Child Pornography

Child pornography is pornography that exploits children for sexual stimulation. It may be produced with the direct involvement or sexual assault of a child (also known as child sexual abuse images) or it may be simulated child pornography. Abuse of the child occurs during the sexual acts or lascivious exhibitions of genitals or pubic areas, which are recorded in the production of child pornography. Child pornography may use a variety of media, including writings, magazines, photos, sculpture, drawing, cartoon, painting, animation, sound recording, film, video, and video games.

Laws regarding child pornography generally include sexual images involving prepubescents, pubescent or post-pubescent minors and computer-generated images that appear to involve them. Most possessors of child pornography who are arrested are found to possess images of prepubescent children; possessors of pornographic images of post-pubescent minors are less likely to be prosecuted, even though those images also fall within the statutes.

Producers of child pornography try to avoid prosecution by distributing their material across national borders, though this issue is increasingly being addressed with regular arrests of suspects from a number of countries occurring over the last few years. Prepubescent pornography is viewed and collected by pedophiles for a variety of purposes, ranging from private sexual uses, trading with other pedophiles, preparing children for sexual abuse as part of the process known as "child grooming", or enticement leading to entrapment for sexual exploitation such as production of new child pornography or child prostitution. (Wikipedia, 2015)

Child Pornography in the General Population

In a small study researching child pornography (CP) use in the general population, Bogarett, et. al. (2001) found that 6% of subjects preferred CP porn titles. Their characteristics included:

- Antisocial personality traits
- Low social desirability
- Greater pornography experience
- Erotophilia– (obsessive interest in sexuality)
- Expressed appeal for having sex with a child

Seigfried, Lovely, and Rogers (2008) did an online survey of the general population showed 10% had ever-used CP. This study also found that those who had accessed CP scored higher on antisocial personality traits.

Seto, Kjellgren, et. al. (2010), found that CP use was predicted by:

- Self-reported likelihood of having had sex with a minor 14 or younger when the person was an adult
- Having friends who think sex with children is acceptable
- Having friends who have viewed CP
- Frequent pornography use
- Watching violent pornography

Ray, Kimonis, and Seto (2014), did a study of pornography users who were at pedophilic sites or seeking help for Internet compulsions:

- 21% had viewed CP
- CP users were higher on sensation seeking and more likely to report interest and experience in sexual contacts with a minor

Ogas & Gaddam, (2011) used meta-analytic data to reveal what people search for in pornography and relate these data to sexual preferences. These two authors looked at over 400 million individual searches submitted to the Web Browser "*DogPile*" between July 2009 and July 2010 and found that over 55 million of these searches were sexual. Of over 55 million searches the most common search was "*youth*", accounting for 13.54% of all sexual searches.

More recently, with reference to sexual preferences in the United States, arguably the best source of information on what pornographic images people search for are the yearly statistical reports produced by

one of the larger pornography distribution sites – PornHub. In 2014 in the United States "teen" was the third most popular pornographic search term. For the United States in 2015 "teen" was the fourth most popular pornographic search term, and in 2016 "*teen*" was the third most common category of pornography searched for. The United States accounts for approximately 40% of the PornHub traffic across these three years. It should be noted that this is not exclusively a North American phenomenon with the pornographic search term "*teen*" being the most common search term worldwide in 2014, second most common in 2015, and the fourth most common is 2016. These data clearly reveal that interest in young images is very common not only in the United States but worldwide.

As is evident from the Internet search data of both Ogas and Saddam (2011), the PornHub yearly summary data, and a study of sexual fantasy in the general population (Joyal, Cossette, & Lapierre, 2014), a great deal of the adult population has fantasies involving teens, youth, and young people.

Sexual Fantasy Involving Young People in the General Population

Within the general population, fantasies of having sexual encounters with "*someone much younger*" than themselves are quite common (Reynaud & Byers, 1999). A study by Joyal, Cossette, & Lapierre (2014) surveyed 1,516 people from the general population and found that 57% of men and 18.1% of women admitted to having sexual fantasies about *"having sex with someone much younger (legally) than me"*. Further, 1.8% of men and 0.8% of women admitted to fantasizing about *"having sex with a child under the age of 12 years"*. When the data were reduced to themes, 3.3% of men admitted to fantasizing about having sex that "*involves a teenager – between the ages of 13 and 17*".

It is critical that the reader understand Dr. Simpson is not justifying sex between adults and youth. The point is simply to underscore that fantasizing about illegal sexual activities between adults and pubescent teens includes a significant portion of the general, non-criminal population.

Criminal Prosecution of Child Pornography

Wolak, Finkelhor, and Mitchell (2011) found that in 2009, 70% of online offending cases involved CP only, no charges for solicitation or contact.

- Almost all were male, Caucasian
- Younger – between 18-25 years-of-age
- Few had prior arrests, history of mental illness, substance use, or violence
- Less were employed full-time
- 70% had CP mostly of girls
- 15% had mostly boys
- 15% had both

The most common characteristics of seized CP: (Baartz, 2008, Oosterbaan & Ibrahim, 2009; Quayle & Jones, 2001; Wolak, Finkelhor, & Mitchell, 2011).

- Prepubescent children
- Girls
- Sexually explicit activities
- Smiling (Taylor and Quayle, 2003)
- One in five had bondage or sexual violence (Wolak, Finkelhor, & Mitchell, 2005)
- 10% were suggestive of rape
- 20% were suggestive of sadism (Eke & Seto, 2012; Seto, 2009)

A study conducted by Family Safe Media (2010) found that of those arrested for possessing CP:

- 83% were images of children 6-12 years old
- 43% were images of children 3-6 years old
- 19% were of children 3 years and younger (Notice that due to overlap, the numbers do not add up to 100%)

Kuhle, Konrad, and Beier (2011) reported that hebephilic participants use more child pornography (of young adolescents, presumably) then pedophilia participants. The greatest use of child pornography was reported by nonexclusive pedophiles or hebephiles, probably because their sexual interests are broader than those of an exclusive pedophile or an exclusive hebephile.

Virtual child pornography

- There is a legal distinction in the United States between virtual child pornography and the depictions of real, identifiable children. This was determined after the United States Supreme Court decision on Ashcroft vs. Free Speech Coalition in 2002.
- Not Real People (NRP) stimulus set was digitally created as a substitute for stimulus sets using images of real children in research studies.

Adolescent Pornography (Hebephilic)

An analysis of online searches of large data sets indicated that content depicting 16-year-olds is the number one age-related search (Ogas & Gaddam, 2011).

Prichard et al. (2011): Examined the top 300 publicly accessible search terms in peer-to-peer networks including *BitTorrent, Gnutella, Limewire*. and *isoHunt*. Three of the top search terms referred to hebephilic pornography - *Pthc* (pre-teen hardcore), *Lolita*, and *Teen*.

The Prevalence of Sexual Interest in Children and Sexually Harmful Behavior Self-Reported by Men Recruited Through an Online Crowdsourcing Platform.

Ó Ciardha, C., Ildeniz, G., & Karoğlu, N. (2022).
Sexual Abuse, 34(2), 207–226. https://doi-org.lopes.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/10790632211013811

Abstract

This study examined the feasibility of using crowdsourcing to recruit men who self-report sexual interest in children or sexually problematic behavior involving children. Crowdsourcing refers to the use of the internet to reach a large number of people to complete a specific task. A nonrepresentative sample of men (N = 997) participated in a brief self-report survey examining age of attraction, sexual interest in children, proclivity toward sexual offenses involving children, and history of sexual offending. Almost a quarter of the sample (23.1%) indicated some degree of sexual interest in children, propensity to sexually offend against children, and/or actual offending behavior. We present our data broken down by type of interest or behavior and examine the frequency of these outcomes. Findings are likely to be of value to those considering the viability of crowdsourcing to overcome the limitations or challenges of face-to-face research on stigmatizing interests and behaviors. Findings also contribute to estimating prevalence of self-reported sexual interest in children, and sexual offending behavior toward children, across different countries.