

# Sexual Abuse Dynamics

Anna C. Salter, Ph.D.

# Emotional Visibility/Invisibility

Where Does Safety Lie?

# Difference in a Pedophile and a Child Molester

- Pedophiles – sexually attracted to children
- Child molester – molests children  
(for any reason)

# Sexually Attracted to Children

Deviant arousal pattern

Not necessarily dysregulated

E.g., teachers, priests, youth leaders, doctors,  
coaches businessmen, etc.



# Pedophiles

“Mutual”

Openly predatory

# How “Mutual” Pedophiles Think

“She wanted it.”

“She enjoyed it just as much as I did.”

“She came on to me.”

“He was erect. If he didn’t like it, he wouldn’t have been erect.”

“He came back.”

# Capacity for Empathy

Thinking  
Errors

Entitlement



Normal

None

# Arousal Patterns

- Pre-pubescent children 0 – 13
- Post-pubescent adolescents 14 +
- Barely pubescent children 11 to 14

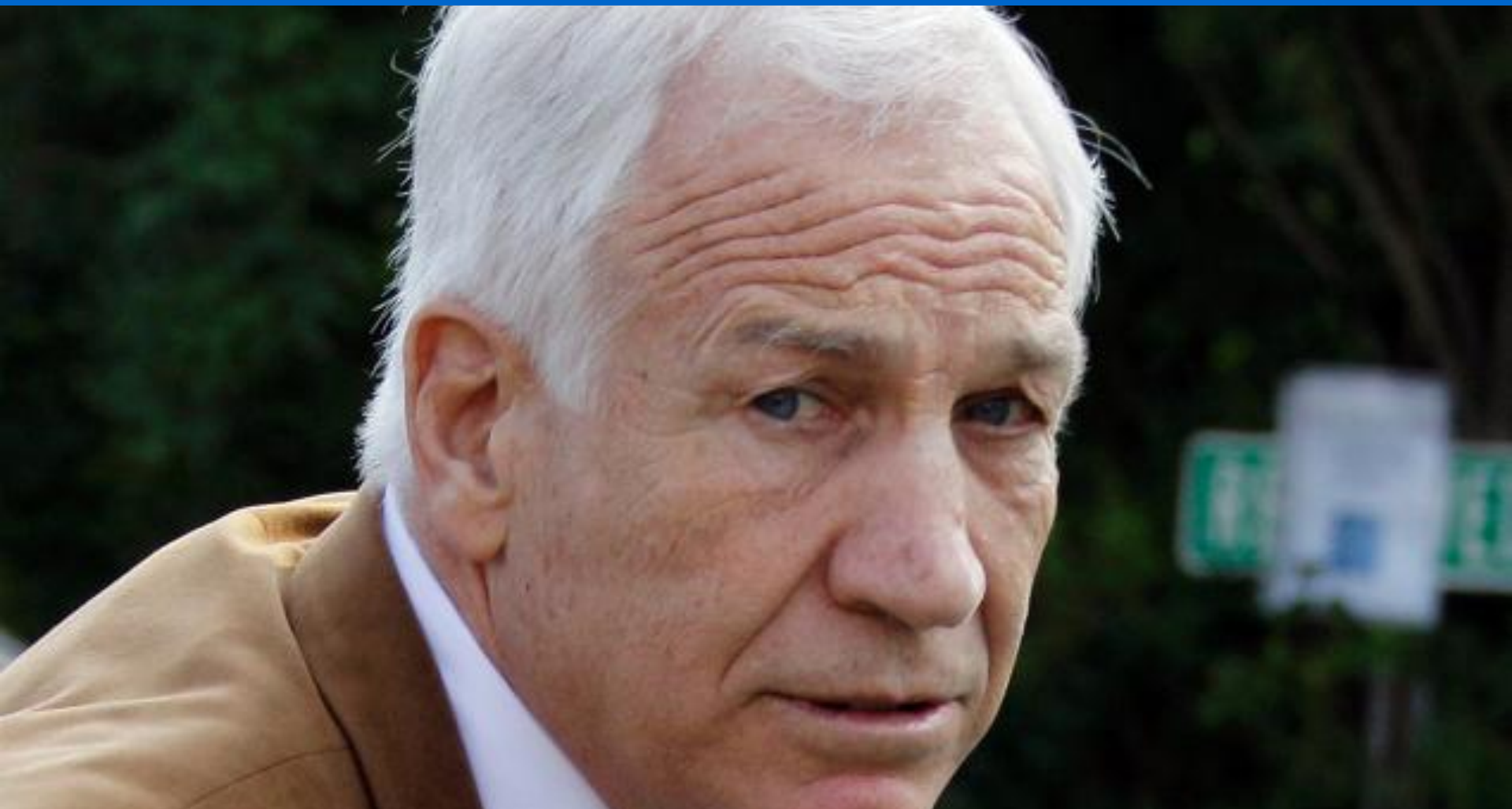
# Hebephilia

24-year-old

6 convictions for sex with 13-year-olds

Almost no sex with adults > 18

- Offender: "You're very hot and sexy. You have a nice body."
- Girl: "I'm 11-years-old."
- "Offender: "I know but you look 13."



# Sandusky's Victims

Ages

8 to 18



# Messages to Victims

- You came on to me.
- You wanted it.
- You enjoyed it as much as I did.

# Normal Arousal Pattern

Abuse post-pubescent teens

Some incest offenders

“My attraction to 2-year-olds? I would say it’s a ten, off the charts.

I am attracted to young people, in general – 0 to 13. At 13, puberty sets in, and I lose the attraction.”

Q. How often do you think about sex?

A. I think about sex 3 or 4 hours a day, maybe 6 tops.

“Putting a child in front of me is like putting a glass of wine in front of an alcoholic.”

# Capacity for Empathy

Thinking  
Errors

Entitlement



Normal

None

# To Man Whose Van He Broke Into

- Put himself in owner's position
  - If him, sense of invasion would have haunted him
  - Would be hard to drive again
  - Every time he got in he would have thought of someone rummaging through contents
  - Felt violated imagining it
  - Disappointed in himself
  - "I let the stupid side of me take over."
- (Cullen, 2009, p. 259-260)





# In His Journal

- “Isn't America supposed to be the land of the free? how come if I'm free, I can't deprive a stupid fucking dumbshit from his possessions. If he leaves them in the front seat of his fucking van out in plain sight in the middle of fucking nowhere on a Frifucking Day night. NATURAL SELECTION. fucker should be shot.”  
(Jefferson County, Columbine Documents, 2016)

“Psychopaths don’t act like Hannibal Lecter or Norman Bates. They come off like Hugh Grant, in his most adorable role.”

(Cullen, 2009, p. 240)

# Violence is Exciting - Willie

“It’s not just fear but that’s exciting. I’ve lived my whole life to make sure someone is afraid of me. . . . The knowledge I can control people is exciting.”

# Dysregulated & Antisocial

Variety of other crimes

Want sex; violate anybody's rights

“A young woman came in with a bad cut on her arm. . . From the way she talked and acted, I got the impression she made men come after her. She was conceited and all wrapped up in herself. . . I tried to get something going but her nose was too far up in the air.”

(Athens, 1997, p. 8)

# Taking it Out on

## Whoever

# Sadists

Sexually Aroused

By

Pain, Suffering, Terror and Humiliation

# Emotional Visibility/Invisibility

Where Does Safety Lie?



# 50 Minute Vial of Water

# Implicit Versus Explicit Denial

# Load-bearing Walls

Why do they shoot spies?

# Benign Transformation

# Affective Sequelae

- Affective Flashbacks
- Secondary to Cognitions
- Secondary to Current Realities

# Impact of Trauma on World View

# Non-Traumatized Beliefs

- Above average
- Things will work out
- Underestimate chances of negative events
- Overestimate chances of positive events
- Overestimate personal efficacy



# What Percent of People?

Rated Selves More Positively  
than Peer of Same Sex and Age

87%

(Taylor, Lerner et al., 2003)

- One's Strengths

Important  
Rare

- One's Failings

Unimportant  
Common

(Campbell, 1986; Marks, 1984)

# Time is on Our Side

Poor Performance

Remember as Better

20 Minutes Later

(Greenwald, 1980)

# Not Recent Phenomena

One month

Rated mood each day compared to *Own*  
typical mood

Almost everybody

Typically happier than they typically are  
(Johnson, 1938)

# Lifetime Probabilities of Experiencing Trauma

Type	%
■ Fire	10
■ Car wreck w/ injury	23
■ Robbery	25
■ Loved one die from homicide, suicide or accident	30
■ Some sort	69

(Norris, 1992)

# Trauma-Based World View

## Shattered Assumptions

Belief in Personal Invulnerability

Belief the World is Meaningful

Belief in Personal Efficacy

(Janoff-Bulman, 1992)

# Fall-Out from Chowchilla Kidnapping

“Massive interferences with Optimism & Trust”  
(Terr, 1985)

# Fall-Out from Chowchilla Kidnapping

- Age 9      Russians ruining ozone layer  
Everybody killed
- Age 10      World end in 2000  
Live in Mountains: Towns  
Not Safe



# Fall-Out from Chowchilla Kidnapping

23 of 25 Afraid of the Future

# World View and Sexual Abuse

“When you get old, you die. I have grandparents who are sixty or sixty-nine and I don’t think *they* are ready to die. But I sometimes think I am going to die sooner than other people – I don’t know why I think this. I think bad people will hurt me. I may be killed instead of dying.”

(Terr, 1990 p. 31)

# Secondary to Current Realities

- Drug/alcohol addiction
- Battered spouse
- Prostitute
- Difficulty holding a job

# Identification with Children

Children are open-hearted

Loving

Non-judgmental, accepting

# Identification with Children

“They weren’t trying to live up to some social standard.”

“I envied them because they seemed so free, so at ease in their world.”