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L. M. Handrahan

To cite this article: L. M. Handrahan (2022): Child Sex Trafficking in Higher Education, Journal of Human Trafficking, DOI: [10.1080/23322705.2021.2019533](https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2021.2019533)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2021.2019533>



Published online: 09 Feb 2022.



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L. M. Handrahan

United Nations-Mandated University for Peace (UPEACE)

ABSTRACT

Using a pragmatic exploratory sequential mixed methods design in data collection and analysis (QUAL quan), this study analyzes 223 child sex trafficking investigations, arrests, and/or prosecutions within the United States (U.S.) higher education workforce. Despite growing awareness of the crime, research on child sexual exploitation material (CSEM) is surprisingly scant with a near total absence of perpetrator data. This is the first examination of the crime in U.S. tertiary education. Policy recommendations, guided by the research results, contribute to progress in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focused on anti-trafficking: Gender Equality (SDG 5.2) and Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions (SDG 16.2).

KEYWORDS

Higher Education;
Trafficking; Child Sex Abuse;
Crime; Workplace

Introduction

"Let unwelcome truths be told." (Farmer, 2004)

"FBI's Assistant Director of Criminal Investigation Joseph Campbell, says child sex trafficking and pedophilia have reached epidemic levels." ("Human Trafficking," 2015)

When Robert Beattie, Family and Community Medicine Department Chair, University of North Dakota, was arrested on child pornography charges *The Dakota Student* asked, "We can't help but wonder if this type of thing is common in other schools around the nation?" ("Integrity," 2015).¹ Using a mixed methods research design (MMR), this question is explored through analysis of 223 child sex trafficking investigations, arrests, and prosecutions of U.S. higher education employees and institutional responses to these cases.² Although there is increased awareness of child trafficking in America, research on child sexual exploitation material (CSEM) is limited by a near total lack of perpetrator data.³ Refined research, such as

CONTACT L. M. Handrahan  L_M_Handrahan@alumni.lse.ac.uk  United Nations-Mandated University for Peace (Upeace) El Rodeo de Mora, San José, Cd Colón, UPeace, Costa Rica

¹Beattie was sentenced, July 2016, to 12 years in federal prison (US Department of Justice, US Attorney's Office, District of North Dakota, 2016a; Haley, 2015; Henson, 2015; Jacobs, 2016; Volpenhein, 2015).

²Handrahan (2021). Child Sex Trafficking in Higher Education Data. <http://www.lorihandrahan.com/data>

³The term perpetrator typically indicates an individual who has been/is being investigated, charged, and/or sentenced with carrying out a crime. Predator describes an individual who injures and exploits others for personal gain and/or profit (Merriam-Webster, 2021). This research uses "perpetrator" when referring to investigations, arrests, and/or sentencing and employs the broader "predator" term to indicate patterns of behavior and/or data where not every case within a dataset represents investigations, arrests, and/or sentencing or where investigations did not result in charges, charges were dismissed and/or a sentence overturned but evidence of predatory behavior remains.

analysis of arrests/prosecutions per occupation or other social categories, has not been conducted (Erooga et al., 2019).⁴ This study is the first to consider CSEM investigations, arrests, and prosecutions within the U.S. higher education profession.⁵

While higher education is not typically associated with child sex trafficking, a simple web-search reveals a plethora of employees charged with the offense. From an Assistant Dean at the University of Virginia prosecuted for trading in infant rape to an award-winning Allegheny College professor prosecuted for possession of over 500,000 CSEM videos/images, child sex trafficking-related arrests/prosecutions of higher education employees appear widespread (Stuart, 2014; “Allegheny College,” 2014). Additionally, the crime is frequently reported to have occurred in the workplace heightening the offense and constituting serious safety and liability concerns for universities and colleges, particularly those that are publicly funded (Chipp, 2019).

Tertiary education is a prestigious profession wielding unique power to impact public policy and influence young, impressionable populations. As of 2020, there were some 3,994 U.S. postsecondary institutions employing an estimated 3.4 million faculty and staff of which some 1.3 million are on faculty status (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2021c; Grinder, 2021; Moody, 2019; Snyder et al., 2019). Some sixty percent of these institutions are private and not subject to public disclosure laws, while public institutions, primary to postsecondary, employ more U.S. government personnel than any other profession; comprising approximately half of all state and local workforces (McFarland et al., 2019; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020; Terence, 2015; Grundy, 2020).⁶ This significant public sector aspect intensifies the necessity for enhanced oversight and accountability in the education sector. The considerable influence of the higher education profession, combined with a bulk of government employees, renders this sector an important sphere in which to examine CSEM perpetrator data.

In 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act expanded the definition of human trafficking to include child pornography (United States Government (USG)). In 2015, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act modified the U.S. Criminal Code, Title 18(f) Transportation of Minors, to further clarify “producers of child pornography are human traffickers” (Motivans & Snyder, 2018, p. 2). This research relies on U.S. Criminal Code definitions and thus understands those engaged in producing, distributing and receiving CSEM images, videos and live-streams are child traffickers. Meanwhile, there is a global movement to eliminate the phrase “child pornography,” as this term remains active in the U.S. legal system it is used in this research. To the extent possible “CSEM,” “child sex trafficking,” “child rape” and “child sex abuse” are alternatively applied.

The U.S. legal system is heavily dependent upon plea bargains to reduce backlogs and avoid costly jury trials. Prosecutors may offer defendants the opportunity to plead guilty to tampering with evidence or unauthorized use of property, for example, in exchange for dropping CSEM charges. Some cases examined in this research were, ultimately, not prosecuted on child sex trafficking charges. If probable cause was apparent in an investigation, arrest warrant or original criminal complaint, even if charges were never brought or dropped by prosecutors, the case is included in the data set. While there have been many CSEM arrests/prosecutions of students, unless the student was also an employee, students are not included in this study (Taibbi, 2014; Yoffe, 2017).

⁴Of 220 US government funded trafficking research grants awarded from 2001–2018, only one mentions perpetrators with not one focused on predators. U.S. State Department’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Person (<https://www.state.gov/research>). In Goździak and Bump (2008) and (Goździak et al., 2015) human trafficking research bibliographies listing over 1,000 studies perpetrators are mentioned twice with no studies focused on predators.

⁵In U.S. Department of Justice’s most recent *The National Strategy for Child Exploitation Prevention and Interdiction* (2016), the only other *National Strategy for Child Exploitation Prevention and Interdiction* (2010), and Child Exploitation and Obscenities Section (<https://www.justice.gov/criminal-ceos>) there is no perpetrator/predator data per professional sector.

⁶As of 2017, 48% of all state-level and 55% of all local-level government employees worked in the public education sector (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020; Terence, 2015).

Background

The scope of the crime in the United States is staggering. As early as 1999, the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) reported 40% of global CSEM was hosted on U.S. internet servers. By 2006, IWF estimated 54% of all CSEM websites were located in America (IWF, 2006). In 2013, European police (Europol) reported that nearly half of all CSEM servers were based in the U.S. (Gallagher, 2013; Gilbert, 2013; Europol, 2013). From 2007 to 2013, the U.S.-based National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) reported a 5,000% CSEM increase, estimating 75% of the children were under twelve-years-old, and 10% were infants and toddlers (Beauchere, 2015; Mulrine, 2015). By 2015, Europol cited dramatic increases in U.S.-based sites, from 516 sites in 2013, to 2,617 sites two years later.

In 2017, IWF was removing 1,000 webpages weekly with 69% of the children under ten-years-old (Europol, 2015; Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), 2017).⁷ The Canadian Center for Child Protection's Project Arachnid processed, in 2017, over 230 million web pages with over 40,000 unique images of child sex abuse. Anti-Slavery Australia reported, in May 2017, that CSEM was a "crime epidemic" with images/videos depicting "highly depraved acts of sexual violence and torture" against "young children" ("Live-streamed," 2017). By 2018, over 45 million CSEM images/videos were estimated to be circulating on the internet. *The New York Times* published, in 2019, a groundbreaking series noting, "twenty years ago, the online images were a problem; 10 years ago, an epidemic. Now, the crisis is at a breaking point" (Keller & Dance, 2019). At the start of 2020, IWF detailed "a record amount of criminal material online" calling CSEM a "shocking ... epidemic" (Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), 2020).

Despite extensive evidence of the crime's magnitude, detailed perpetrator data of all U.S. child sex trafficking arrests/prosecutions has never been collected.⁸ At local/state levels, there are no consolidated arrest/prosecution data available and after 2015, comprehensive federal CSEM crime data appear non-existent (US Federal Bureau of Investigations, 2015). In 2018, the Department of Justice (DOJ) reported that federal child sex trafficking referrals had increased 82% from 2011 to 2015, but provided little analysis and no detailed data on the escalation (Motivans & Snyder, 2018). The most recent federal CSEM crime data, with any detail, are from 2004 to 2013, citing 37,105 perpetrators, overwhelmingly white men, referred for federal prosecution (Adams & Flynn, 2017). Beyond basic race and gender demographics, little else is known about these federal arrests and prosecution referrals.

Who are these 37,105 federally referred perpetrators? What are their social categories? Did they use professional positions and/or workplaces to engage in the crime? If so, how did their employer handle subsequent arrests and prosecutions? What is the scale of CSEM crime in the American workplace? Do certain professions, such as pediatric medicine or special needs education, with access to vulnerable children, disproportionately attract predators? These questions, and many more, are still unanswered. As Erooga et al. (2019) note, "there is virtually no literature on child sexual abuse committed by 'powerful perpetrators' who use position, reputation, wealth and/or power, to become influential members of their organisation."⁹

Even with increased public attention on sexual assault and harassment by and of university and college students, there are no collected data on child sex crimes committed by higher education employees (Dargis, 2015; Krakauer, 2015). Neither the U.S. Department of

⁷For example, in 2015, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) shut down one U.S. based website called Playpen housing 214,898 predators trading in child rape and torture (Raymond, 2015).

⁸U.S. Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) human trafficking data collection started in 2013, with 2019 the latest available report (<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/additional-data-collections/human-trafficking>).

⁹For example, while Salter (2003) and Sher (2007) offer critical work on child sex predators, systematic examination related to workplaces/organizations was not considered as such.

Education (DOE) nor the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) maintains public repositories.¹⁰ State-level departments of education and higher education agencies have not published CSEM arrests/prosecution data. Nonprofits, such as the American Association of University Professors, American Association of University Women or the American Federation of Teachers, have not issued research on CSEM violations in higher education. While the Clery Act requires reporting on sex offenses (rape, fondling, incest and statutory rape), CSEM offenses are not included (Jeanne Clery, 2019). Insurance companies do require detailed information on how institutions manage accusations/reports of child sex abuse by employees, but this data has not been made public (United Educators Insurance, 2019).

Although there is a lack of CSEM crime data within tertiary education, research has been conducted on child sex abuse by primary and secondary educators. Dr. Charol Shakeshaft, a leading expert on educator sex abuse, estimated “the physical sexual abuse of students in schools is likely more than 100 times the abuse by priests” (Profita, 2006). In 2002, DOE estimated that up to 10% of all secondary public-school students had been sexually abused by an employee (Palmer, 2012). In 2004, DOE released *Educator Sexual Misconduct: A Synthesis of Existing Literature* citing an astounding number of primary/secondary teachers arrested for child sex abuse (U.S. DOE, 2004). The U.S. Government Accountability Office issued, in 2014, a report documenting the failure of public schools to protect children from sex abuse by staff and teachers (Adams, 2014). In 2016, *The Boston Globe* published *Private Schools, Painful Secrets* detailing extensive sex abuse by private secondary school employees in New England (Private Schools, Painful Secrets, 2016).

Employment in education is porous with predators moving among primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. In 2016, in a year-long investigation, *USA Today* detailed how predators secured employment in higher education despite revoked primary/secondary teaching certifications. The federal ban on secrecy deals in education, called “passing the trash,” is routinely ignored. Crimes are hidden. Teachers are given “hush money” to quietly resign and obtain employment elsewhere. In addition, the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification is voluntary, and there is no national decertification process for post-secondary education employees (Reilly & Kelly, 2016).

Understanding employment across the education profession is fluid, and considering primary/secondary education employee child sex abuse data as a benchmark, it is reasonable to consider 223 arrests/prosecutions examined in this study a small sample of a likely widespread and undocumented trend in tertiary education.

Methodology

Research Objective

This research seeks to answer *The Dakota Student* question – are arrests of higher education employees on child sex trafficking charges common in America, with “common” defined by Merriam-Webster (2021) as known to the community, occurring or appearing frequently, widespread or general, and, if so, are there consistent elements when employees are charged/prosecuted with the offense? The study also intends to offer an analytical framework for enhanced understanding of predatory behavior, CSEM crimes and institutional reactions with the aim of contributing to improved public policy.

¹⁰DOE Office of Postsecondary Education’s Campus Safety and Security (CSS) survey does not include CSEM, child sex trafficking, or child pornography (<https://ope.ed.gov/campusafety/#/>). DOE’s latest report (2021) on criminal incidents on campuses at post-secondary institutions has no category for CSEM, child sex trafficking, child pornography, or perpetrator data (Irwin et al., 2021). DOE’s latest report on *The Condition of Education* 2020 does not include higher education employee crime data (Hussar et al., 2020). The US Census Bureau’s National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ncvs.html>) provides no data on CSEM crimes committed by faculty and staff in higher education.

Research Design

As there are no collected data available to answer *The Dakota Student* question, this research used a pragmatic, exploratory, sequential mixed methods design guided by grounded theory in a three-phase data collection and analysis (QUAL quan) process. The design relies on a qualitative pragmatic epistemological approach focused on the research problem with pluralistic approaches in data collection and analysis. Rooted in the transformative ontology of critical feminist theory, this study understands the research question is intertwined with a grounded-reality of socio-political agendas of those in powerful, dominant positions in the academy and, therefore, this research embraces a social change objective of confronting and transforming oppression through praxis-oriented research (Åkerblad et al., 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fabregues et al., 2021; Mertens, 2003, 2009; Morgan, 2016; Morse, 1991; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).¹¹

In the first phase, data were collected, analyzed, and publicly displayed in a narrative case study approach. Starting with case-style data permitted ongoing inductive analysis as the data expanded and individual case information emerged into common themes. This preliminarily qualitative research design also allowed the complexity of each case to be captured, documented, and displayed. Inductive analysis of the qualitative data informed the second phase of quantizing the qualitative data. Eighty-one variables in three data sets (1) predators, (2) crimes, and (3) institutions were constructed from qualitative case summaries and entered into a database testing a two-part deductive hypothesis: (1) are child sex trafficking arrests/prosecutions of higher education employees common in America – theorizing yes and (2) do quantitative aspects of the emergent qualitative themes appear – also theorizing yes.¹²

Data Collection and Display

As established, there are no collected public data on CSEM arrests/prosecutions in U.S. tertiary education. While individual federal arrest/prosecution data are available in Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER), PACER is prohibitively expensive and not searchable by profession. At the local and state levels, there is no unified electronic filing system of arrests/prosecutions. Therefore, the only feasible data collection method requires hours of searching and categorizing media reports of CSEM arrests/prosecutions followed by requests to relevant authorities for primary records. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests were filed when agencies were not forthcoming or required a FOIA to fulfill administrative procedures before releasing public records (Loofbourow, 2019).¹³

The data were collected, predominantly, by the researcher from 2013 to 2020.¹⁴ Over this 7-year period, near daily key word searches on Twitter and Google were conducted, and a Google Alert was established. Key words included child pornography, child porn, child sex abuse, assault, arrest, sentenced, prosecuted, college, university, campus, professor, and U.S. justice (to capture DOJ press

¹¹In grounded theory, a general concept of a process/action/interaction is derived from narrative research examining individual lives involving multiple data collection stages and information category refinements. In this research, individual narrative data were collected from media reports, arrest and prosecution documents, and higher educational institutions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Glaser, 2002; Morse, 1991).

¹²This method is known as an “integrative strategy approach” with MMR woven through the research process as a strategy in methods, data, and findings (Åkerblad et al., 2021).

¹³As Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998, p. 22) note, the method must follow the question. Other studies developed comparable methodology when asking the same question. For example, *Hearst Connecticut* journalist Hannah Dellinger learned of a child sex abuse lawsuit against the Boys and Girls Club and asked – is this common at Boys and Girls Clubs across the US? *Hearst Connecticut* journalists filed 100 FOIA requests, gathered 1,600 documents, and worked for 3,000 hours to answer this question. In August 2019, *Hearst Connecticut* published 95 detailed cases of alleged sex abuse at Boys & Girls Clubs in 30 states – creating the first such public database: <https://www.ctpost.com/news/article/At-Risk-Child-sexual-abuse-and-Boys-Girls-Clubs-14300403.php> (Hare, 2019). *USA Today* followed a similar method investigating child sex related crimes among U.S. teachers – with journalists gathering 10 million records in over a year-long investigation (Reilly & Kelly, 2016).

¹⁴Data was processed from May 2013 to June 2020 (with cases updated in June 2021) and comprised over 1,500 unpaid hours, with some 50 FOIA requests and an estimated 10,000 pages of official documents and media reports. A pre-set timeframe was not established for the dataset, e.g., 1980–1990. Rather, due to difficulty gathering data, preliminary case information was obtained

releases). Key word searches surfaced media reports and press releases of arrests/prosecutions. An extensive search for all public information, per case, was performed with material assembled into a Word-based filing system organized by defendants' name, date or arrest/prosecution, and employer. Primary documents (media reports, arrest/prosecution records, and press releases) were gathered and supplemented, when possible, by informal telephone discussions and electronic mail correspondence with local journalists, court clerks, law enforcement, prosecution offices, and higher education personnel.

Case file information was summarized in a qualitative narrative format, focused on three categories – perpetrator data, crime data, and institutional response – and posted on the public media platform of Medium – a free social media site designed for writers. Qualitative case summary data was then transferred into Microsoft's Excel and then into Knack, a paid public data management system, allowing for cross-variable searches and data visualization. The Knack database was developed by a volunteer information technology expert. Data collection, entry, and verification were conducted primarily by the author with assistance from several research volunteers. Public data display (via Medium, Knack, and Squarespace) created a feedback loop allowing an opportunity to correct errors, a reporting mechanism for additional information and a community forum for transparency and debate.¹⁵

Data Limitations

Data quality and access are dependent on individual law enforcement officers and/or prosecutors processing the case. While some records are detailed, providing thick description, others offer limited information. Additionally, child predators frequently amass and conceal large CSEM “collections” and investigators are not always able to locate/obtain entire compendiums. Severe budget constraints, in contrast to the scope of the crime, also prevent law enforcement from conducting a complete analysis of CSEM material obtained in every arrest. Instead, “dip analysis,” offering content samples, and volume estimates are conducted. Therefore, for example, lack of notation of infant/toddler, pre-teen hard core (PTHC) and/or bestiality in official records does not necessarily indicate it was not present. Limitations on the data collected in this research also included: (1) willingness of institutional administrators to provide data; (2) prohibitive cost/ease of access to public records; (3) powerful predators, with access to financial resources and/or potent allies, able to suppress data; and (4) news deserts resulting in a lack of publicly reported data.

Institutional Information

Higher education administrators sometimes adopted a defensive posture. While public institutions, funded by taxpayers, are required to disclose information, private institutions have no such legal requirements, and thus data from private institutions were limited to what administrators were inclined to share or what journalists may have obtained. Despite Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) laws, sensitive information from public institutions, such as termination agreements, has proved difficult to acquire. While many institutions responded to FOIA requests easily and free of charge, in some cases costs associated with FIOA requests were prohibitive and/or civil legal action for FOIA enforcement would have been necessary (Jacoby, 2019; Sussman, 2019).¹⁶

through digital media reports, generally available after the internet opened to commercial use in 1995. Cases reported earlier than 1995, are included where media companies made print archives available on-line and/or where charges were brought decades after reports/allegations were first made due to revised statute of limitations on child sex crimes.

¹⁵Harrison et al. (2020) discuss the importance of detailing data collection methods in mixed methods research (MMR). Data sets created for this research are available here: <http://www.lorihandrahan.com/data>

¹⁶For example, *USA Today* reported “schools issued astronomical fee estimates to provide the same records that other schools gave for free. The University of Maryland said preparing the records would take nearly 600 hours of staff time and cost more than \$22,000 to provide. The University of Oregon said it would charge more than \$12,000 and redact the records almost entirely anyway” (Jacoby, 2019).

Public Records Cost and Ease of Access

Data limitations common with obtaining public records were present with data skewed toward cases where court records were freely electronically available. At the federal level, in order to avoid the PACER paywall, research was dependent upon the willingness of DOJ Public Affairs Officers to provide public documents. While some local/state jurisdictions offer free on-line public records, others require written requests submitted via the U.S. postal system with bank checks for court fees and self-addressed return envelopes. Obtaining records from local/state jurisdictions lacking public electronic access was also dependent on the willingness of court clerks to locate the records.¹⁷

Powerful Predators

Data are likely skewed against those unable to make news of their arrests disappear from public searches. Defendants able to afford expensive social media-scrubbing services, influence local media outlets and/or government officials were less likely to be covered in this research (Farrow, 2019). Due to private tips, this research was able to include some cases not reported by journalists or publicly disclosed by law enforcement, prosecutors, or tertiary education institutions (Handrahan, 2017). While it is difficult to document absent data, three examples surfaced in this research, are illustrative of this bias:

- Alan Clyde More's, George Mason University professor and retired Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer, arrest, prosecution, and sentencing were not made public by law enforcement, prosecutors, journalists, or the university. On a tip, the researcher filed a FOIA with George Mason University Police and obtained More's campus arrest record. More is a registered sex offender in Virginia ("Virginia State Police," 2019);
- Clyde Edward Fant's, Dean of the Chapel and Professor of Christian Studies, Stetson University, federal arrest, prosecution and sentencing were not originally made public. DOJ did not issue a standard press release and journalists did not report on the case. Fant's late father was a powerful politician. On a tip, the researcher obtained Fant's file from PACER. Local media and Stetson University, respectively, then reported on the case and issued a press statement (US Department of Justice, 2013a); and
- Steven Phillip Brey's, Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities at Methodist University, arrest was not initially made public. The researcher was informed university officials accompanied Brey to court after his arrest. Arrest records were obtained and local media reported the arrest. Methodist University did not issue a public statement (McCleary, 2017).

News Deserts

Direct access to all federal, state, and local arrests/prosecution records would have been ideal. Lacking the availability of this data collection, this research was heavily dependent upon public media reports to gain initial knowledge of an arrest. Given the demise of local journalism, culling data in this manner created a limitation and bias particularly pronounced in "news deserts" where regional journalism has suffered severe cuts (Goggin, 2019; Mervosh et al., 2019; O'Connell, 2019).

Research Quality: Data Verification and Result Testing

Determining quality in mixed methods research is an area of debate and sometimes confusion. MMR design typically explains why mixed methodology was selected and offers evident quantitative and qualitative integration (Fàbregues et al., 2021; Harrison et al., 2020). This research follows these basic standards. Additionally, foundational elements in MMR construct validity – the author's knowledge of the literature and comprehension of the studied phenomenon – served as a central validity check.

¹⁷ Court clerks and public affairs officers at the local, state, and federal level were overwhelming supportive of this research; providing friendly, fast, and generous assistance tracking down case files and answering questions.

Hong and Pluye's (2019) three quality checks were also implemented: (1) methodological – extent a study is properly carried out; (2) conceptual – extent concepts are clearly articulated; and (3) reporting – extent study is transparently and accurately reported.¹⁸ Finally, two of Maxwell's (1992) five qualitative validity tests were integrated: (1) descriptive – factual accuracy of the account as documented by the researcher and (2) generalizability – extent a researcher can generalize the account of a particular situation, context, or population to other individuals, times, settings, or context (Åkerblad et al., 2021; Mertens et al., 2016; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Credible Data – Descriptive Validity

Maintaining the veracity of complex data was critical for a high confidence rate in the reliability of this study. Primary public records, supplemented, at times, by information from public officials, generated credible data due to original documentation veracity. Methods triangulation, also called multi-step data collection, was used with four triangulated primary data sources: (1) media reports, (2) public records, (3) press releases, and (4) clarifications from official sources when possible. A detailed cross-referencing process via two databases – a narrative, case-study qualitative dataset, and a quantitative variable-based dataset – further augmented data authenticity. Public data display provided assumption checks from relevant actors, additional clarification, and private tips aiding in a more detailed understanding of data limitations. These data collection and display methods provide a high-level validity and reliability of the research results (Collins, 2015; Dellinger & Leech, 2007; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

External Results Triangulation – Generalizability

Due to the disturbing nature of the data, which may seem unreal or lacking credibility to those not familiar with CSEM arrest and court records, external results triangulation, or external generalizability, offered a valuable validity check. This validity test is also helpful in relation to the research objective of applied social science for informed public policy. The results of this research were consistent with findings from other external studies examining U.S. child sex abuse/trafficking crimes in three categories: (1) predator profile, (2) crime profile, and (3) institutional response, further enhancing the credibility of this study's findings, as described below (Maxwell, 2002).

Predator Profile. Arrests and prosecutions of child sex predators appear to be overwhelmingly of white men, often fathers, in influential professional positions (Handrahan, 2017). Eighty-two percent of the aforementioned 37,105 perpetrators referred for federal child sex trafficking prosecutions were white men (Adams & Flynn, 2017). Interpol reported offenders, from one study, were 92.7% male and 78.8% white (Interpol, ECPAT International, 2018). In 2015, the *Associated Press* published a year-long study of U.S. military child sex crimes, noting child offenders were the largest inmate category in military prisons. Most often the crime was committed against girl-children by male relatives in military leadership – corporals, sergeants, and staff sergeants (Keller, 2017; Lardner & Sullivan, 2015). In 2017, law enforcement reported child sex exploitation rings led by fathers were a “widespread tragedy” (Crib, 2017). In 2019, over nine hundred civil lawsuits brought against the Boy Scouts of America detailed defendants as “men of stature in their communities . . . police officers and members of the military, teachers and a mayor, doctors and a child psychologist” (Kelly et al., 2019). Accused and convicted child predators in the Catholic Church mirror a similar profile – powerful, white men.

¹⁸Dellinger and Leech's (2007) introduced the importance of foundational aspects in MMR validity, e.g., this study builds on thirty years of practitioner/academic work examining male sexual predatory behavior toward women and children in three sectors; Central Asian studies, international humanitarian affairs, and criminology/security studies (Handrahan, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2010, 2012, 2017a, 2017b, 2018a, 2018b, 2019).

Crime Profile – CSEM Content/Quantity. Those prosecuted for CSEM crimes produced, distributed and collected hundreds, thousands and hundreds of thousands of images, videos and live streams of children brutally raped and tortured. Child sex traffickers tend to be prolific, demanding violent content of young children, often ten-years old or younger, and constant “new” material with under five-years-old, including infants and toddlers, increasingly common (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), 2013; Gelber, 2009). A 2005 study found that one in five CSEM arrests included “bondage, rape, and torture” (Wolak et al., 2005). Predators demand children scream in terror. They trade files called “torture12.jpg” (Sher, 2007, p. 237). They write “slut hurt me” across the bodies of children before raping them (Sher, 2007, p. 152). They bind, gag, drug, and handcuff children, toddlers, and infants. They want to watch children being assaulting, crying, bleeding, and sometimes murdered (US Department of Justice, 2010, p. 2016; Gilbert, 2013; Handrahan, 2017; Silmalis, 2017; Dance, 2019; Keller & Dance, 2019).

Institutional Responses. In 2019 and 2020, state-level reforms regarding child sex abuse statute-of-limitations prompted an unprecedented wave of civil lawsuits across America, generating media attention that frequently focused on how institutions protect predators and fail survivors. In higher education, *The Hunting Ground* (2015) and Jon Krakauer’s *Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town* (2015) amplified attention on how poorly higher education administrators have responded to rape and sexual assault of and by students. In 2019, *USA Today’s* “predator pipeline” investigation detailed how “like the Catholic Church, the Boy Scouts of America and USA Gymnastics, universities have concealed evidence that would help reveal the extent of their sexual abuse problems” (Jacoby, 2019). Across the U.S., there appears to be an increased focus on how and why institutions, including tertiary education, too often appear to protect predators and fail sex abuse survivors (Harris, 2017; Sternstein, 2016; Handrahan, 2017; Chipp, 2019).

Research Results

In answering *The Dakota Student* question – are arrests of higher education employees on child sex trafficking charges common in America – the research hypothesis of yes is confirmed with “common” defined as known to the community, occurring or appearing frequently, widespread or general. While 223 cases of an estimated three million faculty and staff appears a small percentage, this study is exploratory and, as previously outlined, a sample of likely a much larger overall data set. This research also hypothesized themes would emerge through inductive analysis of the qualitative narrative case studies. Consistent results, congruent with outcomes in similar studies as noted in the methodology section, did emerge in three categories: (1) predator profile (2) crime profile and (3) institutional profile and response. Deductive results in the quantitative phase confirmed these trends and variable relationships. Key results are listed below.

Predator Profile

The 223 investigations, arrests, and prosecutions of higher education employees examined in this study were, overwhelmingly, white male professors, over half in leadership positions, frequently using their workplace to commit the crime (Chipp, 2019). Of all faculty and staff investigated and/or arrested/prosecuted: 91% were white, 98% male, 54% occupied leadership positions, and nearly 30% received awards for professional excellence.

Faculty arrests comprised the majority of the data, primarily among the humanities, medical sciences, and senior faculty administrators. Among staff arrests, information technology (IT), and campus security/police were most common. Nearly half, 48% occupied positions providing access to

Profile of Investigated/Charged/Convicted Individual Crimes by Race/Ethnicity

Frequency Distribution of Race/Ethnicity of Investigated, Charged or Convicted Individual

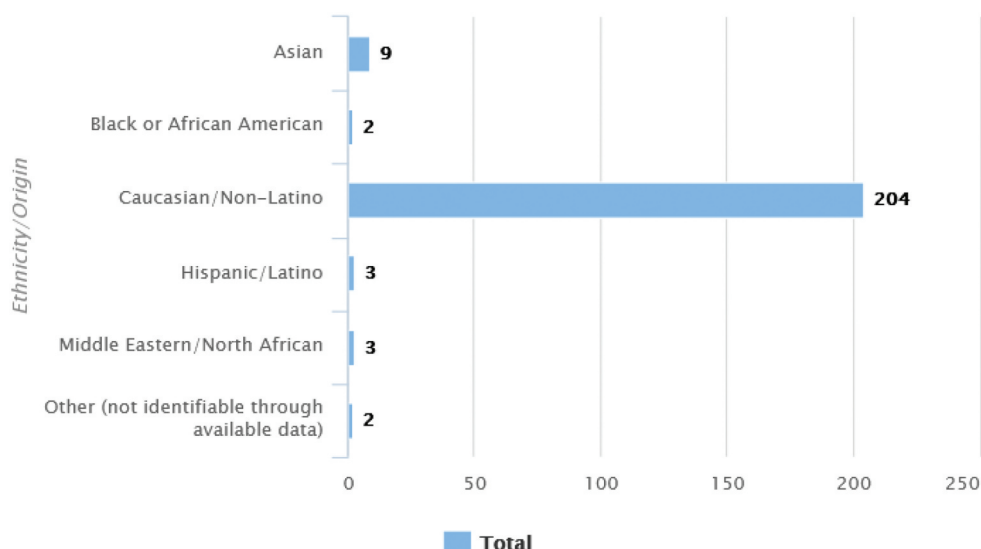


Figure 1. Crimes by Race/Ethnicity - Credit: Stephanie Lynn.

vulnerable populations.¹⁹ Most employees had been at their place of employment for more than 10 years when the arrest occurred and at least 35% of those investigated and/or arrested/prosecuted were parents – overwhelmingly fathers. Figures 1–3 shows the predator profile.

Crime Profile

Eighty-eight percent of the arrests/prosecutions examined were fully adjudicated with 75% entering plea deals and 93% of those pleading guilty. The average jail sentence was 12 years and the average supervised release/probation sentence was seven years. Seventy-one percent of the cases were sentenced to register as sex offenders. Fines and victim restitution appeared to be under-utilized by prosecutors and judges.²⁰ Twenty-seven percent were arrested and/or caught on campus with 42% using institutional property to commit the crime.

Figures 4, 5 and 6 show the age range of victims. Fifty-four percent involved children ten-years-old or younger, including infants and toddlers, with at least 130 reports of pre-teen hard core (PTHC), bestiality and/or sadomasochism violence – consistent with other reports as noted in the background and methodology section detailing common CSEM content.²¹

¹⁹Vulnerable population is defined here as perpetrators engaged in employment/activities providing direct access to children with enhanced vulnerability such as: orphans, children in war-zones or developing countries, children living in poverty, at-risk youth, disabled children, terminally ill children, homeless children, children in after school care, children in sports, music, or religious programs, etc. This conservative calculation is designed to examine how often perpetrators sought out positions of power over vulnerable children, not including their own children and the student body where they were employed.

²⁰Fines and victim restitution were infrequently seen in judgments and sentencing, although this data is less accurate than other crime/prosecution data as it was often more difficult to verify.

²¹As noted, lack of notation of infant/toddler, PTHC and/or bestiality does not necessarily indicate an absence.

Crimes by Gender

Gender of Investigated, Charged or Convicted Individual

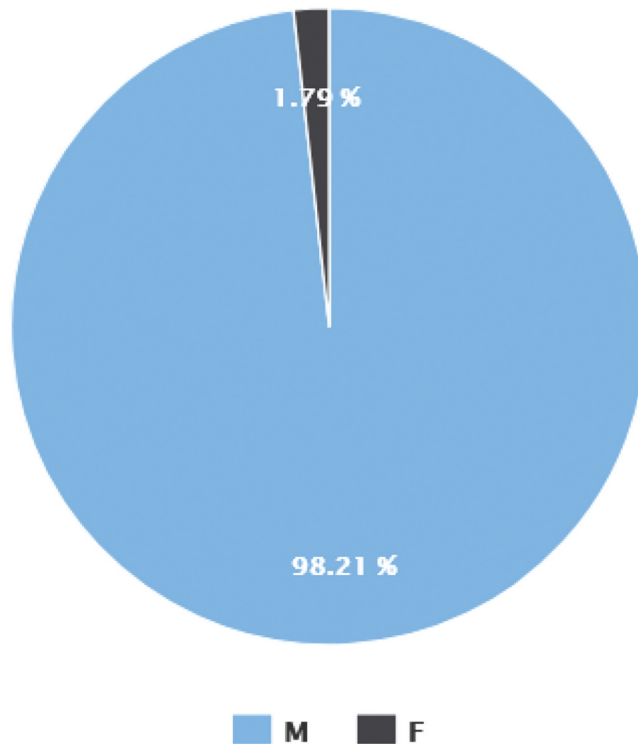


Figure 2. Crimes by Gender.

Five examples related to CSEM content and victim age include:

- J. Martin Favor, African American Studies Department Chair, Dartmouth University, was trading in infant and toddler rape for at least 15 years. His on-line name was “lustyjourney” (Cassidy, 2015; US Department of Justice, 2016b);
- Billy Lockhart, Resident, University of California San Francisco’s (UCSF) Department of Psychiatry, was trading in child rape on university networks with more than 1,700 images/videos including infants as young as six-months-old and masochistic, sadistic, and violent conducts. Lockhart had “stories about children being raped, information on how to do it and conversations with others about exploiting children” (Stone & Sernoffsky, 2018);
- David Roger Allen, Director of Theater, Midland College, was arrested with more than 3,300 CSEM images showing the abuse of “over 400 child victims” including of infants and of torture, bondage, sadistic, masochistic, and bestiality” (“Former drama,” 2009);

Leadership Positions

Percentage of investigated, charged or convicted individuals holding leadership positions within higher education and/or political, religious or community-based organizations

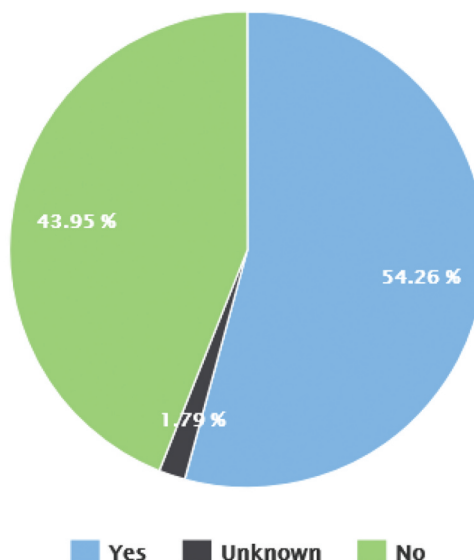


Figure 3. Crimes by Leadership Position.

- Robert Beattie, Chair of the Family and Community Medicine Department, University of North Dakota, had thousands of CSEM files on his office computer including the rape and torture of infants and toddlers. Prosecutors said, “These images are not of a naked child frolicking in a field . . . [but] really horrific acts” (Henson, 2015); and
- Mark Ranzenberger, Journalism Professor at Central Michigan University (CMU), caught when he mistakenly showed CSEM to his students, was trading in infant rape with over 1,000 images/videos including a “grooming” document with instructions on manipulation of children from birth to 11-years-old “to participate in sexual acts” (Hogan, 2016).

Arrests/prosecutions records detailed large amounts of CSEM images/videos, consistent with other reports as noted in the background and methodology section detailing common CSEM quantity. Five examples related to CSEM quantity include:

- Larry Nassar, Associate Professor, Michigan State University (MSU) and USA Gymnastics doctor, possessed 37,000 CSEM images/videos at arrest (US Department of Justice, US Attorney’s Office, Western District of Michigan, 2017);
- Adolfo Zayas-Bazan Albaisa, Adjunct Professor, University of Miami and Florida International University, maintained two storage units housing over five thousand CSEM images/videos (U.S. DOJ, 2019);
- David Blaszczak, Pediatrician, Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)’s family medicine program, sexually abused girls as young as seven-years-old at his daughter’s sleepover parties and produced CSEM of this abuse. He had over 8,000 images/videos including of infants and toddlers (US Department of Justice, US Attorney’s Office, Western District of New York, 2018);

Victim Age

Percentage Under Ten Years of Age

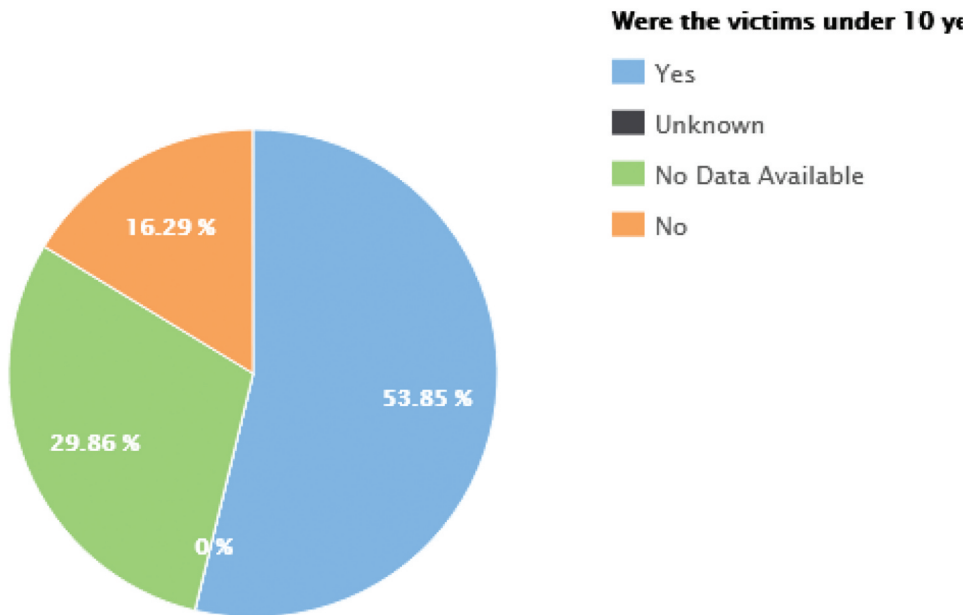


Figure 4. Age of Victims Graphic Credit: .Soluntech

- Neil Mason Williams, Associate Director Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, University of Kentucky, traded in CSEM on his university computer with “thousands” of CSEM images/videos in his possession (US Department of Justice, US Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of Kentucky, 2015a); and
- Michael Morris, Assistant Dean, University of Virginia was caught with 4,000 CSEM images/videos including toddler-rape and PTHC. His on-line name was “funshooter2006” (U.S. Department of Justice, 2014).

Institutional Profile and Response

Sixty-four percent of the investigations, arrests/prosecutions occurred at public higher educational institutions. Of the private institutions, 55 were religiously affiliated (Catholic/Christian) even though historically, 10 were community colleges and seven were Ivy League. Significantly, there were no known arrests at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). Most of the institutions had more than one employee investigated/arrested/prosecuted on CSEM allegations.²²

²²Based on institutional employment at time of investigation/arrest/sentencing or most recent employment if already retired/resigned/terminated. If employed simultaneously at more than one institution, full-time employment and/or employment of longest duration was selected.

Age of Victims

Breakdown of crimes involving different age ranges

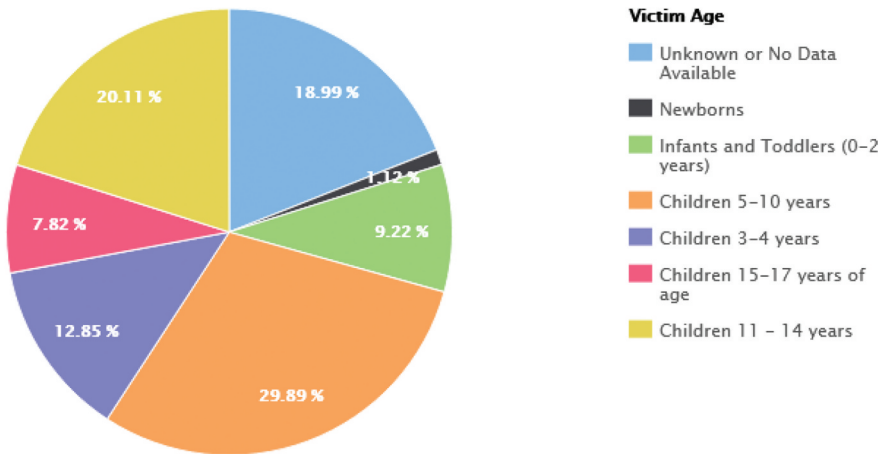


Figure 5. Age of Victims Graphic Credit: Stephanie Lynn.

Institutional Profile and Response

Public or Private Institution

Breakdown of institution type where the investigated, charged, or convicted individual was employed

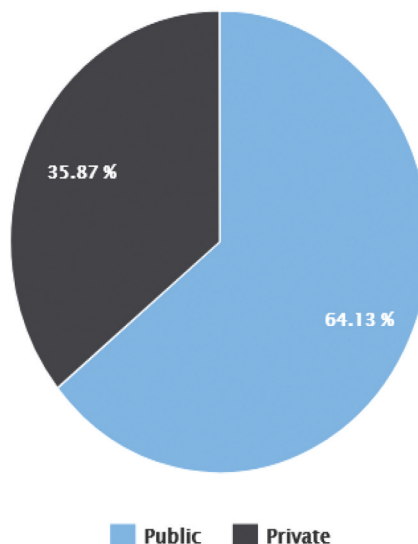


Figure 6. Public or Private Institution

Institutions typically followed a two-prong approach when employee CSEM crimes became apparent. First, an immediate response after the arrest (or just prior if the institution was aware an arrest was forthcoming) followed by a second action upon indictment, guilty plea, and/or sentencing. The most prevalent response upon investigation/arrest was administrative leave with 55% of the institutions placing the employee on paid/unpaid leave. Eight percent of those investigated/arrested resigned following, or just prior to, their arrest, 13% were immediately terminated and 2% retired. After an indictment, guilty plea and/or sentencing, 20% of employees were terminated, 13% resigned and 5% retired. Eighty-two percent of the institutions released a statement or press release.

Overall, the results documented largely inadequate responses to preventing/responding to child sex trafficking crimes by employees with a bias toward protecting perpetrators when these crimes emerge. As detailed in the methodology section, this pattern is evidenced in other investigations of child sex crimes in U.S. institutions. Finally, higher education institutions, public and private, do not appear to have widespread or well-established best practice standards for preventing/responding to CSEM crimes by employees. Examples of the best and worst institutional responses emerging from the results of this study are described below.

Best Practices

Some institutions proactively addressed arrests and exhibited transparency with a public statement and termination or unpaid leave/suspension of the employee. In four cases, institutions took additional measures to secure their communities and make a public stand against child sexual abuse and exploitation.

University of North Dakota. After two faculty, Robert Beattie, Family and Community Medicine Department Chair, and Eric Hewitt Basile, aviation professor, and one staff, Paul Bradley Meagher, campus police officer, were arrested on CSEM charges, the University of North Dakota implemented Safeguarding UND and partnered with the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) to block CSEM websites. UND is, reportedly, the first higher education institute to take the innovative measure of partnering with IWF (McKenzie, 2018).²³

Allegheny College. When award-winning professor Kirk Nessel was arrested on child pornography distribution, receipt, and possession charges (although allowing Nessel to resign) the college was fully transparent about the arrest. Within 48 hours of the arrest administrators offered grief counseling to students, staff and faculty and canceled classes “in order for the community to meet and express concerns to administrators” (Stephenson, 2014). The college president terminated out-of-state travel and returned to campus to take part in these public discussions. Allegheny is the only higher education institution known to have offered campus-wide grief counseling after a CSEM employee arrest (Stephenson, 2014; Stephenson, 2015).²⁴

Stetson University. Within 24 hours of learning Clyde Fant, emeritus professor and former dean, had been sentenced on federal child sex trafficking charges Stetson University’s Board of Trustees Executive Committee unanimously voted to: (1) rescind all awards Fant had received, (2) strip Fant

²³Beattie was sentenced, July 2016, to 12 years in prison. Meagher was sentenced, February 2017, to ten years in prison. Both committed the crime on campus with university equipment. Basile was sentenced, 2107, to 16.5 years. All three traded in torture of under five-years-old including infants and toddlers (US Department of Justice, US Department of Justice, US Attorney’s Office, District of North Dakota, 2016a; Jacobs, 2016).

²⁴Nessel had over 500,000 CSEM videos/images of child sex abuse, including infant rape. He pleaded guilty, 2016, and was sentenced to just over six years in federal prison. In 2018, Nessel settled a civil lawsuit with eight survivors depicted in the CSEM (US Department of Justice, 2014a; 2015).

of his emeritus status; (3) banned Fant from university property and (4) issued a press statement detailing “Stetson does not and will not tolerate the presence of those who abuse others – in any form – on its campuses” (Stetson University, 2017; Jarmusz, 2017).²⁵

Franklin College. After Franklin College President Thomas Minar was arrested on child enticement-related charges, 6 January 2020, college administrators immediately terminated Minar’s employment and: (1) released a public statement; (2) cooperated with law enforcement’s investigation; (3) opened their own investigation into Minar’s conduct as an employee; (4) held a campus-wide community meeting to discuss the arrest, (5) offered off-campus counseling for anyone in need, and (6) re-issued graduation diplomas without Minar’s signature (Irish, 2020; Ketterer, 2020; State of Wisconsin 2020).²⁶

Worst Practices

Institutions often attempted to conceal arrests. Sometimes the employee quietly resigned or retired just prior to an arrest with the institution claiming the employee had left to pursue other opportunities. At times student journalists discovered and reported on the crimes despite punitive opposition from the institution. These four samples illustrate the worst institutional response results.

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). The administration was not transparent about Assistant Professor of Film Peter Kiwitt’s CSEM arrest and reacted unfavorably to student journalists uncovering the crime. Although RIT knew of the arrest, as early as December 2016, no public announcement was made, and Kiwitt remained employed until May 2017 – a month after student journalists discovered, April 2017, the arrest. Prior to the arrest, despite Title IX complaints with “many students reported submitting teacher evaluations including comments and accusations about Kiwitt’s inappropriate behavior in and outside of the classroom,” Kiwitt was awarded tenure (Albin, 2017; US Department of Justice, US Attorney’s Office, Western District of New York, 2019b; Peterson, 2019).²⁷

Bryan College. Bryan College was not transparent about Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies David Matthew Morgan’s arrest. The college issued a statement claiming Morgan had resigned to “pursue other opportunities” and took punitive action against Robert Green, editor of the student paper, when Green attempted to report on the crime (Kingkade, 2012). Bryan College president banned reporting on the case and threatened to expel Green. Green then printed the story on flyers and distributed it on campus, prompting an all-campus meeting with college administrators and national media attention. In 2013, the University of Oregon awarded Green the Ancil Payne Award for Ethics in Journalism (“College Media Matters,” 2012; “College spikes,” 2012; Smietana, 2013).²⁸

²⁵Fant pleaded guilty in a deal, 2013, to one count of child pornography possession and was sentenced, 2013, to time served plus one day, followed by five years of supervised release. He was trading in “ultra-hard” pre-teen hard core (PTHC) child rape, i.e., extreme torture and violence committed against young children. Fant is a registered sex offender in Florida (US Department of Justice, 2013a).

²⁶Minar’s criminal records detail involvement in CSEM KIK group discussing animal rape and the rape of a 4-year-old boy whose father offered to “share his son.” Minar pleaded not guilty, rejecting a plea deal, and awaits a jury trial scheduled for March 2022 (“The Daily Journal,” 2021; Shrake, 2021).

²⁷Kiwitt was arrested, 2016, on child pornography related charges, convicted in 2017, and sentenced to 180 days served on weekends at the county jail. RIT refused to disclose if Kiwitt was on paid or unpaid leave after his arrest or if he was allowed to resign with full benefits or was terminated. In August 2019, Kiwitt was arrested, again, and charged with sex trafficking of a minor, using force, fraud, and coercion and possession of child pornography. This second arrest was triggered by the fatal overdose of a female child Kiwitt is charged with trafficking. He pleaded guilty to federal sex trafficking with coercion charges, August 2021. Sentencing is scheduled for November 2021 (Cleveland, 2019; US Department of Justice, US Attorney’s Office, Western District of New York, 2021, 2019b).

²⁸Morgan was arrested, 2012, on charges of criminal attempt of aggravated child molestation and sexual exploitation of a child. He was caught attempting to meet a child to rape at a gas station in Georgia. In a deal, all charges were dropped and Morgan pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit a felony and was sentenced, 2015, to 10 years probation. He is not required to register as sex offender (“2012, 2012).

Stanford University. Stanford University offered a Visiting Scholar position to registered sex offender Kurt Elliott Mitman. Student journalists at *The Stanford Daily* discovered and reported on Mitman's status. In response, administrators claimed they were unaware of Mitman's crimes and allowed Mitman to complete his term. Mitman pleaded guilty and was sentenced for rape of a 14-year-old boy enrolled at Lafayette College's summer camp where Mitman was staff (Cohen, 2007; Curnin et al., 2019; Levitsky, 2019).²⁹

The University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Thomas Denove, former chair of UCLA's Cinematography Department at the American film Institute, was allowed to retire with emeritus status despite a child sex assault conviction. The student newspaper, *The Daily Bruin*, reported on Denove's conviction and in response administrators issued a statement claiming the university "was not aware of the charges against Denove" (Morris, 2019a). Denove pleaded no contest to two counts of child sexual assault and not guilty to a third, related, charge in November 2018 and was sentenced, May 2019, to 8 years in state prison (Morris, 2019b).³⁰

Discussion

The research results highlight at least six areas for further discussion. Detailed below these are: (1) risk to students and children on campus, (2) influence on research agendas and public policy, (3) .Edu and ISP Dark Web monitoring scoping the crime scale, (4) predator database and criminal background checks, (5) the crime within the context of a dominant white patriarchy, and (6) calculating the costs of employing child sex traffickers. In addition, as this study relies on a mixed method design, MMR contributions are also briefly discussed.

Risk to Students and Children on Campus

As noted in the results section, 27% of the perpetrators were arrested and/or caught on campus with 42% using institutional property to commit the crime. In addition to the well-known cases of Larry Nassar (MSU) and Jerry Sandusky (Penn State), how frequently are employees using employment in higher education, the prestige of their positions and physical locations within their institutions, to access and sexually abuse children? Comprehensive research on this question does not exist. Results from this study detail many cases where employment status and location were used to commit sexual crimes against children. Examples include:

- Mark Hoeltzel, a pediatric rheumatoid arthritis doctor at the University of Michigan, was arrested, February 2018, on two federal pornography charges and sentenced to 10 years in jail. Hoeltzel sexually abused and exploited an 11-year-old girl attending the University of Michigan Arthritis Camp Dakota where Hoeltzel worked (Kelly, 2018);
- Kyle Loughlin, a staffer at Bridgewater State University Children's Center, was arrested, April 2015, on two counts of rape of a child and three counts of aggravated indecent assault and battery of a child under 14. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 7.5 years in jail. Loughlin was sexually assaulting children in the university daycare. He was also an early childhood education student at Bridgewater (Cline, 2018; Hyman, 2015; Relihan, 2017);
- Antonio Lasaga, a Yale University geology professor, was arrested December 1998, on child sexual assault and CSEM possession and sentenced to 15 years in federal prison with a concurrent 20 years in state prison. He had volunteered with Connecticut's Board of Education to mentor

²⁹Mitman pleaded guilty to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse and unlawful sexual contact with a minor, was sentenced, March 2005, to 2.5 to five years in prison. He was free weekdays, 12 hours per day, and drove to/from University of Pennsylvania where he was a student "(2007, 2012; Medina, 2019; Ting, 2019).

³⁰The grandmother of the survivors testified at Denove's trial to the destruction done to her grandchildren by Denove (Rosenbluth, 2019).

a disadvantaged child and, over five years, raped this seven-year-old boy, including in Yale classrooms, and produced CSEM of the assaults. At the time of his arrest, Lasaga possessed over 150,000 videos/images of “sexual torture of children” including on his Yale computer (“Former Yale,” 2002; D’Arcy, 2000; Kaplan, 2008); and

- Robert Parsons, Ohio University police officer, was indicted on 13 child sex abuse charges and sentenced, November 2006, to 6 months in jail. Parsons targeted a teenager while representing the university at high-school career days. He raped the girl, while in his police uniform, during working hours, in locked university buildings and in his patrol car. Three civil suits were brought against the university, including by one survivor who filed a \$10 million suit, October 2019, claiming the university knew Parsons was suspected of child sex abuse since 2001, but continued to employ him and allowing him to represent the university at local schools where he accessed children (R. Cook, 2006; Morris, 2019a; Morris, 2019b; Knight, 2019).

Research Agendas and Public Policy

In addition to using employment prestige and location to access and sexually abuse children, tertiary education is a high-status profession offering unique power to influence public policy through research agendas. How often is employment in higher education used to skew policy toward protecting predators and/or encouraging CSEM? Comprehensive research into this question has not been conducted. This study details numerous cases where research by perpetrators supported crimes they were committing and/or where perpetrators occupied positions influencing public policy toward children, particularly those with enhanced vulnerabilities. Examples include:

- Balazs Tarnai, Association Professor of Special Education at Seton Hall University, pleaded guilty to CSEM charges in March 2011. He was trading in the rape of children as young as five-years-old, possessed thousands of images/videos and secretly and recorded boys in his bathroom. Tarnai’s research was on the “socio-sexual development of autistic children” US Department of Justice, US Attorney’s Office, Western District of Pennsylvania, 2013b; “Former Seton Hill,” 2013; Goudy, 2013);
- Donald Ratcliff, Christian Education Professor specializing in child psychology at Wheaton College in Illinois, was sentenced, in 2014, to 3.5 years in jail on a CSEM guilty plea. He was trading in the rape of children as young as three-years-old and told investigators he masturbated while watching these assaults. Ratcliff claimed his crimes were “moral” because “research in Europe” proved CSEM prevented people from becoming pedophiles (Campana, 2012; Spewak, 2014; Ward, 2013);
- In 2017, Holt Parker, a classical studies professor at the University of Cincinnati, was sentenced to 4 years in prison on CSEM charges. Parker said he traded in CSEM almost daily and bragged about raping an eight-year-old girl. He responded to the rape of a four-year-old child with “love that ... show me ... please!” His e-mail was “daddy.cruel@yahoo.com” and he collected “thousands” of CSEM images/videos including of an infant. Parker’s doctoral degree is from Yale, and he published on sexuality, slavery, and sadism (U.S. DOJ, 2016; “Former University,” 2017); and
- The late Robert Herman-Smith, an assistant professor, Department of Social Work, University of North Carolina Charlotte, was indicted, August 2018, on five CSEM charges. He was coordinator of North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaboration preparing students for employment in “public child welfare” and researched early childhood intervention for at-risk children due to trauma, maltreatment, and poverty. He had access to newborns and children up five-year-old (“UNC Charlotte,” 2017; Lowe, 2017).

Scoping the Crime

Determining the scope of the crime within the higher education workplace is an important consideration for future research. One method of obtaining this information is investigating university/college internet service providers (ISP) and .edu e-mail addresses active in known CSEM forums. For example, ISPs belonging to the U.S. Department of Defense have been cited as nineteenth most active in nearly 3,000 CSEM trading sites (Miller, 2019). Similar research should be performed for higher education institutions.³¹

Predator Database & Criminal Background Checks

The lack of a public arrest/prosecution database and mandatory criminal background checks allow predators to gain and remain employed in higher education after serving prison sentences, as registered sex offenders and when plea deals provide non-child sex trafficking charges.³² Policy-change discussions might include: (1) the creation of a public database of all child sex abuse related arrests/prosecutions maintained by DOE in cooperation with DOJ's Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website; (2) verified criminal background checks as a prequalification for federal funding; and (3) amending the Clery Act to include reporting of all CSEM-related crimes.³³

The White Patriarchy of Higher Education

The academy remains one of America's most robust bastions of white male privilege and dominance – otherwise known as patriarchy. Is there a relationship among higher education employees arrested/prosecuted for CSEM crimes and racist, misogynist, and abusive behavior on campus? Arrests/prosecutions in this research were overwhelming of white men often in leadership; deans, presidents, general counsels, provosts, heads of departments enjoying employment, if tenured, from which they are rarely terminated. How many of those arrested/prosecuted for CSEM crimes also sexually harassed, exploited, or discriminated against women, non-white colleagues, staff, and students? Were female faculty and faculty of color denied tenure by the deans and provosts later convicted on CSEM crimes? Determining these answers should be a priority for the academy.

Cost of Employing Child Sex Traffickers

How much do employee CSEM crimes costs U.S. higher education institutions and U.S. taxpayers funding public institutions? Costs include: (1) lawsuits brought against the institutions by survivors, (2) defending criminal employees when institutions choose to do so, (3) paid leave, often up to two-years, for arrested employees, (4) full retirement benefits provided to convicted perpetrators, (5) loss of tuition and reputation when institutions protect high-profile predators, and (6) loss of academic

³¹U.S. Representative Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) and, now former U.S. Representative Mark Meadows (R-NC) introduced the End National Defense Network Abuse Act to stop the U.S. military from facilitating child sex trafficking in the workplace. Similar legislation might be created for higher education institutions.

³²Criminal background checks are not consistently, legally required for faculty and staff in higher education. While some state-level laws require criminal background checks for employees in contact with children, these laws are not always applied. Some universities and colleges voluntarily conduct criminal checks on all employees; however, this is not a widespread practice nor is it federally mandated.

³³Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website (<https://www.nsopw.gov>) named in memory of Dru Katrina Sjodin, a college student from Minneapolis, Minnesota, murdered by a registered sex offender. The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) of 1990 (<https://studentaid.gov/data-center/school/clery-act-reports>) named in memory of Jeanne Clery, a Lehigh University student murdered in her dorm room. The Clery Act requires higher education institutions participating in federal financial aid to maintain and make public crime data on and near campus.

contributions and personal costs to faculty, staff, and students forced out of higher education by predators. Future research might calculate these combined costs for all employee CSEM arrests/prosecutions in U.S. higher education over the past 10 years.

Mixed Methods Research Contributions

Answering *The Dakota Student* question might have been an uncomplicated quantitative research project but for the lack of available data which prohibited a straightforward inquiry. Absent a ready-made database, a strategic integrative MMR design, using pluralistic approaches in data collection and analysis, was crafted. This involved data collection and analysis of, at least, 10,000 pages of primary documents collected from five different sources by the researcher over a seven year period. The arduous data collection and content complexity favored qualitative methods prior to quantifying the data. The subsequent MMR design (QUAL quan) allowed; (1) the research to meet its stated objective in the absence of available collected data, (2) highlights the benefits of qualitative/quantitative integrative thinking in data collection/analysis and (3) provides deep analysis of complex data that surfaced trends potentially useful in crafting more effective public policy.

This research intended to build a framework to better understand predatory behavior, CSEM crimes, and institutional reactions when employees are charged with these crimes. The resulting design amplifies the value of informed contemplation – careful reflection on the nature of the research problem and how the phenomenon is conceived – and suggests this is a prerequisite to crafting strategic integrative MMR design.³⁴ Informed contemplation is dependent upon a robust foundational element and thus the foundational element provides not only confidence in data content/analysis, as previously discussed, but also in effective MMR construct. The MMR designs created for this research, along with the data sets, are offered as contributions toward future study (Åkerblad et al., 2021; Fábregues et al., 2021).

Conclusion

“There is virtually no literature on child sexual abuse committed by ‘powerful perpetrators,’ who, use position, reputation, wealth and/or power, to become influential members of their organisation.” (Erooga et al., 2019)

The Dakota Student asked, “We can’t help but wonder if this type of thing is common in other schools around the nation?” (“Integrity,” 2015).³⁵ This research answers yes, CSEM crimes appear common in the U.S. higher education workforce and there are shared characteristics among perpetrators, the crime and institutional responses. Further, a lack of transparency by U.S. higher education administrators related to these workplace crimes may be a barrier in: (1) preventing CSEM crime in tertiary education, (2) advancing, overall, national predator research, and (3) creating appropriate policy solutions to protect children and stop child sex trafficking.

Child sex trafficking is embedded in American homes, communities, and workplaces. Comprehensive perpetrator data is needed to accurately understand who the predators are and how they operate. This data are also foundational for budgetary decisions about the resources needed to combat child sex trafficking. A public predator database detailing all local, state, and federal CSEM arrests/prosecutions would provide precise information for improved policies and laws and greatly expand the current scope of human trafficking research. It all starts with the data. Our collective failure, as a country and within the higher education profession, to understand and stop child predators is a result, in part, of limited predator data.

³⁴Informed contemplation is a term developed by this researcher to describe the value of background subject knowledge as applied to consideration of a MMR design.

³⁵Beattie was sentenced, July 2016, to 12 years in federal prison (US Department of Justice, US Department of Justice, US Attorney’s Office, District of North Dakota, 2016a).

This research began with a question posed by University of North Dakota students after one of their professors was arrested on CSEM charges. Robert Beattie, now former chair of the Family and Community Medicine Department, used his employment to facilitate child sex trafficking. Even one arrest like Beattie's in postsecondary education is too many. Two hundred and twenty-three cases detailed in this research should prompt urgent action in the U.S. higher education sector and among policy-makers concerned with protecting children and stopping child sex trafficking in all its forms – including CSEM possession, production, and distribution.

This research offers a discussion framework, suggests an agenda for future study, provides public policy recommendations, and contributes to the body of research on perpetrator data – particularly powerful predators in the workplace.

Acknowledgments

This research is dedicated to my daughter, to courageous survivors everywhere and to student journalists – often lone, brave voices reporting on CSEM crimes in their own universities and colleges. In particular: (1) Sam Stephenson, former co-editor of *The Campus* at Allegheny College, reported extensively on Kirk Nessel's arrest; (2) Robert Alex Green, former editor of *The Triangle* at Bryan College, reported in defiance of extreme pressure from senior administrators on David Morgan's arrest and (3) Frankie James Albin, former editor of *Reporter Magazine* at Rochester Institute for Technology (RIT), reported on Peter Kiwit's arrest against efforts by the administration to conceal the crimes. Intrepid student journalists at *The Dakota Student* – University of North Dakota, *The Stanford Daily* – Stanford University and *The Daily Bruin* – UCLA are also acknowledged.

This research benefited from: technology expert Stephanie Lynn, who spent countless hours developing the Knack database; Nicolás Rozo Garcés, Giancarlo Valencia, and their team at Soluntech provided assistance with the final database polish; Méabh Branagan, my UPeace research fellow who conducted tedious data collection with good will and precision; Nishara Gunasekara, Allison Block, Siobhán Spiak, and other volunteers including UPeace students who assisted in data entry; and countless court clerks, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and public affairs officers who patiently answered questions, and gathered and shared public records.

Gratitude is due to the International Conference on Human Trafficking Research's (ICHTR) Organizing Committee – Dean Jennifer Bossard, Doane University, and Co-Directors of Human Trafficking Initiative at Creighton University, Crysta Price and Dr. Terry Clark, for inviting this research to be presented at the *International Conference on Human Trafficking Research (ICHTR)* in 2019. Appreciation to Dr. Mark Motivans, Statistician, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, for consistently responding to many queries over the years with diligence and patience.

Dr. Charles Hounmenou, Jane Addams College of Social Work, University of Illinois at Chicago, is owed appreciation for his support for this research, his outspoken courage at academic conferences and his anti-trafficking research. Dr. Vernon Murry, Assistant Professor of Marketing, Marist College and Adeleye Lewis Olatunji, of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), are thanked for their kindness and support. Thanks, as well, to the anonymous peer-reviewer for thoughtful suggested revisions. Gratitude to all who encouraged this work over the past 8 years, including, among others, Trent Steele, president of the Anti-Predator Project. Thank you. No financial interest/benefit resulted from the direct application of this research.

Disclosure statement

There is no known conflict of interest to disclose.

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