



Horizon Newsletter

on Sexual Abuse & Deviancy

“The Pain of Abuse”

The Destructive Nature of Sexual Abuse

By Matthew D. Rosenberg, MSW, CSW

Essays/writings	3-10
Research Forum	2
Legal News	3
Literature/Resources	11
Subscription Info	11
Conferences	12

Many people, including attorneys, judges, mental health professionals, and medical professionals view sexual abuse and sexual offending in a rather singular or one dimensional fashion. For instance, when one discovers that a neighborhood child has been sexually abused by her uncle for many months, that person may be outraged and highly sympathetic with the child. This would be the first dimension of the effects of sexual abuse. The neighbor may not consider the interpersonal damage the abuse may have caused the victim; the effects on the entire family system; and the effects on the offender and the offender's family system.

It is extremely important to view sexual abuse and the destruction associated with it in a multi-dimensional fashion. If we continue to view sexual abuse in a singular, individualized, or sensationalized fashion, the preventative, correctional, and rehabilitative efforts we make may actually do more harm than good.

Too often, states pass statutes and amend current laws in response to a very small minority of highly publicized cases. These statutes, haphazardly created in very little time, tend to lump all of the crimes into a neatly defined mold, and the creators spend little time pondering over the long term consequences they may have. For instance, all states have implemented sex offender registration and notification laws to inform and protect the public from sexual offenders. These states, however, may not have considered that many sexual crimes are committed by juveniles 12 to

18 years of age, and that prosecutors and judges are having a difficult time convicting these juveniles because of the weight of the long term consequences. Currently in Michigan, an 18 year old who moons his or her school principal can be convicted of indecent exposure, must register as a sexual offender for 25 years, and have his or her name, address, and crime publicly posted. Moreover, a 20 year old female who has fondled a 13 year old male on one occasion must do the same. There is currently no distinction between levels of risk, types of crimes, or the nature of offenses.

On another, yet just as important level, anyone who works with victims of sexual abuse or sexual offenders must be willing to enter a very dark realm with his or her clients in the lead. Professionals must be fully prepared, as there will be facades at every turn, and fact and fiction may become blurred into obscurity. This is a realm of secrets and perversions, which are manifested through pain, guilt, and shame (and visa versa).

Do we really understand all of the dimensions of sexual abuse? Do we really understand how being sexually abused as a child or raped as an adult influences the rest of a person's life? Have we entered the aforementioned realm with our clients? Have we tuned in to the voices of the individuals who have entered this realm, either by choice or manipulation? This issue attempts to explore these and other questions by reading the words from those who have suffered the *Pain of Abuse*. For these (cont. on page 2)

Sponsored by the
Michigan Coalition
on Sexual Abuse &
Deviancy.

The Horizon

-Editor

Matthew Rosenberg

-Co-Editor

Debra Pawluck

-Co-Editor

Dwayne Hayes



Research Forum

In 1990, Cooper, Swaminath, and Baxter completed a case history of a 20 year old female pedophile exhibiting multiple paraphilias, and who had been the victim of incest and an active participant. The subject undertook extensive clinical, psychometric, endocrine and laboratory sexual arousal studies. Her psychiatric, psychometric, and physiologic arousal profiles were similar to those of many male child molesters, especially incestors. The authors demonstrated that lab arousal tests for female offenders, such as the vaginal photoplethysmograph, may have a significant impact on the assessment of such offenders.

(Source: "A Female Sex Offender with Multiple Paraphilias: A Psychological, Physiological (Laboratory Sexual Arousal) and Endocrine Case Study" 1990. Canadian Journal of Psychiatry. V35)

The National Center for the Victims of Crime estimate that there were 984,000 children victims of maltreatment nationwide in 1999. Forty-three states reported 440,994 victims of neglect; 197,557 victims of physical abuse; 98,339 victims of sexual abuse; and 49,338 victims of psychological abuse or neglect.

Catherine Butz and Steve Spaccarelli examined the use of force as an offense characteristic in subtyping juvenile sexual offenders (1999). For their study, juvenile sexual offenders were grouped based on whether they had ever used physical force or threats of force to commit an offense. The 101 subjects in the study were thus grouped into: rapist

category, non-rapist category, and a deniers category. The three groups were then studied using a variety of psychometric tests. Rapists reported significantly more sexual assault fantasy/predatory behavior, greater preoccupation with children, and more paraphilias than the two other groups. When compared to the deniers group, rapists also reported more obsessive thinking about sex, and demonstrated a greater willingness to engage in the treatment process.

Butz, C. & Spaccarelli, S. (1999). Use of physical force as an offense characteristic in subtyping juvenile sexual offenders. Sexual abuse: A journal of research and treatment. V11(3)

David Burton, Ph.D, in a recent study (1990), explored the relationship between childhood sexual behavioral problems and the development of adolescent sexual offending behaviors. The study compared responses to three groups of incarcerated adolescents. The first group of adolescents admitted to sexual offending behaviors prior to the age of 12; the second admitted to offending behaviors after the age of 12; and the third group admitted both prior to and after the age of 12. Burton found that more than 46% of the sexually aggressive adolescents began their deviant behaviors prior to 12 years of age. He also found that victimization and perpetration were significantly correlated for all three groups. Finally, he found evidence to suggest that the study supports a social learning hypothesis for the development of sexual offending behaviors.

Burton, D. L. (2000). Were adolescent sexual offenders children with sexual behavior problems? Sexual abuse: A journal of research and treatment. V12(1)

Destructive Nature. . .

(cont. from pg. 1) individuals, whether they are survivors, offenders, or family members, have an important message and an important voice.

I would like to thank all of the contributors to this special edition for sharing their experiences, thoughts, and feelings

with others. Though the pain caused by the abuse will be readily apparent in these articles, another, equally important theme you will notice is one of forgiveness, hope, and accomplishment.

All names and identifying information have been deleted

from the articles in this issue, unless the authors requested to have the information printed. If you would like to respond to any of the featured articles, please do so in care of Matthew Rosenberg at The Horizon, P.O. Box 782, Troy, Michigan 48099-0782.

Sentry Children

Never a child
Always a sentry
Watching and listening
For things that could hurt me

Awake in the dark
Sweat to the bone
Why did she leave me
Here all alone?

Alone with him,
He's in there drunk
I'll never forget
How the house stunk

Sweating, can't run the fan
For then I won't hear
And how would I know
If he's coming near?

Leave on a light
Or else I can't see
How would I know
If he's coming for me?

We never change
Once out on our own
We only get older
Sentry children, now grown

ANGELMZ@aol.com

The Net Addiction Website

Net Addiction lists high risk behaviors, types of Internet addictions, and even includes a self-test to assist in determining if someone may be addicted to the Internet. This website also lists numerous resources and treatment options.

www.netaddiction.com



Legal News

In January of 2000, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to revive a Pennsylvania law requiring that some sex offenders be designated "sexually violent predators" subject to lifetime registration and public notice of their address. The court rejected appeals in which prosecutors argued that the state can assume people convicted of certain crimes are violent predators unless they prove otherwise. The law was challenged by Donald Francis Williams, convicted in 1997 of indecent assault for acts committed against a 9-year-old boy. A judge ruled the law unconstitutional and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court agreed last June. The state court said defendants are entitled to all the due-process protections of other criminal proceedings, in which a defendant is presumed innocent. (Associated Press, January 10, 2000)

In Trenton, New Jersey, a

federal judge has ordered New Jersey to rework its sexual offender notification law, known as "Megan's Law," and threatened to shut down the notification process if prosecutors can't put tighter controls on who receives the information. Responding to a class action lawsuit filed by the state Public Defender's Office, U.S. District Judge Joseph Irenas said New Jersey had failed to implement consistent standards of how notifications are conducted.

In February of 2000, in Lafayette, Louisiana, A Roman Catholic priest convicted of child molestation left jail after a judge ruled his detention on a later charge violated terms of a plea bargain. Gilbert Gauthe, 59, first pleaded guilty in 1985 to 33 charges involving 11 boys, but he admitted that he had molested dozens of others. In exchange for his guilty plea, prosecutors

had given Gauthe immunity from any other charges involving children molested before 1985. He was released in 1995 after serving 10 years of a 20-year sentence. But Gauthe was arrested two years later, charged with raping a 12-year-old girl in 1982. In February, a judge ruled that Gauthe's 1997 arrest and detention pending trial had violated his earlier plea agreement.

In Geneva, an international accord aimed at combating child prostitution and pornography was finalized by experts from more than 100 countries in January after more than six years of negotiations. The text is meant to serve as a global framework to standardize national laws against the selling children for sexual exploitation, for illegal adoption or for use of their organs. (SOURCE: Associated Press)

Legal Information Institute

The Legal Information Institute offers a diverse collection of U.S. Supreme Court rulings and decisions. Visit the Legal Information Institute on-line at:
www.supct.law.cornell.edu.supct.hermes.search.html

Turn Away

**So often my heart
wants a voice...A chance
to speak and be heard...
But is silenced by fear...
And utters no word...**

**What would they say if
they knew all about me...
Would they hide their
eyes again.. And pretend
to not see...**

**The pain that dwells
here.. The memories in-
side...I can blame no one
for wanting to hide...**

**For so many years...I
have hidden my soul...So
tortured and fright-
ened...Its taken a toll...**

**Having to go on....Day
after day...Sometimes I
simply wish God...
Would take me away...**

**Away from this world..
Where I don't belong...
Each day it gets harder...
Just to hold on....**

**Don't look in my eyes..
You'll see it there...The
secrets and sights...That
I can never share...**

**I have been there be-
fore...And I will go there
today...You are getting
too close...I'll turn away.**

*Poem by AngelMZ@aol.com,
copyrighted material.*

Sex Offender Registration

Do the various registration and notification laws serve the purpose intended or has a true nightmare begun to unfold in regard to sex offender watch dogging?

A 1994 federal law required all states to have a registry of sex offenders. A 1996 supplement requires all states to release information necessary to protect the public from individuals on the list, but states are allowed leeway in deciding whom to publicize and

how.

Presently Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey have challenges about the constitutionality of Megan's Law as it is enacted in their specific states.

Some states like Virginia and Michigan have web sites where people can look up their zip code and find if anyone with such a conviction lives in their neighborhood.

Recently a Lansing State Journal report told of an error

rate that may reach 50 percent on addresses listed of Michigan's sex offender registry. And as of Jan. 15, an additional burden has been placed on this program where offenders are required to check in with police for updates of their addresses, but law enforcement doesn't have the resources to track them down.

A term that has been heard before in discussion of such laws was mentioned in the Lansing editorial (cont. pg. 4)



(cont. from page 4) which stated some experts "call it the product of a law that is more feel-good than do-good."

The result is the potential for homes incorrectly to be exposed as residences of sex offenders. And just as bad, a recovered sex offender who is trying to go on with his life, is in therapy and has a job, may be harassed because information on the registry does not explain his circumstances and how his life is today.

"Notification reflects a tremendous misunderstanding of a majority of sex offenders," Dr. Fred Berlin, director of the National Institute of the Study, Treatment and Prevention of Sexual Trauma and Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD, says. "We really have demonized these people. What people will not understand and the sensationalism of these laws and the media has done is portray every person ever charged with a sex offense as being the same as a few very high profile cases that are terrible and tragic."

"That absolutely is not the case. A high majority of these men people want to gain control of their lives. Therapy is difficult to receive now in prison and many need to continue, or even begin, with treatment on parole. Working with them - rather than pointing fingers and showing fear, anger and revenge - will accomplish much more to prevent sex abuse."

The fact of the matter is that 90 percent of sexual abuse is committed by someone the victim knows, according to a study done in 1994 by D. Finkelhor. That same study points out that 86 percent of sexual abuse goes unreported. It does give a sense of a "feel good" response with all the scrutiny legislated. But, these facts tell us that a blind eye may be cast on reality.

And now we are seeing more abuse of the laws as time goes by. Just a week after that Lansing report came a story in the same paper of a man whose name appeared on the sex offender web site in Michigan - despite the fact a judge had dismissed a sexual assault charge against him. That man is now suing the state.

Unfortunately, the premise of another editorial was to make better time and taxpayers money by making the registry what people expect - by getting accurate addresses.

We differ in how the state could best utilize the funding for the prevention of sex abuse. How about taking all the funds and manpower pumped into these still inconclusive laws and put it into what can be shown as successful in many studies -- treatment for sex offenders the moment they are incarcerated and programs for them upon release.

And how about going one step even further - working with the criminal justice system to incorporate a working relationship with those who will step forward about their inappropriate behavior even before apprehension, develop an equitable sentencing structure that incorporates

counseling throughout the sentence, develop ways to work with the victims and family members of all involved, and initiate strategies for all persons upon the offender's release.

Is that whistling in the wind? Take a look at Vermont. It is possible. Different dynamics in the makeup of the state, you say? Sure. But someone had to start that program. And it is working.

Constant scrutiny and watchdogging is ineffective if there is not a working arrangement with the person involved. In most instances, these people are worthy members of society other than the serious implications of their sexual behavior. With proper control strategies and a support system, they show good results. Yet, little is ever heard of their stories.

"I just wanted to illustrate the harsh realities of being a registered sex offender, at least from something that I experienced today"

(Saturday). "Every year, the Sex Offender Registration unit of the Sheriff's Department, sends out a registered letter, requiring you to state your current mailing address, employer, etc. Well, I mailed mine back, but apparently, the sheriff's department never received, it; so, I had a visit by two uniformed officers at my door. I was informed that they could arrest me, and would debate doing so amongst themselves, for failing to re-register in a timely manner. It did not make any difference whether I thought I complied by mailing back the form provided to me. The burden of proof was on me."

"Obviously, I am not under arrest, but they did their own share of interrogation, including whom my employer is, and what I do for them. I stated that I listed my employer, but I was not aware that I had to answer what I specifically did for them. I said I provide phone support for a mental health agency, and, the officers said that was an inappropriate job. When I mentioned that my Correction's Officer had no problems with it, they told me that they could put me in the back of the patrol car at any moment, placing me under arrest for non-cooperation. Whether they could or would, was not the point. They simply had to have the last word."

"On their way back to the patrol car, several of my neighbors asked the police why they were there. They told my neighbors why: a convicted sex offender lives in this building and we are checking on him. And, of course, they knew which apartment they had just visited."

"I have been living here for over two years, and have never had the police pull this where I currently live. Is it any wonder that I distrust anyone in law enforcement? The fact that I have kept my nose clean for almost ten years, means absolutely nothing to these folks. I realize that they are doing their jobs, but their attitudes, are not acceptable, as far as I am concerned. They state that (cont. pg. 10)



A Mother's Story

When I was asked if I wanted to write about my son and the last 11 months of my life, I contemplated for many days before I could pick up a pen and write it on paper. The effect of his crime, trial, and sentencing has had on our family cannot be measured; however, I have also realized the love and courage which we have as a family. We have looked to each other for strength to get us through and to help us heal, even though this healing is very slow. My son was convicted of Criminal Sexual Conduct in the 3rd degree, and sentenced to 1-15 years in prison. As of the date I wrote this letter, he has been incarcerated for 11 months. As difficult as this is to face, I am a mother who loves her son unconditionally. His crime was consensual and if it had been a forcible rape, my thoughts and actions may be quite different.

I believe my son would not be with us today if he was not sentenced to a term of imprisonment. What I have found through therapy, my son's honesty, and my reading about addictions is that my son's life was unmanageable. His sexual addiction had taken over and pulled him from us—the ones who love him. He was going in the wrong direction.

Since my son was 11 years old, I've felt that there was something bothering him. My husband and I went from being patient to being demanding (and everything in between) in attempts to get our son to open up. We tried everything, including professional counseling, to try and find out what was at the core of his problem. As he grew up he became an honorable, hard-working, caring young man and had a lot to offer society. Unfortunately, his addiction continued to become stronger and stronger.

My son's incarceration has made him finally deal with personal issues in his life that had haunted him for years—mainly his sexual addiction. He has opened up and expresses the shame he has felt, and has related that he felt that there was nowhere to turn to for help. We, meaning his entire system of support, now know the real per-

son, my son, who is free of shame and guilt (which also led to heavy drinking and depression). I believe he had to be separated from his loved ones in order to find the courage to open up and to truly understand the impact of his actions and why they occurred.

My life over the last 11 months, therefore, has been filled with a roller coaster of emotions and many setbacks. Sitting in a courtroom with his father, loved ones, and countless friends, and hearing the judge sentence him literally broke my heart. My son had never been in trouble with the law before, and now we were looking at county jails and prisons—it was almost too much to bare. His father and I had many sleepless nights in which we wandered the house crying, sometimes hysterically, trying to explain to one another how we, as parents, had failed. I would pray, light candles and ask God to give us all the strength to go on. I would also write letters to the facilities where my son was in hopes of getting him into a therapy program that would be suitable for him. Before his incarceration, he finally had found a psychotherapist whom he trusted and I felt he was going in the right direction. Who would be there to help him now? When and where would he finally be moved to? So many questions and I was beginning to lose control of my own life. My family saw the need for me to seek a professional for some much needed help. A wonderful person helped me in a short time to realize that my son's actions were his own. No one made him commit his crime, not his dad, nor I, or anyone else. I slowly began to heal from the enormous burden I was putting on myself and learning to go with my life. So many people needed me—my son, my loving husband, my wonderful daughters, and my precious grandchildren.

My family has been awakened to our prison system, which I believe is filled with injustice. Our monthly phone bills have gone from \$60.00 before he was incarcerated to up to \$250.00 a month while

he is there. We get our strength from talking to each other. My husband and I constantly worry if he's safe and okay. The only way to be reassured is that phone call (which the state charges 300% on). We visit as often as possible, but he is three hours away and it becomes very tiring, stressful, and emotionally draining.

Our son is worried about us, too. He knows the pain, anguish, and financial burden we are under and even tells us not to visit and to limit the calls. We are a very close knit family and we encourage him to call us, for we have always sacrificed parts of ourselves for each other. Thus, we have no choice but to pay the 300% surcharge in order to have peace of mind.

The other mountain we have been climbing is the "not knowing" when he will be released. Everyone we talked to before he was sentenced said that if he stayed out of trouble and did what he was told, he would serve his minimum sentence and come home. However, this has not transpired. All sex offenders must complete a sex offender group therapy program, but it is not supposed to be mandatory in order to be paroled. My son has never been disciplined while incarcerated; has held a job, volunteered for every group possible, and was still denied parole. Why? He did not complete the program prior to his parole board hearing, and I believe this was used against him. We have since appealed their decision and spent more than \$5000.00 just to be heard. They may still deny him, for "The Board" has absolute power. This system of injustice can be overwhelming, yet we continue to be strong, patient, and above all give our son all the love, hope, and support we can. Yet, it is a daily struggle and we have learned that we must take each day, which each obstacle, one at a time.

These last 11 months have been difficult but ironically, very rewarding. I got my son back—or maybe met him again for the first time in years. My son entered the prison system as a scared young man. But I now see he could never (cont. page 6)

A Survivors Story

My name is Stephanie and I am a survivor of sexual assault. For many years I was abused by my father, cousins, friends of the family, and a few insignificant others. I went through 2 years of counseling at fourteen years old, which did nothing for me as I wasn't ready to admit I wasn't somehow responsible. I thought it was my fault because I was "cute" and developed quite early. I took responsibility and went on with my life.

At eighteen I found myself in an abusive relationship and by nineteen I was pregnant with twins. I found the strength to leave some six years and three children later. I knew I could do better. I had always been a strong person and lucky enough to have family and friends behind me. I was rewarded with finding a good man who had no bad intentions and was willing to raise my children.

By this point in my life I had forgiven my abusers and "gotten over" what they had done to me. Or so I thought. On September 27th, 1997 at 2:30 am, I was parking in front of my home after a long night of work. Anxious to climb in my warm bed and snuggle up next to my husband with our beautiful children sleeping soundly upstairs, I began to exit my car. We live in a small town chosen because of the schools and low crime rate, so when I saw someone running towards me with a ski mask on I was dumbfounded. I thought he wanted my car. I was wrong.


I began kicking and screaming hoping someone close by would hear my screams. No one came. Not even the man who I couldn't wait to snuggle

with only moments before. I was scared and angry. I had promised myself no one would ever touch me again without my consent and here I was letting it happen again. How could this be? Why me? What did I do wrong?

After the attack was over, the police called, and the whole neighborhood wondering what was all the fuss, I found myself being that scared little girl all over again. The police botched the evidence, the hospital didn't know what to do with me, my husband blamed me, and friends that knew of my childhood abuse said it would more than likely come up in court that I was molested as a child. I didn't know where to turn. I thought I could get over this too.

After about 2 weeks I knew better and called a rape crisis center. I asked the counselor why I couldn't get over this after I had no problems getting over "the other times". She said it was because I had never really gotten over the "other times". That remark started me on the road to recovery and healing years of pain.


I went through a twelve step program similar to the one used in AA and did a lot of talking. I attended a group for survivors weekly even though I was afraid to leave my home. Some days I didn't want to go but forced myself cause I knew it felt better when I was home again. Three long years later I am still using the twelve steps, still going through court litigations, and am starting a youth interactive theatre to help rid society of the myths associated with sexual abuse and assault. I'm slowly healing and have answered for myself the question "why me?". I just have one question left. When will society realize what a fight we have on our hands?



The Rape Recovery, Help, & Information Page is an informative website that offers an extensive amount of resources, support options, and information. This website also contains book reviews, links to similar websites, newsletter information, and links to On-Line police agencies, and much more.

Visit this site at:

www.geocities.com/hotspings/2402




"When will society realize what a fight we have on our hands?"

A Mother's Story. . .

(Cont. from pg. 5) have survived in society without facing his demons—his sexual addiction. Remarkably, imprisonment has given him the courage to look into his past and begin to heal. He has opened his heart, mind, and soul up and has grown intellectually, spiritually, and above all he has begun a journey towards recovery from his sexual addiction.

I will continue to have all the strength, courage, and love and welcome him home, hopefully soon. If for some reason I must wait a little

longer, he will be okay and I will be okay. God is watching over him, and my son is still working on self-improvement and also trying to help others with addictions as a facilitator. In many ways, he is shielded from having to face things and it will be difficult someday when he is released. However, we too have learned and accepted his addiction and know the role we must play in helping him to avoid the addictive cycle. With God's help, we will do this together.



"Remarkably, imprisonment has given him the courage to look into his past and begin to heal."

A Sex Offender's Story

Being convicted, related to a person convicted of, and a victim of a sex crime is no laughing matter. What a sex offender, their family, and their victim go through is hell. I know because I was convicted, in the state of Michigan, of a sex crime. Criminal Sexual Conduct in the second degree (CSC II) is what they gave my family and me. I was put in jail, I was placed on probation, and I am on the sex offender registry, which is open to the public. I never understood what made me do what I did, which was touch on a little girl. That touching has torn apart a family that was held together by super glue. That touch put a halt on the lives of everyone involved with the victim, and myself. For that touch, I was in jail for 45 days, commuted for good time (from 90 days), placed on five years probation, and basically almost threw my life away. I had to live in shame for 45 days, because other inmates don't take kind to those convicted of sex crimes. It was miserable knowing that one of those

days someone was going to find out why I was there. I was in fear that one of those days could be my last, all for one touch.

My family suffered as well. We had to move because some of our neighbors had found out. The two parents involved, my mother and my aunt, are no longer on speaking terms, because of that touch. They got into physical confrontations because of that touch. The rest of the family was torn between the two, and now there is no family, just relatives, and a common bloodline. It hurts to know that one something could do that to a family; but it happens. As the offender, I cannot do anything to stop it or paste it together again, because doing that would be signing my own death certificate. Also, I would never want my wife or soon-to-be-born son, to know about my family's terrible secret. So I put myself in a lose-lose situation.

I really do not know the victim's viewpoint nowadays, because I have no contact

with her. I can only guess at what she must go through, and that frightens me the most; knowing that I put a halt on her life, for a touch.

A sex offender is a real and living monster whom has no respect for a person, race, or nature, and is only for destruction of innocent lives.

“I never understood what made me do what I did, which was touch on a little girl.”

Safer Society Foundation

The Safer Society Foundation is a tremendous resource for professionals and the public alike. Their publication division, **The Safer Society Press**, has published dozens of workbooks and other material on sexual abuse and sex offender treatment. Their website announces dozens of national conferences and seminars. Moreover, The Safer Society has a nation-wide database of sexual abuse and sex offender therapists.

Safer Society Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 340, Brandon Vermont 05733
PHONE: (802) 247-3132
www.saferociety.org

“My Story

Excuse me if my thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, appear to be negative, for they are only the truth, and the truth is what you want. I am a sex offender in a Michigan prison serving an indeterminate sentence of 1 to 15 years for molesting a girl who was only fifteen. It is clear that I have

no interest in prepubescent children or forcible rape. However, through the years, I have developed many deviant behaviors, therefore, who knows what I may have done if I had a second chance at the time for a second victim.

From the day of my arrest, to the day I was sentenced, I

gave much effort to learn about my behaviors such as, seeking a therapist specializing in sexual deviancy; I knew I needed help. Unfortunately, with punishment over my head, tremendous shame and guilt within, I could not disclose all of my secrets. I was raised in a (cont. page 8)

Fast Fact:

Sexual assault continues to represent the most rapidly growing violent crime in America

Source: Sexual Assault, Obstetrical and Gynecological Survey. 1993;48:640-648.

"My Story. . ."

(cont. from page 7) middle class to upper class natural parent home, had no prior record, and was terrified of going to prison. I must say, I needed to come to prison to pay my debt to society. I needed to be punished to realize not only how illegal my crime was, but for victimizing another human being. But how much punishment, and when does punishment turn a good person bad.

Once in prison, I had two choices to make. First, I can wallow around in self-pity, participate in childish negative behavior, and make prison solely act as punishment, like the majority. Secondly, I could do absolutely everything possible to interrupt and change my cycle of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; find my meaning of life; and, share my deepest secrets with my family (my system of support). I chose the second. In ten months, I participated in and completed over fifteen self-help groups such as, "Denial" and "Victim Empathy", but read over ten books such as, "Out of the Shadows" by Dr. Carnes, "Sex Smart" by Dr. Zoldbrod and, "Easing the Ache" by Guy Keltelhack. I completed a 51 page relapse prevention and continued care plan. Also, I am a facilitator in a self-help group that directly relates to my planned after-care group, once paroled. Throughout this time, I remained positive and became whole again, even after receiving a twelve-month pass over for only having three months of sex offender therapy.

For me, being a sex offender, I have two major fears that directly hinders my progress in recovery. I fear spending fifteen years in prison, since I have disclosed all my deviant behaviors (i.e., telling the truth). Also, I fear being reintegrated into a society that forces sex offenders to live a shameful and secretive life, just as I've done my whole life. How could these fears have an impact on my recovery? I will say hope is needed for my successful recovery and the indeterminate sentencing (more punishment) in Michigan gives me no hope.

Sex offenders in America lose everything. I will no longer take full blame for my addictions or actions. I am trying to be responsible and held accountable for them, but it seems that nothing I do was good enough for society, psychologists, and my hypocritical politicians. I mean, I was born pure. Did I not learn my behaviors from my family--from society? I am not talking solely about pornography, movies, and commercials, for I believe those are fine. But why wasn't I allowed to express my feelings? Why was I not taught about sex or how meaningful it is? Why must sex be so secretive when it is essential for life? Yes, I committed the crime. But until there is an acceptance of responsibility from society and leaders, to provide this sexual wholeness for our daughters, sons, and those confined, the human sexual being will always be a risk to the world! Not just me! CSC is a horrible crime that already affects everyone and they do not

even know it. My heart-aches for the world knowing our leaders are solely using punishment as a deterrent of sexual abuse. We should implement thought education, feeling education, and real sex education.

I am grateful to be in sex offender therapy. I get excited for group and I enjoy telling my secrets (feel so relieved). But is disclosure all that sex offender therapy is about? I want feedback. I want to be held accountable for my past or current thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. I tell my psychologist that I feel cheated in feedback and he can only reply by saying "others find it difficult to relate to your deviances". Now what? Do I try it on my own like I have tried my whole life? Granted, I understand that not everyone has the sexuality struggle as I had, and I don't blame anyone for a lack of feedback. But alcoholics don't usually go to Narcotics Anonymous, they go to Alcoholics Anonymous. So why am I surrounded by power rapists and child molesters? Yes, like I said earlier, who knows what I may have done next if I had a second chance, but I didn't!

People don't get treated for cancer until they are diagnosed with cancer. So why aren't I in a sex offender specific group in conjunction with a psycho-educational treatment with guys that have the same struggles and are as open as I, who don't ridicule me in the yard, yet alone the bathroom (forced environment)? I want to be in a group with guys that aren't afraid to (cont. page 9)

"I fear spending fifteen years in prison, since I have disclosed all my deviant behaviors (i.e. telling the truth").

California Coalition on Sexual Offending

The California Coalition on Sexual Offending is an organization that was founded in 1986 in response to a growing need throughout the state of California to provide a formally structured resource for professionals working with persons involved in the commission of sexual crimes.

For membership information, contact Ken Prescott at 213-944-6322.

www.ccoso.org
E-mail:
ccoso@hotmail.com



“My Story. . .”

(cont. from page 8) disclose all their secrets, so that hope, optimism, and self-wholeness can be restored into our lives. Why must my psychologist be biased about sexuality? I respect him, but don't want to be him. Why must we only talk about our negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and never about anything good? I understand that most people always want to take credit for the good and never the bad; however, if I only talk about the bad, I'll never remove the shame and guilt within and will begin to carry secrets again.

Throughout my entire childhood into the early adulthood, I felt I was never allowed to feel. My thoughts and feelings were always wrong. My voice was meaningless and, I didn't know what I was talking about. I was spoiled. To-

day, I have a lot of distorted thoughts and beliefs and I need the time to talk about them. I need hours per week, not just ten minutes per group with no feedback. I have a new addiction—therapy. I long for the day to have a meaningful relationship that I know that I will need therapy for life. But until I can be reintegrated into society, why must I have so much idle time in prison and recovery? I can read, read, and read, but there is nothing like therapy with a group that is allowed to be on the group's topic of choice, not the scheduled psychologists' or therapists'. Also, S. A.A. in prison is not therapy. I feel that I've educated myself a lot. I am no longer afraid to speak out when I'm forced to be in a group that is considered accelerated (however it appears slow for

me even though that may be selfish). I've been selfish my whole life, I cannot be so in therapy. I am self-made. What I put into group, I'll get out. Unfortunately, others seem to put little effort into group and I'm paying the price. I put so much into my therapy, yet I feel lost in the system. I want help, but I feel I'm not getting enough. I am becoming angry, and I am beginning to have a bitter taste about America's justice system. I love America, but why isn't America helping me? If I am such a bad person and such a menace to society, then why aren't I receiving excessive therapy? I know there is no cure, but with therapy and you, I can control my addictions, not let my addictions control me.

Fast Fact:

Over 700,000 women are sexually assaulted each year in the United States.

Source: National Crime Center and Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center

Kathy's Essential Information on Abuse, Assault, Rape & Domestic Violence

This website includes information on physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, with a significant focus on domestic violence. There is a tremendous amount of resources and information on this website.

www.mcs.net/~kathyw/abuse.html

Far Reaching Effects of Abuse

My name is **Elden Phillip Owens**, a male Victim/Survivor whose story of abuse spans sixteen plus years. My abusers were my parents, a neighbor and many others ... including myself. The topic that I would like to address here is how I overcame the effects of abuse experienced throughout my childhood, adolescent and teen years.

Like so many others, I struggle with trust, self-image, self-worth and self-confidence to name a few of the confusing day-to-day issues. For too many years I was burdened with the belief that I was the cause of the abuse, no good, lazy, crazy, stupid, and the break-up of our family. In addition

to repetitive rapes and other abuses as a child and adolescent, I have been tied to a tree like an animal, publicly humiliated by my father and abandoned by both biological parents. All the while my mind would tell me “This is love and affection”.

At the age of thirty-one I was obliged to admit to alcoholism. This also allowed for irresponsible behaviors towards my surroundings and myself. During my years of active alcoholism, I purposefully isolated myself from family for fear of committing the same abuse that had been inflicted on me. Complicating this time was an internal struggle with the nature of my sexual ori-

entation, and the role that this may have played in what had happened. After many years of searching myself inwardly, I cannot help but conclude that being a gay male had no bearing whatsoever on the abuse or the abusers. I started overcoming some of the effects by no longer denying that all of these actions really were “Abuse”; acknowledging the reality that neither my parents nor the neighbor were Loving me. They were instead abusing me for their own selfish needs.

By the time I was nine, my perception of Love and attention were horribly twisted, only I didn't know. When people tried to love me in a (cont. page 10)



“Like so many others, I struggle with trust, self-image, self-worth and self-confidence. . .”



Far Reaching Effects. . .

(cont. from page 9) healthy way, I thought there was something wrong with me for this was not love the way I had come to know it. Now I know that I am loved just for being me. How did I learn to love myself? By looking inwardly. Granted, I had to look through a lot of trash that others and I had piled inside, yet I got through. Today I have someone in my life that tells me on a daily basis just how beautiful I am to them and the rest of the world. One of the lessons I have learned over the years is that the inside is what counts, or at least it should. It is the Heart and Soul of a person that you find yourself falling in Love with that matters. By accepting compliments, even if at the time I don't believe them, I grow a little stronger. You see, if I hear it enough, over time I will come to believe, just as I believed the Lies before.

Trust is one of the core issues; trying to trust my thoughts, my feelings, and/or my emotions; often times not trusting how I should react to social situations, work issues or being in a committed relationship. I am now learning to trust in a healthy way. It takes hard work and a deep desire to overcome past hurts and betrayals. The biggest thing that works for my partner and me is open and sometimes painfully honest communication.

I struggle with my self-image and self-worth. I have felt or thought that I was less than hu-

man, a piece of meat that others could use and then discard as they would a thing that has been in the refrigerator too long. Part of this came about after my perceptions changed and I began seeing myself as Old. I battled with my weight. Even now I'll occasionally think that if I stay thin then I will stay young looking and hopefully others will pay attention and possibly Love me.

As I write this article, I struggle with yet another issue. The one that tells me that I am not good enough to write this article, when in truth I know I am the only one who can. The lack of self-confidence says I am not smart enough or that others will laugh at what I write or can write more clinically on the subject at hand. Well, I doubt others will laugh ... for this is no laughing matter. As far as others writing more clinically, that much is true. It is also true that I too have enough knowledge to write ... first hand knowledge. By way of proving this to myself, you are now reading this article.

The last issue I would like to talk about is flashbacks or what I call waking dreams. Even though I have been in therapy for about three years now and out of abusive situations for about the same time, I still have them. One of ways I have found that helps is to talk with my partner about them. Sometimes I am able to do this when they happen. At other times I have to stop doing what it

is that triggers the flashback. It can be something as simple as my partner holding me, to us being intimate with one another, to a sound or a smell. I must admit that in the beginning of our relationship there were a lot of triggers because there was and still is a level of trust that I had not experienced before. This allowed for some things to come to the surface and be dealt with that had not done so previously. Today, I am happy to report that the flashbacks are not as frightening as before because I have learned I can share them and thereby sharing the emotional upheaval and distress that accompanies them. This is one way of taking back what was taken from me: my sense of being safe and sane.

This is but a small sample of the on-going problems that I face squarely with each new day. With each sunrise there are new challenges ... and old enemies in new garb. Each morning also brings hope. It is my hope that through the continued, concerted work of those who care, this type of abuse will forever vanish.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or suggestions for opportunities to help at namaste5@bellsouth.net. I am currently moving into more public speaking roles and am willing to engage with many different groups: Victims, Survivors, professionals ... and offenders.

Peace to all of you.

Rohypnol

Rohypnol (Flunitrazepam) is a benzodiazepine, or sedative, with approximately ten-times the potency of diazepam (Valium). Because many people, notably men, have given it to unsuspecting women, it has been termed the "date-rape" drug. In March 1995, this drug became the first benzodiazepine to be moved to Schedule III by the World Health Organization, requiring more thorough record keeping on its distribution. Anecdotal reports indicate Rohypnol use is growing among high school students in the South, where it is seen as a cheap high - \$.50 to \$3.00 a pill. Because it is sold in a bubble pack, it can be mistaken for a legal (safe) substance. Continued use can result in addiction. Adverse effects can include loss of memory, impaired judgment, dizziness, and prolonged periods of blackout. Although a sedative, Rohypnol can induce aggressive behavior. Evidence also shows that polysubstance abusers also use Rohypnol as a secondary drug.

Sex Offender Registration. . .

(cont. from pg. 4) their intention is never to harass, but that is exactly what this was, in my opinion. "I just keep moving forward and trying to do the best I can. I just wanted to share this again, but it is a constant reminder that certain mistakes and failures, are open to public scrutiny

with or without notice. I did my best to keep my composure and to be as professional with these officers during their visits, but I strongly dislike and disapprove of them telling my neighbors. That is where I draw the line."

Now tell me, is that action something that helps prevent

sex abuse in a restorative way? Or was that a millennium example of exhibiting the rule of a scarlet letter?

**Wayne Bowers, Director
Sex Abuse Treatment Alliance**

Literature and Resources

“Tough Guise”, a 55 minute video that effectively addresses gender and power roles that men and boys learn from their environment while growing up, how they become violent and how they can become better men. There are two versions, one for adults and one for teens. Both are available from Media Education Foundation, 26 Center Street, Northampton, MA 01060, phone 800-897-0089 or 413-584-8500.

“Sexual Abuse and Eating Disorders” by Mark Schwartz and Leigh Cohn (Brunner/Mazel, 1996), is

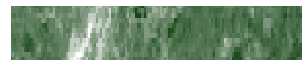
one of the first books to fully explore the complex relationship between sexual abuse and eating disorders. The book encompasses the writings of 26 specialists who discuss numerous topics and questions.

“Female Sexual Abuse of Children” by Michelle Elliot (Guilford Press, 1994), guides the reader through denial, stereotypes, and conventional misinformation to an examination of the realities of female sexual abuse.

Hare Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R), as-

sesses psychopathic (antisocial) personality disorders with a structured interview and expert rating form. This instrument has been researched for over 10 years and has rapidly become a standard in forensic testing. For ordering information, call 1-800-456-3003.

“Violence in Children and Adolescents” by Ved Varma (Kingsley, 1997), brings new insight into the study of violence and young people, combining the expertise of practitioners and academics. It also examines the etiology of violence.



If you have any comments on the articles or other material featured in the Horizon, please write to the author, care of The Horizon Newsletter. Also, please write with any topical themes you would like to see addressed in upcoming editions of The Horizon.

*The Horizon
P.O. Box 782
Troy, Michigan 48099-0782*

Subscription Form

A one year subscription to The Horizon Newsletter is currently running at the promotional rate of \$15.00 per year. \$1.00 from every subscription will go directly to a victims of sexual abuse charity. The subscription will include four issues of The Horizon, and may entitle professionals to be listed on the Sexual Abuse Treatment, Research, Resource, and Referral Website referral page:

www.angelfire.com/mi/collateral/index.html

Name _____ E-Mail _____

Street _____ City _____

State _____ Zip/Country _____

Phone _____

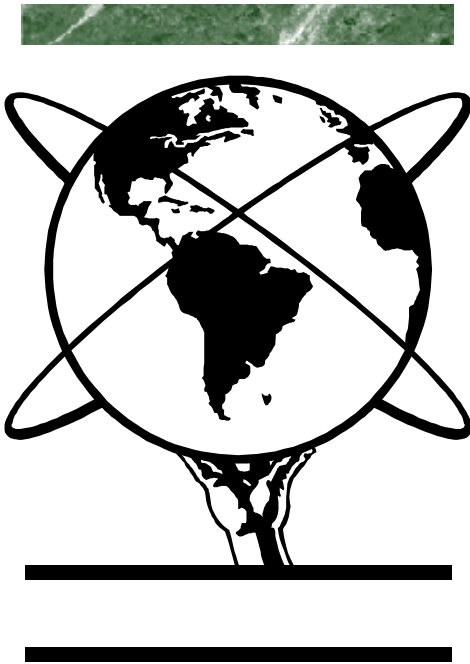
Send this, along with your check or money order to Mr. Rosenberg at The Horizon:

**P.O. Box 782
Troy, Michigan 48099-0782
810-447-2282**

Fast Fact:

At least 20% of adult women, 15% of college women and 12% of adolescent women have experienced some form of sexual abuse or assault during their lifetimes

Source: Koss M.P. 1988. Hidden rape: sexual aggression and victimization in a national sample of students in higher education. In: Burgess A.W., ed Rape and Sexual Assault. New York, NY: Garland Publishing: 2:3-25.



Horizon Newsletter
P.O. Box 782
Troy, Michigan 48099-0782

Conferences, Trainings, & Seminars

Sexual Offenders: Profiles, Victimology, Interviewing, & Treatment, March 24 & 27, 2000, in Detroit Michigan. Featured speaker is Matthew Rosenberg, MSW, CSW. Price for both days is \$155.00 (or \$90.00 for one day). Includes continental breakfast, lunch, course outline, assessment & treatment tools, and a reduced rate for Mr. Rosenberg's book, "Understanding, Assessing, and Treating the Sexual Offender". Call Tanya Brown at 313-831-5535 for more information and to register.

5th International Conference on Family Violence, September 23-27th in San Diego, CA. Contact Joe Marciano at 858-623-2777 or email at jmarciano@mail.csp.edu

8th National Colloquium on Child Abuse, July 10-15th, 2000, at the Chi-

cago Hilton and Towers (Ill.). For more information, call 312-554-0166 or visit the Internet site at: www.apsac.org

Breaking the Cycle of Abuse, sponsored by Northwest Alabama Mental Health, in Hamilton Alabama (April 2000). Contact Woodfin Gregg for more information at 205-921-2186.

Women Healing: Redefining Strength and Courage, sponsored by the Hazelden Foundation and the Betty Ford Center, April 14 & 15, 2000. The conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza in North Dallas, Texas. The Women Healing conferences are a two-day series for women celebrating recovery and the professionals who serve them. For more information, contact Patricia Broat at 1-800-257-7800 ext. 4429 or by email at pbroat@hazelden.org

Turning Sexual Tragedy into

Triumph, National Council on Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity 9th Annual Conference. The conference will be held May 4-6, 2000, at the Sheraton Colony Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. The conference will cover current information regarding sexual addiction/compulsivity, sexual offending, and sexual trauma in the areas of diagnosis, intervention strategies, treatment modalities, and research. Contact their website for registration information at www.ncsac.org, or email them at ncsac@mindspring.com

1st National Conference on Violence, Trauma, and Abuse, in Las Vegas, Nevada, March 30 to April 1st. For more information about the conference, please contact Deborah Jerome at 877-633-2237 or the FACES program at 1450 114th Avenue SE, Suite 100, Bellevue, WA 98004 or call 425-646-9148