

Part 5

Discussion

The results of the profiling research should be treated with some caution. The generalisability of this research is limited by the fact that selection of subjects was neither random nor representatively stratified. Furthermore, only offenders who had been detected by the Censorship Compliance Unit were sampled and this population may well differ from offenders who have not been detected. However, given that this sample included offenders who had not been convicted of an offence, but for whom evidence of offending was verified, it remains broader than that employed in much of the research undertaken in relation to criminal offending.

Various design issues were also identified in relation to the questionnaire used to collect the data. These issues are listed in Appendix C and have been used to modify the questionnaire for future use (Appendix D). However, bearing these limitations in mind, a number of observations can still be made. These suggest potential avenues for ongoing research.

Most of the offenders were detected whilst trading objectionable material on the Internet. The results show that overwhelmingly, these individuals were male. Furthermore, the sole female offender demonstrated very different offence behaviours from her male counterparts, in that her involvement was focused primarily on the distribution of objectionable material for financial gain. As such, the results are in line with national crime statistics showing males as the primary perpetrators of crime within New Zealand (Spier, 1999).

In contrast to New Zealand National Crime Statistics (New Zealand Police 2002), however, the majority of offenders were also found to be of New Zealand European or other European ethnicity, and of medium estimated socio-economic status. Even accounting for the non-representative sampling methods, the relative paucity of offenders from other ethnic groups is notable, especially given that Māori and Pacific peoples tend to be over represented in other New Zealand crime statistics (Spier, 1999). These findings could possibly be explained by the fact that Māori and Pacific peoples tend to be of lower average socio-economic status than other New Zealanders. If this is so, it does not appear to be the cost of computer equipment that prevents offending amongst these groups. Within the context of the current research, socio-economic status was not found to correlate with cost of computer equipment. The most likely reason for this is the lower levels of access to the Internet amongst Māori and Pacific peoples. The 2001 census found that approximately 40 percent of New Zealand households have Internet access, while only 25 percent of Māori and 20 percent of Pacific households have Internet access (Statistics New Zealand, 2001A). It is also worth noting that Pacific peoples have been found to hold more conservative views of the depiction of sex and nudity in broadcasting (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2001). This may represent a cultural 'control' that mitigates against censorship offending by Pacific peoples.

Also, in contrast to national demographic statistics (Statistics New Zealand, 2001), the identified offenders were over represented in the 35 years and under age range, and in terms of living with parents or grandparents at the time of the offence. Of note was that the most common age of offending was 17 years. The research does not provide any evidence that these individuals were also involved in the commission of physical sexual offences against children. However, given that most of the objectionable material identified in the study pertained to the sexual exploitation of children, it is noteworthy that the literature concerning child sexual abuse shows offence behaviour frequently beginning in adolescence or preadolescence (Araji, 2000). Yet, law enforcement officials and the judiciary frequently treat offences

committed by young people as less serious than those committed by adults. The literature also shows that most adolescent sexual offenders do not persist beyond adolescence, however, some do. While it is important that juvenile and young offenders are not stigmatised or socialised within the criminal justice system, the development of specific treatment and preventative measures targeting this population would appear to be potentially very beneficial. In order for it to be effective, such intervention would need to differentiate between younger and older offenders on the basis of interest and motivation for their offending behaviours.

The results of the current research suggested that offenders identified as secondary school students were more likely than others to collect large numbers of images that were well indexed. They were also more frequently associated with the collection of images of older children and teenagers, portrayed with other children, and much less likely to collect images of adult rape or the torture of adults or children. Their interest in objectionable material often falls within the realm of "age appropriateness". Of course, the fact that all of the school students were found to trade and/or possess images of children and young people engaged in explicitly sexual activity, and given that more than half of them were found to trade and/or possess images of children aged between 2 and 7 years, still leaves cause for significant concern about their activities. The finding that these individuals were proportionately more likely to trade and/or possess images of children and young people that suggested or implied incest only serves to increase this concern. However, the data do provide some clues as to where the motivation for initially accessing the objectionable material may come from. Indeed, the fact that school students were also the most likely to be found in the possession of R18 pornography, together with the relatively high proportion of these individuals found to reside in semi-rural locations, supports the concept of a sexually curious group of adolescents with few local alternatives for sexual exploration. What is worrying is that their Internet based exploration has led them to subject matter involving largely deviant activities at a time when they are most likely to be influenced by the message it conveys.

In contrast, those offenders who were identified as tertiary students were more likely than others to be residing in cities. Despite this, they were also more likely to be described as social loners who worked or studied alone. Furthermore, the nature of the material identified in relation to a small but notable subgroup of these offenders emphasised the portrayal of extreme power differentials within the context of sex with children, sex with babies, and the rape and torture of women. These individuals also appeared to be more likely than secondary school students to collect non-objectionable images of children, and equally as likely as older offenders to be involved in regular voluntary contact with non-familial children. Given the small numbers involved, it is unclear exactly what these results convey. However, an apparent lack of other social interaction suggests that social isolation may also be a factor in the development of their interest in objectionable material.

Up to a quarter of all offenders were found to demonstrate one or more behaviours suggestive of social isolation (living alone, not working or studying, being identified as loners, and working or studying alone). Identification as an unemployment or sickness beneficiary was one of the more frequently recorded occupation categories. It is probable that different types of individuals become involved with trading objectionable material over the Internet for different reasons. As a result of their circumstances, unemployed individuals tend to be more socially isolated and have more discretionary time than the general population. These factors may contribute to the likelihood that they will become involved in Internet based activities. However, the fact that all of those identified in the sample of unemployed

offenders were New Zealand European, and yet Māori and Pacific Island peoples tend to be more highly represented in New Zealand unemployment statistics (Statistics New Zealand, 2003), suggests that other factors are necessary in order for offending to occur.

Individuals who were employed or training in the information technology (IT) industry, and in professional/administrative positions, were also relatively frequently identified in the sample of offenders. These individuals may have a higher likelihood of Internet involvement purely because the technology is more familiar to them, and a greater part of their lives, than for the general population. However, the fact that no women were identified in the sample, despite being reasonably represented in professional positions, and to a lesser degree in IT training and employment, suggests that this factor is also insufficient in terms of explaining offending. Taylor et al (2001) show that the act of acquiring images actually facilitates the acquisition of technical skills and prior knowledge of information technology is not necessary for the development of offending behaviours. Of course, it is possible that acquisition of such skills by way of Internet involvement could lead to an interest in an IT career.

It is unclear whether offenders were isolated prior to their engagement with the Internet. However, in a study of individuals convicted for offences involving child pornography accessed and distributed over the Internet, Taylor et al (2001) found that all of the offenders had experienced a steady increase in on-line behaviour and a reduction in other outside social engagement. Taylor et al (2001) also found that many offenders demonstrated significant pride in their computer abilities and were willing to assist others to develop computer skills that enhance their ability to collect and 'protect' objectionable material. Indeed, Taylor et al (2001) suggested that for some, on-line reinforcement of their abilities and knowledge provides significant motivation for their ongoing involvement in the trade and production of child pornography.

Within the current research, those offenders who demonstrated the highest numbers of hours spent on-line during the week prior to investigation were also found to demonstrate the highest levels of computer literacy, security and investment in computer equipment. This finding infers the existence of a highly committed group of offenders whose primary focus is the collection and protection of objectionable material. Given that socio-economic level was not associated with computer investment, it can be assumed that some of these offenders probably had difficulty affording the level of commitment they displayed.

It appears that for some people, commitment to the acquisition of objectionable material using the Internet occurs to the detriment of other aspects of their lives. This conclusion is supported by the finding that one-third of the offenders were identified as living in excessively unkempt, messy, filthy, and/or cluttered conditions. Inspectors commented that in some cases it was difficult to move through the offender's residence and that layers of dirt, food and personal effects prevented access to most surfaces except those on which the computer was placed. This, despite the fact that just under half of the total sample of offenders had taken the care to index and organise their collections. Such dedication was most apparent for those offenders who were found to possess large collections of objectionable material with specific themes.

The possession of large collections of objectionable material with specific themes is in line with what Taylor (1999) describes as "confirmed collectors" of objectionable material.

Of note is that in the current sample, the majority of offenders fell within this category. This finding, together with comments regarding the highly striking or unusual aspects of some offenders' collections, supports the conclusion that images were aligned with specific preferences and were not just randomly accumulated. Similarly, the results of the MSA analyses undertaken as part of this research show that offenders can be distinguished according to the specific characteristics of the objectionable material that they select. Although almost all of the offenders were found to be in possession of, or trading in, images identified under section 3(2)(a) of the Act (pertaining to the sexual exploitation of children or young people), a large proportion of these were also identified as selecting material classified under other sections of the Act. The results of the MDS analyses suggested that, where present, material identified under these other sections may be as important as the material identified under section 3(2)(a) (if not more so) in defining the nature of an offender's interest in objectionable material.

The results demonstrated that offenders' selections could be defined according to whether they focused on non-violent deviance (sexual interest in children, animals, and urination and defecation activities), violent and degrading activities (harm, fear, torture, rape and degradation), or person-focused activities (portraying a specific type of individual). These characteristics appeared to transcend the legal categories of the Classification Act. For instance, individuals who selected material pertaining to the sexual exploitation of children and young people could be differentiated according to whether the imagery they chose focused primarily on the violent or degrading sexual exploitation of children or young people, or the non-violent sexual exploitation of children or young people. Of note was that, while bestiality and urination material was relatively strongly associated with the non-violent selection of child sex imagery, it was still slightly distinguished from the selection of material portraying naturalist or posed nudity, involving children. This finding suggests that while some offenders are likely to choose material that includes children and young people in activities involving bestiality and urination and defecation, others are primarily focused on the sexualisation of young people.

To some degree, these groupings conformed to the general roles that Canter (1995) describes all offenders assigning to their victims. Those portrayed in objectionable material are seen as "objects" to be used and controlled or vehicles of the offender's own emotional state (as seen in images categorised as rape, torture, degradation, incest fear and harm), or as "people" of interest to the offender (as seen in images categorised as involving children, animals, males, familial relationships). However, within the current research, these roles were much less well differentiated than in the research undertaken by Canter, and such differentiation was clouded by the fact that the data were structured according to the legal definitions imposed by the Classification Act. Furthermore, the personal and behavioural elements identified in the material selected by individual offenders appeared to exist on a continuum. As such, an interest in images focusing on a particular type of person was linked to interest in particularly violent or degrading images by an interest in material that showed female subjects engaged in bestiality and urination and defecation activities. Of interest, is that this link appeared to be associated with offenders demonstrating characteristics and behaviours associated with prior conviction of a sexual offence.

In comparison with national crime statistics, the censorship offenders sampled in the current research showed a much higher rate of prior sexual offending than the general population. In the 2001/2002 financial year, New Zealand national crime statistics recorded sexual offences at a rate of 0.089 percent (nine per 10,000 population, New Zealand Police, 2002). Amongst the censorship offender sample

population (N=106) sexual offences were recorded at a rate of 11.32 percent (or 13.21 percent including offences that were still under investigation or where the offender had been warned). The largest proportion of these offences was committed against boys aged less than 16 years and a slightly smaller number were committed against girls.

One of the most striking aspects of the sample of censorship offenders examined in the current research was their level of involvement with children through their work activities, voluntary activities (such as work as a soccer coach or as a volunteer at a local school), or personal circumstances. The number of offenders with access to children is of particular concern, particularly in light of the higher rate of sexual offending amongst censorship offenders. While the research cannot be said to show that collecting objectionable material leads to the sexual offending against children, it certainly shows a relationship between the two factors. Given this relationship, the number of censorship offenders who have put themselves in positions where they have access to the subjects of their collections of objectionable material is a serious concern. As noted previously, child pornography fuels and affirms the sexual fantasies of adults with a sexual interest in children (Lanning 1992). The collection of such material often involves contact with other paedophiles, further normalising collecting behaviour and sexual interest in children (Quayle, Linehan, Holland and Taylor, 2000). Furthermore, a study of child molesters (Marshall, 1988 quoted in Quayle and Taylor 2000) reported that 53% of an offender sample deliberately used pornography as a stimulant prior to their offending. The proportion of offenders who have also committed sexual offences (12) and the number considered likely to commit such offences (19) represent a dangerous subset of censorship offenders.

The occupational data collected for offenders were notable in the fact that it demonstrated how many occupations could be adapted to facilitate access to children (and other subjects portrayed in the objectionable images traded by them). Examples of professional access included offender involvement in:

- driving a school bus and an ice cream van
- supplying stationary to schools
- providing landscape and gardening services to schools
- work as a school holiday camp labourer
- providing services to funeral directors
- providing IT tuition to children
- working as a teacher aide.

In addition, a number of offenders were identified as volunteering for activities that provided them with access to children. This included offender involvement in:

- leading a Scout group
- soccer coaching
- teaching and teacher aiding
- outdoor pursuits centres

- babysitting
- CYPFS caregiving.

In their comments, the censorship compliance inspectors also noted a range of behaviours indicating a desire amongst individual offenders to engage with children and other subjects on a more personal level. These included:

- use of nicknames involving concepts of interest to children
- placement of a telescope to observe passing children
- photographing passing children
- showing sexualised images of children, interspersed with non-objectionable images of children in social situations, to real children in order to normalise the activities portrayed in the objectionable images
- reproducing personal images of sexual acts on the Internet
- detailing related offences and describing personal victories in accessing subjects for these
- producing sexually suggestive videos and images of known children and animals, and including these in collections, scrapbooks and written fantasy material
- creating methods to covertly observe other adults in various states of undress.

Similarly, several of the offenders were identified as having engaged in sexual discussion with children and young people on the Internet. Also of note was the close association between the identification of material involving children that could not be identified as objectionable, but was considered suspicious in the context of the offending, and “other” access to children (in the form of voluntary activities and associations). The collection of non-objectionable material concerning the same subject matter as the objectionable material for which the offenders were investigated, suggests a more than casual interest in the contents of the images. This is all the more concerning when one considers the fact that several of the offenders included images of children who were known to them in their “non-objectionable” collections, often as part of fantasy story lines.

Indeed, both the collection of non-objectionable material portraying children and offender involvement in voluntary activities facilitating regular access to children were identified as being closely associated with offenders having being convicted of a prior sexual offence. Given that previous convictions are recognised as a predictor of ongoing offending (Nagin and Farrington, 1992; Nagin and Paternoster, 1991; Sampson and Laub, 1993), this association may well be important in assessing the risk of ongoing offending or offending in another area. Other variables identified as being associated with prior sexual offending included offenders possessing large collections of objectionable material, possessing well-organised collections of objectionable material, living in excessively unkempt conditions, and living alone. Furthermore, offenders demonstrating more than 50 percent of these variables (including the variable indicating prior sexual offending) were found to be highly selective in their acquisition of objectionable material. While most of these selections pertained to naturalist type and posed nudity without the display of genitals, those that chose such material in combination with bestiality and urination and defecation material and

those that chose bestiality and urination and defecation material in combination with violent and degrading material were also noted as demonstrating high levels of risk. This finding is of particular interest given that the results of the Smallest Space Analysis undertaken to test for associations between these variables suggested that their co-occurrence was relatively weak.

With the exception of the possession of objectionable material in hard copy and the collection of highly specific or unusual objectionable material (for example all 'up-skirt' material, all pertaining to dogs, all pertaining to incest, all pertaining to the torture and impaling of young girls), no other behaviours were strongly associated with having more than one conviction for a censorship offence. Furthermore, MSA analysis revealed that offenders who collected highly unusual or specific material were clearly distinguished from offenders who had previously been convicted of sexual offences. As such, the interests of these two types of offender appear to be quite different. Whereas those who demonstrate behaviours associated with prior sexual offending may use objectionable material to complement a more physical interest in the subject of their offending (such as fantasy generation), those that collect highly unusual material appear to be primarily motivated by the collection of such material. Of note is that those offenders who were found to have the highest levels of computer literacy, computer security, time spent on the Internet and investment in computer equipment were also found to have the smallest collections of objectionable material. These results suggest that the lack of objectionable material, found in the possession of some offenders may have more to do with the offenders skill and commitment in hiding and protecting the objectionable material than with the actual amount of objectionable material collected by them. This conclusion is supported by the fact that, although some offenders were found to possess no objectionable material, their computers showed evidence of the organisation and indexing of objectionable material.

Despite a lack of strong association between other censorship offences and voluntary access to children and animals, access to children and animals was associated with the collection of highly specific or unusual objectionable material. Furthermore, all of the offenders who collected highly specific or unusual objectionable material were found to associate with children and young people or with other known censorship offenders. This finding suggests that such interpersonal relationships may play a functional role in the way they obtain objectionable material.

Lanning (1992) has provided evidence that individuals convicted of sexual offences against children are frequently found in the possession of collections of child pornography or child erotica. He identifies the process of collecting such material as an important part of their activities, stating that they do not simply view such material, but take particular care to save and categorise it. The results presented here suggest that collection of child pornography and other objectionable material may be associated with child abuse in different ways, depending on the motivations of the offender. For some, the physical sexual act may be the primary motivator, with collection of objectionable material merely providing an alternative to actual contact or a means of generating fantasies related to actual contact. For others, however, sexual acts may be motivated by the desire to generate new objectionable material. Given the highly specific nature of the material selected by some offenders, this would appear to be an effective way of ensuring that the image conforms precisely to the offender's specifications. Of course, given that many of the offenders identified in the current research did not demonstrate high levels of behaviours associated with sexual offence, or propensities towards the collection of highly specific objectionable material, there also appear to be other motivations for the trade or collection of objectionable material.

Hartman (1984) proposes four main types of collecting behaviour in relation to child pornography:

Closest Collectors focus almost exclusively on their collection and engage in little or no interpersonal interaction regarding their collections. They do not share their collections with others, and are not actively involved with their subject of choice. Closet collectors tend to obtain their material through discrete commercial channels.

Isolated Collectors collect material to complement their interest in sexual involvement with children and are usually also involved in some form of activity with their chosen subject. These individuals avoid contact with other collectors and tend to keep the material a secret that they share only with their victim/s. Isolated collectors are likely to include images of their victim/s in their collection.

Cottage Collectors share their collection and/or engage in discussion regarding the subject of their collection with other collectors. This interaction serves to validate their collecting behaviour and provides them with recognition for the value of their collections and collecting skills.

Commercial Collectors focus on the monetary gain to be made from producing, reproducing and selling their collections, and are actively involved in this activity. Physical offending against children is likely to occur during the production process.

The results of the current research suggest that censorship offenders are distinguishable according to these "collector types". In particular, the research reveals the existence of two groups of offenders whose behaviours were directly comparable with those of isolated collectors and cottage collectors. In terms of the latter, it is also of note that within the current study, a small group of offenders were primarily defined by the fact that they associated with other known censorship offenders. Associating with other known censorship offenders was not closely related to any other behaviour, apart from associating with individuals involved in other illegal activities. As such, it would appear that the focus of these offenders' censorship offence activities was largely social.

Research undertaken by Taylor et al (2001) indicates that for some individuals the rapid acquisition of technical skills that accompanies the acquisition of images from the Internet actually facilitates increasing levels of involvement in on-line communities. Through the development of such skills, individuals gain a sense of confidence, mastery, and power that may not be present in other aspects of their lives. These skills are recognised by others with whom they interact on the Internet and this recognition provides reinforcement regarding their activities. In order to maintain these reinforcing relationships, they are likely to increase their efforts to acquire image-based "currency" to trade with others. As described by Young (1998), this process may contribute to the development of compulsive or addictive behaviours.

The age of children depicted in images in the offenders' collections shows a clear preference for pre-pubescent children. There is some overseas evidence that the preferences of people who collect child pornography 'drift' towards increasingly younger children as they become satiated by images of older children and seek out more arousing images (Taylor, 1999).

Conclusions

The purpose of the current research was to obtain a profile of the offenders investigated by the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs' Censorship Compliance Unit. The results revealed that a high proportion of these offenders were aged under 25 years, almost all were male, most were New Zealand European, and the majority were involved in the trade and collection of material showing the sexual exploitation of children or young people. However, a good proportion of these people, were also trading and collecting material identified under other sections of the Classification Act as pertaining to adult rape and sexual coercion, sex with the body of a dead person, sexual and degrading acts involving urination and defecation, bestiality, and torture or extreme cruelty. Furthermore, analysis of the data showed that offenders could be differentiated according to the type of objectionable material that they selected using criteria that transcended the sections of the Act. These criteria included the selection of violent and degrading material and the selection of material showing non-violent sexually "deviant" acts or interests. As such, while some offenders only selected material portraying the non-violent sexualisation of children, others only selected material portraying violent acts or actions, often including but usually not restricted to the sexualisation of children. Furthermore, those that selected material portraying bestiality and acts involving urination and defecation were also found to select material portraying both non-violent sexualisation of children and violence and degradation, but only when this material focused on females.

To date, most of the research conducted in the area of objectionable material available on the Internet has focused on that which relates to the sexual exploitation of children and young people. However, the results of this research suggest that ongoing investigation of this area should continue to examine as full a range of objectionable material as possible.

The amount of time and resources that offenders were found to dedicate to pursuing and organising their objectionable material implies that this activity is important to them, and may have compulsive qualities. In support of this conclusion, it was found that even offenders who were considered to reside in an environment of disarray took the time to index and organise their collections. A number of parallels were discovered between the current offenders' behaviour patterns and individuals identified in other research as suffering from Internet dependency. These included high levels of on-line activity, predominant use of two-way communication functions and reduced relationship and occupational activity (offenders were frequently identified as living alone, loners or unemployed).

The results also suggest that censorship offenders' interest in the subjects of the material they selected was often more than voyeuristic. This was reflected in the fact that a number of offenders had taken steps towards more personal interaction with types of individuals portrayed as the subject of the objectionable material that they traded or collected. In comparison with national crime statistics, a high proportion of the current sample of censorship offenders had been previously convicted of a sexual offence. Furthermore, most of these offences were committed against children. The research identified associations between prior conviction for a sexual offence and possession of large, well-organised collections of objectionable material, having regular non-professional access to children, collections of

non-objectionable images of children, excessively unkempt living conditions, and offenders living alone. Of note was that many offenders were found to have regular legitimate contact with non-familial children, either by way of their jobs or as a result of voluntary work undertaken in children's clubs, recreation centres, or schools. A relationship was also identified between offenders demonstrating more than 50 percent of the behaviours associated with prior sexual offending (including prior sexual offending) and the type of objectionable material that they selected. Specifically, those individuals who selected material showing children in naturalist or posed nudity were most likely to demonstrate high levels of sexual offence related behaviours. However, this relationship was most pronounced when offenders were also found to select material portraying bestiality and activities involving urination and defecation. Similarly, although only a small number of those offenders who were specifically identified as selecting violent and degrading material demonstrated high levels of sexual offence related behaviours, all of these were also found to select material portraying bestiality and activities involving urination and defecation. As such, prior sexual offending appears to be primarily related to the selection of a diverse range of non-violent but sexually deviant material.

In line with this conclusion, those offenders who demonstrated high levels of behaviours associated with prior sexual offending were clearly distinguished from those offenders who demonstrated a highly specific interest in the type of material that they collected (for example all images of young females being impaled, all images of incest, all images of dogs, all 'up-skirt' images). The interest in censorship offending demonstrated by those who display a propensity for physical sexual offending appears to be motivated by a wider interest in sexual offending, and objectionable material either serves as an alternative to this or a means of generating associated fantasies. In contrast, those who collect highly specific or unusual material appear much more focused on the collection process itself, and their voluntary associations with children other known censorship offenders serve primarily as a means of accessing or creating the material they are interested in. Of note is that, within the context of the current research, lower numbers of images found in the possession of offenders were actually associated with higher levels of security, time spent on-line and computer literacy. As such, lack of objectionable material found in the possession of some offenders may have as much to do with increased offender care and ability in protecting or hiding such material, as it does with a lack of collecting behaviour.

In addition, a small group of offenders were identified as not demonstrating any consistently observable behavioural patterns other than associating with other known censorship offenders. This group may be primarily focused on the social nature of the trade in objectionable material, gaining reinforcement for their activities from their on-line associates.

The results of the current research indicate that there are at least three different types of censorship compliance offender, with each being motivated by different interests in relation to their offence behaviour. These differences relate to inter-offender variations in collecting behaviour, levels of commitment and compulsive behaviour, efforts made to access subjects, and levels of specificity in image preferences. Differences were also noted between the characteristics and offence behaviours of those offenders who were aged under 25 years and those who were 25 years and older.

Differences in offending behaviour have implications in terms of the management and treatment of offenders, as well as the development of censorship policy and the dedication of resources to pursuing censorship offenders. Although the current research has been largely exploratory, and the findings reflect this, the results suggest a number of issues of importance in terms of current censorship operations. In particular, the research shows that juvenile offenders are dealt with less seriously than adult offenders, despite the fact that relevant literature reveals sexual offending as often beginning during youth, and exposure to child pornography as a major component of this. Possible threats posed by the Internet are often perceived in terms of "older persons" using it to lure children and young people for sexual purposes. The current research acknowledges this threat, and recognises the importance of proactively responding to it. However, it also highlights the threat that Internet involvement poses in terms of fostering paedophilic and abusive behaviours in young people (see Araj, 2000). Of particular concern is that young people, in the process of learning about sex and relationships, may be exposed to material that advocates demeaning, degrading, and using others for their own arousal. Those who are marginalised as a result of their emerging sexual identity or a lack of options regarding its expression, may be most at risk of fostering negative Internet associations. There appears to be a significant need for appropriate referral, assessment, counselling and sentencing options for these individuals.

In conclusion, this research supports and extends the current knowledge base regarding Internet censorship offending and offender behaviour in relation to a range of objectionable material (including, but not limited to, child pornography). It also provides information that can be used practically to enhance operational and policy activities in this area. It offers significant support for ongoing implementation of the modified profiling questionnaire and highlights a number of issues for future investigation and analysis in relation to this process.

