

2006 SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

1950

THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS  
BY CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND DEACONS  
IN THE UNITED STATES 1950-2002

2002

A RESEARCH STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
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FOR THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

*The Nature and Scope of  
Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and  
Deacons in the United States*

**SUPPLEMENTARY  
DATA ANALYSIS**

For the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

*Submitted by*

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Washington, D.C.

In June 2002 the full body of Catholic bishops of the United States in their General Meeting in Dallas approved the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. The Charter stipulated that a descriptive study on the nature and scope of the problem of sexual abuse of minors by clergy be commissioned by the National Review Board. This study was conducted by John Jay College of Criminal Justice; its results were released in February 2004. In November 2004 the full body of Catholic bishops of the United States in their annual meeting in Washington, D.C., contracted with John Jay College of Criminal Justice to provide a supplementary data analysis of the material used to conduct the nature and scope study. This report by the John Jay College is authorized for publication by the undersigned.

Msgr. David J. Malloy, STD  
General Secretary, USCCB

Under contract with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, John Jay College of Criminal Justice performed a supplemental, independent, objective assessment of the nature and scope of child sexual abuse by Catholic clergy based on data provided by dioceses and religious institutes.

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## INTRODUCTION

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The study undertaken by John Jay College of Criminal Justice in 2003, *The Nature and Scope of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in the United States 1950-2002*, sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, was initiated by the National Review Board and the Office of Child and Youth Protection. John Jay College compiled a team of interdisciplinary researchers to conduct this descriptive study, the results of which were released in February 2004 during a live telecast at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Study results showed that 4,392 priests had allegations of abuse (representing 4% of priests in ministry between 1950 and 2002), 10,667 victims made allegations, and the Church paid (at the time surveys were completed) \$572.5 million for legal and treatment fees and as compensation to the victims. Results also showed that while 55% of priests had only one formal allegation of abuse, 3.5% of priests were responsible for approximately 26% of all allegations of sexual abuse against minors.

The study also provided information on: the circumstances of the abuse (e.g., types of sexual acts, location of abuse, duration of the abusive behavior); the offenders (e.g., year of ordination, age, ministry duties, other behavioral problems); the victims (e.g., age and gender, with whom they were living at the time of the abuse); and the dioceses (e.g., differences in abuse rates by region and population size). The results of the John Jay study will inform a future study on the causes and context of the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church.

The timeline to complete the Nature and Scope study was short; the John Jay research team had less than one year to complete the data collection and analysis and release the report. As a result, the results of the Nature and Scope study were descriptive in nature and addressed only key information sought by the Church. In order to better understand the more complex interaction of multiple variables, the John Jay research team continued to analyze the data from the Nature and Scope study to conduct multivariate analyses on the following topics.

- Reporting of the abuse and the distribution of offenses. The aim was to explore reporting trends, the patterns of distribution of ages of those who reported the abuse at the time they reported the abuse, and to estimate the number of new cases that may come forward from the past two decades, when fewer cases have been reported. A second aim was to explore patterns of reporting, such as the length of time it takes to report the abuse based upon gender of the victim, victim/perpetrator relationship, relationship between victim and his/her family, type of abuse that occurred, length of time the abuse occurred, etc. Finally, a team worked together to derive a mathematical model of future reporting based on past reporting in order to guide future policy.

- Comparison of diocesan and religious priests. The aim was to look at patterns of abuse in these two populations to see if there are specific factors that distinguish the two groups that could account for there being twice as many diocesan priests with allegations of abuse than religious priests.
- Church response to the abuse. The aim was to examine the relationship between the Church's response to the abuse and recidivism, or continued offending by individual priests. Observing the various actions taken by particular dioceses may lead to information on "best practices" for controlling abusive behavior in the future.
- Priests with single and multiple allegations. The aim was to explore the demographic, psychological and behavioral patterns of samples of priests, as well as the offense patterns and victims characteristics, to determine if there are differences between offenders with one victim and those with multiple victims. This includes an analysis of the "grooming process" of the multiple offenders to determine how they were able to encourage compliance with the abuse from the children.
- Treatment. The aim was to look at rates of recidivism based upon the types and number of offenses committed by the priests, the types of treatment they were given, the length of time between when they began offending and the time treatment began, and the types of centers where they received treatment.
- Regional differences. The aim was to explore further any differences in patterns of offending based upon regional differences and differences based on size of diocese.

Though this data analysis is far more extensive than what was included in the original report, it is important to understand that there are limits with the data used here. First, the data are likely to be less accurate for allegations that were reported in the early years of the reporting period. Second, it is likely that there were differences among dioceses in record-keeping, and these differences were reflected in the different levels of detail on the completed surveys. Third, there is missing information because not every diocese answered every question on the three types of surveys. This missing data means that the number of cases to be compared is different for almost every variable. Finally, it is important to emphasize that the dataset used is wholly based on information reported to us by the Church. It must be clear to all that, because of the confidentiality provisions used as the data were collected, it is not possible for researchers to identify any diocese or religious order, any individual priest or victim; the data are in aggregate form.

Despite these cautions, this dataset is one of the most extensive collections of information about sexual abuse of minors, and one of a very small number not based on forensic contact. As such, it is a very valuable source of knowledge about sexual offending.

We are grateful for the statistical work provided by Bilal Khan, PhD, from the Department of Mathematics at John Jay College, and for research assistance by John Jay College graduate students Andres Rengifo, Bonnie Starfield, Jennifer Tallon and Brenda Vollman.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### The Shape of the Crisis of Sexual Abuse of Minors in the Church

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#### *1.1 Prevalence and regional patterns*

In the 2004 report on the data gathered from all Catholic dioceses and religious institutes in the United States, the John Jay College researchers provided fundamental statistics about the extent of the sexual abuse of children by Catholic priests and deacons. The dioceses, eparchies, and religious institutes reported information on 4,392 individuals who had been the subject of at least one allegation of sexual abuse while serving in ecclesial ministry between 1950 and 2002. We found that this count of priests with allegations was 4.2 % of all diocesan priests in ministry for that time period and 2.7 % of all religious priests in ministry in the same period.

Although the request for information on allegations included both priests and deacons, there were only a small number (61) of deacons who had been accused. Of these men who were permanent deacons, 95 % were ordained between 1970 and 1990. The events that gave rise to the allegations took place in a similar pattern to that of the overall incidence of abuse events. The statistics describing the deacons reported in the study and their victims did not show these men to be different from the ordained priests for whom data was reported. For the balance of this report, we will refer in the text to priests alone, and ask that it be understood that the 61 deacons are being counted as well.

Also in the first study, we found that the overall percentage of 4 % of priests in ministry with allegations of sexual abuse was not only a general prevalence statistic, but that it was a fairly stable percentage across all fourteen regions of the Catholic Church and for large and small dioceses and religious institutes. The percentage of diocesan priests accused of sexual abuse ranges between 3 % and 6 % when the information is arranged by region and also when the information is arranged or sorted by the size of the diocese. Similarly, the percentage of religious priests with allegations ranged from 1 % to 3 % across all sizes of religious communities, when those with 10 or fewer members are excluded. From the consistency in the prevalence of allegations of sexual abuse in dioceses, the John Jay College researchers concluded that the problem was a general problem, not one that could be linked to dioceses in a particular area of the country, or to those with density of population or number of parishes.

When the events of sexual abuse were displayed as yearly counts by date of occurrence over the 52 years from 1950 to 2002, we observed a gradual but steady increase until the early 1980s and then a more marked, but equally steady decrease. The pattern shown in the incidence of sexual abuse in the United States is now seen to be a consistent pattern in all regions of the Catholic Church. In the pages that follow, the information from each of the fourteen regions is displayed in a separate chart. To preserve anonymity the

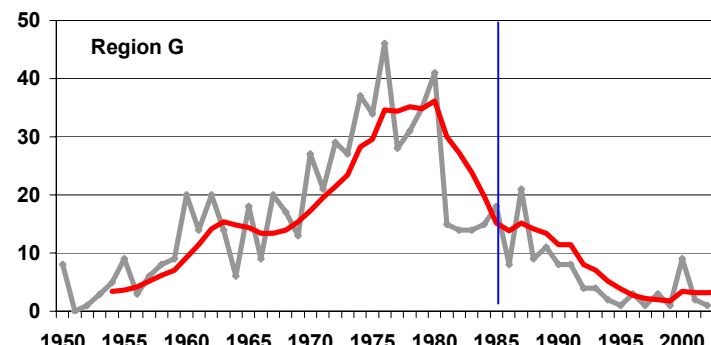
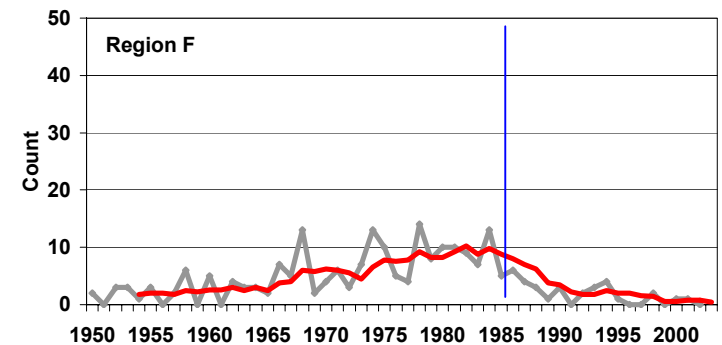
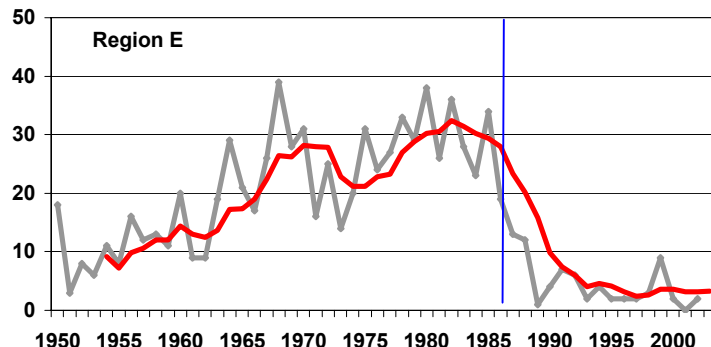
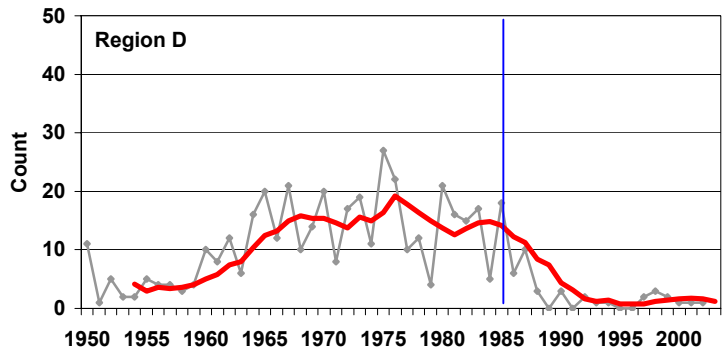
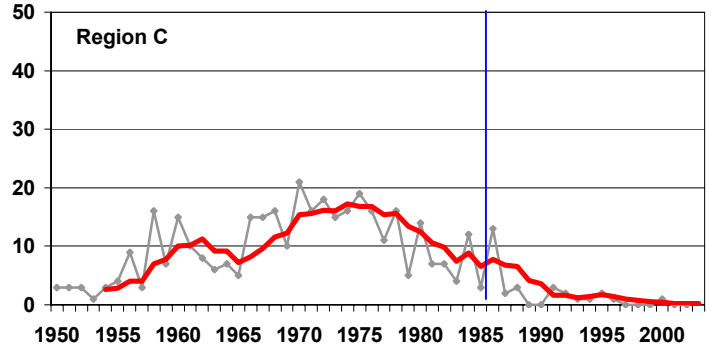
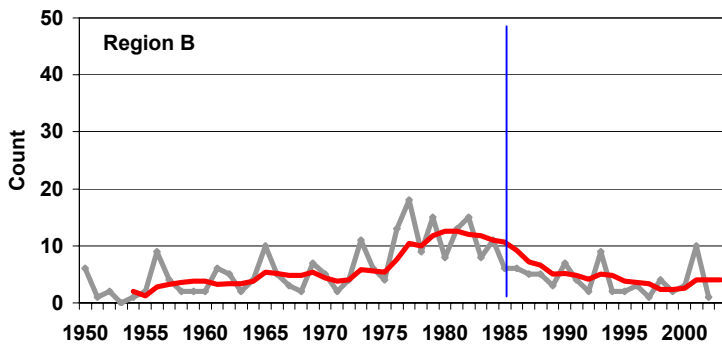
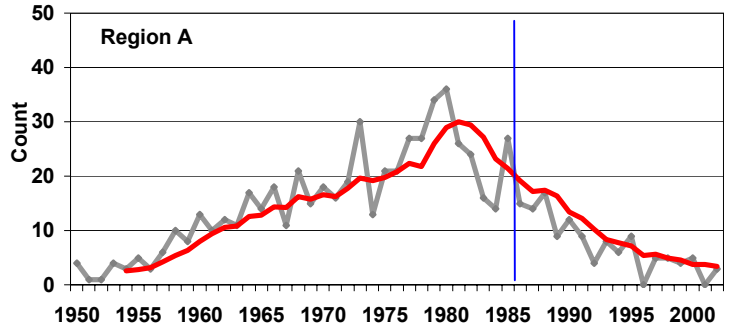
fourteen geographic regions of the Catholic Church in the United States have been randomly designated in Figure 1.1 with letters A through N.

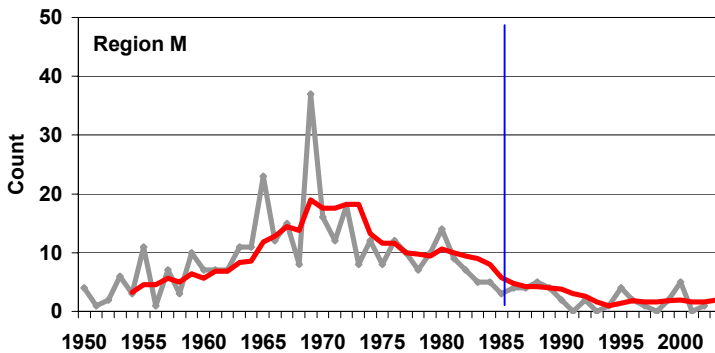
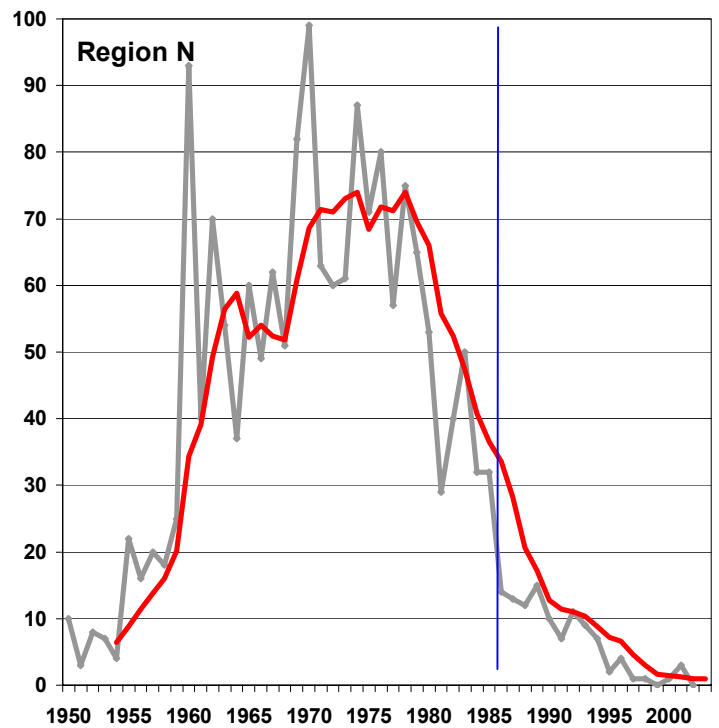
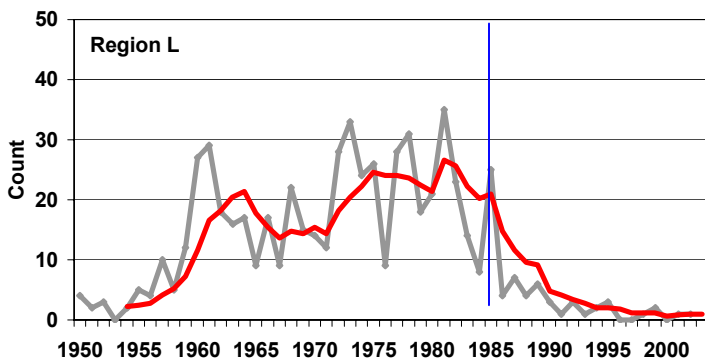
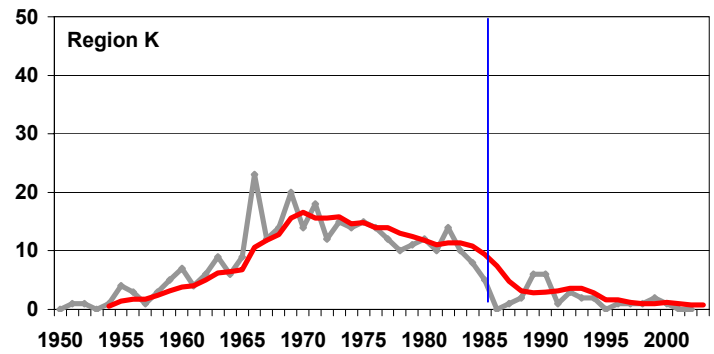
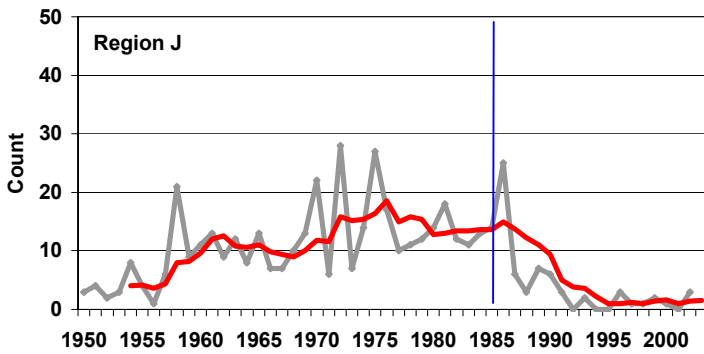
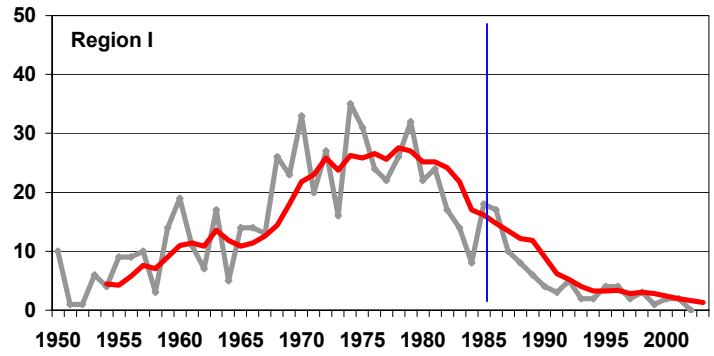
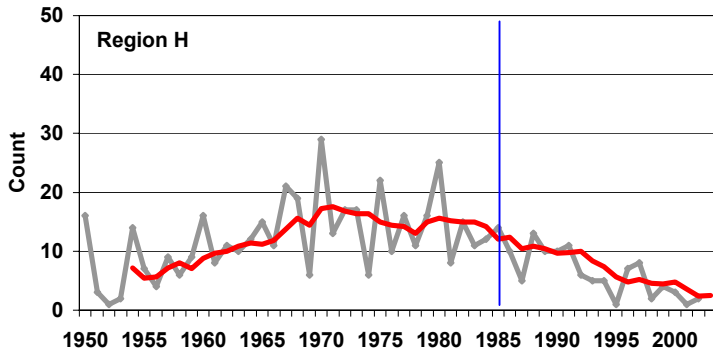
Figure 1.1

**Regional Distribution of Sex Abuse Cases** (yearly counts by date of occurrence per 14 regions)

**Legend**

- Count of priests accused of an abuse event per year
- Moving Average: this is a way of showing the pattern of change more clearly. The moving average value for each year is based on the average value over the previous five preceding years
- 1985





The numerical scale for the number of events, shown on the left of the charts, (the vertical or y axis) is consistent for all charts except the final one in the series, Region N. The scale begins at 0 and rises to a maximum of 50. Thus, the shapes of the distributions

seen in the charts are comparable. The events of abuse depicted in the charts in Figure 1.1 show total numbers of events known the Catholic Church by the end of 2002.

The year of 1985 is shown on each chart to indicate the date of case of Rev. Gilbert Gauthe, the attendant national publicity given his prosecution and imprisonment, and the circulation of the “Mouton-Doyle Report.”<sup>1</sup>

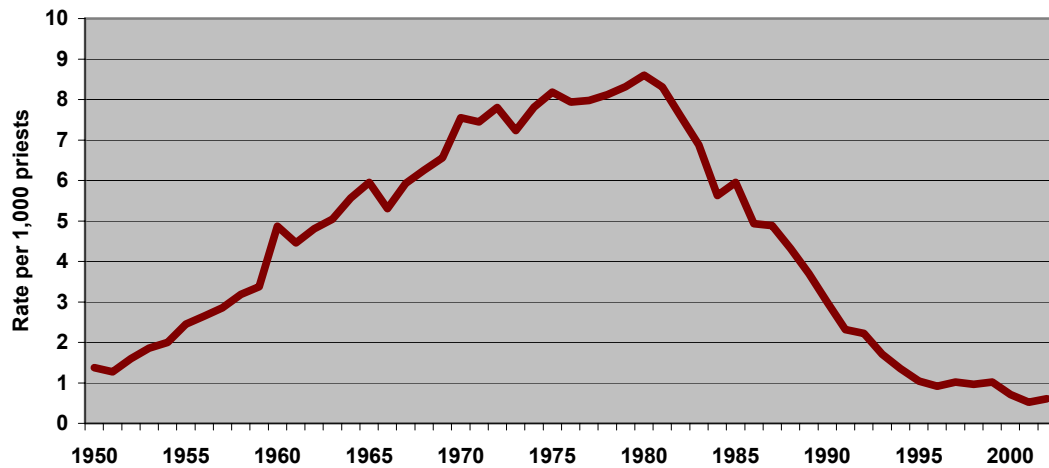
Although the number of men entering the priesthood declined over the period examined in the study, the total number of priests in ministry did not change as significantly. If the numbers of priests accused in a single year are shown as a rate, or index, per 1,000 priests in service, the shape is the same as that depicted in the preceding charts.

Figure 1.2

**Accusation Rate of Catholic Priests over Time, 1950 - 2002**

Range: from 58 in 1951 to 504 in 1980 to 52 in 1995 and 28 in 2002.

Priests in service: 42,970 in 1950, 58,908 in 1975, 45,713 in 2002.



**1.2 Patterns of reporting sexual abuse**

The delay in disclosure of sexual abuse by those who have been victimized is well-documented. The dramatic increase in the reports of sexual abuse in the 1990s and especially between 2000 and 2002, suggested the possibility that many more cases were yet to be reported. Table 1.1 below shows the number and percentage of reports of sexual abuse of children by priests received by the Catholic dioceses, by decade, from the 1950s to the period 2000 - 2002. For this report, we compiled a detailed analysis of reporting patterns: first, of those cases reported within a year of the date of the incident as compared to all cases and those with reporting delays of 25 or more years; second, patterns of disclosure that have been found in other studies of child sexual abuse were tested with the data from the Nature and Scope study; and finally, projections were made about unreported cases.

Table 1.1

**Reports of Incidents of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests**

Decade	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Total Reports
1950 - 1959	53	0.5%
1960 - 1969	190	1.9%
1970 - 1979	266	2.6%
1980 - 1989	1,146	11.2%
1990 - 1999	4,022	39.4%
2000 - 2002	4,533	44.4%
	N = 10,210	100%

*Differences in victim and reporting characteristics by time from event to report*

The first date of an incident of abuse and the date of the report to the diocese were used to create groups of those who reported abuse in one year and those who waited more than 25 years to make a report, and to compare these groups to the averages for all incidents. In 9,510 cases, or 89.2% of the Victim Surveys received, full data was available to analyze reporting patterns. Data show that 1,176 incidents, or slightly more than one in ten, were reported quickly.

In contrast, 41% of the incidents were reported after more than 25 years. The contrast in delay in reporting does not seem to be associated with specific characteristics of the victim, the priest or the behavior that was alleged.

The results of this statistical comparison are summarized as follows:

*Gender*

The overall percentage of boys among all victims, (81%), was only slightly different from the early reporters, (78%), and those who waited 25 years or more, (77%).

*Age at Time of Report*

Of the female victims of abuse who reported within one year of the abuse date, the majority were under 14, with 12.4% being less 10 years of age. A different pattern is shown by male victims who reported within a year, with almost 40% reporting at ages 15 - 17, and only 5% of those under 10 reporting quickly.

*Type of Behavior Alleged*

The distribution of behaviors that were described in the reports of sexual abuse are not markedly different when these groups are compared. Incidents reported in one year are



less likely to involve the victim touching the priests, either over or under clothing, or to engage in mutual masturbation or perform oral sex.

*Use of Alcohol or Drug*

Those who reported their abuse quickly were slightly less likely to have used alcohol or drugs with the priests than those who delayed their reporting.

*Parish Context for the Abuse*

There are no differences in the percentages of the parish role of the priests who were the subjects of the allegation (most were pastor or associate pastor), or of the circumstances of the meeting between priests and victims (at mass and in other parish activities), nor of the likelihood of the family of the victim being persistent (50% of families made an effort to follow-up on their reports). Families who reported abuse quickly were somewhat less likely to have socialized with the priest who was accused.

*Number of events in an incident of abuse*

In 58% of the incidents of abuse reported within one year, the abuse happened only once. If all allegations are considered, the percentage of one-time events falls to 29%. Of those who waited at least 25 years to report abuse, 26% reported an incident that happened once.

*Form of Report to Diocese*

Parents were more likely to report the abuse of a child when the allegation was made within a year of the event of abuse. Although telephone calls and letters accounted for the majority of reports, 19% of those who reported within one year spoke to a parish priest directly about the abuse.

*Research on Disclosure of Sexual Abuse by Children*

The factors drawn from the academic studies that are associated with disclosure of child sexual abuse in general fall into the following three categories: victim characteristics, abuser characteristics, and characteristics of the context of abuse. Within these areas, there are additional patterns of reporting that come from the current study data that are not explored in the extant literature. These are as follows: the impact of same-sex abuse on reporting, and the impact of social conditions that draw forth reporting (decade of reporting differences).

*Gender and Disclosure*

The majority of the research on disclosure of sexual abuse included either exclusively female victim populations, or the overwhelming number of those who disclosed in a study were female (between 75 – 80%). Only one study has specifically targeted male victims of child sexual abuse.<sup>2</sup> The study by M.A. Reinhart was based on responses from 189 boys, and contrasted to the responses of girl victims. The researchers found no significant differences in the patterns of disclosure between genders (regardless of the wide array of acts committed against the boys). Older boys experienced sodomy more often, although this did not seem to impact reporting.

### *Age and Disclosure*

Young children are more likely to disclose abuse accidentally and older teenagers, more purposefully.<sup>3, 4</sup> But the majority of studies found delays of 10 to 20 years in reports of sexual abuse that had been experienced in childhood.<sup>5, 6</sup>

### *Victim Complicity, Familiarity, and Disclosure*

If a child victim of sexual abuse feels responsible or complicit in the abusive relationship, the delay in reporting is increased.<sup>7</sup> Delays in reporting are positively associated with longer duration of abuse and also with the emotional closeness of the relationship.<sup>8</sup>

### *Duration and Severity of Abuse and Disclosure*

The frequency of the contacts between victim and abuser,<sup>9</sup> the duration of the abuse,<sup>10</sup> and the severity of the acts alleged<sup>11</sup> have all been found to prolong the delay in the reporting of child sexual abuse.

Duration of childhood sexual victimization has been found to have a positive relationship with delays in reporting. This association, that the longer an abusive relationship continues, the likelihood of a delay in reporting increases, is true, according to these data, when all cases are included as well as in selected years and time periods. Overall, the strongest positive and significant correlation between duration and delays in reporting is observed in the period before publicity began (1950 - 1980). The correlations are weaker for later non-peak publicity periods, and 2002, the greatest publicity peak year, has the lowest correlation between the variables in this analysis. Similar results are found for the severity of sexual acts: if an incident includes penetration, the average time to reporting is increased by two years. Each of the above-referenced research results can be replicated using the Nature and Scope data, but the differences found are relatively small. The large number of cases in the Nature and Scope study means that small differences are often statistically significant. These differences detected can therefore be expected to be accurate for the phenomenon, and affirm the prior research findings, but do not, in themselves, explain the overall shape of the reporting of sexual abuse by Catholic priests.

### ***1.3 Reports of sexual abuse to the Church over time***

The 2004 report on the Nature and Scope study included a chart of the total number of reports each year of the study period - illustrating the remarkable fact that approximately a third of all reports were made in 2002 after an average delay of 30 years. Nothing in the available research could have predicted this surge in reports. The yearly patterns in delay of reports were used to model expected reports in future years. Prior to 1985, 810 cases of child sexual abuse by Catholic priests had been reported to the dioceses and religious institutes of men. Figures 1.3 and 1.4 show the dramatic difference in what was known in 1985 and what was known in 2002 about a crisis of sexual abuse. The scale on both charts is the same.

Figure 1.3  
Incidents of Sexual Abuse Known or Reported to the Church by 1985

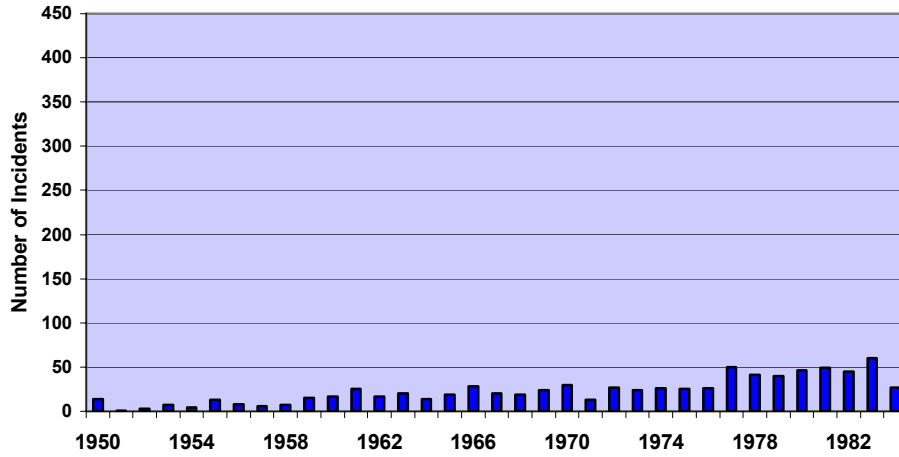
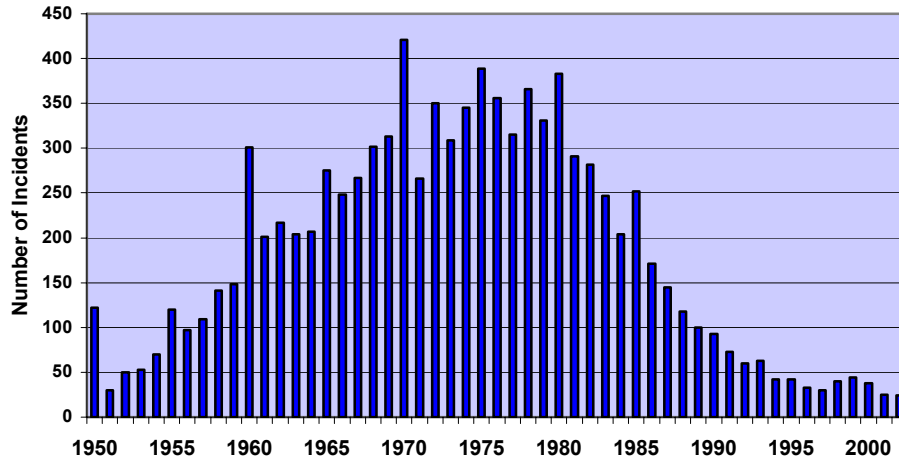
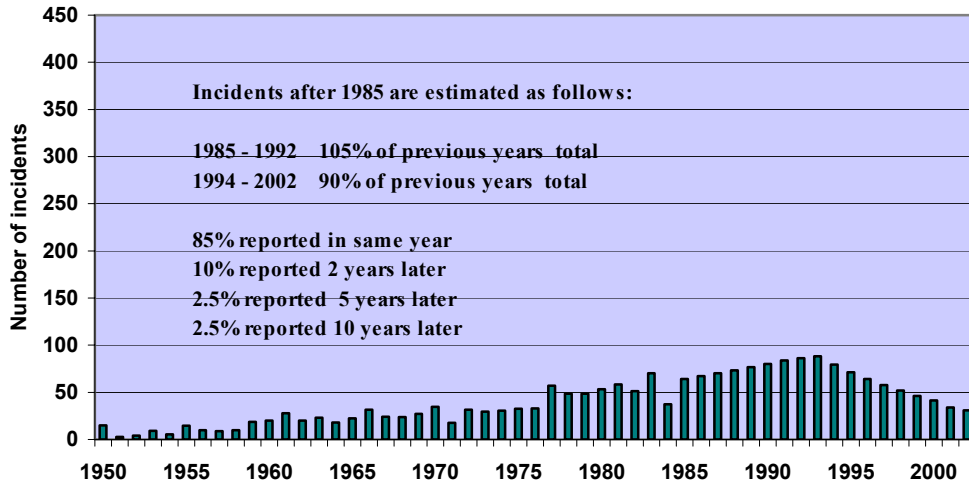


Figure 1.4  
Incidents of Sexual Abuse Known or Reported to the Church by 2002



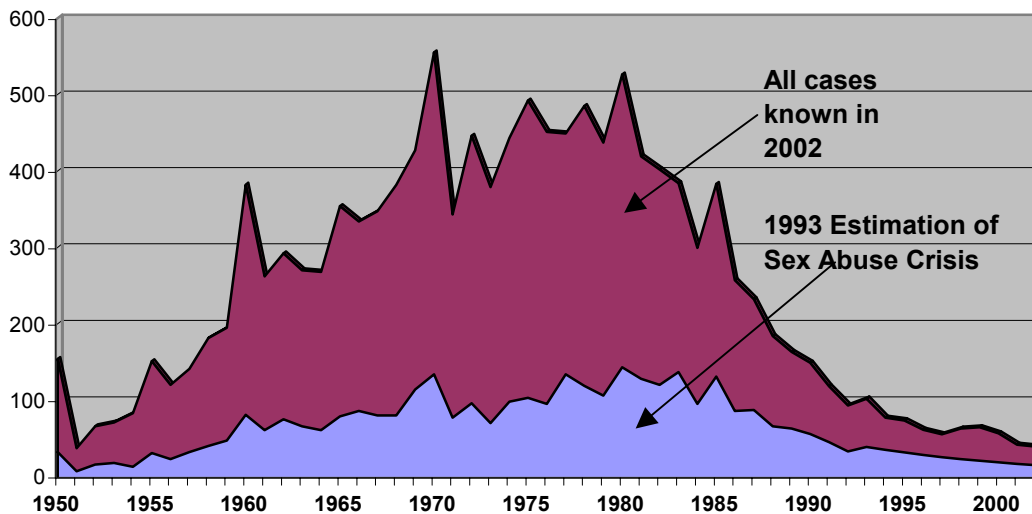
The distribution of the 810 cases of child sexual abuse known before 1985 is shown in Figure 1.3. The reporting of these allegations had the following pattern: 85% of the cases were reported in the first year, 10% reported 2 years later, 2.5% reported 5 yrs later, and 2.5% reported 10 years later. Using this pattern of reporting, a calculation of the distribution of the abuse cases, 1950 through 2002, would generate the chart shown in Figure 1.5.

Figure 1.5  
**Total Incidents, if Estimated Based on 1985 Reporting Patterns**



However, reporting patterns changed significantly after 1985. By 2002, only 10% of cases were reported in the first year, with a much larger proportion reported more than 25 years after the abuse occurred. If the allegations reported in 1993 are used to estimate what the distribution of sexual abuse allegations would look like by 2002, the result is compared in Figure 1.6 to what would come to be known by 2002.

Figure 1.6  
**Total Incidents Known and Estimated Through 2002, Using 1993 Reporting Pattern**



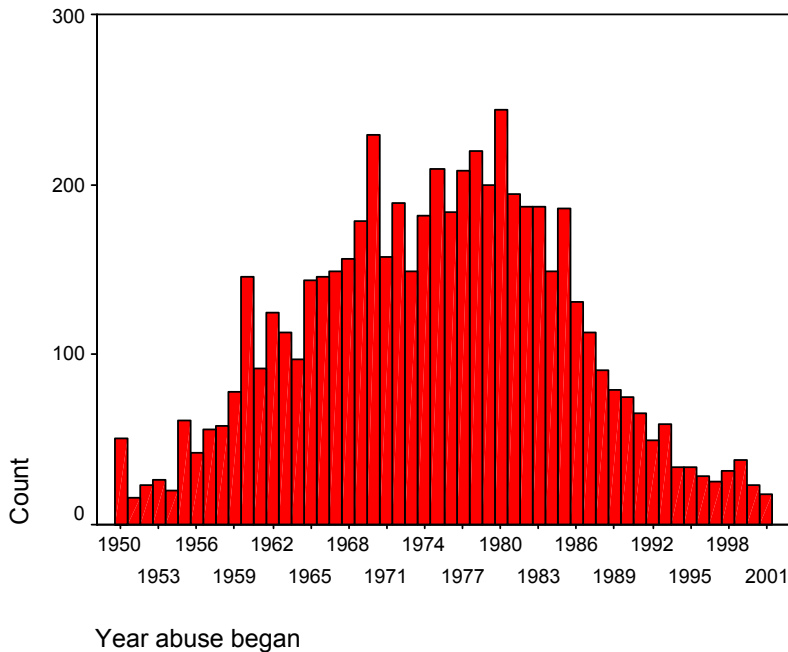
Although only one-third of cases were known by 1993, the shape of the distribution is similar to what is now known. This stable shape is as a result of the slowing of the

overall problem; although the majority of incidents were not yet known, the pattern of events, or incidence, was diminishing.

Sexual abuse is underreported, and more people will come forward to report allegations of abuse. However, reporting patterns have stabilized over the last decade, and reports every year now fit the distribution you see here. This means that the decrease in sexual abuse cases is a true representation of the overall phenomenon. Even if more cases are reported, they will be based primarily on abuse that occurred years before, and the shape of the abuse crisis will remain as it is shown in Figures 1.1 and 1.4.

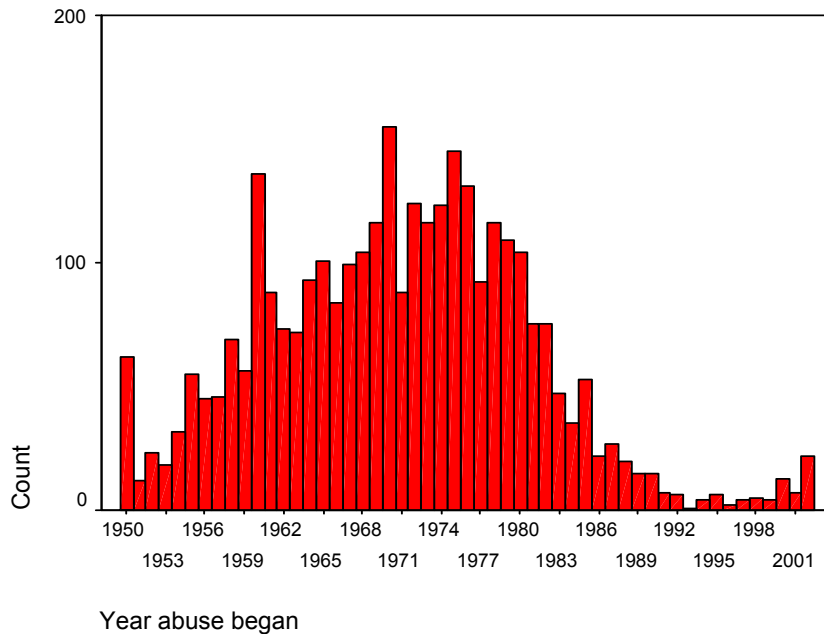
Figure 1.7 shows all cases reported prior to 2002, and Figure 1.8 shows all cases reported in 2002. The distribution of cases in 2002 is almost identical to the distribution of cases prior to that, and the approximately 1,000 allegations reported in 2004 show the same distribution as those reported in 2002. This stability in the cases reported by year supports a conclusion that the overall shape of the problem, or pattern of cases over time, is stable. It is the shape of the crisis of sexual abuse over the period 1950 - 2002. Although more cases will be reported, they will fit this pattern.

Figure 1.7  
**Incidents Reported Before 2002**



Figures 1.7 and 1.8 both include a bar for each year of the study period, and each bar shows the number of incidents of sexual abuse that were reported to begin in a particular year. The two charts have different scales: Figure 1.7 can display up to 300 incidents per year, and Figure 1.8 can display up to 200 incidents per year.

Figure 1.8  
Incidents Reported in 2002



#### 1.4 Estimation of unreported allegations

In order to confirm that the shape of the abuse crisis is stable, a mathematical estimation procedure was carried out on the reporting data to estimate what is not known – the total number of actual events of abuse by Catholic priests during the study period. A natural approach, used here, is to analyze abuse reports to estimate the probability distribution of abuse occurrences over the years. In such an approach, the distribution's parameters are chosen so as to best model the abuse report dates, and the properties of the specific distribution so constructed are then amenable to being interpreted as inherent characteristics of the data that it models.

The difficulty in this approach is that there is every reason to believe that the distribution itself evolves over time. Clearly, the probability distribution in 1990 was different from the distribution in 1970, since the two distributions disagree on the probability of some event. To the extent that our analysis of the data is a dialogue with the probability distribution in 2005, the evolution of the distribution over time is crucial to conclusions that are intended to be historical explanations or predictive forecasts

Since in this part of the study we are concerned with estimating the distributions of abuse occurrences, and quantifying how this distribution evolved over time, we chose to restrict the victim data set to just two variables: abuse date and report date. Victims who reported abuse dates spanning a range of years were counted as having one abuse incident for each year within the stated range. For each year  $y$  (in the range 1950-2002)

we extracted a truncated subset  $Dy$  consisting of only those incidents with a report date prior to  $y$ . In essence,  $Dy$  is the empirical evidence available by year  $y$ , on the basis of which the distribution would have been estimated (had this study been conducted in year  $y$ ). Given two years  $a$  and  $b$  (with  $a \leq b$ ), we denote the number of incidents which occurred between  $a$  and  $b$  (inclusive) that were reported prior  $y$  as  $Dy(a; b)$ .

For each year  $y$  in the range 1950-2002, we modeled the distribution of abuse dates for all incidents in  $Dy$  using a normal distribution. The Gaussian parameters (mean  $\mu_y$  and standard deviation  $\sigma_y$ ) were estimated by applying the Expectation Maximization algorithm<sup>12</sup> to the set of abuse dates for incidents in  $Dy$ . This algorithm determines the Gaussian distribution most likely to produce the data. Figure 1.22 below shows the relationship of  $\mu_y$  to  $y$ . As is apparent from Figure 1.22, the mean of the normal distribution at 1950 is 1950, since that is the date at which the formal data-gathering began for this study. Between 1950 and 1980, the mean of the normal distribution increased steadily, indicating that reports of recent abuse incidents consistently outweighed the cumulative mass of older incidents (since reports of new occurrences are able to “pull” the mean of the distribution forward). Between 1980 and 1990, the mean of the distribution advanced at a constant rate, always lagging behind the current date by approximately 15 years. In 1990, a dramatic shift occurred, and between 1990 and the present, the mean of the distribution stabilized and then decreased, indicating that reports of new occurrences were no longer commensurate with the cumulative mass of older abuse occurrences. The distribution of abuse dates for all incidents in  $Dy$  was considered to determine the year in which the number of incidents dropped most significantly.<sup>13</sup> For all years  $y$  before 1987 analysis of the data prior to 1987 would have shown no significant drop to have ever occurred, and consequently the curve corresponding to  $\Delta = 5$  begins to fall at 1987. Analogous statements hold for the curves when  $\Delta = 7$  (which starts at 1989) and  $\Delta = 10$  (which starts at 1992).

Figure 1.9

### Estimation of Population of Cases, Including Unreported Cases

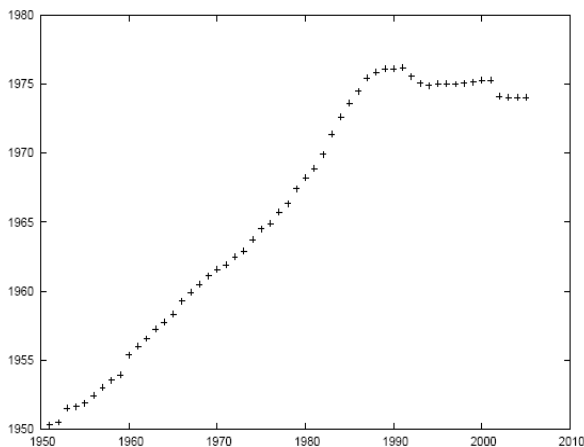


Figure 1:  $\mu_y$  versus  $y$ .

Figure 1.10  
Significant Breaks in Population of Sexual Abuse Cases

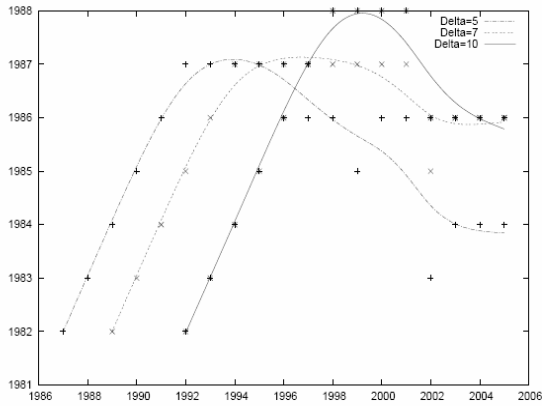


Figure 2:  $x_y$  versus  $y$ .

In summary, the several forms of modeling and estimation of the unreported cases of child sexual abuse by Catholic priests produced consistent results. The dramatic number of cases reported in the year 2002 could not have been predicted simply on the basis of the prior years' data and calculation of lags to time of disclosure. The decline in cases in the 1990s that can be seen on all of the preceding charts is confirmed to be not simply a decline in reporting of cases, but in the incidence of unreported events.



## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Doyle, T.P. & Rubino, S.C. (2004). Catholic Clergy Sexual Abuse Meets the Civil Law. *Fordham Urban Law Journal*, 31 549-617.

<sup>2</sup> Reinhart, M. A. (1987). Sexually abused boys. *Child Abuse & Neglect* 11: 229-235.

<sup>3</sup> Campis, L. B., Hebden-Curtis, J., & Demaso, D.R. (1993). Developmental differences in detection and disclosure of sexual abuse. *Journal of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 32(5): 920-924. This study examined the role of developmental differences in the detection and disclosure of child sexual abuse. The researchers used random medical record review of 72 children/adolescents seen over a three-year period for suspected child sexual abuse. Preschool age kids were significantly more likely than older children/adolescents to show symptoms related to behavior or physical problems that made an adult caretaker suspicious of the possibility of sexual abuse. Younger children make accidental reports that are often preceded by some immediate precipitating event, but not that of child sexual abuse. The inverse was found for older children. Disclosure was measured as verbal statements made to a caregiver.

<sup>4</sup> Paine, M. L. & Hansen, D. J. (2002). Factors: Influencing children to self-disclose sexual abuse. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 22: 271-295. This study provides a comprehensive review of the literature related to disclosure of childhood sexual abuse. Variables mentioned to correlate with disclosure and non-disclosure are: context of abuse, context and elements of children's disclosures, inhibitions towards disclosure, models of disclosure. Delayed reporting into adulthood, related to difficulty in revealing the secret, was further supported by studies noting the crises that occur after disclosure. Children with long-term abuse will have greater risk for more long-term negative effects. Often, a lack of physical evidence of sexual abuse places the onus of reporting on the child victim. There are emotional and behavioral indicators of childhood sexual abuse, but none are conclusively or diagnostically fail-proof. Reporting has increased after the imposition of mandatory reporting statutes, but even suspected cases still go unreported by healthcare and social work professionals. Research findings reveal that many children have had to disclose multiple times over a period of time in order to be believed by the person to whom the child is disclosing (in many cases a parent). The credibility of a child's accusation increases when abuse is verified with physical evidence or eyewitnesses.

<sup>5</sup> Roesler, T. A. & Wind, T.W. (1994). Telling the secret: Adult women describe their disclosure of incest. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 9 (3): 327 - 338. The sample in this study was derived from calls to a national child abuse treatment and research center after the media disclosure (on national television) of a female celebrity who endured years of incest. Callers were asked if they would like to be a part of a research project about child abuse. Of the surveys mailed (over 700), approximately 38% were returned. Over 75% were returned by female victims of incest. The results reflect the responses of the female respondents only, and only those who experienced childhood sexual abuse by someone who was a relative by blood or by marriage.

<sup>6</sup> Lamb, S. & Edgar-Smith, S. (1994). Aspects of disclosure: Mediators of outcome of childhood sexual abuse. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 9 (3): 307 - 326. This article primarily deals with the relationship of disclosure to recovery. The study was conducted using volunteers willing to complete a telephone survey pertaining to their history of sexual abuse, history of repeated disclosures and current socio-emotional functioning. The mean age of this sample is 30 years old, about 10 years younger than in the Roesler & Wind (1994) incest study. The respondents are again overwhelmingly female (79%). Abuse mean age is eight years old (range two to 16). The mean age of the first disclosure is 18 years old. About one-third of this sample did disclose under the age of 14 yrs. The duration of abuse was shorter for the male respondents than the female respondents, and about one-third of the females were abused for more than five years. About one-half of the female victims reported regular frequency of abuse (weekly). Of those who disclosed abuse before the age of 15, one-half told a family member. Of the two-thirds who disclosed in adulthood, 67% told a friend or a member of the "helping professions."

<sup>7</sup> Goodman-Brown, T. B., Edelstein, R.S., Goodman, G. S., Jones, D. P. H., & Gordon, D.S. (2003) Why children tell: A model of children's disclosure of sexual abuse. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 27: 525-540. Researchers investigated variables associated with delays in disclosing child sexual abuse. The study used 218 cases referred to a district attorney's office. The five variables they explored are: child age, gender, type of abuse (intra or extra familial), perceived responsibility, and fear of negative consequences of disclosure. Children's cognitive appraisals of the tolerance of others toward the disclosure of child sexual abuse, and

children's own perceptions for their responsibility of the abuse are important in the decision to disclose. See also Paine, et. al, Roesler, et. al.

<sup>8</sup> Smith, D. W., Letourneau, E. J., Saunders, B.E., Kilpatrick, D.G., Resnick, H. S., & Best, C.L. (2000). Delay in disclosure of childhood rape: Results from a national survey. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 24(2): 273-287. This study sought to collect and describe delays in reporting by female victims of childhood rape. Data was collected from 3,220 respondents (wave II) of a National Women's Study (1993). Nine percent (288) of wave II respondents indicated having experienced one event before the age of 18 that met the study's definition of child rape. This was a telephone survey about women's experiences with trauma and mental health. Nearly one-third (28%) reported never having told anyone about child sexual abuse. Nearly one-half (47%) waited five or more years to report. Most often these women told close friends when they did disclose. Delays of more than one month were related to younger age at the start of abuse, the closeness of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, and multiple experiences of rape. Ninety percent of the women in the sample knew their perpetrators. Just over half (55%) indicated single event experiences of rape. Stranger rape is associated with shorter delays in reporting. The long delay group was younger than the short delay group at the time of abuse (by 2.3yrs when comparing mean ages at abuse). Use of force was slightly more common in the long delay group. See also, Paine, et. al.

<sup>9</sup> Lamb, et. al.

<sup>10</sup> Arata, C.M. (1998). To tell or not to tell; Current functioning of child sexual abuse survivors who disclosed their victimization. *Child Maltreatment*, 3(1): 63-71. This study's purpose was to uncover the impact of child sexual abuse on female victims, as well as to understand what factors influence disclosure. Disclosure seemed not to be related to functioning as an adult. Disclosure tended to be less common with more severe levels of assault and when the perpetrator was related to the victim. Results show that disclosure may be helpful in impeding the development of post-traumatic symptoms. This is particularly true with increased severity of physical abuse. Also, if the abuse lasts over one year, the likelihood of reporting decreases. See also Lamb, Roesler.

<sup>11</sup> Arata, Paine, Smith

<sup>12</sup> Dempster, A.M., Laird, N.M. & Rubin, D.B. (1977) *Maximum likelihood from incomplete data via the EM algorithm*. J. of the Royal Statistical Society, Series B, 34:1 – 38.

<sup>13</sup> Formally, we deemed this to be the year  $xy$  in which the quantity  $Dy(xy; \epsilon; xy) ; Dy(xy; xy$

## CHAPTER TWO

### Diocesan Priests, Religious Priests, and Deacons

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#### *2.1 Comparative characteristics of diocesan and religious priests*

An important conclusion of the Nature and Scope study was the finding that the prevalence of accusations of sexual abuse of children over time was lower for religious priests when compared to that of diocesan priests. When all surveys were summarized, data showed that 2.7% of religious priests in ministry between 1950 and 2002 had been accused of sexual abuse, and that 4.3% of diocesan priests had been accused in the same period. The single important difference in the two groups of priests was their representation in the small sub-group of serial abusers. Of the 149 priests who were formally accused by 10 or more victims, 14 individuals, or less than 10%, were religious priests. This is less than half of what would have been expected, given that a quarter of the priests in the study were members of a religious order of men.

Descriptive statistics for an additional series of comparisons between diocesan and religious priests, summarized below, suggest that the factors shaping abusive behavior, whether individual, situational, or social, affected both groups equivalently.

#### *Decade of Birth and Decade of Ordination*

Religious priests were slightly older, with 47.8% born before 1930, compared to diocesan priests, of whom 36% were born before 1930. This difference is reflected in the decades of ordination.

#### *History of Childhood Sexual Abuse*

A remarkably similar subset of each group, 6.8% of diocesan priests and 6.9% of religious priests, had been victims of sexual abuse.

#### *History of Substance Abuse and Treatment*

Similarly, 19.3% of diocesan priests and 16% of religious priests were known to have alcohol or drug problems. Of each group, approximately half were treated for their substance abuse problems.

#### *Fitness for Ministry / Behavioral Problems*

Approximately one-fourth of priests in the Nature and Scope study had shown behavioral and other problems that raised questions about their fitness for ministry. 20.9% of diocesan priests had shown behavioral problems and 13.6%, additional other problems. A single priest could have been reported to have both behavioral and other problems, so the percentages are not independent. 17.2% of religious priests had records of behavioral problems, and 12.9%, other problems.

*Duration or Persistence of Abuse*

Statistics in Table 2.1 below show the almost parallel distributions of the number of years spanned by the allegations against an individual priest. It is in the rows showing persistence in abusive behavior for more than 10 years that differences are apparent. Chapter four contains more information on issues related to persistence of offending.

Table 2.1

**Diocesan and Religious Priests - Comparison of Persistence of Abuse (in years)**

<b>Duration</b>	<b>Diocesan</b>	<b>Religious</b>
< 1 year	30.4%	33.7%
1 - 2 years	22.3%	25.0%
3 - 5 years	16.3%	17.5%
6 - 10 years	13.3%	12.5%
<b>11 - 20 years</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
<b>21 - 30 years</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>31 - 40 years</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
	N=2905	N=840

*Number and Gender of Victims*

If only the victims who made a formal report of abuse to a diocese are counted, diocesan priests had, on average, between 2 and 3 victims (Mean = 2.8), compared with religious priests who averaged 2 victims (Mean = 2.1). If potential victims, known to the dioceses but who did not submit a formal report, are considered, the averages rise to 3.3 for diocesan priests and 2.7 for religious priests. These statistics are inflated by the data for the few priests who were reported by a large number of victims. A majority, more than 50%, of both groups were formally reported by a single victim. The distribution of gender and age of victims is equivalent overall for both groups of priests.

*Treatment for Sexual Offending*

Religious priests were less likely to be treated for their sexual abuse behavior - with 34% of diocesan priests treated, compared to 26.7 % of religious priests. The types of treatment are shown in Table 2.2. An individual priest may have participated in more than one type of treatment: the percentages reflect the fraction of each group of priests who were afforded the specific type of treatment.

Table 2.2  
**Sex Offender Treatment for Diocesan and Religious Priests**

Type of Sex Offender Treatment (TX)	Diocesan	Religious
Specialized SO TX for Clergy	15.9%	12.5%
Specialized SO TX for All	5.3%	3.1%
General TX Program	6.8%	5.2%
Psychological Counseling	16.1%	13.3%
Psychotherapist	9.9%	7.8%
Relapse Prevention	4.0%	3.5%
Evaluation - Not TX	7.0%	5.4%
Spiritual Counseling	5.2%	4.8%
Other	2.3%	2.1%
	N=3399	N=993

*Criminal Justice System Contact*

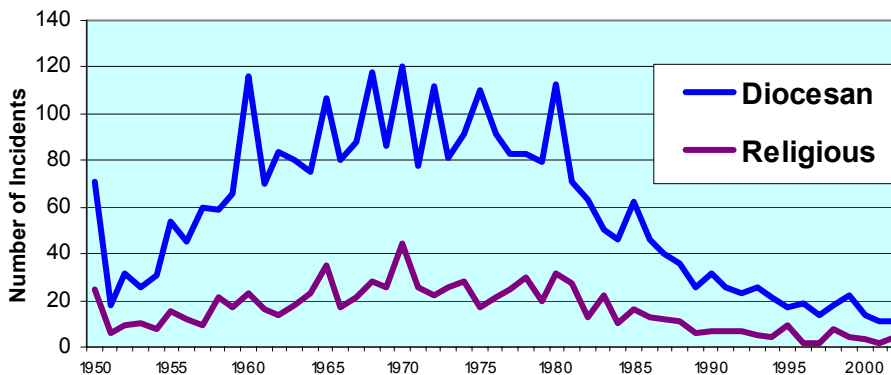
Fewer religious priests were reported to the police, but of those who were reported, the outcomes of criminal justice system contact do not differ from those of diocesan priests.

**2.2 Comparative distribution of onset of behavior over time**

If the first year of the first incident of sexual abuse is used to compare the onset of this behavior for diocesan and religious priests, the totals show a similar distribution. Figure 2.1 below displays the total number of priests whose initial incident of sexual abuse began in each year from 1950 to 2002. The number of cases shown for 1950 is exaggerated because it includes incidents that were known to have occurred in the 1950s, but for which the exact year was not available in the files.

Figure 2.1

**Allegations against Diocesan and Religious Priests, by Year of First Incident**



### 2.3 Deacons

The second question on the Cleric Survey sent to all dioceses for the Nature and Scope study asked: "At the time of the alleged offense(s), was the cleric a(n):" and then listed nine positions in Catholic ministry. This list included positions as Transitional Deacon and Permanent Deacon. There were 19 transitional deacons and 42 permanent deacons reported by their dioceses to have allegations of sexually abusing minors that were included in the Nature and Scope study. These 61 individuals represent less than one and one-half percent of all priests accused of sexual abuse of children (1.39%) whose data was included in the Nature and Scope study. The number of cases is so small that statistics are not useful to describe the relationships among them. Table 2.3 below lists the incidents by decade, based on the first year of abuse, for the 53 deacons for whom data including the specific dates of abuse was available.

Table 2.3

#### Decade of Onset of Abuse by Deacons, by First Year

Decade	Deacons
1950 - 1959	0
1960 - 1969	2
1970 - 1979	15
80 - 1989	20
1990 - 1999	11
2000 - 2002	5
Total Deacons	53

Although the numbers in Table 2.3 are very small, the distribution of cases over time bears a superficial resemblance to the shape of the overall pattern of the larger groups of diocesan and religious priests. The small number of cases makes a statistical comparison impossible.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Priests with a Single Allegation of Sexual Abuse

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#### *3.1 Introduction and definitions*

Many people, including some with professional training in law and psychology, believe that child sexual abuse is a repetitive crime. This conception persists despite the results of many studies that show low rates of recidivism among sex offenders. Statisticians at the Bureau of Justice Statistics studied recidivism among sex offenders using a sample of two-thirds of those released from prison in the United States in 1994. The percentage of those re-arrested within three years for any crime was 43% for the sex offenders and 68% for all offenders. If only re-arrest for a sex crime is considered, 5.3% of all were re-arrested within three years and 3.3% of those who were convicted of a crime against a child were re-arrested for another similar offense.<sup>14</sup> Recidivism statistics in other studies of sex offenders fall between 5% and 15% for studies that follow their subjects for less than ten years and rises to 20% to 30% if the follow-up period is lengthened.<sup>15</sup> These percentages are significantly lower than the average recidivism rate of 70% or more for robbery, burglary, larceny, and weapons possession.<sup>16</sup>

The low level of recidivism for another sex crime was also apparent in the Nature and Scope study, where more than half of all priests known to their dioceses for having been the subject of an allegation of sexual abuse were reported to have had a single victim. There is substantial debate among those who study sexual victimization about the likelihood that a person arrested for a crime of sexual abuse of children will repeat his or her crime. Those who argue for lower levels of recidivism point to the consistency of re-arrest and re-conviction percentages as cited above that range from 5% to 15%. Other experts counter this position by arguing that the actual likelihood of repeated abusive behavior is understated as a result of the acknowledged under-reporting of sex crimes and the limits of official records.<sup>17</sup> It is important to note that most of what is known about sex offenders with respect to recidivism is derived from the study of forensic samples, or those individuals who have come into conflict with the law and who have been identified as a consequence of their criminal justice system contact.

Within this substantial body of research is no indication that a majority of those who have been convicted of a sex offense are likely to commit another sex offense. The highest recidivism rates apply to those individuals with a substantial criminal history.

The form completed by diocesan staff for all priests in service was called the "Cleric Survey." This instrument asked:

- How many victims made allegations of sexual abuse against this cleric in your diocese?
- Is there any indication that the cleric has abused more victims than there are official allegations made?

The second question was designed to elicit data about the diocesan knowledge of victims of sexual abuse who had not been willing to formally report their experience to the diocese. This question was intended to accommodate a situation in which a victim making a report included information about other individuals who had been victimized as children by the same priest, but who were not willing to make formal reports. While 55.7% of priests with allegations of abuse had one formal allegation reported to the diocese, the following analysis is based upon those who had a single formal accusation and no indication of any unreported events of abuse (no reported potential victims). The reason for not including those with a single formal allegation and other potential victims is so that the group of “single offenders” is as accurately drawn as possible, and to separate out those for whom there was evidence of unreported incidents of abuse.

This procedure yields a total of 1,880 cases, or priests with a single formal allegation of sexual abuse. This group of priests, now reduced by more than 500, represents 42.8% of all priests reported in the Nature and Scope study. We sought to understand the ways these individual priests were different from those who had a more extensive history of sexual abuse of children.

### ***3.2 Comparative characteristics of single-victim and multiple-victim cases***

#### *Age and Ordination*

The pattern of reporting for the group with single incidents was not substantially different from the overall pattern of reporting. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 provide a comparison of the clerics with a single victim and the clerics with 2-20 victims in terms of the decade of their birth and decade of their ordination. More than two thirds of the clerics in both groups were born between 1920 and 1949 (they are currently between 55 and 85 years old). However, for the single-incident cases, the distribution is somewhat more even: there are a greater number of cases at both ends of the distribution. Very young and very old clerics are more frequently found among single incident cases than in the group with of 2 to 20 incidents. For instance, clerics born between 1860 and 1919 represent about 19% of the single incident cases but only 13% of the multiple incident cases. A more important divergence is observed for very young clerics, with 13% in the single-incident group of those born after 1950 compared to 6% in the multiple-incident group.

Figure 3.1 presents a visual representation of the ordination distribution patterns by group. The pattern observed in Figure 3.2 for decade of birth is consistent with that seen for decade of ordination: at both extremes of the distribution the clerics with a single incident are greater than the multiple case clerics. A question that remains is why the birth and ordination data are more often missing for single-incident group. A possible explanation would be that the files of those priests who had been reported by more than one person would have more detailed information. It is also possible that supervisors gave more careful attention to the cases of those priests who presented more serious problems. Further research as planned in the Causes and Context study is necessary to better understand the single-victim cases.



Table 3.1  
Decade of Birth, Two Cleric Groups

Decade	Single Victim		2 - 20 Victims	
	Count	%	Count	%
1860-1899	45	2.4	25	1.3
1900-1909	98	5.2	59	3.2
1910-1919	208	11.1	166	8.9
1920-1929	324	17.2	394	21.0
1930-1939	373	19.8	526	28.1
1940-1949	406	21.6	476	25.4
1950-1959	184	9.8	110	5.9
1960-1969	47	2.5	25	1.3
1970-1979	3	.2	2	.1
Missing	192	10.2	90	4.8
Total	1880	100	1873	100

Table 3.2  
Ordination Decade, Two Cleric Groups

Decade	Single Victim		2 - 20 Victim	
	Count	%	Count	%
1890-1919	21	1.1	9	.5
1920-1929	41	2.2	18	1.0
1930-1939	127	6.8	81	4.3
1940-1949	231	12.3	201	10.7
1950-1959	356	18.9	446	23.8
1960-1969	357	19.0	521	27.8
1970-1979	333	17.7	368	19.6
1980-1989	180	9.6	112	6.0
1990-2002	55	2.9	26	1.4
Missing	179	9.5	91	4.9
Total	1880	100	1873	100

Figure 3.1  
Ordination Dates by Decade for Two Groups of Clerics

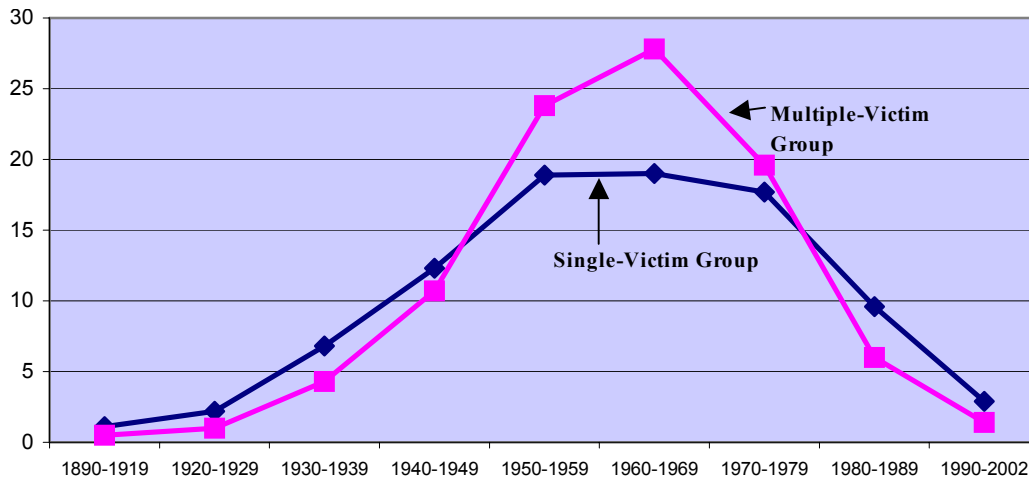
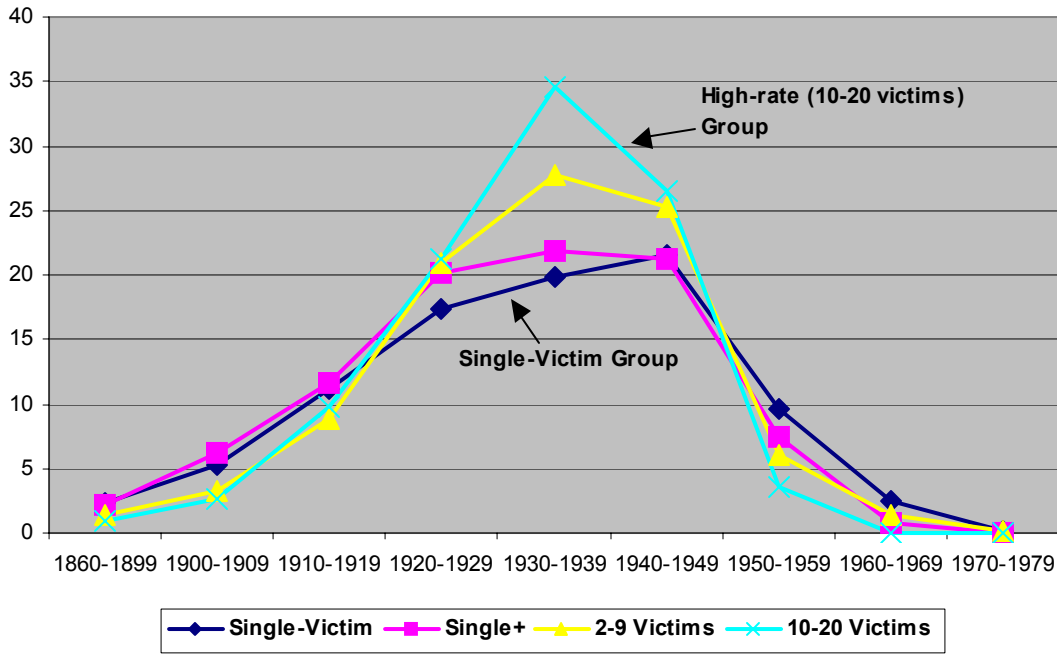


Figure 3.2 shows the decade of birth for four groups: the single-incident group, or those with no other potential victims; the single+ group, or those with one formal report but other potential victims; the multiple-victim group with 2-9 victims; and the multiple-victim group with 10-20 victims. For the single-incident cases, there is a smoother distribution of cases (i.e. greater number of cases at both tails of the distribution and less variation over the time period). In other words, those priests in the single and single+ groups do not show the dramatic pattern of those with 10-20 incidents – peaking in 1935 and yielding a group of priests who were in their mid-30s during the 1970s.

Figure 3.2

**Distribution of Birth Decades for Four Groups of Clerics**



*Age and Gender of Victims*

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 count the total number of victims by age and gender.<sup>18</sup> The group of single-victim priests had 1,178 male victims (66.7%) and 591 female victims (33.3%) compared to the group with multiple victims who were reported to have abused 6,089 male victims (84%) and 1,159 female victims (16%). Those priests with a single victim and no other potential victims were significantly more likely to have a female victim. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 also show that the single-victim group has more male and female victims in the 15-17 year-old age group. Specifically, the 15-17 year-old age group represents only 32% of the male victims for the multiple-victim group but 45% for those with only one victim. A similar difference can be observed for female victims, with the 15-17 year old age group representing 23.5% of the multiple victim group and 34.1% of the single victim group.

Table 3.3  
**Distribution of Male Victims by Age**

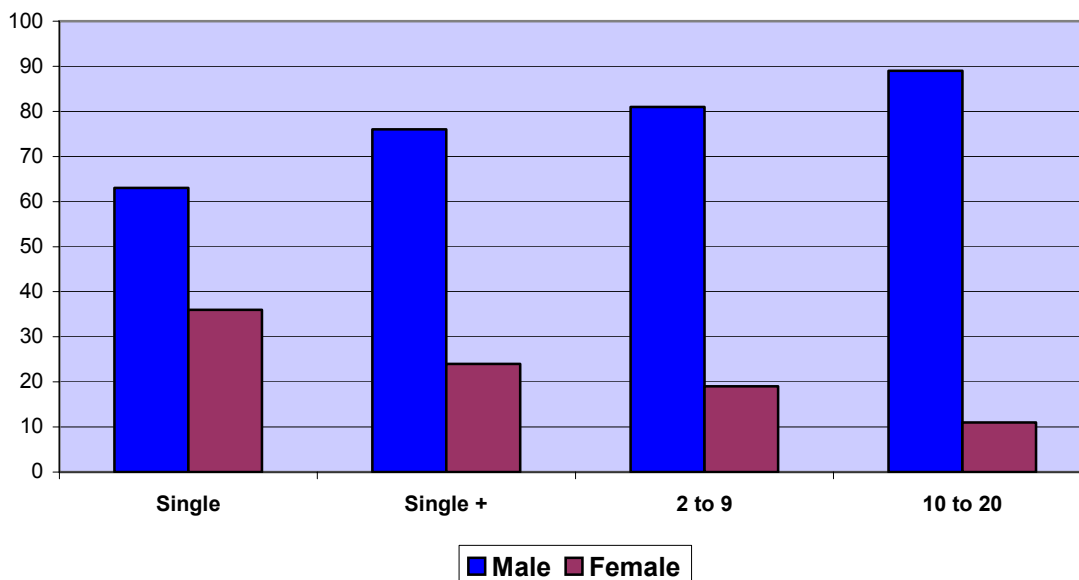
Male victim age	Single-Victim Group		2-20 Victim Group	
	Count	%	Count	%
1-7	33	2.8	203	3.3
8-10	131	11.1	992	16.6
11-14	482	40.9	2930	48.1
15-17	532	45.2	1964	32.3
N	1178	100	6089	100

Table 3.4  
**Distribution of Female Victims by Age**

Female victim age	Single-Victim Group		2-20 Victim Group	
	Count	%	Count	%
1-7	77	13	169	14.6
8-10	93	15.7	262	22.6
11-14	220	37.2	456	39.3
15-17	201	34.1	272	23.5
N	591	100	1159	100

Figure 3.3 suggests that in terms of the victim selection, single-incident cases involved a higher percentage of female victims than any other group considered. Further, the higher the number of victims per cleric the lower the percentage of female victims. Figure 3.3 also suggests that there are important differences in victim selection between those who had a single allegation and no other potential incidents of abuse and the single + groups.

Figure 3.3  
 Percentage of Victims by Gender for Four Cleric Groups



#### *Incidence and reporting over time*

The distribution of the first dates of the incident that became the basis of an allegation of abuse against this group of priests resembles the overall distribution. Thus, these priests were subject to the same social and institutional pressures as those who continued to abuse – but did not do so. Victims of a single incident of abuse by a priest from this group are not more likely to have reported the incident within one year, and this pattern is consistent for peak years and throughout the time period.

### **3.3 Persistence of offending**

When the persistence of sexual abuse behavior, or duration of abuse, is examined for the single-victim and multiple-victim groups, there are marked differences. A large minority of single-victim incidents of abuse (41%) lasted for less than one year. If the single-victim cases of one year's duration are added to those lasting less than one year, the total is 56% of this group. In contrast, more than half (51%) of the multiple-victim group persisted in their abusive behavior for five years or longer. Table 3.5 displays these comparative percentages. Although, for a substantial number of cases, there is incomplete information, the difference in pattern is clear.

Table 3.5  
**Duration of Abuse (in years), Two Groups of Clerics**

Duration in years	Single-Victim Group		2 - 20 Victim Group	
	Count	%	Count	%
Less than 1 year	782	41	382	17
1 year	275	15	202	9
2 years	168	9	212	10
3 years	105	6	145	7
4 years	74	4	127	6
5 years	51	3	116	5
6 years or more	25	1	1007	46
Missing	330	18	309	14
TOTAL	1880	100%	2195	100%

Single-incident clerics are less likely to have a recorded history of abuse (physical/sexual abuse and substance abuse) than clerics with more than one incident. The group of single-incident clerics included 4.2 % who had suffered physical or sexual abuse as children, compared to 8.8% of those with multiple incidents. In regard to substance abuse, 12.8% of those with one victim had histories of substance abuse compared to almost a quarter (23.5 %) of those with multiple allegations. Again, we cannot determine whether this contrast reflects a true difference in the experience and histories of these men or whether the files of the single-incident clerics were less likely to be detailed.

### 3.4 Coercion, treatment or self-correction?

There are a number of possible explanations as to why priests with a single allegation of abuse did not continue in this behavior. It is possible that the prompt reporting of incidents serves to deter future abuse, or it is possible that these men were successfully treated, or deterred from future offending by an interaction with someone in the Church or with the criminal justice system. It is also possible that they stopped, or chose to stop, for some other reason (e.g., guilt, shame, victim told him to stop, etc.). While the data do not give us information on this latter possibility, we were able to explore the pattern of reporting and the role of the criminal justice system and treatment, as well as their joint occurrence and influence.

Priests with multiple allegations of abuse were more likely to be in contact with the criminal justice system than those with a single allegation of abuse. The distribution of criminal justice interventions for both groups is nonetheless skewed towards the initial stages of a criminal complaint (victim contacted the police, police investigated and cleric

criminally charged). Clerics with multiple incidents were convicted at twice the rate as single-incident clerics, as indicated in Table 3.6. These interventions, however, were only brought to bear on fewer than one in five of the priests with a single allegation of abuse.

Table 3.6  
Criminal Justice System Interventions

CRJ Intervention	Single-Victim Group		2- 20 Victim Group	
	Count	%	Count	%
Victim contacted police	338	17.9	917	28.6
Police investigation	318	16.8	737	25.4
Cleric criminally charged	107	5.7	388	11.5
Cleric convicted	62	3.3	296	7.8
Fine	7	.4	17	.6
Probation	36	1.9	83	3.3
House arrest	1	.1	3	.1
Community service	5	.3	13	.5
Jail	8	.4	52	2.1
Prison	18	1	82	3.3
Electronic Monitoring	1	.1	2	.1
Other	12	.6	16	.6
Sentence Pending	2	.1	10	.4
Register pending	0	0	2	.1
Life sentence	0	0	3	.1

\* Clerics may have interacted with the CRJ system in multiple instances.

Table 3.7 displays the percent of the priests in each group who were afforded various forms of treatment for their problems with sexual abuse behavior. Priests in the single-victim group were considerably less likely to be treated than those in the multiple victim group. When the co-occurrence of treatment and criminal justice contact is examined, no significant association is found. Overall, three in four clerics receiving treatment were not reported to the police by their victims. Few single-victim clerics get treatment, and of those who were treated, only about one in four had been reported to the police.

Table 3.7  
Sex Offender Treatment

Treatment (TX) Modalities	Single-Victim Group		2- 20 Victim Group	
	Count	%	Count	%
Specialized TX for clergy	148	7.8	516	20.6
Specialized SO TX for all	58	3.1	154	6.2
General TX program	78	4.1	205	8.2
One-on-one psychological counseling	181	9.6	498	19.9
Psychotherapist	98	5.2	314	12.5
Relapse prevention	35	1.9	135	5.4
Evaluation but no TX	95	5	198	7.9
Spiritual counseling	63	3.3	161	6.4
Other	36	1.9	64	2.6

If there is no evidence of the efficacy of coercion (as a result of criminal justice system contact) or treatment to bring an end to the abuse behavior, it is plausible that these priests were able to understand the wrongness of the behavior and self-correct.

## NOTES

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<sup>14</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2003). *Recidivism of Sex Offenders Released from Prison in 1994*. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/rsorp94.htm>

<sup>15</sup> Hanson, R.K. (2002). Who Is Dangerous and When Are They Safe? Risk Assessment with Sexual Offenders, in B.J. Winick, & J.Q. LaFond (Eds.). *Protecting Society from Sexually Dangerous Offenders* (pp.64-65). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

<sup>16</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2002). *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994*. 06/02 NCJ 193427, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/rpr94.htm>

<sup>17</sup> Hanson, R.K., Morton, K.E., & Harris, A.J.R. (2003). Sexual Offender Recidivism Risk: What We Know and What We Need to Know. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 989:154-166.

Follow-up studies on released sex offenders typically find sexual recidivism rates of 10%-15% after five years, 20% after 10 years, and 30%-40% after 20 years. The observed rates underestimate the actual rates because not all offences are detected; however, the available research does not support the popular notion that sexual offenders inevitably re-offend. Some sexual offenders are more dangerous than others. Much is known about the static, historical factors associated with increased recidivism risk (e.g., prior offences, age, and relationship to victims). Less is known about the offender characteristics that need to change in order to reduce that risk.

<sup>18</sup> Although the data include information about victims for whom the age and gender are not both known, those victims are not included in Tables 3.3 and 3.4.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### **Priests with Multiple Allegations of Abuse**

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#### *4.1 Patterns of offending*

Criminologists describe patterns of criminal or deviant behavior by defining the initial deviant act, or “onset” of the behavior, then measuring the duration, or “persistence” of the behavior, and finally recording its cessation, the point at which an individual no longer engages in the action, or “desistance.” The analysis of patterns of offending has brought some general understanding: many youths engage in deviant acts, but only a small number progress to commit serious crimes; those who commit serious crimes in early adolescence are more likely to persist in criminal behavior; repeat criminals and drug addicts become much more likely to be able to refrain from these behaviors when they reach their late 40s and 50s. The analysis that follows presents the overall distributions of onset, persistence, and desistance of sexually abusive behavior from the Nature and Scope study, then examines patterns in the data for those priests who have been the subject of multiple allegations of sexual abuse of children.

#### *4.2 Onset of abusive behavior*

Men begin to sexually abuse minors for various reasons, and researchers have struggled to develop typologies to explain the onset of abusive feelings, thoughts and behaviors. Most commonly, researchers classify offenders into typologies based upon their level of sexual attraction to children (whether an individual is primarily attracted to children or adults).

Some individuals who sexually abuse children are primarily attracted to age-mates. Despite this preference, they regress to adult-child relationships because of a hindrance to normal adult relationships or because of negative events that “trigger” the abusive feelings and thoughts. These “regressed” or “situational” offenders are rarely attracted to children or adolescents of a particular age or gender, but instead resort to victimizing children to whom they have easy access. According to Leonore Simon and her colleagues,<sup>19</sup> the abusive behavior of situational offenders is a temporary departure from their attraction to adults.

The regressed offenders’ behavior usually emerges in adulthood. It is precipitated by external stress that can be situational (e.g., unemployment, marital problems, substance abuse) or related to negative affective states (e.g., loneliness, isolation). These stresses often contribute to poor self-confidence, low self-esteem, and a self-pitying attitude that allow the individual to rationalize the abusive behavior.

The abusive acts of the regressed offender can best be explained through the “offense cycle” or “offense chain.” The cycle begins when the individual has negative thoughts (e.g., “Nobody likes me.” or “I’m no good.”), and these self-pitying, negative thoughts

lead to negative feelings such as anger, frustration, loneliness and inadequacy. The thoughts and feelings lead the individual to withdraw from others, resulting in further loneliness, isolation, and a lack of communication that reinforce a negative self-understanding. Once in this negative thought-feeling-behavior cycle, the individual begins to experience deviant sexual fantasies. The fantasies may lead to masturbation, with positive reinforcement derived as a result of the abusive fantasy. At this point, the individual targets a victim, engages in a fantasy rehearsal of the future abuse of that victim, and, after the fantasy rehearsal, begins to plan the abusive act and “groom” the victim. Once adequate grooming has taken place, the individual will abuse the victim. The abusive act itself may result in a positive reinforcement of the original fantasy; however, the abuse may also lead to negative feelings, particularly that of anxiety (i.e., “What have I done?”) and fear (i.e., “Will I get caught?”). It is these negative feelings that lead to the desistance of the abuse cycle. Yet, the abuser rarely addresses the original negative thoughts and feelings that led to the abusive behavior. As a result the offense cycle often begins again if the individual has not been caught, or helped to address the underlying issue. Thus, the abusive behavior of repeat offenders is cyclical.

Alternatively, some men who sexually abuse children exhibit persistent, continual, and compulsive attraction to children, and the abuse of children is not chiefly the result of external stressors or triggers. These “preferential” or “fixated” child molesters tend to be exclusively involved with children, and this attraction usually develops in adolescence. They are often unable to attain any degree of psychosexual maturity, do not find age-mates attractive or desirable during adulthood, and have virtually no age-appropriate sexual relationships. Many fixated offenders have poor social skills; they find comfort in relationships with children that they consider to be passive, dependent, psychologically less threatening than adults. They recruit, groom, and develop relationships with children who are vulnerable in some way. This extensive grooming process often creates a close personal relationship between the offender and victim that lasts for a long period of time and results in a significant delay in the reporting of the abusive acts.

Individuals who experience recurrent, intense and sexually arousing fantasies about prepubescent children are classified as pedophiles.<sup>20</sup> Those who experience recurrent, intense, sexually arousing fantasies about adolescents can be classified as ephebophiles.<sup>21</sup> Gene Abel and his colleagues, distinguished researchers who have studied deviant sexual behavior and treatment of sexual abusers for decades, have noted that deviant sexual behavior and paraphilias often develop prior to adulthood. One group of researchers examined the characteristics of 168 pedophiles, ephebophiles and incest offenders.<sup>22</sup> Among their findings, pedophiles were the most likely group to have experienced sexual victimization when they were children, were the most likely to prefer and have pre-pubertal sex partners, and were the most motivated to seduce their victims, while ephebophiles were the most likely to have experienced external stress and began abusing as a result of this stress.

The data collected in the Nature and Scope study does not reveal whether the abusive behavior is a result of deep-seated paraphilic feelings that could no longer be controlled or whether it begins as a result of situational stressors. In the table that follows, the first date of the earliest reported incident of sexual abuse is used to calculate the age of the

priest at the onset of his individual history of sexual abuse of children, and to display the count of ages as five-year increments.

Table 4.1

**Age of Priest at Onset of Reported Sexual Abuse Behavior**

Age Range (years)	Number of Priests	Percent of Total
< 24	126	3.49
25 - 29	614	17.01
30 - 34	793	21.97
35 - 39	627	17.37
40 - 44	470	13.02
45 - 49	366	10.14
50 - 54	257	7.12
55 - 59	151	4.18
60 - 64	104	2.88
65 - 69	46	1.27
> 70	56	1.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,610</b>	<b>100%</b>

**4.3 Persistence of abusive behavior**

Diocesan respondents were asked to report, for each victim who made an allegation of sexual abuse by a priest, the year the abuse started and the year the abuse ended. Of the 10,667 victim surveys summarized in the Nature and Scope study, 8,835 included such information, or had other data that could be used to derive duration. In order to examine the persistence, or duration, of sexual abuse behavior on the part of priests, the first year of the first incident involving an individual priest and the last year of the final incident reported to involve that particular priests was used to calculate a period of years. Although the sexual abuse activity is not constant over the total number of years (at least for most individuals), the behavior is understood to have persisted, that is, reoccurred within the period of years. In other words, if a priest abused one child from 1971 until 1973, and another from 1978-1979, then we report the duration of abusive behavior to be eight years. The recurrence of abusive behavior is understood to mean that whatever brought about this behavior has not been resolved. Thus the term persistence: the problem persists.

*Overview of Persistence Findings*

- The average duration of abuse for all priests is 4.99 years (Median = 2.00, SD = 6.98).
- 31.1% of priests had histories of abuse that were less than 1 year.
- The range of the persistence of abuse behavior for an individual priest is less than 1 year to 41 years.
- The groupings of priests are statistically distinguishable on the basis of their duration of criminal offending.
- As would be expected, the duration of offending behavior increases with the total number of victims reported for an individual priest.

In the Nature and Scope study, the priests were grouped according the total number of victims they were reported to have abused. This model is used below to compare the duration of offending behavior by priests.

Table 4.2

**Persistence of Sexual Abuse Behavior for Priests Grouped by Number of Victims**

*This table summarizes data for the 69% of priests reported in the Nature and Scope study who abused children for one year or more.*

<b>Number of Victims</b>	<b>Average Persistence of Abuse Behavior</b>	<b>Range of Persistence of Abuse Behavior</b>
1	1.58 years	1 year - 21 years
2-3	7.20 years	1 year - 40 years
4-9	11.90 years	1 year - 41 years
10-19	18.10 years	5 years - 41 years
20+	22.03 years	1 year - 35 years
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.99 years</b>	<b>1 year - 41 years</b>

Two different methods of counting victims were available: categorization by behavior (total number of victims as reported in the Cleric Survey) and categorization by data (count of actual Victim Surveys with complete data on the time period of the abuse incident). The total number of priests who can be grouped according to data reported in the Cleric Survey is 4,320. The total number of priests who can be grouped according to complete data provided in the Victim Surveys is 3,445. The difference in total number arises from difference in the available information. For example, if an individual priest is reported as having 20 victims in the Cleric Survey, he would be categorized according to that figure under the first categorization scheme – defined as behavior-based. However, if the diocese sent in only 15 victim surveys for this individual priest, 12 of which had complete duration information, he would be classified into a different group under the second categorization scheme – defined as data-based. Results of the tests for statistical significance of the two models of inter-group differences in the average length of sexual

abuse history by behavior converged;<sup>23</sup> the results were consistent. As is shown in the detailed table that follows, there are differences in the distribution according to the two methods of categorization. The average duration of abuse increases when clerics are categorized according to data, because the total number of victims who had made reports to the diocese about an individual priest was often higher than the number of Victim Surveys received.<sup>24</sup>

In order to gain a better understanding of the data, descriptive statistics were run on the two grouping variables. Each group was isolated and measures of central tendency were run on the duration variable. The results are displayed in Table 4.3. The distributions are parallel despite the fact that clerics were sorted into groups by different methods of categorization. There are significant differences among the five categories of priest-offenders indicating that the greater the number of victims, the longer the duration of offending. Statistics presented throughout this chapter are based on the grouping by behavior.

There are 1,161 priests included in the Nature and Scope study for whom the persistence of sexual abuse behavior was reported to last less than one year. This accounts for 31% of the overall population of abusive priests. A large majority of these priests – 81% – had a single allegation of abuse, and are described in detail in Chapter Three of this report. Of the others with a short duration of offending, 16% had two or three victims and 3% had between four to nine victims.

Table 4.3  
Cleric Patterns of Offending: Revised Duration of Abuse

<b>CLERIC PATTERNS OF OFFENDING: REVISED DURATION OF ABUSE</b>				
	<b>CATEGORIZED BY BEHAVIOR</b>	<b>CATEGORIZED BY DATA</b>	<b>CATEGORIZED BY BEHAVIOR AND POTENTIAL</b>	<b>CATEGORIZED BY DATA AND POTENTIAL</b>
<b>1 Victim</b>	n = 1,008 Mean = 3.1081 Median = 2.0 SD = 2.83478 Min = .5 Max = 40.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 1.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 2.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 4.000	n = 1,183 Mean = 3.0592 Median = 2.0 SD = 2.58450 Min = .5 Max = 21.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 1.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 2.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 4.000	n = 925 Mean = 3.0005 Median = 2.0 SD = 2.48671 Min = .5 Max = 21.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 1.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 2.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 4.000	n = 1,029 Mean = 3.0024 Median = 2.0 SD = 2.58450 Min = .5 Max = 21.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 1.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 2.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 4.000
<b>2 – 3 Victims</b>	n = 872 Mean = 7.1967 Median = 5.0 SD = 6.47467 Min = .5 Max = 40.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 2.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 5.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 10.000	n = 847 Mean = 7.9150 Median = 6.0 SD = 6.86280 Min = 1.00 Max = 41.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 3.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 6.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 11.000	n = 793 Mean = 6.8298 Median = 5.0 SD = 6.56759 Min = .5 Max = 40.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 2.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 5.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 9.000	n = 785 Mean = 7.0350 Median = 5.0 SD = 6.45523 Min = 1.0 Max = 40.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 3.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 5.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 10.000
<b>4 – 9 Victims</b>	n = 546 Mean = 11.8974 Median = 10.0 SD = 7.96803 Min = 1.0 Max = 41.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 5.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 10.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 17.000	n = 422 Mean = 13.2500 Median = 12.00 SD = 7.80901 Min = 1.0 Max = 40.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 7.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 12.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 19.000	n = 628 Mean = 10.6290 Median = 9.0 SD = 7.55269 Min = 1.0 Max = 41.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 5.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 9.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 16.000	n = 551 Mean = 11.3221 Median = 10.00 SD = 7.77175 Min = 1.0 Max = 41.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 5.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 10.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 17.000
<b>10 – 19 Victims</b>	n = 106 Mean = 18.0943 Median = 16.50 SD = 8.02203 Min = 5.0 Max = 41.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 12.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 16.500 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 25.000	n = 75 Mean = 18.40 Median = 17.00 SD = 7.27454 Min = 6.0 Max = 41.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 13.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 17.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 25.000	n = 159 Mean = 15.4843 Median = 14.0 SD = 9.18368 Min = 1.0 Max = 41.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 8.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 14.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 23.000	n = 127 Mean = 15.2913 Median = 14.0 SD = 9.04408 Min = 1.0 Max = 41.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 8.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 14.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 23.000
<b>20 + Victims</b>	n = 36 Mean = 22.0278 Median = 23.00 SD = 8.00887 Min = 1.0 Max = 35.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 16.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 23.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 28.000	n = 28 Mean = 23.4286 Median = 26.00 SD = 7.77664 Min = 1.0 Max = 34.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 19.500 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 26.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 28.750	n = 72 Mean = 18.5139 Median = 17.0 SD = 9.07247 Min = 1.0 Max = 39.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 12.250 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 17.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 26.750	n = 63 Mean = 18.3810 Median = 17.0 SD = 9.40218 Min = 1.0 Max = 39.00 25 <sup>th</sup> % = 12.000 50 <sup>th</sup> % = 17.000 75 <sup>th</sup> % = 27.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,568</b>	<b>2,555</b>	<b>2,577</b>	<b>2,555</b>

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show the distribution of events over time, with Figure 4.1 showing incidents of short duration (less than one year) and Figure 4.2 showing incidents of long duration (more than one year). The incidence, or yearly occurrence, of abusive acts that were of short duration is significantly different from the overall incidence of sexual abuse events in the study. Note that the distribution of short duration events is relatively stable over the 50-year period of the study and does not show the dramatic increase in the 1970s and 1980s, as does the distribution of longer-duration events.

Figure 4.1  
**Incidence of Events of Short Duration (less than one year)**

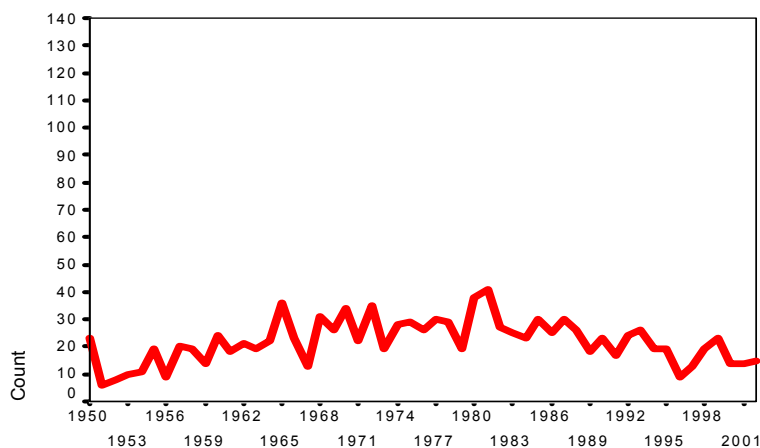
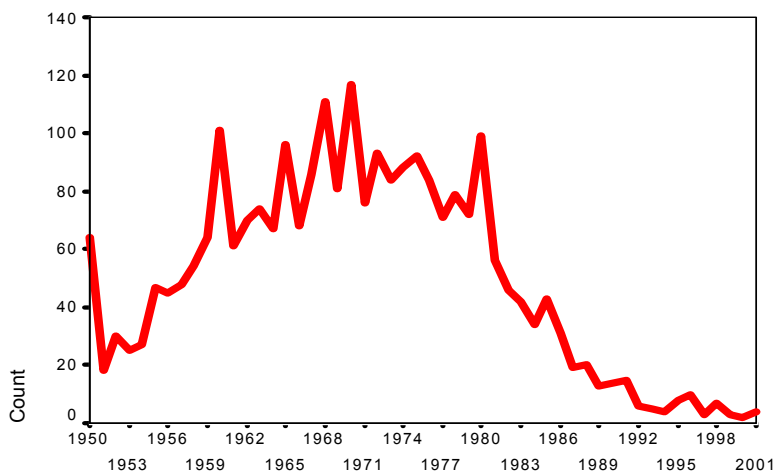


Figure 4.2  
**Incidence of Events with Duration of More Than One Year**



*Persistence of Offending and Grooming Behavior*

Criminologists who study the problem of child sexual abuse have found that an important feature of this type of deviant act is the use of what is called “grooming behavior.” Grooming behavior is a premeditated set of actions intended to manipulate a potential victim into complying with the sexual abuse. According to researcher Douglas Pryor,<sup>25</sup> there are several ways in which child molesters groom their victims, including: verbal coercion, physical coercion, seduction, games, and enticements. Child molesters are able to manipulate their victims into sexual compliance. Throughout the length of the abusive relationship, offenders either continue the manipulation or, if necessary, adjust it in order to continue with the abuse. The most common grooming tactic is emotional and verbal coercion, often through the use of bribes, the lack of disciplinary action in exchange for sexual favors, or emotional blackmail. The victims may be given enticements in order to comply with the abuse, such as money and gifts

The Nature and Scope study reported on three categories of grooming behavior: socializing with the family of a victim, the use of gifts and enticements and the use of threats. A general overview is shown in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4

**Overview of Grooming Behavior**

	<b>All Clerics (n = 4,392)</b>		<b>Duration &lt; 1 yr (n = 1,161)</b>		<b>Duration &gt; 25 yrs (n = 109)</b>	
Socializing with family	1,452	33.1%	284	24.5%	73	<b>67.0%</b>
Enticements	1,137	25.9%	201	17.3%	71	<b>65.1%</b>
Threats	522	11.9%	69	5.9%	40	<b>36.7%</b>

In the tables that follow, a more-detailed view of this behavior can be seen. As has been recognized by many researchers who study the behavior of sex offenders, family socializing and the use of enticements are more widespread than the use of threats. When threats were used, they were more likely to be of a psychological nature (fear, spiritual manipulation) than a physical nature. Those priests with long histories of sexual abuse of children clearly had more incidents and therefore opportunities for deliberate acts of grooming in preparation for abuse. It is also true that the diocesan records of these men with long histories of abuse are likely to have been more detailed, and thus more likely to include information about specific grooming behavior.



Table 4.5  
Location of Family Socializing

Location of Social Interactions With Victim's Family						
	All Clerics (n = 1,452)		Duration < 1 yr (n = 284)		Duration > 25 yrs (n = 73)	
<b>Family Residence</b>	1152	79.3%	210	73.9%	63	<b>86.3%</b>
<b>Church</b>	423	29.1%	78	27.5%	32	<b>43.8%</b>
<b>Cleric Residence</b>	384	26.5%	76	26.8%	30	<b>41.1%</b>
<b>Church Activities</b>	316	21.8%	57	20.1%	18	<b>24.7%</b>
<b>Vacations/ Social Events</b>	289	20.0%	40	14.1%	17	<b>23.3%</b>
<b>Other</b>	114	7.9%	23	8.1%	7	<b>9.6%</b>

Table 4.6  
Use of Enticements

Enticements Offered to Children (by < 1/3 of clerics)						
	All Clerics (n = 1,137)		Duration < 1 yr (n = 201)		Duration > 25 yrs (n = 71)	
<b>Alcohol/ Drugs</b>	385	33.9%	56	27.9%	23	<b>32.4%</b>
<b>Money</b>	321	28.2%	56	27.9%	32	<b>45.1%</b>
<b>Overnight w /Cleric</b>	317	27.9%	27	13.4%	19	<b>26.8%</b>
<b>Taken to Sports/Rec.</b>	237	20.8%	23	11.4%	17	<b>23.9%</b>
<b>Other</b>	194	17.1%	13	6.5%	15	<b>21.1%</b>
<b>Allowed to Drive</b>	113	9.9%	6	3.0%	12	<b>16.9%</b>
<b>Access to Porn</b>	80	7.0%	7	3.5%	5	<b>7.0%</b>
<b>Allowed to Stay Up Late</b>	60	5.3%	4	2.0%	3	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>Special Church Activities</b>	56	4.9%	3	1.5%	3	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>Travel</b>	47	4.1%	2	1.0%	4	<b>5.6%</b>
<b>Food</b>	24	2.1%	2	1.0%	4	<b>5.6%</b>
<b>Sports Related</b>	19	1.7%	2	1.0%	1	<b>1.4%</b>
<b>Toys/Other Gifts</b>	7	0.6%	0	0	0	0

Table 4. 7  
Use of Threats

Threats (Used by 12% of Abusive Clerics)						
	All Clerics (n = 522)		Duration < 1 yr (n = 69)		Duration > 25 yrs (n = 40)	
<b>Verbal Harm to Victim</b>	177	33.9%	22	31.9%	13	<b>32.5%</b>
<b>Spiritual Manipulation</b>	138	26.4%	12	17.4%	11	<b>27.5%</b>
<b>Other</b>	114	21.8%	37	53.6%	8	<b>20.0%</b>
<b>All of the Above</b>	90	17.2%	34	49.3%	5	12.5%
<b>Threatened Exposure</b>	66	12.6%	7	10.1%	9	<b>22.5%</b>
<b>Physical Threat w/o Weapon</b>	65	12.5%	8	11.6%	8	<b>20.0%</b>
<b>Verbal Harm to Cleric</b>	35	6.7%	6	8.7%	1	2.5%
<b>Physical Threat w/Weapon</b>	31	5.9%	6	8.7%	3	<b>7.5%</b>
<b>Threatened Family</b>	28	5.4%	4	5.8%	1	2.5%

*Pathology of Child Sexual Abuse*

Psychological professionals in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century perceived sexual offending as a disease that was a deep-rooted aspect of the person. Early psychological interventions focused on the use of psychoanalysis to treat sexual offending. Psychoanalysis posited that in order for change to occur, intense, lengthy analysis would be necessary in order to address the conflict thought to be the wellspring of the deviant behavior. By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, lawmakers and professionals continued to medicalize the problem of deviant sexual behavior, developing organic treatments to treat the offenders and crafting “sexual psychopath” laws to divert them from the criminal justice system into mental hospitals. This characterization follows the “progressive era” tendency to see criminal behavior as socially disordered or as an expression of deprivation and not as the active choice of an individual.

As criminal justice professionals began to record the numbers of convicted criminals who committed a new crime after punishment, re-training and treatment, the explanations for criminal behavior turned to focus on individual responsibility. By the 1970s, researchers and treatment providers led by William Marshall and Gene Abel developed multi-modal cognitive-behavioral treatment programs. Cognitive behavioral therapy focused upon addressing the many cognitive distortions sexual offenders displayed as well as additional problems that could be addressed through the use of social skills training and victim empathy training. One of the most important components, Relapse Prevention, was added to cognitive behavioral treatment

programs during the 1980s. Relapse Prevention is focused on the process through which the offender takes responsibility and learns to manage his behavior.

To explore the possibility that identifiable subgroups with distinctive pathologies were present in the overall distribution of priests in the Nature and Scope study, four clusters of cases were defined.

- High-rate Abusers: (the 10+ and 20+ groups) – defined by counts of reported and possible victims. These groups count 152 and 39 priests, respectively.
- Pedophiles:<sup>26</sup> Priests with two or more reported victims, either male or female, but none over age 10 at time incident began. This grouping counts 96 individual priests. It is hypothesized that pedophiles are aroused by the physical form of a child, irrespective of the child's gender.
- Ephebophiles: Priests with two or more reported male victims, but all at least age 13 at the time of the start of the incident. This grouping counts 474 priests. It has been suggested that ephebophiles are distinct from pedophiles because they are aroused by the bodies of boys who have developed secondary sexual characteristics.
- Unusual acts group: The Victim Surveys recorded descriptions of unusual or exceptional behaviors and paraphilias<sup>27</sup> for a small number of priests. This grouping counts 143 priests.

The four sub-groups were compared for differences in the following individual characteristics, or variables:

1. onset of abusive behavior;
2. duration, or persistence, of abusive behavior,
3. number of victims or accusers;
4. percent of victims reporting overt sexual acts;
5. extent of socializing with victim's family;
6. use of enticements or threats;
7. history of having been abused; and
8. history of substance abuse.

The age at ordination for the total population and for all subgroups is stable at 27 or 28 – an unsurprising finding given that the overall age for ordination of priests is stable. The age at onset of abusive behavior for all clerics is 39, though it is markedly lower for those with large numbers of victims. This means that priests with allegations of abuse waited, on average, 11 years to commit their first known abusive act. Those priests who we classified as pedophiles were 43, on average, at the time of the first reported abuse event (thus, waiting 16 years on average to commit the first know abusive act). The statistics for all priests with more than one reported incident of abuse are not significantly different from the overall average.

Table 4.8  
Onset of Offending Behavior, Years in Ministry

	10+ / 20+	Pedophiles	Ephhebophiles	Unusual Acts	Clerics > 1 victim	All Clerics
Age in years at 1st event	31	43	36	37	37	39
	28					
Age in years at ordination	27.6	27	28	28	28	28
	27.2					
Years elapsed, Ordination > event	4	16	8	9	9	11
	>1					
Number in Group	152	96	474	143	2512	4392
	39					

Table 4.9  
Persistence of Sub-Group Offending

	10+ / 20+	Pedophiles	Ephhebophiles	Unusual Acts	Clerics > 1 victim	All Clerics
Average Duration in Years	18.10	5.15	6.80	7.03	7.4	4.99
	22.03					
Average No. of Reported Victims	19.7	3.17	3.05	4.93	3.9	2.65
	38.85					
Avg. No. Reported & Potential Victims	24.6	7.0	8.65	5.58	5.1	3.21
	42.70					
Number in Group	152	96	474	143	2512	4392
	39					

To create an index of the severity of the acts alleged, a variable was created for the presence or absence of overt sexual activity, defined as acts of oral sex or acts involving penetration. The chart that follows shows the presence of at least one allegation of explicit sexual activity by a cleric, and compares the occurrence of this behavior and of police contact for the four sub-groups.

Table 4.10  
**Explicit Sex Acts and Police Contact**

	10+ / 20+	Pedophiles	Ephhebophiles	Unusual Acts	Clerics > 1 victim	All Clerics
Overt Sex Acts	94.7%	57.3%	59.7%	57.3%	45%	30%
	97.4%					
Police Contact	60.5%	28.1%	32.3%	31%	30%	24.9%
	51.3%					
Number in Group	152	96	474	143	2512	4392
	39					

Table 4.11  
**Socializing, Enticements and Threats**

	10+ / 20+	Pedophiles	Ephhebophiles	Unusual Acts	Clerics > 1 victim	All Clerics
Cleric Social w/ Family	70%	43.8%	36.7%	28%	40%	34.2%
	80%					
Use of Enticements	79%	41.7%	34.8%	37.8%	34%	21.3%
	93%					
Use of Threats	50%	20.8%	12.2%	29.4%	15.8%	12.3%
	61%					
Use of Gifts	30%	11.5%	19%	16.1%	16%	12.1%
	31%					
Number in Group	152	96	474	143	2512	4392
	39					

Table 4.12  
History of Abuse and Substance Abuse

	10+ / 20+	Pedophiles	Ephebophiles	Unusual Acts	Clerics > 1 victim	All Clerics
Cleric has History of Sexual Abuse	19.1%	4.5%	9.5%	8.4%	8.8%	6.8%
	27.8%					
Cleric has History of Substance Abuse	30%	14.4%	27.3%	23%	18.5%	18.6%
	20%					
Number in Group	152	96	474	143	2512	4392
	39					

To summarize, these tables show that priests who abused ten or twenty or more victims differ significantly from all other clerics in regard to age of onset of behavior, duration of abusive behavior, use of enticements and threats, use of overt acts and abuse history. Other differences are slight, and the only differences in pathology of note are that pedophiles and ephebophiles have a higher likelihood of using enticements, ephebophiles have a higher rate of substance abuse history, and all subgroups are more likely to use overt sexual acts. It is important to note that the pedophile and ephebophile subgroups do *not* have an earlier age of onset than the overall group of clerics. This is a significant finding, because if the deviant sexual behavior was result of a diagnosable pathology, then they would have likely shown a significant difference than other clerics in age of onset of the deviant behavior.

#### 4.4 Desistance from abusive behavior

Priests with more serious problems, i.e., more victims and/or longer duration of abusive behavior, were more likely to be given treatment as sex offenders. It was anticipated that those treated would also be more likely to have been reported to the police and investigated. The overall percentage of priests reported to the police was 24% and of those treated, 27%, but there is not a significant association between police contact and sex offender treatment. The absence of full chronological information makes it difficult to know when reports of abuse, police contact and treatment occurred in the life of an individual.

Data shows that 1,627 priests received some form of treatment or evaluation (37%) and 1,444 received more than one form of treatment. If those clerics who were deceased or not active at the time of the report are excluded, the treatment percentage rises to 49.63%. Treatment ranged from structured treatment programs (Relapse Prevention, Specialized Sex Offender Treatment) to less specific forms of treatment (Spiritual Counseling, General Treatment Program).

Table 4.13  
**Treatment as a Response to Child Sexual Abuse**

Facility	Count of Clerics TXed	Completed Program		New Allegation		Reinstated	
		Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
SLI - Suitland, MD	465	334	71.8%	48	10.3%	114	24.5%
Other	323	186	57.6%	55	17.0%	75	23.2%
SP - Jemez Springs, NM	196	145	73.9%	45	<b>22.9%</b>	67	<b>34.2%</b>
VSJV - Downingtown, PA	138	101	73.2%	7	5.1%	25	18.1%
SP - St. Louis, MO	115	88	76.5%	15	13.0%	24	20.9%
S - Ontario, CAN	107	75	70.1%	9	8.4%	29	27.1%
IL - Hartford, CT	99	58	58.6%	11	11.1%	21	21.2%
SLCS - St. Louis, MO	61	44	72.1%	4	6.6%	12	19.7%
IRC - Chicago, IL	50	26	52.0%	3	6.0%	8	16.0%

We cannot conclude from the data available here that the forms of sex offender treatment were effective or were ineffective. The understanding of desistance from offending or criminal behavior is only now receiving significant attention from criminologists. Although some progress has been made in the analysis of the interaction of individual and situational (or opportunity) factors in the decision of a person to stop wrongful behavior, there are no generally accepted conclusions at this time. A very significant part of what will be learned from the second study of the sex abuse crisis is how and why priests were able to desist from sexual abuse behavior.

## NOTES

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<sup>19</sup> Simon, L.M.J., Sales, B., Kaskniak, A., & Kahn, M. (1992). Characteristics of child molesters: Implications for the fixated-regressed dichotomy. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. 7: 211-225.

<sup>20</sup> Pedophilia is a diagnosable paraphilia and is defined as “recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges or behaviors involving sexual activity with a prepubescent child or children (generally age 13 years or younger)” (APA, 2000, p. 256). Additionally, the individual must have experienced these fantasies, urges or behaviors for at least six months in duration, and there must be an age difference of at least five years between the victim and the offender, with the offender being at least sixteen-years of age. While the paraphiliac does not need to have acted on his urges in order to be diagnosed a pedophile, the condition is characterized by “marked distress or interpersonal difficulty” (APA, 2000, p. 257).

<sup>21</sup> Note: ephebophilia is not recognized by the American Psychiatric Association as a diagnosable paraphilia. However, many researchers have studied ephebophilia as a distinct category of paraphilia.

<sup>22</sup> Danni, K.A. & Hampe, G.D. (2002). An analysis of predictors of child sex offender types using pre-sentence investigation reports. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*. 44: 490-504.

<sup>23</sup> Using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), the averages lengths of offending for each group of priest-offenders was significantly different from all other when grouped by behavior ( $F = 339.26, p < .001$ ) or by data ( $F = 430.78, p < .001$ ). The Bonferroni post hoc analysis illustrates that each group in each categorization scheme is significantly different from all others in that categorization ( $p \leq .006$ ).

<sup>24</sup> Dioceses and religious institutes did not always have sufficient information in their files to complete a survey for every victim who had reported an incident of abuse.

<sup>25</sup> Pryor, D. (1996). *Unspeakable Acts: Why Men Sexually Abuse Children*. New York; New York University Press. Page 123-154.

<sup>26</sup> The offenders classified here as pedophiles and ephebophiles have not necessarily been clinically diagnosed as such. We have classified them here as such based upon their exhibited behavior.

<sup>27</sup> Behaviors connoted by intense, sexually arousing fantasies about non-living objects, violence, children, or non-consenting persons.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### Church Response to Allegations of Abuse

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#### 5.1 *Distributions of responses of dioceses and religious institutes of men*

Although the surveys completed by the dioceses and religious institutes showed that, in many cases, superiors took several kinds of action in response to reports of sexual abuse by priests, the data are very difficult to summarize. The lack of full chronological information prevents assessment of the efficacy of the actions taken, or, indeed, when they occurred in an individual's history of behavior. The delay, often of more than 20 years, in reporting allegations of abuse meant that many priests were either deceased or inactive when the report was made. For the analysis that follows, the number of priests who were not active at the time of the allegation have been subtracted before the percentages were calculated. Unfortunately, there were no independent measures of those who were deceased and those who were inactive.

The tables that follow show statistics that describe the actions taken by dioceses and religious institutes of men, grouped by the number of priests who were the subject of an allegation of abuse received by the diocese when the priest was still active in ministry. The units are the dioceses or religious institutes, and the percentages summarize the use of actions available to superiors. The statistics shown are the average percentage (M or mean), the most common percentage (Md or median), and the minimum and maximum percentage of priests who received a specific response.

For example, Table 5.1 shows the actions of 114 dioceses and religious institutes who were responsible for one to six priests with allegations. In the first row, listing the use of a practice of "Reprimand and Return," the average is 7%; given the small numbers of priests accused in these dioceses, very few priests were so treated. In contrast, more than half were suspended, and the majority were sent for treatment. It is important to point out that the superiors in dioceses and religious institutes often used more than one form of response to those who were the subject of allegations of child abuse.

The tables show that evaluation, administrative leave, treatment, and suspension are most commonly used, although the percentage of use declines as the number of accused priests in a diocese or religious order increases. The variation in the use of specific responses can be seen in Table 5.3, where one diocese or religious institute suspended 88% of its accused priests (the maximum) and another diocese or religious institute took no action against 77% of its accused priests. Across all the tables, there are dioceses or religious institutes in almost all categories of possible action who did not utilize the specific response at all, or did not make a record of their actions. This absence of action is shown in the statistic of the minimum; if the minimum is "0," at least one diocese or religious order did not use the listed response with any accused priests. It is not possible to say whether this is a true record of inaction by superiors or whether it reflects less-than-complete record keeping.

Table 5.1

**Responses of Church Leaders  
Dioceses & Religious Institutes with 1 - 6 Accused Clerics**

All US Dioceses & Religious Institutes <b>Type of Response</b>	% of Accused Clerics in active ministry who received diocesan response (N = 114 Dioceses/ RI)			
	M	Md	Minimum	Maximum
Reprimanded and Returned	7%	0%	0%	100%
Referred for Evaluation	55%	60%	0%	100%
Administrative Leave	34%	25%	0%	100%
Reinstated	20%	0%	0%	100%
Spiritual Retreat	9%	0%	0%	100%
Treatment	60%	50%	0%	100%
Medical Leave	4%	0%	0%	60%
Suspended	53%	50%	0%	100%
No Action Taken	8%	0%	0%	100%

Table 5.2

**Responses of Church Leaders,  
Dioceses and Religious Institutes with 7 - 15 Accused Clerics**

All US Dioceses & Religious Institutes <b>Type of Response</b>	% of Accused Clerics in active ministry who received diocesan response (N=82 Dioceses / RI)			
	M	Md	Minimum	Maximum
Reprimanded and Returned	7%	0%	0%	58%
Referred for Evaluation	42%	40%	0%	100%
Administrative Leave	31%	40%	0%	100%
Reinstated	17%	14%	0%	57%
Spiritual Retreat	5%	0%	0%	56%
Treatment	44%	44%	0%	91%
Medical Leave	7%	0%	0%	64%
Suspended	40%	37%	0%	91%
No Action Taken	14%	11%	0%	86%

Table 5.3

**Responses of Church Leaders  
Dioceses and Religious Institutes with 15 or more Accused Clerics**

All US Dioceses & Religious Institutes <b>Type of Response</b>	% of Accused Clerics in active ministry who received diocesan response (N = 66)			
	M	Md	Minimum	Maximum
Reprimanded and Returned	9%	5%	0%	76%
Referred for Evaluation	41%	41%	0%	87%
Administrative Leave	31%	28%	0%	74%
Reinstated	16%	24%	0%	61%
Spiritual Retreat	7%	4%	0%	36%
Treatment	42%	41%	0%	77%
Medical Leave	6%	3%	0%	33%
Suspended	36%	32%	0%	88%
No Action Taken	13%	9%	0%	71%

**5.2 Outcomes comparison, optimal responses**

Utilizing the same data – percentages of actions taken by individual dioceses and religious institutes - a multivariate analysis was done to determine factors that could be associated with a successful response. Success was understood as fewer victims of abuse, shorter duration and less severity of the acts accused. Accepting the difficulty of evaluating diocesan action, given the complications of the delay in reporting, there are indications that those dioceses that took decisive action were able to limit the extent of the problem of sexual abuse by clerics.

Three indices were used to select a group of 26 dioceses (14.6% of the 178 that responded and reported abuse events) that showed evidence of decisive action: 1) the likelihood that action was taken after an allegation of abuse, 2) the likelihood of a police report; and 3) the promptness of the response to the first study. These dioceses reported a lower than average number of clerics with abuses (12 rather than 18), a shorter average duration per individual (3.8 yrs as opposed to 5.6 yrs) and a lower than average percentage of explicit sexual acts.

When the analysis is repeated with the religious institutes, the same differences are present. For those dioceses and religious institutes with 15 or more priests with allegations, increased use of suspension and treatment increases the positive results. The

question of the statistical significance of these differences is complex, as we cannot be certain of the temporal relationships, i.e., the timing of the actions undertaken by the particular dioceses.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The results of these analyses are important in their explanation of the nature and scope of the problem of child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. The multivariate analyses give insight into the distribution of the problem over the past half-century, the situational nature of most of the offenses, and heterogeneity in offender characteristics. The following are key conclusions drawn from these analyses.

### *Reporting of the abuse and the distribution of offenses*

The distribution of known events of abuse is stable with respect to shape, but the number of unreported incidents is not known. The marked decrease in reported incidents of sexual abuse is a true representation of the total (known and unknown) incidence. Estimates of the decrease in incidence coincides the first national publicity of the case of Rev. Gilbert Gauthé in 1985 and the consequent response by the Church. An additional marked drop in reports is found in the early 1990s, a time that is also identified as a break point in the estimation of reported and unreported events. It is not possible to distinguish the effect of national press attention to the Gauthé case (and the issue) from the effect of Church policies and actions. The only plausible explanation for the number and distribution of cases reported in 2002 is that individuals were prompted to report abuse after many years by the intensity and detail of the press coverage of the sexual abuse crisis.

### *Comparison of diocesan and religious priests*

Though diocesan priests had a higher rate of abusive behavior than religious priests, there were no other distinguishable differences between the groups.

### *Church response to the abuse*

Church response is not easy to summarize, as a result of the delayed reporting of the majority of incidents. However, there are indications that those dioceses in which church leaders took prompt and decisive action had fewer reports of abuse and fewer reports of severe abuse. Controlling situational factors, i.e., opportunities, offers the greatest potential for protection of all in the Church community (priests, children, families). Education about the problem of sexual abuse is the most recognized pathway to the safety of all.

### *Priests with single and multiple allegations*

Priests accused of only one event of sexual abuse are similar to others, but show evidence of greater self-control or self-correction. There is no evidence of an association with increased likelihood of arrest or successful treatment. The analysis of the duration of sex abuse behavior by individuals showed great variation in combinations of length in years and number of victims. Sexual abuse behavior occurs after a significant period of ministry and there are no clear, early indications of risk that a priest will abuse later on, based on what can be known from the Nature and Scope data. The average time in ministry at the time of a first allegation of abuse is 11 years. Analysis of victim selection

shows that specialization by age is not common. If the highly active serial offenders are excluded, we are not able to distinguish other sub-groups based on conventional understandings of the pathology of sex offending. The average priest was in his late 30s at the time of the first reported event.

*Regional differences*

The pattern of abuse incidents is consistent over time in all regions of the Catholic Church. In all regions, there is a marked decrease in incidents by 1985, and an even steeper decrease in events in the 1990s. Additionally, the amount of abusive behavior is also relatively stable across 13 of the 14 regions of Catholic dioceses. One region has nearly double the number of incidents of other regions.











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