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Constructing Sex Offending Against Children:

A content analysis of the Globe & Mail 1970-2005

By
Anne-Marie Grondin

Thesis submitted to the Department of Criminology, University of Ottawa, in partial
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Abstract

Discursive practices on sex offending against children are value-laden, often eliciting strong social reactions due to the sensitive nature of the topic and anxieties which are born of the rhetoric of several claims-makers. Despite research findings which could help reduce the level of anxiety, stereotypes and common assumptions prevail. Furthermore, the media tends to represent sex offending in a simplified and distorted manner. Lurid and partial portrayals of child sex offending are highly problematic both for immediate victims, and for society as a whole, considered here to be a collateral victim of a level of social reaction so radicalized it can be characterized as *pedophobic*. In order to explore whether media portrayals change over time, I examined portrayals of child sex offending in the Globe & Mail between 1970 and 2005. In so doing, I accounted for the social context in which these media portrayals were constructed. Quantitatively, the number of articles increased exponentially between 1970 and 2005. These portrayals also changed over time with respect to their content. These findings point to a third conclusion – that child sex offending is socially constructed through the media. Through processes of simplification, and by ignoring the totality of the problem, the media misrepresent child sex offending.

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1.0 Introduction

Sex offending against children is one of the most reviled crimes, and has been characterized as "the worst among other evils" (Doyle & Lacombe, 2003: 290). Perpetrators of these offences are considered by many as "lepers of society" (Dunphy, 2003: 196), abominations, monsters (Douard, 2005: 2). Sex offenders have also been referred to as 'predators' (Jenkins, 1998), 'sex fiends' (Cricher, 2002), even 'sex terrorists' (Itzin, 2001). As many have noted, sex offending against children "arouses high passions" (Hacking, 1991: 255).

Child sex offending is a difficult area to grasp, in part because stereotypes dominate much of the discourse in this area. First, prevalence of the problematic is often said to be on the rise (Quinn et al., 2004), despite evidence to the contrary (Doyle & Lacombe, 2003; Hacking, 2001). While all such offending is acknowledged as harmful (West, 2000; Zuriff, 2000), harms need not be lasting, nor violent (James, 1996; Jenkins, 1998; Plummer, 1990). Offenders are believed to be incurable recidivists (Wacquant, 2001), despite research evidence that they are not necessarily likely to reoffend (Douard, 2005; Wilson, 2005). Finally, while all victims are often assumed to be contaminated by their experiences (Douard, 2005; Quinn et al., 2004), children experience a wide range of consequences, and are not invariably nor permanently harmed in the aftermath of their sexual victimization (James, 1996).

Given that the problematic is politically loaded, it is not surprising that certain conclusions are favoured over others. But, while their existence is not altogether surprising, stereotypical, narrow, and partial understandings of the problem can lead to unanticipated and perhaps negative ramifications, both for offenders and their victims. For instance, the punitive character of the current socio-political climate and of attitudes towards sex offenders gives priority to punishment, not treatment. This is compounded

by the fact that many so-called treatment authorities are sceptical about the rehabilitative potential of sex offenders (Burdon & Gallagher, 2002).

What Loïc Wacquant terms 'penal panopticism' – society's growing eagerness to incarcerate criminals for long periods of time and to impose Orwellian surveillance at the informal level – works to undermine the constitutional rights of sex offenders, creates barriers to employment, and leads, in some cases, to vigilantism (2001). According to Donald West, "[t]his amplifies deviance and does not protect children," and works to "produc[e] undue restrictions on children's freedom and on their interactions with teachers and other adults." (2000: 511)

Narrow and simplified accounts of sex offending against children are problematic on many levels. In this context, media representations of sex offending against children are an important area of study. Nowadays, it is not uncommon to come across headlines that highlight the lurking and imminent danger posed by sex offenders. Words such as "pervert, (...) molester, defiler, psychopath, and predator" are often used by the media to characterize child sex offenders" (Jenkins, 1998: xi). Furthermore, the mass media "have been singled out as the most common and pervasive source of shared information on crime and justice." (Surette, 1992: 5) Whether the media fashions the public's perceptions of sex offending against children, or whether the extensive media coverage of these crimes simply reflect a demand on the part of a public that takes a particular interest in the topic is a complex question, and arguments can, rightly, be made on both sides.

There is little doubt that the media play a role in constructing crime. For one, the media are a means for the public to learn about crime, as evidenced by the ability of most people to cite the news media regarding crime (www.nytimes.blogrunner.com, April 09, 2005). Moreover, "people use knowledge they obtain from the media to construct a picture of the world, an image of reality on which they then base their actions." (Surette, 1992: 2) Examples of this reside in the enactment of Megan's law and Zachary's law, of the Jacob Wetterling Act in the United States, and Christopher's law in Canada, all of which have introduced legislation concerning sex offender registries (Petrunik, 2003). As witnessed in Canada and elsewhere, increasingly punitive approaches to dealing with sex offenders have spawned cycles of sex offender legislation (Jenkins, 1998). Correspondingly, each "spate of legislation (...) has been a reactive process" (Brogden

& Harkin, 2000: 45), often enacted in the aftermath of a particularly gruesome sex crime, and following a state of moral panic (Cricher, 2002; Doyle & Lacombe, 2003; Gaucher, & Elliot, 2001).

Crime news in particular tends to distort certain aspects of crime stories – this is exacerbated by the need to sensationalize issues presented (Barlow et al., 1995; Ericson et al., 1987; Kappeler et al., 1996). The sensitive nature of child sex offending in combination with the sensationalization of crime news do much to paint a distorted picture of the problematic. While “the figure of the sex offender has become one of the most terrifying folk-devils” of our age (Cricher, 2002: 522), sexual acts between adults and children were, at one time, celebrated as “la grande libéralisation des mœurs”, a celebration of freedom from social constraints (Guillebaud, 1998: 26). As Jenkins asserts, “[i]mages of the sex offender have changed dramatically and cyclically over time.” (1998: 2) Based on the shift in conception of the problematic over time, it can be hypothesized that media portrayals of child sex offending have changed accordingly.

The media work to reproduce our social, political, and moral order (Allen et al., 1998; Altheide, 2000; Pritchard & Hughes, 1997; Wacquant, 2001). Based on this premise, we can deduce that news stories reflect the level of social reaction towards particular phenomena. While our tendency might be to think of social reaction as occurring at the micro-structural level, it also occurs at the broader level of social institutions. News stories may allow us to catch a glimpse of individual reactions towards social phenomena, but, as previously mentioned, this assertion remains highly contested. Still, news stories allow us to glean at the level of social reaction within a specific social institution: that of the media, and while it is all but impossible to trace a positive causal relationship between media portrayals and public perception or policy enactment, it is safe to say that both are affected by media representations, at least to some extent, and vice versa.

Thus, looking at media portrayals of social phenomena allows us to put together a *vue d'ensemble* of the stories that illicit reactions from a wide range of players in the social spectrum. The amount, and the nature of discourse that is produced at any time informs us about some of the concerns of a particular epoch. The fact that the media is, for many, a primary source of information about crime and justice (Surette, 1992) cannot be

neglected. The manner in which a story is portrayed gives insight as to how the problem is conceptualized.

What I hope to accomplish in the following is to locate, within a mass medium, the variation in focus on children and sex crimes over time. I have studied over 600 newspaper articles published in a Canadian periodical in an attempt to highlight social reactions towards sexual deviance against children at different time periods. More specifically, I have assessed whether and to what extent there has been a shift in the nature of newspaper representations of sex offending against children between 1970 and 2005. The amount and the nature of media portrayals were accounted for, and when possible, were linked to the social context in which they were produced. Accordingly, I have examined whether the level and the nature of the coverage on child sex offending has varied, and if so, how.

The aim of this introductory section was threefold. First, to introduce my research question and areas of interest. Second, to contextualize my inquiry, and to provide the reader with a broad understanding of how sexual deviance is construed. Finally, to provide an overview of the layout of the present study. In the following chapter, I will review the literature on child sex offending and the media. Chapter three will explain the methodological approach used to collect my data. Chapter four will describe my research findings, while chapter five will see these findings analyzed. In the final chapter, I will draw some tentative conclusions from this research.

2.0 Review of the Literature

2.1 Defining Child Sex Offending

2.1.1 Discourse and Terminology

Sex offences encompass a wide range of behaviours, and different groups – intervention workers, lawyers, psychiatrists, therapeutic professionals, media figures, advocacy groups, etc. - tend to define this form of offending in different ways. Although most terms are in fact offence- or offender-specific, they are often used interchangeably, particularly by media reporters (Doyle & Lacombe, 2003; James, 1996; Quinn et al., 2004). Furthermore, references to child abuse have increasingly connoted child sexual abuse (Hacking, 1991). In the following, I will attempt to shed further clarity on the issue of language by identifying and defining commonly used terminology and by establishing a working term of my own to refer to sexual offences that are committed against children.

Distinctions are made in the literature between legal and clinical definitions of child sex offending. According to Burdon and Gallagher (2002), the legal definition focuses on acts perpetrated by individuals who have come into contact with the criminal justice system for a sex-related offence. This categorization fails to account for sex offenders within the system who were convicted of non-sexually related offences and sex offenders who do not have a custody status. In contrast, offenders who fit the clinical definition “are said to suffer from some form of paraphilia” according to the DSM-IV (2002: 90).

Pedophilia and hebephilia are two forms of paraphilia, and fit into the clinical definition of child sex offending. Coined by Krafft-Ebing in 1912, ‘paedophilia erotica’ referred to acts committed by “sexually needy subject[s] (...) drawn to children (...) by a morbid disposition” (Mohr, 1964 in Stein, 1993: 11). Whereas paedophilia refers to sexual interaction between adults and pre-pubertal children, hebephilia connotes the “[sexual] preference for pubescent children” (Freund & Blanchard, 1989: 100) who are not recognized to be adults by legal and social standards. It should be noted that there exists no statutory definition of paedophilia or hebephilia in the Canadian Criminal Code. Defining child sex offending in terms of the age of consent is problematic because there

does not exist a universal standard that dictates the age at which youths are considered able to consent to sexual activity.

The clinical definition of child sex offending fails to account for sex offenders who do not have a paraphiliac disorder. In adopting as broad a conception of the problematic as possible to avoid restricting the scope of the present inquiry, the phrase 'child sex offending' will be preferred over clinical or strict legal categorizations, and other designations deemed problematic, including the phrases 'sexual abuse' and 'sexual assault'. Sexual abuse, which includes verbally inappropriate behaviour towards children, goes beyond the scope of inquiry of this paper. As for the 'sexual assault of children', this phrase fails to account for the production and consumption of child pornography. Furthermore, the term 'assault' connotes an act of physical aggression, when we know that in fact, most sexual offences are devoid of such levels of violence (Hacking, 1991; James, 1996; Loseke, 2003; West, 2000).

The phrase 'child sexual offending', on the other hand, compensates for the failures of the expressions noted above. It is broad in scope, and does not discriminate between clinical and legal definitions. It accounts for the production and consumption of child pornography, as well as for the act of exposing a child to adult or other pornography. It accounts for child prostitution. As well, it includes all offences of a sexual nature against children: touching, petting, masturbation, oral sex, voyeurism, exhibitionism, sodomy, digital and vaginal penetration, and all levels of assault.

Readers should be cautioned not to confuse 'child sex offending' with sexual offending committed by children. For one, intervention workers are careful not to associate the powerful label of the 'sex offender' with children. Rather, they might refer to youths who committed sexual offences as 'children with sexually inappropriate behaviour', or 'youths with sexually deviant behaviour' (CIASF, 2006). Conversely, I am weary that referring to adults who committed sexual crimes as 'individuals who committed acts of a sexual nature' would minimize the legal implications of their acts. In order to include both adult and youth perpetrators of sexual offences against children, without labelling youths, or minimizing the acts committed by adults, I have chosen to refer to the problematic as 'child sex offending'. The phrase "child sexual abuse" is most often used in the literature to refer to sexual offences committed against children (Adler, 2001; Hacking, 1991;

Pratt, 2005; Schofield, 2004). While I have chosen to avoid using the term 'abuse' for reasons mentioned above, it follows that child sex offending no more connotes offences committed by children than child sexual abuse.

2.1.2 Overview of the Problematic

Much of the literature goes counter to popular beliefs and common assumptions about child sex offending. For one, while many would argue that child sex offending constitutes a universal taboo, this contention is in fact a myth (Walter, 2000). For instance, certain communities around the world embrace, and view sexual acts between adults and children as positive for both parties involved (Khal, 1978; Pratt, 2005; Tremblay, 2001). Furthermore, while it is often asserted that the prevalence of these offences is on the rise (Adler, 2001; Quinn et al., 2004; West, 2000), some authors would argue that we are not witnessing an increase in the incidence, but rather in the volume of discourse of the problematic (Doyle & Lacombe, 2003; Hacking, 1991).

Numerous researchers have tried to pinpoint the aetiology of child sex offending: etiological approaches include everything from 'feeble-mindedness' (Finkelhor, 1979), brain damage (Langevin, 1990), and neuroendocrines (Gladue, 1990) at the biological level, to high degrees of isolation, parent-child role confusion, abandonment, marital conflict, oversexualization, and poor offspring supervision (1979) at the psycho-social level. In reality, it is impossible to find a simple cause for the occurrence of child sex offending, as its causes are multiple, and their interactions, complex (Hacking, 1991). In much the same way, perpetrators of child sex offending "come from virtually all social, income, racial, ethnic and age groups." (James, 1996: 3) Furthermore, some research findings demonstrate that there exists a small proportion of female offenders (Finkelhor, 1979; Finkelhor, 1984; Righthand & Welch, 2001; Snyder, 2000). Gender does not discriminate offenders from non-offenders. It is all but impossible to accurately profile a sex offender, although many have tried (Hazelwood & Warren, 2000; Righthand & Welch, 2001; Vandiver & Kercher, 2004).

While we often hear of adult perpetrators of child sex offending, most perpetrators are reported to be young. One study revealed that "[t]he proportion of arrestees under 30 years old (78%) was significantly larger than the proportion of age references that

described offenders as under 30” in the media (Barlow et al., 1995: 13). Furthermore, “[t]he largest group [of perpetrators] is teenagers, then young adults” (Finkelhor, 1979: 74). Individuals as young as three or four years of age have been reported to commit sexually deviant acts towards other children (Righthand & Welch, 2001).

Although perpetrators of child sex offending are often portrayed as incurable recidivists (Cricher, 2002; Quinn et al., 2004; Wacquant, 2001; West, 2000), there is research evidence that demonstrates this assumption is false (Douard, 2005; Wilson, 2005). For one, researchers tend to report recidivism rates for the category of sex offenders as an aggregate whole, whereas rates of recidivism often vary according to the type of offence committed. For instance, extra-familial offenders are more likely to re-offend than incest offenders (Langevin et al., 2004). Furthermore, offenders who have undergone treatment are less likely to reoffend (Wilson, 2005). Recidivism rates are not necessarily correlated with the seriousness of an offence. As the author of one study reports, “[t]he less dangerous behaviours (...) can be the most repetitive.” (Snyder, 2000: 516)

A majority of victims are known to their assailant prior to the occurrence of the offence (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; James, 1996, Snyder, 2000). The incidence of incest, or the commission of a sex offence against a child within one’s immediate family, is more prevalent than that of extrafamilial offences (Righthand & Welch, 2000; Ward et al., 2003). What is more, most offences take place in private dwellings (Finkelhor, 1979; Snyder, 2000). This information goes against the popular notion of ‘stranger danger’ often conveyed (Jenkins, 1998).

In the aftermath of child sex offending, victims often suffer from a wide range of short- and/or long-term effects. These may include emotional reactions, changes in self-perceptions, physical or somatic consequences, under- or over-sexualized behaviours, social isolation, or difficulties in their interpersonal relations. Many factors may influence the impact of these effects. Studies report that trauma will be greater when the sexually deviant act: 1) continues over a longer period; 2) is committed by a close relation; 3) involves penetration; 4) is accompanied by violence or aggression; 5) includes the child’s active participation; 6) is not believed by persons to whom it is disclosed; and 7) is perpetrated against an older victim (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986).

To summarize, the consequences of child sex offending vary according to the victim and the act. It is important to note that not all victims experience trauma. Finkelhor (1979) asserts that “child victims fare better to some extent than adult rape victims” (31). This is due in part to the fact that children are less likely to require massive use of force to comply with the perpetrator’s sexual requests (1979). While many believe that the consequences of child sex offending are devastating for all (Plummer, 1981), and that victims will be scarred forever (Loseke, 2003), one survey showed that, in some cases, “minor incidents have only minor effects, except when accompanied by other stresses.” (West, 2000: 511). Another study demonstrated that “one-fifth to two-thirds (...) manifest pathological disturbance” in the aftermath of their victimization, contrary to the common belief that all child sexual offence victims are affected in the same way (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986: 14).

Sex offending is not necessarily perceived as harmful or violent by all children. Indeed, offending is not always harmful (West, 1981; Hacking, 1991; James, 1996; Loseke, 2003). Some victims even experience positive consequences as a result of their victimization. For instance, “[a] child may learn much from a consistent and caring adult lover and come to cherish him as a friend long after the period of erotic attachment has passed.” (West, 1981: 255). Kenneth Plummer (1981) contends that:

“on occasions, pedophilia may help the child (a) relate closely with adults outside the limited family context and thereby help to reduce age divisions in society, (b) in his or her emotional and sexual development when parents abrogate their responsibilities of this, and (c) find parental substitutes and guidance in situations of parental neglect.” (243)

Also, consequences need not be lasting (Jenkins, 1998; Zuriff, 2000). Much of the fear child sex offences illicit stems from the idea that sexually victimized children are contaminated by their experiences, and that, in the near future, they will turn to crime, or become unproductive members of society as a result (Douard, 2005; Hacking, 1991; Quinn et al., 2004; Thomson, 2004). Some even regard experiences of child sex offending as gateways to a criminal career (Jenkins, 1998).

In actuality, children are not invariably contaminated by their victimization (James, 1996). In fact, many victims actively participate in the sexually deviant acts committed towards them (Petrunik, 2005; Wacqant, 2001; West, 2000). Some researchers would even go as far as to assert that many instances of child sex offending are consensual (Quinn et al., 2004). This relates to the fact that perpetrators of child sex offending rarely use violence because they don't need to. On that note, extreme violence, predatory behaviour, and death are rare, contrary to some popular stereotypes (Plummer, 1981; Rind et al., 1998; West, 2000; Wilson, 2005).

Although there exists research-based evidence that counters common stereotypes about child sex offending, we seldom hear of it. As we will see later on in this chapter, child sex offences are construed in a manner which serves to demonize perpetrators of these offences, and to emphasize the 'victim' status of children towards whom these acts are committed. Current criminal justice responses appear to have been formulated based on popular views on child sex offending, rather than on the evidence that contradicts popular stereotypes. In light of the belief that sex offenders are untreatable, for instance, prison has been, and is still the preferred method of intervention regarding perpetrators of child sex offending (LaFond & Winick, 2004). In recent years, treatment has become "a by-product of continuing efforts to incapacitate sex offenders." (Burdon & Ghallager, 2002: 99). Sanctions are becoming increasingly punitive, as corroborated by the fact that governments "have dramatically increased sentences for sex crimes, passed mandatory minimum sentences for repeat offenders, including sex offenders, and enacted life-time sentences" (2004: 1174).

Current criminal justice trends "shif[t] the focus away from (...) the individual, and redirec[t] it to actuarial consideration of aggregates." (Feeley & Simon, 1992: 449). Risk assessment and managerial strategies are increasingly prevalent and this, despite the fact that very little is known of the overall efficacy of risk-management strategies (Burdon & Ghallager, 2002). Community notification statutes "authoriz[e] or require communities where [sex] offenders will live to be notified of their arrival" (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000: 1). The 'Dangerous Offender' legislation has been modified "to expand the window of opportunity for its application and to remove the possibility of a determinate sentence" (Petrunik, 2003: 55). The recent 'long-term offender' statute adds to the number of

years 'dangerous offenders' will undergo community supervision once released from prison.

Peace bonds, which prohibit child sex offenders "from engaging in any activity that involves contact with persons under the age of fourteen years" and "from attending a public park or public swimming area where persons under the age of fourteen years are present" (CCC, s.810.1(1)), have been extended to persons deemed likely to commit serious personal injury (Petrunik, 2002). At the community level, supervision orders and Circles of support and accountability aim towards reducing the risk of recidivism by monitoring child sex offenders and facilitating their reintegration to the community (Hannem & Petrunik, 2004; LaFond & Winick, 2004). The implementation of these new strategies enlightens us to both the shift in ideology within the criminal justice system in recent years, highlighting a risk-management orientation, and the shift in the level of awareness or recognition of the phenomenon as a social problem that needs to be resolved and prevented.

2.1.3 Variations in Time and Place

As we have seen, the way we conceptualize child sex offending is fluid. Even the language used to refer to sexually deviant acts committed towards children has changed over time. For instance, Bill C-127 changed rape offences to sexual assault offences in Canada (Roberts & Pires, 1992). Furthermore, there has been a shift in the amount of discourse on child sex offending. Indeed, it is in 1970 that child sex offending is said to have been 'discovered', theorized, and studied (Adler, 2001; Guillebaud, 1998; Hacking, 1991). Prior to 1970, child sex offending was believed to be a rare occurrence (Jenkins, 1998), and little was said and written on the matter (Adler, 2001; Jenkins, 1996). For the most part, child sex offences were not linked to any negative effects in the aftermath of their occurrence (Pratt, 2005). In some cases, children were even blamed for their victimizations (Adler, 2001; Jenkins, 1998).

The emergence of the problem has been linked to many factors. Jenkins (1998) contends demographics played an important role:

“[c]oncern about sex crimes was at its lowest during periods of relatively high tolerance for sexual experimentation, including the 1920s and especially the (...) 1960s. (...) The sexual revolution was in retreat by the early 1980s, under the assault of diseases like herpes and later AIDS, and a new conservatism became evident.” (224)

Pratt (2005) argues children were simply of a lesser value in the past. Since families have a lesser number of children nowadays, the value of each child has been increased. Furthermore, the protection of children’s rights, and more specifically, of their moral and sexual ‘purity’, are relatively new areas of concern (Best, 1990; Hacking, 1991; Plummer, 1981), bearing influence on our definition of what constitutes abusive behaviour. Today, children are believed to be sacred (Doyle & Lacombe, 2003), and are “defined as economically worthless but sentimentally priceless” (Best, 1990: 33). Others have theorized that the ‘child saving movement’ of the nineteenth century did much to recognized child sex offending as a social problem (Best, 1990; Hacking, 1991). I will further expand on this last explanation upon a later discussion of social constructionism.

Still today, certain societies are tolerant, even supportive of what we consider deviant sexual acts committed towards children (Khal, 1978; Pratt, 2005). In fact, certain groups within our own society are supportive of paedophilic acts. The North American Man-Boy-Love Association (heretofore referred to as NAMBLA), founded in 1978, and still active today, calls for legal reform regarding ‘consensual’ sexual relations between youths and adults (NAMBLA, 2005). Advocates for this association “support the rights of youth as well as adults to choose the partners with whom they wish to share and enjoy their bodies”, and consider the criminalization of such acts to be “extreme oppression” and overt acts of ageism (2005, [online]: 1). The Rene Guyon Society, created in 1962, upholds that sexual relations with children are healthy and beneficial for all parties involved, as evidenced in their motto: “Sex by year eight or else it’s too late” (Kinnear, 1995). Suffice it to say that these groups are, at present, very marginal.

Our understanding of child sex offending varies, and has shifted through time and across cultures. After having established a working term for, and definition of the problematic that is being studied, and after having reviewed the literature on the subject matter, it is important to keep in mind that none of it is ‘set in stone’. What we recognize as the

'truth' at one time may shift, or be discarded at another. As we will see in the next section, social institutions often view problems differently, much like the different cultures and groups mentioned above. In the following, I will review the literature that covers the media, and how this social institution portrays the problematic of child sex offending.

2.2 Child Sex Offending and the Media

2.2.1 Why Study the Media?

Many authors would agree that the media play a role in constructing images of crime (Allen et al., 1998; Barlow et al., 1995; Bennet, 1982; Ericson et al., 1987; Greer, 2003; Silverman & Wilson, 2002; Surette, 1992). The media influence both public attitudes and policies, although the 'chicken-or-the-egg' question is far from resolved. While there exists support for the hypothesis that public attitudes about crime are shaped in part by the media, the interplay between public perceptions and media coverage is highly contentious (Surette, 1992). As one author reports, [w]hen effects do occur, the most common are increased belief in the prevalence and spread of crime, victimization, and violence, and cynical, distrustful social attitudes." (1992: 96).

We should be wary of overly deterministic interpretations of these effects. For one, the public is composed of active interpreters of crime news. It cannot be assumed that mere exposure to media portrayals of crime will suffice to influence their opinions (Allen et al., 1998). With regards to newspaper reports, crime news are only available to those who have access to newspapers, and to those who are literate (Surette, 1992). Furthermore, some studies have shown that "persons already more concerned and perhaps more knowledgeable become more attentive to newspaper crime news, rather than the other way around." (1992: 158)

Similarly, "research findings indicate that the media do influence, to various degrees, the agendas, perceptions, and policies of its consumers with regard to crime and justice, but not directly or simply." (Surette, 1992: 102) Although it is true that media messages "create an interpretive framework for thinking about solutions to the social problem of crime" (Pritchard & Hughes, 1997: 50), political processes are far too complex to posit a direct causal relationship between media and policy (Crtcher, 2002). Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that heavy media coverage of certain crimes has contributed to

changes in legislation in the past and that, whether directly or indirectly, media portrayals played a role in shifting public policy (Cricher, 2002; Doyle & Lacombe, 2003; Petrunik, 2003; Silverman & Wilson, 2002).

While it is not my objective to assess whether media portrayals impact on public attitudes and policy, it is important to consider that the media do not exist in a vacuum. For instance, “[t]he organizations and processes involved in newsmaking (...) contribute to, and are shaped by, a wider institutional and societal order.” (Ericson et al., 1987: 27) The media, as a social institution, play a broader role than those which we take for granted, namely to inform and to entertain. Their influence may be subtle and indirect, but the media play a role in shaping social reactions to reported phenomena. Conversely, the media teach us about these social reactions when we look at the socio-political context in which they exist. By studying media portrayals in their broader socio-political context, we are not only observing media representations and media processes, but also the level of social reaction any phenomenon might elicit.

Discursive practices on sexuality have increasingly become cognitively differentiated. In other words, both pure science and the mass media process information, but they do so as distinct social systems. Considering Luhmann’s contention that social discourse varies semantically according to which social system is “constructing reality”, studying media portrayals of a phenomenon enlightens us to the way the media serves to provide differential social discourses on a particular social phenomenon (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Luhmann, 2000). In sum, it is important and worthwhile to study the media because 1) media discourses are revealing of some the social reactions brought on by certain social phenomena; and because 2) the media may have particular discursive practices that differ from those of other social institutions. Studying media portrayals allows us to qualify how the media ‘talks’ about a phenomenon.

2.2.2 Crime News and the News Process

Crime has traditionally been the focus of much curiosity and attention. The media are no exception - they have reported on crime since the invention of the printing press (Surette, 1992). Today, crime news “remains a regular feature of both print and broadcast content” (Ericson et al., 1987: 44) and “is read consistently by a greater

percentage of subscribers than other types of news items.” (1992: 63). Given its sensational nature, crime news tends to distort social phenomena (1992), and to overemphasize the prevalence of crime (Ericson et al., 1987). Moreover, the rarest forms of crime (murder being the primary example) are most often reported (Surette, 1992). Thus, “crime news does not mirror crime and its control.” (Ericson et al., 1987: 45) For instance, contrary to empirical evidence, crime is reported as being increasingly traumatic and violent (Allen et al., 1998; O’Keefe & Reid-Nash, 1987; West, 2000) and pervasive (Allen et al., 1998).

The gap which exists between crime news and ‘reality’ can be partly explained by the concept of newsworthiness, or “criteria by which news producers choose which of all known events are to be presented to the public as news events.” (Surette, 1992: 56) Events or phenomena that are chosen over others possess certain qualities that stories which don’t ‘make the cut’ might lack. Factors associated with newsworthiness include: 1) the seriousness of an offence; 2) unusual or humorous circumstances; 3) dramatic or sentimental value; 4) the involvement of a person of high social status (Roshier, 1981: 46). Consonance, or “how an event ties in with prior news themes and accepted public images and explanations” also affects the value of a news story (Surette, 1992: 58). When sensational stories are the focus of crime news, “[t]he mass media provide citizens with a public awareness of crime, but this awareness is, at best, based upon an information-rich and knowledge-poor foundation.” (Sherizen, 1978: 204)

Other explanations for distorted images of crime and deviance involve what is referred to as the ‘news process’. The assignment of news items depends on a variety of factors aside from what the story consists of. These factors are weighed by several players involved in the creation of crime news. The way a story is reported depends on a reporter’s or editor’s manipulation of angles, space, and time. Furthermore, each assignment is highly subjective, as it involves establishing the credibility of a particular source, as well as evaluating the event itself as favourable or unfavourable, positive or negative, happy or sad, etc. Finally, each assignment is shaped by editorial changes (Ericson et al., 1987). Thus, crime news does not involve the simple reporting of events as they happen. Rather, individuals colour the way in which items are reported at each level of the news process. These individuals affect “the way in which particular types of

crimes (and criminals) are selected for publication out of the total pool of potentially reportable crime” (Roshier, 1981: 40).

The already sensational nature of crime news is compounded when juxtaposed to stories of child sex offending, which are, by their very nature, newsworthy. It might be expected that media portrayals of child sex offending be distorted. The subjectivity of the news process awards further support for this hypothesis. As previously mentioned, there often exists a gap between common ‘knowledge’ about sex offenders, which is highly stereotyped, and what is published in the literature. Individuals involved in the news process are seldom experts in the field of child sex offending. Given the sensitivity of the subject matter, stories might be manipulated in a way which resists competing discourses in favor of a normative view of child sex offending. Individual biases cannot be controlled for in the news process. As a result, individuals involved in the news process may contribute to the perpetuation of prevailing preconceptions and distorted images of the problematic.

2.2.3 Child Sex Offending in the Media

As previously mentioned, child sex offences, like most violent offences, are considered by media figures to be particularly newsworthy (Ericson et al., 1987; Greer, 2003; Jenkins, 1998; Kappeler et al., 1996). Given the importance attributed to children in Western society, it is not surprising that “[e]very week, the public encounters tales of unsuspecting children snatched from the playground by perverts” (Doyle & Lacombe, 2003: 291). Generally, child sex offending in the media is portrayed in a negative light (West, 2000). Negative media portrayals are often accounted for through a ‘moral panic’ framework, wherein “[a] condition, episode, person, or group of persons emerge to become defined as a threat to the societal values and (...) is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media.” (Cohen, 1972: 9)

For instance, archetypal descriptions of child sex offenders are often narrow, focusing on predatory strangers (Greer, 2003). Furthermore, extrafamilial offences tend to be reported more often than intrafamilial offences in the media: “[r]epresentations of the sexual abuse of children within the home are notable for their absence rather than their prevalence in media discourse.” (2003: 2) The media also tend to emphasize that child

sex offending indiscriminately “produces negative effects for all of its victims” (Rind et al., 1998: 22). Media representations tend to be pessimistic about the society’s ability to respond to the problem, and often highlight a “pervasive feeling of depression” about possible outcomes (Hacking, 1991: 257). Feelings of inaptitude are further fostered by continuous increases in the amount of journalistic coverage on sex crimes (Wacquant, 2001). Indeed, “[t]he media’s interest in (...) sex offenders (...) has increased exponentially over the last two decades despite fairly stable rates of sexual offenses. (Quinn et al., 2004: 221).

Notwithstanding the observations noted above, there exists little in the way of literature on child sex offending in the media in a Canadian context. While we know that media portrayals, generally, tend to 1) change over time; 2) be dichotomized or distorted; 3) have some relation to the level of social reaction towards different phenomena, little is known about the way the specific social problem of child sex offending is portrayed, save for a few case studies (Cricher, 2002; Greer, 2003; Silverman & Wilson, 2002). For this reason, I turned to a review of media coverage on child sex offending in the Canadian Francophone newspaper *La Presse* between 1988 to 2000. In this study, Lucie Quevillon observed certain trends which pertain to the present undertaking (2002).

Generally, child sex offending is declared to be a problem which is underreported, and one that is characterized primarily by its staggering prevalence. With the exception of a few articles, much of the coverage is punitive. Particular attention is afforded to the controversy surrounding the False Memory Syndrome, which “ha[s] its root in core Freudian beliefs about the power of infantile experiences connected with sexuality and the repression of memories in later life,” and which created quite a stir in the 1980s when various individual difficulties were associated with repressed (and later recovered) memories of child sexual abuse (Jenkins, 1998: 180). Furthermore, most articles were reported from the victim’s perspective rather from the perpetrator’s (Quevillon, 2002).

Most importantly, Quevillon’s study reveals that there were both quantitative and qualitative shifts in media portrayals of child sex offending between 1988 and 2000. Quantitatively, the number of articles reporting an episode of child sex offending increased in the 1990s, and decreased slightly in 2000. Qualitatively, media reports saw a shift in the language used to refer to perpetrators of child sex offending, as well as in

the relation of the perpetrator to his (perpetrators were all male) victim. For the most part, perpetrators were said to have known their victim prior to the offence, but were not linked by familial bond. However, a growing number of strangers were reported to have committed child sex offences in 2000, revealing a gradual shift towards conceptualizing perpetrators as unbeknownst to their victims, underlying a fear of 'stranger danger'. Also, a variety of responses were offered as solutions to the problem of child sex offending. The popularity of these suggested responses also shifted between 1988 and 2000. For instance, very few articles referred to treatment and rehabilitative alternatives in 2000, which further focused on criminal justice responses, compared to articles published in 1988 (Quevillon, 2002).

These findings confirm the idea that media portrayals of child sex offending change over time. In the following chapters, I will assess whether the content analysis of articles written in a Canadian Anglophone newspaper yields similar results. To do so, I will situate the emergence of divergent discourses in the *Globe and Mail* between 1970 and 2005. Before breaking this down any further, the following section will describe the foundation for the present undertaking.

2.3 Child Sex Offending as Construed by the Media

2.3.1 Social Constructionism

Social construction theory, or the *constructionist approach*, is grounded in the idea that social phenomena become defined as social *problems* by various groups or people (referred to as *claims-makers*), whose interests lie in the promotion of these problems as objects of concern (Best, 1990). In adopting a social constructionist perspective, theorists "radically shifted the focus of the sociology of social problems away from social conditions and onto the *process of collective definition or claims-making*" (Best, 1993: 132) (emphasis added). Rather than looking at social phenomena as empirically valid and taken-for-granted 'facts', social constructionists look at the processes through which these phenomena become problematized.

Critics of the strict constructionist approach suggest that the perspective is overly relative, edging towards analytic purity on the spectrum of knowledge-interpretation (Best, 1993). While the exercise of looking at a social problem as subjective is a

valuable analytical tool, some argue that certain conditions cannot be explained away as a mere construction. As Joel Best puts it, “[a] strict constructionist can no more assume that AIDS exists than to presume that there’s probably no large, satanic blood cult at work.” (1993: 137). To dismiss all social problems as subjective fictions of our imaginations could be detrimental, not to mention counterproductive in terms of research development. Social constructionism should be looked at as a method of analysis that allows one to explore claims-making and the emergence of social problems.

As Philip Jenkins asserts, “[a]lthough a constructionist might challenge the factual claims used to support a particular cause, he or she does not argue that the problem itself has no basis in reality.” (1998: 5) For example, David Garland argues that what constitutes ‘risk’ is socially constructed. However, he specifies that “[i]f people experience risks as real they are real in their consequences” (Beck, 1992 in Garland, 2003). Similarly, I contend that child sex offending is socially constructed. This by no means implies a minimization of the harms done to child victims. Coerced sexual activity cannot be reduced to subjective interpretation on the part of the person subjected to it. As we have seen, child victims often experience a wide range of adverse consequences in the aftermath of their victimization. Still, it remains that little was said about child sex offending prior to 1970, and that, from that point on, discourse on the problematic proliferated, was theorized, and resulted in a series of interventions that seek to address it. It is the process by which child sex offending has become defined as a problem that I seek to address.

When a social problem gains acceptance, claims-makers are said to have *ownership* of that problem (Best, 1990). Given the prominence of discourse on child sex offending at present, it is safe to assume that one or more groups of people have gained ownership of the problematic. To do so, claims-makers likely resorted to a variety of rhetorical exercises designed to promote and propagate the importance and urgency of the problem. Best (1990) identifies several such rhetorical devices in claims-making. The first consists of defining a problem so as to “mak[e] some issues relevant while relegating others out of bounds” (1990: 26). To do so, *domain statements* “call attention to a previously unacknowledged social problem.” (Ibid) Claims to novelty work to establish a problem as ‘real’ and as urgent, as it has never before been addressed (1990).

Estimates also work to promote social problems. Numbers are often cited to lend support for the importance of a problem. In this sense, “[t]he bigger the problem, the more attention it can be said to merit” (Best, 1990: 29). Best (1990) identifies three types of estimates: 1) *incidence estimates* are self-explanatory: claims-makers use them to estimate the extent of the problem. High incidences tend to signify that a problem is urgent and requires immediate attention; 2) *growth estimates* signal increases in the number of people affected by a social problem, or a ‘turn for the worse’ in terms of the problem’s dimension (1990); 3) *range claims* “sugges[t] that people may be indiscriminately affected, that the problem extends throughout the social structure.” (1990: 31).

Once initial claims are made, a social phenomenon will become problematized if others “validate the claims, giving attention to the problem, expressing concern about it, and establishing policies to deal with it.” (Best, 1990: 80). If claims-makers are successful in *validating* their rhetoric, they will have ownership of the problem. Finally, the social problem will continue to proliferate if the domain expands. *Domain expansion* allow the net of the problematic to widen, incorporating new, yet related phenomena, and developing the scope of the social problem (1990). For instance, child sex offending emerged as an ‘add-on’ to the broader problematic of child abuse and neglect, which took precedence in the Victorian era (Adler, 2001; Hacking, 1991).

Before a response to a social problem can expand, however, claims-makers often resort to the media to disseminate their message. As Best explains, “[b]y reporting claims, the press can bring an issue to general public attention, generating concern about the problem and support for the claimant’s cause.” (1990: 87) The media thus contribute to laying claims about social phenomena, and to validate their importance. For one, they report on the claims made by various groups and individuals, and, by the same token, propagate their rhetoric. Furthermore, they perpetuate the process of problematization by reporting other groups’ validation of the social problem. In fact, the mere appearance of a social problem in the media validates claims made about a social problem by deeming it ‘worthy’ of mediaticization. In light of this, we can hypothesize that the media play a vital role in constructing social problems.

2.3.2 The Paradigm of Simplification

Edgar Morin (1990) argues knowledge is constantly simplified into organized schemas of interpretation. In order to make sense of the complexities that surround us without becoming paralyzed with the wealth of information we must process at high speed, we tend to reduce information to its simplest form. Such is the premise of the *paradigm of simplification*. While this cognitive process is highly functional, it also tends to foster mutilated and incomplete pictures of any totality. Blind acceptance of partial knowledge further creates a disjunct between the holistic understanding, and the partial interpretation of a phenomenon. As a result, certain phenomena come to be viewed according to distorted and partial understandings. This can have adverse consequences when we attempt to address a phenomenon we do not fully understand. More specifically, partial and piecemeal understandings of phenomena lead to partial and piecemeal solutions (1990).

As we have seen, the media play a part in socially constructing social problems. Furthermore, we know that the media often distorts social problems by portraying them in a highly stylized fashion. By constructing social problems in a way that is distorted, and claiming the distorted imagery as fact, the media fuel the paradigm of simplification. With regards to child sex offending, perpetrators are often represented in a stereotypical fashion in the media. For instance, perpetrators of child sex offending might be referred to as 'monsters' (Jenkins, 1998). By focusing on the monstrosity of the individual's behaviour, the media ignore the holistic interpretation of the individual, who is bound to have some qualities, talents, and attributes that are worth taking into consideration. In doing so, the media paint a partial (and most often bleak) picture of the individual who commits sex offences towards children, and contribute to the perpetuation of stereotypes. In turn, these stereotypes hinder our ability to gain a better understanding of the problematic.

2.3.3 Focus of the Present Study

As we have seen, discursive practices on child sex offending are value-laden, and often elicit strong social reactions due to the sensitive nature of the topic and anxieties which are born of the rhetoric of several claims-makers. Despite research findings which could

work toward reducing the level of anxiety in relation to child sex offending, stereotypes and common assumptions prevail. My focus is on the dissemination of images of the problematic by the media, and how the media construe child sex offending.

In what follows, I will observe how an Anglo-Canadian newspaper portrays child sex offending so as to describe the way this particular medium ‘talks’ about sex offending committed against children. Considering that both discourse on child sex offending and media portrayals change over time, I will examine whether, and to what extent, media portrayals of child sex offending have shifted between 1970 and 2005. To do so, I will pay tribute to the social context in which media portrayals are constructed.

3.0 Methodology

My methodology entails a content analysis of child sexual offending as portrayed in a Canadian newspaper between 1970 and 2005. The goal is to describe and explore the nature of any shift that might have occurred in portrayals of sex offending against children in Canada and to locate the emergence of divergent discourses over time by situating them in different social and historical contexts. This contextualisation will be made possible through the study of newspaper articles at different epochs, as well as various works which study similar questions in diverse socio-historical settings.

The context in which a document is written is vital to understanding the factors which influenced authors to generate their statements or hypotheses, the conceptual framework of the document, and social reactions towards phenomena that are prevalent at the time when the document is written (Cellard, 1997). In the present case, the documents studied consist of newspapers, and the authors are journalists and editors, or readers (through the 'Letters to the editor' section). Context provides insight into the news process: the assignment of news items, how the assignment is reported, and which stories 'make the cut' (Ericson et al., 1987), as well as the social factors which shape, in part, readers' beliefs, perceptions, and interpretations of events.

It is important to keep in mind the context of each period that is looked at in order to situate the problematic of child sex offending in its respective timeframe, for, as Jenkins asserts, "[i]mages of the sex offender [and of sex offending] have changed dramatically and cyclically over time." (1998: 2) Thus, it is safe to assume that the manner in which they are represented also has shifted, and that representations or portrayals are shaped by the broader socio-historical context. It is this hypothesis which I have set out to examine.

3.1 Data Collection

My research begins in 1970, when child sex offending gained prominence as an object of criminological inquiry (Kinnear, 1995; Robets & Pires, 1992). Child sex offending is 'discovered' at this time, not only by academics, but also by 'experts' in various fields, and by the media (Adler, 2001; Best, 1990; Guillebaud, 1998; Hacking, 1991). For these

reasons, 1970 stands out as a pivotal year for the present study, as it marks the beginning of contemporary social reactions towards child sex offending as a public issue. In contrast, 2005 was chosen to represent a recent snapshot of such social reactions represented in the Canadian media. In order to look at the thirty five years that separate 1970 and 2005, samples were chosen at intervals of seven years, for reasons which will be identified below. Thus, the following years were examined: 1970, 1977, 1984, 1991, 1998, and 2005.

The mid-nineteen eighties and late-nineteen nineties are identified in the literature as prominent years for media reports of child sex offending (Jenkins, 1998). While we see, in the mid-eighties, following the publication of the Badgley report (1984), the widespread acknowledgment of sex acts against children as a social problem, the 1990s are characterized by “anguished, lurid media reports” (Adler, 2001: 227) of cases that received vast coverage: Sarah Payne’s death marked an increase in coverage of child sexual abuse in the U.K. (Crticher, 2002), *l’affaire Dutroux* revolutionized media coverage of child sex offending for Belgium (Guillebaud, 1998), and in Canada, the Bernardo case received extensive coverage at this time (Gaucher & Elliott, 2001). Notwithstanding the year 1970, the importance of which has already been qualified, 1984 and 1998 are years of particular interest to this study, given the considerations mentioned above.

Fourteen year intervals are somewhat lengthy when attempting to assess whether there has been a shift in media portrayals over time. Within a timeframe of fourteen years, media portrayals might shift in one direction, then another, without being registered via the data collected. Seven-year intervals were used to compensate for this potential pitfall. The years 1977, 1991, and 2005 were included in the analysis as benchmarks, allowing me to better orient the present investigation and appreciate socio-historical events which might shape the manner in which child sex offences are portrayed. Articles for 1970, 1984, and 1998, our focal years, were collected beforehand and were used as indicators of the types of narratives which dominated media discourses in each period. Those of 1977, 1991, and 2005 followed suit.

Samples collected for each year were irregular. In 1970, very little was written in the *Globe and Mail* regarding child sex offending – so little, in fact, that I had to include

newspaper articles for the entire year. Merely using a sample of that year would have been insufficient, both in terms of the number of articles collected and the generalisability of the data. The following year that was studied (i.e. 1984) generated far more data. I initially set out to sample by method of saturation, or “the point at which no new information or themes are observed in the data,” (Guest et al., 2006: 59). I realized, however, that while saturation samples are practical, they provide “little guidance for estimating sample sizes, prior to data collection, necessary for conducting quality research.” (Guest et al., 2006: 59).

I opted instead to use an opportunistic sample of six months (beginning of January to the end of June) for the remaining focal years, 1984 and 1998, and of three months (beginning of January to the end of March) for benchmark years: 1977, 1991, and 2005. Notwithstanding articles collected for 1970, saturation was attained before all other samples were complete. Admittedly, there may have been noteworthy cases of child sex offending that I excluded from my analysis if they occurred outside the periods that were studied and included in my samples. Articles collected within samples should be regarded as indicators, or snapshots of what is going on at the time they were reported, rather than parts of a representative sample.

Newspapers were chosen as the medium of study, as crime news make up a large proportion of their content (Surette, 1992). Furthermore, “[n]ewspapers (...) are implicated in and reflect the products of larger socio-historical patterns” (Hackett, 1988: 83), which are central to the present undertaking, as mentioned earlier. Arguably, all newspapers, like other forms of mass media, are sensational. However, distinctions are made between ‘popular’ press, which put further emphasis on engaging readers’ emotions, and ‘quality’ press, which report on stories in a style that is far more factual (Schlesinger & Tumber, 1994).

In 1981, the Royal Commission on Newspapers deemed the *Globe and Mail* one of four national Canadian newspapers, along with *Le Devoir*, the *Toronto Star*, and *La Presse*. While the *Toronto Star* and *La Presse* were categorized as ‘popular’ press, the *Globe and Mail* and *Le Devoir* were considered ‘quality’ press (Canada, 1981). In order to study media representations of child sex offending in an Anglophone Canadian

newspaper of national scope, I chose to use the Globe and Mail as my source for documentation.

With regards to the actual data collection, I was faced with a couple of choices. I could search for articles through a computerized database and search engine, such as that of the *Canadian Periodical Index* online (CPI.Q), or search the archives for newspapers. While the former option would likely have been less time-consuming, it was also problematic on a number of levels. First, very few computerized databases keep records of newspaper articles that date back to 1970. Second, computerized databases vary in terms of the newspapers they carry, which limited my choice of database, given my decision to use the Globe and Mail to collect data. Furthermore, certain databases, such as CPI.Q, carry only selected sections of the Globe and Mail, and not the collection in its entirety.

Finally, the use of search words is problematic, as it limits results to those yielded by a particular choice of words, which may or may not be representative of the articles that are written on child sex offending, especially considering that the nature of discourse on child sex offending varies over time (Jenkins, 1998; Roberts & Pires, 1992). One's choice of words may also be influenced by prior preconceptions of the problematic. Choosing to look at the words "child sex offender" as opposed to "defiler" or "predator" is telling, but only in respect to the researcher's anticipated results. Search words further complicate matters by widening the scope of the search itself. For instance, searching the word 'monster' (used here to refer to a child sex offender) might result in finding advertisements about 'monster trucks' or a 'monster garage sale'.

For these reasons, I looked at archived copies of the Globe and Mail on microfilm at the University of Ottawa library. In so doing, I was able to look at all articles that dealt with child sex offending in the Globe and Mail for the periods I set out to study, and to bypass complications related to search words and databases. I proceeded to look at every article in each section of the Globe and Mail for 12 months in 1970; 3 months in 1977; 6 months in 1984; 3 months in 1991; 6 months in 1998; and 3 months in 2005. Each section of the newspaper was important to review, to account for any shifts in the context in which child sex offending are portrayed. For instance, the childhood victimization of athletes may be reported at certain periods (appearing in the sports section of the

newspaper), and not others. Taking into account the section of the newspaper in which the article was reported and comparing them between periods studied allowed me to better trace these shifts.

It is important to mention that the method I chose to adopt to collect my data, albeit thorough, leaves room for human error. Researching newspaper articles on microfilm is a lengthy and meticulous process. That said, it is possible that I may have missed a few relevant articles because of fatigue or brief lapses of attention. To avoid missing any articles, I put my research on hold at the first signs of growing weary, and took it up again when I felt rested. Though this may have further lengthened the process, I am confident that, if any articles were missed, these lapses were exceptional.

Each article that was relevant was photocopied and numbered. Names of authors, dates of reporting, pages and sections were noted at this time. This information would later be transcribed to my data collection sheet (**Figure 3.0 A** on the next page). Method of pagination differed within sampled years of study. In 1970, 1977, and 1984, pages were simply identified by Arabic numbers, as were sections. Furthermore, page numbers increased gradually, and followed suit for every section of the newspaper. For example, an article in the entertainment section might be labelled 'p.25, section 3'. In contrast, page numbers in 1991, 1998, and 2005 are preceded by a letter, which indicates the section in which the article figures, and each section's first page was numbered '1'. So, the first page of the business section would be 'B1', rather than 'p.17, section 2'. Furthermore, certain sections present in one year may be excluded from the newspaper in another. The women's section, for instance, is present in 1970, but no longer appears any time afterwards. While these inconsistencies affect in no way the findings or analysis, they are nonetheless important to acknowledge as a point of reference.

Figure 3.1 A

Data Collection Sheet

No. _____

Title article: _____

Author: _____ Date: _____

Type article: _____ Length: _____

Themes: _____ Page: _____

Focus: V____ P____ CJS____ Other: _____

Portrayal: Pos. _____ Neg. _____

Qualifiers/Quotes:

[illegible]

The length of the articles collected was also noted on the data collection sheet, although it was not taken into account in my final analysis, much like the type of article (editorial, letter to the editor, etc.). Also included in the data collection sheet were the focus of the article (on the victim, perpetrator, criminal justice system, or other), and whether this focus was portrayed in a positive or negative light. These last factors mainly served the purpose of jogging my memory as to the contents of the article, come the time of analyzing the amalgamation of data collected.

The 'qualifiers/quotes' section of the data collection sheet enabled me to jot down noteworthy information about the article collected, as well as useful quotes for analysis. Once all articles were collected and reviewed, five themes were identified: child prostitution, child pornography/obscenity, child sexual abuse, wrongful accusations/convictions, and age of consent offences. We will revisit these themes at a later time, but for now, suffice it to say that each article was assigned a theme, in accordance with its subject matter, which was also written on the data collection sheet. When there was overlap, and two or three themes were mentioned in an article, all themes covered were written on the sheet. Upon review, one theme was chosen over others as the 'main' theme for each article.

In order to track major socio-historical trends for each time period, I made lists of recurring storylines and important events that occurred and were recorded in the *Globe and Mail* during the periods that were studied. Furthermore, I based much of my analysis on readings which situated the problematic in time, through a historical lens. Both of these methods were useful to understand the way child sex offending was portrayed at different times.

3.2 Data Analysis

Relevant articles were chosen on the basis of their content. Any article that discussed, or alluded to, acts of a sexual nature between adults and persons of less than 18 years of age, even if it did not make mention of child sexual offending *per se*, was collected. Overall, 609 articles were collected. Of these, 20 articles were excluded from the final analysis because they did not touch on child sex offending directly. For example, one article reviewed a theatrical piece which did not address the issue of child sex offending

directly, but featured a brief scene about the sexual abuse of a child¹. While this article was initially collected, it was, upon secondary review, discarded as irrelevant to this research and excluded from the sample.

As we will see in a later chapter, 26 more articles were excluded from the final analysis because they reported on a case that involved a celebrity who, by his sensational nature, attracts copious amounts of publicity and reporting. Since the amount of news reporting given to this case is more likely related to this individual's social status, rather than the problematic itself, and because the case is rather innocuous, all 26 articles were excluded. Given that these articles were all recorded under the same analytical theme for 2005, their exclusion meant I could avoid skewing the results for that year's sample.

Given the volume of articles collected and length and time restrictions imposed, it would be impossible to cite every article amassed. Instead, I took note of sub-themes that emerged from the data, and will be referring to these sub-themes when describing my findings. Whenever possible, I made direct reference to articles which best represented the sub-themes and broader trends identified, and tried to include as many of these articles as possible. References for these articles were inserted in the text as footnotes, both to allow readers to locate the articles in the newspaper (page number, section) and in the broader socio-historical context (date), as well as to direct readers' attention to the titles of said-articles.

The importance of the titles of newspaper articles is twofold. First, when looked at in retrospect, they often confer up comical elements, and can be highly entertaining. These titles strike parallels with Michel Foucault's *discourses that make one laugh*, which "not only rais[e] questions but also caus[e] laughter" (2003: 6). Second, article titles are often telling – they do much to enlighten the reader about social reactions to particular phenomena. Take the following two examples: written in 1970, one article entitled "U.S. commission on pornography. Sex material not corrupting young: report"² contrasts sharply with "Ending the evil influence of porn"³, written in 1991, roughly twenty

¹ Lacey, L. "Stripping away the sunny masks of domesticity". *Globe and Mail*, Thursday Mar. 7, 1991: p.C3.

² A.P. *Globe and Mail*, Thursday Aug. 6, 1970: p.3, Women's section.

³ Skelton, J. "Ending the evil influence of porn". *Globe and Mail*, Monday Jan. 14, 1991: p.A14.

years later. While the former title gives the impression that pornography does not negatively influence youths exposed to it, the latter suggests the opposite idea. This demonstrates that a similar theme can, within two distinct moments in time, be viewed differently, even oppositely.

Thus, article titles often reflect the level of social reaction towards child sex offending within their respective socio-historical context. Rather than looking at newspaper articles in their entirety, I could, alternatively, have looked at newspaper headlines alone, which I am certain would also have generated an interesting discussion. However, I chose instead to look beyond the article titles and to take into account elements revealed within the article itself in my analysis and discussion of findings, as titles can sometimes be misleading, or insufficient in providing adequate material for analysis.

Offender occupation was taken into account in chapter four by means of tracking a qualitative shift in media portrayals. The importance of perpetrator occupation is best exemplified by what has become the icon of the paedophile priest (Loseke, 2003). That said, articles which characterized offenders primarily by their occupation were counted and compiled by occupation type. I did not discern those articles that mentioned separate incidents from those which recounted the same incident. In other words, I did not specify whether an occupation was mentioned in, say, 18 different cases, or whether one same incident, and its perpetrator's occupation, was mentioned 18 different times. In either case, the end result is the same: the perpetrator and his or her occupation appear in the *Globe and Mail* 18 times.

The following two chapters will impart a discussion of the findings and research results of the project that has been outlined in the last few pages. Research findings will be presented chronologically, in order to afford readers with an in-depth comprehension of the problematic at different times, and to provide some context as to the time at which articles were written, both politically and culturally. The analysis of these findings, conversely, will be presented thematically. Looking at each theme separately will allow for a comprehensive review of changes in the manner in which each theme was portrayed over time.

4.0 Statistical Breakdown and Classification of Data by Year

Before attempting to understand the evolution of the content of media portrayals of child sexual offending in Canada, it is important to establish whether there has been a quantitative change in the representation of these offences over time. As previously mentioned, the 1970s saw the emergence of child sexual abuse as a social problem distinct from the larger category of child maltreatment. At this early stage, there were only an average of 3.2 articles per month that dealt with child sexual abuse in the *Globe and Mail*. Had I begun my analysis prior to the 1970s, I would perhaps have discovered an almost complete absence in articles that relate to sex offending against children, to the exception of occasional references to “child molesters”⁴ in discussions of the broader issue of ‘sex criminality’ (Callwood, 1953; Katz, 1947).

Table 4.0 A

Number of Articles Collected and Extrapolation by Year

	1970	1977	1984	1991	1998	2005	Total
Actual Number of Articles Collected	38	22	112	70	238	110/ 84	564
Average Number of Articles (Monthly)	3.2	7.3	18.7	23.3	39.7	36.7/ 28	120.2
Percentage of Articles Collected	2.5%	5.7%	14.5%	18.1%	30.8%	28.5%	100%

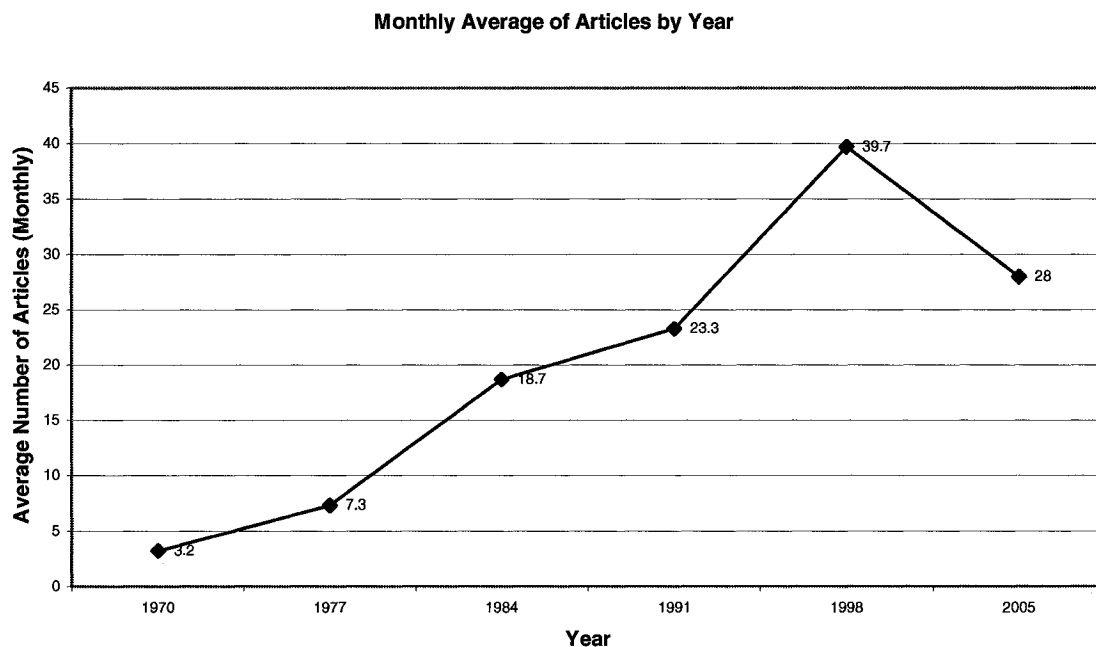
The first line of **Table 4.0 A** outlines the number of articles collected for each time frame in actual numbers. Since each year’s sample is made up of an uneven number of months, this first line affords very little information with which to compare one year’s data collection with another’s. Thus, for comparative purposes, the second line extrapolates an average number of articles by month. In 2005, 110 articles were collected. As we will see in **section 4.6**, however, 26 of those articles were related to a case which received extensive media coverage, not because of the nature of the problematic, but because of the status of the celebrity involved. To avoid skewing the variables, this case

⁴ A Canadian periodical index search reveals that the first report of “child molestation” dates back to March 19, 1955 in the *Toronto Star* (Anonymous, “Fled Burwash twice nab man in Buffalo”).

will not be included in the present analysis. The actual and average number of articles collected for 2005, excluding this particular case, are outlined in bold in **Table 4.0 A**.

As this table demonstrates, little is written on child sex offending in 1970. In 1977, articles written about the problematic increased significantly. Despite indications in the literature that 1977 marks a turning point for press coverage of child sex offending, the Globe and Mail witnessed explosions in newspaper coverage of the matter in 1984, and again in 1998. As shown in **Figure 4.0 A** (below), reports of child sexual offending increased steadily after 1970. Notwithstanding a spurt in the 1990s, it is practically possible to trace a positive linear relationship between the year of article reporting and the average number of articles written per month from 1970 to 2005. After peaking in 1998, newspaper coverage on child sex offending witnessed a decline. Time will tell whether this decline will continue.

Figure 4.0 A



The data mentioned above confirms that representations of child sexual victimization 1) have grown since the 1970s (Hacking, 1991; Pratt, 2005); 2) have increased with the identification in the 1990s of a “rising epidemic” of child sexual abuse (Adler, 2001:209),

peaking in the late 1990s; and 3) have decreased slightly at the onset of the 21st century. As such, there can be no doubt, media portrayals of child sex offending, as represented in the *Globe and Mail*, have increased since 1970. In the following, we will take a closer look at this evolution, and attempt to identify and characterize its nature and any shifts.

Five main themes have emerged in the data: 1) child prostitution; 2) child obscenity/pornography; 3) child sexual abuse; 4) age of consent, and 5) wrongful accusations/convictions. Each theme relates to a type, or absence of, deviant sexual act against children addressed in a given newspaper article. Before describing each of these categories, the reader should note that each theme is very broad and encompasses a large number of behaviours. This makes it difficult to define or categorize any specific article. Moreover, articles often refer to more than one type of sexually deviant act. For each article, the most prominent theme was picked as the primary basis of classification. Sex crimes often encompass a wide range of overlapping deviant behaviours, and can best be understood as existing on a continuum (Itzin, 2001). Similarly, these classifications are somewhat fluid, and there is overlap in the categories.

4.0.1 Child Prostitution

The types of deviant sexual acts included under the theme 'prostitution' are wide-ranging. For the purpose of this analysis, both child and adolescent involvement in sex work for pay were assigned to this category. Motives for engaging in child prostitution fit one of three categories outlined by Alan Brown (1999): 1) prostitution as exploitation, where unequal power relations set the stage for the objectification of children through purchase; 2) prostitution as labour, which pushes the issues of agency and consent to the forefront of the prostitution debate; and 3) prostitution as an exchange of commodity, as a means of survival (1999). In each category, child prostitution is seen as criminal. Similarly, in the articles surveyed, all articles that dealt with child prostitution saw it as a crime. The articles surveyed in the *Globe and Mail* report both on cases of direct paid encounters, when transactions were completed by 'Johns' and their child victims, and on those involving a broker or procurer, within the context of child trafficking and sex tourism.

4.0.2 Child Pornography / Obscenity

Two types of articles are identified as relating to the theme of pornography/obscenity. Any article that reports on the sexual exploitation of children in visual material falls into this category. The concerns identified within this first type of article were twofold. First, a number of articles focus on the consumption of child pornography by adults, outlining the moral and criminal wrongdoing against children. A second concern is that of the moral corruption of children exposed to pornography, and the idea that children's innocence could be endangered if they become observers of 'immoral' sexuality between two persons, whether in the context of sexual abuse, or not. While I excluded fantasies from my definition of sexual offending against children for this study, many articles refer to child pornography as an enabling mechanism for an abusive act. This notion goes hand-in-hand with the recognition by legal authorities that "child pornography [is] not merely the product, but also the cause of abuse." (Adler, 2001:216)

Articles that relate to the theme of obscenity were not as simple to categorize. Many articles, particularly in the 1970s, report on artistic materials (movies, paintings, musicals, plays) considered by some at the time to be obscene. While some of these articles are critical of 'morality squads' using the law to infringe on free speech rights, others simply report on the obscene nature of certain materials. For instance, the film adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* in the 1990s created quite a stir. Sometimes, articles and their authors are condemned for exposing the public to obscene material – for example, a picture, or a reference to an 'immoral' topic relating to children in some way. In sum, the theme of obscenity applies both when an article is considered obscene, as well as when obscenity is the topic of an article.

4.0.3 Child Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse encompasses a wide range of deviant sexual behaviours. Articles that report on intra-familial or extra-familial abuse, incest, solicitation or invitation to sexual touching, digital or penile penetration, masturbation, oral sex, and any other type of coerced sexual relation between adults and children under the age of 18 years, as well as references to sexual offending, sexual abuse, sexual aggression, sex killings, and paedophilia are included under this category. Terms used prior to the changes brought

about by the 1978 Law Reform Commission and the 1983 Criminal Code reform (Bill C-127) such as 'indecent assault' and 'rape of a minor' are also included under this theme. Despite the breadth in definition of child sexual abuse, the reader should be cautioned not to consider this theme as a default category in which articles that did not fit precisely were 'dumped'.

4.0.4 Wrongful Accusations / Convictions

So far, the themes that were identified related to certain types of deviant sexual acts. However, a number of the articles collected focus rather on the absence of a deviant sexual act. As such, our fourth theme relates to wrongful accusations and convictions. Wrongful accusations occur when an alleged victim accuses an individual of committing a deviant sexual act, but the accusation fails to be substantiated, at least in a legal sense. A wrongful conviction, on the other hand, occurs when an innocent individual is convicted of a crime they did not commit. Much of the discussion related to wrongful accusations and convictions has to do with the discovery, and the subsequent retraction, of the so-called Recovered Memory Syndrome.

4.0.5 Age of Consent

The concept of consent, intricately related to that of agency, has been the focus of many debates concerning child sexual offending. Much like our last theme, consent and agency focus on the absence of deviant or criminal sexual acts. More specifically, this category groups behaviours that could be interpreted as abuse, but that are not, in light of the child's apparent consent to engaging in what would normally be considered a deviant sexual act. For the most part, Globe and Mail articles portray children involved in deviant sex acts as coerced victims. There are, however, a few notable exceptions. First, a few articles reporting on the arts make mention of the fact that the books, theatrical pieces, or movies they are reviewing fail to identify abusive sexual relationships between children and adults as such. Furthermore, reports of underage boys involved in sexual relations with adult women often question the notions of consent and agency that are taken for granted with regards to underage girls engaged in similar relations.

It is useful to adopt a thematic approach to understand how media portrayals have evolved. Different themes have been the subject of concern at various times. We will revisit this thematic approach at a later time. At present, however, we will conceptualize the shift in portrayals of child sex offending in the media in a different way – through a comparative analysis of representations of the problematic by year of reporting. In the following, I will trace the evolution of media portrayals at different points in time, situating the problematic within diverse socio-political contexts. For each time frame, the themes that were identified above will be examined through a quantitative lens. Given the length and time restrictions imposed for the purpose of the present undertaking, I will limit myself to general observations about each theme, rather than attempting a precise quantitative description. This exercise is crucial to making more specific observations about the shift in the nature of portrayals of child sex offending over time.

4.1 Portrayals of Child Sexual Offending in 1970

The 1970s are of particular interest to the study of child sex offending. For one, it is at this time that the problematic is first ‘discovered’ and theorized (Adler, 2001; Guillebaud, 1998). Furthermore, the early 1970s are characterized by a dichotomized discourse with regards to child sex offending. While ‘experts’ begin excavating the problematic of sex acts against children and becoming vocal about their harmful impacts, paradoxically, criminal justice officials are sympathetic towards those accused of acts deemed at this time to be “victimless” (Jenkins, 1998).

For comparative purposes, the number of articles collected for each year was estimated based on my saturated sample. Thus, for 1970, the number of articles stays the same, as articles were collected for twelve months of that year; in 1977, 1991, and 2005, the number of articles was multiplied by four, as they were collected over a period of three months; in 1984 and 2005, articles were collected over six months, and thus their number was multiplied by two. When comparing themes that come up within each year, as will be the case later on in this chapter, we will refer once more to ‘actual’ numbers, as opposed to representative samples.

In 1970, 38 articles were collected, which translates into 2.5% of all articles included the present analysis. As indicated in **Table 4.0 A**, the least amount of articles was collected

in 1970. Furthermore, the theme of pornography/obscenity was most prevalent during this year, closely followed by that of sexual abuse (**Fig. 4.0 A**).

4.1.1 Child Prostitution

In 1970, only 2 articles dealt with child prostitution, representing 5.3% of all articles collected for that year (**Tab. 4.1 A**). Remember, the following numbers depict the actual numbers of articles collected on each theme within the year 1970.

Table 4.1 A

Number of Articles by Theme in 1970

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Prost.</i>	<i>Porn/Obsc</i>	<i>Sexual Abuse</i>	<i>Wrongful Acc./Conv</i>	<i>Age of Consent</i>	<i>Total</i>
Articles (Yearly)	2	15	14	6	1	38
Percentage	5.3%	39.5%	36.8%	15.8%	2.6%	100%

Thus, it appears that child prostitution was not a major object of concern for the Globe and Mail in 1970. Two hypotheses emerge. First, we could assume that child prostitution was not common enough to make headlines, in other words, that it was, in 1970, a rare occurrence. Contrary to this hypothesis, Best (1990) argues that while child prostitution occurred well before the 1970s, “nineteenth-century campaigns to save prostitutes paid little attention to the women’s ages (...). In contrast, age became an important issue in 1970, when some feminists called for decriminalizing adult prostitution” (73). It appears that child prostitution is a longstanding practice, but it was transformed from social phenomenon to social problem in the 1970s.

A second hypothesis emerges: child prostitution in 1970 was not a major preoccupation because it was not yet deemed to be problematic, and thus little of the issue was reported in the news media. Our second hypothesis concords with Jenkins’ assertion that “underage sex operations exposed in the 1970s employed young people who were participating of their own volition, so there was no question of child abduction or

coercion.” (1998: 154) Youths who engaged in the sex trade were believed to be, in the early 1970s, free agents. Because agency is antithetical to the notion of exploitation, child prostitutes were not considered ‘victims’, and child prostitution was tolerated to a great extent.

Both articles collected for the year 1970 go hand in hand with the latter hypothesis. The first, “Unmarried girls face problems in Thomson”⁵ reports on young unwed women’s dependence on prostitution to support themselves. This article is predicated upon the framing of child prostitution as means of survival, whereby children choose (albeit a limited choice) to engage in prostitution to meet their needs. Child prostitutes are portrayed as capable of choosing to do sex work, as opposed to drug trafficking, for instance.

The second article collected for 1970 that deals with child prostitution is entitled “12-year-olds soliciting men, parents warned”⁶. As the title would suggest, child prostitutes are believed to initiate sexual encounters with adults for pay, a belief that is quite paradoxical to that which is assumed today. Ironically, this particular article appears to warn parents of the dangers of having their children soliciting adults for sex, or even of having children soliciting them for sex, rather than the current prevailing message of warning against sexual predators. In this example, children are portrayed as sexual predators, not prey.

4.1.2 Child Pornography / Obscenity

Child pornography/obscenity is the theme that appears most frequently in 1970: 15 articles were collected for that year, (39.8% of all collected articles for 1970) (**Tab. 4.1 A**). Child pornography incorporates two sub-sets of the problematic, namely the production of child pornography, and the consumption, or exposition to pornography by children. In 1970, reporters seem less concerned with the exploitation of children through the production of child pornography than about the potential for consumers exposed to this type of stimuli to sexually offend against children. As Doyle and

⁵ C.P. “Unmarried girls face problems in Thomson”. G&M, Tuesday Jan. 20, 1970: p.10, section 1.

⁶ Reuter. “12-year-olds soliciting men, parents warned”. G&M, Tuesday Dec. 15, 1970: p.11, section 1.

Lacombe explain, child pornography is often understood to have a grasp on its viewer, an “awesome power”, whereby “those who read pornography automatically act on their fantasies.” (2003: 300) As one article reports, “there will be no stopping these sex offenders. This filth is stimulating to them.”⁷

In contrast, the consumption of pornography by children is not portrayed as being problematic in 1970. Although claims that pornography can lead to the moral corruption of youth were then entertained, these claims were, by and large, dismissed as unfounded⁸. Debates surrounding the potential adverse effects of child pornography at this time stem from the availability in North America of pornographic materials involving children, much of which was imported from Europe, especially the Netherlands (Jenkins, 1998). Contradictions abound within the discourse: while some argue that pornographic imagery of children can only lead to devastation, others embrace the liberation from repressive sexual mores within the arts.

This schism is recaptured in discussions of obscenity. In 1970, various films, books, theatrical productions, and artistic displays portraying incestuous affairs and inappropriate sexual relationships set the stage for further debates. Many of these were thought by critics to portray child sex offending overly lightly. In his review of a theatrical piece, one author remarks: “Incest is hard to make very funny, but by avoiding any sense of a society that might reject it, [the director] has been able to do this.”⁹

Articles that relate to the theme of obscenity in 1970 hence follow two frames of thought. First, a number of articles denounce the immoral nature of obscene materials: “I expect of the society in which I live and to whose wellbeing I contribute, to keep this filth away from me.”¹⁰ Furthermore, many articles report on the ‘crackdown’ on obscenity led by a taskforce identified as the ‘Morality Squad’¹¹. In a few cases, appeal court judges went

⁷ A.P. “U.S. Senate rejects pornography report as repulsive, ‘marshmallow-headed thinking’”. G&M, Wednesday Oct. 14, 1970: p.4, section 1.

⁸ A.P. “U.S. commission on pornography. Sex material not corrupting young: Report”. G&M, Thursday Aug. 6, 1970: p.3, Women’s section.

⁹ Whittaker, H. “Creative forces at work on World Theatre Day – and a welter of sadism, incest, blood and laughs”. G&M, Friday Mar. 27, 1970: p.19, section 1.

¹⁰ Hildebrandt, C. “Sex”. G&M, Wednesday, Nov. 18, 1970: p.6, section 1.

¹¹ Reuters. “Film obscene, producer fined”. G&M, Saturday Jan. 31, 1970.

as far as to attend the performances of various musical productions to assess the legitimacy of their appeals against designations of obscenity¹².

However, a number of articles report on obscene artistic materials in a positive manner, celebrating them for their genius, their ability to make a serious matter laughable, to entertain, to inform: "Perverse though it may seem, sex films have proved to be a great educational bonanza – showing how dull, how undirty, sex can be."¹³ Articles framed in this light are critical of repressive tactics utilized by the 'Morality Squad' to quash artistic expressions of sexual diversity and liberation. In sum, the divergent discourses that surround the theme of child pornography/obscenity support Kitzinger's assertion that the media are "a forum for public debate." (1999: 220)

4.1.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is the second most prominent theme addressed in the *Globe and Mail* in 1970: there were 14 articles on sexual abuse, representing 36.9% of the articles for 1970 (**Tab. 4.1 A**). These statistics correspond with the growing concern for child sex offending emphasized in the literature. Indeed, numerous authors purport that child sexual abuse was 'discovered' in 1970 (Adler, 2001; Best, 1990; Guillebaud, 1998). Moreover, Hacking (1991) observes a proliferation of literature on child sexual abuse at this time. Still, there is very little coverage of child sexual abuse in the media in 1970: there are only 14 articles that address the problematic over a period of twelve months.

All 14 articles collected and classified under this theme report on extrafamilial sexual abuse. The predatory imagery conveyed in the print media in 1970 goes hand in hand with notions of 'stranger danger' that date back to the 1950s, when "few doubted that the problem was one of outsiders" (Jenkins, 1998: 13). Although incestual relations are acknowledged, and indeed widely represented in the arts, sexual abuses perpetrated by individuals outside the family seem to form the core of social anxieties in 1970, as

¹² Anonymous. "Court held in theatre for obscenity charge". *G&M*, Friday Feb. 27, 1970: pg.5, section 1. See also: Anonymous. "Judge visits Hair in hearing appeal on Futz". *G&M*, Friday Mar. 13, 1970: p.12, section 1.

¹³ Anonymous. "Sexual escalation on film: What to do now?". *G&M*, Saturday Apr. 25, 1970: p.25, section 3.

represented in the media. Reports of the “Capture of the Chicago killer-rapist”¹⁴ and of the “killer in ‘Red Riding Hood’ case”¹⁵ portray brutal and violent predatory behaviour, supporting the notion that “the rhetoric of media (...) have merged the imagery of pedophilia with that of violent sexual predation.” (Quinn et al., 2004: 216) What is more, these articles fail to mention that such violent extremes are exceptionally rare (Plummer, 1981; West, 2000).

Herein lies the contradiction: one would expect, given the nature of these depictions, that punitive criminal justice responses would be widely advocated. On the contrary, articles that address criminal justice responses depict parliamentary efforts to maintain bail alternatives¹⁶, and diagnostic and treatment centres that specialize in sexual deviance¹⁷.

4.1.4 Wrongful Accusations/Convictions

In 1970, 6 articles (15.8%) were related to the theme of wrongful accusations and convictions (**Tab. 4.1 A**). Of those 6 articles, 5 reported and followed-up on the same story. Both stories presented in 1970 were those of individuals wrongfully accused. There were no reports of wrongfully convicted persons for charges of child sex offending in 1970.

Both stories emphasize the injustices faced by those accused of child sex offending. The first story, which tells the tale of a man acquitted on charges of incest and indecent assault, focuses on injustices suffered at the community level: financial loss, loss of employment, and of reputation. As put forward by the Supreme Court judge, “the case ‘demonstrated how a man’s life can be ruined by prejudicial testimony.’”¹⁸ Moreover, this statement is indicative of dissatisfaction with criminal justice proceedings. As later stories would suggest it, this case created such a stir that the man who was falsely

¹⁴ A.P. “Capture of Chicago killer-rapist depends on survival of cut victim”. G&M, Saturday July 18, 1970: p.2, section 1.

¹⁵ Reuter. “Police seek girl’s killer in ‘Red Riding Hood’ case”. G&M, Monday Dec. 28, 1970: p.8, section 1.

¹⁶ Anonymous. “York County grand jury. Alternative to bail suggested in sex crime”. G&M, Wednesday Nov. 11, 1970: p.5, section 1.

¹⁷ Kirkwood, L. “Diagnostic centre urged. Official suggests new system to reform criminals”. G&M, Saturday Nov. 21, 1970: p.31, section 3.

¹⁸ C.P. “Film censor is acquitted in Edmonton”. G&M, Thursday July 23, 1970: p.2, section 1.

accused later received financial compensation¹⁹ and was given a new job as a film critic for the CBC²⁰.

The second story focuses on injustices faced by one man in his encounter with the criminal justice system. This time, the problem lies with faulty forensics evidence, which is viewed with much scepticism. The potential iatrogenic effects of using forensic evidence are emphasized by the Counsel for the accused, who describes this margin of error as “frightening beyond description.”²¹ Both stories are critical of the criminal justice system, and hint at two distinct sets of consequences felt by those wrongfully accused in the aftermath of those accusations.

4.1.5 Age of Consent

Only one article (2.6%) was related to the age of consent in 1970 (**Tab. 4.1 A**). This article is a summary of a movie entitled *Age of Consent*, which depicts the “tenderness of sexual awakening”²², and although it does not feature a discussion of the age of consent *per se*, it was included in the present analysis only because it assumes that the young girl (described as a “nymph”) portrayed in the film is sufficiently mature to consent to being painted in the nude by an adult for money. More specifically, the reference made by the author to a “luscious girl-child who’s ready for love”²³ is a clear indicator of his lack of concern for the notion of enlightened consent.

4.2 Portrayals of Child Sexual Offending in 1977

Articles were collected for a period of three months in 1977. Overall, 22 article were collected, estimated to represent 88 articles for an entire year, and 5.7% of the overall sample of articles collected by year (**Tab. 4.0 A**). Sexual abuse stands out as the only

¹⁹ C.P. “Suspended Alberta film censor takes \$12,420 settlement, quits”. G&M, Saturday Sept. 19, 1970: p.3, section 1.

²⁰ C.P. “Now CBC film critic. Suspended censor subject of TV show”. G&M, Saturday Sept. 26, 1970: p.27, section 3.

²¹ Anonymous. “Soo man is acquitted of attempted rape”. G&M, Monday Nov. 28, 1970: p.2, section 1.

²² Knelman, M. “Japanese thriller-of-the-absurd”. G&M, Wednesday, Jan. 28, 1970: p.12, section 1.

²³ Ibid: p.12, section 1.

theme to get significant media attention in 1977, though pornography/obscenity is talked about to a lesser extent (**Fig. 4.2 A; Tab. 4.2 A**).

Figure 4.2 A

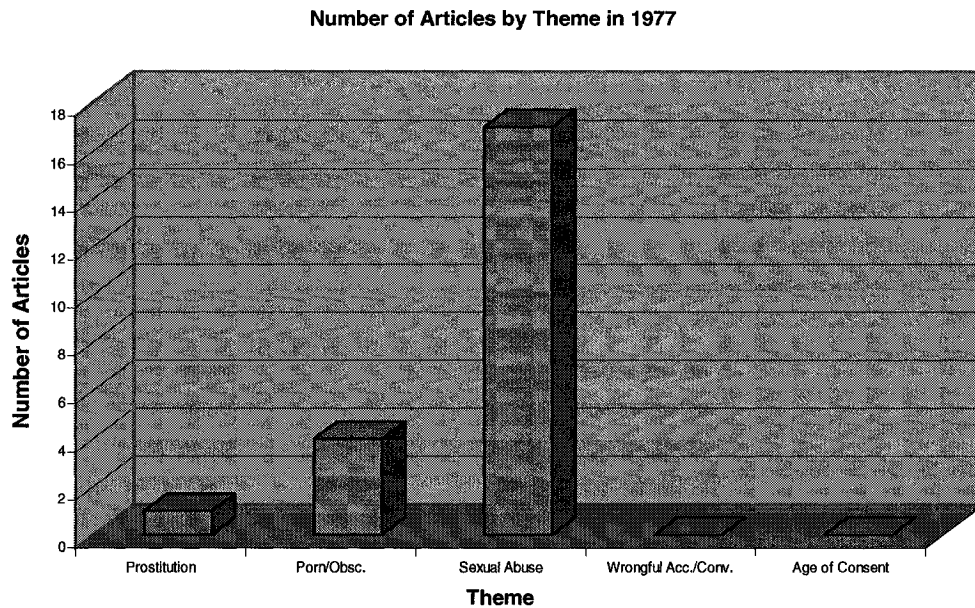


Table 4.2 A

Number of Articles by Theme in 1977

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Prostitution</i>	<i>Porn/Obsc.</i>	<i>Sexual Abuse</i>	<i>Wrongful Acc./Conv.</i>	<i>Age of Consent</i>	<i>Total</i>
Articles (Yearly)	1	4	17	0	0	22
Percentage	4.6%	18.2%	77.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

4.2.1 Child Prostitution

For my three-month sample of 1977, only one article dealt with child prostitution, or 4.5% of that sample (**Tab. 4.2 A**). This article describes how a massage parlour was protected by a Canadian city's police chief, who knew of some illegal (sexual) business

taking place, but who did not bring down criminal charges in exchange for money²⁴. Amongst other things, teenage girls were being asked to perform sexual favours for clients. The article talks at length about the corruption of the police official, whose role in this story is fascinating. Indeed, if the police's job is to criminalize these offences, and that their chief chooses not to, it sends a message about whether or not child prostitution, at least in the eyes of the police chief, should be criminalized at all. In a letter written a few years before, he states: "if a man wants to go there, nobody is forcing him to go, (...) As long as we have men who pay all kinds of money to receive whatever services they give, what can the police be expected to do to prevent them?"²⁵

This statement sheds light on two assumptions: first, that child prostitution exists because there is a demand for it, and second, that criminal justice officials have no power to stop it. The first assumption is reminiscent of Brown's 'prostitution as labour' model, where the child prostitute is seen as a 'sex worker' (1999). The second assumption enlightens us as to why child prostitution was more visible in the seventies than it is today (Tremblay, 2001). Pierre Tremblay outlines three key factors that create the ideal conditions for child prostitution to occur: 1) when youths assume adult roles early on in life, and sex is acknowledged as an acceptable behaviour by people in their close environment; 2) when prostitution is made attractive by a lack of opportunities to otherwise earn money; and 3) when "the threat of arrest for all market participants (including patrons) is low." (2001: 5)

This last factor is directly related to the police chief's statement above. His apparent lack of motivation to criminalize child prostitution created an environment which was 'safe' (criminally speaking) to engage in adult-child sex acts for pay. Both assumptions stated above make up what could be considered the 'old mentality' towards child prostitution – remnants of the pre-1970s philosophy of child-as-free-agent.

4.2.2 Child Pornography/Obscenity

Four articles from the sample discussed child pornography and obscenity in 1977 (18.2% of articles collected) (**Tab. 4.2 A**). Contrary to existing competing ideologies with

²⁴ Gory, B. "Massage parlor operator gave police chief of Vanier \$1,000 for protection, trail told". G&M, Wednesday Feb.9, 1970: p.1 & 2, section 1.

²⁵ Ibid: p.2, section 1.

regards to child pornography in 1970, all articles in 1977 depict the issue as a social problem. Child prostitution takes on new meaning in the late seventies, and is harshly attacked in the media by several self-appointed authorities, as attested in the following article headline: “Expert says children in pornography trade”²⁶. The rise in numbers of ‘experts’ in this area speaks to the emergence of the problem as a public issue.

As with child prostitution, Dr. Densen-Gerber lead the campaign, and many others adopted this cause as their own. For instance, Kenneth Wodden produced a documentary on *60 Minutes* entitles “Kiddie Porn” (Jenkins, 1998). Claims-makers professed ownership of child pornography, which allowed them to redefine the social phenomenon as a social problem – what Best believes to be the “ultimate success for claimants” (1990: 12). Indeed, most articles cite whopping numbers of children involved in the sex trade. One article refers to a “multimillion dollar industry”, involving as many as “120,000 children”²⁷, while another estimates the problem to reach “more than 600,000 children”²⁸. Extensive press coverage of these numbers contributed to making the year 1977 a turning point for child pornography (Adler, 2001).

Rather than seeing purchasers of sex as mere clients of a market trade industry, ‘Johns’ were portrayed as perverted: “We permit our society’s sickest members the license to sexually use three-year-olds”²⁹, using the ‘prostitution-as-exploitation’ model to make sense of the problem (Brown, 1999). That children were the object of exploitation was seen as particularly problematic: “the use of children is a particularly serious abuse”³⁰. This coincides with the idea that “[t]here’s nothing more taboo than to offend against a child” (Dunphy, 2003: 194). As such, child pornography is, as Jenkins asserts, “harshly penalized, a stigma hitherto reserved for the most dangerous addictive drugs” in 1977 (1996: 87). The stringent use of criminal penalties are also the subject of media attention in the *Globe and Mail* at this time³¹. Media discourse reflects the notion that

²⁶ A.P. “Expert says children in pornography trade”. *G&M*, Saturday Jan. 15, 1977: p.17, section 1.

²⁷ Ibid: p.17, section 1.

²⁸ Reuter. “Woman psychiatrist goes to U.S. Congress with her crusades against child pornography”. *G&M*, Tuesday Feb.15, 1977: p.11, section 1.

²⁹ Supra note 22.

³⁰ A.P. “14 indicted for pornography using children”. *G&M*, Tuesday Feb. 08, 1977: p.12, section 1.

³¹ Ibid: p.12, section 1.

“penal ideology and practice became more conservative during the 1970s” (Feeley & Simon, 1992: 449).

The punitive stance adopted in the late seventies in part reflects the broader impacts thought to arise as a result of the problem. More specifically, child pornography is portrayed as a gateway to other deviant behaviour on the child’s part. One article reports on how pornography is “driving thousands of children into ‘promiscuity, alcoholism, drug addiction, venereal disease and premarital parenthood.’”³² Of this, Densen-Gerber is quoted saying: “‘We know psychiatrically how destructive this inappropriate sexuality is to our children,’ (...) ‘it leads them to join our deviant populations, to become drug addicts, prostitutes, teen-age parents and criminals.’”³³ Not only is pornography thought to cause further deviance on the abuser’s part (Adler, 2001; Doyle & Lacombe, 2003; Jenkins, 1998), it is also thought to incite those victimized to engage in deviant behaviours. As a result, child pornography is “perceived in Canada and elsewhere as (...) [an] overall menace” (2003: 295). This contrasts sharply with the pornography debates and newspaper articles of 1970, which dismiss the potentially corrupting effects of pornographic material on children.

Only one of the four articles collected for this time frame addressed the topic of obscenity³⁴. Once again, purchasers of a magazine depicting pictures of nude children were cast as perverts: “the magazines were designed for people with perverted sexual tastes.”³⁵ Even the magazines were demonized as “very, very gross.”³⁶ This paints a very different picture from that invoked through the freedom of artistic expression argument used only a few years before. Whereas “high art” is said to have the “ability to render the naked as nude, as if ‘nude’ is another form or style of clothing, leaving behind ‘naked’ as the truly disrobed” (Cover, 2003: 53), the social context in which this magazine is operating delegitimizes the nude subjects (i.e. children). The delegitimization is best illustrated in the following passage: “These are not innocent

³² Supra note 22.

³³ Supra note 24.

³⁴ Gray, M. “Vancouver declares war on magazines showing nude children”. G&M, Thursday Mar. 24, 1977: p.10, section 1.

³⁵ Ibid: p.10, section 1.

³⁶ Ibid: p.10, section 1.

pictures such as you find in family nudist magazines, (...) [t]hey show children posed in suggestive positions”³⁷.

4.2.3 Child Sexual Abuse

The year 1977 is identified in the literature as a turning point for media portrayals of child sexual abuse (Adler, 2001). From this point onwards, references to ‘child abuse’ assume the presence of sexual abuse (2001; Jenkins, 1998), and the domain is further expanded to include a wide variety of professionals, agencies, and services that deal with the sexual abuse of children (Hacking, 1991; Rind et al., 1998). There were 17 articles that reported on child sexual abuse over the three month period observed for 1977. These articles made up the majority (77.3%) of my sample for that year (**Tab. 4.2 A**).

In 1977, the charges of sexual abuse laid against Roman Polanski made the headlines. Polanski, a famous movie director, was charged with rape of a minor involving the use of drugs, sodomy, perversion, unlawful sexual intercourse with a girl under 14, and committing a lewd or lascivious act³⁸. The case is noteworthy, for it contrasts with the image of the predatory stranger image of abusers portrayed hitherto in the *Globe and Mail*. Notably, Polanski is never described as a ‘monster’. Although his acts are never condoned or excused, the director is portrayed as a victim, whose expecting wife was tragically and brutally murdered by the Manson clan³⁹. As we will see in future sections, his case is revisited by the media numerous times, with different outlooks on the matter. Very little was said of his victim.

Notwithstanding the Polanski case, most perpetrators are portrayed as strangers to their victims, much like in 1970. Only three articles report on individuals who knew their victims beforehand, although none report on crimes of an incestual nature. Of these three articles, one perpetrator is a cleric⁴⁰, the second, a Boy Scout leader⁴¹, and the

³⁷ Ibid: p.10, section 1.

³⁸ A.P. “Polanski is arraigned on sex counts”. G&M, Thursday Mar. 31, 1977: p.16, section 1.

³⁹ Reuter. “Polanski charged with rape.” G&M, Monday Mar. 14, 1977: p.14, section 1.; See also: Reuter. “Polanski indicted on 3 sex charges”. G&M, Friday Mar. 25, 1977: p.14, section 1.

⁴⁰ Reuter. “Nude sessions held in church, cleric on carpet”. G&M, Monday Jan. 17, 1977: p.14, section 1.

third, the director for a home for boys⁴². Most perpetrators were said to be repeat offenders. One man, who did not have a criminal record, but who alleged he had raped nine women, was nonetheless assessed as hopeless: “[I am] not optimistic about Young changing in the future”⁴³, a mental health professional told reporters. Another repeat offender was said to be “a walking time bomb on pent-up anger and sexual fantasies”⁴⁴. These portrayals go hand in hand with the widespread belief “that most or all sex offenders are irredeemable predators” (Quinn et al., 2003: 216), despite the fact that, “[i]n reality, sex offenders have relatively low reconviction rates” (West, 2000: 514) as well as low recidivism rates after treatment (Wacquant, 2001; Wilson, 2005). As put forward by Philip Jenkins, “the reframing of the abuse problem was fueled by lurid stories of (...) serial murderers of children” and other tales of stranger-danger in the American media (1998: 119). Similarly, Canadian media depicted a narrow portrayal of child sexual abuse.

Despite being depicted as ‘irredeemable’, arguments in favor of treatment are rampant. Two articles describe the perpetrators as mentally ill individuals who do not belong in prison, but rather in treatment facilities⁴⁵. In these articles, prison is believed to be detrimental to sex offenders, who are the target of much violence and harassment, and who experience high levels of isolation. Another article describes at length treatment programs (often experimental) offered to sex offenders in Penetanguishene maximum security mental health center⁴⁶. Again, sex offenders are deemed to be ‘sick’, mentally ill, incapable of controlling their behavior, and biologically dysfunctional. The prevalence of therapy in discourse about potential criminal justice responses to child sex offending results from an acknowledgment of the problematic by professionals at this time.

New attitudes about sexual abuse transpire in media reports, and it is made obvious that “[p]sychologists and therapists now commonly accept the very high figures offered for

⁴¹ A.P. “Leader accused of raping boys tries suicide”. G&M, Wednesday Mar. 23, 1977: p.11, section.

⁴² Anonymous. “Man facing new charges in sex case”. G&M, Friday Jan. 7, 1977.

⁴³ C.P. “Police not given man’s story of 9 sex assaults, court told”. G&M, Saturday Jan. 8, 1977: p.4, section 1.

⁴⁴ Anonymous. “Murder trial. Man schizophrenic, doctor testifies”. G&M: Friday Jan. 21, 1977.

⁴⁵ Anonymous. “Strangled girl, man committed to Penetang”. G&M, Saturday Jan. 22, 1977: p.5, section 1. See also: C.P. “Sex offenders need treatment, MPs”. G&M, Saturday Mar. 21, 1977: p.15, section 1.

⁴⁶ Bruner, A. “The Penetang experiment”. G&M, Saturday Mar. 26, 1977: p.9, 11, 12, Women’s section.

the incidence of child molestation” (Jenkins, 1996: 140). Influenced by psychoanalytic theory, mental health professionals remained, up to this moment, unconvinced that children did not seduce their abusers (Adler, 2001; Jenkins, 1998). In contrast, these ‘experts’ now began redefining and constructing child sexual abuse on their own terms, claiming ownership of the problem (Best, 1990; Pratt, 2005). As a result, child sexual abuse began being increasingly defined in accordance with the medical model. Psychology and psychiatry also dominate discourse about victims in the *Globe and Mail* at this time. Testimonials about trauma, depression, divorce, and suicidal ideation in the aftermath of sexual abuse lend legitimacy to outreach services⁴⁷.

4.2.4 Wrongful Accusation/Convictions

As shown in **Table 4.2 A**, there were no articles on wrongful accusations and convictions in the sample I collected for 1977.

4.2.5 Age of Consent

There were no articles reporting on the age of consent for 1977 (**Tab. 4.2 A**).

4.3 Portrayals of Child Sexual Offending in 1984

Over the first six months of 1984, 112 articles were collected, estimated by extrapolation to represent 224 articles, or 14.49% of the sample, for the whole year (**Tab. 4.0 A**). The number of articles collected in the 1984 sample marks an important increase in the newspaper representations of child sex offending in the *Globe and Mail*, especially in comparison to the 38 articles amassed over twelve months for 1970. Each theme examined is reported to a similar extent as in 1977 (**Fig. 4.2 A** and **Fig. 4.3 A** trace a similar pattern), only in greater numbers. Once again, sexual abuse is the theme that is reported on most often, followed by pornography/obscenity, then prostitution. (**Fig. 4.3 A; Tab. 4.3 A**).

⁴⁷ Boyle. “Distress centre listens when you need someone to talk to”. *G&M*, Monday Jan. 17, 1977: p.13, s.1.

Figure 4.3 A

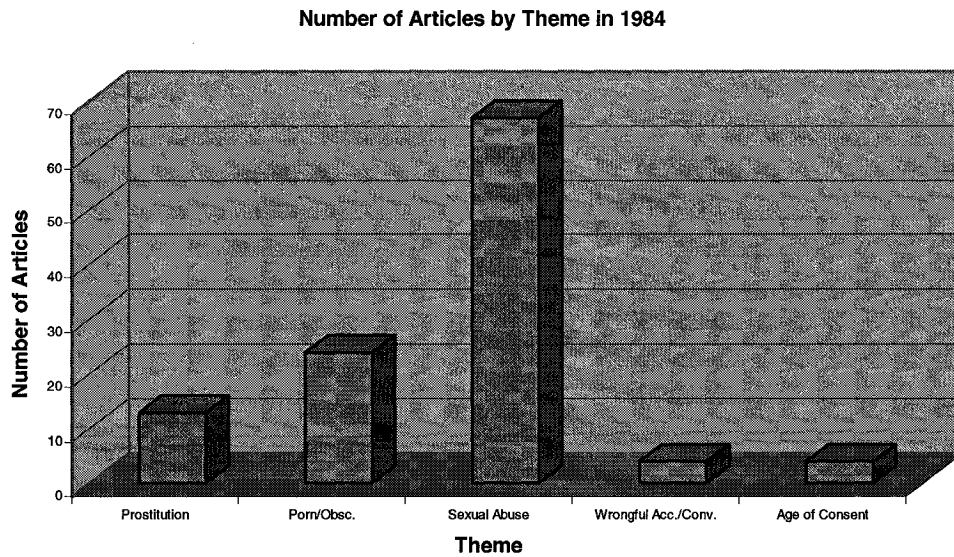


Table 4.3 A

Number of Articles by Theme in 1984

Theme	Prostitution	Porn/Obsc.	Sexual Abuse	Wrongful Acc./Conv.	Age of Consent	Total
Articles (Yearly)	13	24	67	4	4	112
Percentage	11.6%	21.4%	59.8%	3.6%	3.6%	100%

4.3.1 Child Prostitution

Over six months of reporting, 13 articles were written on child prostitution in 1984, or 11.61% of that year's sample (**Tab. 4.3 A**). In most articles, cases of child prostitution were said to increase at a tremendous rate⁴⁸, except in one case, where a police detective from the 'morality bureau' was quoted to say that child prostitution was "not an

⁴⁸ Lipovenko, D. "A \$400 million business. Pornography growing, mayor says". G&M, Tuesday Feb. 7, 1984: p.5, section 1. See also: Wright, D. "Sex trade stays lively". G&M, Wednesday, Mar. 14, 1984: p.7, section 1. See also: York, G. "Little data on youth prostitutes, committee says after 7 months". G&M, Thursday May 31, 1984: p.M2.

epidemic⁴⁹. Child prostitutes are portrayed in two different manners. On the one hand, child prostitutes are portrayed as victims of a subtle form of exploitation, one described by Brown (1999) as prostitution for survival. According to this view, prostitution allows for the exchange of one commodity for another: sex for money. Money in turn ensures the survival of prostitutes, who, in the case of youths, cannot depend on the financial support of their parents or mentors (1999). As put forward in one article, “prostitution is [a] last resort” for youths and adults alike – it is a choice, but one that is limited⁵⁰. Oftentimes, youths are said to be “rescued” from prostitution through criminal justice intervention⁵¹.

With this victimization discourse comes talk about decriminalizing prostitution, which is largely discarded by legislative officials⁵². As a matter of fact, the criminal justice ‘mood’ favours a ‘get tough’ approach⁵³. In accordance with this ‘mood’, prostitutes are also portrayed as threats, especially to residents of neighbourhoods where prostitution is prevalent: “[it] just doesn’t feel safe in these streets anymore. I don’t feel safe. I don’t feel safe for my daughter”⁵⁴. As such, there is a move to further criminalize prostitution, and particularly child prostitution in Canada in 1984⁵⁵. Other criminal justice responses portrayed in the *Globe and Mail* at this time include counselling and job training,⁵⁶ as well as a variety of social services available for those who want to get out of the sex trades⁵⁷.

Portrayals of victims also vary with regards to the background characteristics of youths engaged in prostitution. In prior years, child prostitution was portrayed as a gendered problematic, affecting mostly young girls⁵⁸. Male youth prostitution was taboo (Tremblay, 2001). However, in 1984, both males and females were acknowledged to

⁴⁹ Kashmeri, Z. “Police rescue girl, 3 charged. Juvenile escapes prostitution”. *G&M*, Tuesday Mar. 13, 1984: p.M4.

⁵⁰ C.P. “Prostitutes tired of abuse, accusations, group says”. *G&M*, Tuesday Jan. 17, 1984: p.10, section 1.

⁵¹ See Kashmeri, supra 45: p.M4. See also Kashmeri, Z. “Hooker windfall has hotels competing, police say”. *G&M*, Saturday May 5, 1984: p.21, section 1.

⁵² See Lipovenko, supra 44: p.5, section 1.

⁵³ *Ibid*: p.5, section 1.

⁵⁴ Goldenberg, S. “Residents ask police to remove prostitutes from neighborhood”. *G&M*, Wednesday May 16, 1984: p.M2.

⁵⁵ See Lipovenko, supra 44: p.5, section 1. See also: Wright, supra 44: p.M4.

⁵⁶ Callwood, J. “The moral pecking the victims”. *G&M*, Thursday Feb. 9, 1984: p.L1.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*: p.L1. See also York, supra 44: p.M2.

⁵⁸ See C.P., supra 2: p.10, section 1.

engage in child prostitution⁵⁹. While some articles describe child prostitutes as at risk youths (low socioeconomic status, little education, homeless, unemployed, substance abusing)⁶⁰, others asserted child prostitutes were from “normal backgrounds”⁶¹. One article reports that “an increasing number [of child prostitutes] come from middle-class families”⁶², implying that the problematic ordinarily concerned low-income youths before this time, despite a lack of evidence that this was the case. Moreover, victims of sexual abuse come from all social backgrounds and class (Hornor, 2002). It would follow that child prostitutes, who, according to the exploitation model, are also victims of child sexual offending, would have emerged, even prior to 1984, from a variety of social settings as well.

Differences in portrayals were also related to the type of market involved. With regards to child prostitution in Canada (‘basic’ prostitution, direct paid encounters on the streets), prostitutes were portrayed both as being ‘at risk’, or as displaced middle-class “family kids”⁶³. When articles reported on the broader prostitution market (either regarding child trafficking or sex tourism), youths were always portrayed as being ‘at risk’. Nonetheless, youths involved in the sex trades abroad were portrayed as innocent victims of a lucrative industry, in lands of little opportunity⁶⁴. Regardless of whether or not child prostitutes were considered ‘at risk’, the sex trade industry itself was widely acknowledged as risky. Notwithstanding potential health problems incurred⁶⁵, child prostitution was portrayed as a vocation characterized first and foremost by its endemic levels of violence⁶⁶. Furthermore, prostitution was often associated with the sexual

⁵⁹ See Lipoenko, supra 44: p.5, section 1.

⁶⁰ See Callwood, supra 53: p.L1. See also: Milson, L. “20 bodies, toll mounting as Seattle area police hunt killer”. G&M, Friday Apr. 6, 1984: p.1, 10, section 1.

⁶¹ See Lipoenko, supra 44: p.5, section 1.

⁶² Ibid: p.5, section 1.

⁶³ Lipoenko, D. “Report to Archdiocese. Child-porn are linked to kin”. G&M, Wednesday, Feb. 8, 1984: p.20, section 1.

⁶⁴ Johnson, B. “The lucrative trade in stolen innocence. Japan’s gangsters have stepped up the exploitation of Filipino youths”. G&M, Saturday Mar. 3, 1984: p.10, section 1. See also: Anonymous. “Peru’s prostitutes battle disease, red tape”. G&M, Tuesday May 22, 1984: p.10, section 1.

⁶⁵ See Anonymous, supra 58: p.10, section 1.

⁶⁶ See C.P., supra 46: p.10, section 1. See also: Johnson, supra 58: p.10, section 1. See also: Milson, supra 55: p.1, 10, section 1. See also: York, supra 44: p.M2. See also: Anonymous, supra 58: p.10, section 1.

victimization of children in contexts other than in the sex trade. As such, child prostitution was portrayed as being 'caused' by child sexual abuse⁶⁷.

4.3.2 Child pornography/obscenity

There were 24 articles that reported on child pornography/obscenity in the sample collected for 1984, representing 21.43% of that sample (**Tab. 4.3 A**). As with child prostitution, child pornography is acknowledged as being on the rise, as becoming increasingly prevalent⁶⁸. One article purports that child pornography is in fact so ubiquitous that it is often incorporated into 'mainstream' pornography⁶⁹. That child pornography should purportedly be so widely available is made all the more alarming by the manner it is portrayed in the media. For one, it is said to be "contagious", in the sense that child victims of pornography (say, 'exploitees') become predatory pornographers ('exploiters') in their adult lives, thus perpetuating the cycle of abuse⁷⁰. Individuals who consume child pornography (at this time called 'child molesters') are said to be incurable⁷¹, and are portrayed as operating in networks⁷². Paradoxically, we see the emergence at this time of stories that report on intrafamilial abuse. Contrary to the focus on 'stranger danger' in the 1970s, articles in 1984 purport that offenders are most often known to their victims: "The parent or parents may do the photographing, often as part of an incestuous involvement. Often, however, it is some other trusted adult"⁷³.

Child pornography is also linked to further deviant behaviour. Those who consume child pornography are said to be more likely to perpetrate physical as well as sexual violence

⁶⁷ See C.P., supra 46: p.10, section 1. See also: Callwood, supra 52: p.L1.

⁶⁸ Fagan, D. "6 porn magazines among top sellers, aide to PM says". G&M, Monday Jan. 23, 1984: p.5, section 1. See also: Hutchinson, L. "Victims of abuse". G&M, Friday May 18, 1984: p.6, section 1.

⁶⁹ C.P. "Playboy, Penthouse in sales top 10, committee on pornography informed". G&M, Saturday Apr. 7, 1984: p.E22.

⁷⁰ Kashmeri, Z. "U.S. special agent wants tough laws on pornography". G&M, Monday Feb. 6, 1984: p.5, section 1. See also: McConnell, F. "Pornographers don't protect". G&M, Saturday Mar. 17, 1984: p.L4.

⁷¹ See Kashmeri, supra 65: p.5, section 1.

⁷² Ibid: p.5, section 1. See also: Lipovenko, supra 58: p.20, section 1.

⁷³ See Lipovenko, supra 58: p.20, section 1.

against children⁷⁴. Furthermore, pornography is portrayed as an antisocial model: children who consumed it and attempted to mimic what they saw were seen as having been 'schooled' or instructed to engage in sexually violent behaviour⁷⁵. In one particularly horrendous case, a seven-year-old boy caused the death of an infant in his attempt to recreate sex acts witnessed through pornographic magazines⁷⁶. All these factors, combined with the belief that pornography desensitizes children to violence⁷⁷, allowed for the introduction of a climate of panic in the 1980s (Adler, 2001).

Certainly, the discourse on child pornography is anxiety-ridden. Described in one article as "hate propaganda"⁷⁸, claimsmakers are not hesitant to use strong words to depict the problematic. Ronald Reagan calls it "ugly and dangerous", and uses moral rhetoric to appeal to the masses: "If we do not move against [child pornography] and protect our children, then we as a society just aren't worth much."⁷⁹ He goes on to argue that "[t]here's no one lower or more vicious than a person who would profit from the abuse of children".⁸⁰ For some, opposition to child pornography is a valence issue, as demonstrated in the following passage from an article discussing the censorship debate: "The greatest concern – one that is common even to those who oppose film censorship in principal, - is an antipathy to scenes of extreme violence or the sexual exploitation of children."⁸¹ This author is saying is that, despite differences in opinion about the legitimacy of decriminalizing pornography, there remains a general consensus that child pornography should be criminalized and this, much before the advent of, and pervasive access to, the internet.

Part of the attitude conveyed above may stem from social reactions to the problem, in light of victims' portrayals in the media. According to Best, "[t]he understanding that

⁷⁴ C.P. "Porn, battering linked". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 29, 1984: p.17, section 1. See also: Weiner, C. "U.S. pornography law advocated as a model". G&M, Monday May 21, 1984: p.1, 2, section 1.

⁷⁵ York, G. "Adult videotapes in store displays will be regulated". G&M, Wednesday Mar. 28, 1984: p.M5.

⁷⁶ AUTHOR. "Sex magazine imitated, 8-month-old girl killed". G&M, Saturday Apr. 28, 1984: p.17, section 1.

⁷⁷ See Weiner, *supra* 68: p.1, 2, section 1.

⁷⁸ Scott, J. "ACTRA porn policy meets resistance". G&M, Wednesday Mar. 21, 1984: p.M7.

⁷⁹ A.P. "Reagan orders probe of porn". G&M, Tuesday May 22, 1984: p.17, section 1.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*: p.17, section 1.

⁸¹ Cruisckshank, J. "Videotapes face censors in Ontario". G&M, Saturday May 5, 1984: p.1, 2, section 1.

children are powerless innocents (...) present[s] a strong warrant” for the idea that children are under imminent threat (1990: 34). Children’s innocence is glorified in the media through their portrayals as quintessential victims⁸². The historical belief that child sexual abuse was rare, and the corresponding reluctance to believe children who came forward gave way to the ‘Believe the children’ philosophy after the 1970s. This philosophy is also reflected in the *Globe and Mail* at this time. Children who were not believed were portrayed as having incurred further victimization – a victim status further enforced by their lack of acknowledgement as such⁸³.

Attitudes about child pornography are not as homogeneous in 1984 as they are portrayed to be in the articles mentioned above. One writer denounces the crackdown on pornography as an overzealous endeavour, stating that child pornography is rare, contrary to beliefs that it is widely available, and easily accessed: : “sex films involving children have *never* found among the thousands of tapes confiscated from video stores.”⁸⁴ In an other article, Bob Rae qualifies censors’ overinclusive practices as “clumsy and insensitive (...) operating outside the clear rule of law.”⁸⁵ Clearly, the issue of child pornography is not regarded by all in the same manner. On the contrary, the public is divided on the matter, as reflected in portrayals of the problematic in the *Globe and Mail* at this time.

Despite divergences of opinion, the criminal justice responses that are advocated at this time are consistent with the ‘get tough on crime’ philosophy: “We should lock them up for as long as we can ...So what if they aren’t treated and come out the same, at least we have saved so many children”, says one police officer⁸⁶. In another article, a government official urges the attorney-general to “use his powers to prefer an indictment, skip preliminary hearings and try the accused directly in a higher court”⁸⁷. Maude Barlow, a renowned feminist and special adviser on issues concerning women (i.e. claimsmaker), gives “the vivid impression (...) that nothing matters more than

⁸² See McConnell, supra 65: p.L4. See also: Bryan, L. “The real victims”. *G&M*, Wednesday Mar. 21, 1984: p.6, section 1. See also: Corbeil, C. “A slumber party without a lot of heavy baggage. A real look at 14-year-olds”. *G&M*, Thursday Apr., 26, 1984: p.E1.

⁸³ See Lipoenko, supra 58: p.20, section 1.

⁸⁴ Johnson, B. “So where is all that porn?”. *G&M*, Saturday Apr. 28, 1984: pg.10, section 1.

⁸⁵ Rae, B. “Clarify censor’s role”. *G&M*, Saturday June 16, 1984: p.7, section 1.

⁸⁶ See Kashmeri, supra 65: p.5, section 1.

⁸⁷ Kashmeri, Z. “Shortcut urged in porn cases”. *G&M*, Thursday Feb. 9, 1984: p.4, section 1.

enacting laws, any laws, to get rid of pornography.”⁸⁸ Even Roman Catholic bishops suggest amendments to the Criminal Code: “pornography involving children should be made an especially serious crime subject to severe penalties.”⁸⁹ All criminal justice responses put forward in the *Globe and Mail* at this time are punitive, regardless of who is making the claim. This goes hand in hand with Philip Jenkins’ contention that moral conservatism “reached its apogee” in the 1980s (1998: 121).

As demonstrated, a crime control approach is favoured in the media over the due process rights of those accused or convicted of consuming or producing child pornography. The theme of freedom of expression is picked up again in relation to discussions in the media of artistic materials considered obscene. Given the punitive stance adopted with regards to child pornography, one author asserts: “it is now impossible for anyone, male or female, to see [a nude image] without reading a sexual message”⁹⁰. Moreover, a ‘necessary evil’ argument is used to justify the bypass of due process rights; the normalizing effects of child pornography are used to legitimate censorship and harsh criminal justice responses⁹¹.

Other articles that report on obscenity echo this debate. Two articles report on the prevalence of films depicting children sexually at various film festivals⁹². The production and presentation of these films denotes an interest, or preoccupation, in the problematic in the 1980s. As one director states, “the point of [my] film [is] to combat the silence around father-daughter incest”⁹³. Despite good intentions, however, the film mentioned in this article was cancelled because the director “was told [she] had used children – exploited them”⁹⁴. Again, caution is prioritized over freedom of artistic expression for fear of becoming desensitized to the problematic, or mistaken as a child pornographer. The ever-expanding scope of child sex offending is reflected in the media in its consequences.

⁸⁸ Callwood, J. “Hiding the facts behind a screen of smut”. *G&M*: Thursday May 10, 1984: L1.

⁸⁹ Oziewicz, S. “Let clients of prostitutes be charged, bishops say”. *G&M*, Saturday Apr. 7, 1984: p.E22.

⁹⁰ Crean, S. “Eroticism is where you find it”. *G&M*, Saturday June 16, 1984: p.6, section 1.

⁹¹ Matas, R. “Traditional values defended. Films attack families, censor says”. *G&M*, Friday Apr. 6, 1984: p.M2. See also: Johnson, *supra* 79: p.10, section 1.

⁹² Peary, G. “Only in Kanada, you say? Canadian film doesn’t exactly have Berliners all in a tizzy”. *G&M*, Friday Mar.2, 1984: p.E1. See also: C.P. “Festival is forced to cancel films showing”. *G&M*, Tuesday Mar. 20, 1984: p.M7.

⁹³ See C.P., *supra* 87: p.M7.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*: M7.

4.3.3. Child sexual abuse

There were 67 articles that related to child sexual abuse in the 1984 sample. As in 1977, child sexual abuse made up the majority of articles collected for that year (59.82%) (**Tab. 4.3 A**). For the first time in our analysis, incest emerges from the data as a significant type of sexual abuse. Articles relating to incest are more prevalent than those relating to extrafamilial sexual abuse in 1984. Furthermore, there emerges an important amount of articles that report on offenders who are known to the victim, but are not related to them. As demonstrated in **Table 4.3 B**, 14 articles reported on incestuous relations; 18 articles reported on abuses perpetrated by offenders known, but unrelated to the victim; and only 3 articles reported on 'stranger abuse'. The remaining 32 articles either failed to mention how the victim and perpetrator were related, or addressed the issue of child sexual abuse more broadly, without reference to a specific case.

Table 4.3 B

Link between Offender and Victim in 1984

<i>Link</i>	<i>Intrafamilial/ Incest</i>	<i>Extrafamilial/ Known</i>	<i>Extrafamilial/ Unknown</i>
Number of Articles	14	18	3

Murder was the direct result of sexual abuse perpetrated by strangers in a number of cases. Overall, five articles reported on child 'murder-rapes', a significant amount (7.46% of the sample), given how rarely it occurs in actuality (Plummer, 1981; West, 2000). Disproportional reporting on sexual abuse resulting in the death of child victims can be understood as an issue of newsworthiness. More specifically, "violent crime's relative infrequency in the real world heightens its newsworthiness and leads to its frequent appearance in crime news." (Surette, 1992: 63)

In 1984, we also begin to see the emergence of a broader range of offenders. There are, of course, an important number of parents⁹⁵ and other heads of family⁹⁶ (no brothers, sisters, nor mothers), but also policemen⁹⁷, a group home worker⁹⁸, teachers⁹⁹, a doctor¹⁰⁰, a security guard¹⁰¹, a British government official¹⁰², as well as a football player¹⁰³. Child sexual abuse is portrayed to occur under any circumstance and to be perpetrated by just about anyone – it is all-encompassing. One article relates to ritual abuse¹⁰⁴, and two others, to abuses that were perpetrated by groups within small communities¹⁰⁵.

Nine articles were reserved for discussions of celebrities involved in cases of child sexual abuse, notably those of movie director Roman Polanski, and Québec National Assembly member Gilles Grégoire. This abundance of coverage can be understood as a preferential selection by news manufacturers, who tend to ‘play up’ newsworthy stories (Roshier, 1981). That said, “[t]he involvement of a famous or high status person in any capacity (although particularly as offender of victim)” is associated with newsworthiness (1981: 46). Discussions about these two cases mainly revolved around issues of preferential treatment given to persons of status by the criminal justice system and other social institutions. Polanski, for one, avoided imprisonment by seeking refuge in Paris,

⁹⁵ C.P. “Quebec father pleads guilty to incest, branding of children”. G&M, Saturday Jan. 14, 1984: p.18, section 1. See also: Anonymous. “Agency is awarded custody of 7-year-old”. G&M, Friday Jan. 20, 1984: p.4, section 1. See also: Anonymous. “Foster home to have care of children”. G&M, Tuesday Feb. 14, 1984: p.5, section 1. See also: Hickl-Szabo, R. “Rise seen in abuse of children by parents”. G&M, Thursday May 24, 1984: p.M1.

⁹⁶ C.P. “Women decry incest acquittal”. G&M, Thursday Feb. 16, 1984: p.14, section 1. See also: Lipovenko, D. “Complaints to police. Victims of incest seek compensation”. G&M, Tuesday Mar. 20, 1984: p.M5.

⁹⁷ Anonymous. “Policeman is charged”. G&M, Saturday Jan.28, 1984: p.4, section 1. See also: Anonymous. “Constable charged with sex assault”. G&M, Friday Apr.20, 1984: p.M2.

⁹⁸ Anonymous. “Man, 29, charged with indecency at group home”. G&M, Friday Jan.13, 1984: p.4, section 1.

⁹⁹ Anonymous. “Fondled pupils, teacher receives suspended term”. G&M, Friday, May 18, 1984: p.M1. See also: Anonymous. “Sex charges laid against teacher, 42”. G&M, Monday June 11, 1984: p.M2.

¹⁰⁰ C.P. “Judgment reserved in assault case”. G&M, Friday Apr.27, 1984: p.M2.

¹⁰¹ C.P. “Former guard is convicted”. G&M, Friday May 25, 1984: p.3, section 1.

¹⁰² Frankl, V. “Rumors in Westminster of child-sex scandal prompt PM to step in”. G&M, Saturday June 23, 1984: p.14, section 1.

¹⁰³ Anonymous. “Hollywood Henderson jailed in sex-assault case”. G&M, Tuesday June 12, 1984: p.S3.

¹⁰⁴ Anonymous. “Ex-members of cult guilty of child rape”. G&M, Wednesday Feb.8, 1984: p.13, section 1.

¹⁰⁵ C.P. “Police hold 13 adults on child-sex charges”. G&M, Friday Feb.17, 1984: p.11, section 1. See also: C.P. “5 more accused in child sex case plead not guilty”. G&M, Friday Mar.2, 1984: p.2, section 1.

despite well-documented “fascination for barely pubescent girls”¹⁰⁶. As for Grégoire, he was able to keep his seat in the National Assembly upon his return from jail¹⁰⁷. Moreover, Grégoire served only nine months of a two-years-less-a-day sentence for sexually assaulting seven girls¹⁰⁸.

In contrast, opinions about criminal justice responses addressed by the media at this time with regards to ‘non-status’ perpetrators are much more punitive in their nature. Articles in the *Globe and Mail* in 1984 seem to denounce criminal justice responses that are more liberal, and applaud those that are castigatory in character. While the practice of putting ‘at risk’ offenders on parole is attacked and deemed a “failure”, the legislated imposition of indeterminate sentences, as put forward in Bill C-85, is commended¹⁰⁹. Furthermore, imprisonment is favoured over therapeutic sentences for mentally disordered offenders¹¹⁰. One article reports the public flogging of a Pakistani sex offender, underlining how “[m]ore than 100,000 people applauded”, without condemning the use of corporal punishment¹¹¹. One child sex offender is even required by the courts to comply with chemical castration, an order later deemed “illegal” by virtue of a violation of fundamental human rights¹¹².

For children, an assortment of new services is provided: intervention therapy centres¹¹³, programs of various sorts¹¹⁴, and diverse preventive interventions¹¹⁵. Furthermore, there appears to be a movement within the media to denounce injustices directed at victims, as though journalists have also become crusaders for the protection of children, who are constantly considered ‘under threat’. Stories do not simply objectively state facts, but underline these injustices with fervour. When one young woman’s refusal to testify

¹⁰⁶ Fielding, J. “Troubling Foibles”. *G&M*, Saturday Feb. 18, 1984: p.E18.

¹⁰⁷ Gibb-Clark, M. “Chastened Gregoire returns to work”. *G&M*, Thursday May 24, 1984: p.10, section 1.

¹⁰⁸ C.P. “Gregoire released on parole”. *G&M*, Thursday Mar. 29, 1984: p.10, section 1.

¹⁰⁹ Anonymous. “The public at risk”. *G&M*, Thursday June 26, 1984: p.6, section 1. See also:

Anonymous. “Rapist’s appeal rejected”. *G&M*, Saturday Apr.14, 1984: p.19, section 1.

¹¹⁰ Anonymous. “Court upholds rapist’s term”. *G&M*, Friday Mar.2, 1984: PAGE

¹¹¹ Anonymous. “Raped little girl, Pakistani flogged”. *G&M*, Monday Jan.9, 1984: p.10, section 1.

¹¹² A.P. “Take sex reducing drug, court orders stepfather. *G&M*, Tuesday Jan.31, 1984:p.12, section 1. See also: Anonymous. “Castration ‘ruled illegal as sentence”. *G&M*, Saturday May 19, 1984: p.16, section 1.

¹¹³ C.P. “Centre helps incest victims”. *G&M*, Wednesday Feb.8, 1984: p.20, section 1.

¹¹⁴ Malarek, V. “Programs help crime victims deal with solitude”. *G&M*, Tuesday Apr.10, 1984: p.M2.

¹¹⁵ Lipovenko, D. “17,000 children see production. Play encourages sex abuse disclosure”. *G&M*, Wednesday May 23, 1984: p.M3.

against her sexually abusive stepfather lands her in jail, an article is written to expose the hypocrisy of the criminal justice system, which is portrayed to protect the said-stepfather (whose identity has been withheld), rather than the victim, whose mother “warned her (...) that the family would be broken up if she testified”¹¹⁶.

Although the criminal justice system faces much criticism¹¹⁷, it does not stand alone in its plight. Doctors who turn down sexually abused patients because of their perception of the limits of their expertise are demonized as uncaring for having refused to help victimized individuals in need of treatment¹¹⁸. Children’s Aid Services are also the focus of much negative press. Overburdened by purported increases in demand for services from child sexual abuse victims, there is a demand for better resources within the agency and for further training of social workers who intervene with victims of sexual abuse¹¹⁹. In light of the increase in reported incest cases at this time, a greater number of children are removed from their homes, and placed in foster care¹²⁰.

The newfound acknowledgement of incest cases also affects school systems, who, in accordance with new policy, are mandated to abstain from informing parents of complaints of sexual abuse on their children’s part. School boards are urged to ‘jump on the wagon’ and adopt the ‘believe the victim’ approach, which poses a dilemma with regards to prioritizing children’s rights over parents’ rights. This reluctance is also portrayed as being problematic in the media: “The educational sector has not begun to address children’s interests as distinct from those of their parents.”¹²¹ As demonstrated, the educational sector is also the target of criticism by the media with regards to the protection of child victims.

¹¹⁶ Reuter, N.Y.T., A.P. “Girl held for contempt released after 9 days”. G&M, Monday Jan. 9, 1984: p.2, section 1.

¹¹⁷ Malarek, V. “Crime victim’s search for justice”. G&M, Monday Apr.9, 1984: p.M3.

¹¹⁸ C.P. “Doctor suspended for turning down young rape victim”. G&M, Wednesday Feb.15, 1984: p.8, section 1. See also: C.P. “Some MDs examine victims of sexual assault”. G&M, Monday Apr.9, 1984: p.3, section 1.

¹¹⁹ Kelly, C. “Children at risk, CAS union brief says”. G&M, Saturday Feb.18, 1984: p.5, section 1. See also: C.P. “CAS failed abused child: ombudsman”. G&M, Tuesday Apr.10. 1984: p.8, section 1.

¹²⁰ Anonymous. “Agency is awarded custody of 7-year-old”. G&M, Friday Jan.20, 1984: p.4, section 1. See also: Anonymous. “Foster home to have care of children”. G&M, Tuesday Feb.14, 1984: p.5, section 1.

¹²¹ Lipovenko, D. “School boards uneasy not informing parents of abuse complaints”. G&M, Wednesday Mar.28, 1984: p.M5.

Psychiatry is another realm that is highly criticized in the media. In 1984, psychoanalysis was under siege, as a result of Jeffrey Masson's revisiting of the Freudian seduction theory. According to Masson, Freud's abandoned original seduction theory, which stipulated that 'neurosis' was the direct result of being sexually abused as a child, was correct. As such, psychoanalysts are condemned for ignoring repressed memories of child sexual abuse: "the most astonishing implication of [Masson's] criticism of Freud's abandonment of the 'seduction theory' (...) is that the theory (...) is almost universally denied."¹²² A Harvard psychiatrist is quoted as saying: "In psychiatry, you're considered naïve and unprofessional if you believe the patient."¹²³ The debates surrounding Freud's seduction theory also appear to be grounded in a desire to protect children by emphasizing "the importance of acknowledging the reality of child abuse"¹²⁴. Furthermore, these debates reflect the notion that discourse about recovered memories is abundant during the 1980s, particularly towards to middle of the decade (Adler, 2001; Jenkins, 1996; Jenkins, 1998; Pratt, 2005). As we will see in the next section, recovered memories are also discussed in the context of wrongful accusations and convictions.

4.3.4 Wrongful accusations/convictions

Four articles related to wrongful accusations and convictions in the 1984 sample (3.57%) (**Tab. 4.3 A**). All four articles went counter to the child protection crusades described above. In one instance, an alleged victim was portrayed as an easily discreditable accuser by virtue of her "long history of complaints to police", rendering her "incapable of belief", according to the trial judge assigned to the case¹²⁵. The accused in this case was Toronto alderman Allan Sparrow. Likewise, Masson's contention that hysteria can be traced to child sexual abuse is dismissed as "[p]oppcock"¹²⁶. In another case, allegations of sexual misconduct against a welfare worker are said to result from persecutory practices. The accused is portrayed as "the victim of a witch hunt by Ontario Social Services"¹²⁷. Finally, in the fourth article, the accused, a celebrity rock

¹²² Copps, R. "Assault on Freud a mixed blessing". G&M, Saturday Mar.17, 1984: p.7, section 1.

¹²³ Swartz, J. "From couch to pillory for a lettered author". G&M, Tuesday Mar.20, 1984: p.7, section 1.

¹²⁴ Carveth, D.L. "Seductive sound and fury". G&M, Saturday Mar.31, 1984: p.7, section 1.

¹²⁵ McQuaig, L., "Sparrow discharged on sex assault count". G&M, Tuesday Feb.7, 1984: p.1.

¹²⁶ Blumenthal, R. "Did Freud slip?". G&M, Saturday Jan.28, 1984: p.10, section 1.

¹²⁷ York, G. "Fired welfare worker a victim of witch hunt by Drea: union". G&M, Monday Apr.23, 1984: p.M4.

star, ridicules his accuser, a teenage girl, by referring to the allegations as “a totally stupid and ridiculous situation”, despite the fact that eleven of the twelve members of the trial jury were in favour of convicting him¹²⁸.

4.3.5 Age of Consent

There were four articles that addressed the age of consent in 1984, or 3.57% of that year's sample (**Tab. 4.3 A**). One film review depicted a relationship between an adult and a teen¹²⁹, and the other articles were culturally-related. In one article, an individual from the Eastern Arctic is given a sentence of one week in jail for sexually abusing a girl. The reason given by the territorial court judge for attributing such a lenient sentence is culturally-based. In the Eastern Arctic, a young woman “is considered ready to engage in sexual relations” upon entering menarche¹³⁰. The judge also took into account that the alleged offenders were “upstanding members of their community”, and that the ‘victim’ “was not injured or hurt in any way”¹³¹. In another article, one man writes of the level of tolerance towards youth-adult intimacy of native Canadian culture. He adds that the minimum legal age of marriage, according to the Quebec civil code, is 12 years of age¹³².

As demonstrated above, the Canadian context occasionally provides for conditions in which child-adult sexual relations are tolerated. For instance, sexual relations between adults and adolescents are more likely to be tolerated than those involving young children. In one article, the vice-principal of a school is reported to have had “sexual intercourse several times” with a 15-year-old¹³³. Nowhere in the article is it mentioned that such a relationship constitutes a sexual abuse. Furthermore, the perpetrator is given a year's probation, along with a \$5,000 dollar fine, on the grounds that he no longer poses a threat, given his public disgrace. Evidently, sexual offending against children, and more specifically, age of consent offences “cannot, in sociological terms,

¹²⁸ A.P. “Dale cleared in sex case”. G&M, Friday Jan.13, 1984: p.E6.

¹²⁹ Anonymous. “Sirene star ‘pure yet sneaky’”. G&M, Saturday June 28, 1984: p.E6.

¹³⁰ C.P. “Age of consent not in culture, Inuit men get light sentences”. G&M, Friday May 4, 1984: p.9, section 1.

¹³¹ Ibid: p.9, section 1.

¹³² Rogers, R.S. “‘Abuse’ a cultural problem”. G&M, Saturday May 19, 1984: p.7, section 1.

¹³³ C.P. “Sex with girl, 15, brings \$5,000 fine”. G&M, Saturday Mar.3, 1984: p.15, section 1.

be seen as inherently deviant; it must be seen as a stigmatizing categorization historically produced in certain kinds of societies.” (Plummer, 1981: 236)

4.4 Portrayals of Child Sex Offending in 1991

Articles for 1991 were collected over a three-month period. Seventy articles were collected altogether, representing an estimate of 280 articles for the entire year, or 18.11% of all articles between 1970 and 2005 (**Tab. 4.0 A**). Upon entering the 1990s, articles reporting on sexual abuse are, by far, the most prevalent, confirming the tendency observed in 1984. Moreover, the difference between the number of articles on sexual abuse and that of all other themes is greatest in 1991 (**Tab. 4.4 A**; **Fig. 4.4 A**). While there are no articles that report on the age of consent, articles that relate to child prostitution, child pornography/obscenity, and wrongful accusations/convictions all range within 1 and 5 articles for the three months collected.

Figure 4.4 A

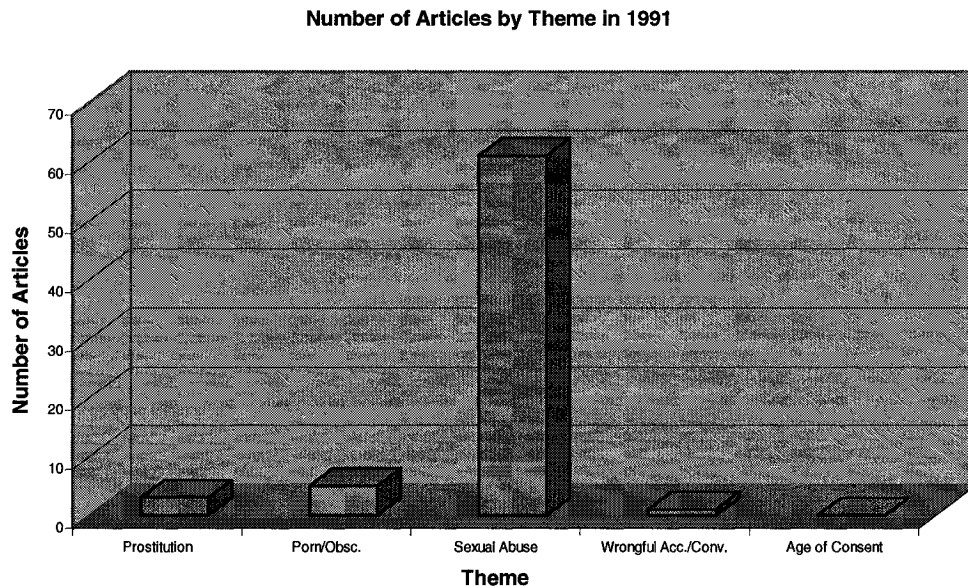


Table 4.4 A**Number of Articles by Theme in 1991**

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Prostitution</i>	<i>Porn/Obsc.</i>	<i>Sexual Abuse</i>	<i>Wrongful Acc./Conv.</i>	<i>Age of Consent</i>	<i>Total</i>
Articles (Yearly)	3	5	61	1	0	70
Percentage	4.3%	7.1%	87.1%	1.4%	0.0%	100%

4.4.1 Child Prostitution

Three articles were collected for 1991 which related to child prostitution, making up 4.29% of articles for that year (**Tab. 4.4 A**). All articles adopted a child-prostitution-as-survival approach, portraying child victims as lower-class¹³⁴, or homeless, runaway youths¹³⁵ who make money through prostitution in order to stay alive. Becoming involved in child prostitution was linked to dysfunctional family environments, as well as subsequent substance abuse behaviour in all cases. All in all, child prostitution was depicted as a “societal problem”¹³⁶ and articles worked towards “dispel[ling] the convenient belief that runaway teen-agers are on the streets because they are looking for adventure”¹³⁷. What is more, the criminal justice system is portrayed as a ‘revolving door’ for youths, who cycle through courts, youth centres, and the streets¹³⁸.

4.4.2 Child Pornography/Obscenity

There were 5 articles that related to child pornography/obscenity in the sample collected for 1991 (**Tab. 4.4 A**). These articles highlighted the dialectical relationship between issues of safety and security, and freedom. On one hand, the struggle to define the “undue exploitation of sex” is acknowledged as problematic¹³⁹. Accordingly, resulting overarching police practices are recognized as nothing more than net-widening

¹³⁴ Perlez, J. “Street kids survive by the wits”. G&M, Thursday Jan. 31, 1991: p.A11.

¹³⁵ Anonymous; “Nobody’s children”. G&M, Saturday Mar. 2, 1991: p.5, Broadcast Week section. See also: Lowe, D. “Centre gives hope to youth”. G&M, Saturday Mar. 23, 1991: p.D7.

¹³⁶ See Lowe, supra 105: p.D7.

¹³⁷ See Anonymous: p.5, Broadcast Week section.

¹³⁸ See Lowe, supra 105: p.D7.

¹³⁹ Anonymous. “Find our tolerance level”. G&M, Saturday Feb. 9, 1991: p.D7.

operations¹⁴⁰. Furthermore, police 'crackdowns' on child pornography are portrayed as failures, thus invalidating the seizure of so-called pornographic material: "Either [the pornographic materials] don't portray what they are accused of portraying or they can be defended on artistic grounds."¹⁴¹

On the other hand, some articles discard the importance of civil liberties, opting instead to focus on the perceived necessity of societal security: "Boo, cry the media, especially the writers. Censorship! Loss of freedom! Loss of civil rights! Fie, I say. Why should the safety of women and children be the trade-off for the media's freedom?"¹⁴². Articles that favour security over liberties reflect genuine concern for the safety of children. The corruption of children via exposure to pornographic material, as well as their exposure to potential dangerous predators who imitate pornography, or are fuelled in their desires to act out because of child pornography, are believed to be imminent threats, and true security concerns¹⁴³. Policy and legislation are portrayed as inadequate. This inadequacy is, in turn, linked to the commission of further deviance, and believed to be the cause of extreme acts of overt violent behaviour: "when the Marc Lépins and Ted Bundys emerge from the shadows, all I can say is: what did you expect?"¹⁴⁴. As such, some articles plead for more stringent laws, and focus on the criminal justice system as a solution.

The same debate is found in articles that relate to the theme of obscenity. While they insist on the importance of free artistic impression, film and theatre directors are faced with societal resistance to their representations of incest and other forms of sexual deviance involving children or youths. One article, which reviews the work of Christopher Hampton, a playwright, is entitled "No apologies made for finding pleasure in evil"¹⁴⁵. The allusion to evil in this article's title refers to one character's "deflowering [a] girl in a workaday manner"¹⁴⁶. Upon reading the article, one gets the impression that the playwright should, in fact, apologize for the obscene nature of his work. Likewise, a film

¹⁴⁰ Taylor, K. "Comic cops cause concern because of sweeping seizures". G&M, Thursday Mar. 21, 1991: p.C3.

¹⁴¹ Ibid: p. C3.

¹⁴² Skelton, J. "Ending the evil influence of porn". G&M, Monday Jan. 14, 1991: p.A14.

¹⁴³ Ibid: p.A14.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid: p.A14.

¹⁴⁵ Conlogue, R. "No apologies made for finding pleasure in evil". G&M, Friday Feb. 15, 1991: p.D8.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid: p.D8.

director's controversial representation of incest in his film adaptation of *Hamlet* leaves him defensive about possible social reactions: "I'm really ready to fight. They cannot deny any of my findings here."¹⁴⁷ Although both of these individuals assert their rights to be creative, they are conscious nonetheless of social pressure exerted by a public determined to denounce their work as obscene.

4.4.3 Child Sexual Abuse

Sixty one articles were found that related to child sexual abuse in the 1991 sample of articles amassed. These articles by far outnumbered articles that deal with any other theme for that year, representing 87.14% of the sample (**Tab. 4.4 A**). In 1991, an overwhelming majority of articles refer to extrafamilial abuse. Child sexual abuse perpetrators are wide-ranging in their occupations, with particular focus given to clerics (**Tab. 4.4 B**). Indeed, the 'pedophile priest' scandal obtains much coverage in 1991. Clerics become the target of reporters through their involvement in two stories which received widespread media coverage: the abuse of Native children in residential¹⁴⁸ schools, and that of young boys at Mount Cashel orphanage¹⁴⁹. Both situations occurred in the prior to, and during the 1970s, and were brought to light in the early 1990s. As a result, child sexual abuse committed by clerics became a generalized problem, and media attention was given to other 'pedophile priest' incidents¹⁵⁰. Sexual

¹⁴⁷ Alaton, S. "Here, I'm really ready to fight". G&M, Thursday Jan. 3, 1991: p.C1.

¹⁴⁸ Haslett Cuff, J. "Film offers a tragic lesson in discrimination". G&M, Tuesday Jan. 8, 1991: p.C3. See also: Berthelette, J. "I am no longer a Christian". G&M, Friday Jan. 25, 1991: p.A14. See also: Roberts, D. "Bishops to discuss charges of abuse. Meeting to deal with native schools". Saturday Feb. 2, 1991: p.A4.

¹⁴⁹ C.P. "Former head of Mt. Cashel to face trial". G&M, Tuesday Jan. 22, 1991: p.A5. See also: Anonymous. "Mount Cashel report". G&M, Thursday Feb. 14, 1991: p.A8. See also: Cox, K. "Lawyer claims government can't escape responsibility". G&M, Friday Feb. 15, 1991: A6.

¹⁵⁰ C.P. "Priest jailed". G&M, Monday Jan. 14, 1991: p.A7. See also: C.P. "Priest jailed for assault". G&M, Monday Jan. 21, 1991: p.A3. See also: Cumming, C. "Forgiving the sins of the fathers". G&M, Thursday Jan. 31, 1991: p.A18. See also: Catholic leader seeks help in healing wounds". G&M, Monday Feb. 4, 1991: p.A4. See also: Conlogue, R. "Small flaws erode Lilie's power". G&M, Monday Feb. 4, 1991: p.C1. See also: Roberts, D. "B.C. bishop charged with sex offences". G&M, Tuesday Feb. 5, 1991: p.A4. See also: C.P. "Priest apologizes". G&M, Monday Feb. 11, 1991: p.A3. See also: C.P. "Charges expected from abuse probe". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 13, 1991: p.A6. See also: Delacourt, S. "19 Ottawa lay brothers face 149 abuse charges". G&M, Friday Feb. 15, 1991: p.A5. See also: Will, G. "Stricter screening of potential priests vowed". G&M, Monday Feb. 18, 1991: p.A3. See also: Daly, B. "Need time to assess". G&M, Friday Feb. 22, 1991: p.A14. See also: C.P. "Church apologizes". G&M, Friday Mar. 15, 1991: p.A8.

abuses perpetrated by medical doctors are also the focus of much mediacized attention¹⁵¹.

Table 4.4 B

Number of Articles and Perpetrator Occupation in 1991

<i>Perpetrator</i>	<i>Number of articles</i>
Priest	18
Doctor (MD)	7
Child care worker	3
Teacher	2
Big Brothers (volunteer)	1
Government official	1
Public swimming pool employee	1

Another category of offender that is heavily focused on in 1991 is that of young men under 20 years of age¹⁵². Seven articles reported on the commission of child sexual abuse by young men. In one article, the perpetrators were the same age as their victims, and the incidents occurred at school¹⁵³. The court is increasingly portrayed as judging youths on equal par with adults¹⁵⁴, judgements which are in line with the apparent punitive nature of the courts at this time. In one article, a 62-year-old man is sentenced to a period of incarceration of 6 years for offences that occurred in the past. Other articles urge the implementation of harsher sentences¹⁵⁵, as well as the use of the

¹⁵¹ Taylor, P. "Taking stand on MDs who abuse". G&M, Monday Jan. 28, 1991: p.A1. See also: Taylor, P. "4 key rulings involving MDs overruled". G&M, Monday Jan. 28, 1991: p.A4. See also: C.P. "Privileges retained". G&M, Wednesday Jan. 30, 1991: p.A4. See also: Taylor, P. "Travelling doctors abused native girls, task force told". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 20, 1991: pp.A1, A2. See also: C.P. "Former coroner convicted of assaulting women patients". G&M, Thursday Feb. 21, 1991: p.A7. See also: Taylor, P. "Group seeks removal of MD's privileges" G&M, Tuesday Mar. 5, 1991: p.A5. See also: Anonymous. "MD's trial to continue in sexual assault". G&M, Tuesday Mar. 26, 1991: p.A12.

¹⁵² Reuter. "Boys charged with rape". G&M, Saturday Feb. 9, 1991: p.A9. See also: Claridge, T. "Trial as adult upheld. Murder charge laid at age 16". G&M, Monday Feb. 18, 1991: p.A6. See also: Anonymous, supra 163. G&M, Monday Feb. 18, 1991: p.A6. See also: Anonymous. "Bail denied". G&M, Friday Feb. 22, 1991: p.A8. See also: Anonymous. "Conviction set aside". G&M, Tuesday Mar. 12, 1991: p.A12. See also: Anonymous. "Jailed for sex attacks". G&M, Friday Mar. 15, 1991: p.A8.

¹⁵³ Anonymous. "10 boys charged". G&M, Saturday Mar. 2, 1991: p.A8.

¹⁵⁴ See Claridge, supra 1221: p.A6.

¹⁵⁵ Anonymous. "Judge calls for lighter penalties in family sex assault cases". G&M, Tuesday Jan. 15, 1991: p.A7. See also: C.P. "Sex offender jailed". G&M, Wednesday Jan. 23, 1991: p.A2.

'dangerous offender' designation¹⁵⁶. Child sexual abuse perpetrators are portrayed as predators¹⁵⁷, incurable recidivists¹⁵⁸, and career criminals¹⁵⁹.

Sympathies align with victims of child sexual abuse in 1991. The difficulties faced by child victims in court are enumerated, and court proceedings are, in that regard, portrayed as problematic¹⁶⁰. Women accused of criminal wrongdoings in their adult lives are compassionately excused, in light of their sexual victimization as children¹⁶¹. Various programs and services are implemented to prevent the incidence of child sexual abuse, and to treat victims who come forward¹⁶². Greater awareness of occurrence of the problematic leads to greater awareness of the secrecy that fosters and perpetuates it¹⁶³.

Paradoxically, victims are said to disclose the abuse more often, yet a majority is still believed to remain in the shadows. In their attempts to protect known, and unknown victims of child sexual abuse, law enforcement agencies work arduously to prosecute perpetrators. In all their enthusiasm, however, due process rights are sometimes dismissed, as demonstrated in three articles collected in the sample. In these cases, court judges often express frustration for having no other choice than to stay charges¹⁶⁴, reduce sentences¹⁶⁵, or let the perpetrator go free¹⁶⁶. This would indicate that judges, and likely other criminal justice officials, are active participants in the radicalization of social reactions towards child sex offending and this, despite their mandate to resolved disputes as objectively as possible.

¹⁵⁶ C.P. "Dangerous offender". G&M, Friday Feb. 22, 1991: p.A6.

¹⁵⁷ Anonymous. "One of 2 sisters abducted sexually assaulted". G&M, Tuesday Feb. 5, 1991: p.A6.

¹⁵⁸ C.P. "Escaper arrested in Windsor chase". G&M, Friday Feb. 8, 1991: p.A5. See also: Millson, L. "Inmates given parole in stages". G&M, Friday Feb. 8, 1991: p.A5.

¹⁵⁹ Oziewicz, E. "Columbian faces sex charges". G&M, Friday Mar. 10, 1991: p.A8.

¹⁶⁰ Shoaltz, D. "Child's videotape evidence rejected". G&M, Saturday Feb. 16, 1991: p.A6. See also: Claridge, T. "9 male jurors join sex-assault defendant in courtroom lineup". G&M, Thursday Feb. 28, 1991: p.A14.

¹⁶¹ C.P. "Not seeking damages from bereaved mom, firm says". G&M, Thursday Jan. 3, 1991: p.A8. See also: C.P. "Receptionist's slaying part of violent trend". G&M, Thursday Feb. 21, 1991: p.A8.

¹⁶² Shoaltz, D. "Action on child abuse increases". G&M, Thursday Feb. 7, 1991: p.A5.

¹⁶³ Shoaltz, D. "Decent people kept the secret". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 6, 1991: p.A1, A7. See also: Miller, M. "Horrid secret". G&M, Monday Feb. 18, 1991: p.A12.

¹⁶⁴ Anonymous. "Charges stayed". G&M, Monday Mar. 25, 1991: p.A3.

¹⁶⁵ C.P. "Man who abused daughter given suspended sentence". G&M, Monday Feb. 11, 1991: p.A5.

¹⁶⁶ Anonymous, supra 149: p.A12.

4.4.4 Wrongful Accusations / Convictions

Only one article related to the theme of wrongful accusations and convictions (1.43% of the sample for that year) (**Tab. 4.4 A**). In accordance with the previous discussion, this article (entitled “Action on child abuse increases”) reports on one police officer’s eagerness to convict a suspect of child sexual abuse, and the resulting charges of perjury and obstructing justice he faced. In light of new evidence, the case he had investigated is reopened, and the accused, Guy Paul Morin, is set to stand trial for a second time later that year¹⁶⁷.

4.4.5 Age of Consent

There were no articles on age of consent offences in the 1991 sample of articles collected (**Tab. 4.4 A**).

4.5 Portrayals of Child Sexual Offending in 1998

Over a period of six months, over twice as many articles were collected for 1998 as were collected in 1984. The year 1998 sees unprecedented coverage of child sex offending: 238 articles were collected, representing an estimated 476 articles for the whole year. These numbers point to an explosion in media coverage of child sex offending in 1998. Once again, sexual abuse was the theme most often reported on, followed by wrongful accusations and convictions, and, following each other closely in range, pornography/obscenity, prostitution, and finally, age of consent offences (**Fig. 4.5 A; Tab. 4.5 A**)

¹⁶⁷ C.P. “Jessop case investigators to stand trial”. G&M, Friday Feb. 22, 1991: p.A3.

Figure 4.5 A

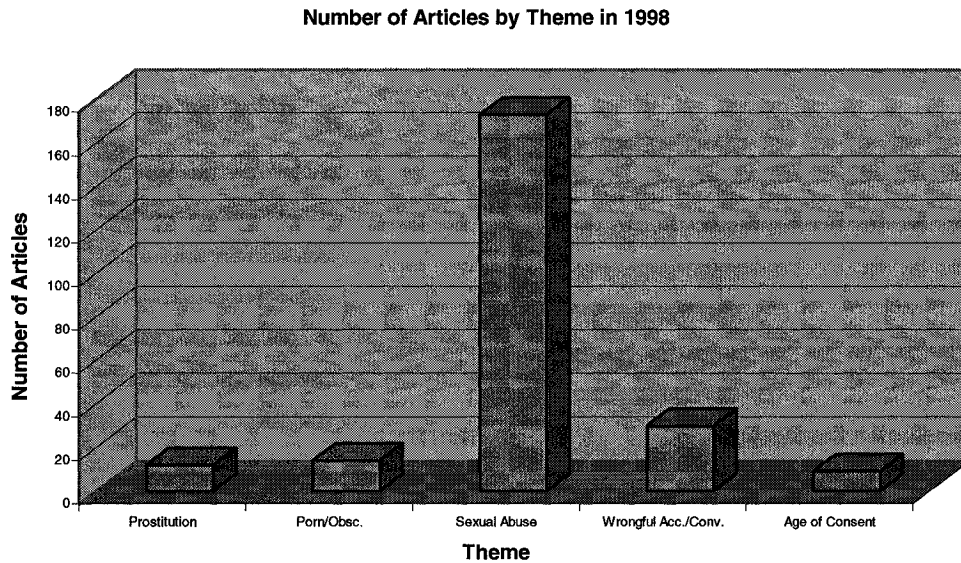


Table 4.5 A

Number of Articles by Theme in 1998

Theme	Prostitution	Porn/Obsc.	Sexual Abuse	Wrongful Acc./Conv.	Age of Consent	Total
Articles (Yearly)	12	14	173	30	9	238
Percentage	5.04%	5.88%	72.69%	12.61%	3.78%	100%

4.5.1 Child Prostitution

There were 12 articles on child prostitution in 1998 (5.04% of that year's sample) (**Tab. 4.5 A**). Two views of the problematic were presented: first, a number of articles looked at child prostitution as a global problem. Globalization was seen both as the cause of child prostitution, through child trafficking and international prostitution rings¹⁶⁸, and its solution, through the organization of summits and conferences to increase awareness of

¹⁶⁸ Anonymous. "Prostitution ring smashed". G&M, Saturday Feb. 7, 1998: p.A10. See also: Anonymous. "Brothel ring cracked". G&M, Saturday Feb. 28, 1998: p.A3.

the problematic¹⁶⁹. Child prostitution was also portrayed as a local problem, one that occurs on the streets of Canadian (and other) cities¹⁷⁰. Regardless, both types of child prostitution were portrayed as dangerous, involving much violence, drugs, even kidnappings¹⁷¹. Furthermore, child prostitution was characterized as a problematic that is, for the most part, invisible: “It’s happening, it’s not really out in the open.”¹⁷²

Moreover, newspaper articles highlight a lack of concern about child prostitution, which would offer a partial explanation for the invisibility of the phenomenon: “Child prostitution is not taken seriously enough [in Canada].”¹⁷³ Further awareness, coupled with proactive action are urged in order to help the “damaged but determined survivors” of child prostitution, many of which are believed to have been sexually abused in their earlier childhood,¹⁷⁴ as well as to break down the barrier created by secrecy, which surrounds child prostitution, given its stigmatizing nature. That child prostitution is the ‘dirty secret’ of certain towns and cities is believed to contribute to the perpetuation of the problematic¹⁷⁵.

One article stood out from the rest in its portrayal of child prostitution. In this article, prostitution, referred to as “the oldest profession in the world”, and more specifically, child prostitution, are portrayed in a positive light¹⁷⁶. The discovery of an ancient brothel where customers would resort to “services offered by young boys and girls” was embraced as one of Greece’s “oldest home[s]”¹⁷⁷. At no point does the author adopt a moral stance on the issue, nor is there any mention of exploitation. Rather, the sex trade is portrayed as nothing more than a profession, even for children, one that is healthy and natural. As mentioned above, this article stands out from other articles

¹⁶⁹ Anonymous. “Sex-trade conference begins”. G&M, Saturday Mar. 7, 1998: p.A8. See also: Housser, S. “Teens tell chilling tale of life in sex trade”. G&M, Monday Mar. 9, 1998: p.A4.

¹⁷⁰ Doyle, J. “Safe”. G&M, Saturday Mar. 14, 1998: p.15, Broadcast Week section. See also: Anonymous. “Prostitution arrest made”. G&M, Saturday Apr. 18, 1998: p.A12.

¹⁷¹ See Anonymous, supra 137: p.A3. See also: Housser, supra 138: p.A4. See also: Anonymous, supra 139: p.A12. See also: Anonymous. “Man sought in kidnapping”. G&M, Tuesday Apr. 21, 1998: p.A8.

¹⁷² Anonymous. “Police probe prostitution talk”. G&M, Friday June 26, 1998: p.A6.

¹⁷³ See Anonymous, supra 138: p.A8.

¹⁷⁴ See Housser, supra 138: p.A4.

¹⁷⁵ See Anonymous, supra 141: p.A6.

¹⁷⁶ Smith, H. “Ancient brother excites archaeologists”. G&M, Friday Apr. 17, 1998: p.A14.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid: p.A14.

related to this theme, because it is the first, and only article in 1998 to accept child prostitution as a 'normal', or natural social phenomenon.

4.5.2 Child Pornography / Obscenity

In the sample collected for 1998, 14 articles, or 5.88% of the sample, were related to child pornography and obscenity (**Tab. 4.5 A**). The internet was cited as a source of concern with regards to a perceived growth of the problematic, given then pervasiveness, and complexity of online child pornography: "it's only going to get worse"¹⁷⁸. Anxieties are directed toward the borderless nature of the internet, making it possible for child pornography networks to be established, and for difficulties in exerting control over the distribution and consumption of pornographic material. In one article, an individual accused of possessing child pornography is portrayed as a true dangerous threat. As this article reports, seized from his domicile were not only pictures of a sensitive nature, but also drugs, alcohol, a gun... and children's clothing¹⁷⁹. Given that this is the only article which discusses the details of a perpetrator's background, his portrayal paints a bleak picture of users of online child pornography.

Other articles are somewhat more critical of the child pornography 'crisis'. One reporter who set out to assess the scope of the problem found that "in all my searches I was able to discover only three images of girls (...). I wasn't shocked, exactly – they weren't doing anything 'depraved'"¹⁸⁰. This reporter's observations give reason to believe that child pornography on the internet is not as pervasive as it would seem, and that perhaps child pornography is not as prevalent a problem as we have been led to accept as true. The exaggeration of the incidence of child pornography, and stereotyped media portrayals have important repercussions. As one article reports, media leaks can "distor[t] the nature and strength of the case"¹⁸¹. Such is the case for Michael Jackson at this time, who was accused of videotaping a sexual encounter with a 13-year-old. The case was thrown out, and the accuser, sued for slander¹⁸².

¹⁷⁸ Rowan, G. "Child porn grows on the internet". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 4, 1998: p.A4.

¹⁷⁹ Anonymous. "Child porn charges laid". G&M, Wednesday Apr. 22, 1998: p.A10.

¹⁸⁰ Haslett Cuff, J. "Access to child porn overblown". G&M, Saturday Feb. 21, 1998: p.C22.

¹⁸¹ Anonymous. "Porn case appeal dropped". G&M, Friday Feb.13, 1998: p.A4.

¹⁸² A.P. "Jackson wins lawsuit". G&M, Saturday Apr. 1., 1998: p.C2.

Articles relating to obscenity are numerous in 1998. First, in rebuttal to an article mentioned in the last section, regarding the surprising portrayal of child prostitution as natural, one individual writes: "How shameful that this depravity is listed as just another sexual pleasure", criticizing the reporter for her "nonchalant reference to pedophilic tendencies"¹⁸³. The depiction of child prostitution as an everyday occurrence in ancient Greece is, in this article, considered obscene.

The protection of children's integrity is emphasized in articles related to obscenity at this time. Much discussion is centred around the potential release of Paul Bernardo's videotaped sexual assaults and killings, considered obscene. The families of Leslie Mahaffy and Kristen French are portrayed as being revictimized by the courts, who allege the videotapes are not constitutionally protected. The issue is one which pits news-media organizations against the families of victims of one of Canada's most notorious criminals. While the news media argue they have the right to view the tapes' contents, the French and Mahaffy families argue this would entail a breach of privacy¹⁸⁴.

In the last case and others, there appears to be a disjuncture between what is obscene, and what is considered free expression, as with the case of the reporter who expressed enthusiastic acknowledgement of an archaeological find. Similarly, the arts are once again the subject of debate. Screenings of movies such as *Pretty Baby* (1987) and *Lolita* (1955) are said to "glamorize pedophilia", to "normalize the activities of pedophile behavior"¹⁸⁵, and to minimize the harms inflicted onto victims. Some are concerned that "perverts will flock to this travesty" (in this case, the film *Lolita*)¹⁸⁶. In sum, a number of films depicting children engaged in sexual relations with adults are considered obscene, and the legality of their presentation is put into question¹⁸⁷. In contrast, one movie,

¹⁸³ McLagan, T. "Too nonchalant". G&M, Friday Apr. 24, 1998: p.A18.

¹⁸⁴ Anonymous. "Fund for Bernardo victims". G&M, Friday Feb. 20, 1998: p.A8. See also: Claridge, T. "Victims' families fail to ensure Bernardo tapes never viewed". G&M, Thursday Feb. 26, 1998: p.A6. See also: C.P. "Tapes ruling to be appealed". G&M, Saturday Feb. 28, 1998: p.A6.

¹⁸⁵ Reuters. "Lolita film sparks protests". G&M, Wednesday Mar. 25, 1998: p.C3.

¹⁸⁶ Byrne, C. "One who loved not wisely, but too well". G&M, Wednesday May 27, 1998: pp.D1, D2.

¹⁸⁷ Doyle, J. "Pretty Baby". G&M, Saturday Apr. 11, 1998: p.13, Broadcast Week section. See also: Skelton, C. "Lolita too hot for Canada's distributors". G&M, Monday May 11, 1998: p.C2.

Boogie Nights (1997), which tells the tale of a male adolescent pornography star, is celebrated as a success, and is not portrayed as obscene¹⁸⁸.

4.5.3 Child Sexual Abuse

There were 173 articles related to child sexual abuse in the sample collected for 1998 (72.69%), making up, by far, the vast majority of articles for that year (**Tab. 4.5 A**). As before, child sexual abuse was portrayed in part as a 'stranger danger' phenomenon. Five articles reported on children who had been sexually assaulted amidst kidnaps and murders by people unknown to them¹⁸⁹. Most articles, however, portrayed perpetrators of child sexual abuse as individuals known to their victims. While 8 articles reported on incest offences¹⁹⁰, the majority (52) of child sexual abuses were said to have been committed by individuals known to the victim, but not related by blood. Most of these perpetrators (45) were identified through their social occupation/status, as demonstrated in **Table 4.5 B**.

¹⁸⁸ Grimbly, S. "Boogie Nights a sexy subject but fails to deliver". G&M, Friday Apr. 10, 1998: p.C3.

¹⁸⁹ C.P. "Missing Alberta girl found unharmed". G&M, Monday Apr. 13, 1998: p.A4. See also: C.P. "Abduction suspects locked behind bars". G&M, Tuesday Apr. 14, 1998: p.A7. See also: C.P. "Escaper charged with assault". G&M, Thursday Apr. 16, 1998: p.A5. See also: Luhnnow, D. "Serial sex murders are haunting Mexican border city". G&M, Thursday June 11, 1998: p.A19. See also: C.P. "Man charged with abduction". Monday June 22, 1998: p.A4.

¹⁹⁰ Anonymous. "Man sentenced for incest". G&M, Friday Jan. 23, 1998: p.A8. See also: Doyle, J. "Dad". G&M, Saturday Jan. 24, 1998: p.7, Broadcast Week section. See also: Doyle, J. "Priest". G&M, Saturday Feb. 7, 1998: p.15, Broadcast Week section. See also: Doyle, J. "The Cement Garden". G&M, Saturday Feb. 14, 1998: p.15, Broadcast Week section. See also: Groen, R. "Exposé will fuel debate over Waco". G&M, Friday Mar. 20, 1998: p.C4. See also: Daurio, B. "Debut novel deserves a bid hand". G&M, Saturday Jan. 25, 1998: p.D15. See also: Cohen, M. "Sexual low jinks in New York". G&M, Saturday May 2, 1998: p.D16. See also: Kennedy, K. "Small-town St.George subdues his dragon". G&M, Saturday May 16, 1998: p.D15.

Table 4.5 B

Number of Articles and Perpetrator Occupation (1991, 1998)

<i>Perpetrator Occupation</i>	<i>Number of Articles in 1991 (3 months)</i>	<i>Number of Articles in 1998 (6 months)</i>
Priest	18	8
Doctor (MD)	7	1
Teacher	2	4
Government official	1	1
Coach	0	9
Sports athlete	0	4
School principal	0	4
President (Nicaragua)	0	4
Counsellor	0	2
RCMP officer	0	2
Guard of a youth detention centre	0	2
School janitor	0	1
Nurse	0	1
Babysitter's employer	0	1
Student	0	1
Child care worker	3	0
Big Brothers (volunteer)	1	0
Public swimming pool employee	1	0

In bold, we find four perpetrator occupations which also figured on the list of perpetrator occupations in 1991. Gone from that list are three types of occupations, but many more have been added. As evidenced above, the range and diversity of perpetrator occupations increased. For instance, athletes are reported to have sexually abused children for the first time. Sports coaches make up the most prevalent category of perpetrators in 1998. It is also noteworthy that categories which were prevalent in 1991 (i.e. priests, doctors) receive much less coverage seven years later. The focus of newspaper articles on perpetrators of child sexual abuse in the Globe and Mail has shifted.

Perpetrators whose occupations were not the focus of the article, but who were nonetheless known to their victims, included foster parents¹⁹¹ and stepparents of child

¹⁹¹ Anonymous. "Sex charges of at group home". G&M, Thursday Apr. 9, 1998: p.A12. See also: Gadd, J. "Teen-agers tell of abuse in foster care". G&M, Thursday Apr. 30, 1998: p.A12.

victims¹⁹². Male adolescents, as well as young boys were also categorized as child sexual offenders in a few cases¹⁹³. Finally, women make their debut in 1998 as perpetrators of child sexual abuse. The absence of portrayals of child sex offenders as women is said to “ha[ve] been around for a great many years, but unfortunately, because of social attitudes, it hasn’t been addressed.”¹⁹⁴ Despite the assertion that child sexual abuse committed by women is not a ‘new’ phenomenon, it is portrayed as being on the increase¹⁹⁵. Whether or not this increase is related to an increase in the number of reported incidents is not specified.

Interventions and social service practices will often vary with the type of sexual abuse undergone by child victims (intrafamilial, incest, extrafamilial, etc.) (Itzin, 2001). In accordance with the wide range of perpetrators mentioned above (family members, as well as individuals known, and unknown to the victims), a variety of responses are put forward to meet the needs of child victims, or potential victims of sexual abuse. Many preventive strategies are suggested, most often by law enforcement agencies. These strategies are aimed towards the prevention of abuses by strangers¹⁹⁶. One Toronto policeman warns: “make sure [your] children know to be aware of their surroundings and to report any strange behaviour by people they do not know.”¹⁹⁷

A number of strategies are also in effect for children who were victims of sexual abuse. For one, the *Crime Stoppers* phoneline is portrayed as an effective measure to track down individuals accused of child sexual abuse. Once again, this tactic is aimed primarily at extrafamilial offenders who were unknown to their victims prior to their offences. Other tactics, which attempt to focus on each category of victimization, include in-school programs¹⁹⁸ and mobile trauma squads¹⁹⁹, which specialize in dealing with

¹⁹² Valpy, M. “Out from the darkness of Cinderella”. G&M, Friday Jan. 9, 1998: p.A13.

¹⁹³ Anonymous. “Teen arrested for sex assaults”. G&M, Thursday May 21, 1998: p.A1. See also: Reuters. “Boy guilty of sexual assault on toddler”. G&M, Friday June 5, 1998: p.A12. See also: A.P. “Boy jailed for toddler attack”. G&M, Saturday June 6, 1998: p.A15. See also: Green, S.J. “Boys showed no remorse, probe told”. G&M, Friday June 26, 1998: p.A8.

¹⁹⁴ Appleby, T. “Attitudes, statistics shroud sexual assaults by women”. G&M, Monday Mar. 9, 1998: p.A6.

¹⁹⁵ C.P. “Women perpetrating assault”. G&M, Monday Feb. 16, 1998: p.A7.

¹⁹⁶ Anonymous. “Women warned of assaults”. G&M, Tuesday Apr. 28, 1998: p.A12. See also: Anonymous. “Sex assaults spark warning”. G&M, Monday May 18, 1998: p.A6. See also:

Anonymous. “Sex assaults spark warning”. G&M, Wednesday June 24, 1998: p.A10.

¹⁹⁷ Anonymous. “Men charge with indecency”. G&M, Saturday Jan. 17, 1998: p.A6.

¹⁹⁸ Anonymous. “Khalsa school keeps financing”. G&M, Saturday Feb. 14, 1998: p.A9.

¹⁹⁹ Anonymous. “Arrest in sexual assault”. G&M, Saturday Jan. 31, 1998: p.A14.

cases of child sexual abuse. Despite the diversity of these services, they all have one thing in common: a perceived lack of funding. Facing increases in the number of children who come forward with attestations of sexual abuse, many agencies and social service programs are depicted as overwhelmed²⁰⁰. Children's Aid Services, for instance, are said to suffer from a "lack of specialized training, [and] the heavy case loads of social workers", resulting in the mismanagement of information and murky intervention plans²⁰¹.

The lack of resources cited above is linked directly to an increase in crises experienced by victims²⁰². An increase in funding is portrayed as all the more urgent, given the consequences undergone by child victims. Indeed, these victims' lives are depicted as devastated, in some cases, even ruined in the aftermath of child sexual abuse²⁰³. Whereas some contemplate suicide²⁰⁴, others leave home for the streets and are forced to prostitute themselves to survive²⁰⁵. Native Canadians who were sexually abused as children in residential schools exemplify this phenomenon. One victim of residential abuses recounts:

"I have spent years of my life at healing conferences, alcohol- and drug-rehabilitation centres, sweat-lodge ceremonies and myriad other places where Indian people are attempting to recover from the 100 years of (...) sexual abuse meted out in those government-sanctioned, Church-run schools. I can no longer count the number of residential-school survivors I knew (and know of) who died of alcoholism, drug abuse and suicide; I can no longer count the number of memorial services I have attended, many of them on Skid Row in Vancouver;"²⁰⁶

²⁰⁰ See Gadd, *supra* 160: p.A10.

²⁰¹ Séguin, R. "Horrific child abuse case reveals deep flaws in system". G&M, Thursday Apr. 23, 1998: p.A4.

²⁰² Hess, H. "Foster care overflows to college dorm". G&M, Friday June 19, 1998: pp.A1, A8.

²⁰³ Philip, M. "I think I'm going to make it". G&M, Tuesday Jan. 27, 1998: p.A10. See also: Dirks, C. "A future for Erin". G&M, Saturday Jan. 31, 1998: p.D7. See also: Daurio, B. "Debut novel deserves a big hand". G&M, Saturday Jan. 25, 1998: p.D15. See also: Raphael, B. "Good works and the law". G&M, Wednesday June 24, 1998: p.A19.

²⁰⁴ Defoe, C. "Finley visits ark corners, but focus wavers". G&M, Tuesday Jan. 13, 1998: p.C2.

²⁰⁵ Philip, M. "Portrait of a teen-aged squatter". G&M, Monday Jan. 26, 1998: p.A1, A8. See also: Mitchell, A. "More children running away younger, Statscan says". G&M, Friday Feb. 13, 1998: p.A3.

²⁰⁶ Flynn, L.-L. "Horrors of residential school live on". G&M, Saturday June 27, 1998: p.D7.

As this testimonial demonstrates, victims of child sexual abuse are depicted as 'damaged' by their victimization. The consequences of child sexual abuse are portrayed as devastating for all victims alike. Furthermore, these victims are believed to be scarred forever.

The residential school scandal is pursued in 1998, with demands on the part of the Native peoples for an apology from the Canadian government. The issue of accountability for wrongs done permeates articles on this subject matter²⁰⁷. Numerous lawsuits are filed against the Canadian government, as well as the Roman Catholic Church²⁰⁸. As such, debates abound over who should be held responsible for the systematic abuses of Aboriginals in residential schools: social institutions, or a select few 'bad apples'. Through these debates, the sexual abuse of children is portrayed, at least in part, as a social problem, rather than an individual matter.

Most articles, however, depict the problematic to be the result of factors situated at a micro-structural level. Many perpetrators are portrayed as potentially 'treatable', but insatiable recidivists²⁰⁹. Again, the issue of accountability arises, whereby politicians and legislators demand harsher sentences for perpetrators of child sexual abuse²¹⁰. The United States are looked upon as visionary and innovative, for their implementation of sex offender registries²¹¹ and notifications of various types²¹². Already, the wheels are

²⁰⁷ Anderssen, E. "Natives finally get Ottawa's apology". G&M, Wednesday Jan. 8, 1998: pp.A1, A8. See also: Anonymous. "Residential schools, national scandal". G&M, Thursday Jan. 8, 1998: p.A16. See also: Anonymous. "To Aboriginal Canadians: 'Our profound regret'". G&M, Thursday Jan. 8, 1998: p.A17. See also: Anonymous. "An Inuit leader reacts to Ottawa's apology". G&M, Thursday Jan. 29, 1998: p.A19. See also: Matas, R. "'Sorry' doesn't mean it's all our fault, Ottawa tells natives". G&M: Monday Feb. 2, 1998: p.A3. See also: C.P. "Regrets yes, apology no". G&M, Friday Mar. 6, 1998: p.A4. See also: Matas, R. "Probe of Canadian residential schools to be reported at UN". G&M, Saturday June 20, 1998: p.A6.

²⁰⁸ C.P. "Native victims fund mulled". G&M, Tuesday May 5, 1998: p.A7. See also: Cheney, P. "Floodgates open for abuse claims". G&M, Saturday June 6, 1998: pp. A1, A2. See also: Cheney, P., R. Matas, D. Roberts. "Abuse claims against church surge". G&M, Tuesday June 9, 1998: pp.A1, A7.

²⁰⁹ Downey, D. "Child molester could change, court told". G&M, Wednesday Mar. 25, 1998: p.A10. See also: Smith, A. "Interrupting a vicious cycle". G&M, Friday Apr. 3, 1998: p.A18. See also: Anonymous. "Man gets 2 years for assault". G&M, Wednesday Apr. 22, 1998: p.A10. See also: Anonymous. "Man sought in sex assaults". G&M, Tuesday June 2, 1998: p.A12.

²¹⁰ Anonymous. "Convict's penalty questioned". G&M, Thursday Feb. 19, 1998: p.A20. See also: Gadd, J. "Child-protection law to get tougher". G&M, Saturday June 13, 1998: p.A3.

²¹¹ Reuters. "Sexual-offender lists backed by U.S. courts". G&M, Tuesday Feb. 24, 1998: p. A13.

²¹² A.P. "Licence reveals sex offenders". G&M, Tuesday Apr. 21, 1998: p.A17.

in motion for the implementation of community notification strategies in Canada²¹³. In addition, more intrusive measures are encouraged to “help children escape abusive homes”²¹⁴. Anyone who does not pursue these measures is deemed unfit and uncaring, and portrayed as siding with the perpetrators, much like a ‘with us or against us’ philosophy²¹⁵.

However, a number of articles criticized these measures as overly harsh: “it’s meanness that marks our time, and that touches almost everyone, including the political right and left.”²¹⁶ In these articles, the demand for more intrusive measures within Children’s Aid Services, for instance, is portrayed as highly problematic²¹⁷. Lengthy sentences given to elderly folk accused of having committed child sexual abuse in the 1960s or 1970s are also problematized²¹⁸. Vigilante reprisals are reported to result from community notification²¹⁹. Furthermore, meeting the needs of child sex offenders in prison is depicted as unlikely, sometimes even impossible²²⁰. Also, children are said to be re-victimized by the criminal justice system through reporting procedures and judicial process²²¹.

²¹³ C.P. “Molester agreed to warning”. G&M, Thursday Mar, 5, 1998: p.A4.

²¹⁴ Gadd, J. “Must help children escape abusive homes, inquiry told”. G&M, Thursday Jan. 8, 1998: p.A8. See also: McInnes, C. “Children seized justifiably in B.C., investigation finds”. G&M, Wednesday June 10, 1998: p.A3. See also: Gadd, *supra* 179: p.A3.

²¹⁵ Coz, K. “N.S. not following up on sexual-abuse leads, lawyer says”. G&M, Wednesday Jan. 14, 1998: p.A7.

²¹⁶ Salutin, R. “Forget the compassion, the cult of meanness rules the ‘90s”. G&M, Friday May 22, 1998: p.C1.

²¹⁷ Matas, R. “Child-protection tactics decried”. G&M, Saturday Feb. 7, 1998: p.A8. See also: Matas, R. “Shift in child-protection policy leaves B.C. town reeling”. G&M, Monday Feb. 9, 1998: p.A3.

²¹⁸ Claridge, T. “Native council looks for alternatives to jail”. G&M, Monday Jan. 19, 1998: p.A6. See also: Claridge, T. “Convicted man’s arrest was a mistake”. G&M, Monday Feb. 2, 1998: p.A7. See also: Anonymous. “Man, 85, faces sex charges”. G&M, Wednesday Feb. 25, 1998: p.A10. See also: Reuters. “70-year-old sentenced”. G&M, Wednesday Apr. 15, 1998: p.A12.

²¹⁹ C.P. “Molester awarded \$42,000”. G&M, Thursday Mar. 12, 1998: p.A11. See also: C.P. “Lien targets victim’s father”. G&M, Friday Mar. 20, 1998: p.A6. See also: Knott, S. “Turn on the heat”. G&M, Saturday June 13, 1998: p.9, 17 Broadcast Week section.

²²⁰ Makin, K. “Does conditional sentencing fit the crime?” G&M, Monday May 18, 1998: pp.A1. A2. See also: Claridge, T. “Lawyer seeks early release for prisoner”. G&M, Thursday June 25, 1998: p.A13.

²²¹ Makin, K. “Some sex-assault trails abuse children again: judge”. G&M, Wednesday May 13, 1998: pp.A1, A11. See also: Hovdestad, W.E. “Making courts safe for kids”. G&M, Thursday May 14, 1998: p.A20. See also: Robertson, G. “Where the dark secrets can be told”. G&M, Friday June 19, 1998: p.A12.

The stigma experienced by individuals accused of child sexual abuse is underlined at numerous times in 1998. This is portrayed as problematic when stigma compromises an individual's right to a fair trial²²², and when the reputations of individuals are affected, particularly if these individuals are absolved of guilty verdict at a later time²²³. The stigma is, in fact, so powerful that one perpetrator committed suicide in light of the newspaper publication of his name in relation to an ongoing investigation of a case of child sexual abuse. Of the stigma felt by his client, the man's lawyer asserted: "It affects every aspect of a person's life and everyone gets tarred with the same brush, and they have to wear that forever."²²⁴

Accused perpetrators of child sexual abuse are not alone in feeling the stigma brought on by the nature of the problematic. Families of those accused of child sexual abuse, and the broader community who surround them, are also affected²²⁵. As describe in one article, "[The perpetrator] was ostracized and his family was ostracized because of the suspicions"²²⁶. Mere suspicion is enough to warrant stigma for individuals and their families. Much of this stigma is linked in the Globe and Mail to a 'small-town phenomenon', whereby individuals are bound by the bonds of their communities to keep abuses hidden, thus allowing for the perpetuation of the problem. Six articles depicted child sexual abuse as occurring in small towns or communities²²⁷.

In contrast, victims are believed to undergo less stigma than ever before, mostly due to greater awareness on the part of the public and social service agencies with regards to the proper etiquette to adopt with them²²⁸. For instance, Canadian singer Susan

²²² Makin, K. "Judge's order may nullify trial, lawyer says". G&M, Tuesday May 5, 1998: PAGE.

²²³ Green, S.J. "Principal testifies in student's suicide". G&M, Saturday June 27, 1998: p.A10.

²²⁴ Cox, K. "Lawyer seeks ban on naming people accused of abuse". G&M, Saturday Jan. 17, 1998: p.A10.

²²⁵ Hess, H. "Student suicide sparks call for inquest". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 18, 1998: p.A8. See also: Mitchell, A. "Hutterite communities rocked by sex charges". G&M, Saturday May 30, 1998: p.A3. See also: Mitchell, A. "Hutterites urged to plead guilty to sex charges". G&M, Tuesday June 16, 1998: p.A9. See also: C.P. "Young Hutterite men sentenced in sex case". G&M, Saturday June 27, 1998: p.A6. See also: Green, *supra* 192: p.A10.

²²⁶ Cernetig, M. "Man held in 1964 slaying gets juvenile anonymity". G&M, Friday Mar, 13, 1998: p.A4.

²²⁷ C.P. "Man convicted of sex assault". G&M, Wednesday Jan. 14, 1998: p.A12. See also: Séguin, R. "Horrific child abuse case reveals deep flaws in system". G&M, Thursday Apr. 23, 1998: p.A4. See also: Kennedy, K. "Small-town St. George subdues his dragon". G&M, Saturday May 16, 1998: p. D15. See also: Mitchell, *Supra* 194: p.A3. See also: Mitchell, *supra* 194: p.A9. See also: C.P., *supra* 194: p.A6.

²²⁸ Honey, K. "Why sex-assault victim went public". G&M, Saturday Apr. 25, 1998: pp. A1, A2.

Aglukark appeared on *Life & Times* to discuss, amongst other things, her sexual victimization as a child, and the emotional scars that incurred²²⁹. Several victims come forward in 1998 to denounce sexual abuses perpetrated in the past, when they were children²³⁰. These articles lend support to the idea that a greater number of individuals report their sexual victimizations. Cases of sexual abuse perpetrated long ago are sometimes the result of victims' purported delayed memories. These memories are sometimes criticized as invalid²³¹. Likewise, experts testify it is more healthy to focus on the present, rather than the past, and reliving memories from long ago through court processes is reported to have adverse effects on victims²³².

4.5.4 Wrongful Accusations / Convictions

Much is said of wrongful accusations and convictions in 1998. Thirty articles which related to this theme were collected, representing 12.61% of the six-month sample (**Tab. 4.5 A**). Recovered and repressed memories are the object of much backlash at this time: 10 articles denounce repressed memory syndrome as "psychological quackery"²³³, a "dangerous and powerful too[l] for persuasion, [which] spawn[ed] hundreds of false accusations against parents, destroying families and undermining the credibility of genuine abuse victims."²³⁴ Sexual abuse recalled through dreams²³⁵, and through

²²⁹ Doyle, J. "Life & Times: Susan Aglukark". G&M, Saturday Feb. 21, 1998: p.17, Broadcast Week section.

²³⁰ C.P. "Man convicted of sex assault". G&M, Wednesday Jan. 14, 1998: p.A12. See also: Anonymous. "Sex offender sentenced". G&M, Wednesday Jan. 21, 1998: p.A10. See also: C.P. "Ex-priest convicted of assault". G&M, Tuesday Feb. 10, 1998: p.A4. See also: Anonymous. "Man faces rape charges dating back to 1960". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 18, 1998: p.A7. See also: A.P. "Woman describes rape and mutilation". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 25, 1998: p.A16. See also: Anonymous. "Convicted 38 years later". G&M, Thursday Feb. 26, 1998: p.A12. See also: Anonymous. "Man sentenced for pair of 38-year-old sexual assaults". G&M, Tuesday Mar. 24, 1998: p.A8. See also: Galt, V. "Four teachers stripped of certification for misconduct". G&M, Thursday Apr. 9, 1998: p. A8. See also: Reuters. "Glitter charged with five offences". G&M, Wednesday May 6, 1998: p.C2. See also: C.P. "Victims want more time". G&M, Monday June 8, 1998: p.A3.

²³¹ Fair, G. "The courts and delayed memories". G&M, Wednesday Jan. 28, 1998: p.A17.

²³² Anonymous. "Sexual-abuse memories". G&M, Saturday Feb. 28, 1998: p.D5.

²³³ Makin, K. "McLellan to look into recovered-memory debate". G&M, Wednesday May 20, 1998: p.A3.

²³⁴ Guardian. "Psychiatrists slam 'repressed' memory". G&M, Tuesday Jan. 13, 1998: p.A2. See also: Matas, R. "Teacher's had three trials, spent more than \$500,000". G&M, Saturday Jan. 10, 1998: pp.A1, A12. See also: Matas, R. "A teacher relives a legal nightmare". G&M, Tuesday Jan. 13, 1998: p.A2. See also: Anonymous. "Crown won't appeal decision". G&M, Saturday Jan. 17, 1998: p.A6. See also: Anonymous. "Remember those justice forgot". G&M, Wednesday Apr. 15, 1998: p.A14. See also: Makin, K. "False memory's victims languish in jail". G&M, Saturday May 9,

memories from long-ago²³⁶ are also called into question, much like the matter of multiple personality disorder²³⁷. Sexual abuse testimonials that resulted from so-called satanic cult rituals are also criticized for having left “more victims than there were to begin with”²³⁸. In essence, the collateral damage resulting from a radicalization of social reactions to child sex offending is acknowledged.

False accusations and convictions are portrayed as having been caused by the overenthusiasm of criminal justice officials in what can only be described as a witch hunt for perpetrators of child sexual offending, an offspring of the growing awareness of child sexual abuse²³⁹. The case of Guy Paul Morin’s wrongful conviction illustrates this best. According to the Morin Inquiry Report, Morin’s wrongful conviction and imprisonment were “rooted in systematic problems as well as the failings of individuals.”²⁴⁰ More specifically, false testimonies from purported witnesses, police officers, jailhouse informants, and forensic investigators led to the conviction of an innocent man. These individuals were said not to have had malicious intentions, but to have been motivated by their incentive to convict a man they thought guilty of child sexual assault and murder. The Morin Inquiry Report led to criticisms of the system, portrayed here as biased and unfair²⁴¹.

1998: pp.A1, A12. See also: Makin, K. “‘Recovered memory’ losing its value”. G&M, Saturday May 9, 1998: p.A12. See also: Anonymous. “Recalling abusive memories”. G&M, Thursday May 12, 1998: p.A20. See also: Birnbaum, J. “It is not the therapist’s job to play judge and jury”. G&M, Wednesday May 13, 1998: p.A17.

²³⁵ Anonymous. “Father granted new trial”. G&M, Tuesday Feb. 24, 1998: p.A4.

²³⁶ Cernetig, M. “Bishop acquitted of sexual assault”. G&M, Wednesday Mar. 25, 1998: pp.A1, A4.

²³⁷ Laframboise, D. “Multiple personality disorder – the many faces of a fad”. G&M, Saturday May 2, 1998: pp.D1, D2.

²³⁸ Doyle, J. “Flowers of the forest”. G&M, Saturday May 30, 1998: p.7, Broadcast Week section. See also: Roberts, D. “Account of Martensville trials mistakes sympathy for substance”. G&M, Saturday Apr. 18, 1998: p.E4.

²³⁹ See Matas, supra 159: pp.A1, A12. See also: Matas, supra 159: p.A2.

²⁴⁰ Makin, K. “Morin problem rips legal system”. G&M, Friday Apr. 10, 1998: pp.A1, A9.

²⁴¹ Makin, K. “Morin wants to see action on Kaufman inquiry results”. G&M, Thursday Apr. 9, 1998: p.A10. See also: “Is DNA sampling more intrusive than fingerprinting?”. G&M, Thursday Apr. 9, 1998: p.A19. See also: Makin, K. “Morin finally closes his case”. G&M, Friday Apr. 10, 1998: pp .A1, A8. See also: Makin, K. & H. Hess. “The Morin Inquiry Report. Faulty police, legal work recipe for disaster”. G&M, Friday Apr. 10, 1998: p.A8. See also: Makin, K. “Prisoner testimony hard to discredit”. G&M, Friday Apr. 10, 1998: p.A10. See also: Makin, K. “Morin wants heads to roll”. G&M, Saturday Apr. 11, 1998: pp.A1, A11. See also: Makin, K. “Morin and Me. The ride of a lifetime”. G&M, Saturday Apr. 11, 1998: p.D2. See also: Anonymous. “Whose fault the malice to Morin?”. G&M, Tuesday Apr. 14, 1998: p.A18. See also: James, S. “Insanity and the law”. G&M, Saturday Apr. 25, 1998: p.D11.

Perhaps as the result of the findings brought to light in this report, other articles also report on the failings of the criminal justice system. One article picks up on the (mis)use of jailhouse informants as witnesses in criminal court trials. Informants are portrayed as dishonest, given their vested interests in reaching a deal with the Crown, in return for a drop of charges, or reduction of sentence length. Those with lengthy criminal records are portrayed as especially untrustworthy, given both their incentive to commit perjury, and their criminal status²⁴². The avid thirst for convictions of purported child sexual offenders has had broader repercussions, as demonstrated in newspaper articles in 1998. For instance, accusations of child sex offending are sometimes used in custody hearings, as a method of demonizing the non-custodial parent, and of ensuring that the child will not be placed with this said-parent²⁴³. In another case, a man wrongfully suspected of child sexual abuse was murdered by a group of women, some of them who had been themselves victims of sexual abuse as children.²⁴⁴

4.5.5 Age of Consent

Nine articles reported on the age of consent in the 1998 sample collected (3.78%) (**Tab. 4.5 A**). One article regarded online relationships and the potential for child luring through the internet. In this case, two men were charged with aiding and abetting and accosting a child for immoral purposes, after a 13-year-old willingly met with the men, and was believed by her mother to have been abducted²⁴⁵. In another article, two minors, aged 16 and 14 years old, are stripped of their right to have consensual sex: "California teen-agers have no constitutional right to have sex – even voluntarily and with each other."²⁴⁶ As demonstrated in both these cases, youths are not considered free agents in their 'choices' about sex, and are consequently controlled through legislation and law enforcement. Rachel Thomson explains this well: "Where young people would like to think of themselves as being in control, the law treat[s] them as either out of control or as in the control of another." (2004: 146)

²⁴² Claridge, T. "New trial ordered for man convicted in baby's death". G&M, Monday June 1, 1998: PAGE.

²⁴³ McIlroy, A. "Fathers demand fair child custody and access laws". G&M, Tuesday Mar. 31, 1998: PAGE. See also: Anonymous. "Where kids sit when families split". G&M, Monday Apr. 6, 1998: p.A14.

²⁴⁴ Thom, J.-A. "Reclaiming a stolen life". G&M, Saturday June 27, 1998: p.C12. See also: Dickason, O.P. "Big Bear's spirit provides healing light". G&M, Saturday June 27, 1998: p.D17.

²⁴⁵ C.P. "Men face sex charges". G&M, Tuesday Apr. 21, 1998: p.A6.

²⁴⁶ Reuters. "Sex appeal lost". G&M, Friday Apr. 10. 1998: p.A13.

Under certain circumstances, however, the law tolerates what could be considered age of consent offences, but are not. Within the institution of marriage, for example, youths can engage in sexual intercourse: "I would be expected to be a wife to this old man in every way - including having sex with him. (I had never had sex before.)"²⁴⁷ Persons of a higher social status also sometimes get away with perpetrating age of consent offences. As explained in one article, Woody Allen married his underage teenage stepdaughter. He was compared, in the article, to Charlie Chaplin, who "fell for [a] 15-year-old" and "indulged his passion for very young women"²⁴⁸. Both celebrities' deviant sexual behaviours were tolerated by the law, even if their affairs were considered scandalous by the broader public. In certain cases, legal tolerance is also gendered. Young boys' and adult women' relationships are not always considered problematic²⁴⁹.

In other cases, however, and for the first time in the present analysis, adult women must face the criminal penalties incurred through their romantic involvement with youths²⁵⁰. For example, Mary LeTourneau's long-lasting affair with a student is well documented in 1998. Exceptionally, the young man's protection is not the primary concern in this case. Rather, LeTourneau is believed to pose a risk to herself: "Society does not need to be protected from Mary LeTourneau,' who is sick and 'fixated' on the young boy (...). 'The person who really needs to be protected from Mary LeTourneau is Mary LeTourneau.'²⁵¹ Despite insistence on both parts that they are "in love", the boy's objection to being considered a victim, and his parent's objection to the imprisonment of his lover, LeTourneau's parole is revoked and she is sentenced to seven more years of prison for having met with the boy, and violating parole conditions.

²⁴⁷ Weber, E. "Memoirs of a dustbowl bride". G&M, Saturday June 27, 1998: p.D1. See also: Doyle, J. "Wedding in white". G&M, Saturday June 27, 1998: p.13, Broadcast Week section.

²⁴⁸ Haslett Cuff, J. "Hanging with Woody in Wild Man Blues". G&M, Wednesday Mar. 18, 1998: p.C3.

²⁴⁹ Allemang, J. "Hip Dawson's Creek bubbles over with teen tribulations". G&M, Friday Apr. 10, 1998: pp.C1, C2.

²⁵⁰ Anonymous. "Women and boys". G&M, Friday Apr. 3, 1998: p.A18.

²⁵¹ A.P. "Teacher gets 7 1/2 years for meeting boy again". G&M, Saturday Feb. 7, 1998: p.A21.

4.6 Portrayals of Child Sexual Offending in 2005

In the final year of our analysis, 110 articles were collected for a period of three months, estimated to represent 440 articles for the whole year (**Tab. 4.6 A**), almost twice as many articles as were collected a decade before, in 1991 (**Tab. 4.4 A**). As mentioned earlier on in this chapter, however, 26 articles were devoted to an especially sensational case, the Michael Jackson trial, which will not be discussed in detail. An analysis of the Jackson saga would require more detail than can be gathered for the purpose of the present endeavour, and could likely become a thesis unto itself. Notwithstanding those 26 articles, 84 articles were collected, translating into 336 articles over twelve months. Sexual abuse is once more the theme which receives the most coverage, followed by pornography/obscenity, to a much lesser extent. Prostitution and wrongful accusations/convictions are represented practically equally represented, and very little is said about the age of consent (**Fig. 4.6 A**).

Figure 4.6 A

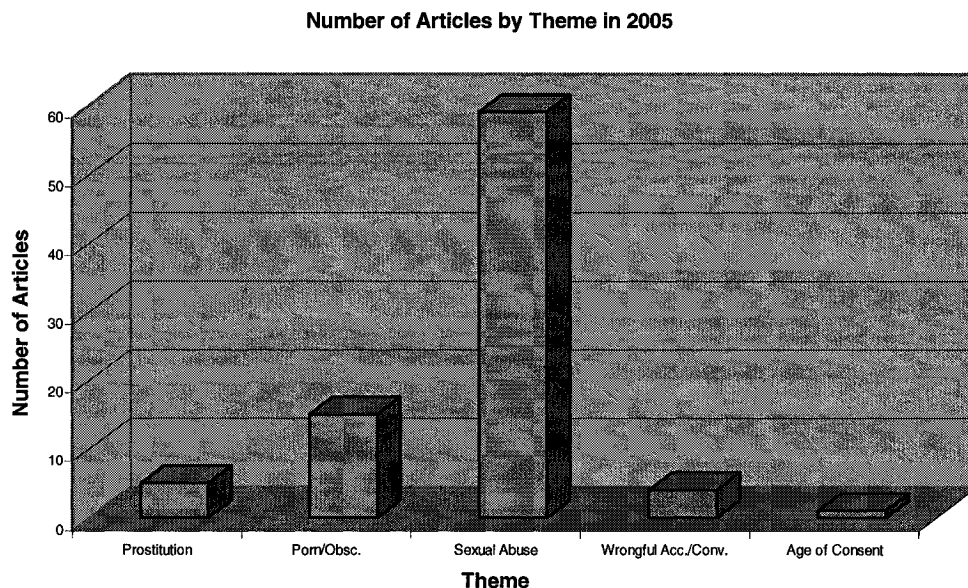


Table 4.6 A**Number of Articles by Theme in 2005**

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Prostitution</i>	<i>Porn/Obsc.</i>	<i>Sexual Abuse</i>	<i>Wrongful Acc./Conv.</i>	<i>Age of Consent</i>	<i>Total</i>
Number of Articles	5	15	59	4	1	84
Percentage	5.95%	17.86%	70.26%	4.76%	1.19%	100%

4.6.1 Child Prostitution

Five articles reported on child prostitution in the three-month sample collected for 2005, or 5.95% of that sample (**Tab. 4.6 A**). While one article reported on international child prostitution rings²⁵², most articles in 2005 depict children engaged in street prostitution²⁵³. Three articles give voice to the tolerance of certain countries towards children involved in the sex trades²⁵⁴. More specifically, these articles depict child prostitution in accordance with all three categories of prostitution outlined by Brown (1999). To a certain extent, child prostitution is considered exploitative, as would indicate the reference to children engaged in the sex trades as “mafia kids”²⁵⁵. Child prostitution is also viewed as labour. Certain children choose other venues than prostitution to subsist. As such, prostitution is one avenue amongst others for children to earn an income. Finally, children are said to engage in prostitution for survival. Under limited circumstances, the ‘choice’ of children to become involved in the sex trades is narrow, and prostitution may become the only available means to survive on the streets.

The comparison of international attitudes regarding child prostitution is not solely descriptive. Rather, when pitted against Canadian attitudes, more tolerant perspectives are described as “chilling”, and highly problematic²⁵⁶. As reported in two articles,

²⁵² C.P. “Quebec man sentenced in teen prostitution”. G&M, Thursday Jan. 6, 2005: p. A12.

²⁵³ Lacey, L. “Through the lens, brightly”. G&M, Friday Feb. 18, 2005: p. R20. See also: Dixon, G. “Filmmaking in conversation with Zana Briski and Ross Kaufman”. G&M, Friday Feb. 18, 2005: pp. R20, R21. See also: Fong, P. “Vancouver sex workers to have a say”. G&M, Tuesday Mar. 29, 2005: p. A8.

²⁵⁴ See Lacey, supra 222: p. R20. See also: Dixon, supra 222: pp. R20, R21. See also: Walmark, H. “The Passionate Eye: Prostitution Behind the Veil”. G&M, Saturday Feb. 19, 2005: p. 5, Globe Television section.

²⁵⁵ See Dixon, supra 222: pp. R20, R21.

²⁵⁶ See Walmark, supra 223: p. 5, Globe Television section.

Canadian legislation leans heavily on the criminalization of individuals involved in child prostitution²⁵⁷. Current legislation notwithstanding, certain groups argue it is high time for prostitution laws to change, arguing that the focus on criminalization puts prostitutes (including child and teen prostitutes) in danger. The Canadian sex trades are thus portrayed as dangerous, and child prostitutes as being 'at risk'²⁵⁸.

4.6.2 Child Pornography / Obscenity

There were 15 articles on child pornography and obscenity in the 2005 sample (17.86%) (**Tab. 4.6 A**). Child pornography is said to have rapidly increased in prevalence in 2005: "This is a huge and growing problem".²⁵⁹ This increase is explained as follows: "police methods are becoming more sophisticated, the public is reporting more suspicious circumstances and criminals are getting dumber and more daring"²⁶⁰. In essence, law enforcement agencies and other criminal justice officials are getting 'better' at discerning the problem (exemplified by the development of new 'taskforces' to address the problematic²⁶¹), as well as creating awareness within the community. In turn, the community is more likely to suspect behaviours that are out of the ordinary. For example, one man was reported to have videotaped children undressing in a public change room. In this case, the man's behaviour was suspect because, first, he brought a camera into a change room, and second, because the children "noticed [the] camera being pointed at them", despite an absence of indication that the camera was turned on²⁶².

Indeed, it appears as though the definition of child pornography has expanded. As revealed in his trial, Michael Jackson's alleged child pornography collection consisted in fact of nothing more than children's books on dress-up games. Nonetheless, these books were introduced as evidence, and the manner in which they were used was put into question. As Adler (2001) explains, the expansion of case law with regards to child

²⁵⁷ See C.P., supra 221 : p. A12. See also : Fong, supra 222 : p.A8.

²⁵⁸ See Fong, supra 222: p.A8.

²⁵⁹ Philip, M. "Police identify hotel seen in photos of abused girl". G&M, Saturday Feb. 5, 2005: p. A1, A8.

²⁶⁰ Press, J. "Underworld of child porn a 'disgusting' place". G&M, Saturday Mar. 26, 2005: p.A11.

²⁶¹ C.P. "Global task force set up to deter child exploitation". G&M, Thursday Jan. 27, 2005: p.A14.

²⁶² Press, J. "Snoop with camera in dressing room sought". G&M, Tuesday Mar. 22, 2005: p.A14.

pornography “seems to threaten all pictures of unclothed children, whether lewd or not, and even pictures, of clothed children, if they meet the hazy definition of ‘lascivious’ or ‘lewd’.” (240) Furthermore, the possession and/or consumption of any material depicting children in a manner which could be considered obscene or pornographic is defined as such, “even if it is made without the use of real children, (...) because it ‘inflames the desires of child molesters, pedophiles, and child pornographers’, and ‘encourag[es] a societal perception of children as sexual objects’.” (2001: 244)

Similarly, in another case, letters written anonymously to law enforcement agencies, describing fantasies of child sexual abuse, are defined as pornographic²⁶³. The use of the term ‘pornographic’, as opposed to ‘obscene’, is important here, as it connotes that individuals would or could read it to gain sexual satisfaction. As this case demonstrates, the definition of child pornography has expanded to one such degree as to blur the distinction between what is pornographic, and what is obscene.

Categories of perpetrators also witness an expansion. Perpetrators are increasingly referred to by their type of occupation, much like child sexual abusers in the 1990s. In what is described as a “flurry of child pornography arrests”²⁶⁴, several individuals make the headlines: a piano player at a ballet school²⁶⁵, a Boy Scout leader²⁶⁶, a gymnastics instructor²⁶⁷, a daycare operator²⁶⁸, and a swimming coach²⁶⁹. Online child pornography is a major concern²⁷⁰, and paedophiliac networks much resemble child pornography rings in their portrayals. In some cases, child pornography rings and networks are used interchangeably to describe the smuggling of children and of photos of children for the purpose of distributing, or sharing in pornographic displays of children²⁷¹.

²⁶³ Mickleburgh, R. “Child-porn letters spark manhunt”. G&M, Wednesday Feb. 23, 2005: p.A7.

²⁶⁴ Appleby, T. “Son of daycare operator arrested on porn charges”. G&M, Friday Mar. 4, 2005: p.A11.

²⁶⁵ Gray, J. “The piano man and the child prey”. G&M, Wednesday Jan. 26, 2005: pp.A1, A10.

²⁶⁶ Appleby, T. “Scout leader arrested on child-porn charges”. G&M, Tuesday Feb. 22, 2005: p.A11.

²⁶⁷ C.P. “Gymnastics instructor, 64, faces child-porn charges”. G&M, Friday Feb. 25, 2005: p.A9.

²⁶⁸ Appleby, supra 233: p.A11.

²⁶⁹ Appleby, T. “Scarborough swimming coach charged with possessing child porn”. G&M, Thursday Mar. 24, 2005: p.A11.

²⁷⁰ See C.P., supra 230: p.A14. See also: Philip, supra 228: pp.A1, A8. See also: Appleby, supra 235: p.A11. See also: Press, supra 229: p.A11.

²⁷¹ See Gray, supra 234: pp.A1, A8.

Regardless of the type of pornography portrayed, children are viewed as prey²⁷² to the hungry sexual appetites of consumers of child pornography. The threat posed by these individuals is portrayed as all the more menacing, given their potential to form vast paedophiliac networks online²⁷³. As John Pratt argues, “in relation to current concerns about the internet, the family is once again seen as a defensive bastion, under treat from abusive strangers rather than harbouring abuse itself. That these new strangers have the potential to blend the virtual and real worlds, assuming different identities as they ‘groom’ their potential victims, seems to make them all the more alarming” (2005: 280).

The idea of paedophiliac networks much resembles that of child pornography rings. In some cases, child pornography rings and networks are used interchangeably to describe the smuggling of children and of photos of children for the purpose of distributing, or sharing in pornographic displays of children²⁷⁴.

In relation to matters considered obscene, the upcoming release of film feature *Karla*, based on the Bernardo-Homolka serial sexual assaults and murders, introduces debates on the appropriateness of the film’s content. Once again, distinctions between pornography and obscenity are blurred: individuals are “‘very, very concerned’ the film’s depiction of those gruesome events could be construed as child pornography”²⁷⁵. Those opposed to the release of the movie argue we “must have respect for the dead. We cannot allow anyone to ‘profit from their deaths’.”²⁷⁶ To gawk at the horror of the crimes committed by Bernardo and Homolka is considered perverted, pornographic. The production itself is considered obscene.

Other articles related to obscenity denounce the oversexualization of children and youths in art and on television/video. A gallery exhibition entitled “Paperdolls” is criticized on the basis of the “exploitative nature of the paintings, about their Lolita-esque qualities, their sensual provocation”²⁷⁷. The half-naked prepubescent girls in the paintings are considered overly sexual in their portrayals, too appealing for the *Humbert*

²⁷² See Gray, supra 234: pp.A1, A10.

²⁷³ See Philip, supra 228: pp. A1, A8.

²⁷⁴ See Gray, supra 234: pp.A1, A8.

²⁷⁵ Black, A. “Families demand advance look at Bernardo movie”. G&M, Thursday Mar. 24, 2005: p.R4.

²⁷⁶ Smith, R. “We shouldn’t be afraid of Bernardo film”. G&M, Thursday Mar. 31, 2005: pp.R1, R2.

²⁷⁷ Dault, G.M. “Sugar and spice and all things nice”. G&M, Friday Feb. 4, 2005: p.R29.

Humberts who might stumble upon the gallery showing. In a second article, the oversexualization of youths, and more specifically, female youths, is explained as “the result of the peculiar economic and social currents that swirl through 21st-century North America as it lives through the age of Britney Spears, *Extreme Makeover* and Paris Hilton”²⁷⁸.

4.6.3 Child Sexual Abuse

With regards to child sexual abuse, 59 articles were collected for 2005, thus 70.26% of the sample (**Tab. 4.6 A**), exceeding by far all other themes in that year. Articles on child sexual abuse witnessed a decrease in proportion, as compared to the 173 articles collected on the theme in 1998 (**Tab. 4.5 A**). As indicates **Table 4.6 B** (on the next page), many articles refer to perpetrators of child sexual abuse by their occupation, much like in the 1990s. Again, we find that many of the same categories existing in 1998 are repeated in 2005 (designated in bold). Gone are a number of occupation types, in particular coaches and athletes, on which numerous articles had been written in 1998. Once again, it is clear that the focus on child sexual abuse perpetrators has shifted. Furthermore, two new categories are added: a singer and a student. All articles which make reference to a singer focus on the very sensational Michael Jackson trial, which received a lot of coverage. These articles were not included in the number of articles on child sexual abuse collected, nor in the total sample of articles for 1998.

In 2005, child sexual abuse was portrayed as one of the most heinous crimes that could be committed: “It’s right up there with crimes against humanity.”²⁷⁹ A number of articles also referred to perpetrators of child sexual abuse as ‘predators’, who “cull the weak or the vulnerable from the heard;”²⁸⁰ Many such predators were said to be repeat

²⁷⁸ Cheney, P. “Liquor, lights, mobs of men: Girls Gone Wild”. G&M, Saturday Feb. 26, 2005: p.A9.

²⁷⁹ Press, *supra* 247: p.A9.

²⁸⁰ Blatchford, C. “A recipe for the raw empowerment of a bully”. G&M, Monday May 7, 2005: p.A4. See also: Senanayake, S. “Brutalizing survivors in the days of shock and chaos. Sexual Predators”. G&M, Saturday Jan. 8, 2005: p.A7. See also: Rook, K. “Rapist may be plasterer-painter, police say”. G&M, Wednesday Jan. 12, 2005: p.A12. See also: Lacey, L. “Festival shocker stars sweet young thing”. G&M, Friday Jan. 28, 2005: pp.R6, R7. See also: Press, J. “Teen charged with sexual assault”. G&M, Friday Feb. 25, 2005: p.A9. See also: Mahoney, J. “Police question man about serial sex assaults”. G&M, Thursday Feb. 24, 2005: p.A18.

offenders²⁸¹. In light of their portrayed likelihood of recidivism, many articles question why 'predators' should ever be free, and call for harsher sentences, and 'dangerous offender' designations²⁸². If perpetrators of child sexual abuse are release in the community, they are required to register with the sex offender registry. Likewise, in certain jurisdictions, children who perpetrate acts of sexual abuse unto other children must also register, as is the case with the Manitoba Child Abuse Registry²⁸³.

Table 4.6 B

Number of Articles and Perpetrator Occupation (1991, 1998, 2005)

<i>Perpetrator Occupation</i>	<i>Number of Articles in 1991 (3 months)</i>	<i>Number of Articles in 1998 (6 months)</i>	<i>Number of Articles in 2005 (3 months)</i>
Priest	18	8	6
Teacher	2	4	3
Doctor (MD)	7	1	2
Guard youth detention centre	0	2	2
School Principal	0	1	1
<i>Singer</i>	0	0	26
Student	0	0	1
Coach	0	9	0
Sports athlete	0	4	0
President (Nicaragua)	0	4	0
Counsellor	0	2	0
RCMP officer	0	2	0
Government official	0	2	0
Nurse	0	1	0
Babysitter's employer	0	1	0
School janitor	0	1	0
Child care worker	3	0	0
Big Brothers (volunteer)	1	0	0
Public swimming pool employee	1	0	0

²⁸¹ Friesen, J. "Man arrested in 14-year series of sex assaults". G&M, Tuesday Feb. 10, 2005: p.A17. See also: Mahoney, supra 248: p.A18. See also: Appleby, T., D. Walton. "Killer had lengthy record, 'fire in his eyes'". G&M, Saturday Mar. 5, 2005: p.A10. See also: Friesen, J. "Sex offender arrested after entering centre". G&M, Monday Mar. 14, 2005: p.A8.

²⁸² Walton, D., K. Harding. "The twisted mind of Jim Rozco. 'They knew he was loopy for an entire decade'". G&M, Monday Mar. 7, 2005: pp.A1, A6. See also: Blatchford, supra 248: p.A4. See also: Anonymous. "Why did Jim Rozko walk free for so long?" G&M, Tuesday Mar. 8, 2005: p.A16. Dropkin, S. "So what's dangerous?". G&M, Thursday Mar. 10, 2005: p.A22.

²⁸³ Makin, K. "Young sex offender can be registered". G&M, Wednesday Feb. 9, 2005: p.A6.

The threat posed by sexual predators goes beyond their potential for violence. The 'broader consequences' of their sexual offending are twofold: first, in the aftermath of their victimizations, individuals are said to experience a wide variety of negative consequences, "which in some cases are so serious that 'some doubt their value'" as people²⁸⁴. Second, prior victimization figures in the cycle of child sexual abuse. Simply put, some individuals are said to commit child sexual abuse as a result of their own victimization as children²⁸⁵. Children who are sexually victimized are essentially portrayed as 'contaminated'.

Still, incarceration is not always believed to be the answer, and overreliance on the criminal justice system to address child sexual abuse is criticized. For one, prison is portrayed as inadequate for child sex offenders: "We have all heard the story of what happens to child molesters in prison: They get attacked and killed, man cons hate those skin-beefers."²⁸⁶ Furthermore, the unlawful breach of due process rights is once again highlighted as the result of 'overcriminalizing' practices²⁸⁷. Finally, the court process is believed to revictimize child victims of sexual abuse through the stigma they are forced to endure²⁸⁸.

4.6.4 Wrongful Accusations / Convictions

Four articles were classified as relating to wrongful accusations and convictions in the 2005 sample (3.69%) (**Tab. 4.6 A**). The first of these articles cites Michael Jackson, who states that the (wrongful) accusations being brought upon him are the result of a racist conspiracy against "black luminaries"²⁸⁹. One other wrongful accusation is mentioned in the *Globe and Mail* in 2005. In this case, a student's paper on child sexual abuse, which included a narrated passage of an anonymous offender's experience, was

²⁸⁴ Rusk, J. "Ex-UCC teacher jailed 3 years for sex abuse". *G&M*, Saturday Jan. 8, 2005: p.A18. See also: Louis, M.K. "Good and bad touching". *G&M*, Monday Feb. 7, 2005: p.A12. See also: Henley, J. "Vast pedophilia trial opens in France". *G&M*, Friday Mar. 4, 2005: p.A12.

²⁸⁵ Rusk, J. "MD blames childhood of sex abuse for misconduct". *G&M*, Thursday Jan. 20, 2005: p.A16. See also: Rusk, J. "College revokes doctor's license". *G&M*, Friday Jan. 21, 1998: p.A9. See also: Henley, supra 251: p.A12.

²⁸⁶ Crosbie, L. "Why prison justice is anything but". *G&M*, Saturday Jan. 8, 2005: p.R3.

²⁸⁷ Cook, T. "Saskatchewan appeals court orders new trial for two men in sexual-assault case". *G&M*, Thursday Jan. 20, 2005: p.A12.

²⁸⁸ Hewitt, G. "Young witness stumbles over story details". *G&M*, Wednesday Mar. 9, 2005: p.A14.

²⁸⁹ Rogers, J. "Jackson: Mandela, Ali and me". *G&M*, Monday Mar. 28, 2005: p.R4.

deemed suspicious by the university, and the student was subsequently accused of having written it herself. As such, she was accused of having potentially sexually abused a child. Her being labelled a sex offender had serious repercussions, the stigma bearing heavily on her reputation²⁹⁰.

Death row is the focus of articles that relate to wrongful convictions in 2005. Given the 'hate-on' for crimes of a sexual nature against children in 2005, advocates for the abolition of the death penalty voice their concerns about potential spurts of death row convictions in the United States with regards to child sex offending²⁹¹. An overreliance on technological advances to help 'solve' crimes is depicted as highly suspicious. So-called DNS 'evidence' is referred to as "junk science' and 'forensic fraud'"²⁹².

4.6.5 Age of Consent

Only one article related to the age of consent in the sample collected for 2005 (0.91%) (**Tab. 4.6 A**). In this article, a man, wedded to a girl of 10 years of age, argues his marriage is lawful, given there was no minimum age to wed at the time he married the girl, before an amendment was made to legislation in Quebec in 2001. This article lends support to the idea that certain age of consent offences are tolerated in Canada under certain circumstances, in this case, within the institution of marriage.

²⁹⁰ Makin, K. "Sex-offender-label case headed for Supreme Court". G&M, Saturday Mar. 19, 2005: p.A7.

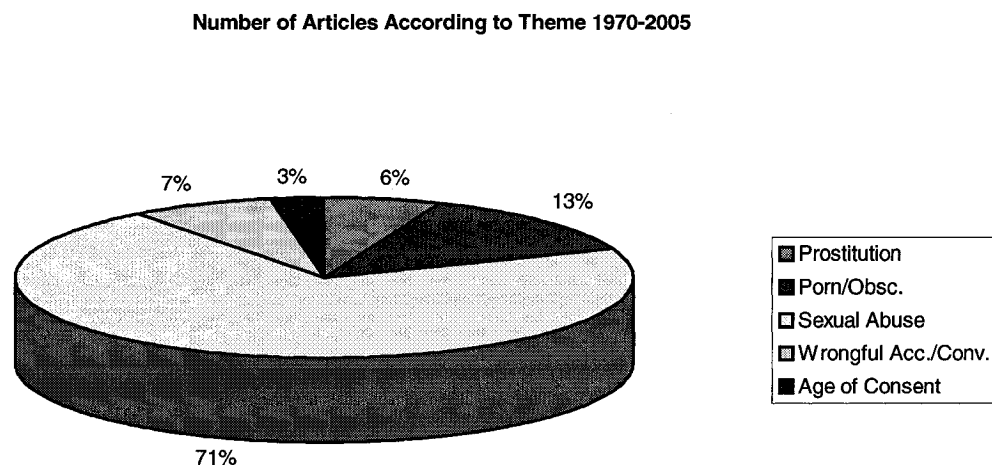
²⁹¹ Carter, R. "Doubts on death row". G&M, Saturday Mar. 5, 2005: p.D3. See also: Anonymous. "Conviction". G&M, Saturday Mar. 19, 2005: p.D15.

²⁹² See Carter, *supra* 259 : p.D3.

5.0 Thematic Analysis

Heretofore, we have looked at newspaper reports of child sex offending as portrayed when they were written. Each year observed represented the problematic in a particular way. Now, to better trace the evolution of these portrayals, we will look at how the focus on each theme has changed between 1970 and 2005 through a thematic comparative analysis. As indicates **Figure 5.0 A**, our themes were represented unevenly in the Globe and Mail. Articles on child sexual abuse were by far the most prevalent, followed by those on pornography and obscenity. Articles on wrongful accusations and convictions, as well as those on prostitution were almost equally represented, and articles on the age of consent were the least prevalent of all.

Figure 5.0 A

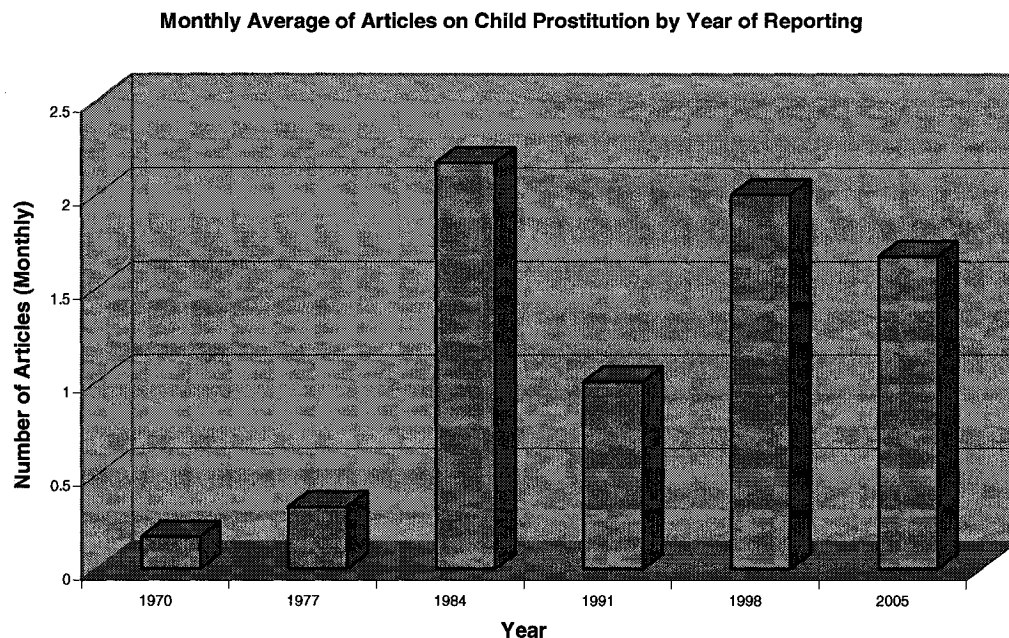


While certain themes were represented in greater numbers than others, all themes witnessed an evolution in terms of the object of their focus. In what follows, each theme will be looked at separately in an attempt to discern the shift in the nature of newspaper portrayals of child sex offending (broken into themes) over time.

5.1 Child Prostitution

As **Figure 5.1 A** demonstrates, there was variation in the extent of coverage on child prostitution between 1970 and 2005. While little is said about it in 1970, there is an explosion of articles relating to child prostitution in 1984. In 1991, articles on child prostitution are on the decrease, but only for a short time, as they increase again in 1998. There are somewhat fewer articles on child prostitution in 2005 than in 1998.

Figure 5.1 A



As mentioned in the last chapter, child prostitutes are, in 1970, portrayed as free agents, who engage in the sex trades of their own volition. As Pierre Tremblay (2001) asserts, “interactions among hebephiles were largely mediated by juveniles themselves, (...) they recruited one another more than they were recruited by the provider; indeed they selected the provider more than the provider selected them.” (15) In light of the zeitgeist of the early seventies with regards to sexual mores, it is hardly surprising that social reactions towards child prostitution are not yet radicalized in 1970. Still, the contrast between this conceptualization of child prostitution and that of moral condemnation, fourteen years later, is astounding.

This free-labour model, which also emerges in 1977, would change under the influence of Judianne Densen-Gerber and her book *For Money or Love*, and other child-savers of the epoch (Best, 1990; Jenkins, 1998). While certain segments of the feminist movement would attempt to decriminalize adult prostitution, “antiprostitution crusaders [would begin] to focus on the exploitation of underage prostitutes” (1990: 73). As a result, “[d]uring the 1980s, threats to children came under intense scrutiny.” (1) In 1984, the free-labour model shifts to a view of child prostitution as exploitation. Child prostitution is no longer observed as a mere social phenomenon, but becomes portrayed as a social problem: the sex trades are said to be violent, dangerous, risky. Through ownership of the ‘problem’-atic, the silence is broken. As such, child prostitution is said to not only affect ‘at-risk’ youths, but youths of all classes and social strata. In sum, it is portrayed as an endemic, growing, and urgent social problem.

In response, child prostitution is heavily criminalized in 1984. Ironically, the justice system criminalizes the very population it seeks to protect, to ‘save’ it from exploitative practices. This paradox would be taken up by certain advocacy groups in 2005, two decades later. In the meantime, child prostitution continues to be portrayed as dangerous. What is worse, much of its occurrence is said to be kept secret. The secrecy which surrounds the problem is linked to the perpetuation of the problem, and the lack of available services to address it. Given the amount of articles which report on child prostitution at this time, however, one can hardly characterize the problematic as ‘secret’. In fact, child prostitution almost receives the highest amount of coverage in 1998, second only to levels of reporting in 1984, and not by much.

In all likelihood, we can speculate that the incidence of the problematic did not increase between 1970 and 2005; it was increasingly mediacized and discussed. As evidenced above, various claims-makers used *growth estimates*, *range claims*, and *domain statements* to persuade readers of the reality and urgency of the problematic. Child prostitution is depicted as a ‘real’ problem that affects youths in ‘real’ ways. Rhetoric and claims-making were in fact so powerful that, by 2005, individuals who went against the current were demonized and ‘othered’.

Katherine Beckett distinguishes *valence* issues from *position* issues. Valence issues “are characterized by the near universal approval or disapproval” of persons or

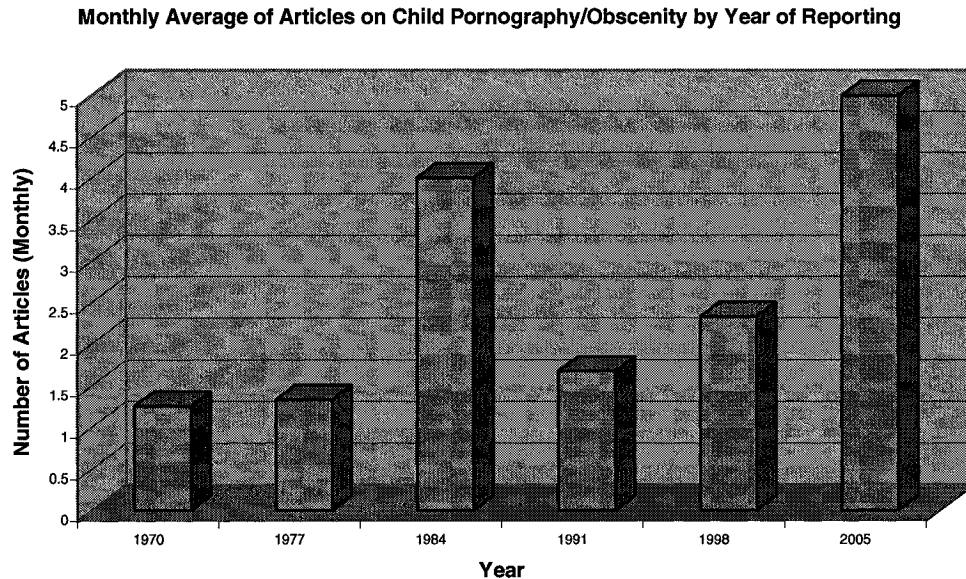
institutions, while position issues are those that tend to instigate debates (1996: 58). Media discourses on child prostitution in 1970 would suggest that the criminalization of the sex trades was, even when children were involved, an open area for debate. Child prostitution was thus, at that time, a position issue. The demonization of dissenters in 2005, on the other hand, suggests that the media today portray child prostitution as a valence issue, one which is “seen as immune from (...) contestation.” (1996: 57) While certain articles which go against the current are published in the *Globe and Mail*, most articles tend to portray child prostitution as an issue which elicits a fairly homogeneous sentiment: moral condemnation.

Furthermore, articles on child prostitution followed an expansionary rationale as of 1984. As Joel Best argues, domain expansion allows claims-makers to “present (...) new, peripheral issues as ‘another form of,’ ‘essentially the same as,’ ‘the moral equivalent of,’ or equally damaging as’ the original, core problem” (1990: 80). Child prostitution began incorporating social phenomena which were ‘trendy’, yet up to then unrelated to child prostitution. In 1998, for example, child prostitution was portrayed as a consequence of globalization, the ‘buzzword’ of the approaching new millennium (Ellwood, 2002). While child prostitution can perhaps not be said to have increased over time, discourse on child prostitution seems to be more prevalent.

5.2 Child Pornography / Obscenity

Child pornography/obscenity receives little coverage in the 1970s, witnesses a precipitous increase in 1984, and decreases in 1991. After 1991, reports on the subject matter increase, with a sudden upsurge of articles in 2005 that is proportional to the one experienced in 1984, as demonstrated in **Figure 5.2 A**.

Figure 5.2 A



Despite relatively stable levels of coverage of child pornography and obscenity in 1970 and 1977, the nature of their portrayal differs a great deal. While, in 1970, child pornography is not depicted as exploitative, and materials considered obscene are embraced in the arts, both face stern reprobation in 1977. Child pornography and obscenity are indeed ‘discovered’ and problematized in 1977 (Best, 1990). *Growth and incidence estimates* are used to establish a cause for concern, in accordance with Joel Best’s argument that “Numbers, rates, and percentages help describe a problem’s dimensions; they give a sense of the claim’s urgency. Moreover, figures strengthen a claimant’s argument because they can be offered (and are usually accepted) as facts” (1990: 45).

As with child prostitution, the establishment of child pornography as a social problem leads to an expansion of coverage. In 1977, concerns arise about the stimulating potential on consumers of child pornography, depicted as a gateway to other deviant behaviours. In 1984, implications for consumers as well as those merely exposed to child pornography are wide-ranging: contagion and corruption of child victims, perpetuation of the cycle of exploitation, and imitation of exploitative behaviours, all of which are brought up again in 1991. In 1998 and 2005, this expansion is reflected not

only in portrayals of the problematic itself, but also of child pornographers and consumers of child pornography.

As the problematic expands, discourse on protection and security overrides that of civil liberties. Only a few articles present a critical analysis of the expansionary tendency outlined above, and of its resulting implications. Of these articles, it is possible to glean some of the broader repercussions of prevailing attitudes about child pornography and obscenity. For one, our society is becoming increasingly vigilant towards potential threats to children, both in terms of exposure to, and consumption of child pornography. What is more, the line which distinguishes what is pornographic from what is obscene is increasingly blurred. This has important repercussion for the arts, as demonstrated in numerous articles every year after 1977. Not only do artistic representations of children in 'sexual' contexts get denounced as obscene (and, by extension, as pornographic), but informational documentaries and films about the problematic of child sex offending, in all its forms, do as well.

Increasingly, the vigilance exerted by individuals of all types – criminal justice officials, special tasks forces, but also members of the general public and communities – leads to a conceptualization of children as 'sexual'. The quest to put an end to depictions of children as sexual fuels the coverage of the very problematic it seeks to impede. As Adler (2001) proposes, by redefining depictions of children as sexual, we look for sex in the 'non-sexual'. Furthermore, "[a]s the crisis over child pornography mounts and the legal proscriptions multiply, the sexual allure of children does too." (254) Simply put, the delegitimization of children as nude subjects which occurs as of 1977 allows for a paedophilic gaze to settle upon all visual materials related in some fashion to children.

By acknowledging child pornography as a social problem in 1977 and thereafter, we are, in essence, redefining the nude child as obscene. Despite our best efforts to protect the integrity and innocence of child exploiters, youths are purportedly portrayed as oversexualized in 2005. That portrayals of children are increasingly sexual is debatable. In light of the context of societal vigilance observed in 2005, it is more likely that we look for erotic imagery of children to guard against the purported harms incurred through obscenity and pornography, and find what we seek, given the expansionary nature of the problematic and its portrayals.

The same can be said of child pornography on the internet. As of 1998, many discussions about child pornography are centred on the internet. Writing in 2001, however, Philip Jenkins asserts child pornography on the internet is an “unconstructed proble[m]” (6). Given the abrupt increase in articles on child pornography in 2005, we can deduce that, a mere four years later, online child pornography has been effectively constructed as a social problem. Much like the problematic of child prostitution, through its expansion, began incorporating issues of globalization, the expansion of child pornography allowed for the inclusion of the internet in its realm. Conversely, discussions about the internet are often linked to various problematics at this time: cyber-terrorism, cyber-stalking, the proliferation of viruses, etc. As such, child pornography has also been included in broader discussions about the internet.

Much of the literature cites technological innovation, and more specifically, the advent of the internet, as a source for renewed concern about social problems (in this case, child pornography) (Adler, 2001; Jenkins, 1998; Pratt, 2005). Although child pornography on the internet is undeniably the source of much concern in 2005, the advent of the internet alone cannot explain the number of articles that relate to the problematic. After all, 1984 saw a proliferation of articles on the matter, well before the widespread accessibility of the internet.

Following the claims-making years of the late seventies, discourses on child pornography culminated in the publication of the Badgley Report in 1984, which recognized the problem of child pornography as a serious one, and made recommendations for further legislation in this area (Canada, 1984). The broader problem of child sexual offending, which was gaining prominence during the 1980s, “led to anti-pornography campaigns”, and also helped bolster the prevalence of child pornography in the media (Doyle & Lacombe, 2003: 303). Discourse in the public sphere breeds discourse in the media, and, as Foucault would ascertain, “[d]iscussion changes, indeed produces, the thing discussed.” (Foucault, 1978 in Adler, 2001). The more articles published in the *Globe and Mail* regarding child pornography, the more intensely the problem is represented, as there is more to discuss.

5.3 Child Sexual Abuse

The number of articles written on child sexual abuse far exceeds that of any other theme, as shown in **Figure 5.3 B** on the next page. Given the sheer number of articles collected, it is no wonder that the graphed evolution for articles on sexual abuse follow the progression in reporting on child sexual offending traced in **Figure 4.0 A** – a steady increase until reaching its apex in 1998, followed by a decline in 2005 (**Figure 5.3 A**). A peak in the number of articles about sexual abuse in 1998 goes hand in hand with the idea that, “[d]eclared a ‘national emergency’ in 1990, the crisis over child sex abuse has taken centre stage (...) as the worst of all possible evils.” (Adler, 2001: 218)

Figure 5.3 A

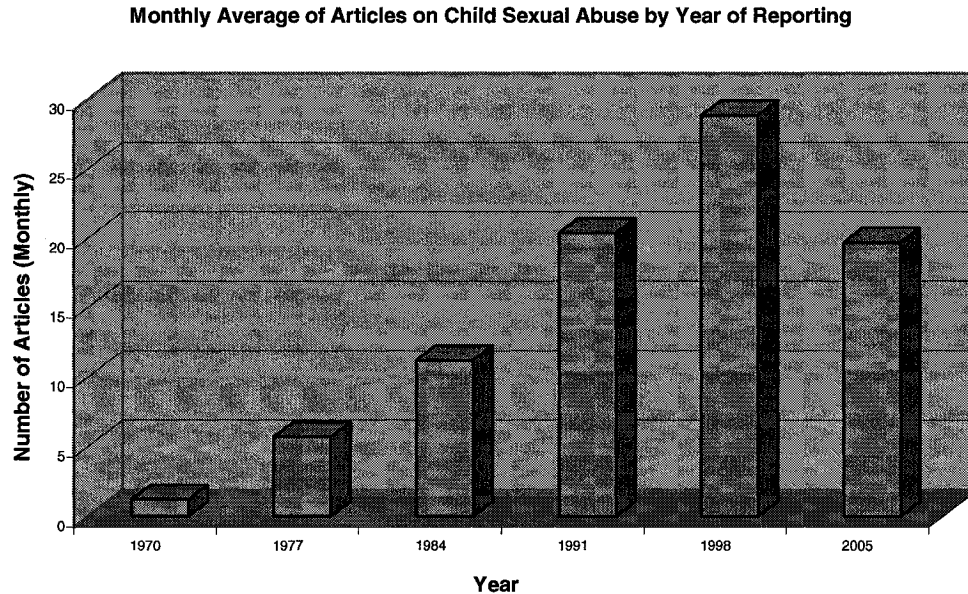
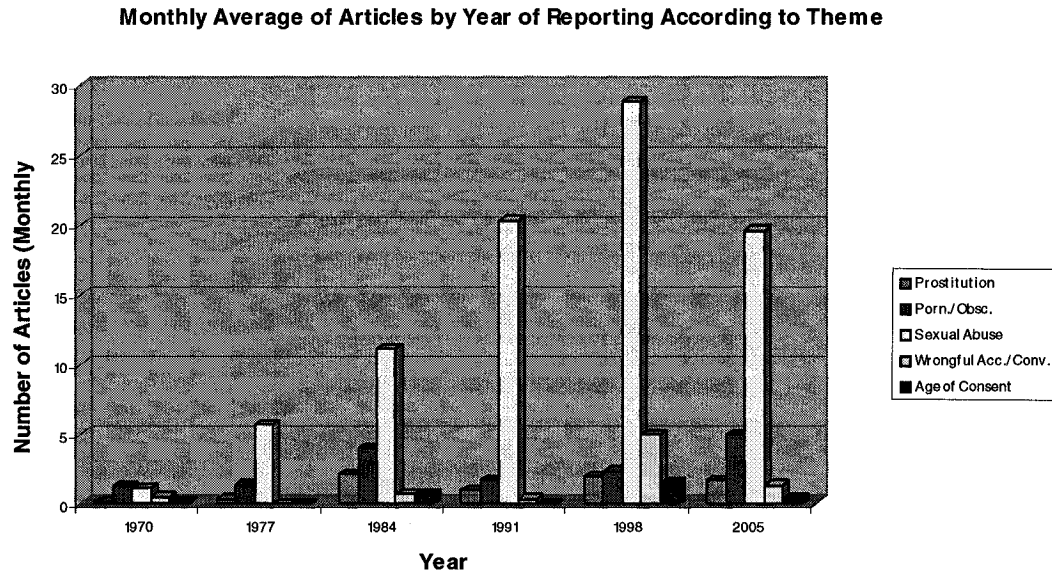


Figure 5.3 B



Between 1970 and 2005, there was a shift in the manner in which perpetrators of child sexual abuse were portrayed. While, in the seventies, most perpetrators were portrayed as strangers to their victims, incest characterizes the nature of the majority of offender – victim relationships portrayed in 1984. Extrafamilial offenders who are known to their victims make sparse appearances in Globe and Mail articles in 1977, and again in 1984, but gain prominence in 1991 and onwards. A focus on ‘stranger danger’ takes precedence once more in 1998, as well as in 2005, when perpetrators of child sexual abuse are often referred to as ‘predators’.

In 1984, the status and occupation of perpetrators of child sexual abuse are enumerated for the first time, albeit briefly. Reference to perpetrator occupation becomes, as of this time, the norm in articles that report on child sexual abuse. Since most of these occupations allow for contact with children (as is the case with athletic coaches, teachers, public swimming pool employees, and so on), reference to them implies concern about the potential for abuses. In other words, abuses were made possible through access to children.

In response, restrictions and screening applying to all persons of a type of employment are suggested: screening volunteers and future clerics, review boards for teachers and doctors, etc. While, in 1984, only one perpetrator is defined by type of occupation, many perpetrators are said to have the same type of employment as of 1991. Categorizations by occupation multiply in 1998, and again in 2005. Furthermore, the focus shifts from year to year between these different categories. If we agree that “the media establish powerful frames of reference for perceiving the world and are a strong component of shaping public attitudes and opinions,” (Surette, 1992: 4) it becomes quite clear that our assumptions and understandings of child sexual offenders are shaped, at least in part, by media portrayals, and that they may shift in time along with these portrayals.

In 1970, suspicions about child sexual abuse are omitted from crime stories which depict highly dubious circumstances. In one article, children are kidnapped and later the same day returned to their parents by strange men. There is no mention of possible sexual abuse. In another example, child murder victims who were found lying naked on the ground are not assumed to have been the targets of sexual violence. That assumptions about child sexual abuse did not, in 1970, colour journalistic impressions of crime news is telling. In contrast, the omnipresence of these assumptions in 2005 supports the idea that child sexual abuse “has assumed dimensions of a normative feature” in our lives (Pratt, 2005: 263).

The angle of articles that relate to child sexual abuse also shifts as of 1984. In reading articles written in 1984 and afterwards, one gets the impression that reporters are actively denouncing wrongs done to child victims, as opposed to ‘sticking to the facts’ of cases reported in the seventies. Beginning in 1984, harms inflicted onto children through sexual abuse, their resulting consequences, and how these consequences permeate their lives as adults are heavily focused on. At no time is there mention that, as the literature indicates, not all child sexual offending is harmful (West, 2000; Zuriff, 2000), that the harms need to be lasting (Jenkins, 1998; Zuriff, 2000), nor that children are not invariably contaminated by child sexual abuse (James, 1996).

Many authors would testify that the value of children in our day and age knows no equal (Best, 1990; Doyle & Lacombe, 2003; Guillebaud, 1998; Pratt, 2005) That children are priceless and powerless/innocent (Adler, 2001; Hacking, 1991; Jackson & Scott, 2004;

Loseke, Loseke, 2003) make for powerful claims. In portraying child victims as such, these children have become powerful “rhetorical weapon[s]” (Jenkins, 2001: 8). In essence, “[s]ocial problems stories feature plots that serve to construct the immorality of the problem. The public tends to worry when conditions are very extreme.” (2003: 7)

Recruiting child victims for rhetorical purposes allows claims-makers to push the issue of child sexual offending, and the need to respond to it. In 1984, for instance, new services are available for victims, yet more are said to be needed. In 1991, more victims are said to disclose their abuses, yet more still need to come forward. This exercise is repeated in 1998 and 2005: despite claims that law enforcement agencies are improving their strategies and perfecting their techniques, the incidence of child sexual abuse is always on the rise, and lack of funding is always a problem. It has become quite evident that the Canadian media is used as a tool for rhetorical activity and claims-making. As Best explains, “the press can bring an issue to general public attention, generating concern about the problem and support for the claimant’s cause.” (1990: 87)

In turn, suggested criminal justice responses are portrayed differently through time. In the seventies, despite abundant depictions of ‘stranger danger’, incarceration and other punitive means appear quite unpopular. Perhaps this apparent paradox is symptomatic of the novelty of child sexual abuse at that time, implying that legislators were not yet given time to react to this newly discovered social problem. Given the rapidity of reaction of Canadian policy-makers in the 1990s with regards to the spate of sex offender legislation, however, this hypothesis seems somewhat unlikely. Rather, I would be inclined to believe that society was simply more passive towards the problematic of child sexual abuse at that time. In contrast, punitive responses are widely advocated as of 1984. In fact, in 1991, criminal justice officials quite clearly embark in what I characterize as punitive reactions towards child sexual abusers.

Certain issues arise out of the fact that criminal justice officials no longer apply the law in an objective manner, but as participants in this radicalized social reaction, and although the majority of articles advocate for harsher and more punitive responses, a few articles are critical of this trend. In these cases, practices are deemed overzealous and all-encompassing, and are sometimes depicted as making the problem worse for all parties involved. These critiques arise in 1998 and 2005, at the same time as the number of

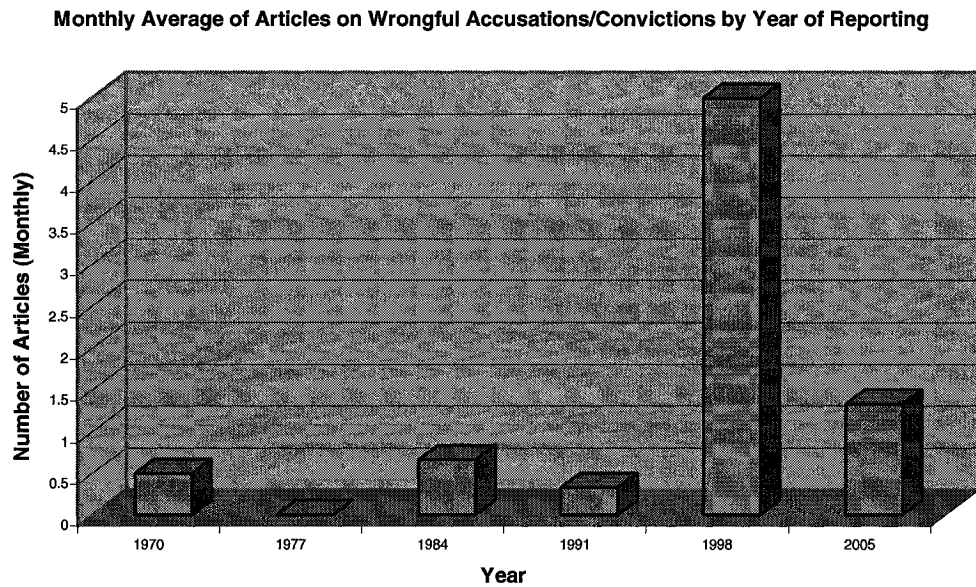
articles on child sexual abuse reached their peak and decreased in numbers. This can signify one of two things: either, that the vast numbers of articles allow for a better understanding of the issue as a whole, or alternatively, that we are experiencing a decline in the 'moral panic' about child sexual abuse.

As put forward by Jenkins (1998), "[p]ublic willingness to accept claims has (...) fluctuated over time, and (...) these changes have affected how not only the mass media but also legislators, judges, medical experts, and criminal-justice professionals have approached the sexual abuse of children." (3) That said, the public (represented by the media) may be less willing to blindly accept claims about child sexual offending, especially in the aftermath of ill-supported claims about satanic cult rituals and recovered memories in all forms.

5.4 Wrongful Accusations / Convictions

Little is said about wrongful accusations and convictions in the Globe and Mail before 1998. In 1977, there were no articles that related to this theme in the sample collected. Although 1984 saw a few more articles than in 1970, the number of articles collected was still relatively low, and decreased again in 1991. However, 1998 was a pivotal year for wrongful accusations and convictions, one characterized by a significant spurt, as shown in **Figure 5.4 A**. The number of articles decreased once more in 2005, but was still greater than that of years prior to 1998. The graph depicted below follows a similar pattern as was traced in **Figure 5.3 A** with regards to child sexual abuse. That, in 1998, articles on child sexual abuse and wrongful accusations and convictions should reach their apex reflects the scope of the social reaction towards child sex offending at that time.

Figure 5.4 A



As outlined in the previous chapter, articles on wrongful accusations in 1970 critique the criminal justice system for its responses to child sex offending. These criticisms of the system are not surprising, given the tradition of activism inspired by the antipsychiatry movement at this time. Within the context of this revolutionary movement, “[r]adical critics challenged the historic reliance on institutional responses to deviancy, whether for mental patients, convicts, or the poor.” (Jenkins, 1998: 111) Also, it would appear that societal reactions towards those accused of child sex offending are not as punitive in 1970. Public condemnation is neither automatic, nor permanent – an observation which is not at all surprising, given the relative novelty of addressing child sex offending as a ‘social evil’.

Contrary to the tendency in 1970 to denounce injustices within the system, there appears to be a move towards a punishment-oriented philosophy in 1977. Feeley and Simon (1992) note an “acceleration of demands for rationality and accountability in punishment coming from the courts and legislatures” during this time (456). If the ideology of the time is partial to incapacitating child sex offenders, it stands to reason that the media would reflect this trend, hence the absence of reports voicing concerns about overenthusiastic or all-encompassing criminal justice policy. It can therefore be

argued that the want for articles that report on wrongful accusations or convictions at this time is the result of a backlash from the liberalization of the early seventies, a “reversal of the pendulum”, to borrow from Jenkins (1998: 118).

In accordance with the media's tendency to emphasize a 'law and order' model of criminal justice, stories are more likely to denote support for crime control, rather than due process (Surette, 1992). An absence of articles that relate to due process infringements (wrongful convictions) seems only natural. Another possible explanation is that there were no wrongful accusations and convictions for the three months studied in 1977. As demonstrated in later sections of the last chapter, however, this hypothesis is not supported by evidence put forward in later editions of the *Globe and Mail*, and can thus be discredited. Some individuals were wrongfully accused and convicted at this time, but these stories were not brought to light until the late nineties.

In 1984, articles that denounce criminal justice practices as overzealous, and as having unintended consequences begin to surface. However, it isn't until 1991 and 1998 that this issue is truly brought to light, with the help of the Morin Inquiry Report and backlash with regards to recovered or repressed memories. What these cases demonstrate is that, despite good intentions, a punitive social reaction towards child sex offenders can easily turn into a witchhunt, and have drastic repercussions not only for those (wrongfully or rightly) accused or convicted of child sex offending, but also for their families and communities at large, who become collateral victims of the criminal justice system.

Moreover, these cases alert us to a particular condition which allows for this witchhunt to occur. Whereas a punitive social reaction, on its own, can lead to the stigmatization of individuals involved, their social exclusion, sometimes even their murder, as we saw in a few cases of vigilante reprisals, it cannot wrongfully convict, sentence, or incarcerate without recruiting the help of criminal justice officials. In other words, overzealous criminal justice practices are fuelled by radicalized social reactions of criminal justice officials, who embark upon a *pedophobic* paradigm, despite their duty to remain fair and objective – a far cry from the “Just the facts, ‘mam” philosophy.

That these issues are brought to light in such great numbers in 1998 is likely due, in part, to the fact that a greater number of cases of child sex offending are reported in the

Globe and Mail, thus giving greater visibility to the phenomenon, and all its facets. Stated simply, “as [a] problem’s boundaries expan[ds], controversy gr[ows]” (Best, 1990: 82). As mentioned above, however, a number of highly mediacized cases also contributed to highlighting deficiencies within the criminal justice system. By conveying their messages through the media, Guy Paul Morin and many others became claim-makers in their own right.

In 2005, repercussions are seen to go beyond extending to perpetrators, victims, their families, and surrounding communities to affect the academic realm. That academic freedom is oppressed by the ‘with us or against us’ philosophy of the radical social reaction towards child sex offending highlights an important problem. Donald West reflects that “[i]t has become dangerous for academics to publish politically incorrect conclusions.” (2000: 523) By stifling research efforts on the problematic, overenthusiastic criminal justice practices may in fact contribute to perpetuate the very problem it seeks to annul by creating a ‘blind spot’, or an inability to be critical of the overarching powers of law enforcement with regards to child sex offending and how these are in some ways problematic.

Although academics may be reluctant to be critical of practices relating to child sex offending, articles in the Globe and Mail continue to offer readers alternative viewpoints about the problematic, and critical assessments of all-encompassing criminal justice practices. In 2005, despite a decrease in the number of articles that denounce wrongful accusations and convictions, an overreliance on DNA evidence is problematized. Skepticism about the use of forensics dates back to (within the parameters of the present analysis) 1970. Interestingly, it appears we have come full circle in critically assessing such practices and their impacts.

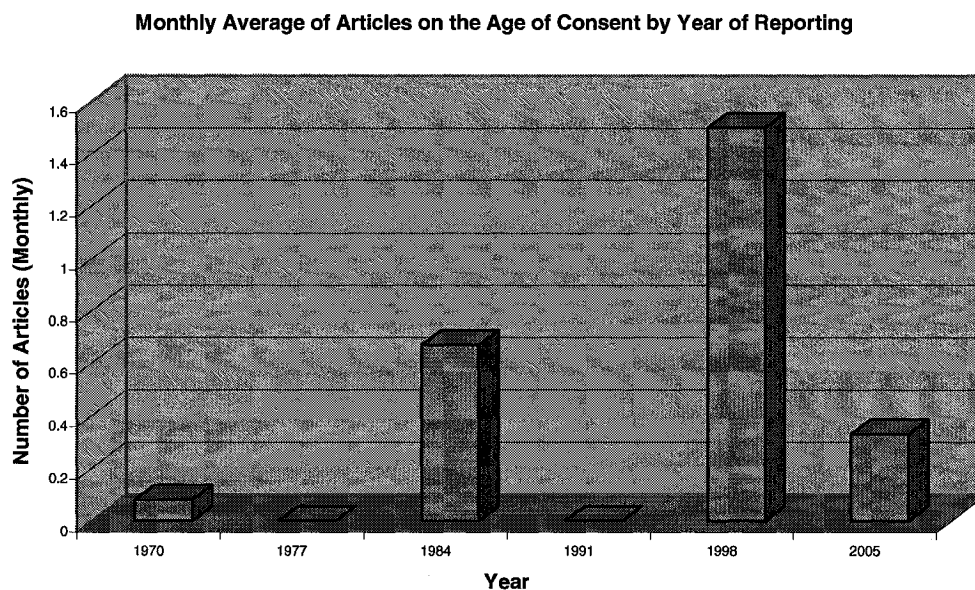
5.5 Age of Consent

Articles which related to the age of consent appeared the least frequently in the sample of data collected. As shown in **Figure 5.5 A** on the next page, these articles were most prevalent in 1998, followed by 1984, and 2005. There were no articles that related to the age of consent in 1977 and 1991. Surette (1992) identifies consonance as a key component of news operations. Consonance can be defined as “how an event ties in

with prior news themes and accepted public images and explanations.” (1992: 58) If nothing is happening, politically or socially speaking, with regards to the age of consent, it follows that reports on this theme will be scarce in the news. Canada has a long history of legal age of consent legislation, but 1977 and 1991 saw little legislative change in that regard (Pilon, 2001). Canadian media had little to work from. Although we can suspect that age of consent violations were taking place at that time, and that certain groups engaged in discourse about the legal age of consent, no story touched upon the matter. Stories concerning the age of consent were likely cut in the organizational process, for lack of consonance.

In 1970, the age of consent does not appear to stir any radical social reaction, as demonstrated by the passive description of sexual activity between youths and adults in film. When comparing with contemporary discourse on the subject matter, there does not seem to be, in 1970, “[c]ompeting notions of agency and protection [which] characterize contemporary public discourse on young people’s sexuality.” (Thomson, 2004: 135) In contrast, Mary Letourneau’s relationship with a young man, as reported in 1998, suggests both that 1) youths cannot consent to sexual relationships with adults, and are not free agents of their sexuality; and 2) they must be protected by the law and other social institutions, as age of consent offences fall under the broad category of child sexual offending.

Figure 5.5 A



What emerges in 1984, 1998, and 2005 are a number of conditions under which age of consent offences are tolerated or punished under the law. Jenkins (2001) distinguishes relationships between adults and teens, which he describes as *mala prohibita* offences (condemned by some, but not all), and those between adults and pre-pubescent children, which are *mala in se* offences, or, as he describes, “contrary to nature” (28). Put simply, our social reactions are less radicalized, generally speaking, when it comes to older children than when younger children are involved. As such, the victim’s age is a factor in influencing the level of social reaction towards age of consent offences.

The institution of marriage also plays a role in moderating social reactions towards the age of consent. More specifically, underage teens who engage in sexual activity with adults within the institution of marriage are not penalized by law. To put this into context, a thirteen-year-old who consents to sexual activity with an adult to whom he or she is married may consummate the relationship legally. However, if this thirteen-year-old alleges he or she consents to having a relationship with an adult outside the bonds of marriage, as did Mary Letourneau’s young partner, he or she is deemed to lack enlightened consent, the relationship is deemed abusive, and is punished by law.

Finally, social status played a role in shaping reactions towards age of consent offences. Individuals of higher social status gained further tolerance on the part of criminal justice authorities. Despite public acknowledgement of their relationships with youths, celebrities were less likely to be penalized by the law. However, social reactions were still somewhat radicalized in the social realm. Public opinion often condemned their relationships with underage youths.

6.0 Synthesis & Conclusion

Portrayals of the problematic I have set out to assess are, without a doubt, complex and multifaceted. Still, a number of observations can be gleaned from the findings outlined in preceding chapters. To begin, there has been an impressive shift in the quantity of articles that relate to child sex offending. As demonstrated in chapter four, the number of articles which relate to child sex offending increased steadily as of 1970, multiplied exponentially in the 1980s, and peaked in the 1990s before witnessing a slight decrease in 2005. This shift, combined with the corresponding pattern in portrayals about child sexual abuse (sketched out in **Figure 5.3 A**) points to the manifestation of a more covert phenomenon.

As previously mentioned, the steep increase in the number of articles portrayed in the 1990s goes hand in hand with reports that the incidence of child sex offending is on the rise (Adler, 2001). As my research findings demonstrate, each decade offers reports of the increasing prevalence, and sometimes, purported omnipresence of sex offending against children. Yet, no matter how high numbers are reported to be, each decade tops the one that preceded it, and the problem is always reported to grow, despite recurring claims that rates of child sex offending have reached their apex.

Theoretically, we can guess that the number of sex offences against children is no more, and no less prevalent than it was thirty five years ago, notwithstanding slight variations in incidence over time. If the existence of newspaper reports about child sex offending were in fact truly representative of the actual occurrence of deviant sexual behaviours towards children, the incidence of child sex offending in 1970 would almost be nil. Given the longstanding history of sex crimes against children, however, this hypothesis is highly unlikely. What is more, our conceptualizations of sexual deviance, as well as the technologies used to discern them and respond to them, have shifted over time (Douard, 2005; Foucault, 2003) and across cultures (Khal, 1978; Pratt, 2005; Tremblay, 2001).

Finally, notwithstanding the volume of articles collected in the late nineteen-nineties, a Canadian study of national scope found that “the rate of sexual offences reported to the police declined by 36% between 1993 and 2002. Declines occurred for sexual assault as well as for other sexual offences such as sexual exploitation and invitation to sexual

touching.” (Kong et al., 2003: 1) These research findings go counter to the idea that reports on child sex offences are more prevalent because the offences are equally more prevalent. Thus, explanations for the shifts in the volume of media portrayals on child sex offending are not as simple as we might assume. Rather, what this points to is a prime example of the social construction of a phenomenon which, although real in its consequences, has been the object of so much scrutiny that it now appears more frequently in newspaper reports. Child sexual offending went from being so taboo that it was steadfastly ignored in the Canadian print media to being such a ‘hot topic’ that incidents were said to occur when in fact they had not. In short, we began seeing child sex offending when and where there was none.

Again, I stress that acknowledging that a phenomenon is socially constructed by no means obliterates those cases when abuse did occur, nor does it minimize the pain incurred onto people in the process. However, it is imperative that we acknowledge and reflect on how we have come to understand social phenomena and the process whereby they have been defined as social problems, so as to consider the broader implications of our actions and reactions. This borrows from the Foucaultian tradition of doing the genealogies of social occurrences (Foucault, 1980).

As fervently documented (yet often ignored), the construction of child sex offending has had repercussions not only on children, but also on:

- 1) individuals wrongfully convicted of child sex offending;
- 2) individuals rightfully convicted, through the increase in penalties and harsher criminal justice responses) (Lafond & Winick, 2004; Quinn et al., 2004; Roberts & Pires, 1992);
- 3) individuals rightfully or wrongfully accused of child sex offending (prior to conviction, the issue of guilt is irrelevant: *habeas corpus* and other due process rights should be respected regardless, but are often ignored in the context of a witchhunt) (Loseke, 2003);
- 4) academics, through their restricted freedom of intellectual expression (Loseke, 2003; Quinn et al., 2004; Wattam, 1997; West, 2000; Zuriff, 2000);
- 5) artists, through restrictions imposed on artistic expression and the expanding realm of the obscene (Adler, 2001; Cover, 2003; Jenkins, 1998;

- 6) parents, friends, and others whose gazes upon children are coloured by concern, fear, even, over perceived (self- or other) impropriety and inappropriateness (Brogden & Harkin, 2000; Jenkins, 1996; Pratt, 2005; West, 2000; and finally,
- 7) children, whose daily interactions with adults and personal freedom are also affected by the concern of others over their well-being (Thomson, 2004; West, 2000.

In sum, we have gone from a point in time when individuals suffered in private, given the extent and implications of the taboo which regimented discourse on child sex offending, to the widespread recognition of the problematic as a public issue – and a prevalent one at that. Although it cannot be deemed the sole entity responsible in the development of radical social reactions towards child sex offending, the Canadian print media is partly responsible for the manner in which sex offending against children has been portrayed and, by the same token, constructed.

At the onset of this research project, I had made up my mind to look at portrayals of the problematic of child sex offending, its victims, perpetrators, and criminal justice responses, and whether and to what extent these portrayals changed over time. As I soon discovered however, the problematic of child sex offending is not so simple to deconstruct. Since one of the principle rules of document analysis is to accept the document as it is, without attempting to change it, or see it for something it is not (Cellard, 1997), I decided to modify the categories used in my analysis. While I am satisfied that these categories adequately represent the data amassed, I am cognizant of the fact that a number of other, different, categories could also have been outlined and used for analytical purposes, each bringing to bear new, and surely interesting elements.

Such is the dilemma that arises from choices inherent to the organisation of knowledge. In narrowing the scope of their research, one learns to look for overarching themes and for ways to simplify data, to separate, to unify, and to develop hierarchies. This is symptomatic of what Edgar Morin terms the *paradigm of simplification* (paradigme de la simplification), or the reduction of what is complex to superlative simplicity. As Morin would argue, the paradigm of simplification is a vital tool in understanding the complex

realities which typify our 'modern' world (Morin, 1990). As such, it is present in almost every aspect of social life. We can observe it in matters relating to human behaviour and social interaction. Given our inability to understand the complexities which make up human social behaviour, we categorize and label. For instance, adolescents are said to form cliques: 'nerds', 'skaters', 'preps', 'loners', etc. Employers may characterize their workers as 'Type A' or 'Type B' personality types. Within institutions, schemata, graphs, statistics, and diagrams are used to make sense of various trends and issues.

The paradigm of simplification is indeed pervasive in our daily interactions, an observation which is not entirely surprising, given the complexities which characterize these interactions, and the rapidity with which we are required to process information. To use this research project as an example, the complex issue of child sex offending was divided into five themes, which were simplified in turn into overarching observations in order to facilitate the explanation and integration of my findings. Had I further broadened the task, I would likely have exceeded time and length restrictions. Furthermore, attempting to cover all aspects of my topic would be both futile and unfeasible. Thus, simplifying complex realities serves a utilitarian purpose.

This last statement is key to understanding media processes. Through various means, news media reports are simplified to accommodate readers and writers alike. As explains a former managing editor of the *Globe and Mail*:

“[O]ur function is to make society understandable to readers, to try to figure out what's going on, to try to make some sense out of it... [but] [t]here is so much information now that nobody can master it all and explain it all and digest it all. Yet, we're supposed to be a major force in trying to sort it all out, and say: 'In all this welter of material, this is what's important, and this is what you should focus on and this is what we think is important as news.'” (Ericson et al., 1987: 16)

Given the complexity of information that is out there, newspaper reporters and editors must simplify this information in order to broadcast it in a manner considered both interesting and coherent. The news process ultimately decides on the type of information that is reported, and the manner in which it is conveyed (1987). Stories about a complex matter such as that of child sex offending will be simplified to take on a

form which is accessible to readers who do not have any background knowledge about the problematic.

While simplifications are handy, Morin argues that, by engaging in the paradigm of simplicity, we often ignore the realm of the complex, wherein lies the problem. Blind acceptance of simplified realities leads to the destruction of totalities, to an isolation from factors which make a process or concept whole, to a vision of society which is one-dimensional and mutilated (1990). Focusing solely on the unsettling nature of the crimes committed by those who offend sexually against children obliterates from view the person behind the offence, their background, their families, and their contributions to society. What is not taken into consideration through simplified accounts is in fact key knowledge to understanding the individual who committed the crime, and perhaps even factors which contributed to their offending.

Simplifications often take the individual out of context. In the case of child sex offenders, it becomes very difficult to see anything beyond the offence. Researchers have relentlessly attempted to typify, sort, and classify child sex offences and the people who commit them. For instance, juvenile perpetrators have been classified as “naïve experimenters, undersocialized child exploiters, sexual aggressives, sexual compulsives, disturbed impulsives, group influenced, and pseudosocialized” individuals (Righthand & Welch, 2001: 13). Female child sex offender taxonomies include the ‘predisposed molester’, the ‘psychologically disturbed’, the ‘experimenter/exploiter’, the ‘rejected/revengeful’, the ‘predisposed molester’, and the ‘male-coerced molester’ (Vandiver & Kercher, 2004). The adult male child sex offender has also been classified in many ways, including ‘impulsive’, ‘ritualistic’, ‘seductive’, ‘introverted’, and ‘sadistic’ (Hazelwood & Warren, 2000). There are many more such typologies that have been created for each type of offender, but the ones stated above will suffice as examples.

Despite the efforts of many, researchers have yet to construct an all-encompassing profile of child sex offending, one that can explain all types of deviant sexual activity between children and adults or adolescents. The reason for this is simple: child sex offending is much too complex to be simplified into five or six narrow categories. Similarly, the people who commit child sex offences are human beings, and human nature is far from simple. Motives for committing sex crimes against children may vary

from one person to another, and under difference circumstances. It is no more possible to classify a person's motive to commit a sexual act against a child than it is for, say, university students' motives to attain a university degree. While a student may be initially motivated by their parents' desire to see them excel in university, their motive might change as they take a liking to their discipline, for example. Similarly, a child sex offender's motive to offend might change along the way.

Furthermore, human nature is very difficult to understand, let alone to predict. While we can give educated guesses as to why act or react in certain ways, we can never truly be sure that the reasons we provide are, in fact, correct. In other words, our attempts at understanding child sex offending, as well as so-called predictable outcomes for those who offend sexually against children, are mainly approximations. When newspapers cite experts on the matter, they are in fact simplifying already simplified accounts. In this sense, reporters are subject to what Morin terms the 'blind acceptance' of the paradigm of simplification. Keeping in mind that "surveys have reported that as many as 95 percent of the general population cite the mass media as their primary source of information about crime" (Surette, 1992: 81), the public is also blind to accept simplified accounts of child sex offending.

The problems associated with simplification are compounded when, in response, we address a problematic of which we know relatively little by relying on partial information, which, more often than not, perpetuates, and sometimes aggravates, the problem, rather than solves it (1990). To make a very simple parallel, let us pretend I am failing a class at school. I do not know why I am failing, but I deduce it is because I did not study my textbook enough at the last exam, and resolve to stop attending all classes in order to spend more time focusing on my textbook. In reality, I am failing because I attended less than half of all the classes before the first exam, and the professor specified that only material covered in class would figure on the exams. By neglecting to go to all classes, and opting instead to read the textbook more carefully, I am not only failing to respond to the problem, but I am making it worse.

In much the same way, knee-jerk reactions to oversimplified media portrayals of child sex offending are highly problematic – they lead to narrow, and often inadequate 'solutions'. Responses which favour the enactment of more stringent laws, the

imposition of harsher or more punitive punishments, or the circumvention of fundamental Charter rights, such as those put forward in the *Globe and Mail*, are partial solutions that serve only to provide 'band-aid' solutions to a very complex, and deep-seated problem. Moreover, these reactive and overinclusive responses are detrimental not only to child sex offenders, but to all, as they widen the net of inclusion in the 'deviant' category, and overlook necessary safeguards in preventing wrongful accusations and convictions.

Furthermore, these responses exacerbate the problem of those who suffer from the secondary deviance of individuals who offend sexually against children – the collateral victims. For instance, child victims of incest who want the sexual offending to stop, but who continue to love the person who abused them dearly (father, mother, or sibling), might face the added guilt of sending their loved ones to prison over a long term span in the aftermath of disclosure. This guilt may be furthered if punishments intended for these types of crimes grow in sentence length and conditions imposed. What is more, knowing that this is what awaits their loved ones, children may be dissuaded from disclosing at all, which would put them at risk for further victimization. While longer prison sentences may have been implemented with good intentions, the iatrogenic effects are devastating.

Moreover, simplified and strict categorizations reify the offender. Terms such as 'predator', 'monster', and 'sex fiend' symbolize a tendency to situate the problem within the person, rather than the behaviour. This idea finds further support in claims that sex offenders are "walking time bombs" (Dunphy, 2003: 189), "public enemy number one" (Kitzinger, 1999: 214), the "personification of evil" (Loseke, 2003: 8). These reifications do much to enforce beliefs that we are witnessing a period of moral decline, and that all persons who sexually offend have violated many victims (who are still, for the most part, unknown to social services and law enforcement agencies), under extremely violent circumstances, with no possibility for rehabilitation or treatment. These attitudes, which an important body of literature contradicts, may lead to further victimization or deviance, or may encourage former sex offenders to go underground, without seeking professional help.

While I have not, through the course of my research, assessed public opinion, nor policy enactments in relation to media portrayals of child sex offending, both spheres are

intricately linked to the focus of the present undertaking. Admittedly, I cannot claim to have measured to what extent negative or punitive media portrayals of child sex offending have had repercussions on either. One such exercise would have proven difficult, perhaps impossible, given the questions of causality and consequence which would inevitably arise – questions which, as we have seen, are highly contested, and far from being resolved. Regardless of the exact nature of their relationship, however, media, public, and policy are undeniably related to one another. There can be no discussion of the importance of doing a study on media portrayals without establishing first that the media influences the public and informs policy, at least to some degree, and that these relationships are bi-directional. Based on this premise, I argue that simplified accounts of child sex offending in the *Globe and Mail*, if blindly accepted, can result in any of the unintended consequences mentioned above.

In order to avoid the negative consequences of blindly accepting simplified accounts of reality, Morin asserts we must step out of the paradigm of simplification and adopt more complex processes of thought. Engaging in a *paradigm of complexity* will allow us to avoid the mechanistic, deterministic trivialities of narrow categorizations (1990). With regards to child sex offending, we must attempt to look at the problematic in all its complexity, to embrace cognitive dissonance and to explore those areas which we do not understand: “*Le tout est dans la partie qui est dans le tout*” (1990: 101). We must come to terms with the idea that there exists disorder, and that not all things can be typified and dichotomized.

To adopt a more complex view of any social problem is certainly an important analytical tool to keep in mind. However, this approach is limited in much the same way as what Joel Best terms ‘strict’ social constructionism. As Best (1993) argues, social constructionism is useful for understanding the emergence of social problems. However, there are problems associated with adopting a ‘strict’ constructionist view, and social construction theory should be regarded as an analytical tool well suited for tracing the emergence and development of social problems (1993).

Best further asserts that “strict constructionism places unreasonable constraints on sociologists who hope to understand social problems.” (1993: 131) Similarly, the paradigm of complexity, albeit useful for understanding a problematic, would be near

impossible to adopt all the time. As previously mentioned, our cognitive processes, which help us classify information, serve an essential function. Without them, we could not manage the wealth of information we encounter on a daily basis. Thus, the paradigm of complexity should also be looked upon as an analytical tool, one that allows us to step out of the simplified, and often incomplete, version of the 'truth'.

Indeed, as Morin contends, we must live with uncertainty, rather than attempting to find the 'truth', or the 'right' answer, as the Enlightenment project has taught us (Morin, 1990). Instead, we should borrow from the post-modern contention that there in fact exist many 'truths' (Foucault, 1983). In turn, this uncertainty will allow us to question our practices, and to be reflexive of our beliefs and assumptions, and of the categories and discourses which are used to make sense of a problematic.

Certainly, stepping into the paradigm of complexity can allow individuals, and likely most social institutions, to consider a problematic in all its aspects, and to attempt to find solutions based on the aggregate of information on a subject matter. However, this task is impossible for the news media, which, by their very nature, need to simplify social problems, and to 'sell' a version of the 'truth' to their readers. In chapter four, for instance, we saw that child sex offenders were defined primarily as strangers in the 1970s, as intrafamilial offenders in 1984, and as extrafamilial offenders known to their victims in the 1990s. In 2005, there is renewed concern for strangers, what with preoccupations that centre on the internet. At no time do reporters refer to the way child sex offenders were portrayed in previous decades. In other words, each timeframe provides its own version of the 'truth' about child sex offenders.

Morin would likely argue that incomplete accounts about child sex offenders, when observed in their respective timeframes, would lead the readers of the *Globe and Mail* to blindly accept these accounts (1990). So, in 1998, for instance, one might be led to believe priests, or athletic coaches are more likely to offend sexually against children. While public attitudes are sometimes shaped by the media, however, we know that as non-passive consumers, people likely filter whether and to what extent they accept media portrayals of child sex offending (Surette, 1992). To be sure, "readers are active interpreters, bringing to bear a variety of perspectives derived from their particular social experiences and positions." (Allen et al., 1998: 65). As such, we should not seek to "ask

how the media make us act or think, but rather how the media contribute to making us who we are.” (Ibid).

By constructing a social phenomenon as problematic, the media bring us to focus on particular issues, and to respond. Though certain people are critical of the media’s construction of social problems, the fact remains that, as reported in my findings, multiple social services and legislations that regard child sex offending have been implemented in recent years. Furthermore, by simplifying a problematic, the media misrepresent its complexity. This is not to imply that newspaper editors conspire to mislead readers. While editors may have some leeway in deciding what is newsworthy and how to report it, most newspaper articles are accurately reported. The media portray selective aspects of child sex offending, but often fail to explain it in its totality. Misrepresentation occurs when a holistic understanding is denied.

In retrospect, it is fairly easy to pinpoint the shifts in portrayals of child sex offending over a period of 35 years. We need to remind ourselves, however, that media play a role in informing us about social issues, and that, at any point in time, media discourses are indicative of the way an issue is ‘talked’ of. It may seem irrelevant, when looked at in isolation, that there were 9 articles in 1998 about sports coaches who had sexually perpetrated against children, and none seven years before, when the focus was primarily on the Roman Catholic church, and on offences committed by priests. The fact remains, however, that, over a period of 6 months at minimum in 1998, the Globe and Mail informed readers of an important demographic of perpetrators in the sports industry, while it failed to do so seven years prior to that time. To the extent that the media disseminated information about a number of sports coach-perpetrators in 1998, while failing mention that sports coaches had likely been found guilty of such offences in years prior, and that this did not translate into a ‘new’ type of threat, child sexual offending was misrepresented.

Of course, some individuals remain reflexive of media misrepresentations. The broader issue here is that piecemeal policies and practices, which are based on incomplete accounts about child sex offending, are currently being put in place. More importantly, these efforts, while well-intended, have serious adverse iatrogenic effects not only for perpetrators of child sex offending, but also for their victims and the broader community.

From the 1970s and 1980s, there exists an abundance of literature that looks at child sex offending in, I would argue, more complex ways. For instance, a number of authors look at children's agency, consent, even participation in 'intergenerational intimacy' (Douc   et al, 1987; Plummer, 1981; Virkkunen, 1981). As would indicate the level of backlash that came about in the aftermath of the publication of a study by Rind et al. (1998), which concluded that child sexual abuse "does not cause intense harm on a pervasive basis" (46), researchers have much to lose from publishing results that go counter the current ideology regarding child sex offending. As Donald West asserts, "[i]t has become dangerous for academics to publish politically incorrect conclusions." (2000: 523)

Currently, little research is produced that is critical of traditional experimental research on child sex offending, and the broader repercussions of the construction of these crimes, which suggests a need for further academic development in this area. In the case at hand, a comparative analysis of media content in different socio-political contexts allowed for four observations to be made. The first two observations relate directly to media portrayals of child sex offending: 1) there has been an increase in the number of articles that report on the problematic since 1970; 2) the manner in which particular themes were reported has also witnessed shifts.

The second set of observations is broader in scope. What can be gleaned from the first set of observations is that: first, the phenomenon of child sex offending has been constructed as a social problem since 1970. The media hype which accompanied the social construction of child sex offending likely reached its apex in 1998. Claimsmakers have in fact been so successful in their campaigns that the phenomenon has witnessed several unanticipated consequences, as reflected in several articles of the *Globe and Mail*, and particularly in those that reported on wrongful convictions and accusations. However, little research is produced at this moment on the broader repercussions of 'doing the business' of child sex offending, as child sex offending is a topic which is politically loaded, and because it has become extremely difficult to publish findings that go counter the philosophical current.

Second, the Canadian print media, and likely other forms of media, do much to fuel and perpetuate lurid portrayals of child sex offending by simplifying accounts of the problematic into narrow, disjointed categories. The (mis)representations of child sex offending at all levels (that of victims, offenders, offences, and criminal justice responses) in the *Globe and Mail* feed the construction of the problematic. While the number of articles on child sex offending in 2005 has decreased since 1998, portrayals of the problematic are as negative as ever. In fact, **Figure 4.0 A** demonstrates that, notwithstanding a spurt in the number of articles in 1998, there has been a steady increase in the volume of articles which address child sex offending since 1970. Thus, the pedophobic reaction is not likely to let up anytime soon.

In order to become more reflexive of current practices and legislation with regards to child sex offending, and to step out of the narrow and restrictive paradigm which currently categorizes the socio-political context, we must reach a deeper and more complex understanding of the problematic. However, because of the nature and form of mass media, complex representations are made impossible. For this reason, individuals must be sceptical of media representations of child sex offending, which, although complex in their own right, often portray the problematic in an overly narrow and simplistic manner.

What this thesis has taught us is that the construction of child sex offending in Canada can only be fully understood when looked at through the lens of history, accounting for the socio-political contexts in which it evolved. Through the course of this undertaking, I conducted the study of a social problem that is relatively new, historically speaking. I suspect that the construction of the phenomenon began well before 1970, given the unlikelihood that child sex offending suddenly sprang into view out of benign luck. I think it imperative to, at this point, delve deeper in time to unravel what preceded the 'discovery' of child sex offending, and, given fluctuations in the construction of problems, to investigate whether there were times in the past when sex crimes towards children were constructed to the same extent as we have witnessed in recent years. In so doing, we could better grasp the elements which make child sex offending an area of concern or, alternatively, of passive acknowledgement.

While more sensational reports of child sex offending may have emerged from using the 'popular' press, likely yielding some interesting results, I chose to look at a 'quality' press newspaper, in the hopes of minimizing overly sensational articles, which might have coloured my conclusions. In choosing to look at a 'popular' newspaper, I risked having these conclusions discarded as nothing more than disproportionately sensationalized and distorted reflections of 'true' crime news. A comparison of the two types of newspapers, while interesting, would have yielded an unmanageable amount of data for the purpose of this undertaking. In fact, the data proved overwhelming after looking at one newspaper alone. A comparative analysis of portrayals of child sex offending in both types of press remains a fascinating area for further research.

Much like I observed in the *Globe and Mail*, Lucie Quevillon (2002) identified in her research of Canadian francophone newspaper *La Presse* that 1) discourses on false and recovered memories were dominant in the mid- to late-eighties; 2) quantitative increases occurred in the 1990s, before decreasing in 2000; 3) strangers were the focus of the press in 2000, as opposed to individuals known to the victim; and 4) discourses on treatment and rehabilitative alternatives were gradually replaced by punitive rhetoric as favoured criminal justice responses. Since her study looked at media representations between 1988 and 2000, it would be worthwhile to look at media portrayals of child sex offending in *La Presse* at earlier times, and perhaps to compare the results generated from this francophone newspaper with those of the *Globe and Mail* in the 1970s.

The level of social reaction towards child sex offending, and the extent to which it has been constructed, is reflected in a number of current social issues. For instance, the implementation of the latest Canadian legislation on the age of consent, highly reminiscent of that which was put in place in the 1800s, reflects a level of general social angst regarding issues of childhood, sexuality, and morality. The radicalization of the level of social reaction incurred through the moral panic concerning child sex offending can be seen to affect our conceptualization of the moral and sexual realms, particularly with regards to children. The impacts of the construction of sex crimes towards children are real and beyond measure. What is more, these impacts are perpetuated through a variety of related social problems that grow through the rhetoric of contemporary child savers. Much time and many resources have been invested in clinical research on child sex offending. While such research efforts are necessary and require continued

investment, the broader impacts of the construction of sex crimes remain practically unscathed academically, and warrant further critical inquiry.

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