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# Ontario College of Teachers Cases of Teacher Sexual Misconduct

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Master of Arts

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ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS CASES OF TEACHER SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

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Graduate Program in Faculty of Education

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Masters of Arts, Counselling Psychology

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London, Ontario, Canada

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## Abstract

Teacher sexual misconduct in Ontario was examined by using cases reviewed by the Ontario College of Teachers between 2000 and 2013. Despite the impetus by key stakeholders to develop appropriate policies to circumvent teacher-student sexual relationships, this phenomenon is still not well understood. The current study found that around 92 percent of perpetrators are men. The results indicate that male perpetrators who abuse elementary school-aged males are more likely to have multiple victims and longer offending careers. This study found less intrusive sexual behaviour, fewer multiple victim perpetrators, and shorter offending careers in more recent cases. This suggests that the government-commissioned report published in 2000 may have raised awareness and shaped this issue in a positive way. Practitioners, policy-makers, and the public are provided with a comprehensive picture of the perpetrators, victims, and the nature of abuse to engage in meaningful discourse and implement program and policy.

Keywords: teacher sexual misconduct, educator sexual misconduct, grooming, child sexual abuse

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## An Exploration of Teacher Sexual Misconduct Cases in Ontario

Parents across Canada entrust teachers with their children and youth on a daily basis. The Latin phrase “in loco parentis”, which means “in place of parent,” truly emphasizes the responsibility that the teachers have for students while they are at school (DeMitchell, 2003). In Canada, education is highly valued and many jobs require the successful pursuit of post-secondary education. Thus, education underpins employability and is one of the best predictors of a female’s income (Statistics Canada, 2000). Furthermore, for individuals under the age of 18, school is mandatory; these youth are required to attend school until they receive their high school diploma or until they turn the age of majority.

In addition to school being compulsory, schools and educational institutions are said to be microcosms of society (McCormack, 1985). The socialization, such as gender roles and hierarchies, that occurs within the confines of school walls reflect the “real-world” that each individual will eventually enter (McCormack, 1985). Thus, it is imperative that teachers model appropriate behaviour and take pride in their trusted positions by maintaining ethically sound relationships with their students. When teachers disregard such expectations and act indecently, they not only jeopardize students’ well-being but also may perpetuate oppressive frameworks, demonstrating that this behaviour is normal and should be tolerated (Knoll, 2010).

The current omnipresence of violence and bullying in schools has highlighted the importance of school safety (Twemlow & Sacco, 2013). However, one type of violence that has been quite overlooked is sexual abuse perpetrated by teachers. For many, it is inconceivable that someone who dedicates his or her career to improving the capacities of children could commit such a heinous breach of trust. Quite often, it is the teachers who are most highly regarded that offend (Shakeshaft, 2004). McCormack (1985) proposed that sexual harassment by teachers is “widespread, not discussed, and appears as an accepted part of the academic environment” (pp. 29); that is, these acts of impropriety are not isolated incidents.

# Literature Review

## 1.1 Prevalence

Between 1995 and 2002 there were 122 investigations, charges, or prosecutions of Canadian teachers for sexually abusing children and youth (Moulden, Firestone, Kingston, & Wexler, 2010). Furthermore, studies conducted in the United States of America (Shakeshaft, 2004; Wurtele, 2012), the Netherlands (Timmerman, 2003), and Israel (Khoury-Kassabri, 2006) indicate that anywhere between 2 to 8 percent of students have been sexually involved with their teachers. Other studies contend that the rates of sexual harassment by school staff are much higher, as high as 17 to 41.9 percent for females (American Association of University Women, 2001; McCormack, 1985; Winters, Clift, & Maloney, 2004). Furthermore, females are generally thought to be the victims of sexual abuse at a greater rate than males (Briere & Elliot, 2003). Moreover, as women continue their education, they are more likely to be sexually victimized by teachers, with one in every six females reporting sexual victimization by a teacher (McCormack, 1985). This gender difference will be discussed in greater depth later on.

At first glance these numbers may appear to be relatively small. However, these instances of sexual abuse represent only a fraction of the abuses that actually occur; less than five percent of students who experienced sexual harassment report it to another adult (Winters et al., 2004). In addition, a study of child sexual abuse found that only 10 percent of children divulge that they are being harmed at the time of abuse (Edgardh & Ormstad, 2000) and only around one in three will disclose the abuse before adulthood (Finkelhor, 1984). Nonetheless, even with modest numbers, one could easily argue that a single instance of teacher sexual misconduct is one too many.

## 1.2 Definitions

Sexual misconduct is an umbrella term, which can include an offense in any of the following three categories: physical, verbal, or visual. Kissing, fondling, touching, oral, anal, and vaginal penetration are considered physical sexual offenses. Verbal sexual abuse includes conversations, jokes, questions, personal information, and harassment of a

sexual nature. Finally, visual sexual misconduct is the possession or creation of child pornography, or sharing pictures or communicating over webcam that involves sexual content (Shakeshaft, 2000). Teachers who abuse their power and authority to exploit children and youth are labeled as professional perpetrators (Sullivan & Beech, 2002). Teacher sexual misconduct can be understood as institutional abuse, which is described below.

Institutional abuse is the “sexual, physical, or emotional abuse of a child (under the age of 18 years of age) by an adult who works with him or her. The perpetrator may be employed in a paid or voluntary capacity; in the public, voluntary, or private sector; in a residential or non-residential setting; and may work either directly with children or in an ancillary role (Gallagher, 2000, pp.797).” Therefore, these trusted leaders can be found in churches and other religious and spiritual institutions, sporting and recreational facilities, educational and vocational institutions, as well as special needs facilities (Jaffe et al., 2013). Sullivan and Beech (2002) found that 90 percent of the professional perpetrators in their study were aware about their sexual preference for children before entering their profession. That is, this type of offender pursues employment that increases their access to children. Teachers or other school personnel tend to take advantage of children in empty classrooms, offices, and hallways (Knoll, 2010). However, many instances of teacher sexual misconduct do not spontaneously occur; oftentimes the teacher will spend considerable time desensitizing a child to the licentiousness of the liaison.

Educator sexual misconduct frequently follows a series of manipulative maneuvers referred to as grooming, a process where the teacher forms a bond with the child and builds trust, which in turn decreases the student’s inhibitions (Mcalinden, 2006). The actions are conscious and deliberate (Knoll, 2010). Yet grooming often does not just entail manipulating a child; Craven, Brown, and Gilchrist (2006) define grooming as “a process by which a person prepares a child, significant adults, and the environment for the abuse of this child” (pp. 297). In essence, the most committed groomers will groom themselves, the environment, and the child (Craven et al., 2006). Grooming oneself is the process that the offender goes through in his or her mind to justify or deny their criminal behaviour (Craven et al., 2006). Meanwhile, grooming the parents will allow the offender

to obtain additional trust and often will result in the abuser having greater access to the victim and more opportunity to groom and exploit the child (Knoll, 2010). There are numerous ways to groom a child such as: giving special attention or privileges, gift giving, or flattering the student (Hutchings, 2009).

Oftentimes, predators will target specific children because they perceive them to be vulnerable (Erooga, 2012). Although, perpetrator typologies will be discussed in greater detail later on, two widely cited studies indicate that offenders seek out children who may be emotionally or psychologically unstable, have a tumultuous home life, or come from a lower socio-economic status (Conte, Wolf, & Smith, 1989; Elliott, Browne, & Kilcoyne, 1995). For example, almost half of the participants in one study disclosed that they selected children who had low-self esteem or who were not very self-assured (Elliott et al., 1995). In turn, it is imperative to understand these behaviours to prevent and minimize the exploitation of children and youth. The literature demonstrates that the ramifications for the victims of child sexual abuse or institutional abuse are complex, devastating, and long lasting (Colton, Roberts, & Vanstone, 2010; Wolfe, Jaffe, & Jette, 2003).

### 1.3 The Impact of Sexual Abuse on Victims

Prior research on institutional abuse has revealed that victims may endure negative long-term psychological, emotional, developmental, and physical effects (Burgess, Welner, & Willis, 2010). Finkelhor and Hashimma (2001) postulate that a loss of trust in adults and authority figures mimics the experience of incest survivors. The literature indicates that Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), relationship difficulties, contact with the criminal justice system, and depression are some examples of typical experiences for youth who have been victimized by sexual abuse (Bebbington, Cooper, Minot, & Brugha, 2009; Burgess et al., 2010; Rodgers & Leschied, 2011). Compared to non-victims, victims of child sexual abuse are more likely to have substance abuse problems, to self-harm, attempt and commit suicide more frequently, have health problems such as diabetes and heart disease, and encounter challenges with adult relationships (Dube et al., 2005).

Students who are sexually abused by adults in a position of trust feel more violated compared to students who are sexually abused by their peers. A study that compared teacher sexual harassment and peer sexual harassment found that students were more uncomfortable and reported more psychosomatic complaints when victimized by teachers compared to peers (Timmerman, 2003). Furthermore, a meta-analysis found that PTSD, depression, suicide, sexual promiscuity, sexual perpetration, and academic achievement were all significantly linked to child sexual abuse regardless of gender, socioeconomic status, type of abuse, age when abuse occurred, relationship to perpetrator, and number of incidents of abuse (Paloucci, Genuis, & Violato, 2001). Yet, Buckle, Lancaster, Powell, and Higgins (2005) found that academic achievement is not independently predicted by sexual abuse in childhood. In summary, sexual abuse in childhood certainly can have an impact on an individual's wellness. People respond to sexual abuse and trauma in different ways and the impact of sexual abuse will depend on the individual and contextual factors, such as the response to disclosure (Robins, 2000). Oftentimes the impact is not only on the survivor of sexual abuse, it can affect the whole family.

Parents may also suffer from psychological distress, which can influence their ability to provide support to their child following the crisis (Knoll, 2010). In other words, the whole family is often traumatized or affected by an incident with this gravity. Thus, systemic factors are likely to influence how the child reacts to an act of teacher sexual misconduct; dynamics between the parent and child can have some bearing on the child's psyche. Many researchers argue that there is great heterogeneity in the responses and reactions that sexually abused children present (Daignault & Hebert, 2009).

Moreover, sexual violence is a gendered issue and is often approached with such a lens. The proportion of girls and boys who received unwanted sexual attention from teachers and school staff in one study was relatively close (Whealin, Zinzow, Salstrom, & Jackson, 2007). Thirty-four out of 100 males and 40 out of 100 females had inappropriate interactions with school personnel (Whealin et al., 2007). The fact that both boys and girls are victims at both the hands of male and female teachers is something that both researchers and society often wrestle with (Denov, 2001). It is often more difficult to give credence to women committing sexual offenses because female violence contradicts the

traditional gender role expectation that women are nurturing (Denov, 2001). Research has shown that both boys and girls who are victimized by women report long-term struggles with self-concept and identity, substance abuse, self-injury, depression, discomfort with sex, rage, and difficulty having relationships with women (Denov, 2004). Any similarities or differences between sexual violence perpetrated across gender lines is important to be aware of and to explore further in this line of research.

## 1.4 Perpetrator Characteristics

### 1.4.1 Gender Differences

First of all, men are the primary perpetrators of sexual violence, including institutional abuse (Moulden et al., 2010). Most professional perpetrators, individuals who use the organizations or institutions in which they work to target and abuse children, are single adult males who are university educated, have generally prosocial attitudes, minimal substance abuse issues, virtually no prior sexual or criminal offenses, and few psychological deficits (Moulden, Firestone, & Wexler, 2007; Sullivan & Beech, 2002). Yet, not all perpetrators will have these characteristics and fall into these categories. Even though men are much more likely to commit sexual abuse and be professional perpetrators compared to women, one study found that two percent of women who work in the public child care sector would have sex with a child if she knew she could get away with it (Freel, 2003).

In addition, the characteristics of female sexual offenders are usually quite different from male teacher sexual offenders. Female sexual offenders have generally been described as: single, Caucasian, from a low socio-economic status, unemployed, have a history of mental health disorders; come from unstructured, underprivileged, and uncontrolled homes; and come from incestuous families (Colson, Boyer, Baumstarck, & Loundou, 2013). The average age of female offenders is usually between 26 and 32 years old (Vandiver & Kerher, 2004). However, it is possible that female teacher sexual offenders may fit a different profile from female sexual offenders in other studies as women who work in schools would have been employed at the school prior to the offense and are required to complete a higher level of education to obtain their position. That is, the descriptors of being unemployed and having a lower socioeconomic status are less likely

for female teacher sexual offenders. It may be unsound to paint female teachers who sexually abuse students with the same brush as female offenders who sexually abuse victims in other contexts. Determining what proportion of women who sexually abuse children is challenging. Research on female perpetrated child sexual abuse has demonstrated that it is more likely to go undetected because it can be concealed through child caring practices, such as changing diapers and bathing (Kaplan & Green, 1995). Thus, female sexual offending research is in its infancy and there is still a lot to be uncovered. Furthermore, there are very few peer-reviewed articles that describe female teacher sexual misconduct.

Discipline for identified cases of sexual abuse are inconsistent at best; no cases were reported to authorities and only one percent of teaching licenses were revoked in a study of 225 cases of teacher sexual misconduct in New York (Shakeshaft & Cohan, 1995). However, this study is dated and there is a dearth of more recent research on discipline for teachers who commit sexual offenses. In addition, there is a difference in the way people perceive male sexual offenses and female sexual offenses. Denov (2001) found that police, psychiatrists, and therapists treated female perpetrated sexual abuse more lightly than male perpetrated sexual abuse. Cases of sexual violence perpetrated by females are often minimized and the cases are three times more likely than male cases to be unfounded (i.e. considered to be fabrication) (Bunting, 2007; Denov, 2001).

Moreover, sexual violence may be less shocking or offensive to males in general. In a study with undergraduates that used various scenarios of teacher sexual misconduct, women viewed the situations more negatively than men (Fromuth & Holt, 2008). A similar result was found in another study; women were angrier and rated the relationships as more serious than men (Geddes, Tyson, & McGreal, 2013). The same study also found that male teacher and female student scenarios were considered to be more adverse than female teacher and male student scenarios (Geddes et al., 2013). These studies give some insight on how society views sexual abuse. Evidently, there is a double standard for male and female perpetrated sexual abuse, even though the effects on the victim can be equally devastating. Furthermore, gender is implicated in the categories of sex offenders in the current body of literature.



### 1.4.2 Sex Offender Typologies

There are many different types of sexual offenders described in the literature and it is well recognized that this is a heterogeneous group of people. Various researchers have described the categories or typologies differently, there is no universal classification system and the groups are not mutually exclusive (Robertiello & Terry, 2007). Sex offenders may abuse victims with different sexes and ages. It is essential to examine typologies because some sex offenders are more likely than others to recidivate (Robertiello & Terry, 2007).

First of all, there are pedophiles and hebephiles, which are individuals who have a sexual preference for prepubescent children and pubescent children, respectively. A recent study on intra-familial child sex abusers, extra-familial child sex abusers, and child sex abusers who work with children found that the individuals who work with children appear to be the most pedophilic out of the three different groups based on several indicators (Turner, Rettenberger, Lohmann, Eher, & Briken, 2013). However, the perpetrators who work with children seem to display less antisocial behaviour and psychopathy compared to other adults who sexually abuse children (Turner et al., 2013). Moreover, sexual deviance in adolescence is reported by about half of adult sex offenders (Abel, Osborn, & Twigg, 1993). This type of predator would be described as a fixated abuser (Shakeshaft, 2013).

A fixated abuser is usually male and works in elementary or middle schools (Shakeshaft, 2013). Students, parents, and school personnel generally have positive regard for this teacher and he often has an unusually large number of teaching awards (Shakeshaft, 2013). While a collection of teaching awards does not signify that a teacher is a sexual predator, it does reveal that the teachers who have a large amount of awards and who abuse children are skilled at deception. There are two archetypal fixated abusers; both have many similarities but their grooming may differ based on the gender of the victim. The first scenario is a male teacher who selects a male victim. This type of person generally selects a target, provides him with extra attention and offers small gifts. The teacher then often proceeds to contact the parents, typically a single-mom, and suggests that her son has potential but requires extra help (Shakeshaft, 2013). This male teacher often effortlessly secures the trust of the mom, as she feels fortunate that her son will

receive additional attention and will be in the presence of a positive male role model. The teacher will take the child on special outings, such as sports events, which increases the amount of unsupervised access he has to the child. He also gradually starts escalating the amount of affection towards the child and abuses him in an environment where the student feels safe (Shakeshaft, 2013). Fellow teachers, parents, and other school administration are generally not suspicious of the teacher's special interest in the child as the teacher has an excellent reputation (Shakeshaft, 2013).

The other common fixated abuser situation is when a male teacher targets a female student. In this case, the teacher flatters the girl on her maturity or talents and she might even hold a special role such as the class helper or monitor. As with the other situation, over time the teacher increases the sexual nature in his touching and the victim does not realize that she is being exploited (Shakeshaft, 2013). She has developed feelings for the teacher and trusts him (Shakeshaft, 2013). However, only around a third of sexual abusers who target children under the age of 13 are fixated abusers (Shakeshaft, 2013). The rest of the abusers who are sexually interested in this age group are classified as "opportunistic abusers" by some researchers (Shakeshaft, 2013).

Opportunistic abusers take advantage of situations and are not pedophiles; children are not who these offenders are exclusively attracted to (Shakeshaft, 2013). In contrast to having a more premeditated trajectory to sexually abusing a child, these individuals violate boundaries and have bad romantic judgment (Robins, 2000). In addition to poor judgment, they have inferior interpersonal boundaries, comprehension of adolescent development and sexuality, as well as emotional and social immaturity. Narcissistic opportunistic offenders are motivated by power, control, and sexual gratification, while situational offenders abuse youth as a result of substance abuse problems, loneliness, depression, or stress (Robins, 2000).

Those who use the Internet for sexual purposes with children also constitute another type of offender. Individuals who are involved in the child pornography industry can be further divided into the collectors, travelers, manufacturers, and chatters (McLaughlin, 1998). In addition to what type of cyber actions these people may engage in, these

individuals might be further categorized by what age group of youth they prefer and how often they view child pornography (Robertiello & Terry, 2007). Furthermore, the Internet can give ideas to offenders, such as the types of victims they should target, after they spend time perusing social networking sites that are commonly used by children and adolescents (Davidson & Gottschalk, 2011).

There is little research on female sexual offenders but some research indicates that this group can be divided into six distinct groups (Sandler & Freeman, 2007). Using a cluster analysis, women were grouped into: criminally-limited hebephiles, criminally-prone hebephiles, young adult child molesters, high-risk chronic offenders, older non-habitual offenders, and homosexual child molesters (Sandler & Freeman, 2007). Others have broken down the female perpetrators into: women who have been abused as children and abuse their own children who are known as a “predisposed offender”, women who are coerced by men, women who are angry and impulsive, and teacher-lover offenders whereby the women are “in love” with the student and believe they are educating him on sexual experiences (Robins, 2000; Syed & Williams, 1996). This final group, a group that would be particularly pertinent to this study, may be understudied and not appear in literature outside of North America since in some countries statutory rape is not a legal concept (Wijkman, Bijleveld, & Hendriks, 2010). However, there is some indication that teacher/lover cognitive distortions involve ascribing an adolescent’s compliance to her manipulation as sexual desire (Erooga, 2012). In addition, teacher-lovers often view their encounters as a form of kindness (Erooga, 2012). While many sexual offenders are difficult to treat, there is some research showing that this group may be comparatively more treatable (Matthews et al., 1991).

Research on sexual abuse by professional perpetrators is unquestionably challenging to investigate for a number of reasons. One of the limitations of the existing literature is that the data are based on cases where the offenders have been convicted (Colton, Roberts, & Vanstone, 2010; Leclerc, Proulx, & McKibben, 2005; Robins, 2000; Turner et al., 2013). Alternatively, while providing a wealth of detailed information, some studies only focus on one or two cases of teacher sexual misconduct (Burgess et al., 2010; Robins, 2000).

Furthermore, in order to inform policy and practice in Ontario, it is important to examine cases that are culturally and organizationally relevant.

## 1.5 Victim Characteristics and Disclosure

This section discusses victim characteristics that researchers have connected to sexual victimization. It is important for the reader to be mindful that sexual abuse is a complex issue and there is great heterogeneity in these abusive relationships. McCormack (1985) found that students who are particularly concerned with academic success might be more vulnerable to a teacher's abuse of power. Other vulnerabilities, such as being a delinquent child or having a marginalized ethnic background may also accentuate the power imbalance between teacher and student (Hall, 2002). Offenders specifically look for children who they believe that they can control and whom they believe will be most likely to keep the abuse a secret (Knoll, 2010). Thus, children with severed relationships with their parents may be targeted since they are probably more likely to remain silent (Shakeshaft, 2004). Another characteristic that offenders may target is the absence of friends in a child's life. Similarly to the broader literature on sexual victimization and violence, females who have been sexually abused as children or kids who have a history of victimization are at a higher risk of being chosen by abusers (Craven et al., 2006). Victims of the teacher-lover abuser are generally attention-seeking adolescents who may be troubled or needy (Knoll, 2010). While these particular factors may put particular students at risk, it does not elucidate why such adults commit these transgressions.

There are several reasons why students often do not feel comfortable disclosing the sexual abuse to friends, their parents, or school authorities. Robins (2000) discusses how students are socialized to respect the authority of teachers. Teachers evaluate their student's performance and have the ability to make a school experience positive or negative for a child. Fear, embarrassment, and guilt are likely noteworthy reasons why students fail to tell others about their sexual abuse experiences. Thus, students are effectively silenced by their fear: fear of the offender, that no one will believe their story, that they will be punished, or that they are at fault for what has transpired (Robins, 2000).

Often, their fear is substantiated. For example, in the past there have been victims who have been accused for ruining a teacher's life, for "fabricating a story" that the teacher sexually abused them (Shakeshaft, 2013). Likeable teachers who are alleged of sexual misconduct often receive support from the community; in turn, the student making the claim is ostracized (Shakeshaft, 2013). Oftentimes the teacher has groomed almost everyone. This is exemplified by: victims who fail to see the acts as inappropriate, parents who disregard the child's accusations, authorities who fail to detect any abuse, communities who rally together for the accused, and juries who acquit (Salter, 2012). That is, teachers will often only commit the crimes once they are assured that the student will keep the abuse a secret (Moulden et al., 2010; Robins, 2000). Furthermore, tactics such as intimidation, threats, and bribes will also ensure secrecy from the victim (Shakeshaft, 2004).

There are several additional barriers to disclosure for boys. Boys are less likely than girls to disclose in an effort to avoid appearing weak, helpless, homosexual (if the perpetrator is a man), or adverse to sexual experiences with a woman (if the perpetrator is female) (Robins, 2000). In addition to victimized boys having more obstacles to overcome for disclosure, the issue of sexual abuse may be a topic that males avoid addressing altogether. Sexual abuse is usually tied to the oppression of women, thus males, the dominant gender group, may avoid confronting the issue of sexual violence (McCormack, 1985).

For those who do disclose, effective action is not always taken. In a study of children who were abused in residential institutions, a handful of children reported sexual abuse to the authorities (Colton, Vanstone, & Walby, 2002). The result of their disclosure was either that the authorities did not take action or the case was dropped following an investigation (Colton et al., 2002). Investigations can be very taxing for victims of sexual abuse and some individuals regret going through the process and are re-victimized by it (Colton et al., 2002). Sometimes parents have an influence on the restitution process; if parents uncover that a teacher has had a past history of abuse that should have been known, it is more likely that they will seek amendment (Knoll, 2011). Thus, it is pertinent to explore how all these factors come together and impact disclosure patterns in Ontario.

## 1.6 Models of Child Sexual Abuse

A unanimous model to explain child sexual abuse does not exist; the reason why one sexually offends is likely as heterogeneous as the group of offenders that abuse. That is, there are numerous operating factors and dimensions, increasing the complexity of the situation (Erooga, 2012). One model suggests that there are four pre-conditions of abuse: motivation, which includes emotional congruence, sexual arousal, and blockage, internal inhibitors, external inhibitors, and resistance (Finkelhor, 1984). When one has the motivation to abuse, they will overcome internal inhibitors, external inhibitors, and resistance by the child (Finkelhor, 1984). The self-regulation model for sexual offenders, which was based on self-regulation theory, has also been used to explain sexually offensive behaviour (Ward & Hudson, 1998). This model posits four different pathways to sexual offending that are related to the offender's goals and the tactics that the perpetrator utilizes to achieve such goals (Yates & Kingston, 2006). Regardless of what motivates a person to sexually abuse, there are a range of systemic factors that allow sexual abuse to occur.

## 1.7 Systemic Factors

It is difficult to identify potential sexual perpetrators because there is no reliable and effective tool to screen for these individuals (Erooga, 2012). Even if background checks are conducted, sexual abuse charges may appear as misdemeanors on record (Knoll, 2010). Moreover, proper screening or employment procedures may be expedited or may be neglected by schools that have a short supply of teachers (Knoll, 2010). There is a history of society failing to protect children from abuse. For example, organizational factors, such as the culture of the school and school board often dictate how an incident of sexual abuse is prevented and dealt with (Wurtele, 2012).

While some postulate that there should be a culture of zero tolerance for sexual misconduct, in actuality this is often not articulated or enforced (Wurtele, 2012). When an issue is noticed but is consciously ignored or unacknowledged a "culture of silence" is maintained (Wurtele, 2012). Adults often propagate this toxic culture to maintain a positive reputation or to avoid being a whistle-blower (Wurtele, 2012). Put differently, those who have suspicions or knowledge of inappropriate student-teacher relations keep

quiet to save the reputation of the school in exchange for a child's safety. When a school district transfers a teacher who has allegedly committed sexual abuse to another school or district, this is called "passing the trash" (Wurtele, 2012). In the case of the 225 teachers in New York who admitted to sexually abusing a student, 16 percent of the teachers who were terminated or who retired, went on to teach in a different school (Knoll, 2010).

However, "passing the trash" may not only be to preserve a reputation; school districts may strategically attempt to dodge civil suits, criminal prosecution, and disciplinary proceedings (Knoll, 2010; Moskowitz, 2001). In 2000 the Honourable Sydney L. Justice Robins produced a report after an Ontario teacher pled guilty to 14 sexual offenses that involved 13 victims over two decades within the same school board (Robins, 2000). This is a prime example of "passing the trash" or a "culture of silence" (Robins, 2000).

Ultimately, *Protecting Our Students*, the report produced by Justice Robins, provided over 100 recommendations to reduce teacher sexual misconduct. The author highlights systematic factors, such as the denial or minimization of child abuse complaints by school administration, as one factor that permits the sustainment of such abuse (Robins, 2000).

*The Student Protection Act* was enacted following Justice Robin's report and reflected several of the recommendations that he proposed (The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2007). For example, the Act defines sexual abuse and also imposes a duty on school boards to remove teachers charged with offenses and the school boards duty to report (The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2007). The report by Justice Robins went to the Ministry of Education with the intention to create a more supportive school environment. Another recommendation by Justice Robins that was implemented was that students and teachers do not need to provide the perpetrator with a copy of the report if they are reporting sexual misconduct (The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2007). The College took action following the report by Robins by issuing its first professional advisory in 2002, which was entitled Professional Misconduct Related to Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct (Ontario College of Teachers, 2002). The advisory outlines the responsibilities of the members and the school board and provides members of the professions with examples of risky situations they should avoid with students. In

addition, the College had key players: parent groups, the police, the media, school board officials, federation representatives, College members, community childcare providers, and Children's Aid officials come together to attend a series of eighteen meetings to increase public awareness of the advisory (Ontario College of Teachers, 2002). Lastly, in 2003 the Safe Schools Act amended the Education Act to require all employees of publically funded schools to that are in contact with students regularly to have criminal record checks (Education Act, O. Reg. 322/03, 2003).

Following *Protecting Our Students*, the Honourable Patrick LeSage was employed by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT or the "College") to analyze the College's effectiveness in achieving their mandate, to protect the public interest. More specifically, Justice LeSage examined the College's Intake, Investigation and Discipline Procedures and Outcomes, and Dispute Resolution Program (LeSage, 2012). The report that Justice LeSage produced offered 49 recommendations, including a suggestion that there should be more liberal sharing of information between school boards and the College (LeSage, 2012). The report also advocates for a culture of zero tolerance; teachers who engage in sexual misconduct with students should have their teaching certificates revoked (LeSage, 2012). Despite, the thorough research and valuable recommendations that the aforementioned individuals have contributed, even if a child or youth comes forward with information about an inappropriate relationship with a teacher, their voices are not always heard or respected.

## 1.8 The Current Study

The goal of the current study was to examine teacher sexual misconduct in Ontario by extending the work done by Jaffe and colleagues (2013). They examined cases of teacher sexual misconduct from 2007 to 2012 and reported on the nature of perpetrators, victims, grooming behaviour, abuse, and professional and legal consequences. The Jaffe and colleagues (2013) study was limited because they only reviewed six years of data and a total of 110 cases. In addition, they did not compare cases based on when the College reviewed them or by when the abuse occurred. In addition, the Jaffe and colleagues (2013) study was also limited because there was no comparison done to reflect how Justice Robin's report, *Protecting Our Students*, has impacted this issue. The current



study built off the existing database created by Jaffe and colleagues (2013). It is a retrospective examination of all teachers who have been reported to the OCT for sexual abuse from 2000 to 2013. The present study presumed that better awareness and policies that were implemented following *Protecting Our Students* (Robins, 2000) would inhibit teachers from committing sexual abuse and would prevent potential perpetrators from entering the profession. In addition to deterring teachers, this study expected that the nature of abuse would be more constrained. This study anticipated that perpetrators would have shorter offending careers, would have fewer victims, and that there would be less intrusive sexual behaviour due to the increased media attention and development in this area. In addition to comparing changes over time, this study also examined male and female teachers.

The decision to explore both male and female teacher sexual misconduct in greater depth was made so that both genders could be compared on their characteristics, the characteristics of the victims, the nature of the abuse, and the disciplinary decisions. By looking at the gender of the perpetrator, disciplinary decisions and sentencing patterns for men and women can be compared. This study expected that women would receive more lenient criminal punishments compared to men based on past literature on female sentencing and general attitudes towards female sexual offending (Denov, 2001; Geddes et al., 2013). It was also hypothesized that the College reprimands for female teachers would be less punitive than for male teachers (i.e. a smaller proportion of women will have their certificates revoked compared to men).

This is a public health, legal, and educational issue with serious implications. The results may influence policy initiatives, education and practice guidelines, legislation, the development of safeguards, improve oversight and accountability, promote programming for perpetrators, and guide treatment directions for victims. Ultimately, this study hopes to advocate for student safety and illuminate a relatively repressed issue.

## Chapter 2

### 2 Methods

The teaching profession in Ontario is self-regulated by the Ontario College of Teachers, which was established in 1997. The College licenses, governs, and regulates the teaching profession in Ontario and has a mandate to work in the public's interest (Ontario College of Teachers, 2013a). The Investigation Committee and Discipline Committee work in conjunction and have the authority to suspend or revoke teaching certificates (Ontario College of Teachers, 2013a).

When a complaint is filed against an educator, the College's Investigation Committee, which is composed of a panel of three individuals, reviews any documents and information relevant to the complaint. The complaint could be an issue of professional misconduct, incompetence, or incapacity and the panels are composed of individuals who have been elected and appointed as Council members. If the Investigation Committee decides that the complaint is valid, the case is sent to the Discipline Committee. They conduct hearings related to professional misconduct and incompetence. There are a number of different disciplinary actions that the committee can impose. Revoking a teaching certificate, suspending a certificate for up to two years; imposing terms, conditions, or limitations on a certificate; or postponing, reducing, or cancelling conditions if alternate conditions are fulfilled are a few examples (Ontario College of Teachers, 2013a).

The current study reviewed cases reported to the OCT from 2000 to 2013 that involved teacher sexual misconduct. This information can be found online on the College's website under Members, Complaints and Discipline, Decisions. The definition of sexual abuse this study used was taken from the *Student Protection Act*, a bill that was passed in Ontario in 2002. Their definition of sexual abuse is "sexual intercourse or other forms of physical sexual relations between the member and a student, touching, of a sexual nature, of the student by the member, or behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by the member towards the student (Student Protect Act, 2002)." The OCT defines teacher sexual

misconduct as “any behaviour of a sexual nature which may constitute professional misconduct.”

The cases were obtained from the OCT website as disciplinary decisions that concern members of the College are required to be publically accessible. Information was also gleaned from annotated hearings in the College’s publication, *Professionally Speaking*. This study only included cases where a sexual offense was cited. Allegations of possession or creation of child pornography, grooming behaviours, sexual abuse, or sexual communication, were included. Individuals who may have held a role at the school but who were not members of the College (e.g. club supervisors or voluntary coaches) were not included in the current study because they are not teachers by definition.

The information provided on the College’s website was complimented using WestlawCanada and Quicklaw, two major Canadian databases of judicial decisions. Searches were performed using individual case names and the terms “teacher sexual misconduct” and “teacher sexual abuse.” In addition, Internet searches of individual case names in newspaper articles were used to fill in the gaps where possible. A more detailed explanation of the data entry process is reported elsewhere (Jaffe et al., 2013). Jaffe and colleagues reviewed cases reported between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012 in Ontario (Jaffe et al., 2013). The authors retrieved cases from the Ontario College of Teachers website for disciplinary decisions and used cases where allegations of sexual abuse, sexual communication, and possession or creation of child pornography were used (Jaffe et al., 2013). Teachers had to be registered with the College and a student had to be enrolled in an educational institution up to graduation from secondary school (Jaffe et al., 2013). This study expanded the dataset by adding the 2000 to 2006 and 2013 cases using the same criteria as the aforementioned study.

## 2.1 Participants

There were 284 teachers (91.5% male) who had a disciplinary hearing for teacher sexual misconduct before the OCT between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2000 and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013. For the purposes of this study “teacher”, “offender”, and “perpetrator” will be used

interchangeably. Since males perpetrated the vast majority of reported cases, meaningful comparisons between male and female teachers were not possible. However, descriptive statistics on the female group provide an overview of these offenses.

There were 260 men who were implicated in sexual misconduct and who were reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee. Table 1 summarizes the information on the male teachers who sexually abused students. The mean age for male perpetrators at the start of their first reported offense was 37.14 years old ( $SD = 9.88$ ). In 27.3% of cases the perpetrators were elementary school teachers. In 45.8% of the cases, the teacher was employed in a secondary school setting. The remainder of the cases did not specify or the teacher worked at both elementary and secondary schools. Sixty-two percent of the time the teacher worked at a public school. In 25.8% of the cases the teacher was at a Catholic school. Furthermore, 6.2% of the teachers worked at a private school and the remainder were unidentifiable or worked for another school system (e.g. First Nations). It took male teachers a mean of 9.55 years ( $SD = 11.01$ ) from the time they received their teaching certificate to the when the first reported offence started.

**Table 1**

*Characteristics of Male Perpetrators of Sexual Misconduct*

	n (%)	M (SD)
Age of Perpetrator	122	37.14 (9.88)
Level of School Taught		
Elementary	71 (27.3)	
Secondary	119 (45.8)	
Both	2 (0.8)	
Not Specified	68 (26.2)	
School System Taught At		
Public	161 (64.9)	
Catholic	67 (27)	

Private	16 (6.5)
Not specified	4 (1.6)

Male offenders were the victim's classroom teacher 64.3% of the time. In 34.4% of cases the offender was a teacher in the school in relation to the victim. Additionally, in 13.7% of cases the perpetrator was a coach. In 4% and 3.1% of the cases the offender was a club or arts leader, respectively. The teacher was also a tutor in 4% of the cases and a principal or school administration in 4.4% of the cases. Another 4.4% of cases represented the perpetrator being a counsellor and in 4.1% of the cases the offender also played another role. It is important to note that the percentages do not need to add up to 100; for example, the perpetrator could be both the classroom teacher and a coach.

Male offenders in this sample had between zero (possession of child pornography) and 30 direct victims. The author recognizes that child pornography is not a victimless crime. However, some men were designated to have zero direct victims for the purpose of analysis. In 53.8% of the cases the offender had one alleged victim.

There were 24 documented cases of female perpetrated sexual misconduct over the thirteen-year period. The perpetrator's age was only reported some of the time. For the 14 cases where the age was reported, the women ranged from 24 to 38, with a mean age of females starting to offend at 31.36 ( $SD = 4.47$ ). In 20.8% of the cases women taught at an elementary school, 66.7% taught at a secondary school, and 12.5% of the sample was unknown. Fifteen of the 24 female offenders were employed in the public school system. A quarter of the female sample, or six women, taught at a private school. Two female teachers were Catholic school employees and one woman worked in both the Catholic and public school system.

Female teachers were the victim's classroom teacher in 81% of cases. Female offenders were a teacher in the school or a coach in equal numbers; they had these roles 23.8% of cases. They were involved with clubs, arts, or was a counsellor 4.8% of the time. In two instances or in 9.5% of the cases the teacher acted as a tutor. There were no female religious leaders, principals or school administration, in the sample. The female teachers had between one and four victims, with 72.3% of the sample having just one reported

victim. In general, female teachers had a span of five years ( $SD = 4.36$ ) between the time that they received their teaching degree and the beginning of their first reported offense.

## 2.2 Definitions

The grooming variables are not self-explanatory and warrant further clarification.

Grooming can be a number of different techniques of engaging the victim, the caretakers of the victim, or preparing the environment so that developing an abusive relationship is more easily achieved (Craven et al., 2006). Electronic communication could include emailing, texting, sending picture messages, video-chat, or online messaging. The gift-giving variable encompassed purchasing items, such as clothing, flowers, or phones for the student. Help on tests, extra attention, spending time alone with the student, or offering them friendship or compliments were what constituted the special attention variable. "Targeting vulnerable students" was anything from selecting a child whose parents were separated or divorced, choosing a child who was in crisis or who was troubled, or offering emotional counselling to the student. Romantic grooming may be promising love or a future together; access to substances could be alcohol or drugs. An example of integrating into the family system might be befriending the parents or relatives of the victim. Sometimes the teacher would discuss personal issues with the student, likely to gain their trust. Sexual flattering might be commenting on a student's physical maturity or calling the student "hot" or "sexy". Exposing the child to porn and making porn with the student were a single variable. In some of the cases the perpetrator might show the student film or magazine pornography while in other cases the teacher might take photographs or film the student(s).

The nature of sexual abuse will be briefly explained for clarity. Minor physical sexual abuse would include actions such as kissing, hugging, or fondling. As described in other research, major physical sexual abuse includes, oral, anal, and vaginal sex (Walling et al., 1994). Technological communications or love notes usually represented sexual communication. Emotional sexual abuse are gestures like the teacher professing love to the student and sexual harassment were incidents where the teacher said inappropriate sexual comments to the student (i.e. sexual jokes, comments to the student with sexual undertones, proposing to have sex, etc.). Sexual harassment has been defined in many

different ways but can generally be thought of as “unwanted imposition of sexual requirements in the context of a relationship of unequal power (MacKinnon, 1979).”

## 2.3 Statistical Analysis

Data was analyzed using SPSS/Windows version 13.0. For a priori hypotheses, the alpha level was set to .05 to determine statistical significance. For exploratory analyses, the alpha level was set to .01, a more conservative approach. This was done to minimize the likelihood of a Type I Error, which is more likely with a greater number of tests based on having multiple comparisons (Dallal, 2001).

Cases were looked through three different approaches. The first was to examine all cases reported to the College from 2000 to 2013 for the descriptive analysis. Secondly, cases were reviewed by comparing two different cohorts: cases that the College reviewed between 2000 and 2004 and cases that the College reviewed between 2009 and 2013. Finally, the cases were compared based on when the onset of the sexual abuse occurred. Cases between 1953 and 1999 were compared to cases where the sexual abuse occurred between 2000 and 2013.

An exploratory analysis was performed. Variables of interest were length of time that a teacher held his or her teaching certificate to the time of abuse, disciplinary outcomes (e.g. court decision, incarceration: yes or no, length of incarceration in months, OCT, decision, etc.), and the nature of abuse (e.g. grooming behaviours).

## Chapter 3

### 3 Results

The present study looked at all reported cases of teacher sexual misconduct in Ontario from 2000 to 2013 as reported through the Ontario College of Teachers. This study was conducted to extend the work of Jaffe and colleagues (2013) who reviewed cases from 2007 to 2012. The aim was to identify and compare perpetrators in Ontario to those in the current literature on trusted professionals who have abused children based on their professional relationship, such as priests. It is important to note that for many of the variables in this dataset, the number of participants (n) varies because data was not comprehensively reported for each individual. Put differently, while the total numbers of cases in the study are fixed, the information for a teacher may be available for one variable (e.g. age of teacher), but may be missing for a different variable (e.g. length of abuse).

As previously mentioned, this study only made comparisons between different groups of male perpetrators; the number of female perpetrators in the sample was too small to have the statistical power to compare them to male perpetrators. The male perpetrators were divided into four groups: men who sexually abused elementary school-aged girls, men who sexually abused elementary school-aged boys, men who sexually abused secondary school-aged girls, and men who sexually abused secondary school-aged boys. The sample was divided into these groups for several reasons. Firstly, pedophilia, which describes a mental health disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistically Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) – 5, is defined as having an enduring sexual interest in children, who are typically 13 years old or younger (American Psychological Association, 2013). Thus, those that prey on minors who are in secondary school generally would not be classified as pedophiles based on the age of victim, according to the DSM-5. Secondly, for children and parents, entering high school may mark a milestone in one's education and development; as such, parents may modify their parenting, supervision, and school involvement as a result of the child's desire to gain more independence (Eccles & Harold, 1996). Determining what to do with men who abused students in grade seven and eight was more ambiguous. When these men were explored separately they did not



significantly differ from perpetrators who abused elementary school-aged children and secondary school-aged children.

The present study had several hypotheses with regards to how sexual misconduct cases would change over time. The Ontario College of Teachers act was proclaimed in July of 1996 and began operating in May of 1997 (Ontario College of Teachers, 2013b). The Professional Misconduct Regulation also came into effect in 1997 and the first disciplinary hearing open to the public happened the year after (Ontario College of Teachers, 2013b). The College's publication, *Professional Speaking*, which reports activities of the College Council, including disciplinary decisions, was established around the same time (OCT, 2013a). The year 2000 marked when the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession were developed and became a part of the College bylaws (Ontario College of Teachers, 2013a). In addition, in April of that year *Protecting Our Students* by the honourable Justice Sydney Robins was published (Robins, 2000). This brief history of the College influenced the current study's hypotheses of how teacher sexual misconduct may have changed following the comprehensive report.

The present study chose to use cases where the sexual abuse began between 1953 and 1999 and between 2000 and 2013 for many comparative analyses. That is, while the College reviewed all of the cases in the present study in year 2000 and thereafter, many of the cases transpired prior to 2000. The aforementioned report by Justice Robins, *Protecting Our Students*, which was published in 2000, provided an intensive overview of teacher sexual misconduct in Ontario (Robins, 2000). This marked a point in time where awareness of this issue was beginning to gain some ground. Therefore, it is reasonable to compare the cases that happened prior to and after this point in time. This study also compared groups of perpetrators by categorizing them based on when the College reviewed the case. The cases seen between years 2000 to 2004 were one group and the cases seen between 2009 and 2013 made up the other group. The four-year gap between 2004 and 2009 was deliberate to try to ensure that there were distinct differences between the two time periods.

### 3.1 Descriptive Characteristics of Victims

Table 2 displays information about the victims of male teacher sexual misconduct. Three quarters of the sample who were victimized by male teachers were female. Male students were victimized in 20% of cases and in 5% of the cases the perpetrator abused both girls and boys. The children and youth in this study ranged from two to 28, with the average age being 13.94 ( $SD = 2.67$ ). There were two cases where the victim was older than 18 years old. In this study's sample, females in high school represented the largest group.

The mean age of survivors who were victimized by female perpetrators was 15 ( $SD = 2.0$ ). Furthermore, the victim(s) of female teachers were male 82.6% of the time. The victim was in secondary school in 85% of the cases perpetrated by females. Moreover, in 81% of the cases the perpetrator of sexual misconduct was the classroom teacher of the victim.

**Table 2**

*Characteristics of Victims Who Were Abused By Male Teachers*

	n (%)	M(SD)
Sex		
Male	50 (21.6)	
Female	169 (73.2)	
Both	12 (5.2)	
Average age of victim(s) at onset of abuse		
Male	30 (20.5)	12.67 (2.73)
Female	116 (79.5)	14.28 (2.41)
Level of School		
Elementary	58 (25.1)	
Secondary	116 (50.2)	

Unknown 57 (24.7)

### 3.1.1 Disclosure

It was expected that there would be fewer cases of delayed disclosure in more recent years compared to preceding years. Between 2000 and 2004 there were 25 cases that the OCT reviewed that had occurred 10 years or longer from the start of the when the abuse began and when the OCT made a disciplinary decision. These cases were deemed “historical cases”. Between 2009 and 2013 there were seven cases that were considered “historical.” A chi-square analysis was conducted and revealed that for the male perpetrators, the difference in the proportion of historical cases from 2000 to 2004 and 2009 and 2013 was significant,  $\chi^2(1, N = 172) = 11.44, p = .001$ .

## 3.2 Grooming Behaviour

Table 3 illustrates an overview of the grooming behaviour by the male teachers who engaged in sexual misconduct. Giving students special attention is the most commonly used grooming technique with 56.7% of perpetrators using this tactic, followed by electronic communication with 43.6%, targeting vulnerability with 25.4%, romantic (e.g. promise of love, promise of future relationship) with 21.8%, gift giving with 17.2%, substance access with 13.6%, flattering a student’s physical appearance or physical maturity with 11.2%, discussing personal issues with 11.1%, exposing students to pornography or making pornography with the students with 5.8%, and integrating oneself into the family with 4.6%.

**Table 3**

*Summary of Grooming Techniques Employed by Male Perpetrators*

Grooming Technique	n	% of Case
Electronic communication	88	43.6
Gift giving	34	17.2

Special attention	110	56.7
Targeting vulnerability	50	25.4
Romantic	42	21.8
Substance access	27	13.6
Family integration	9	4.6
Sexual flattering	18	11.2
Discussed personal issues	9	11.1
Exposed to porn/made porn	15	5.8

Chi-square analyses were conducted to determine if men who abused male elementary school-aged boys, men who abused elementary school-aged girls, men who abused secondary school-aged boys, and men who abused secondary school-aged girls differed on their use of grooming techniques. The current study found that using electronic communication as tool to groom significantly differed for different groups of male perpetrators,  $\chi^2(3, N = 134) = 14.19, p = .003$ . When converted to a z-score, the standardized residual (-2.0) was greater than the critical value (1.96), supporting a specific finding among male perpetrators. There were fewer men who used electronic communication to groom males in elementary school than expected. The chi-square analysis also showed that sexual communication as a form of sexual abuse was significant,  $\chi^2(3, N = 145) = 11.43, p = .01$ . When converted to a z-score, there were no standardized residual values greater than the critical value of 1.96.

In 81.8% of cases, female teachers sexually abused their victims multiple times (i.e. opposed to an isolated). In 18.2% of cases, the sexual abuse occurred multiple times that lasted longer than a year. There were no reported isolated incidents of female teachers sexually abusing students. Women offenders also used special attention as a grooming technique most often; in 75% of cases they used this strategy. Similarly to the male perpetrators, female perpetrators used electronic communication quite frequently.

Women used electronic communication in 75% of the cases, used romantic seduction in 68% of the cases, gave gifts in 35% of the cases, and provided access to substances in 30% of the cases. Targeting vulnerability, discussing personal issues, integrating into the student's family, exposing the student to pornography, or flattering the student's sexual maturity or physique was only reported in three or fewer cases.

Chi-square analyses were conducted for all of the grooming techniques to compare the four groups of male teacher sex offenders. Gift giving, targeting vulnerability, access to substances, family integration, sexual flattery, and sharing one's personal issues, all had expected counts of less than five in two or more of the cells. Since this violates the rules for the chi-square test, the results have not been reported. A chi-square was conducted to compare the four groups of male teacher sex offenders on the grooming technique special attention and was found to be non-significant,  $\chi^2(3, N = 129) = .84, p = .84$ . Male teachers who abused elementary school-aged girls used this technique in 63% of cases, male teachers who abused secondary school-aged girls used this technique in 65% of cases, male teachers who abuse elementary school-aged boys used this technique in 67% of cases, and male teachers who abused secondary school-aged boys used this technique in 53% of the cases.

### 3.2.1 Electronic Grooming

Men used electronic communication as a form of grooming in 47.1% of the cases. Online abuse occurred in 36.8% of cases perpetrated by men. Online was a location of abuse almost twice as often for female victims compared to male victims; females were abused online in 40.2% of the cases while males were abused online by 23.1% of male offenders. In addition, male perpetrators use electronic communication more often with female victims compared to male victims. They used this method of grooming with females in 56.2% of the cases, while they only used it in 20.8% of the cases that involved male victims. The use of electronic communication was identified in 68.8% of the cases where a woman was grooming a victim(s). Online was one of the locations of where the abuse occurred in 41.3% of cases perpetrated by females.

Over time, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of cases involving electronic communication and cases where students are being abused online. Between 2000 and

2004, 44.1% of cases involved electronic communication. This form of grooming was used in 50.9% of cases between 2009 and 2013. A chi-square analysis was conducted to compare these two time periods and was found to be non-significant  $\chi^2(1, N = 132) = 3.35, p = .067$ . During the first time period there were five reported cases of online abuse by teachers; during the latter time period the number increased by fivefold to 25. A chi-square analysis was conducted to compare these two time periods and was found to be significant  $\chi^2(1, N = 127) = 19.19, p < .001$ .

### 3.3 Nature of Abuse

#### 3.3.1 Number of Victims

It was hypothesized that there would be fewer cases with multiple victims in more recent cases compared to older cases. This was examined by comparing when the cases occurred and also by comparing when the College reviewed them. For the first instance a variable was created according to when the cases actually occurred, it was created using the date of when the first reported offense started.

A chi-square analysis was conducted to compare whether perpetrators who started abusing students between 1953 and 1999 and 2000 to 2013 were single or multiple victim offenders. This study found that cases that happened more recently have significantly fewer multiple victims than older cases,  $\chi^2(1, N = 216) = 20.12, p < .001$ . In the cases that started 1999 and prior, 62.4% of the sample had multiple victims, while the proportion of cases that had multiple victims in cases that started 2000 and later was 31.7%. Table 4 depicts these findings.

**Table 4**

*Comparing Different Groups of Male Perpetrators on the Number of Victims and Length of Offending Career*

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Perpetrator Group	Number with <u>one victim</u>	Number with <u>multiple victims</u>	Average number of <u>victims</u>	Length of <u>offending(months)</u>
	n (%)	n (%)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Male elementary	5 (27.8)	13 (72.2)	4.3 (2.8)	50.8 (62.4)
Female elementary	17 (53.1)	15 (46.9)	3.4 (5.5)	23.8 (37.4)
Male secondary	8 (50.0)	8 (50.0)	2 (2.0)	11.8 (14.3)
Female secondary	61 (71.8)	24 (28.2)	1.8 (2.4)	14.8 (16.1)

Then, the current study examined whether single- or multiple-victim group membership differed based on when the College reviewed the cases. This variable was created whereby the College made a decision about the case anytime in the years 2000 to 2004 (time period one) and 2009 to 2013 (time period two). While the proportion of perpetrators who had one reported victim compared to multiple victims was greater from 2009 to 2013 compared to 2000 to 2004, the chi-square was non-significant,  $\chi^2(1, N = 141) = 1.40, p = .24$ . In 60.6% of cases from 2009 to 2013 there was only one victim. Between 2000 and 2004 the perpetrator had one reported victim in 50.7% of the cases.

### 3.3.2 Sexual Acts

This study hypothesized that there would be less intrusive sexual behaviour (oral, vaginal, or anal sex) in cases that occurred in more recent years (i.e. after 1999) compared to cases that occurred in the 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's (i.e. before 2000). A chi-square analysis was conducted for male perpetrators and found that more recent cases had a smaller proportion of intrusive sexual behaviour,  $\chi^2(1, N = 223) = 7.80, p = .005$ . Between 2000 and 2012 (i.e. after 1999), 37.8% of the cases had major physical sexual abuse; in the cases between 1953 and 1999 (i.e. before 2000), 56.8% of the sample involved more intrusive sexual behaviour or in other words major physical sexual abuse.

This study also hypothesized that there would be less intrusive sexual behaviour in cases that have been reviewed by the College in more recent years (i.e. 2009 to 2013) compared to cases that were reviewed in the early 2000's (i.e. 2000 to 2004). A chi-square was conducted and was found to be non-significant,  $\chi^2(1, N = 146) = .002, p = .97$ . A slightly smaller proportion of cases involved intrusive sexual behaviour between 2000 and 2004 than between 2009 and 2013. In the early 2000s intrusive sexual behaviour occurred in 45.7% of the cases perpetrated by males. Between 2009 and 2013 there was intrusive sexual behaviour in 46.1% of the cases perpetrated by males.

Male teachers engaged in intrusive sexual behaviour, which would involve vaginal or anal intercourse, or oral sex in 45.2% of the cases. Total percentages can amount to more than 100% since perpetrators may abuse their victims to varying degrees and have their actions fall into more than one category for analysis. In other words, they are not mutually exclusive. Hugging, kissing, and/or fondling occurred in 75% of the cases. Sexual communication, which might include love notes or technological communications were reported in 41.5% of cases. Emotional sexual abuse, such as professing one's love for the student, occurred in 34.8% of cases. Harassing the student, for example, making inappropriate sexual comments occurred in 13.7% of cases.

Female teachers engaged in intrusive sexual behaviour in 71.4% of the cases. Minor physical abuse was in almost all of the cases, with the proportion being 91%. Sexual communication was in 70% of the cases and emotional sexual abuse was in 57.1% of the cases. Finally, women sexually harassed their victims in 4.8% of cases.

### 3.3.3 Possession of Child Pornography

From the male sample, teachers possessed child pornography in 11.9% of cases. There were no cases of females teachers possessing child pornography. Of the 28 men who were found to possess child pornography, seven either exposed the student to pornography as a grooming technique or made pornography with the student. For the male teachers who possessed child pornography, seven had no direct victims, five had one direct victim, five had multiple direct victims, and for 11 of the men the number of victims was undetermined.



### 3.3.4 Location of abuse

Male teachers selected the school grounds as the location of abuse most frequently. In 47% of cases perpetrated by men, children were sexually abused at school. In 36.7% of cases, men abused students in their home and in 35.7% of cases the abuse occurred over the Internet. In 21.2% of cases the male perpetrator abused children and youth in the teacher's car. Abuses in the community occurred in 16.9% of cases. In 12.9% of the cases, the abuse occurred in an extracurricular setting. Students were sexually offended in their own homes by male offenders in 8.2% of the cases. In 4.6% of cases the male perpetrators abused their victims in hotels. There were also 34 cases where the location was redacted or was not identified.

In most cases, that is 62% of the time, women offenders used their own household to sexually abuse their victim(s). Another common location of abuse for female perpetrators was the community. In 55% of the cases, the female perpetrator abused children and youth in the community, for example, in a park or coffee shop. In 42% and 40% of cases, the women sexually abused the student at the school or online, respectively. The victim's home was where the teacher exploited the student in 25% of cases. In addition, female teachers were found to commit sexual misconduct in their vehicles with youth in 35% of cases. Finally, hotels were used as a location of abuse in 3 out of 21 cases or 14.3% of the time.

### 3.3.5 Duration of Offending Career

The mean duration of male perpetrator's offending careers were 26.96 months ( $SD = 43.67$ ). If a perpetrator had multiple victims, the offending career would start when the first offence began and when the last offence ended. Table 5 summarizes the aforementioned details of abuse for male perpetrators. Typically, female perpetrators offending careers were shorter; they lasted for 19.7 months ( $SD = 18.53$ ).

#### **Table 5**

*Mean Number of Victims, Duration, Age, and Length of Time to Offend for Male Perpetrators*

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	n	M (SD)
Total number of victims	225	2.73 (3.71)
Duration of sexual offending (months)	151	26.96 (43.67)
Age of perpetrator at first offense	122	37.14 (9.88)
Time (years) between receiving teaching oocertificate and first reported offense	242	9.55 (11.01)

A one-way between-subjects Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the four groups of male perpetrators on the duration of their offending careers. When comparing men who abused male elementary school-aged students, men who abused female elementary school-aged students, men who abused male secondary school-aged students, and men who abused female secondary school-aged students, a significant difference was found,  $F(3, 99) = 5.33, p = .002$ . Male perpetrators who abused male students in elementary school had the longest offending careers; male perpetrators who abused female students in elementary school children had the second longest offending careers ( $M = 23.8, SD = 37.39$ ), followed by male perpetrators who abused females in secondary school, and then male perpetrators who abused males in secondary school. Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe analysis revealed that perpetrators who had male elementary school-aged victims ( $M = 50.8, SD = 62.38$ ) abused their victims for significantly longer than perpetrators whose victims were female secondary school-aged students ( $M = 14.82, SD = 16.12$ ),  $p = .003$ . In addition, perpetrators who offended elementary school-aged boys also abused them significantly longer than secondary school-aged boys ( $M = 11.78, SD = 14.27$ ),  $p = .044$ .

A t-test was conducted to compare the duration of offending careers for men whose first reported student abuse occurred between 1952 and 1999 and men whose first reported abuse occurred between 2000 and 2013. Male perpetrators between 1952 and 1999 had stints of abuse that were significantly longer ( $M = 56.08, SD = 10.91$ ) than male perpetrators who first abused a student between 2000 and 2013 ( $M = 16.47, SD = 22.23$ ),  $t(149) = 5.35, p < .001$ .

Instead of only comparing groups by when they occurred, t-test comparisons were made to compare teachers whose cases were reviewed by the College in different time periods. The length of time of offenses that were reviewed by the College between 2000 and 2004 and 2009 to 2013 did not significantly differ,  $t(88) = .001$ ,  $p = .99$ . Those cases seen in the first time period lasted an average length of 18.44 months ( $SD = 42.54$ ) and those that were seen in the second time period lasted 18.43 months ( $SD = 26.24$ ). A case seen between 2000 and 2004 does not necessarily mean that the abuse also occurred during that time period. For example, a case where the abuse could have spanned between 1996 and 1998 could have been reviewed in either time period (2000 to 2004 or 2009 to 2013) depending on when the case was brought to the College's Investigation team.

When comparing the male perpetrators who only had all female victim(s) or all male victim(s), one interesting finding was discovered. Male perpetrators who abused boys ( $M = 46.72$ ,  $SD = 64.34$ ) had a significantly longer duration of offending compared to male perpetrators who abused girls ( $M = 20.79$ ,  $SD = 33.14$ ),  $t(131) = 3.0$ ,  $p = .003$ .

### 3.3.6 Frequency of Abuse

Male perpetrators abused their victim on multiple occasions in 73.2% of cases. In 9.4% of the cases the abuse was reported as an isolated incident and in 17.4% of the time the abuse occurred multiple times over the span of a year or longer. A chi-square was conducted to compare the frequency of male perpetrated abuse for cases that occurred before 2000 and after 1999 and was found to be significant,  $\chi^2(2, N = 208) = 20.96$ ,  $p < .001$ . For the cases that happened before 2000, 13.4% of the cases were isolated incidents (i.e. the student was sexually abused once), 56.1% were multiple instances, and 30.5% were multiple instances that occurred over a year or were long-term relationships. In contrast, 7.1% of cases were isolated incidents after 1999, 84.1% were multiple instances, and 8.7% were long-term relationships that lasted longer than a year. While it is surprising that there are fewer isolated incidents in recent years compared to older cases, it is also compelling that there is a smaller proportion of long-term relationships in recent years compared to preceding years. There were standardized residuals greater than 1.96 for the offenders who abused students multiple times over a year's time or longer for prior to 2000 and after 1999. The standardized residual for the cases prior to 2000 was 2.9 and the standardized residual for the cases after 1999 was - 2.3.

It is also striking to observe that after 1999, more intrusive sexual abuse occurred in 12.5% of long-term relationships but prior to 2000, more intrusive sexual abuse occurred in 40.9% of long-term relationships. Put differently, in more recent cases compared to older cases we are observing less sexual intercourse and oral sex. Furthermore, it appears that male perpetrators are starting to offend significantly later in life for more recent cases compared to older cases. Male teachers who started abusing students after 1999 ( $M = 39.63$ ,  $SD = 10.21$ ), compared to male teachers who started abusing students between 1952 and 1999 ( $M = 34.57$ ,  $SD = 8.90$ ), were on average about five years younger with this difference being significant,  $t(120) = 2.50$ ,  $p = .004$ .

## 3.4 Outcomes of Abuse

### 3.4.1 Professional Consequences

The most likely response of the OCT, whether the perpetrator was male or female, was to revoke the teaching certificate. Males had their license revoked 64.4% of the time and were suspended and/or reprimanded in 26% of cases. In a small proportion of cases male offenders resigned or retired or received a different form of remediation. Just over twelve percent of the men were instructed to complete counselling and 18.3% of the men were directed to complete an educational course.

On the other hand, females had their licenses revoked 90.5% of the time and were suspended and/or reprimanded in the remaining 9.5% of cases. The OCT instructed one woman to enroll in personal counselling and two women to enroll in an educational course. Interestingly, in over a third of cases the female teacher was “warned” or requested to end a relationship by someone who was not directly involved in the abuse or relationship (e.g. a parent of the victim or principal at the school).

A chi-square analysis was conducted to compare if the College has increased or decreased the number of certificates that they are revoking over time. When comparing the cases of both male and female teachers from 2000 to 2004 and 2009 to 2013, a non-significant difference was found,  $\chi^2(1, N = 156) = .31$ ,  $p = .58$ . A chi-square analysis was also conducted for only the male teacher offenders and a non-significant difference was found,  $\chi^2(1, N = 139) = .29$ ,  $p = .59$ . A chi-square analysis was also conducted to

compare if there was a change in the proportion of certificates revoked for both male and female perpetrated cases that happened before 2000 and after 1999. A non-significant difference was found,  $\chi^2(1, N = 222) = 2.56, p = .14$ .

A chi-square was also conducted to determine if male teachers who abused children in elementary school had their certificates revoked more often than male teachers who abused children in secondary school. Those who abused elementary school-aged children had their certificates revoked 83% of the time and those who abused secondary school-aged children had their certificates revoked 63% of the time. A significant difference was found in the proportion of male teachers who had their certificates revoked and who abused children in elementary school compared to secondary school,  $\chi^2(1, N = 139) = 5.86 p = .015$ . There were no standardized residuals greater than 1.96.

### 3.4.2 Legal Consequences

In terms of legal consequences, men were convicted in 62.2% of cases and were imprisoned in 96 out of 167 cases or 57.5% of the time. Men were incarcerated for a mean of 23.68 months ( $SD = 27.33$ ). Men received probation 50.6% of the time and were on probation for an average of 32.30 months ( $SD = 62.54$ ).

Women were convicted of their charges in 42.9% of the instances and were incarcerated in 3 out of the 9 cases. The mean length of time that these women were incarcerated was 20.22 months ( $SD = 22.48$ ). Female offenders received probation 41.7% of the time and were on probation for a mean of 16.8 months ( $SD = 5.02$ ).

## Chapter 4

### 4 Discussion

The current study was a retrospective examination of teacher sexual misconduct cases in Ontario from 2000 to 2013. The purpose of the study was to be able to describe patterns of teacher sexual misconduct in greater detail. This research was done with the intention that all relevant stakeholders: students, parents, the teaching profession, law enforcement, and policymakers can achieve a greater understanding of this issue. Two case examples, Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Thompson are described below; these case studies will be referred to several times thereafter.

The other major goal of this study was to determine how cases of teacher sexual misconduct have changed or stagnated over time. This study extended the research conducted by Jaffe and colleagues (2013), which investigated teacher sexual misconduct cases in Ontario from 2007 to 2012. Hence, adding another seven years of cases permitted a systematic investigation of these abusive incidents. The present study hypothesized that more recent cases would have less intrusive sexual behaviour, the perpetrators would have fewer multiple victims, and they would have shorter offending careers. In addition to the hypotheses that center on how different time periods compare, this study had both a descriptive and exploratory component.

The current study explored different groups of perpetrators based on the information that child sex offenders are a heterogeneous group. Thus, while we expected that there might be some differences among male teachers who sexually abuse their students, it was unclear as to what those differences might be.

One unique contribution of this study was the inclusion and description of female teachers who sexually abused students. Female sex offenders are a population that is often overlooked in both the literature and in society in general (Denov, 2001). This study sought to shed some light on this population and to guide future research on this group of individuals. While it can be difficult to create a comprehensive picture of female teacher sexual misconduct from a small sample size, it is still important to start tracing this concern.

## 4.1 Major Findings

The current study attempted to tackle if teacher sexual misconduct has changed over the years. The College, which was formed almost twenty years ago, has developed procedures and processes to deal with allegations of professional misconduct over this period of time. It was hypothesized that with greater awareness of teacher sexual misconduct, the patterns of sexual offending would look different in more recent years compared to cases that transpired further back in time. Terry and Freilich (2012) found that the duration of abuse declined for both male and female victims of male priests and attributed this to an increased awareness about sexual abuse in society, identification of abuse in the church, and the implementation of strategies to minimize sexual abuse in this institution. This study anticipated similar findings, that with greater awareness the cases of abuse would be markedly less severe in terms of the number of victims, the number of cases with intrusive sexual behaviour, and the length of offending careers.

### 4.1.1 Number of Victims

The present study found that perpetrators who victimized elementary school-aged boys had significantly more victims than perpetrators who victimized secondary school-aged girls. There were 13 male perpetrators who had multiple male victims who were in elementary school in this study. Compared to the group of male offenders as a whole, this group started offending at a younger age, offended for a longer period of time, and started abusing children earlier in their teaching career. The length of their offending career, which is related to the length of the actual abuse, is important because the length of abuse has been identified as a predictor of trauma (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986). Seto and Lalumiere (2000) found that offenders who had multiple, unrelated, child victims who were younger and male, were more likely to reoffend. Interestingly, a different study found that having a self-reported sexual interest in young males was associated with a progression to multiple-victim offending and that having male extra-familial victims is connected with serial offending and post-conviction recidivism (McKillop, Smallbone, & Wortley, 2014). While this is quite alarming, the number of teachers who appear to fall into this category is reassuringly small in relation to the number of teachers in Ontario and is also reasonably small when looking at this dataset as a whole.

The proportion of perpetrators who had multiple victims was significantly greater before the publication of *Protecting Our Students* (i.e. before 2000) compared to cases that occurred after (i.e. after 1999). This is a promising finding that supports the hypothesis that greater awareness reduces a teacher's ability to accumulate multiple victims. In addition to reviewing cases by when they happened, this study also compared the cases by when they were reviewed by the Discipline Committee of the College.

When comparing more recent cases to older cases by when the College reviewed them, the current study found that there was not a significant difference in proportion of cases with multiple victims. This finding can be interpreted in two ways; that there is greater awareness and more victims are coming forward or that the number of victims has not really changed. In some situations, once a victim sees a story in the newspaper about their teacher sexually abusing other students, they may be more inclined to come forward. One way to interpret why there are more multiple victim perpetrators in cases seen by the College from 2009 to 2013 compared to 2000 to 2004 is that a greater number of victims feel more comfortable to come forward in more recent years compared to former years. Thus, it is possible that perpetrators who are labeled as "single victim perpetrators" are actually multiple victim perpetrators but only one victim comes forward. However, another interpretation could be that indeed, the number of victims per perpetrator has not significantly changed over time or that there are a greater number of perpetrators with multiple victims in more recent years than before.

## 4.1.2 Perpetrator Characteristics

### 4.1.2.1 Age at onset

As expected, most of the perpetrators were male. The current study found that 91.5% of the sample was male and 8.5% of the sample was female. This compares similarly to the study of Canadian teachers implicated with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for sexually abusing children; they found that 7.5% of their sample was female (Moulden et al., 2010). This study also compared the age of perpetrators at the onset of their first reported offense.

A relatively late onset on offending is apparently what the body of literature on child sexual offending has determined thus far. For the cases where the age of perpetrators was



available, the average age of perpetrators aligned with other studies; in the current study, the mean age of male perpetrators was 37.14. Lang and Frenzel (1988) found that the mean age for pedophiles in their study of fifty-two convicted intra-familial sex offenders and convicted stranger-perpetrated sexual offenders of girls under the age of 14 years old was 33.8 years. A different study found that 32 years old was the self-reported age of the first sexual encounter with a minor (Wortley & Smallbone, 2014).

Childhood trauma has been predicted by the perpetrator's age in a seminal article in this field. If the offender is older, that is over the age of 30, trauma is more likely to result (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986). When looking at convicted sex offenders, researchers have found that compared to rapists and nonsexual offenders, child molesters are significantly older (Barbaree & Seto, 1997). Extra-familial sex offenders generally have the opportunity to create close relationships with children later in life through professions or roles that allow such proximity (i.e. teaching, coaching, pastoral work) (Smallbone & Wortley, 2004).

Meanwhile, the average age of the female perpetrators in our study was 31.36. The existing literature states that female child abusers are generally between the age of 26 and 36 years (Miller, 2013) or 26 and 32 years old (Vandiver & Kerher, 2004). Thus, the mean age found in the current study seems to support what other researchers have found. This study provides a unique contribution, age of teacher perpetrators, to the literature on child sexual abuse. In addition to age, this study also explored the length of offending career, as an attempt to differentiate the offenders in this sample.

#### 4.1.2.2 Typologies

One of the goals of the study was to take a closer look at child sex offender typologies and how the categories from the current literature map onto the sample population in this study. Having distinct groups of perpetrators emerge from the dataset would have been beneficial for several reasons. If one could classify an offender, then this information could be applied to how they are remediated or disciplined. For example, one type of offender may be more receptive to an educational course on boundaries, while another type of offender may have a very high risk of recidivism and should be prevented from having contact with children indefinitely. Ultimately, this study categorized the male

perpetrators by the gender of his victim and general age group (i.e. in elementary school-aged or secondary school-aged).

#### 4.1.2.3 Duration of Offending Career

The most fascinating finding was that men who sexually abused male students in elementary school had an offending career significantly longer than men who sexually abused females in secondary school and males in secondary school. This finding is inconsistent with research conducted on male priests who abused minors. The Nature and Scope study, which examined child sexual abuse by priests in the United States of America over a fifty-two year period, found that the duration of abuse was comparable for male victims and female victims (Terry & Freilich, 2012). Thus, teachers who offend younger males may be distinct from the other perpetrators. Hence, this finding indicates that teachers who abuse males in elementary school pose a greater risk to society.

A limitation of this variable is that for some cases, the length of offense represents the actual length of abuse for the victim, while in other cases it is more indicative of the offending career of the perpetrator. In other words, the length was determined by when the abuse for the first victim started and when the abuse for the last victim ended. For perpetrators with single victims, the length of their offending career is essentially the length of time that the victim was being abused. However, for perpetrators with multiple victims, the length of abuse has the potential to be quite longer, especially in there are months or years in-between the various victims. Put differently, the absolute amount of time that the offender may have been abusing these victims may have been 38 months; yet, if those abuses spanned over 10 years and thus would be entered as 120 months.

Despite this nuance, it is still worth speculating as to why this is happening. First of all, it may be that male offenders silence younger children. Male children who are victimized by male perpetrators might feel inordinate shame and guilt due compared to female victims or older victims. Therefore, the abuse of multiple younger male victims may go on for longer compared to female or older children because the victims may have a difficult time reporting the abuse. Another reason may be that males who target younger males may represent a more fixated type of abuser, or even may have pedophilic tendencies, and take more care and put more thought into their abuse. They may be more

careful to hide the abuse and as a result, they are able to satisfy their sexual needs by violating children over a longer period of time.

This study found that offenders in cases that were older had significantly longer offending careers compared to offenders in more recent cases. In cases that were initiated after 1999, the length of offending careers were shorter; conceivably because people were more aware that this type of abuse and know what type of warning signs to look for. This finding mirror what was found in the Nature and Scope study cited below.

They also found that for older cases, cases that occurred between 1950 and 1974, the length of abuse for males was 1.9 to 2.0 years and for females was 1.9 to 2.2 years (Terry & Freilich, 2012). After 1974, the duration of abuse noticeably decreased and in 2002, the last year of data analyzed, the average length of abuse for male victims was 0.2 years and for female victims was 0.1 years (Terry & Freilich, 2012). In the current study, older cases, cases that started between 1952 and 1999, were significantly longer than cases that occurred after 1999. In fact, in the present study, the cases that occurred between 2000 and 2013 lasted for an average of 16.47 months or just less than a year and a half. Yet, this length of time is quite different from the 1.2 months length of abuse by priests in 2002 (Terry & Freilich, 2012). Thus, nature of student-teacher relationships may be different than those of priests and children.

#### 4.1.2.4 Pedophilia and Sexually Deviant Behaviour

The current study and existing research has found that those who commit sexual crimes have patterns of offending that are remarkably heterogeneous (Looman, Gauthier, & Boer, 2001; Tallon & Terry, 2008). Different behaviour patterns, psychodynamics, and motives are even found within the group of perpetrators who are labeled as pedophiles (Miller, 2013). One study that examined sexual abuse by priests on many similar variables to the present study concluded that their findings demonstrated that they are a diverse group as well (Terry & Frielich, 2012). Thus, making inferences about different groups of offenders is often challenging. It has also been purported that sexual responses in humans are more unpredictable and dynamic than sexual identity (Smith, Rengifo, & Vollman, 2008).

The subject of sexual interest in children is a hotly debated topic in research, the criminal justice system, and psychology alike. One study, which examined child sexual abuse by priests in the United States of America over a fifty-two year period, found that in the majority of cases, paraphilic behaviour (i.e. pedophilia) was not present (Smith et al., 2008). Only a small proportion of priests, 3.5 percent, started abusing youth soon after their ordination (Smith et al., 2008). It was difficult for the current study to ascertain how many offenders in the study were pedophiles because pedophilia is a mental health disorder that would need to be diagnosed by a qualified mental health practitioner, such as a psychiatrist or a psychologist. In other words, having intercourse with a child does not necessarily mean that one would receive a diagnosis of pedophilia. Seto (2004) posits that not all pedophiles will sexually abuse children, some sex offenders who sexually abuse children are not pedophiles, and some pedophiles that sexually abuse children also have adult sex partners. In summary, pedophilia exists along a continuum (Blanchard, 2013).

Many researchers have questioned the clinical relevance and utility of the pedophilia diagnosis. In fact, as far as Kingston, Firestone, Moulden, and Bradford (2007) are concerned, specific variables made an insubstantial contribution to predicting pedophilia in their study. For example, age, education, and alcohol abuse, did not differentiate pedophiles and non-pedophiles (Kingston et al., 2007). Some research on pedophiles characterizes them as having: deficient social skills, as being shy, unassertive, passive, socially withdrawn, and having troubled childhoods (McAnulty, 2006; Langstrom & Seto, 2006; Marshall, 1989). Most research on teacher sexual misconduct demonstrates that the majority of offenders are quite the opposite; they are generally likeable and regarded as trustworthy (Shakeshaft, 2013). Research on paraphilia are generally scant because of the stigma and since some of the behaviours may be illegal (Bhugra, Popelyuk, & McMullen, 2010). Other authors have maintained that male perpetrators having a sexual interest in younger females is not pathological, it is evolutionary adaptive (Blanchard, 2013). Generally, having a sexual interest in children is considered pathological in the North America; however, a teacher having a sexual relationship with a student younger than 18 years old violates age of consent laws since the relationship is based on trust and authority (Department of Justice, 2015).

### 4.1.3 Nature of Abuse

#### 4.1.3.1 Grooming

It is well established that almost all child sex offenders groom their victims to some extent (Jaffe et al., 2013; Leclerc, Wortley, & Smallbone, 2011). Sexual predators purposely make their victims feel loved by providing them with attention and by spending time with them (Smallbone & Wortley, 2000; Leclerc et al., 2011). The finding that emerged here was electronic communication is used differently among different groups of teacher offenders. That, is men who abused boys in elementary school use this tool significantly less than men who abuse elementary school girls, high school boys, and especially high school girls. This result may be a function of the student's age. While grooming behaviours are important to be aware of, it is argued that perpetrators can adopt new strategies quite easily and will use tactics that are age or gender appropriate (Lacoste & Tremblay, 2003; Leclerc, Proulx, & Beauregard, 2009). In addition to grooming techniques, many researchers argue that location is also a critical component of the perpetrator being successfully in their attempt to sexually assault a child.

#### 4.1.3.2 Scene of Abuse

Location of abuse was also of interest in the present study because in recent years situational determinants of sexual offending have also been analyzed. Wortley and Smallbone (2006) submit that location is a critical factor in the commission of sexual crimes. The abuse generally occurs in private and often near or in the perpetrator's residence (Duwe, Donnay, & Tewksbury, 2008; Wortley & Smallbone, 2006). The theoretical explanation for "activity approach type" of offenders indicates that when a suitable victim, the absence of a capable guardian, and a motivated offender come together in time and space, crime will transpire (Cohen & Felson, 1979). In the present study, just over a third of the crimes were committed at the teacher's home when the perpetrator was male. However, the school grounds were where almost half of the sample of male teachers abused students. This is consistent with previous research that found that empty classrooms, school offices, and school hallways, are frequently the location of teacher-student abuse (Knoll, 2010).

It is important to note that these percentages do not total 100% as more than one location may have been chosen per case. The proportions were actually slightly different for female perpetrators. In contrast to male perpetrators, female teachers used their own home as the location to sexually abuse students more often than on school property.

It is easy to imagine how the routine activity approach theory can be applied to teacher sexual misconduct. On school property there are likely many “suitable victims”, parents or other guardians have a limited presence, and the offender who is tempted to act on impulse, ultimately sexually assaults a child. Indeed, this notion of unrestricted access to students as a possible precipitating factor for teacher sexual misconduct can be excavated from the following results. In Sullivan and Beech’s (2004) study, 90% of the abusers were cognizant of their sexual attraction to children prior to the start of their careers, 42% stated that they chose their profession in part due to the access to children they would have. Fifteen percent reported that they chose their profession so that they would have contact with children (Sullivan & Beech, 2004). The next section discusses how access to children and sexual attraction to children eventually leads to the sexual abuse of young individuals.

#### 4.1.3.3 Sexual Acts

The hypothesis that there would be fewer, or a smaller proportion of cases, with intrusive sexual acts in more recent years (i.e. after 1999) compared to older cases (i.e. before 2000) was supported by the data. This finding could be explained a multitude of different ways. Perhaps teachers are less skilled at grooming and making sexual advances on students, students are better able to avoid such encounters, as well as situational or contextual constraints that impede this from happening more often.

When comparing cases by when the College reviewed them, between 2000 and 2004 and 2009 and 2013, the proportion of cases with more intrusive sexual behaviour (i.e. oral sex or intercourse) were non-significant. Considering why there is no difference is difficult to speculate. Attitudes toward sexual behaviour can and do change over time and are also a product of the cultural context (Bhugra et al., 2010). For example, more liberal attitudes towards sex may contribute to why there was not a major difference.

#### 4.1.3.4 Offense Pathways

In addition, the length of time between when teachers graduated from teachers college to when they allegedly started abusing children, were significantly shorter in the older cases compared to cases that happened in more recent years. This is a curious finding. One explanation for why the more recent perpetrators take longer to offend than the former perpetrators is the employment rate in Ontario for teachers. In more recent years, the job market has been more competitive and obtaining a job shortly after graduation is less frequent (Ontario College of Teachers, 2013a). Thus, if teachers in more recent years started teaching in schools more quickly, then perhaps they would start offending earlier as well.

Another possibility is that in more recent years, teachers are deterred to abuse children due to increased awareness and precautions. They take longer to groom themselves and to convince themselves that it is worth the risk. It is postulated that in recent years teachers have become more skilled at keeping their abuse secret and the length of time appears to be more delayed than older cases because there are victims that are failing to come forward and report the abuse. For example, a teacher might briefly assault one student, eventually move onto a second victim, but only the second victim comes forward and the length of time between when they received their teaching certificate and the first reported offense is entered as longer and is in fact, inaccurate.

Regardless of whether the case occurred more recently or in the distant past, on average it takes several years before a teacher grooms a student and commits an offense. This finding is consistent with other research that has found that teachers who bullied students were more established in the profession and had been teaching for more than five years (McEvoy, 2005). The length of time it takes to start offending might be associated with the decision-making process that an offender goes through. A study published in 1995 used the rational choice approach and examined the decision-making of 10 individuals who molested children (Proulx, Ouimet, & Lachaine, 1995). They established that the perpetrator does not simply make a one-time decision to offend. In contrast, they must choose their “hunting field”, the location where they will find and select a victim; the time of the assault; the allure of the victim based on erotic values, vulnerability, and

familiarity; how to approach the victim; and how to engage the victim in sexual activity (e.g. bribes, threats, coercion, seduction, etc.) (Proulx et al., 1995).

A more extensive model developed by Leclerc and colleagues (2011) has since been developed. These researchers suggest that there are two phases to sexual offending (Leclerc et al., 2011). First, the offender must enter the setting; in teacher sexual misconduct cases, this would be the institution. Then, trust-gaining strategies or instrumental initiation must be employed (Leclerc et al., 2011). Following gaining the trust of the victim, the offender must use tactics to get the victim to the crime location; this is called the continuation phase (Leclerc et al., 2011). Location selection occurs next and after that the instrumental actualization or isolation of the victim must ensue (Leclerc et al., 2011). The crime achievement phase consists of three different parts: the completion phase where the offender uses strategies to gain cooperation from the victim; the outcome, which is the sexual act(s); and the post-offense condition, where the offender prevents the victim from disclosing what has transpired (Leclerc et al., 2011).

This model illustrates that the offender goes through a complex thought process where many creative and astute strategies are practiced before the victim is exploited.

Furthermore, this planning process is thought to exist along a continuum opposed to categorically planned or unplanned in serial sex offenders (Bennett & Wright, 1984). Moreover, Beauregard, Leclerc, and Lussier (2012) compared three different groups, child molesters, rapists, and victim-crossover sex offenders, on their crime commission process. They determined that child molesters prefer structured planning and emphasize controlling the situational characteristics prior to engaging a victim (Beauregard et al., 2012). They also found that in general child molesters do not use weapons, restraints, or physical force (Beauregard et al., 2012).

#### 4.1.4 Outcomes of Sexual Misconduct

The finding that the majority of teachers implicated in sexual abuse with students had their certificates revoked was inconsistent with other research in the field. Recall the study of teacher sexual misconduct in New York that found that only one percent of certificates were revoked (Shakeshaft & Cohen, 1995). The OCT may take teacher transgressions more seriously compared to the American counterparts. However, that



study is also dated so it may be more so that times have changed how teacher sexual misconduct is dealt with in both Canada and the United States.

It was expected that females would have more lenient punishments and would have their certificates revoked less often than males. While statistical analyses could not compare men and women, the descriptive statistics showed that a greater proportion of female perpetrators had their certificates revoked than male perpetrators. This may be because only the most severe cases of female teacher sexual misconduct come to the attention of the College. For example, students may not perceive female teachers hugging students to be as threatening as if male teachers were to do this. Along a similar line, male students who are sexually abused by female teachers may get positive attention from their peers or may have a more difficult time disclosing female teacher sexual misconduct unless the teacher has clearly crossed the line (e.g. had sexual intercourse with the student).

Similarly, the male perpetrators who abused younger children had their licenses revoked more often than the male perpetrators who abused older children. This may be because people perceive younger children to be more vulnerable. Thus, the Committees may have viewed these crimes as worse than crimes committed against secondary school-aged children. Nonetheless, the finding that the majority of teachers who commit sexual abuse have their certificates revoked is encouraging.

If one were to speculate on why the College has remained stagnant with its reprimands, it may be because the College only recently had its Investigation and Discipline procedures reviewed. It is possible that when the College requested the Honourable Patrick LeSage to evaluate its effectiveness in 2012, there was suspicion that the processes required revamping. Any recommendations that were actualized will likely not influence the landscape of teacher sexual misconduct for a few years. In addition, differences in criminal justice consequences were not found either. Regrettably, criminal convictions and sentences are not always reflective of the degree of wrongdoing or impact on the victim. Perpetrators may have exceptional lawyers or may take plea bargains so that their sentences are shorter and the victim does not have to stand trial.

### 4.1.5 Victim Characteristics

This study found that there appears to be more female victims compared to male victims. Existing research has been inconsistent; some research shows that boys and girls are victimized fairly equally (Moulden et al., 2010), while other research shows that girls are abused more than boys (Gallagher, 2000; Timmerman, 2003). While it may be true that females are victimized more frequently than males, it also may be that males simply do not report the abuse as frequently. This is often attributed to male survivors not wanting to reveal that they have had sexual relations with someone of the same sex (Goodman-Brown, Edelstein, Goodman, Jones, & Gordon, 2003; Homma, Wang, Saewyc, & Kishor, 2012).

The average age of the victims in this study also parallels other research that has been done in a Canadian context. The present study found that the average age of male victims was 12.67 and the average age of female victims was 14.28. The study this research extends from found that male victims in cases reviewed between 2007 and 2012 were an average of 13 years old at the onset of abuse and females were an average of 14 years old (Jaffe et al., 2013). A different study that used Canadian teachers that were investigated by the RCMP between 1995 and 2002 found that the victims were approximately 12 years old (Moulden et al., 2010). Two real cases that are adapted from the College's case reports, one with a female victim and one with a male victim, are described below.

## 4.2 Case Illustrations

While many of the cases in this study take different shape and form, two case studies are summarized to illustrate the diversity of cases found within the dataset. The following case examples of Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Thompson help guide the discussion on the implications of teacher sexual misconduct.

### 4.2.1. Case of Mr. Fletcher

Stephen Fletcher was a 42-year-old English teacher at a secondary school in Oakville. The victim was a female student enrolled at the school. Her age was never published but she was unquestionably under the age of 18 years old. Between April 2010 and Jan 2011, Mr. Fletcher and the student exchanged text messages and emails of a personal nature.

They also had telephone conversations of personal/sexual nature throughout this time. In April 2010 the two started seeing one another outside of school. The member and the student met at a pond near a school, met at their respective homes, exchanged good-bye kisses and touched one another. After a while, the member introduced the student to his 12-year-old daughter. As their relationship continued, they participated in activities that couples often do together. For example, they would cook together, watch movies, and hang out. The mother of the student found out about the relationship after her exams in June 2010 and confronted her daughter. The student stated that she and her teacher had a “close and not sexual” relationship. There was never any evidence of sexual intercourse. In turn, the mother called the member who apologized and agreed to end the relationship. In December the student’s aunt and her had a conversation about dating older men. When the aunt shared this with the mother she figured that her daughter was still seeing the teacher.

The school board was contacted and the board notified the Children’s Aid Society who then contacted the police. Ultimately Mr. Fletcher was criminally convicted for sexual exploitation and was sentenced to 14 days in jail and 18 months probation. Even though the member had 20 years of teaching experience it appeared that he had a difficult time taking full responsibility for his actions. He justified what he did by stating that he was not the only one who does it, that the student was mature, and that she was also connected with other teachers. The OCT revoked his license.

#### 4.2.1. Case of Mr. Thompson

Wayne Thompson sexually abused five boys who were in grade seven or grade eight on a weekly basis from 1971 and 1974. Mr. Thompson was not only a teacher; he was also a guidance counsellor as well as the vice-principal. The abuse included kissing, fondling, masturbation, and fellatio. He performed fellatio on his students and his students would also perform oral sex on him. He also encouraged the boys to have sex with girls while he watched. The sexual misconduct often occurred on school grounds in his office. One way that he was able to manipulate the boys was using his position as a sexual educator. For example, he asked one of the boys to remove his pants so that he could check him for crabs. He was able to desensitize the students by talking about sex from a health angle

prior to making advances on the students. Yearly overnight trips with the students also enabled him to take advantage of his power.

The abuse was kept the secret for almost four decades. When brought to trial Mr. Thompson was 72-years-old and was suffering from dementia and prostate cancer. Nonetheless, Mr. Thompson said that he saw nothing wrong with teachers engaging in sexual acts with students. Furthermore, he conveyed that the students were sexually attracted to him. He was sentenced to a three-year probation and lifetime ban of attending places where youth 16 and younger might be. The victims wished that Thompson had received a longer sentence. The shorter sentence was attributed to Thompson's poor health. Two students, who were in their 40's and 50's at the time of the sentence said that they endured "long term, harmful and life-altering consequences" because of the abuse.

### 4.3 Implications of Research

Bringing awareness to this topic was one of the foremost intentions of this study. As the results have showed, there are differences in more recent cases of teacher sexual misconduct, and it is likely that the *Protecting Our Students* (Robins, 2000), the LeSage Report (LeSage, 2012), and media coverage has helped illuminate this issue. *Protecting Our Students* was critical in educating people about teacher sexual misconduct in Ontario. It incited legislative changes such as the Student Protection Act, it prompted the College to develop its first professional advisory, and it encouraged stakeholders to engage in dialogue about this issue and spread awareness.

Making tangible revisions in policy, education and training, programs, oversight and accountability, and situational variables is indispensable. Terry and Freilich (2012) describe in length five ways that they believe child sexual abuse can be decreased. They recommend increasing the effort, increasing the risks, reducing the rewards, reducing provocations, and removing excuses (Terry & Freilich, 2012). Some of these ideas will be discussed below. Additionally, the aforementioned case examples will help demonstrate how the findings from this research and the existing literature could be applied to this issue in Ontario.

### 4.3.1. Policy

Beauregard and colleagues (2012) recommend that policies created to prevent crime should be crime specific. They declare that prevention efforts that focus on crimes that are committed against a certain type of victim have an increased chance to be successful (Beauregard et al., 2012). Beauregard and colleagues (2012) believe that gauging the risk of negative consequences may happen at every step of the decisional process of offending. Thus, for some teachers, amplifying the risk may deter them from taking the chance. Removing excuses should also be explored as a way to minimize abuse. Many individuals may plead ignorance and use any ambiguity in policies to rationalize or justify their behaviours, even to themselves. Furthermore, using these cognitive techniques may surface after years of being a teacher or follow stressful life events. Thus, refreshing experienced teachers on the professional standards should be considered as a requirement that they have to renew every few years.

Establishing and enforcing a zero tolerance policy is one way to increase the chance that potential offenders might lose their jobs or teaching certificates if they are discovered. In the current study, the most frequent location of abuse was the school. This is indicative that at the present time there may be a bystander effect occurring. The bystander effect is described as a decreased likelihood of an individual intervening when witnessing a crime when there are other witnesses because the level of responsibility is distributed among all of the bystanders and the person thinks that someone else will or has already helped out (Morgan, 1978). There are many factors that influence this effect. For example, some research shows that if the situation is ambiguous; bystanders are less likely to lend a hand (Harada, 1985). Mr. Fletcher, one of the teachers described in the cases earlier, insisted that he was not the only one who had close relations with a student. This statement reflects the necessity for a culture of zero-tolerance to be established.

Mr. Fletcher used telephone calls, emails, and text messaging to increase his presence in the life of the student he victimized. As technology falls in the hands of almost every young individual, it may be pertinent to develop more strict guidelines for teachers to share personal media with students. Social media policy could help curtail electronic grooming and online abuse, which was quite evident in this study. In 2012 the

Department of Education in New York City released a social media policy prohibiting Facebook friendships between teachers and students (Wurtele, 2012).

The Ontario College of Teachers issued a professional advisory on the use of electronic communication and social media in 2011 (Ontario College of Teachers, 2011). The document advises members to act appropriately with students; this includes but is not limited to declining student-initiated social media friend requests and avoiding exchanging private texts, phone numbers, or personal addresses with students. One way to utilize technology but not blur the lines of student/teacher relationships may be to have teachers create accounts that are approved and/or monitored by the school. For example, teachers could have accounts that they specifically use with students where administration have access to passwords or can oversee activity. While, this information is a valuable guideline to members of the profession, it appears that disregarding these instructions would not result in any serious repercussions from the College. Moreover, policies are not always effective if they are stand-alone intervention; people need to be educated and trained on the issues at hand and the policies that guide their work.

#### **4.3.2. Building Barriers to Sexual Abuse**

While policy has the ability to dictate procedures and influence outcomes, it is incumbent on the school system to safeguard their students. Smallbone and Wortley (2004) theorize that sexually abusing children is associated with delinquent tendencies. They found that individuals who had a history of dishonesty, exploitation, aggression, or serious rule breaking may be more inclined to abuse a child (Smallbone & Wortley, 2004). In a different study by the same authors they found that 39 percent of their sample had prior convictions for property offenses and almost a quarter had a conviction for nonsexual violent offenses (Smallbone & Wortley, 2000). This differs from other research that states that teacher offenders generally have prosocial attitudes and virtually no prior criminal or sexual offenses (Moulden et al., 2007; Sullivan & Beech, 2002).

In any case, some stakeholders believe that more thorough background checks should be conducted either prior to entry to teachers college or prior to employment. Reference checks and criminal record or vulnerability sector checks are one way to create a barrier

for some devious perpetrators (Leclerc et al., 2009). Other authors have less confidence in this measure; Knoll (2010) proposes that past charges of sexual abuse may appear as misdemeanors on background checks. Other ideas include increasing surveillance in certain areas of the school or limiting distribution of keys to the school. Unfortunately, even if schools were to screen teachers better or control access to facilities, it is almost certain that teachers who are motivated to offend may find some way to weasel into the profession. Therefore, it is essential that people are educated and trained on this issue so that teachers cannot make excuses for their actions.

### 4.3.3. Education and Training

Making professionalism or boundary courses in teachers college a requirement may also help foster more ethical behavior in new teachers. Mr. Fletcher had twenty years of teaching experience, yet he could not understand the magnitude of his actions on the student he exploited. Accordingly, offering incentives for current teachers to complete such courses is how one could reach more seasoned teachers. In addition to educating teachers on boundaries, students should also be taught and informed about what is acceptable conduct. In the case of Mr. Thompson, it sounds like the children may have initially been confused as to whether their health teacher was performing a medical examination on them or sexually abusing them. There should not be grey area for teacher sexually misconduct, it should be communicated to students that inappropriate behaviour should not be tolerated.

Some research has inferred that educating children about how to resist sexual advances may be useful. Child sex offenders in one study reported that assertively saying “no” was the most successful resistance strategy that they encountered from potential child victims (Smallbone & Wortley, 2000). In contrast, trying to get away, yelling for help, and fighting back were the least successful strategies (Smallbone & Wortley, 2000). Thus, teaching youngsters assertive dialogue and educating them more about boundaries and consent is something that could be added the curriculum in Ontario.

As in the case of Mr. Fletcher, the student’s mother became aware of an unusually close relationship between her daughter and the teacher. However, the abuse continued for a

period of time, despite that knowledge. It seems reasonable to confront the teacher in question, in this case Mr. Fletcher, upon finding out about such relationship. However, some teachers continue to violate teacher-student boundaries despite being asked to stop. If parents had a better sense of whom they should confront about suspicious teacher-student relationships (e.g. police or principal), then the length of abuse may be shortened or the sexual abuse may be circumvented.

As mentioned earlier, shaping community norms and attitudes is an important consideration for reducing teacher sexual misconduct. Combating the bystander effect is another direction that education and training can take. Increasing the strength of the community, increasing the community's sense of responsibility for preventing sexual abuse, and increasing an individual's sense of physical and social safety are different ways to support this endeavor (Baynard et al., 2004). Thus, education and training would focus on issues such as empowering school staff to oppose messages that promote sexual violence or on building skills to become effective supporters to sexual abuse survivors (Baynard et al., 2004). There is research that has shown that bystanders are less likely to assist when the situation is ambiguous; therefore, there needs to be proper training on the signs of grooming or teacher sexual misconduct (Baynard et al., 2004).

While special attention from teachers can appear encouraging to students and parents alike, it is the most common grooming technique used by teacher offenders in Ontario. Therefore, parents should be educated on what grooming by teachers looks like and how to tackle this situation, should they be wary. This study also observed that educators, especially female teachers, often sexually abuse students in their own homes. Thus, parents should be cautious if they are aware of their son or daughter spending time at a teacher's house. As a final note, van Dam (2001) suggests that parents and adults who work with children should receive training sessions on the modus operandi commonly adopted by offenders. Yet the onus to prevent teacher sexual misconduct should not only be on the students and their families. The school and school board also need to take responsibility for their role in this matter.



### 4.3.3. Oversight and Accountability

Wortley and Smallbone (2014) sense that more effective supervision in institutional settings effectually prevent teachers from offending. As offenders age, they generally gain more access or more unsupervised access to children (Wortley & Smallbone, 2014). Working in isolation void of oversight and accountability is risky. Thus, restricting opportunity for one-on-one interactions between students and teachers may be an effective way to reduce abuse. In the present study there were many cases where the teacher acted as a trip chaperone. The Boy Scouts of America has a policy that requires a minimum of two adults to supervise activities and also instructs adults to have separate sleeping and showering arrangements (Wurtele, 2012).

Furthermore, regular supervision and evaluation is suggested to help detect brewing problematic relationships and issues (Wurtele, 2012). Mr. Thompson abused boys on overnight trips over a three-year period. Thus, creating a norm where trip chaperones have to be accompanied by other adults could help minimize the exploitation of students. Oversight and accountability are indispensable when it comes to preventing teacher sexual misconduct. Likewise, programming for teachers could help prevent sexual abuse by reaching vulnerable teachers who may be on the verge of committing an offense and remediating teachers who have already committed an offense.

### 4.3.4. Programs

It seems like taking a more proactive approach to teacher sexual misconduct may thwart abuse that is perpetrated by teachers whose personal issues manifest through sexual abuse. Female teachers who abuse children appear to be motivated by self-worth issues, boundary issues, and intimacy issues (Gannon & Rose, 2008). Promoting positive mental health and wellness for teachers may be both an important implication of this study and an area of future research. Cale, Leclerc, and Smallbone (2014) found that child sex offenders differed from sex offenders who abused women in terms of their levels of self-esteem and satisfaction with their sex lives. Lower self-esteem and less satisfaction with their sex lives were found in the group that offended children (Cale et al., 2014). Furthermore, sexual difficulties shortly prior to the first incident of sexual abuse uniquely

predicted the perpetrator offending multiple victims (McKillop et al., 2014). Therefore, greater access to individual counselling, couple counselling, or workshops on self-esteem may benefit teachers who are struggling with personal issues.

Recidivism in offenders is a critical implication to contemplate. Researchers estimate that over a five-year follow-up, thirteen to fifteen percent of all sexual perpetrators, will reoffend, post-criminal sanction (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005). McKillop and colleagues (2014) consider sexual reoffending to be consistently predicted by sexual deviance, antisocial orientation, relationship problems, and specific offense characteristics. Studies show that offenders who receive treatment are significantly less likely to reoffend than offenders who are not treated (Hanson, Bourgon, Helmus, & Hodgson, 2009). In the case of Mr. Fletcher, even though his certificate to teach was revoked, one does not know what he went on to do after he was released from his two-week prison sentence and 18 month probation. Sexual violence is a serious problem in our society; yet few are discovered or brought before the justice system. It is crucial that these men and women not only receive a slap on the wrist but are also helped with their sexually deviant behaviour. Research shows that there is not one program that is appropriate for everyone; for example, individual differences, such personal history, can have an impact on how programs are received (Heppner, Neville, Smith, Kivlighan & Gershuny, 1999). Furthermore individuals in the field argue that the social context is necessary when attempting to change individual behaviours (Edwards et al., 2000). The current best practices are that treatment intensity should match the level of risk of the offender (Wilson, Looman, Abracen, & Pake, 2013). The current study demonstrated that there are likely at least three different groups of perpetrators who may need specific programming: female teachers who abuse high school-aged boys, male teachers who abuse high school-aged girls, and male teachers who abuse elementary school-aged boys. While the risk of reoffending can be difficult to determine, the literature indicates that male perpetrators who abuse elementary school-aged boys are the most likely to reoffend (McKillop et al., 2014). While this group might be the most risky, it appears that male perpetrators who abuse high-school aged girls are also a problematic group as they are the biggest group and are accounting for the majority of these cases. Generally, cognitive behavioural therapy interventions and techniques are used to treat sex offenders (Wilson,

et al., 2013). However, there is a paucity of research on whether or not opportunistic abusers should be treated differently than fixated abusers or pedophiles. This study confirmed that teacher sexual misconduct is an ongoing problem that requires further attention, research, and program evaluation.

## 4.4 Limitations

There are several different methodological and statistical matters to consider when evaluating this research. The methodological issues included accessing and ensuring the integrity of the data. The sample size represents a statistical limitation that this study encountered. Finally, external validity and the appropriateness of applying these results to a broader population will be discussed.

### 4.4.1 Methodological

Transparency has been an issue for many of the self-regulated professions over the year, the OCT not being an exception. In September 2011, The Toronto Star, a Canadian broadsheet daily newspaper, published a story entitled “Bad teachers: Ontario’s secret list.” The article accused the College of keeping the names of certain teachers secret, or granting them anonymity, once the teacher plead not guilty or no contest to certain allegations (Donovan, 2011). The Star claimed that in 2010, 35 of 49 published cases did not identify the teacher, in 2009, 20 of 43 published cases did not identify the teacher, and in 2008, 5 of 38 cases did not identify the teacher (Donovan, 2011). They also add that in most of these cases the school was left unnamed and the school board was unidentified. They also posit that 40 to 50 College cases per year are never published (Donovan, 2011).

The cases that were permitted anonymity would not be the worst situations of sexual misconduct, that is where a teacher was convicted of a criminal offense on a student, however it is clear that the paucity of information presents challenges for interpreting data both in the study and may reduce faith in the College and their ability to safeguard students. Since the article only examined three years of the College’s processes and the present study looks at data over the span of thirteen years, it is hard to determine whether cases reviewed by the College in other years would also lack stringency. All things

considered, it is important to be mindful of this while considering the results of this study.

Missing information was also a factor that limited the present study. In order to protect the identity of the victim and confidential information, the College redacts pieces of information or does not upload all “Exhibits” (i.e. pieces of evidence relevant to the case) on the website. Due to the limited access of information, some of the variables were not developed in the most accurate way. For example, the variable which describes the length of the time between when the teacher received their teaching certificate and when their first reported offence could be a better represented if one were to know when the teacher actually started teaching. In other words, teachers do not necessarily start their teaching careers as soon as their graduate from teachers college. Some teachers likely find work immediately after completing teachers college, while others they might not enter the teaching workforce for several years. It is important to note that an attempt to access this information was made; an overture was extended to the College (P. Jaffe, personal communication, January 11, 2014). Due to the confidential nature of the files, they restrict access to third parties and a written motion would have to be submitted for each case desired (see Appendix A). Information, such as who reported the offense to the College and other disclosure dynamics, would have deepened our understanding of this issue.

Also, it is difficult to ensure the validity of all of the data. For example, some victims of teacher sexual misconduct develop feelings for their perpetrator so they may have only disclosed certain details of the abuse or may have misconstrued or recanted some of their statements to protect their perpetrator. Thus, ensuring the validity of the data to the highest degree is difficult. Unless both parties agree on what transpired, it is sometimes impossible to know exactly what happened. Conflicting reports from two or more parties, or in colloquial terms “he said, she said”, types of situations are expected. While the number of maliciously reported cases compared to legitimate cases of teacher sexual misconduct probably unparalleled, there have been a few reported cases of students acting in bad faith towards certain teachers (Sikes & Piper, 2011).

False allegations can be detrimental to a teacher's career. As Sikes and Piper (2011) point out, teachers who are under investigation for sexual misconduct can be subject to hostility, violence, negative media coverage, murder, or social condemnation. This study appreciates that false allegations can always be a possibility. Further to this, it is possible that in some cases a perpetrator is guilty when found innocent or visa versa. As a result, this line of research has been conducted to be sensitive to both students and teachers. The criminal justice system and the College's Investigation and Discipline Committee are not foolproof. When viewing this data as a whole, it is unlikely that the odd case that may not have completely accurate information would influence the dataset and analysis as a whole in any discernable way. While most of the information in this study comes from a legitimate source (e.g. OCT records opposed to self-report data), one should be mindful that the information has the proclivity to be misconstrued by any party. Further to the integrity of the information entered, there were some statistical limitations based on sample size.

#### 4.4.2. Statistical

One of the major limitations of this study was that the sample size of the female perpetrators was too small to compare them to male perpetrators. The larger the size of the sample, the more accurately it reflects the population. Since the size of a sample determines the statistical power, this study only reported descriptive statistics for the females. The likelihood of discovering effects that are true is low when one has low statistical power (Button et al., 2013). While it is valuable to get a sense of female teachers since there is very scarce research on this topic, the female offenders could not be compared to the male offenders. In essence, comparing these two groups would be futile due to low statistical power. In turn, finding true effects would be less likely and an exaggerated estimate of the size of the effect could ensue.

In addition to the small female sample, once the male perpetrators were categorized into the four different groups for statistical comparisons (i.e. males who abused elementary school-aged boys, elementary school-aged girls, secondary school-aged boys, and secondary school-aged girls), the numbers were often too small to do a chi-square analysis. Generally, each cell in a chi-square should have an expected count of at least

five (Flaherty & Currall, 2013). Our smaller group, men who abused elementary school-aged boys, was too small to run some of these analyses.

#### 4.4.2. Generalizability

This study was able to use total population sampling; all teachers who have been reviewed by the College for teacher sexual misconduct were examined. Since all members within the population of interest were included in the study, the findings of the study are reflective of teachers who have been reported to have sexually abused students in Ontario. It is also important to note that this study and the individuals in this sample are only a certain representation of teacher sexual misconduct. In other words, this study describes the patterns and details of teachers who have been detected.

The teachers who have abused students and who have not come into contact with the OCT or criminal justice system may differ from this sample. For example, those offenders may be much more skilled at grooming. As a result, the victim may have a more difficult time disclosing the abuse because the offender has manipulated the victim in such a way that they feel that they cannot share what has happened with others. Another example might be that more “romantic” relationships between a teacher and student go undetected because the victim truly believes that they love one another. Based on the literature that suggests that sexual violence, institutional abuse, and teacher sexual misconduct, are heavily under-reported phenomenon, it is safe to consider that undetected cases look differently from those that are identified. Self-disclosure rates of child sex abuse are cited at around 33 percent (London, Bruck, Ceci, & Shuman, 2005). Thus, this research probably only represents only a fraction of the teacher sexual misconduct cases. Readers must proceed cautiously when generalizing to all educators that are committing sexual offenses against students.

This research extended and contributed to the work that has been done on teacher sexual misconduct in Ontario, Canada, the United States of America, and various other places around the world. This study identified that there are discernable differences between different perpetrators and their course of offending, which ultimately may have an effect on victim outcomes. This study also discovered that sexual misconduct by teachers has

changed over time and that the greater awareness may have played a pivotal role in shaping the professional standards of the profession. One needs to be careful when generalizing the findings of this study. The findings of this study cannot be generalized to all teacher sexual misconduct cases. This study looked at a number of cases over a considerable period of time. However, going forward, teacher sexual misconduct will likely be shaped by the progression of technology, media coverage, and other contextual influences.

Each province has its own College that regulates the teaching profession so it is difficult to say that the teachers that were implicated with sexual misconduct in Ontario would look similar to teachers in another province. For example, teachers who seek teaching careers solely for the purpose of accessing and abusing children might select a different province to teach in if they perceive that there will be a greater chance that they might be able to get away with such crimes. Even situational or organizational factors may vary considerably from school to school, school district to school district, and city to city. For example, older schools may not have windows in the doors, which increase the propensity for abuse to happen behind closed doors. Recall the case of Mr. Thompson, the teacher, principal, and guidance counsellor, who abused children in his office. Abusing children in his office likely meant that his office had privacy that was conducive to such abuse happening. Certain school boards may be more active in their attempt to reduce teacher sexual misconduct than others, which could certainly infiltrate into the culture of the community and impact how these teachers and situations are dealt with.

## 4.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The current study looked at cases reviewed by the College from 2000 to 2013. Data in Ontario cannot be extended back much further since the College was introduced in 1996 and started seeing disciplinary decisions in 1997. One way to replicate or extend these findings may be to conduct a similar study in a different province. In addition, there were variables that were not included in the analysis in the present study due to missing data. For example, who reported the abuse and to whom, may be of interest for future researchers if the College were to permit this confidential information to be shared. Fleshing out the details of the disclosure process could be useful for both victims and

adults. For example, in some cases parents became aware of the relationship between their child and the teacher and approached the teacher in question first. In some of these cases the teacher agreed to discontinue the relationship, yet the abuse continued nevertheless.

This study focused more on the offender and the characteristics of the abuse than the survivors. A future study could examine the victims more closely to gain more insight on their interpretation of the offender, the abuse, the relationship, and how this impacted their experience. Doing a qualitative analysis on how teacher sexual misconduct affects survivors would also help determine what kind of support would be beneficial for students following such abuse.

It would also be useful to understand this population better. Sexual offenders in general are usually quite heterogeneous and their motivations for offending and patterns of abuse can be quite dynamic and flexible (Looman et al., 2001). Using a statistical test called a cluster analysis may help elucidate different typologies of teacher offenders in the future. The point of this analysis is to divide individuals into homogenous and distinct groups by grouping them with others who are similar with respect to variables of interest.

It would also be intriguing to see what happens to the teachers whose certificates are revoked. For example, what professions do teachers seek once they are unable to teach? One could follow-up with teachers five or ten years after they are released from prison or after their certificates are revoked. Exploring how the experience affects future job prospects, relationships, and mental health could be fascinating. More importantly, investigating whether these men reoffend or encounter the criminal justice again could provide some insight on whether or not these men have been properly rehabilitated and how enduring these patterns of offending are.

Finally, it would be interesting to look at the public's perceptions of teacher sexual misconduct. Although it is assumed that there is greater awareness today than there was before, it would be helpful to determine the public's knowledge of infringements in the education system. More importantly, surveying parents, teachers, and students about their knowledge about inappropriate relationships or sexual abuse in the school could also



inform our understanding. The unintended consequences of greater awareness of teacher sexual misconduct can then be examined in greater depth.

## 4.6 Conclusion

The present study highlighted the need to continue rigorous research in the area of teacher sexual misconduct. This study looked at cases reviewed by the College from 2000 to 2013 and found that despite increased awareness, teacher sexual misconduct continues to be a difficult issue that the province of Ontario is grappling with. The present study found that men who abuse elementary school-aged boys are more likely to offend more than one victim and have longer offending careers. In addition, the current study also found that there was less intrusive sexual behaviour, fewer multiple victim perpetrators, and shorter offending careers in cases that occurred following the government-commissioned report by Justice Robins. The report offered recommendations for identifying and preventing teacher sexual misconduct in Ontario. Valuable insights about the location of abuse, offense pathways, victim characteristics, perpetrators characteristics, and discipline were discovered in the current study. Even though more recent cases of teacher sexual misconduct have demonstrated that the issue may be more contained, it is paramount that this area be given precedence in future research, policy development, training, and programming.

Teachers have a unique opportunity to make a profound impact on the lives of students. It is crucial that they use their trusted position to help shape young minds in a positive way. Mental health, future relationships, and academic and occupational achievements, have all been shown to suffer when someone who is in a trusted position of authority sexually abuses a young person (Wolfe et al., 2003). Students should be able to go to school without the fear that their teacher may manipulate or abuse them. While the vast majority of teachers maintain appropriate professional boundaries with their students and are concerned about their student's learning, growth, and well-being, a small number of teachers allow mentorships to be reduced to liaisons. This study demonstrated that teacher sexual misconduct is not an issue of the past; it is an ongoing problem and if left to his or her own devices some teachers will continue to commit these offenses.

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## List of Appendices

### Appendix A: Rules of Procedure of the Discipline Committee and Fitness to Practice Committee

*13.14(2) – If a member of the public wishes to have access to all or part of the record of the Committee, subject to sub-rule (3), he or she shall bring a motion before the Committee upon notice to the parties. Unless the Committee directs otherwise, the motion shall be a written motion.*

*13.14(3) – Subject to sub-rule 13.14(4), if a member of the public wishes to have access to the Notice of Hearing, Agreed Statement of Facts and / or Joint Submission on Order filed as exhibits in a proceeding, a motion is not necessary but he / she shall make a written request of the Committee and shall be provided with a copy of these documents, provided all reasonable photocopying charges are paid in advance. The Committee will advise the parties of the request and what documents have been released.*

*13.14(4) – Where the hearing, or any part of the hearing, has been closed, or where any exhibit or document has been restricted from access to the public or otherwise appears to contain sensitive personal information, the hearings office shall consult with the Chair of the Panel before releasing the Notice of Hearing, Agreed Statement of Facts and / or Joint Submission on Order, and the Chair of the Panel may require that the requesting party bring a motion under sub-rule 13.14(2) to determine whether access should be granted to the Notice, Agreed Statement or Joint Submission.*



## Appendix B: Number of cases per year of decision

	Male perpetrator	Female perpetrator
2000	16	0
2001	11	3
2002	16	1
2003	28	6
2004	17	0
2005	22	2
2006	19	1
2007	26	1
2008	21	1
2009	9	2
2010	16	1
2011	11	2
2012	17	3
2013	31	1

## Curriculum Vitae

**Name:** Taryn Mototsune

**Post-secondary Education and Degrees:** Queen's University  
Kingston, Ontario, Canada  
2008-2012 B.Sc. (Honours)

Western University  
London, Ontario, Canada  
2013-2015 M.A.

**Honours and Awards:** Western Graduate Research Scholarship  
2013 – 2014, 2014 – 2015

**Related Work Experience**

Student Intern  
Family Service Toronto  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
2015

Student Intern  
The Jean Tweed Centre  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
2014 – 2015

Group Co-facilitator  
Changing Ways (Partner Assault Program)  
London, Ontario, Canada  
2014

Volunteer  
Canadian Mental Health Association – Waitlist Clinic  
London, Ontario, Canada  
2014

Research Assistant  
The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
2012 – 2013

Research Assistant

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
2010, 2011

Research Assistant  
Queen's University, Autism Spectrum Disorders Lab  
Kingston, Ontario, Canada  
2011

Research Assistant  
Queen's University, The Bully Lab  
Kingston, Ontario, Canada  
2010 – 2011