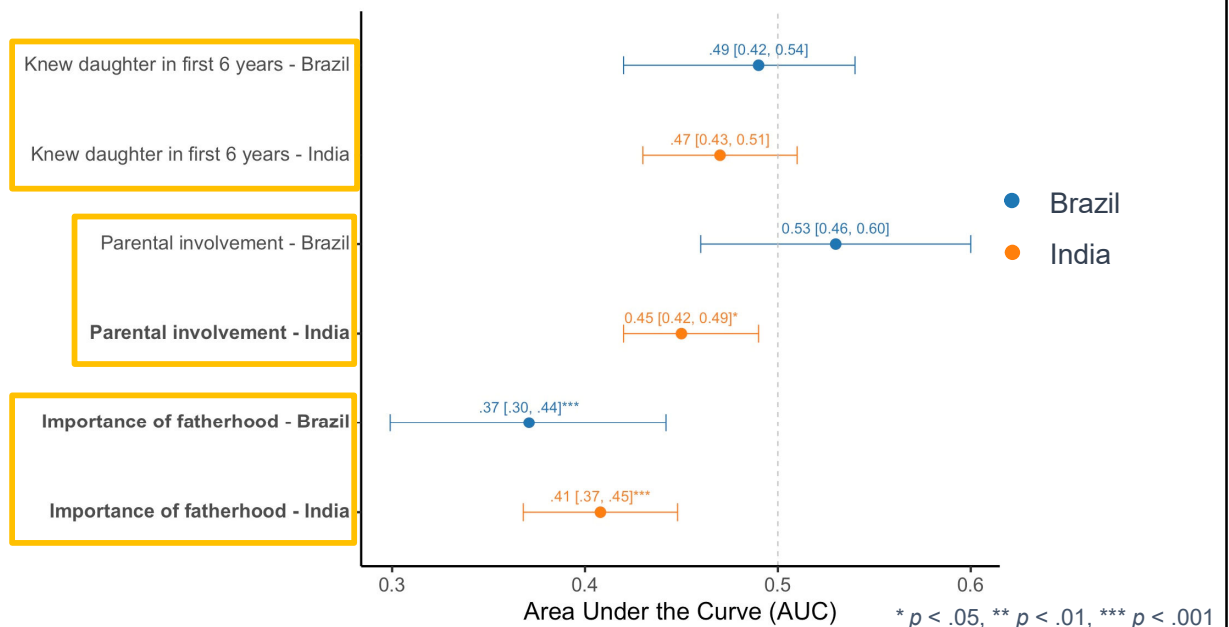
Not at all likely   Extremely likely
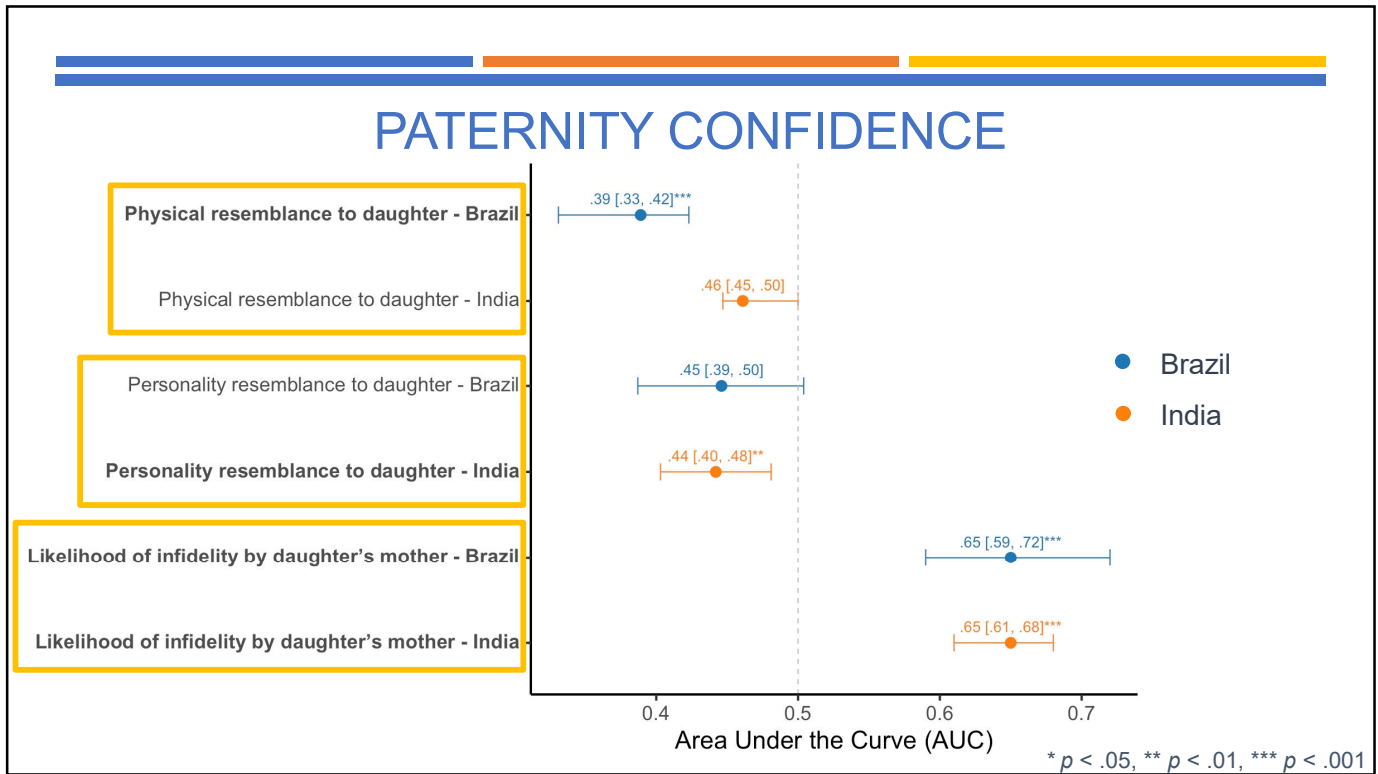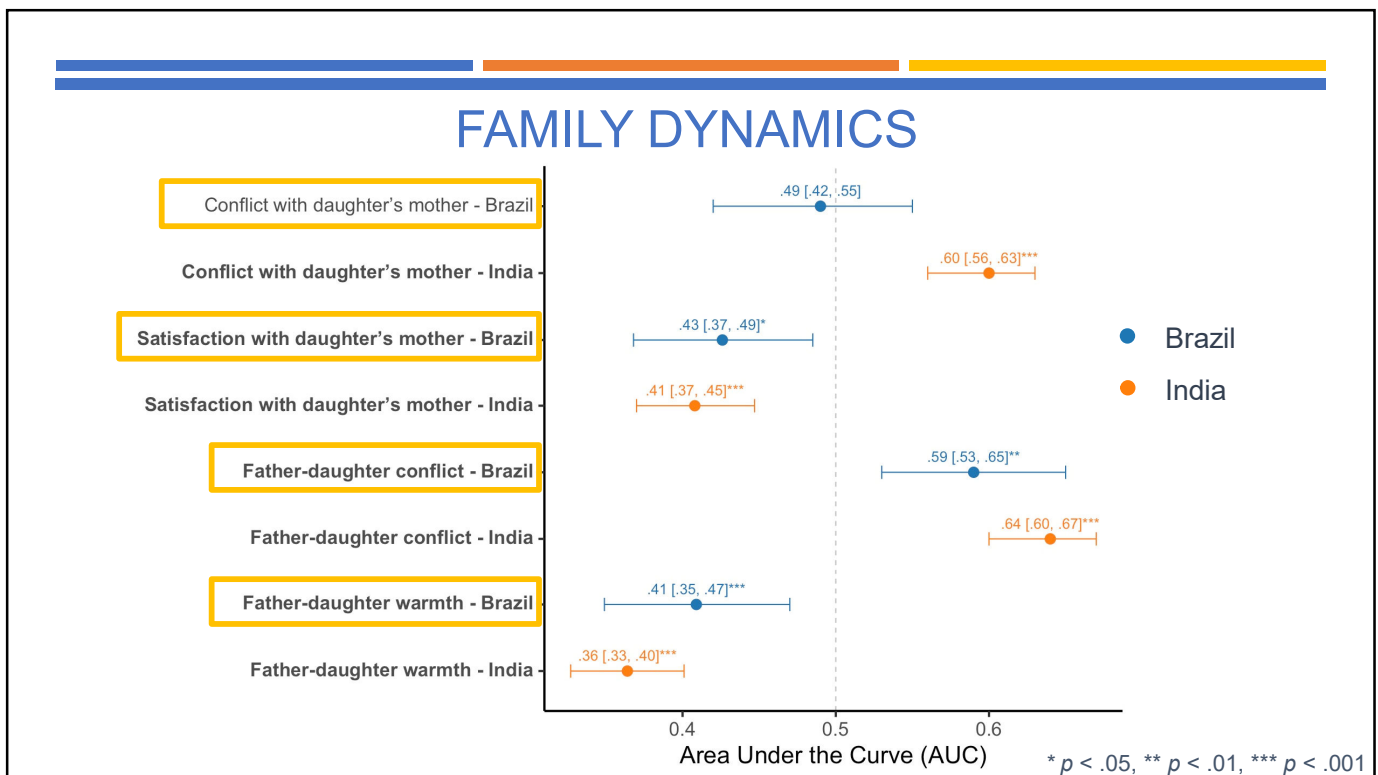
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No likelihood (0)   Any likelihood (1)

10

FATHER-DAUGHTER INCEST PROPENSITY

Brazil (*n* = 1073)

7.5

92.5

■ Any likelihood

d = .41

India (*n* = 1269)

22.1

77.9

■ Any likelihood

11

WESTERMARCK

Knew daughter in first 6 years - Brazil .49 [0.42, 0.54]

Knew daughter in first 6 years - India .47 [0.43, 0.51]

Parental involvement - Brazil 0.53 [0.46, 0.60]

Parental involvement - India 0.45 [0.42, 0.49]*

Importance of fatherhood - Brazil .37 [.30, .44]***

Importance of fatherhood - India .41 [.37, .45]***

● Brazil
● India

Area Under the Curve (AUC)

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

12

PATERNITY CONFIDENCE

Physical resemblance to daughter - Brazil — .39 [.33, .42]***
Physical resemblance to daughter - India — .46 [.45, .50]
Personality resemblance to daughter - Brazil — .45 [.39, .50]
Personality resemblance to daughter - India — .44 [.40, .48]**
Likelihood of infidelity by daughter's mother - Brazil — .65 [.59, .72]***
Likelihood of infidelity by daughter's mother - India — .65 [.61, .68]***

● Brazil
● India

Area Under the Curve (AUC)

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

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FAMILY DYNAMICS

Conflict with daughter's mother - Brazil — .49 [.42, .55]
Conflict with daughter's mother - India — .60 [.56, .63]***
Satisfaction with daughter's mother - Brazil — .43 [.37, .49]*
Satisfaction with daughter's mother - India — .41 [.37, .45]***
Father-daughter conflict - Brazil — .59 [.53, .65]**
Father-daughter conflict - India — .64 [.60, .67]***
Father-daughter warmth - Brazil — .41 [.35, .47]***
Father-daughter warmth - India — .36 [.33, .40]***

● Brazil
● India

Area Under the Curve (AUC)

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

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Multivariate Predictors of Incest Propensity Reported as Adjusted Odds Ratios

17

Multivariate Predictors of Incest Propensity Reported as Adjusted Odds Ratios

18

DISCUSSION

Individual	Westermarck	Paternity	Family	Country
Antisociality Incest aversion ✓	Importance of fatherhood ✓	Likelihood of infidelity ✓	Father-daughter relationship ✓	Number of sexual partners ＋

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Questions?

University of Ottawa
Institute of Mental Health Research

SSHRC CRSH

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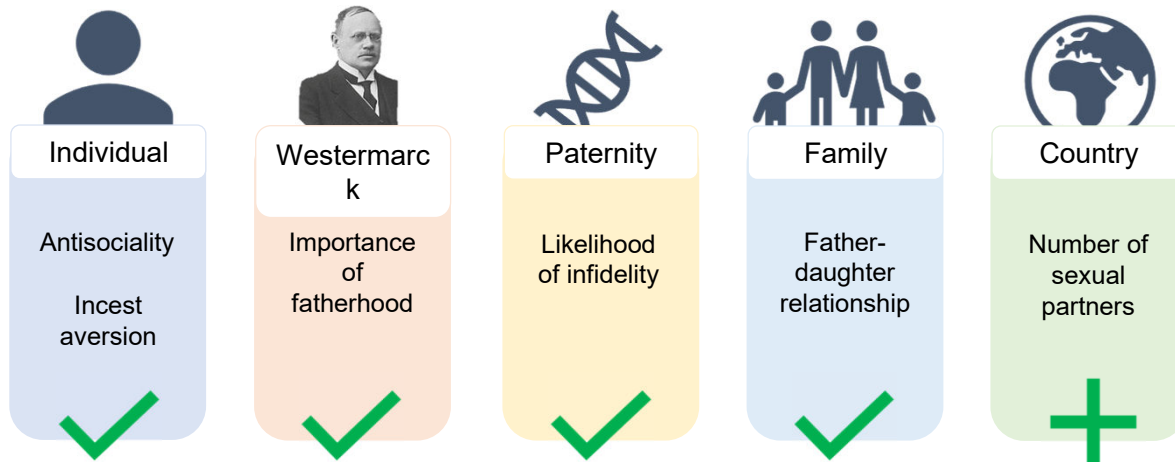
20

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

- Mean age:
  - Brazil (43.4, *sd* = 13.6) > India (35.3, *sd* = 8.6)
- Education:
  - Brazil < India: 79.3% of participants in India completed college/university or higher compared to 31.4% in Brazil
- Location:
  - Even proportion of urban (50.4%) vs rural (49.6%) participants in India, but in Brazil 81.9% sample lived in urban area
- Children
  - Fathers in Brazil had avg of 2.12 (*sd* = 1.2) children and fathers in India had avg of 2.25 (*sd* = 1.0)
  - 90.6% of fathers in Brazil and 91.9% in India had only biological daughters

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Today's Symposium

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Risk assessment (Natasha) — 5
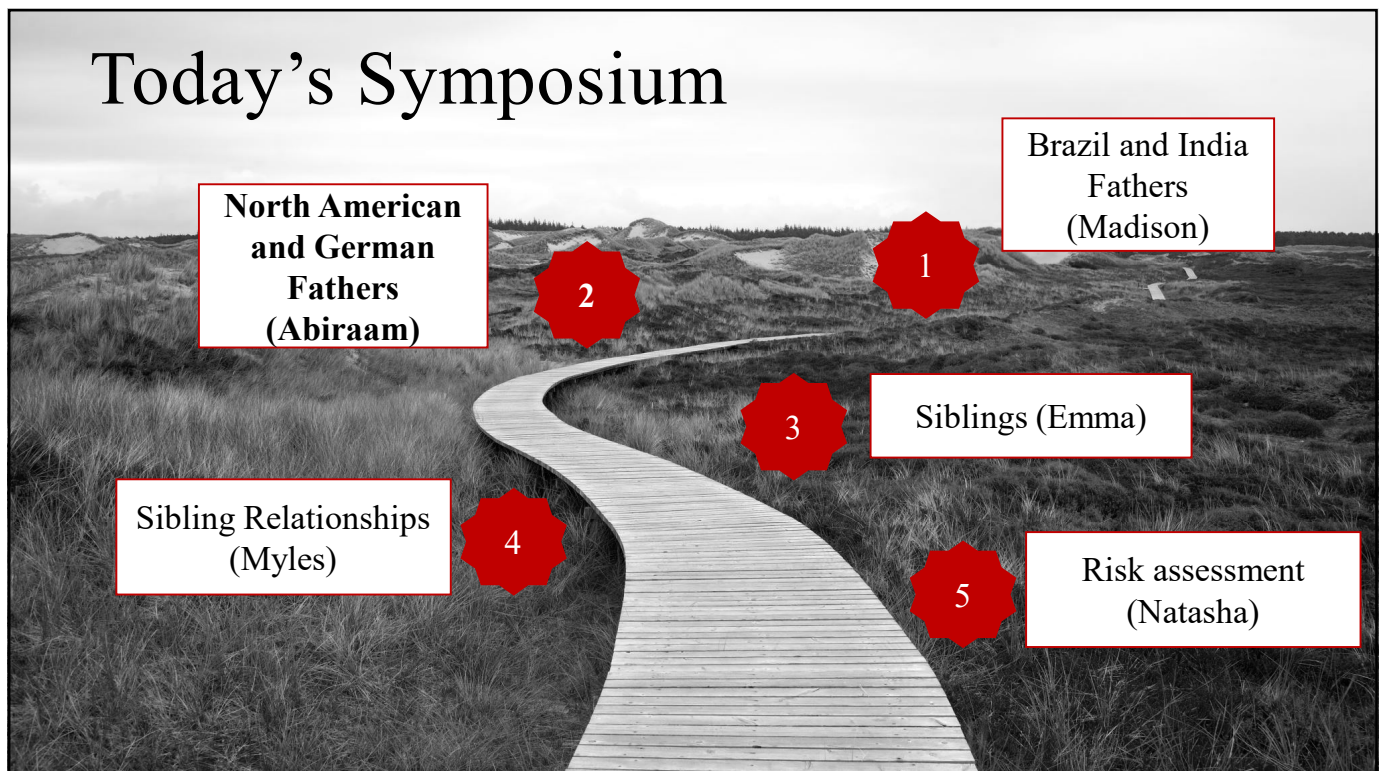
22

Father-daughter intrafamilial child sexual abuse (ICSA): Exploring risk factors

Abiraam Samithamby (abiraamsamithamby@cmail.carleton.ca)

Kelly M. Babchishin, & Michael C. Seto

August 28, 2025

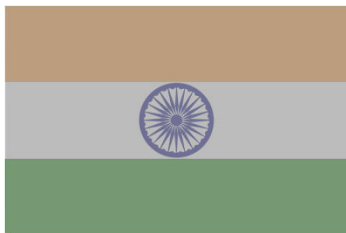SEXUALLY HARMFUL BEHAVIOURS Research Lab

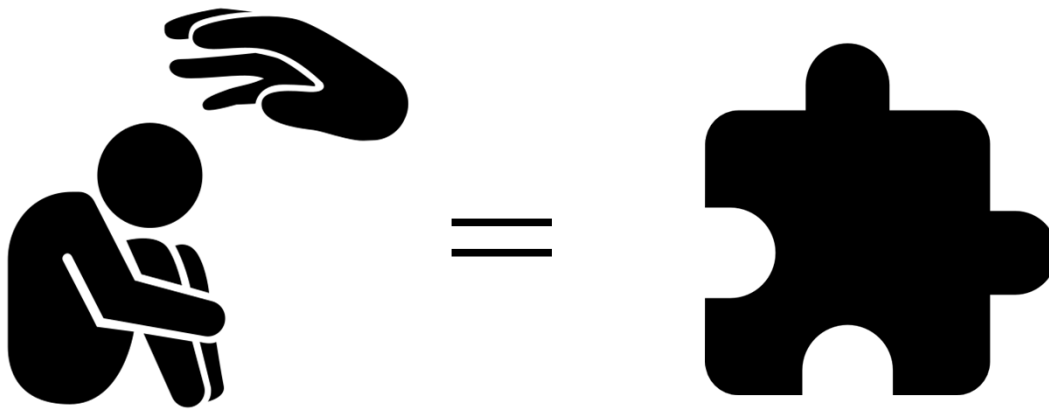SSHRC CRSH

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Shifting the focus
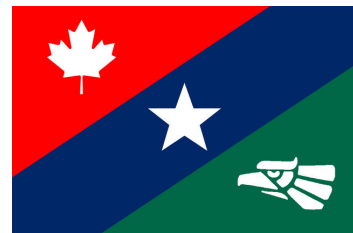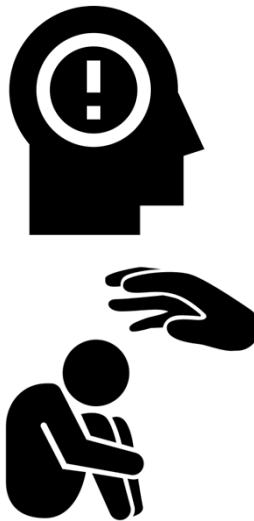
24

Incest is a puzzle

25

Risk factors for ICSA
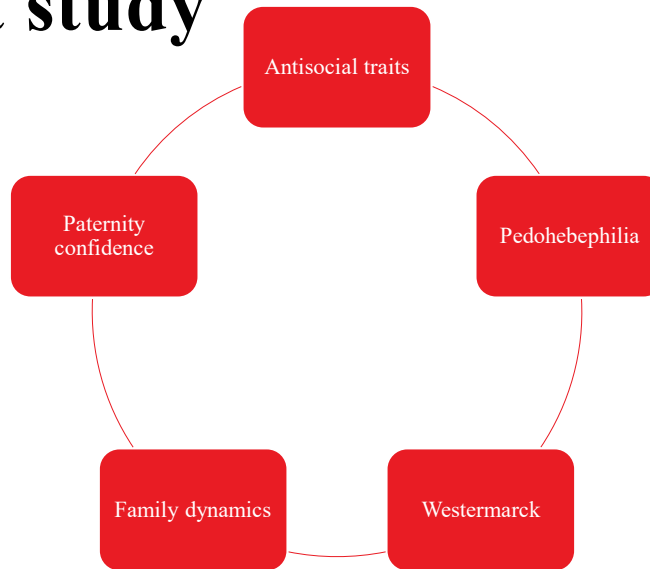

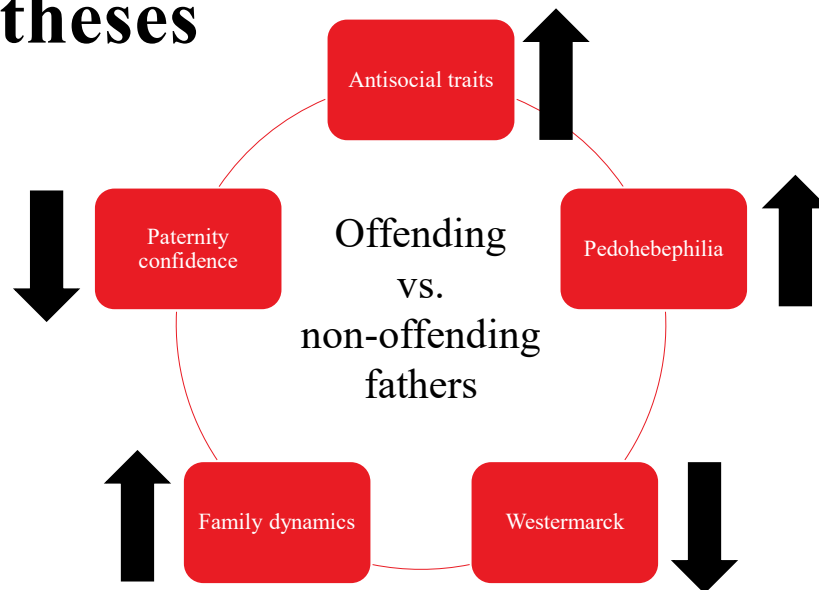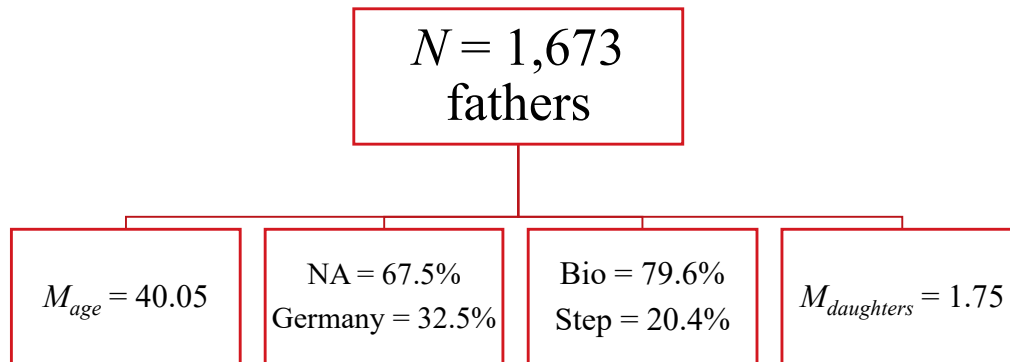| Antisocial traits | Pedohebephilic interests | Westermarck | Family dynamics | Paternity confidence |

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Current study

27

Hypotheses

28

Method – Participants

$$N = 1{,}673$$
fathers

$M_{age} = 40.05$	NA = 67.5% Germany = 32.5%	Bio = 79.6% Step = 20.4%	$M_{daughters} = 1.75$

Method – Questionnaire

Antisocial traits	• CATS (12 items)
Pedohebephilia	• Rate attractiveness (adults + children) • ↑ scores = ↑ attraction to children
Westermarck	• Present during first 6 years? • Parental involvement (8 items)
Family dynamics	• Parent-child warmth (5 items); Parent-child conflict (5 items); Partner conflict (5 items); Exposure to violence (8 items); Sexual abuse history (1 item)
Paternity confidence	• How much resemble child physically? In personality? • Suspicion that mother of child cheated?
Outcome measures	• ICSA behaviour • ICSA proclivity (arousal and disgust)

Method – Story vignette

- "Andrew is driving **his young daughter** Nicole home from a ballet recital. It's late in the evening and they have been driving for a good while when the car suddenly breaks down. Andrew decides they should spend the night in a hotel. The hotel is fully booked and there is only one room left with a double bed. They take the room and go to sleep. Andrew wakes up in the middle of the night because Nicole is embracing him and **fondling his genitals** with one hand. Andrew responds by **kissing her**. They move closer together under the covers and **begin to have intercourse**."
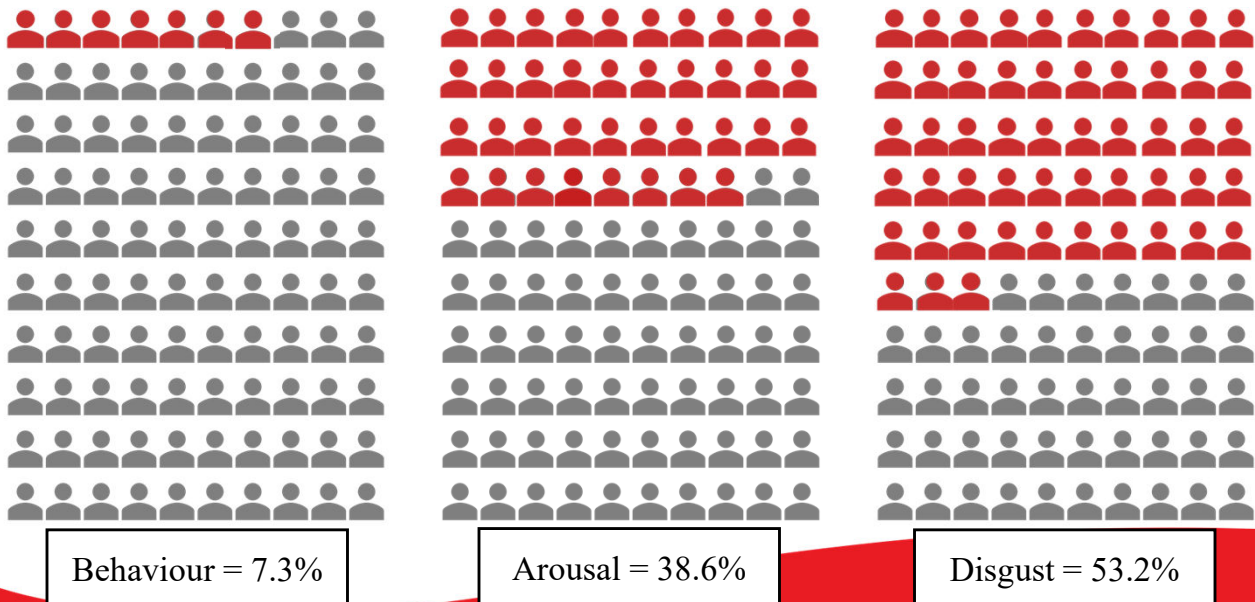
How arousing do you find the story? (0 to 10)
- 0: No proclivity
- 1-10: Some proclivity

How disgusting do you find the story? (0 to 10)
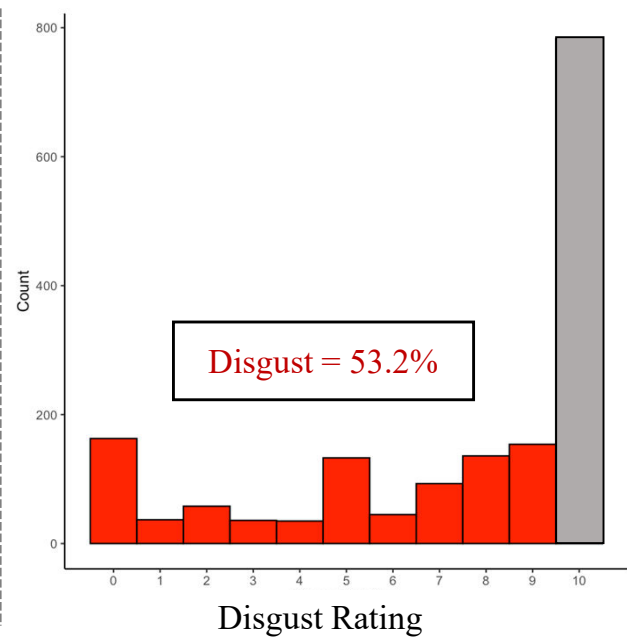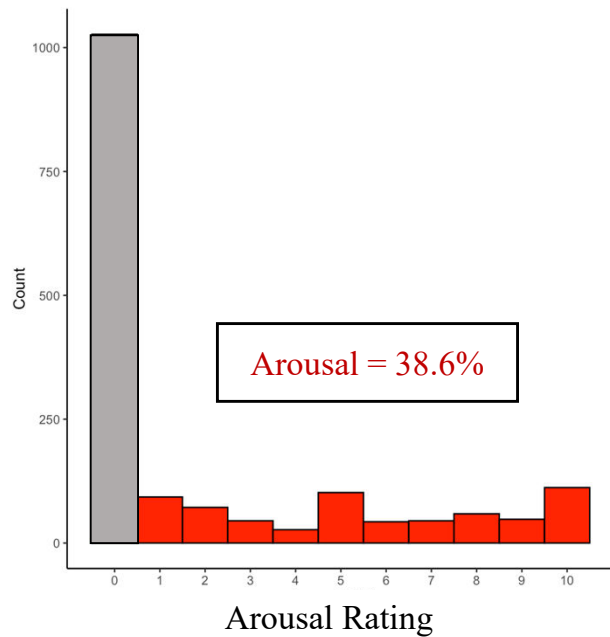- 10: No proclivity
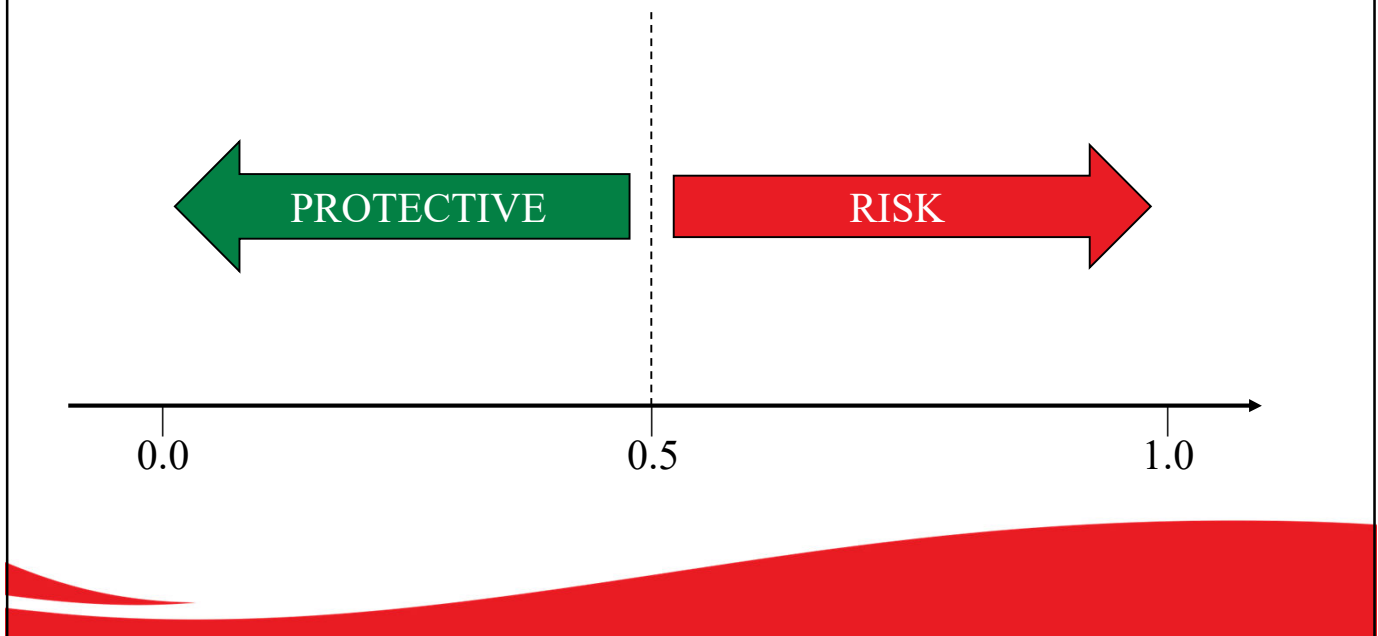- 0-9: Some proclivity

31

Results – Outcome measures

Behaviour = 7.3%   Arousal = 38.6%   Disgust = 53.2%

32

A note on proclivity measures

Arousal = 38.6%

Disgust = 53.2%

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Results – Area Under the Curve (AUC)
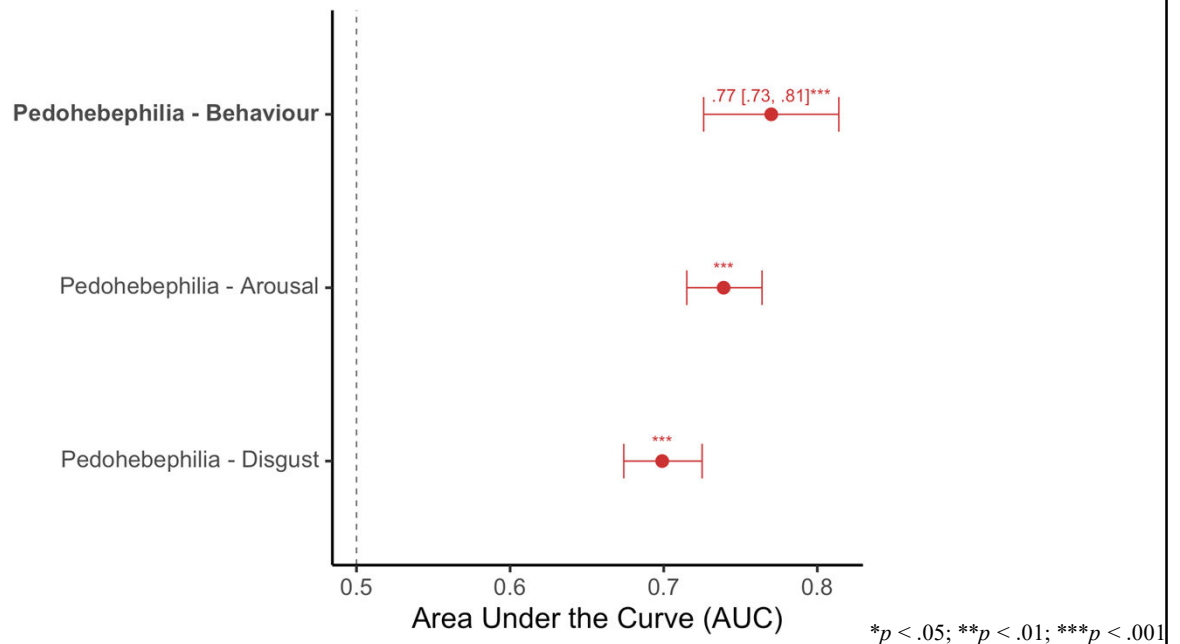

PROTECTIVE

RISK

0.0   0.5   1.0

34

Results – Antisocial traits
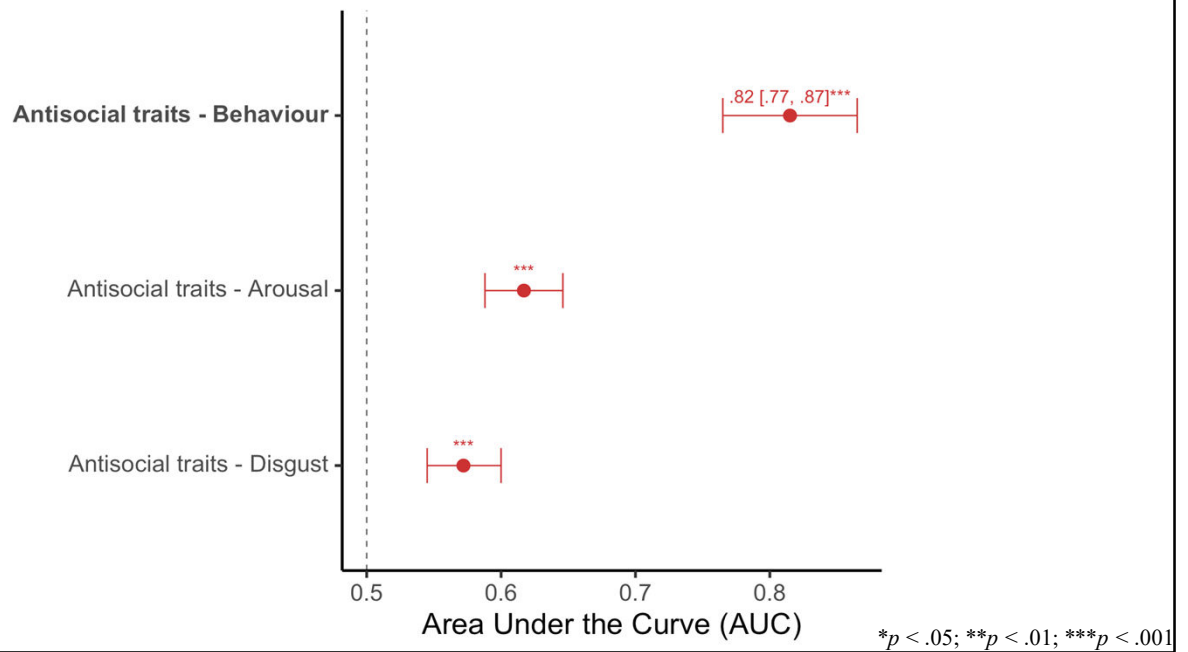
35
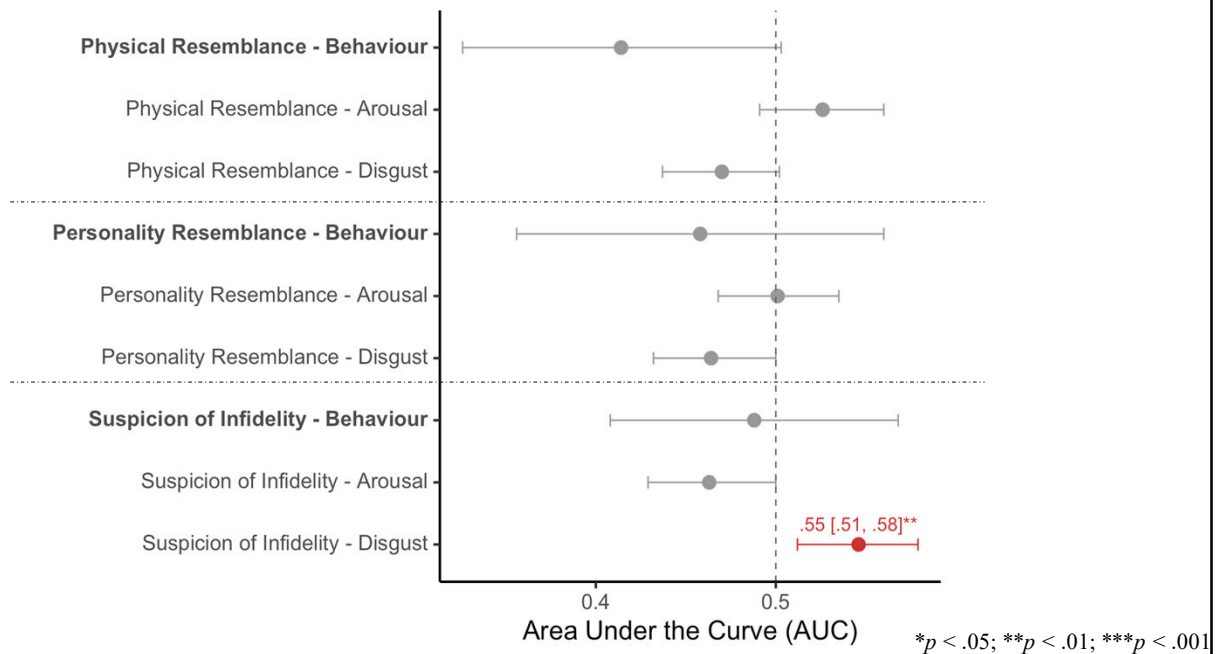
Results – Pedohebephilia

36

Results – Westermarck

Know Child First 6 Years - Behaviour	.44 [.38, .49]*
Know Child First 6 Years - Arousal	***
Know Child First 6 Years - Disgust	*
Parental Involvement - Behaviour	.34 [.28, .40]***
Parental Involvement - Arousal	***
Parental Involvement - Disgust	***

Area Under the Curve (AUC)

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001
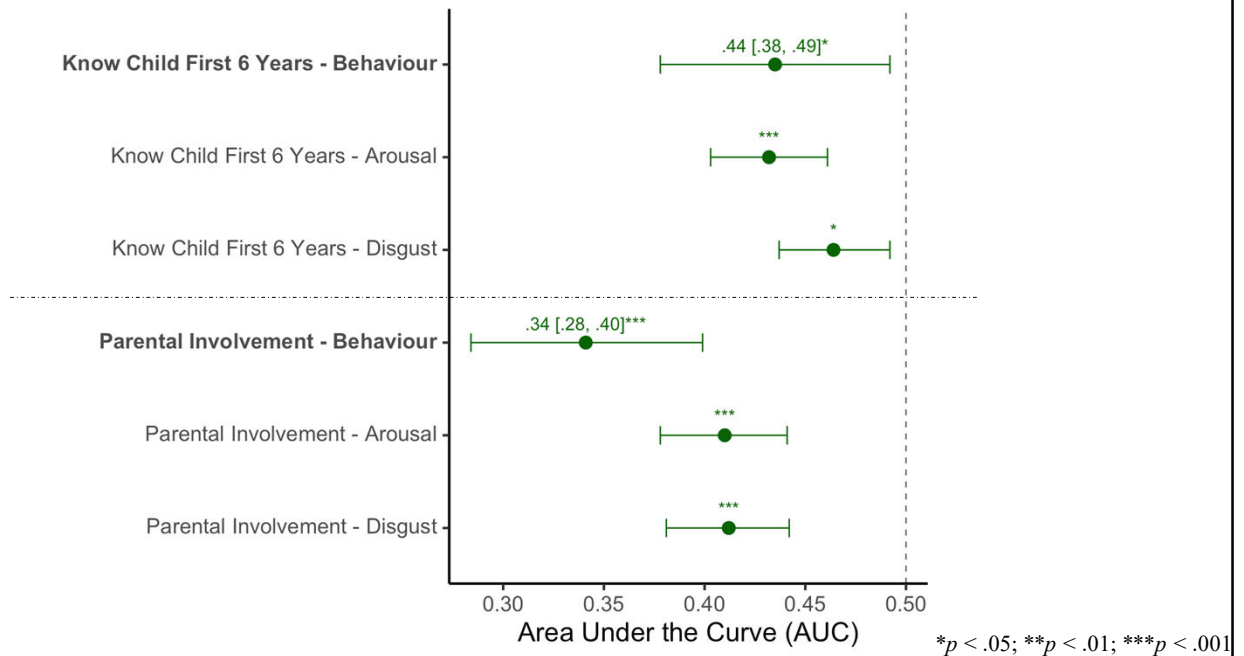
37

Results – Family dynamics

|	
Parent-Child Warmth - Behaviour	.32 [.27, .37]***
Parent-Child Warmth - Arousal	***
Parent-Child Warmth - Disgust	***
Parent-Child Conflict - Behaviour	.64 [.60, .69]***
Parent-Child Conflict - Arousal	***
Parent-Child Conflict - Disgust	***
Conflict with Mother - Behaviour	.68 [.62, .74]***
Conflict with Mother - Arousal	***
Conflict with Mother - Disgust	***
Family Violence Exposure - Behaviour	.80 [.76, .85]***
Family Violence Exposure - Arousal	***
Family Violence Exposure - Disgust	***
Sexual Abuse History - Behaviour	.74 [.68, .80]***
Sexual Abuse History - Arousal	***
Sexual Abuse History - Disgust	**

Area Under the Curve (AUC)

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

38

Results – Paternity confidence (bio only)

Results – Paternity confidence (step only)
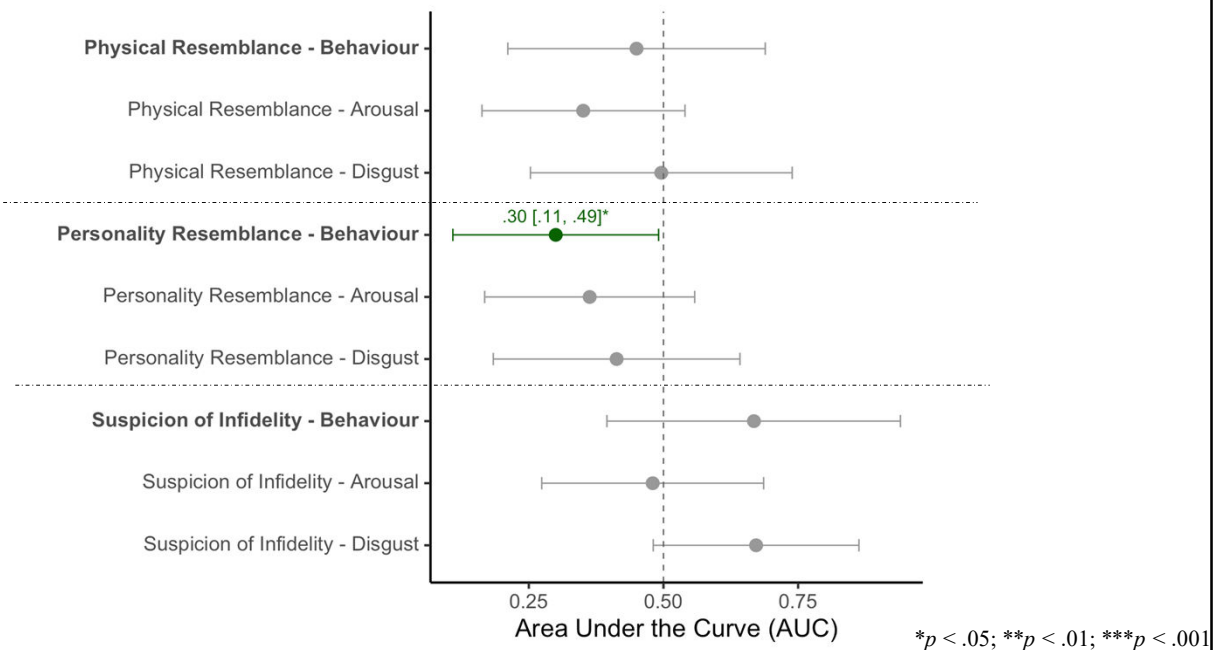
Discussion

Current study:	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Antisocial traits	Pedohebephilic interests	Westermarck	Family dynamics	Paternity confidence
Madison's Study:	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

41

The use of vignettes
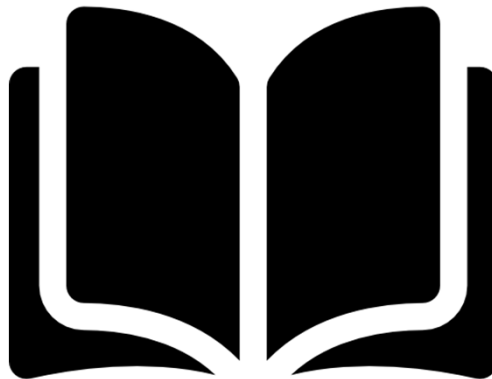
42

Conclusion

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Thank You!

Email: abiraamsamithamby@cmail.carleton.ca

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Today's Symposium

Brazil and India Fathers (Madison)

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Risk assessment (Natasha)
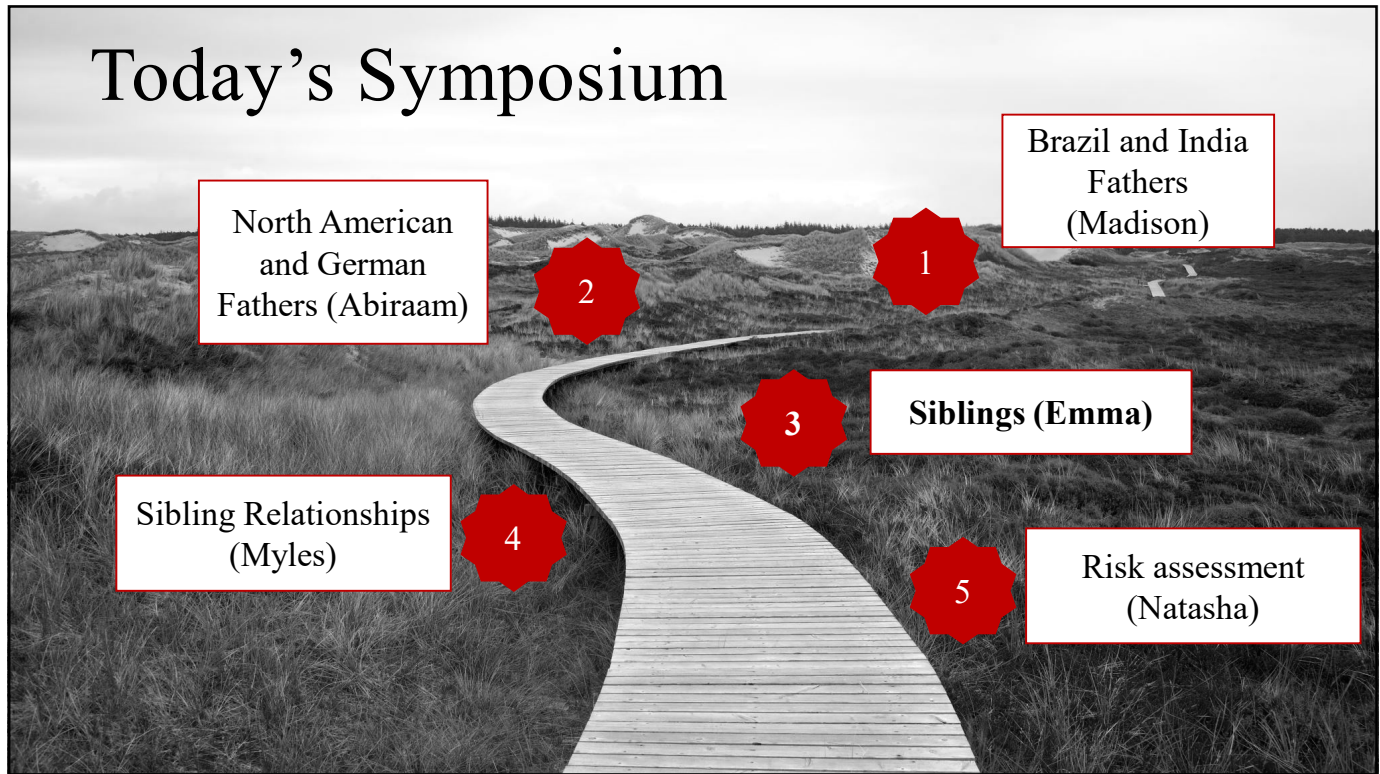
5

The impact of individual and evolutionary factors on the propensity for sibling sexual abuse

Emma J. Holmes (emmajholmes@cmail.carleton.ca)

Kelly M. Babchishin & Yan Liu

August 28th, 2025

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Theories of sibling sexual abuse

Motivation factors
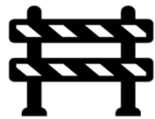
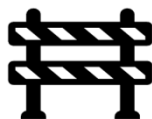Facilitation factors
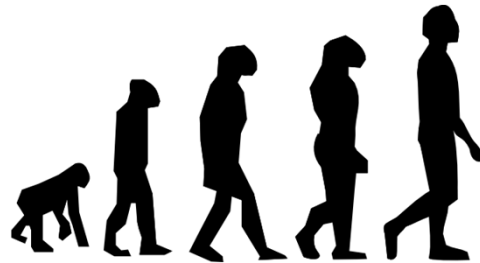
Evolutionary theory of incest aversion
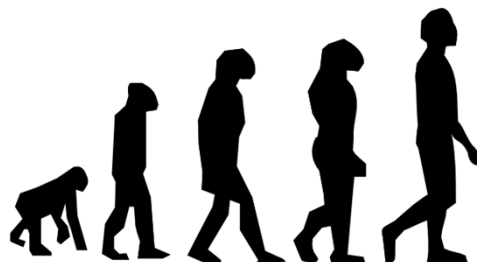
47

Current study

Which combination of factors best explain propensity for sibling sexual abuse?

Motivation factors

Facilitation factors

Evolutionary theory of incest aversion

48

Method – Participants

Wave 1: $N = 684$

centiment

Wave 2
$N = 225$

reddit

$N = 255$

SONA SYSTEMS

$N = 1,164$

✅ 18 – 30 years old

✅ ≥1 biological sibling(s) within 5 years of participant

✅ Live in Canada or the USA

❌ Twins

🚹 46.6% identified as women

🚹🚺 49.1% identified as straight

49

Method – Measures

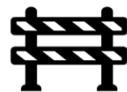Reactions to 3 fictional vignettes depicting sibling sexual abuse
- Likelihood of reciprocation
- Moral opposition
- Disgust

Propensity

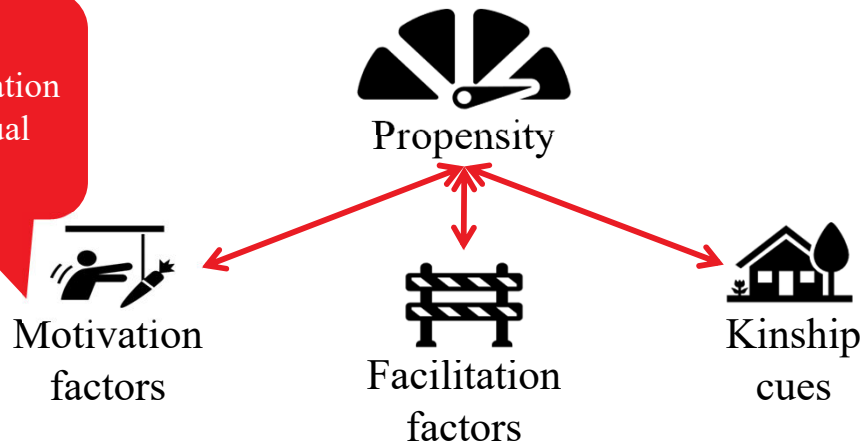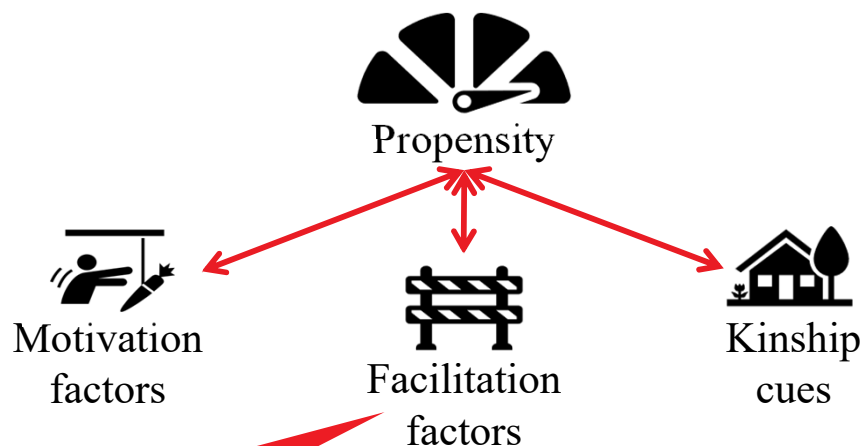Motivation factors

Facilitation factors

Kinship cues

50

Method – Measures

51

Method – Measures

52

Method – Measures

Propensity

- Sibling-typical activities
- Parental perinatal association
- Perceived physical resemblance

Motivation factors

Facilitation factors

Kinship cues
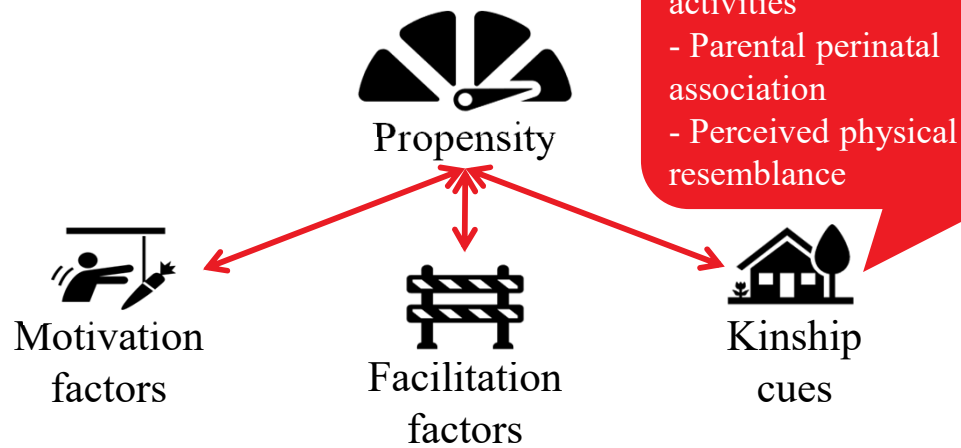
53

Method – Analyses

Observed variables (e.g., pedophilia)

Latent variables (e.g., motivation factors)

Mplus

Assess…
- Model-data fit
- Theoretical relationships between constructs
- Compare fit of competing models
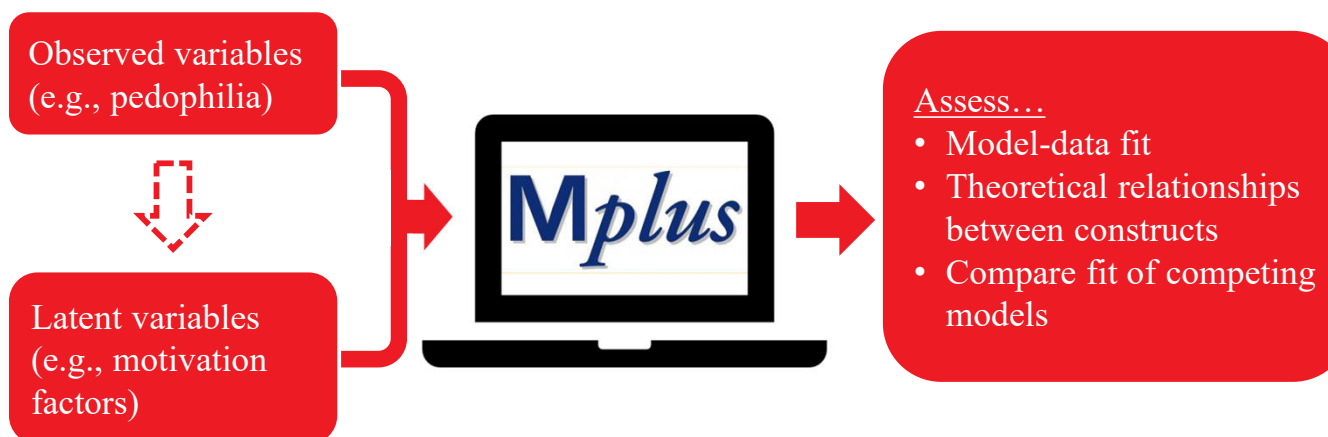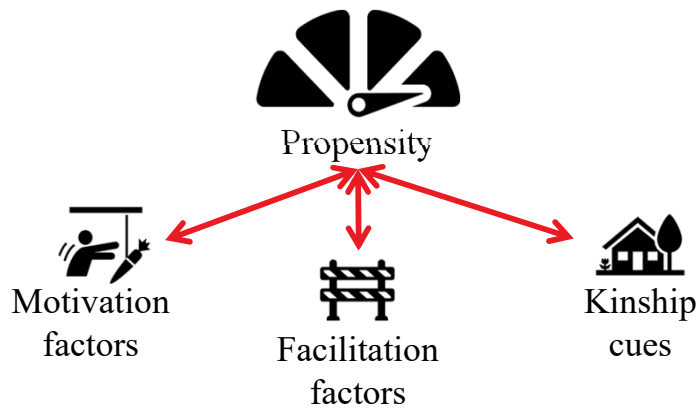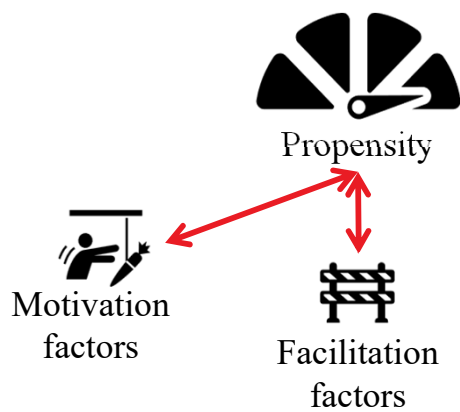
54

Results

Motivation-Facilitation-Kinship model

Model fit:
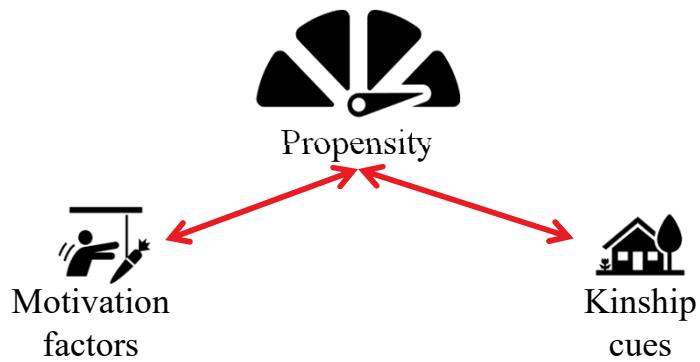- M-F-K: baseline model

Results

Motivation-Facilitation model

Model fit:
- M-F-K: baseline model

- M-F: significantly worse fit

Results

Motivation-Kinship model

Propensity

Motivation factors

Kinship cues

Model fit:
- M-F-K: baseline model

- M-F: significantly worse fit

- M-K: significantly worse fit

The Motivation-Facilitation-Kinship model fit the data the best.

Results

Propensity

.77

.28

.21

Motivation factors
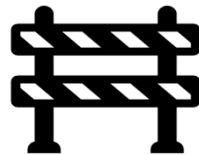
Facilitation factors
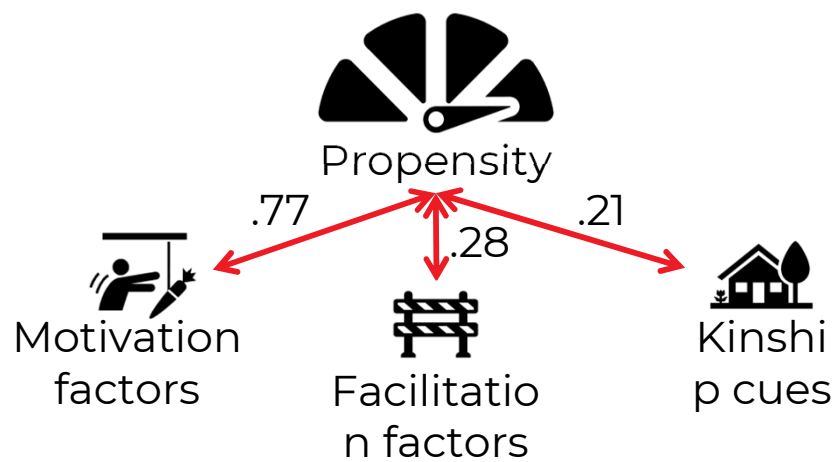
Kinship cues

Conclusion

Motivation factors ✓

Facilitation factors ✓

Kinship cues

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Conclusion
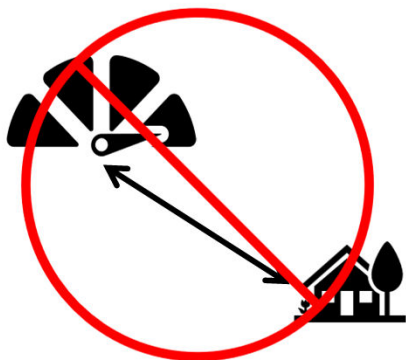
Alternative explanations
- Specificity of evolved mechanisms
- Kinship cues = proximity = opportunity

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Thank you!

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emmajholmes@cmail.carleton.ca

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Today's Symposium

Brazil and India Fathers (Madison)

North American and German Fathers (Abiraam)

1

2

Siblings (Emma)

3

Sibling Relationships (Myles)

4

Risk assessment (Natasha)

5
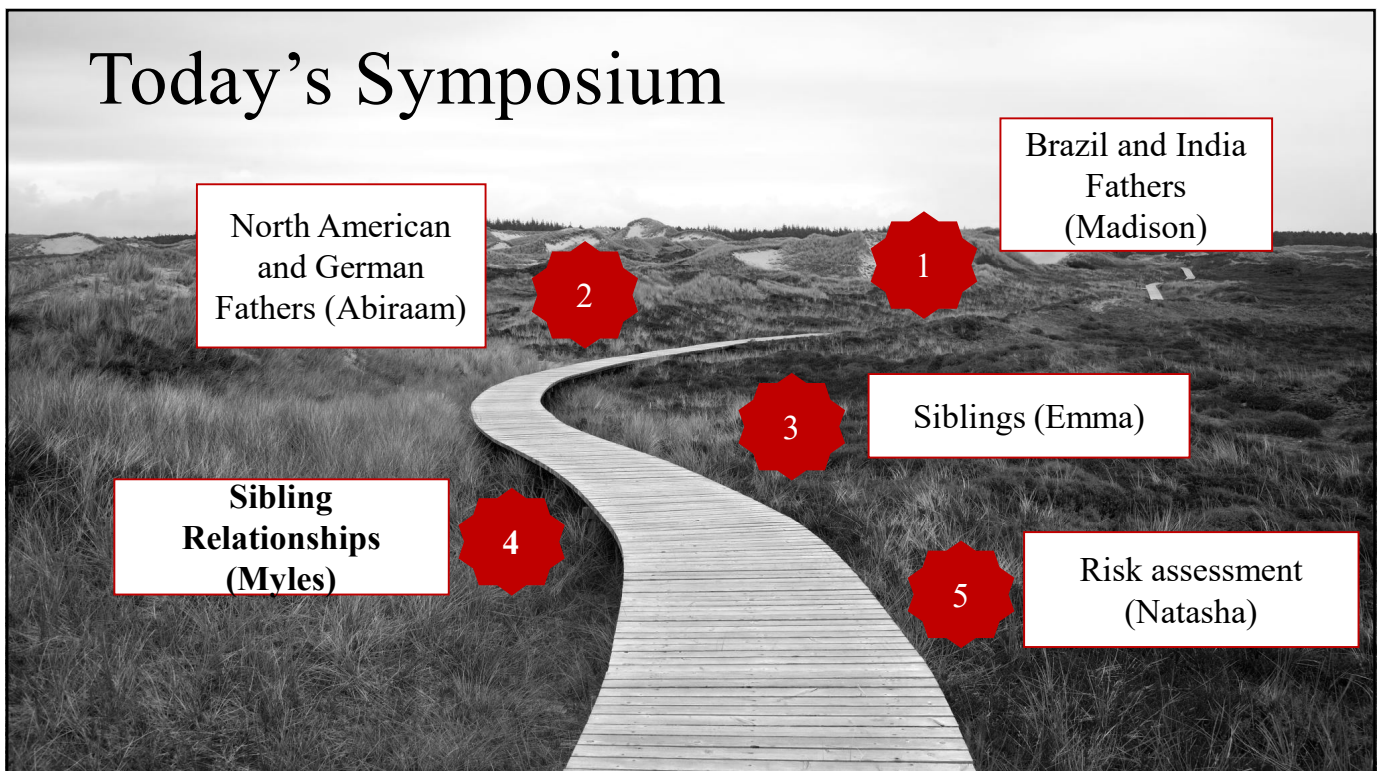
62

Assessing the Link between Sibling Relationship Quality and Propensity for Sibling Sexual Abuse (SSA)

Myles Davidson (mylesdavidson@cmail.carleton.ca)

Emma J. Holmes, & Kelly M. Babchishin

August 28, 2025

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Why study sibling relationship quality?

64

Sibling relationship quality can be a protective or risk factor for SSA

Negative relationships	Positive relationships
Anger	Nurturance
Aggression	Openness
Physical intimacy	Warmth

Risk factors   Protective factors
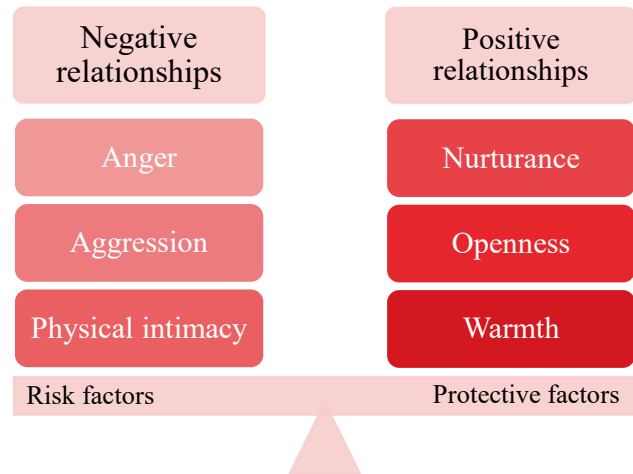
65

?

Research Question

Is sibling relationship quality related to propensity for SSA?

66

Method – Participants

Wave 1: $N = 684$

Wave 2:
$N = 225$

$N = 255$

$N = 1,164$

✅ 18 – 30 years old

✅ ≥1 biological sibling(s) within 5 years of participant

✅ Live in Canada or the USA

👤 46.6% identified as women

👥 49.1% identified as straight

67

Method – Measures

**Modified Sibling Attachment Inventory (SAI)**

Noel et al., 2018

- Predictor variable
- 10 items
- **Items personalized** using participants' sibling's name
- Items rated from **participant's** and their **sibling's** perspective
(e.g., "I accept [sibling] as they are" vs. "[Sibling] accepts me as I am")
- Two additional items added

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Method – Measures

You are sitting on the floor of your living room with [sibling's name], doing a puzzle. Nobody else is home. [sibling's name] puts their hand on your genitals and begins to rub their hand along your genitals.
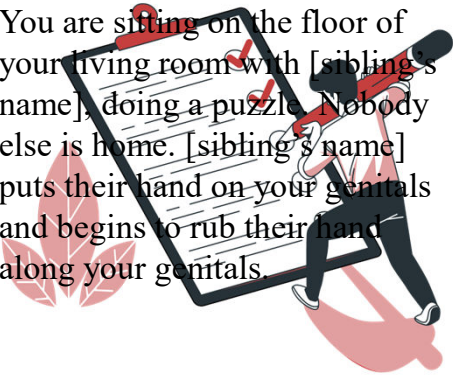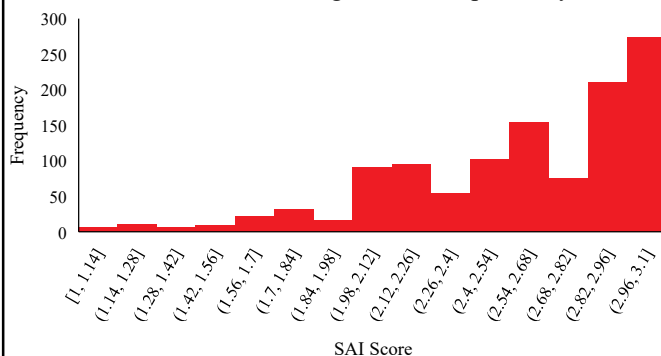
Propensity for SSA

- Outcome variable
- Measured using reactions to author-generated vignette
  - Disgust
  - Arousal
  - Moral wrongness
  - Likelihood of encouraging sibling reciprocation
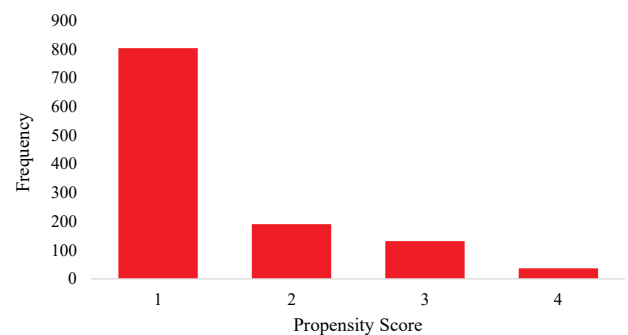- Composite propensity computed and grouped into quartiles

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Results

Distribution of Sibling Relationship Quality

$M_{SAI} = 2.57$ ($SD = 0.43$)

Distribution of Propensity for SSA

$M_{Propensity} = 1.49$ ($SD = 0.82$)

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Results

Regression of Propensity for SSA on Sibling Relationship Quality

$$\beta = -.11, p < .001$$
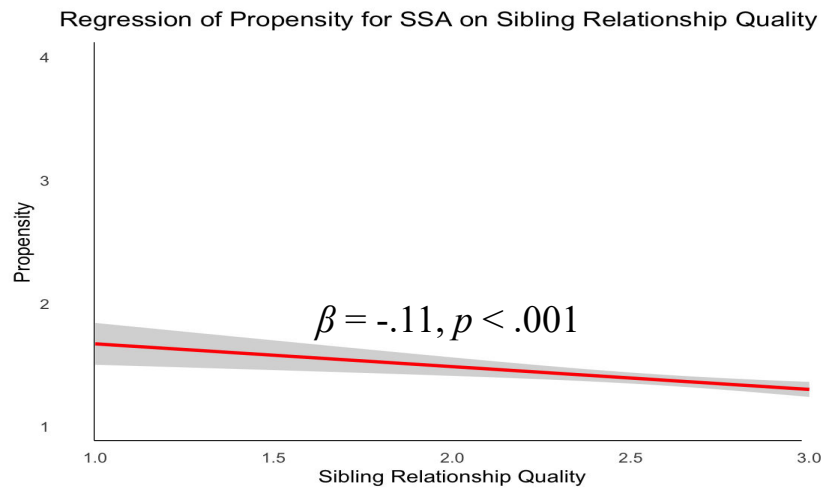
Model explained 1% of the variance ($R^2 = .01$).

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Results

Interaction Effect of Sibling Relationship Quality and Participant-Sibling Gender Concordance on Propensity for SSA
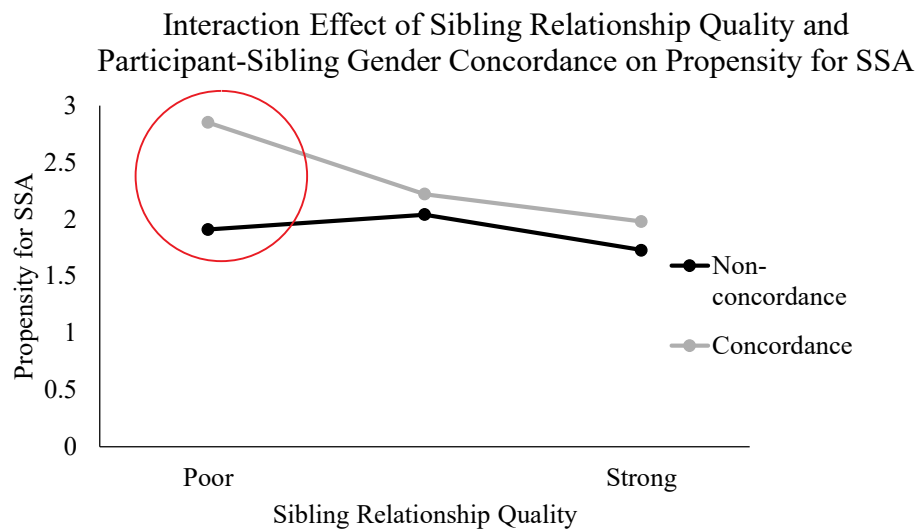
72

Results

Interaction Effect of Sibling Relationship Quality and Sibling Age Order on Propensity for SSA
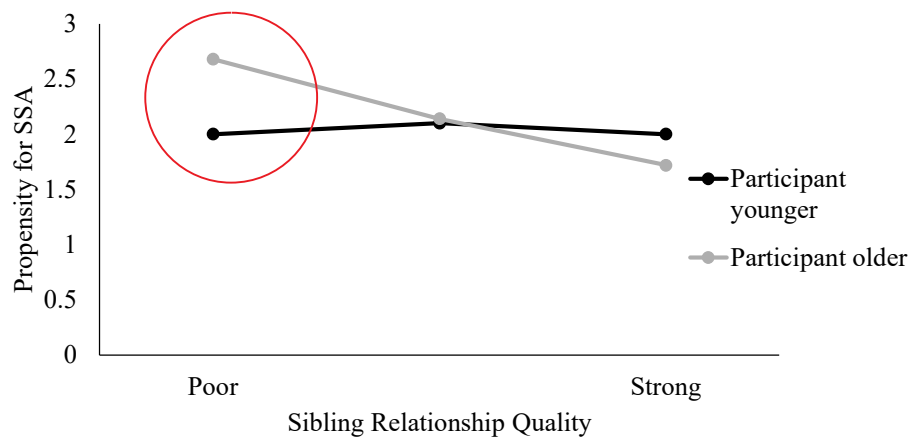
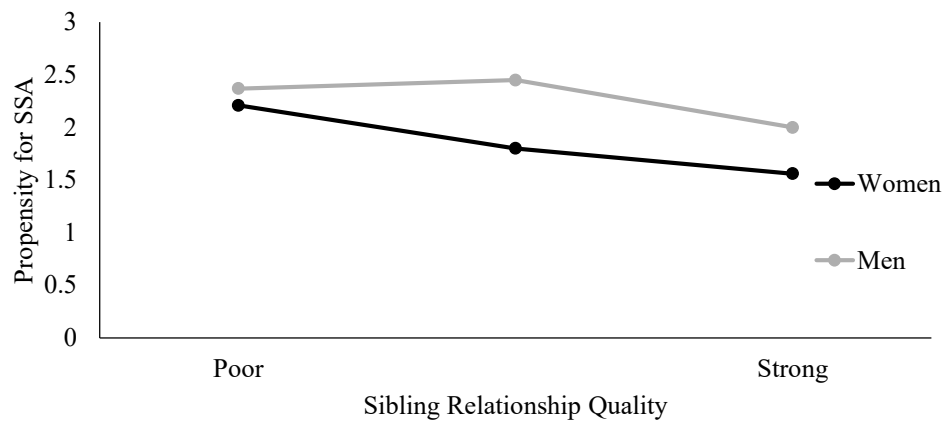73

Results

Interaction Effect of Sibling Relationship Quality and Participant Gender on Propensity for SSA

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Discussion

Sibling relationship quality is potentially protective against SSA, especially in certain contexts

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Thank you!

Carleton University

SEXUALLY
HARMFUL
BEHAVIOURS

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Today's Symposium

Brazil and India Fathers (Madison) — 1

North American and German Fathers (Abiraam) — 2

Siblings (Emma) — 3

Sibling Relationships (Myles) — 4

Risk assessment (Natasha) — 5
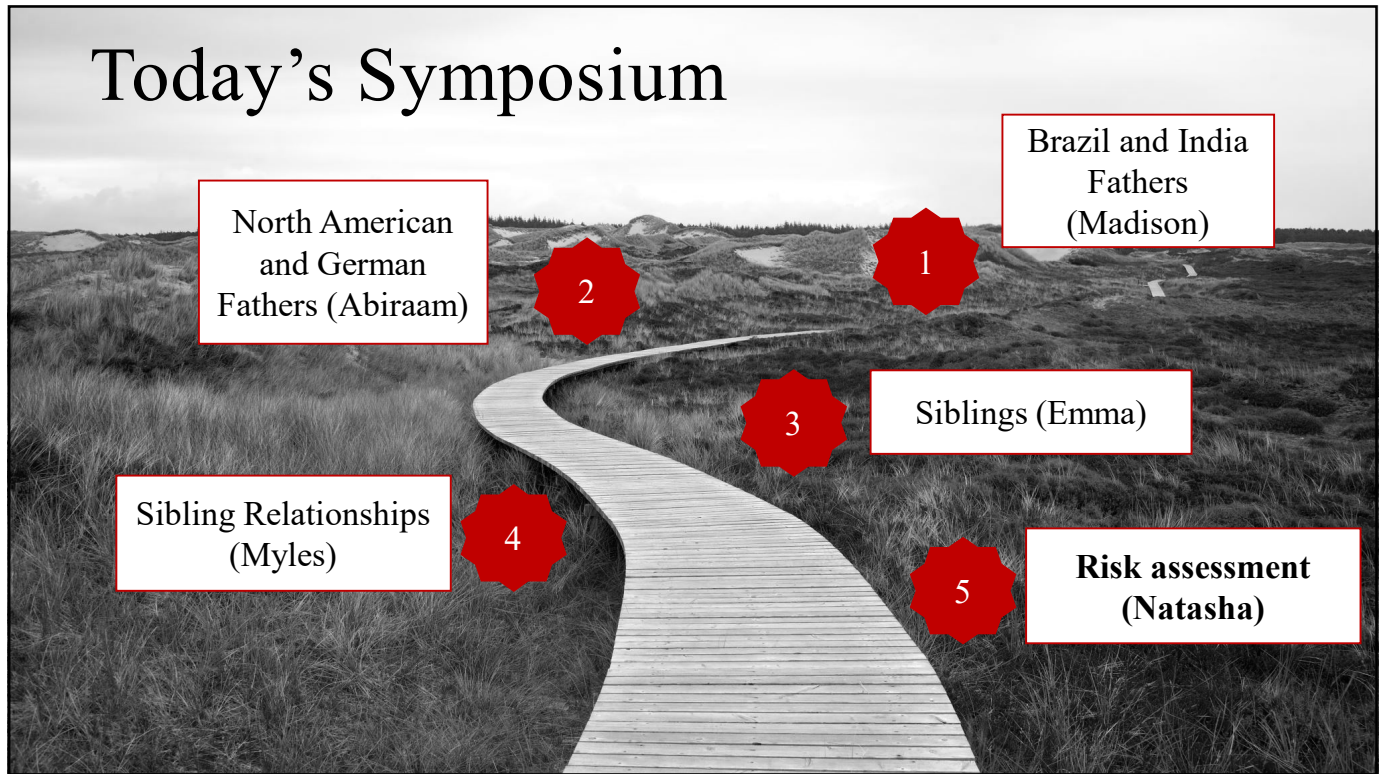
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Risk Assessment for Men with Incest Sexual Offences: Predictive Accuracy of the Static-99R

Natasha Fracassi
& Maaike Helmus

IATSO 2025
Poznań, Poland

Thursday, August 28th, 2025

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Introduction

Incest Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) ≠ Extrafamilial Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)

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Introduction

ICD-11
- Child over 5 years = 5-14 years

DSM-5
- Prepubescent child ≈ <13 years

Research
- Varies per study, per jurisdiction → <18 years
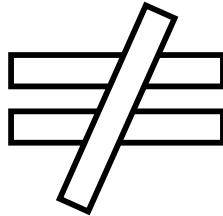
Incest
- child age may be extended due to the unique dynamics of familial abuse

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Static-99R

SAARNA

www.saarna.org

Item #	Risk Factor	Possible Score
1	Age at release from index sex offence	-3, -1, 0, 1
2	Ever lived with a lover	0, 1
3	Index non-sexual violence - Any Convictions	0, 1
4	Prior non-sexual violence - Any Convictions	0, 1
5	Prior Sex Offences	0, 1, 2, 3
6	Four or more prior sentencing dates	0, 1
7	Any convictions for non-contact sex offences	0, 1
8	Any Unrelated Victims	0, 1
9	Any Stranger Victims	0, 1
10	Any Male Victims	0, 1
	Total Score (Sum)	From -3 to 12

Static-99R: Strengths, Limitations, Predictive Accuracy Meta-Analysis, and Legal Admissibility Review

L. Maaike Helmus[1], Sharon M. Kelley[2], Annabelle Frazier[3], Yolanda M. Fernandez[4], Seung C. Lee[4], Martin Rettenberger[5], and Marcus T. Boccaccini[6]

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Purpose of Current Study

Given the discrepancy in Static-99R total score and risk factors between incest and extrafamilial CSA, would the predictive accuracy of Static-99R vary between these two groups?

Does the way we define "child" have substantial impact on recidivism research?

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Hypotheses

The predictive accuracy of Static-99R will vary between incest and extrafamilial CSA

The age cutoff used the define child will have substantial impact on recidivism research

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Method: Multiple Datasets

In order for a dataset to be used in this study:

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Dataset Name	Dataset #	Sample Size
DSP	1	308
Knight & Thorton 1	4.1	124
Knight & Thorton 2	4.2	87
Proulx	6	89
Boer	7	164
Hang	8	71
Langstrom	11	580
Reinhardt	12	85
Bartosh	15	53
Bonta/Yessine	17	31
Wilson	18	40
Grace	19	298
Johansen	25	227
Lehmann	29	376
Nicholaichuk	32	48
Romine Swinburne	33	331
Proulx (Pinel)	34	117
BC-RAPSA-D	35	556

18 Datasets

Total 3,585

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Datasets

Child Age

- 3 → 0-13, 0-17 (if incest)
- 5 → 0-15
- 5 → 0-13
- 5 → unknown/undefined

Jurisdiction

- 9 Canadian
- 5 American
- 3 European
- 1 New Zealand

Recidivism

- 10 charges
- 8 convictions

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CSA Type

Incest CSA

Individuals who commit sexual offenses exclusively against children within their own family, such as their biological children, stepchildren, or other close relatives

Extrafamilial CSA

Individuals who committed a sexual offence outside of their family circle

CSA Type	N (%)
Extrafamilial CSA	1,997 (55.7%)
Incest CSA	1,588 (44.3%)
Total	3,585 (100%)

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Static-99R Total Score

Averages Static-99R Total Score	
2 CSA Type	Mean (SD)
Extrafamilial	3.27 (2.46)
Incest	0.73 (1.94)
	2.15 (2.57)

Min, Max

-3, 11

Cohen's D

1.129

Very Large Effect Size

95% Confidence Interval

2.390, 2.678

Statistically Significant

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Sexual Recidivism at Fixed 5-year Follow Up

Defined In Primary Data

Reoffending with a new sexual offense and/or crimes with a sexual motivation, whether or not the offence was explicitly sexual

Chi-Square

2 CSA Type	No Recidivism	Yes Recidivism	Total	
Extrafamilial	1,747 (87.5%)	250 (12.5%)	2,007 (100%)	$p < .001$
Incest	1,514 (95.3%)	74 (4.7%)	1,588 (100%)	
	3,261 (91%)	**324 (9%)**	**3,585 (100%)**	

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Child Age

Child Age	n (%)
0-13	1,136 (31.7%)
0-15	825 (23%)
0-17 (if incest)	756 (21.1%)
Unknown/Undefined	868 (24.2%)
Total	3,585 (100%)

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Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	n (%)
Canada	1,424 (39.7%)
United States	822 (22.9%)
Europe	1,041 (29%)
New Zealand	298 (8.3%)
Total	3,585 (100%)

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Data Analysis

Population
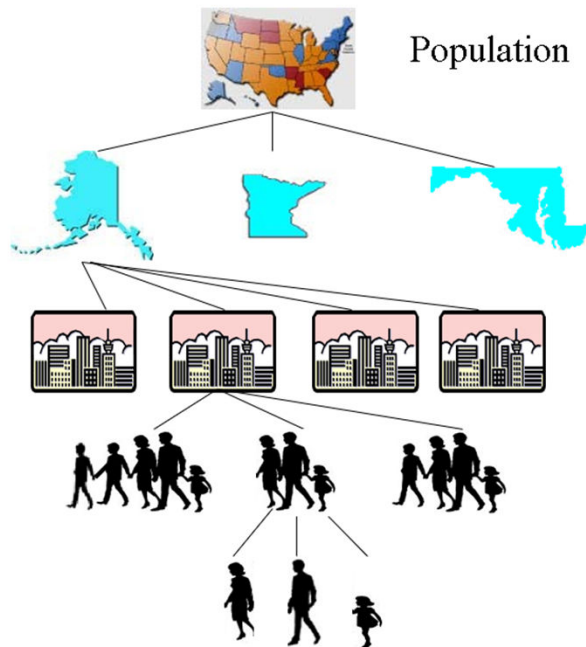
Multilevel Logistic Model

Compared different models to see:

- If Static-99R predicts sexual recidivism differently based on the type of CSA

- If age cutoff used to define a child influences research findings

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Results: CSA Type

The odds of incest CSA sexually recidivating were

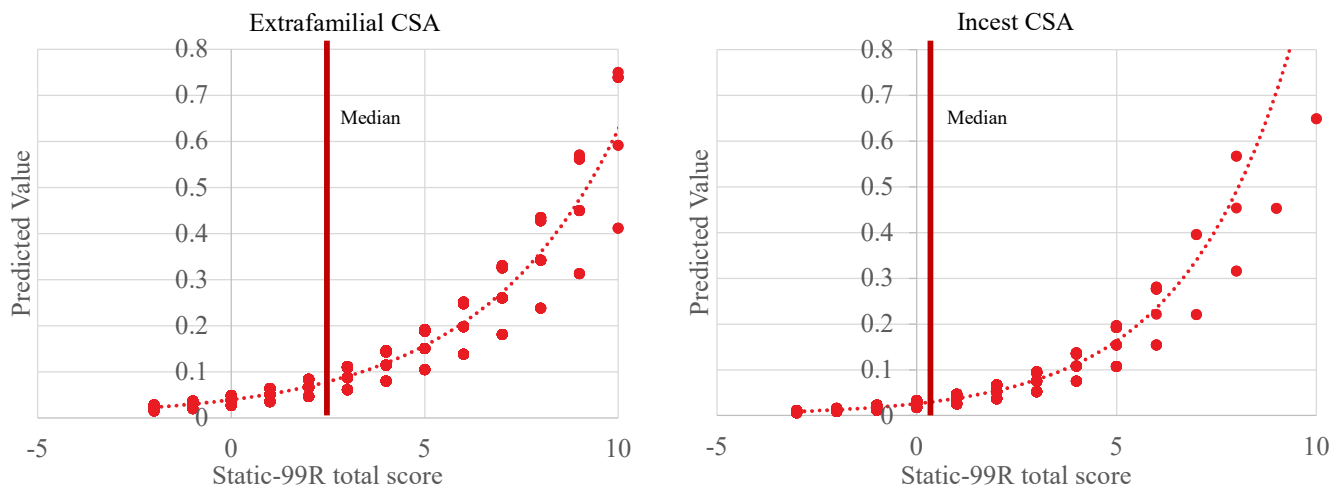66.9% lower compared to extrafamilial CSA

Statistically significant

Once Static-99R is added to the model

Not statistically significant

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Comparing Slopes

The predictive accuracy of sexual recidivism for the Static-99R total score is **THE SAME**

across both extrafamilial CSA and incest CSA

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Results: Child Age

The odds of sexual recidivism for individuals who committed CSA categorized by 0-17 (if incest) were 4.7% more than those categorized by 0-13

The odds of sexual recidivism for individuals who committed CSA categorized by 0-17 (if incest) were 7.4% more than those categorized by Unknown/Undefined

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Summary of Findings

Static-99R shows its reliable predictive accuracy across CSA subtypes

Older child age cutoffs show a less homogenous and riskier group

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Questions?

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