

Sexual Offender Recidivism

National Associations of Sentencing Commissions
August 7, 2006, Philadelphia

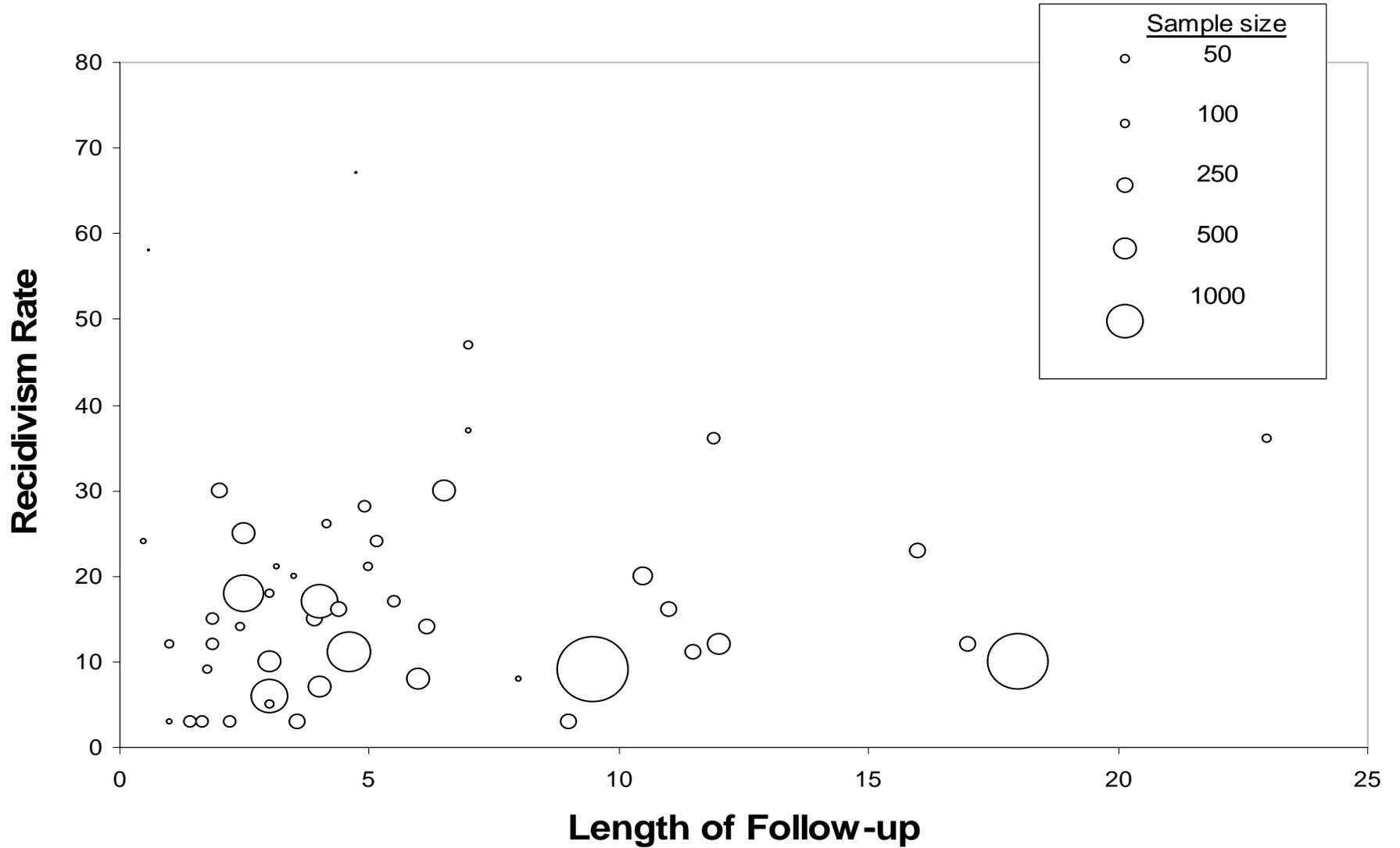
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Recidivism Base Rates

How many sexual offenders will commit another sex offence?

What is the probability of the “typical” sexual offender committing another sex offence?

Sexual Offense Recidivism Rates



Average Recidivism Rates

Hanson & Bussière (1998)

- 61 studies, 4-5 years follow-up
- 13.4% sexual (n = 23,393)
- 36.3% any (n = 19,374)

Hanson & Morton-Bourgon (2005)

- 73 studies, 5-6 years follow-up
- 14.3% sexual (n = 19,267; 73 studies)
- 36.2% any (n = 12,708; 56 studies)

US Bureau of Justice Statistics

Langan et al., 2003

- Recidivism of sex offenders released from Prison in 1994
- 15 States, n = 9,691
- Three year follow-up; rearrest for sex crime
- 5.3% (517 of 9,691 for sexual offenders)
 - 1.3% (3,328 of 262,420 for other offenders)

US Bureau of Justice Statistics

Langan et al., 2003

- Compared to non-sex offenders, sex offenders had a lower overall rearrest rate

43% (4,163 of 9,691 for sex offenders)

68% (179,391 of 262,420 for other offenders)

US Bureau of Justice Statistics

Langan et al., 2003

- Rearrest for sex crime
- 5.0% for rapists
- 5.1% for child molesters

Harris & Hanson (2004)

- N = 4,724 Sexual Offenders
- 10 Samples
- Average follow-up = 7 Years (some to 32 years)
- Sample sizes 191 to 1,138
- Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, California, Washington, HMP (Eng. & Wales), three Correctional Service of Canada data sets
- Recidivism - 1/2 “charges” - 1/2 “convictions”

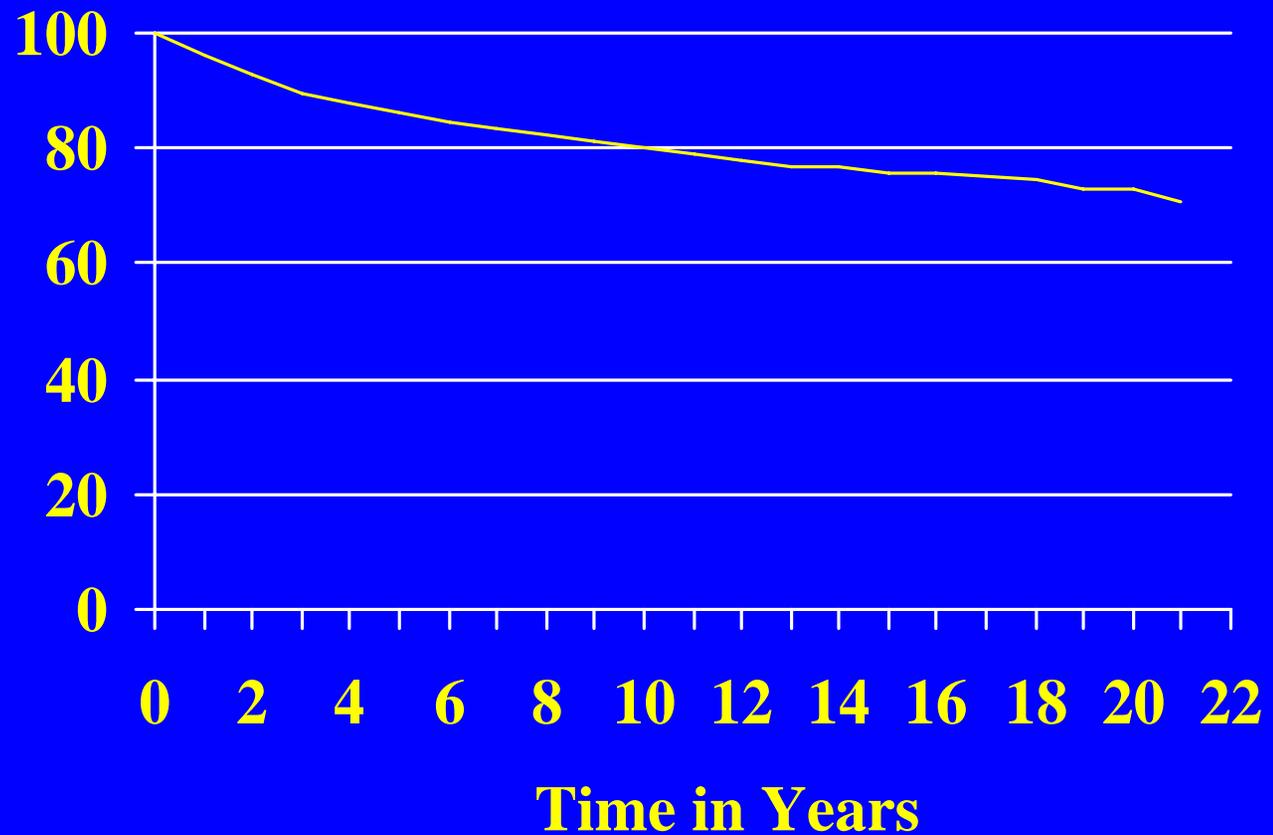
Sexual Recidivism Rates (%)

	5 years	10 years	15 years
All Sex offenders	14	20	24

Sample size = 4724

Sexual Recidivism in a Sample of Mixed Sexual Offenders N = 4,724 Over a Twenty Year Period

Percentage of
Offenders
that have not
Sexually
Recidivated
over Time



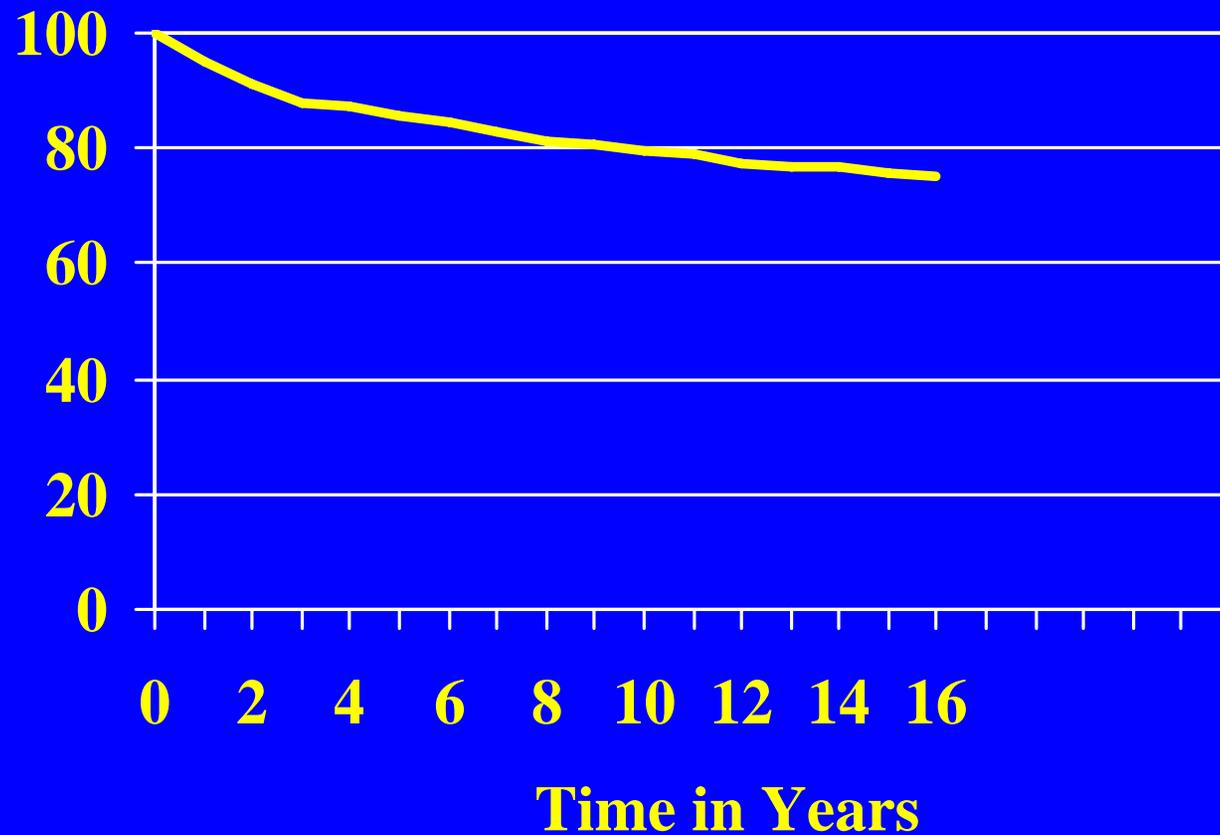
Sexual Recidivism Rates (%)

	5 years	10 years	15 years
Rapists	14	21	24
Incest offenders	6	9	13
Girl victim child molesters	9	13	16
Boy victim child molesters	23	28	35

Sexual Recidivism in a Sample of Rapists

N = 1,038 Over a Fifteen Year Period

Percentage of
Offenders
that have not
Sexually
Recidivated
over Time



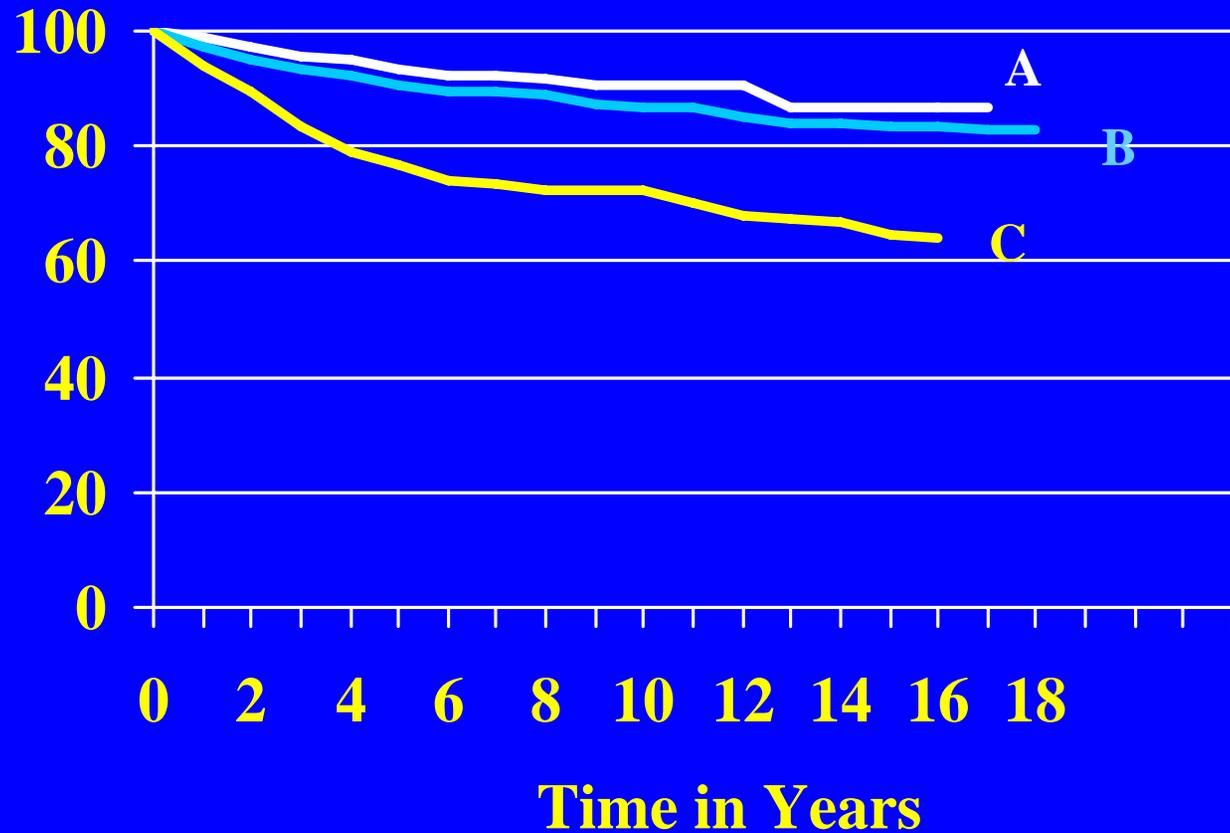
Child Molesters

A Incest offenders (N = 1,099)

B Girl Victim offenders (N = 1,572)

C Boy Victim offenders (N = 706)

Percentage of
Offenders
that have not
Sexually
Recidivated
over Time



Sexual Recidivism Rates (%)

	5 years	10 years	15 years
No prior sex offences	10	15	19
Any prior sex offences	25	32	37

Sexual Recidivism Rates (%)

	5 years	10 years	15 years
Over 50 years old	7	11	12
Less than 50 years old	15	21	26

Actuarial Risk Scales for Sex Offenders

- Empirically derived factors
- Explicit rules for combining risk factors
 - MnSOST/MnSOST-R
 - VRAG/SORAG
 - Risk Matrix – 2000 (UK)
 - RRASOR
 - Static-99

RRASOR

- Male victims
- Unrelated victim
- Prior sex offences (3 points)
- Age 18 - 24.99

Static-99

- Male victims
- Never married
- Non-contact sex offences
- Unrelated victims
- Stranger victims
- Prior sex offences (3 points)
- Current non-sex violence
- Prior non-sex violence
- 4+ sentencing dates
- Age 18-24.99

Sexual Recidivism Rates (%)

Static-99 Risk Categories	5 years	10 years	15 years
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Low (24%)	6	9	10
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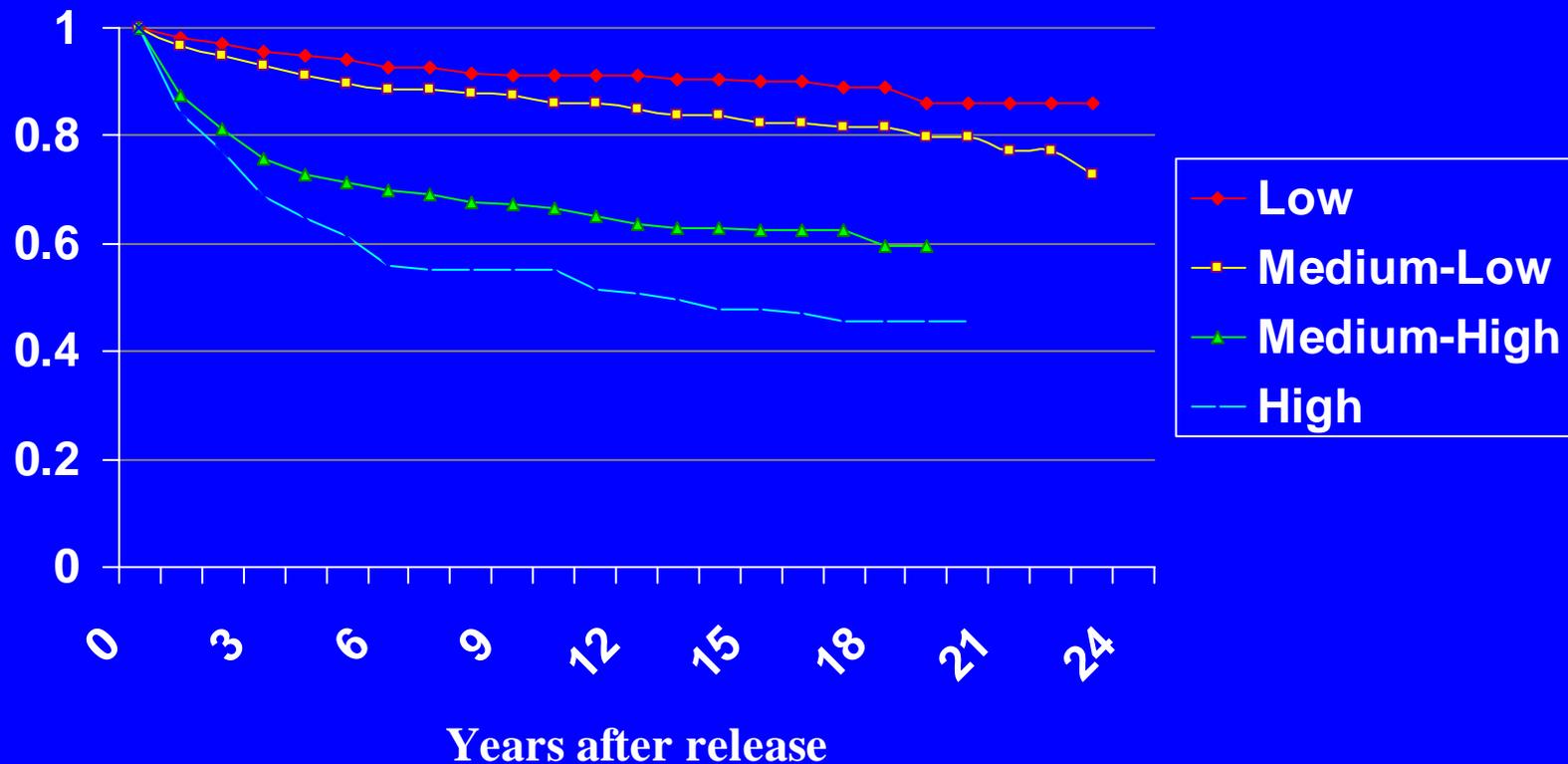
Medium-Low (33%)	11	13	17
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Medium-high (27%)	29	33	37
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High (12%)	39	45	52
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STATIC-99

Sexual Recidivism



Observed versus Actual Rates

Not all sexual offences are detected

Consequences of detection rates of 10% to 20%

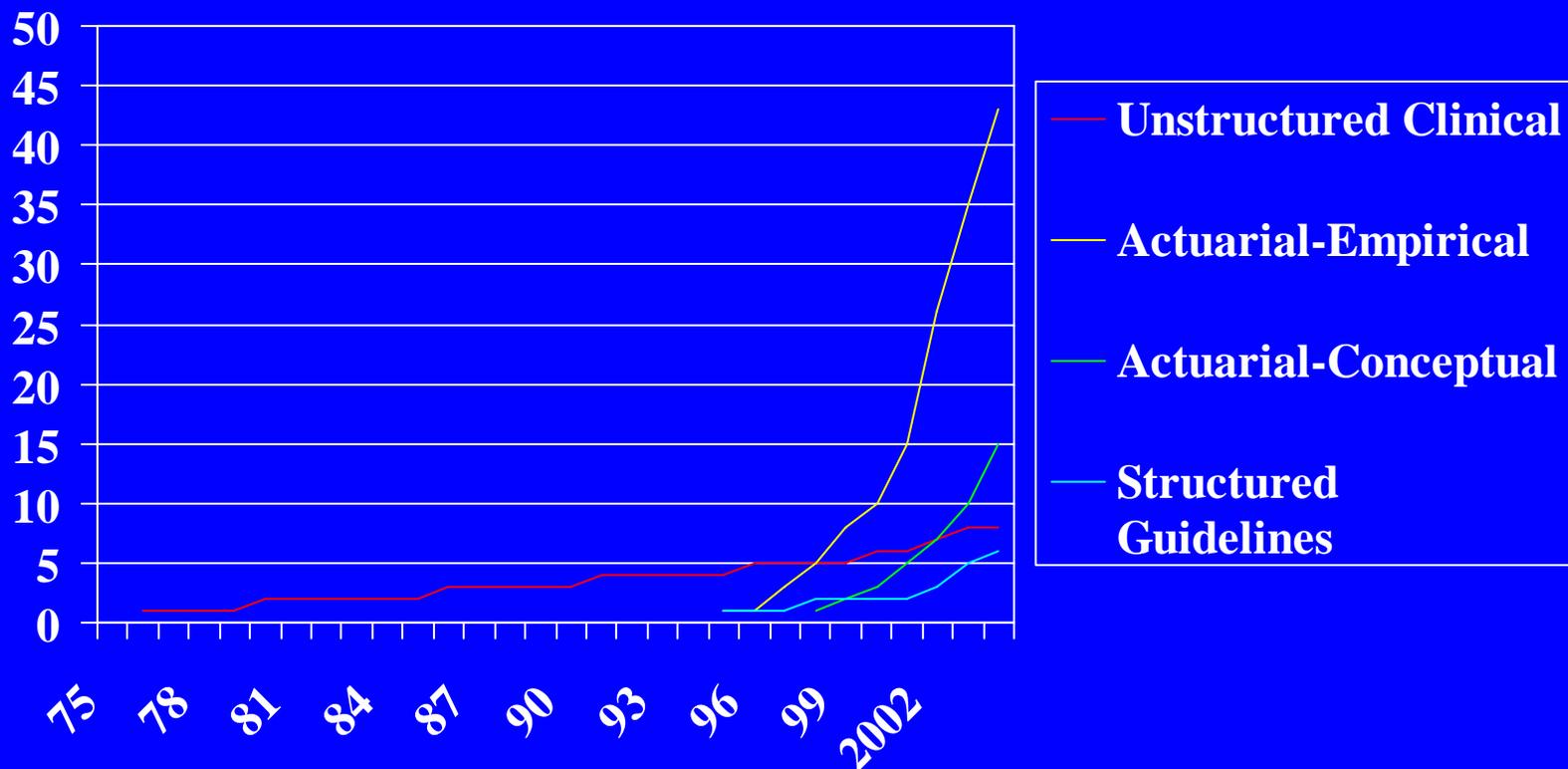
- High frequency offenders will get caught
- Low frequency offenders may get caught
- No need to catch non-recidivists

Estimated Sexual Recidivism Rates

Years of Follow-up	Observed	Estimated
5	10-15	30-40
10	15-25	30-45
20	30-40	40-55

Type of evaluation	Factors	Overall evaluation
Unstructured clinical judgement	?	Professional judgement
Actuarial – empirical factors	empirical	mechanical
Structured professional judgement	Theory	Professional judgement
Actuarial – conceptual factors	Theory	mechanical

Sex Offender Risk Assessment Validation Studies (1975-2004)



Prediction of sexual recidivism

	d (95% CI)	N (k)
Actuarial – empirical factors	.70 (.64-.75)	13,594 (51)
Actuarial – conceptual factors	.67 (.58-.77)	4,184 (20)
Structured judgement	.57 (.41-.73)	965 (6)
Unstructured	.43 (.28-.58)	1,723 (9)

Established Predictors of Sexual Recidivism

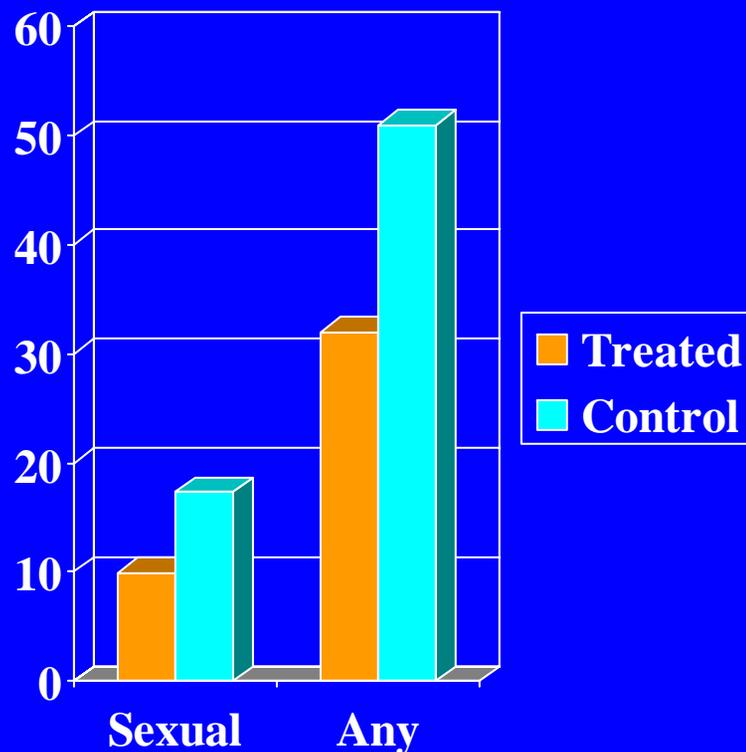
- Sexual Deviancy
 - Deviant sexual interests (pedophilia)
 - Sexual preoccupations
- Antisocial Lifestyle
 - History of rule violation
 - Lifestyle instability

Are treated sexual offenders less likely to reoffend than untreated offenders?

Reviews finding lower recidivism rates among treated sexual offender than untreated sexual offenders

- Gallagher et al. (1999) – 22 studies
- Hanson et al. (2002) – 43 studies
- Lösel & Schmucker (2004) – 69 studies

Hanson et al. (2002)



Reductions in both sexual recidivism (17% to 10%) and general recidivism (51% to 32%) found when current treatments are evaluated with credible designs

Conclusions

- Most sexual offenders are never reconvicted for a new sexual offense
- Not all sexual offenders are equally likely to reoffend
- A number of risk assessment tools are available that have demonstrated moderate to large accuracy
- Offenders who attend treatment are less likely to reoffend than offenders who do not attend treatment

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