THE FACTS:

- The majority of child sexual offending against girls under 12 years of age occurs within the home, is underreported and inadequately prevented.
- The majority of policy and media attention focuses on sensationalized cases of extramural child sexual abuse by "child sexual predator".
- The location of nonbiological father offenders within legal research classifications is ambiguous and problematic.

THE ASSUMPTIONS:

- Law and laypersons
- Etiology and treatment

INTRAFAMILIAL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE:

Emphasis becomes the importance of family dynamics and social relationship inherent between the offender and victim (i.e., parent/child)

DIFFERENCES IN VICTIM EXPERIENCE

- Socially and psychologically dependent on abuser
- Increased difficulty breaking emotional bond with abuser
- Resist attempting to behave as abuse
- Resist seeing their father figure as an abuser = increased self-blame
- Greater stigma from outside the family = internalize this stigma
- Increased desire to protect their family unit from shame and dissolution

INTRAFA MILIAL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: The vast majority of child sexual abuse is INTRAFA MILIAL Untreated and inadequately prevented.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. When comparing biological and nonbiological father offenders, do differences emerge on the following variables?
   - Offender or victim characteristics
   - Abuse duration, incidents, or severity
   - Delays before victim disclosure (months)

2. Where do nonbiological father offenders best fit within legal policies, treatment and research groups?

THE BACKGROUND

- The increase in interest in child sexual offending, particularly in the context of biological father and stepfather offenders, is on the rise.
- A long-standing problem is the overemphasized biological father and stepfather offenders, which has led to a biased perspective.

THE DESIGN:

- Retrospective data analysis of clinical and archival records.

DELAYS BEFORE VICTIM DISCLOSURE:

- Time to victim disclosure
- Number of incidents of abuse
- Premeditated
- Punitive responses
- Sexual gratification achieved
- Use of threat or actual force
- Moderate/severe physical injury

RESULTS

- Significant differences between groups are displayed in boxes.

METHOD

- Program Clinical Files
- Offender demographics
- Offender behavior
- Victim characteristics

IMPLICATIONS

- The results suggest equivalently injurious protracted abuse that is wrongly undisclosed or reported by victims of both biological and nonbiological fathers.

- These outcomes suggest:
  - The clinical and legal consequences for child sexual offenders should be evaluated from a perspective that acknowledges the context in which the abuse manifested.
  - A narrow, sensationalized focus on extramural child sexual abuse may extend stigmatization to victims of intramural abuse, decreasing reporting.
  - The pervasive nature of intramural child sexual abuse deserves media and policy reform attention to better expose the risk of child sexual abuse by a parental figure, regardless of biological relationship.

Few if any differences between groups:

- These results support recent findings indicating that differentiating between biological and nonbiological father offenders may be based on capricious assumptions of differences between these groups. Such differentiations:
  - Are unwarranted for the purposes of effective legal and treatment policies
  - Unduly emphasize biological over social aspects of the offender-victim relationship
  - Deter prevention of future abuse and long-term negative consequences to victims

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