

Université de Montréal

Processus de prédation des agresseurs sexuels sériels : Une approche du choix rationnel

Par

Eric Beauregard

École de criminologie

Faculté des arts et des sciences

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Université de Montréal  
Faculté des études supérieures

Cette thèse intitulée :

Processus de prédation des agresseurs sexuels sériels : Une approche du choix rationnel

Présentée par :

Eric Beauregard

a été évaluée par un jury composé des personnes suivantes :

Maurice Cusson (président-rapporteur)

Jean Proulx (directeur de recherche)

Kim Rossmo (co-directeur de recherche)

Denis Lafortune (membre du jury)

Gabrielle Salfati (examineur externe)

(représentant du doyen de la FES)

## Résumé

Les théories existantes quant à l'agression sexuelle ont permis d'identifier différents facteurs qui pouvaient être reliés à ce type de crime. Ainsi, des facteurs biologiques, développementaux, psychologiques, sociologiques, culturels et situationnels ont été avancés afin d'expliquer l'agression sexuelle. Cependant, ces macrothéories de l'agression sexuelle font peu mention d'une donnée importante dans l'étude d'un type de crime spécifique : le processus de passage à l'acte. Afin de remédier à cette situation, des microthéories du processus de passage à l'acte ont été élaborées, souvent sous forme de typologies ou de modèles séquentiels. Cependant, ces microthéories de l'agression sexuelle présentent de nombreuses limites : (1) elles négligent de s'attarder à l'analyse de l'événement criminel en entier, c'est-à-dire en combinant l'analyse de l'agresseur, de la victime et du contexte; (2) elles présupposent que le processus de passage à l'acte est stable et qu'il ne fluctue pas; (3) elles présupposent que les caractéristiques personnelles de l'individu (personnalité, cognitions, préférences sexuelles) représentent les facteurs principaux influençant le processus de passage à l'acte; (4) elles prennent pour acquis la spécialisation des délinquants sexuels, négligeant les études criminologiques qui démontrent le caractère polymorphe de la carrière criminelle des délinquants; (5) elles ne sont pas suffisamment détaillées, négligeant ainsi la complexité de chacune des phases du processus de passage à l'acte; (6) elles ont négligé l'inclusion de facteurs géographiques (environnementaux) dans leurs modèles; et (7) elles n'ont pas exploré les processus décisionnels sous-jacents aux processus de passage à l'acte.

Afin de mieux saisir la nature et la dynamique du processus de passage à l'acte de l'agression sexuelle, cette étude s'est efforcée d'examiner la question à partir d'une

approche théorique différente mais également à partir d'analyses distinctes mais complémentaires, dans un échantillon de 72 agresseurs sexuels sériels ayant commis un total de 361 agressions sexuelles. Les sujets étaient incarcérés dans un pénitencier du Service Correctionnel du Canada.

Tout d'abord, le processus décisionnel qui sous-tend le processus de prédation a été exploré de façon qualitative auprès des agresseurs sexuels sériels de notre échantillon. Nos résultats démontrent que ces agresseurs, en plus de changer de stratégies pour pressentir, emmener la victime au lieu du délit et commettre le crime, prennent leurs décisions à ce sujet selon différents facteurs tels que le type de victime et ses réactions, des facteurs situationnels ainsi que l'environnement. Le modèle dégagé d'après une approche du choix rationnel démontre qu'il est tout à fait compatible avec les modèles de sélection de victimes de la criminologie environnementale. Les agresseurs sexuels sériels évaluent, parfois de façon très limitée, les coûts et les bénéfices associés à une façon de s'y prendre et vont s'adapter aux différents facteurs situationnels et environnementaux lors du passage à l'acte.

Deuxièmement, on a trouvé des scripts de prédation grâce aux méthodes quantitatives complémentaires, soit les méthodes d'analyse factorielle des correspondances et de classification hiérarchique. Encore une fois, les résultats mettent en lumière des façons différentes d'agir chez des agresseurs sexuels sériels. De fait, les scripts établis permettent de mieux comprendre l'interaction entre les composantes géographiques (type de lieu et familiarité des lieux associés au crime) et comportementales (stratégies d'approche, pour emmener la victime au lieu du délit et pour commettre le délit, méthode de recherche de victime, moyen d'attaque) associées au

processus de prédation. C'est cette interaction qui donne justement lieu à des façons différentes d'agir chez un même agresseur selon les contraintes de la situation, comme le suggère le courant de la criminologie environnementale.

Ainsi, nos résultats permettent d'appuyer le fait que les délinquants sexuels, tout comme les autres criminels, sont capables d'adaptation et que leur façon d'agir est changeante selon différents facteurs situationnels et environnementaux. Une approche typologique, où un agresseur est associé à un type précis de processus de passage à l'acte, nie cette variation et cette plasticité du processus de passage à l'acte chez les criminels. C'est d'ailleurs pour ces raisons que l'approche du choix rationnel et la notion de script s'avèrent à notre avis plus souples pour l'étude du processus de passage à l'acte. Chaque script comporte différentes phases, lesquelles comportent des facteurs de différentes natures, à savoir comportementaux et géographiques. Cette façon de considérer le processus de passage à l'acte, plus particulièrement le processus de prédation, offre une plus grande liberté et permet d'apprécier les facteurs proximaux qui peuvent influencer sur le cours de l'agression sexuelle.

## Summary

Theories on sexual aggression have identified different causal factors related to this type of crime. Thus, biological, developmental, psychological, sociocultural, and situational factors have been put forward in order to explain sexual aggression. These macrotheories, however, have neglected one important component in the study of a specific type of crime : the offending process. In order to overcome this situation, microtheories of the offending process have been developed. These microtheories, however, present several limitations : (1) they neglect to take into account the entire criminal event, that is analyzing the offender, the victim, and the context; (2) they assume that the offending process is stable and that it will not fluctuate; (3) they assume that personal characteristics of offenders (e.g., personality, cognition, sexual preferences) are the main factors influencing the offending process; (4) they assume the specialization of sex offenders, neglecting results from criminological studies showing that criminal careers of offenders are polymorphous; (5) they are not detailed enough, neglecting the complexity of each phase of the offending process; (6) they have neglected to include geographic factors in their models; and (7) they have not explore the decision-making underlying the offending process.

In order to better understand the nature and the dynamic of the offending process of sexual aggression, this study explore the question from a different theoretical perspective and also from different analytical frameworks, in a sample of 72 serial sex offenders who have committed a total of 361 sexual assaults. These offenders were all incarcerated in a penitentiary of the Correctional Service of Canada.



First, decision-making underlying the offending process has been explored using qualitative analysis. Results show that these offenders change strategies to encounter, bring the victim to crime sites and to commit the crime but also take their decisions according to different factors such as the victim type and her reaction, situational factors and the environment. The model identified from a rational choice perspective show good compatibility with target selection models of environmental criminology.

Second, scripts of hunting process have been identified from complementarily quantitative methods, namely multiple correspondence analysis and hierarchical cluster analysis. Again, our results show different pathways of the offending process in serial sex offenders. Further, the scripts identified help us to better understand and analyze the interaction between geographic (type of location, familiarity of location) and behavioral components (strategies to approach, to bring to crime site, to commit the crime, victim search methods, attack methods) related to the hunting process. This is this interaction that gives rise to different offending pathways in a single offender according to situational constraints, as suggested in environmental criminology.

Therefore, our results support the fact that sex offenders as well as any other criminals can adapt and may change their offending process according to situational and environmental factors. The typological approach neglects this variation in the offending process. That is why the rational choice approach and its script concept seem better suited for the analysis of the offending process. Each script presents different phases, which include behavioral and geographic components. The use of the script concept offer greater liberty in the study of the hunting process and allow to consider proximal factors influencing on sexual assault.

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À Romy, la plus belle des princesses...

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Premier chapitre

Introduction

Les travaux portant sur l'agression sexuelle et les agresseurs sont nombreux. Plusieurs théories ont été conçues au cours des années afin de déterminer les différents facteurs associés à ce type de crime et ainsi mieux comprendre les causes favorisant le passage à l'acte sexuel chez certains individus. Les chercheurs ont tout d'abord élaboré des modèles macrothéoriques afin de découvrir et d'apprécier les différents facteurs associés à la commission d'une agression sexuelle. Cependant, ces travaux ne parviennent pas à saisir le processus menant au passage à l'acte chez les agresseurs sexuels. Des modèles microthéoriques ont donc été développés afin de palier cette lacune et de mieux comprendre ces processus de passage à l'acte et leur diversité. Ces études ont toutefois mis l'accent sur les caractéristiques personnelles des agresseurs sexuels, négligeant certains facteurs comme les facteurs situationnels et environnementaux.

Nous présenterons donc les différents modèles macrothéoriques et microthéoriques de l'agression sexuelle et leurs limites respectives. Ensuite, nous discuterons de différents facteurs situationnels qui influent sur le processus de passage à l'acte chez les délinquants sexuels. L'approche de la géocriminologie, ou criminologie environnementale, qui tient compte de la situation, sera abordée en rapport avec l'agression sexuelle afin d'introduire la notion de processus de prédation. Enfin, la problématique et les buts de la thèse seront présentés.

## MACROTHÉORIES DE L'AGRESSION SEXUELLE

### *Théorie féministe de l'agression sexuelle*

La théorie féministe de l'agression sexuelle définit le viol comme un acte pseudo-sexuel principalement motivé par le désir de domination des hommes sur les femmes (Brownmiller, 1975). Cette domination aurait pour conséquence d'exclure les femmes

des décisions politiques qui les touchent (par exemple la question de l'agression sexuelle et de ses contrôles). Elles ne sont donc pas considérées comme des participantes égales aux hommes dans la vie sociale et privée. Les femmes sont décrites et perçues comme étant une propriété pour lesquelles les hommes entrent en compétition. La gratification sexuelle n'est pas vue comme la motivation principale de l'agression sexuelle; l'usage de la sexualité coercitive servirait plutôt à établir et à maintenir la domination des hommes envers les femmes.

### *Théorie interactionniste de l'agression sexuelle*

Contrairement à la perspective féministe, Tedeschi et Felson (1994) considèrent que le but premier de tout acte sexuel coercitif est la gratification sexuelle. Les délinquants sexuels ont une forte motivation sexuelle et choisissent le plus souvent comme victimes des jeunes femmes. Lorsque la victime est connue, ils utilisent les moyens coercitifs en derniers recours, seulement quand d'autres types de stratégie ont échoué. D'autres hommes poursuivent leurs avances sexuelles malgré la résistance de la victime, croyant que cette dernière est ambivalente ou qu'il s'agit d'une fausse résistance (*token resistance*).

Tedeschi et Felson expliquent que l'agression sexuelle est due, en partie, au fait que les femmes sont sexuellement plus sélectives sexuellement que les hommes et que cela entraîne un conflit sur le plan des comportements sexuels. Ce conflit conduirait les hommes à utiliser différentes méthodes afin d'amener les femmes à avoir des relations sexuelles, l'agression sexuelle étant une de ces méthodes. Les hommes ont plus souvent recours aux moyens coercitifs lorsque les « coûts » associés à l'acte sont faibles (par exemple, lorsque la probabilité d'être arrêté est faible), lorsqu'ils considèrent que la

victime a mauvaise réputation ou lorsqu'ils ne possèdent pas les valeurs morales inhibant ce type de comportement. En fait, l'agression sexuelle serait un comportement instrumental visant une fin (Tedeschi et Felson, 1994).

### *Théorie de l'apprentissage social appliquée à l'agression sexuelle*

Se basant principalement sur la théorie de l'apprentissage social, Malamuth et ses collègues (Malamuth, 1986; Malamuth, Heavey et Linz, 1993; Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss et Tanaka, 1991) ont établi deux modèles permettant d'expliquer l'agression sexuelle. Dans le premier, les auteurs affirment que l'agression sexuelle est le résultat d'une combinaison d'interactions entre des facteurs de motivation, de désinhibition et des facteurs d'opportunités, tous ces facteurs devant atteindre un niveau assez élevé (Malamuth, Heavey et Linz, 1993). Ces trois dimensions ont été opérationnalisées par Malamuth à l'aide de six composantes, soit une excitation sexuelle par rapport au viol, un désir de domination, de l'hostilité envers les femmes, des attitudes facilitant l'agression sexuelle d'une femme, des caractéristiques de la personnalité antisociale/psychotique et peu d'expérience sur le plan sexuel. Les résultats obtenus par Malamuth (1986) ont permis de constater que chacun des prédicteurs du modèle était relié à l'agression sexuelle.

Dans le second modèle élaboré par Malamuth et collab. (1991), les auteurs ont ajouté les facteurs développementaux qui pourraient mener à l'agression sexuelle. Ainsi, un environnement familial hostile, dans lequel la violence et l'abus parentaux sont présents, serait un facteur distal dans l'agression sexuelle (Malamuth et collab., 1993). De plus, les enfants provenant d'un environnement familial hostile auraient tendance à fréquenter des pairs délinquants et à s'adonner à différents actes antisociaux.

Les auteurs ont établi deux trajectoires conduisant à l'agression sexuelle. La première, *the hostile masculinity path*, comporte l'excitation sexuelle déviante, un désir de domination, de l'hostilité envers les femmes et des attitudes facilitant l'agression sexuelle d'une femme. Dans la seconde trajectoire, *the sexual promiscuity path*, l'adoption précoce de rôles d'adulte peut entraîner des comportements de promiscuité sexuelle. Ainsi, les garçons qui mettent beaucoup l'accent sur la sexualité comme source de valorisation auprès des pairs ou afin d'établir leur estime de soi vont utiliser une variété de stratégies afin d'avoir des relations sexuelles avec des femmes, incluant la coercition.

#### *Théorie évolutionniste de l'agression sexuelle*

Puisque la grande majorité des scientifiques acceptent que le comportement humain soit le résultat de l'évolution, certains chercheurs ont tenté d'appliquer cette théorie aux comportements criminels, plus particulièrement à l'agression sexuelle (Palmer et Thornhill, 2000; Ellis, 1989; Ellis, 1991; Thornhill et Thornhill, 1983; Shields et Shields, 1983; Lalumière et Quinsey, 1999; Palmer, DiBari et Wright, 1999; Quinsey et Lalumière, 1995; Thornhill et Palmer, 2000). Même si ces modèles diffèrent sur certains points, ils partagent tout de même des arguments communs. Mais tout d'abord, il est important de clarifier certains malentendus au sujet de la théorie de l'évolution appliquée à l'agression sexuelle.

Le premier malentendu concerne l'aspect naturel de l'agression sexuelle (*naturalistic fallacy*) (Palmer et Thornhill, 2000). Certains chercheurs ont rejeté la théorie évolutionniste de l'agression sexuelle, car ils considèrent qu'il est inacceptable d'affirmer que l'agression sexuelle était naturelle (dans le sens où elle survient chez des espèces



animales) ou que l'agression sexuelle était favorisée par la sélection naturelle. Un autre malentendu concerne le déterminisme génétique. À tort, certains chercheurs croient que la théorie de l'évolution postule que les comportements sont génétiquement déterminés (les gènes seuls étant responsables des comportements) et que seule une altération des gènes pourrait permettre une modification des comportements. Enfin, le troisième malentendu qu'ont relevé Palmer et Thornhill (2000) concerne la différence entre les causes directes et les causes ultimes (*proximate versus ultimate causation*). Ainsi, afin de discréditer cette théorie, les opposants mentionnent que les agresseurs sexuels de femmes adultes sont rarement, sinon jamais, animés du désir conscient de reproduction, ce désir étant une des causes ultimes de l'agression sexuelle.

Certaines explications s'imposent afin de bien comprendre l'intérêt d'une telle théorie dans l'agression sexuelle. Une explication centrale des tenants de la perspective évolutionniste est que l'agression sexuelle peut être considérée comme une adaptation favorisée par la sélection naturelle; elle permettrait à l'homme d'accroître ses chances de reproduction en augmentant son nombre de partenaires (*mates*). Cette stratégie n'est pas pertinente chez la femme. La femme doit en effet consacrer une grande part de temps et d'énergie à la gestation ainsi qu'aux soins des nouveau-nés. Les femmes auraient donc mis au point une stratégie visant à sélectionner des partenaires possédant les ressources nécessaires pour prendre soin de la nouvelle famille ainsi qu'une certaine stabilité après la fécondation de la femme. Les hommes, quant à eux, voient leur rôle limité à la transmission de leurs gènes par la copulation. Afin d'assurer sa descendance, l'homme a avantage à copuler avec un très grand nombre de femmes (de manière consensuelle ou non) plutôt que de s'occuper de quelques nouveau-nés.

Une seconde explication évolutionniste propose que l'agression sexuelle ne serait qu'un sous-produit (*by-product*) d'autres adaptations psychologiques. Ces adaptations sur le plan sexuel visent à promouvoir, chez l'homme, une plus grande capacité à acquérir des partenaires sexuelles afin de pouvoir se reproduire. Une plus grande excitation sexuelle visuelle chez les hommes, une plus grande motivation sexuelle, une moins grande habileté à s'abstenir de relations sexuelles, un plus grand désir pour une variété de partenaires sexuelles et un plus grand désir de s'engager dans des activités sexuelles impersonnelles sont des exemples de ces adaptations (Palmer et Thornhill, 2000). Toutefois, les femmes ont développé une forme d'adaptation en rapport avec la forte motivation sexuelle des hommes : la sélectivité. Bien que la plupart des hommes soient excités sexuellement (un peu du moins) par la plupart des femmes, la femme typique n'est pas attirée sexuellement par la plupart des hommes. L'agression sexuelle ne serait qu'un effet secondaire des adaptations sexuelles différentes chez l'homme et la femme et non pas une adaptation en soi (Thornhill et Palmer, 2000). À titre d'exemple, Thornhill et Palmer mentionnent que la masturbation, beaucoup plus fréquente chez l'homme que chez la femme, est un moyen d'atteindre une gratification sexuelle sans être choisi par une partenaire. Il s'agirait ainsi d'un effet secondaire et non pas d'une adaptation.

Pour Lalumière et Quinsey (1999), une théorie évolutionniste de l'agression sexuelle doit inclure des connaissances portant sur les différences individuelles quant à la propension aux comportements d'agression sexuelle. Selon ces auteurs, ces différences seraient principalement fonction du niveau de préférences sexuelles déviantes, des efforts pour s'accoupler (*mating effort*) et de l'antisocialité.

Lalumière et Quinsey (1999; Quinsey et Lalumière, 1995) rapportent que les hommes condamnés pour agression sexuelle montrent une plus grande excitation sexuelle (évaluée par la phallométrie) lors de la présentation de scénarios décrivant des relations sexuelles non consentantes et coercitives, comparativement aux hommes qui n'ont jamais été condamnés pour de tels crimes. Ces anomalies dans les préférences sexuelles (par exemple la pédophilie) pourraient résulter d'une atteinte neurologique survenue lors de la différenciation sexuelle du cerveau pendant le développement intra-utérin.

Concernant les efforts pour l'accouplement, il existe des différences considérables entre les hommes et les femmes. Comme il a été mentionné plus haut, les hommes ont un plus grand intérêt pour la variété des partenaires sexuels, des relations sexuelles impersonnelles et l'attrance physique pour le sexe opposé, alors que les femmes recherchent un partenaire possédant les ressources nécessaires pour prendre soin de la famille après la naissance de l'enfant. Cette position opposée quant aux efforts d'accouplement peut se manifester par une agression sexuelle, en particulier si (1) les coûts associés à l'usage de la coercition sont faibles, (2) si la femme est perçue comme une adversaire politique ou idéologique, (3) si l'homme ne parvient pas à calculer les coûts associés à l'usage de la coercition (par exemple lorsqu'il est intoxiqué par l'alcool) et (4) si l'homme présente des tendances antisociales (Lalumière et Quinsey, 1999).

Enfin, l'antisociabilité est définie par Lalumière et Quinsey comme étant un construit décrivant des comportements, des attitudes, des croyances et des composantes de personnalité qui sont généralement coercitives envers autrui. La psychopathie serait la manifestation extrême de l'antisociabilité. Une hypothèse suggérée par les auteurs avance que la psychopathie représenterait une stratégie d'adaptation favorisant l'accouplement,

une approche agressive afin d'atteindre une certaine domination sociale et l'usage fréquent de tactiques déloyales dans les échanges sociaux (Lalumière et Quinsey, 1999). Ainsi, les hommes présentant un indice élevé de psychopathie ou d'antisociabilité pourraient répondre plus facilement aux stimulations sexuelles et être moins inhibés face au non-consentement d'une femme.

### *Théories multifactorielles*

Hall et Hirschman (1991) ont conçu un modèle quadripartite de l'agression sexuelle des femmes adultes. La première composante désigne des individus qui, contrairement aux gens normaux, ne verront pas leur excitation sexuelle inhibée par la violence. Les distorsions cognitives sont désignées comme la seconde composante du modèle. Ainsi, si l'individu interprète l'acte sexuel comme plaisant pour la victime, et ce en dépit du degré de coercition exercé, cela peut justifier le comportement agressif. La troisième composante du modèle est la faible maîtrise des affects (*affective dyscontrol*). Ici, l'acte sexuel ainsi que d'autres comportements agressifs sont modulés par une perte de contrôle de certaines émotions comme la colère. Lorsque ces états émotifs deviennent trop forts et qu'ils n'arrivent plus à être contenus par les inhibitions, la commission d'actes sexuels coercitifs est favorisée. Enfin, la quatrième composante est la présence d'un trouble de la personnalité, plus spécifiquement une personnalité antisociale. Les individus présentant un tel trouble sont caractérisés par une propension à violer les règles. En même temps, ce type d'individus est souvent impliqué dans des activités criminelles autres que sexuelles.

Ellis (1989; 1991) reprend pour sa part des éléments des théories féministe, d'apprentissage social et de l'évolution et avance que des facteurs neurologiques

pourraient expliquer l'agression sexuelle. Cette théorie peut être résumée selon quatre propositions. Tout d'abord, il y aurait deux motivations à l'agression sexuelle : la motivation sexuelle et la motivation de contrôle. Deuxièmement, les stratégies employées pour commettre une agression sexuelle seraient apprises par expérimentation (modification des stratégies afin de maximiser le plaisir tout en réduisant le risque d'arrestation) ainsi que par idéation (*ideational learning*), où l'apprentissage est effectué en considérant et en répétant sur le plan cognitif des scénarios de viol (soit à l'aide de livres, de films, d'attitudes en faveur du viol ou même de fantaisies imaginées). Le recours à ces techniques sera positivement renforcé si elles parviennent à satisfaire une des deux motivations au viol. Troisièmement, les hommes seraient favorisés par la sélection naturelle afin de posséder des stratégies visant à acquérir plusieurs partenaires sexuels (certaines stratégies comportant des éléments de duperie et/ou d'usage de la force). Ainsi, l'agression sexuelle apparaît comme une stratégie directe afin de compétitionner pour l'accès à la copulation avec une femme, cette copulation étant la plus importante ressource du point de vue de la reproduction (Ellis, 1989). Enfin, différentes tendances à l'agression sexuelle résulteraient d'une exposition du cerveau à des niveaux élevés de diverses hormones mâles [androgènes et autres hormones sexuelles] (Ellis, 1989). Ainsi, le cerveau des violeurs, au moins durant le processus de planification et la commission de leurs agressions, doit avoir un fonctionnement très différent de celui d'autres personnes (Ellis, 1989).

D'ailleurs, Ellis émet deux hypothèses neurologiques expliquant ce fonctionnement différent du cerveau des violeurs par rapport à celui des non-violeurs. La première hypothèse concerne les structures hypothalamique-limbiques. Selon Ellis, ces

structures seraient responsables de la motivation, de tous les comportements concernant la copulation ainsi que des tentatives pour maintenir un accès plus ou moins exclusif à des partenaires sexuelles (Ellis, 1989). Ainsi, le rôle des structures hypothalamique- limbiques dans l'agression sexuelle se manifesterait par une hypersexualité ainsi qu'une extrême possessivité des partenaires sexuelles.

La seconde hypothèse concerne les processus d'activation réticulaire (*reticular activating processes*), qui joueraient un rôle dans la sensibilité aux stimulus aversifs provenant d'une victime non consentante ainsi que des sanctions criminelles reliées à ce crime (Ellis, 1989). Le système d'activation réticulaire est un réseau de neurones situé dans la partie supérieure du cerveau qui s'occupe de traiter tous les stimulus envoyés. Une forte exposition à des hormones androgènes pourrait expliquer la différence dans le système de formation réticulaire des hommes et des femmes. Chez les hommes, il y aurait une plus rapide habituation aux stimulus et la nécessité d'une stimulation plus élevée, ceci favorisant la poursuite de comportements sexuels coercitifs malgré le non-consentement d'une femme.

Marshall et Barbaree (1990) présentent une théorie multifactorielle qui incorpore des éléments d'expériences d'apprentissage, de biologie et de composants socioculturels au sujet de l'agression sexuelle. Selon les auteurs, la période de la puberté, avec tous les changements hormonaux qu'elle comporte, devient une période critique où les garçons doivent apprendre à exprimer et à maîtriser leur sexualité, en développant les inhibiteurs nécessaires afin d'empêcher une fusion de la sexualité et de l'agression. Même si cette tâche peut s'avérer difficile, surtout durant la période de puberté où il y a augmentation de production des hormones sexuelles, Marshall et Barbaree considèrent que les facteurs

développementaux et environnementaux ont la plus grande influence quant à l'expression des besoins sexuels et à la maîtrise de l'agression (Marshall et Barbaree, 1990).

Ces facteurs sont regroupés sous trois catégories. Tout d'abord, les expériences vécues durant l'enfance, comme un environnement familial violent, a pour conséquence de faciliter l'usage de l'agression, de fermer l'accès à des interactions sociosexuelles appropriées et de favoriser un manque de confiance en soi et envers autrui et des sentiments d'hostilité chez l'enfant. De tels facteurs n'aident pas le jeune à acquérir des inhibitions envers l'agression sexuelle; en fait, ces facteurs peuvent favoriser l'inverse (Marshall et Barbaree, 1990).

Ensuite, les facteurs socioculturels, tels que la banalisation de la violence interpersonnelle, une acceptation de la domination masculine, des attitudes d'hostilité envers les femmes et la pornographie sont tous des éléments pouvant favoriser l'agression sexuelle.

Enfin, Marshall et Barbaree (1990) rapportent un certain nombre de facteurs de désinhibition qui facilitent le passage à l'acte sexuel et coercitif. Parmi ces facteurs, les auteurs signalent la consommation d'alcool, la colère, l'excitation sexuelle, le stress et l'anxiété.

Considérant que d'un point de vue biologique tous les hommes ont la capacité d'agresser sexuellement, les facteurs environnementaux et développementaux mentionnés peuvent moduler cette tendance et doivent donc être pris en compte dans une compréhension de l'étiologie de l'agression sexuelle.

### *Limites des macrothéories*

Selon Marshall (1982), « *the valuable contribution that a model at the macrolevel can make is to identify the general categories of factors that influence the appearance and continuation of behavior* » (p. 59). Ainsi, les macrothéories de l'agression sexuelle permettent d'apprécier les différents facteurs (biologiques, développementaux, d'apprentissage, psychologiques, culturels, sociologiques et situationnels) associés à la commission d'une agression sexuelle. Toutefois, un des problèmes associés aux macrothéories concerne le fait que l'accent est souvent circonscrit à un seul ou à quelques facteurs. Afin d'y remédier, certaines théories tentent d'incorporer plusieurs facteurs dans des modèles multifactoriels complexes. « *However, a problem with these broader theories as they currently exist is their relative neglect of more distal causal factors and the lack of detailed descriptions of the mechanisms and processes associated with sexual offending.* » (Ward et Hudson, 1998, p. 49). Par exemple, Malamuth et collab. (1993) ont conçu leur modèle en mettant l'accent sur des facteurs généraux et proximaux, négligeant d'expliquer comment ces facteurs pouvaient toucher les processus de passage à l'acte. Un autre problème concerne le manque d'explication quant aux mécanismes par lesquels ces facteurs interagissent les uns avec les autres afin de favoriser l'agression sexuelle. Souvent, les liens séquentiels entre les facteurs ne sont pas spécifiés (Proulx et collab., 1999). Un troisième problème est relié à la difficulté de ces macrothéories à considérer la dimension temporelle propre à chaque événement criminel. Quatrièmement, la plupart des macrothéories n'incluent pas les caractéristiques du scénario délictuel (et du *modus operandi*). De plus, aucun lien n'est établi entre les caractéristiques du scénario délictuel et les facteurs spécifiés à l'intérieur des macrothéories. Enfin, un examen des différentes



macrothéories de l'agression sexuelle révèle qu'elles ne parviennent pas à établir et à expliquer la diversité des processus de passage à l'acte des délinquants sexuels. Les microthéories, qui sont plus spécifiques et plus détaillées, abordent la question de la diversité des agresseurs sexuels.

## MICROTHÉORIES DU PROCESSUS DE PASSAGE À L'ACTE DES AGRESSEURS SEXUELS

*Groth, Burgess et Holmstrom (1977)*

Dans tous les cas d'agression sexuelle, deux composantes principales seraient présentes : le pouvoir et la colère (Groth, Burgess et Holmstrom, 1977). Le viol serait un acte pseudo-sexuel où l'acte sexuel servirait des besoins non sexuels (domination, agression, contrôle). L'agresseur sexuel motivé par le *pouvoir* commet des délits caractérisés par l'intimidation, l'utilisation d'une arme, des menaces ou la force afin de maîtriser la victime. Chez ce type d'agresseur, le viol sert à le rassurer sur son identité, sa compétence et sa force. L'agression est préméditée et est précédée de fantasmes sexuelles déviantes envahissantes, où la victime est imaginée comme résistant au début puis, lorsque conquise, se soumettant volontairement à ses avances sexuelles. Souvent l'individu est déçu par l'agression, car elle ne correspond pas parfaitement au scénario imaginé dans les fantasmes, d'où l'aspect répétitif et compulsif chez ce délinquant sexuel. L'agresseur sexuel motivé par la *colère* exprime sa rage et son hostilité envers la victime en la battant, en la forçant à participer à des rapports sexuels ainsi qu'en l'humiliant. L'agression sexuelle est souvent précipitée par des conflits vécus avec des femmes qui lui sont proches (sa mère, son épouse, une conjointe), mais la colère est déplacée envers une

autre femme. La motivation principale est la vengeance et la punition. L'attaque est soudaine, souvent envers des femmes plus âgées que l'agresseur.

*Knight et Prentky (1990)*

Une autre typologie basée sur la motivation des violeurs est celle de Knight et Prentky (1990). Cette typologie se distingue des autres par (1) le recours à des critères de *modus operandi* et à des facteurs précrime (entre autres, les fantasmes sexuelles déviantes) dans le but d'évaluer la motivation, (2) l'utilisation de la compétence sociale, un critère qui est relatif à l'agresseur, et (3) le recours à des méthodes inductives et déductives (Proulx, St-Yves, Guay et Ouimet, 1999).

La typologie de Knight et Prentky (1990) comprend neuf types répartis en quatre motivations au viol, soit l'opportunisme (*opportunity*), la colère (*pervasive anger*), la gratification sexuelle (*sexual gratification*) et la vengeance (*vindictiveness*). La motivation opportuniste est caractérisée par l'impulsivité, la non-planification et certains facteurs situationnels favorisant le viol. Dans ce contexte, l'agression sexuelle apparaît comme une absence de contrôle des impulsions, typique de l'histoire d'antisociabilité de ces individus. Les comportements des personnes correspondant à ce type suggèrent une recherche d'une gratification sexuelle immédiate avec un usage de la force nécessaire pour arriver à leur but. Ces individus sont indifférents au bien-être de la victime (Knight et Prentky, 1990). Il existe deux types d'opportunistes, soit ceux avec ou sans déficits quant aux habiletés sociales.

Le type colérique est caractérisé par une rage indifférenciée, c'est-à-dire malgré l'absence de résistance de la part de la victime. Souvent, des blessures physiques sont infligées à la victime, pouvant parfois aller jusqu'à la mort. Les actes de violence ne

seraient pas liés à la présence de fantasmes sexuelles déviantes. De plus, cette rage ne serait pas limitée aux femmes, étant souvent dirigée contre les hommes. Les individus correspondant à ce type présentent des problèmes de maîtrise des impulsions dans plusieurs domaines de leur vie, et ce, depuis l'enfance.

Quatre types d'agresseurs sexuels sont motivés par la sexualité et se distinguent d'abord par la présence ou non de fantasmes sadiques, et ensuite par le degré de compétence sociale. D'ailleurs, les fantasmes sexuelles sadiques qui orientent le scénario délictuel déterminent également le niveau de violence. Le niveau de violence physique et verbal serait plus élevé pour les deux types présentant des fantasmes sexuelles sadiques que chez les deux types présentant des fantasmes sexuelles déviantes non sadiques (Knight et Prentky, 1990).

Enfin, chez les violeurs vindicatifs, le degré de compétence sociale permet aussi de distinguer deux types. Ce genre d'agresseur sexuel est caractérisé par une violence expressive non préméditée et exclusivement dirigée vers les femmes. Les agressions sexuelles commises par ces individus visent à dégrader et à humilier les victimes, allant des insultes verbales jusqu'à l'homicide. L'agression ne serait pas érotisée et ce type d'agresseur sexuel ne serait pas envahi par des fantasmes sexuelles sadiques.

Cette typologie présente certaines limites. Tout d'abord, seuls la préméditation et le niveau de violence seraient utilisés pour décrire le délit, laissant de côté plusieurs caractéristiques de la victime et de l'agresseur. De plus, la motivation de l'agression sexuelle serait inférée seulement d'après le *modus operandi* et d'un facteur précrime, c'est-à-dire la présence ou l'absence de fantasmes sexuelles déviantes. Les modèles de

passage à l'acte qui suivent comportent des informations plus détaillées sur le *modus operandi*, l'agresseur et ses victimes.

*Proulx, St-Yves, Guay et Ouimet (1999)*

À partir d'un échantillon de 78 agresseurs sexuels extrafamiliaux de femmes, Proulx, St-Yves, Guay et Ouimet (1999) ont établi trois profils basés sur les éléments du scénario délictuel (*modus operandi*). Les agresseurs sexuels du profil sadique (15,4 % de l'échantillon) sont ceux dont le scénario délictuel est caractérisé par la préméditation, l'absence de lien entre l'agresseur et la victime et un niveau élevé de violence physique et verbale. Il y a également usage d'une arme et séquestration de la victime. Dans 92 % des cas, un coït survient. Dans 67 % des cas, l'agresseur contraint la victime à commettre des gestes sexuels. Les agresseurs du profil colérique (50 % de l'échantillon) commettent un délit non prémédité envers une victime qui a ou non un lien avec l'assaillant. Ce type d'agresseur a toujours recours à une violence expressive, mais le délit comporte moins d'éléments sexuels que dans le profil sadique. Enfin, le profil opportuniste (34,6 % de l'échantillon) présente des similitudes avec le profil colérique quant à la non-préméditation et au lien avec la victime. Cependant, le peu de violence expressive employée et l'absence d'humiliation distinguent les sujets du profil opportuniste de ceux des deux autres profils.

En mettant en relation les trois profils avec des variables de la phase précrime (48 heures avant le délit) ainsi qu'avec des variables des troubles de la personnalité (tels que mesurés par le MCMI), les auteurs ont été en mesure d'approfondir leur typologie. Ainsi, les agresseurs du profil sadique présentaient un profil de personnalité caractérisé par les troubles schizoïde, évitant et dépendant. De plus, ces individus rapportaient plus souvent

des fantasmes sexuelles déviantes que ceux des deux autres profils. Les agresseurs du profil colérique se distinguent des autres quant à la consommation d'alcool et ne montrent aucune élévation significative aux échelles du MCMI. Enfin, les individus correspondant au profil opportuniste obtiennent des élévations marginalement significatives aux échelles narcissique et paranoïde (Proulx et collab., 1999).

*Proulx, Perreault, Ouimet et Guay (1999)*

À l'aide d'un échantillon de 51 agresseurs sexuels d'enfants, Proulx et ses collègues (1999) ont établi trois profils de scénarios délictuels. Les agresseurs « homosexuels non familiers » sont ceux pour qui le délit est prémédité et la victime, de sexe masculin et provenant d'un milieu dysfonctionnel, est non familière. Ce type d'agresseur utilise des stratégies non coercitives pour amorcer le crime (jeux, séduction). Le délit dure habituellement plus de 15 minutes et comporte des actes sexuels coïtaux et non coïtaux. On note que ce type d'agresseur rapporte plus fréquemment des fantasmes sexuelles déviantes, des distorsions cognitives, des affects négatifs et la consommation de matériel pornographique comparativement à ceux des deux autres groupes.

Pour les agresseurs « hétérosexuels non familiers », le scénario délictuel est prémédité dans la moitié des cas. La victime, non familière et de sexe féminin, ne provient pas d'un milieu dysfonctionnel. Des stratégies coercitives sont utilisées pour amorcer l'agression (menaces, usage de force physique) et le délit, d'une durée de plus de 15 minutes, implique que la victime pose des actes sexuels sur l'agresseur dans la moitié des cas.

Enfin, les agresseurs « hétérosexuels familiers » ne préméditent pas le scénario délictuel. La victime, de sexe féminin, est abordée de façon coercitive par l'agresseur.

Des actes coïtaux sont impliqués ainsi que des actes sexuels de la part de la victime sur l'agresseur. Habituellement, ce délit dure moins de 15 minutes.

*Ward, Louden, Hudson et Marshall (1995)*

En se basant sur l'approche qualitative de la *grounded theory*, Ward, Louden, Hudson et Marshall (1995) ont trouvé deux séquences délictuelles chez 26 agresseurs sexuels d'enfants. La première séquence est caractérisée par des affects positifs (joie, tendresse), la présence de fantaisies sexuelles déviantes et de distorsions cognitives (la victime est consentante et elle éprouve du plaisir). Lors de cette séquence, l'agression sexuelle est de longue durée et comporte un faible degré de coercition. Ce type correspond au profil homosexuel non familial de la typologie de Proulx et collab. (1999).

La seconde séquence délictuelle se démarque par la présence d'affects négatifs (anxiété, culpabilité), l'abus d'alcool et la perception de la victime comme étant un objet sexuel. L'agression est de courte durée et comporte un niveau élevé de coercition, semblable au profil hétérosexuel familial de la typologie de Proulx et collab. (1999).

*Polaschek, Hudson, Ward et Siegert (2001)*

Polaschek, Hudson, Ward et Siegert (2001) ont refait le même exercice, mais cette fois à l'aide d'un échantillon de 24 agresseurs sexuels de femmes adultes. Les auteurs ont relevé deux séquences délictuelles qui tiennent compte de facteurs cognitifs, de comportements, de motivations et d'éléments contextuels. La première séquence est caractérisée par un affect positif, la planification de l'agression dans le but d'obtenir une gratification sexuelle et une approche indirecte de la victime (séduction, persuasion). Lors de la préparation, des précautions sont prises pour prévenir la résistance de la victime. Des actes sexuels sans humiliation (comme la pénétration vaginale) sont commis

et l'agresseur tente de normaliser la situation après l'agression (offre une cigarette à la victime). Cette séquence présente certaines similitudes avec le type sexuel non sadique de la typologie de Knight et Prentky (1990).

La seconde séquence est caractérisée par la présence d'affects négatifs et l'intention de l'agresseur de se venger. Une approche directe (violence physique, menaces) sert à entrer en contact avec la victime. L'agresseur se prépare en recourant à des moyens d'augmenter son excitation sexuelle (pornographie). Des actes sexuels avec humiliation sont commis (sodomie, fellation à la suite d'une sodomie) et après l'agression, l'agresseur emploie des stratégies de contrôle (attache la victime, coupe le fil du téléphone).

#### *Limites des microthéories*

Ces typologies et séquences que l'on peut qualifier de « microthéories » du processus de passage à l'acte, souffrent de certaines limites. Tout d'abord, une étude approfondie du processus de passage à l'acte ne devrait pas seulement s'attarder à l'agresseur et à sa victime mais aussi à l'analyse de l'événement criminel en entier, c'est-à-dire en combinant l'analyse de l'agresseur, de la victime et du contexte (Meier, Kennedy et Sacco, 2001). Tant les typologies de Proulx (Proulx et collab., 1999) que les modèles de Ward (Ward et collab., 1995; Polaschek et collab., 2001) ont mis l'accent sur l'agresseur. D'ailleurs, dans le cas des agresseurs ayant fait plusieurs victimes, les chercheurs ont convenu d'analyser seulement le délit avec la dernière victime, suggérant ainsi l'hypothèse selon laquelle le dernier crime d'un individu se rapprocherait le plus du scénario délictuel imaginé dans ses fantasmes. Une telle décision nuit à l'exploration des différents processus de passage à l'acte et des processus décisionnels sous-jacents.

Effectuer une analyse du processus de passage à l'acte en ne considérant qu'une seule victime présuppose que ce processus, tout comme le *modus operandi* utilisé, est stable et qu'il ne fluctue pas. Ainsi, une telle prise de position renvoie à l'idée que les agresseurs sexuels agissent toujours de la même façon, qu'ils sont « spécialisés » dans un type de victime et qu'ils sont insensibles aux facteurs situationnels et aux opportunités. Ces classifications présument également que les caractéristiques personnelles de l'individu (personnalité, préférences sexuelles, cognitions) sont les principaux facteurs qui déterminent le processus de passage à l'acte.

Ainsi, en réalisant leurs études avec des échantillons composés seulement d'agresseurs sexuels d'enfants ou d'agresseurs sexuels de femmes adultes, les auteurs prennent pour acquis la spécialisation des délinquants sexuels, négligeant ainsi une longue tradition d'études criminologiques qui démontrent le caractère polymorphe de la carrière criminelle des délinquants, ces derniers étant sensibles aux opportunités qui se présentent à eux (Lussier, 2004). En d'autres mots, ces auteurs présupposent qu'un agresseur sexuel d'enfants agressera toujours des enfants, alors qu'un agresseur sexuel de femmes adultes ciblera toujours des femmes comme victimes de choix. Pourtant, autant la pratique clinique auprès de cette clientèle que la recherche criminologique démontrent que cette position ne s'applique pas à tous les agresseurs sexuels (Lussier, 2004; Heil, Ahlmeyer et Simons, 2003).

Par ailleurs, les études réalisées jusqu'ici sur le processus de passage à l'acte des délinquants sexuels ne sont pas assez détaillées. En fait, la notion de processus de passage à l'acte est complexe et renferme plusieurs phases spécifiques, telles que la préparation, la sélection des cibles, la perpétration de l'acte, la fuite et la phase postcrime. Chacune de



ces phases comporte à son tour un nombre important de facteurs et d'éléments essentiels et elles méritent une attention particulière afin de comprendre comment elles s'articulent entre elles. Ainsi, en se limitant à certains éléments du processus de passage à l'acte, et ce avec un nombre très restreint de variables, plusieurs phases du crime se trouvent négligées. Enfin, les études réalisées jusqu'ici concernant les processus de passage à l'acte des délinquants sexuels ont grandement négligé les facteurs situationnels. On reconnaît pourtant que ces facteurs influent sur le déroulement du crime.

#### FACTEURS SITUATIONNELS ET PROCESSUS DE PASSAGE À L'ACTE

Certaines études sur les délinquants sexuels permettent de constater l'importance des facteurs situationnels et environnementaux dans le processus de passage à l'acte, une dimension souvent négligée, tant dans les macrothéories de l'agression sexuelle que dans les microthéories.

Il a été démontré que la présence d'un affect de colère avant de commettre une agression sexuelle est associée à un plus grand usage de violence ainsi qu'à une augmentation de l'excitation sexuelle dans un contexte de coercition (Marshall et Barbaree, 1990; Marshall, Earls, Segal et Darke, 1983; Yates, Barbaree et Marshall, 1984). La présence de distorsions cognitives (plus particulièrement un sentiment de vengeance) est également reliée à l'aggravation de l'agression sexuelle (Ouimet, Guay et Proulx, 2000). Cependant, ces variables peuvent également être mises en relation avec des caractéristiques stables de l'individu (les troubles de la personnalité par exemple).

La consommation d'alcool dans les heures précédant l'agression sexuelle est un autre facteur précipitant à considérer dans l'étude du passage à l'acte. Cette consommation aurait pour conséquences de réduire le contrôle sur l'excitation sexuelle,

de modifier les croyances de l'individu par rapport aux prohibitions sociales usuelles et d'aggraver les blessures infligées à la victime (Marshall et Barbaree, 1990; Marshall et collab., 1983; Ouimet et collab., 2000).

Les comportements de la victime sont des éléments situationnels importants dans l'étude du processus de passage à l'acte. Les recherches de Block et Skogan (1985; 1986) ont démontré que la résistance de la victime durant l'agression sexuelle est associée à un plus grand risque de blessures physiques.

Les risques de blessures physiques infligées à la victime ainsi qu'une augmentation significative du risque de conséquences graves pour elle sont plus grands lorsque l'agresseur a une arme (Chéné et Cusson, 2005; Felson et Krohn, 1990; Felson et Messner, 1996).

D'ailleurs, ces résultats concordent avec ceux de l'étude de Nicole et Proulx (2005) sur les facteurs qui distinguent de manière décisive les meurtriers sexuels des agresseurs sexuels non meurtriers. En effet, cette étude a permis de vérifier lesquels parmi les facteurs relatifs au développement, à la personnalité, aux fantasmes sexuelles, à la carrière criminelle et à la situation étaient le plus sûrement associés à l'issue fatale d'une agression sexuelle. Les résultats démontrent que les facteurs les plus importants sont situationnels, c'est-à-dire que les risques sont plus grands lorsque les agresseurs sexuels sont en colère avant le délit, qu'ils ont consommé de l'alcool et qu'ils sont en présence d'une arme.

Une étude récente a permis de vérifier l'impact des facteurs situationnels et des intérêts sexuels sur le *modus operandi* d'agresseurs sexuels de femmes adultes (Beauregard, Lussier et Proulx, 2005). Les résultats montrent encore une fois l'influence

prépondérante des facteurs situationnels par rapport aux caractéristiques personnelles de l'individu sur la nature du processus de passage à l'acte. En effet, la consommation d'alcool et de pornographie ainsi qu'un affect de colère dans les heures précédant le délit sont fortement associés aux trois échelles de *modus operandi* utilisées, c'est-à-dire l'organisation du délit, le degré de force déployé par l'agresseur et le niveau de blessures infligé à la victime. En revanche, les caractéristiques du sujet ne sont pas liées à ces échelles. Toutefois, dans certaines études, des liens significatifs avec la personnalité ont été observés (Proulx, Blais et Beauregard, 2005).

Les résultats de ces études permettent de constater l'impact de la situation sur le processus de passage à l'acte des délinquants sexuels. Cependant, les études recensées ont examiné des facteurs situationnels limités à l'agresseur ou à la victime. Ils ont négligé l'environnement ou la géographie du crime comme facteurs situationnels.

#### GÉOCRIMINOLOGIE, OU CRIMINOLOGIE ENVIRONNEMENTALE

La géocriminologie, ou criminologie environnementale, peut être définie comme étant l'étude du phénomène criminel dans l'espace. Elle propose que le crime soit considéré comme la rencontre de délinquants, de victimes ou de cibles potentielles et de cadres légaux dans des lieux et un temps spécifiques (Brantingham et Brantingham, 1991).

La cartographie des événements criminels n'est pas récente. En effet, dès le milieu du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, André-Michel Guerry et Lambert-Adolphe Quetelet cartographiaient les crimes de violence et contre la propriété et examinaient la possibilité d'une relation avec la pauvreté. La seconde vague d'intérêt pour la criminologie spatiale est survenue entre les années 1900 et 1970, à l'instigation des tenants de l'école de sociologie de Chicago.

Le modèle de l'écologie humaine conçu par Robert Park et Ernest Burgess a servi de base à l'étude criminologique entreprise par Clifford R. Shaw et Henry D. McKay. Ces deux chercheurs ont, entre autres, cartographié les lieux de résidence de délinquants connus, divisé la ville en unités carrées et organisé ces unités en zones concentriques. Leurs études ont permis de confirmer l'hypothèse selon laquelle la criminalité était surtout concentrée au centre de la ville, près des résidences des délinquants, et tendait à diminuer au fur et à mesure qu'on s'éloignait de ce centre. De plus, les hauts taux de criminalité semblaient liés à des problèmes sociaux tels que la pauvreté, la maladie et le développement rapide de l'immigration. Toutefois, ce modèle théorique a lentement été délaissé pour faire place à un mouvement qui étudiait le crime principalement selon une dimension spatio-temporelle.

Trois modèles théoriques forment la base de la géocriminologie: la théorie des activités routinières (*routine activities*), la théorie du choix rationnel (*rational choice*) et la théorie des patterns criminels (*crime pattern*). La théorie des activités routinières (*routine activities*) soutient que les actes illégaux sont commis lorsqu'il y a convergence spatio-temporelle entre un délinquant motivé, une victime ou une cible potentielle et l'absence de gardien (Felson, 1998). Cette perspective propose que cette convergence se produit dans le cadre des activités de tous les jours des individus, c'est-à-dire au travail ou dans les loisirs.

Par ailleurs, la théorie du choix rationnel (*rational choice*) explique le crime en fonction d'un processus décisionnel. Dans ce cas, on croit que le crime est le résultat d'une décision qui est évaluée selon les « coûts et bénéfices » qui y sont associés (Cornish et Clarke, 1986). Même si cette rationalité peut paraître souvent limitée, surtout

dans les crimes impulsifs et violents, un calcul est fait en considérant des variables situationnelles telles la scène de crime et les caractéristiques de la victime (Rossmo, 2000). Selon Felson (1993), la théorie du choix rationnel tient davantage compte du contenu des décisions alors que la théorie des activités routinières est centrée sur l'aspect écologique qui fournit les opportunités criminelles sur les bases desquelles les choix sont effectués.

Malgré l'apparence souvent chaotique de certains crimes, le lieu où se déroule le crime est rarement laissé au hasard. Il existe donc souvent un raisonnement derrière la géographie criminelle (Brantingham et Brantingham, 1991). Ainsi, les crimes semblent être commis en des lieux où une victime potentielle est repérée par un agresseur durant ses déplacements dans ce même espace. En voyageant entre son lieu de travail, ses lieux de loisirs et son lieu de résidence, l'agresseur acquiert une connaissance de l'espace et se construit ainsi une image mentale de la ville. Cette théorie des « patterns criminels » (*crime pattern theory*) suggère donc qu'il est plus probable que les crimes se produisent sont plus susceptibles de se produire dans des lieux où il y aura rencontre entre la connaissance de l'espace (*awareness of space*) du criminel et la présence de victimes ou de cibles potentielles (Brantingham et Brantingham, 1993).

Quelques études se sont intéressées aux délinquants sexuels et à leurs comportements géographiques. Lebeau (1987) a établi que la distance parcourue par des agresseurs sexuels de femmes adultes variait selon le type d'approche utilisé pour accéder à une victime. Ainsi, les agresseurs sexuels (sériels et à victime unique) parcouraient la plus courte distance lorsque le mode d'entrée en contact avec la victime était de

s'introduire illégalement dans son domicile, alors que ceux qui faisaient la plus longue distance employaient une méthode visant à obtenir la confiance de la victime.

L'étude de Warren, Reboussin, Hazelwood, Cummings, Gibbs et Trumbetta (1998) a examiné, entre autres, les relations entre les variables démographiques, de scènes de crimes, des antécédents criminels et la distance parcourue par les agresseurs sexuels sériels afin de passer à l'acte. Les résultats ont révélé que près de 50 % des agresseurs sexuels de leur échantillon commettaient au moins une agression sexuelle à moins de 0.5 miles de leur lieu de résidence. Ceci signifie que les violeurs sériels tendent, à au moins une occasion, à se mettre dans une situation à risque d'être appréhendés considérant la très grande proximité avec leur lieu de résidence. Les délinquants sexuels plus âgés et de race blanche parcouraient une plus longue distance que les délinquants sexuels plus jeunes et de minorité visible. Cette différence entre les délinquants sexuels âgés et les plus jeunes pourrait indiquer que les jeunes sont plus impulsifs et que les vieux ont plus facilement accès à une voiture. Les violeurs qui commettent leurs crimes de manière ritualisée voyageaient sur une plus longue distance. Cette manifestation de comportements ritualisés sur la scène de crime et l'emploi de contentions pourraient être associés aux fantaisies sexuelles particulières qui motivent l'agression sexuelle et donc possiblement à la sélection d'une victime spécifique. Enfin, les délinquants sexuels qui avaient de nombreux antécédents criminels, qui sont entrés par effraction chez la victime et qui l'ont cambriolée durant l'agression, avaient tendance à franchir une plus grande distance. Selon les auteurs, ce résultat reflétait une plus grande motivation au crime ainsi qu'une plus grande expérience dans la perpétration de crimes non sexuels.

#### PROCESSUS DE PRÉDATION (*HUNTING PROCESS*)

D'après les connaissances sur les interactions entre les comportements géographiques et criminels, Rossmo (1997) a pu déterminer un modèle du processus de prédation (*hunting process*) des criminels sériels. Ce modèle est inspiré d'une étude réalisée sur les comportements des lions du Serengeti (Schaller, 1972). Selon Rossmo (1997), les comportements de prédation peuvent être divisés selon deux dimensions : (1) la méthode de recherche d'une victime potentielle (détermine les lieux de rencontre entre l'agresseur et la victime) et (2) la méthode d'attaque (liée au lieu où la victime sera abandonnée). Ce modèle permet de distinguer, chez des prédateurs sériels, quatre méthodes de recherche de victimes ainsi que trois méthodes d'attaque.

Concernant les méthodes de recherche de victimes, le « *hunter* » est un agresseur qui cherche spécifiquement une victime à partir de son lieu de résidence. Le « *poacher* » représente un agresseur qui recherche spécifiquement une victime à partir d'un lieu d'activité autre que son lieu de résidence ou qui voyage (*commutes*) dans une autre ville durant le processus de recherche. Le troisième type est le « *troller* », qui désigne un agresseur qui rencontre une victime de manière opportuniste (c'est-à-dire un opportunisme prémédité) pendant qu'il s'adonne à des activités non prédatrices. Enfin, le « *trapper* » caractérise un type d'agresseur qui occupe une certaine position, qui a une certaine occupation ou qui crée une situation qui lui permet de faire la rencontre de victimes potentielles sur le territoire qui est sous « son contrôle ».

Au sujet des méthodes d'attaque, le « *raptor* » désigne un agresseur qui attaque une victime dès qu'il entre en contact avec elle. La deuxième méthode d'attaque utilisée par le « *stalker* », signale que l'agresseur va d'abord suivre la victime avant d'entrer en contact avec elle et de l'attaquer. Enfin, l'« *ambusher* » consiste en un agresseur qui

attaque sa victime seulement quand elle a été attirée dans un lieu, comme une résidence ou un lieu de travail, où l'agresseur exerce son contrôle (Rossmo, 2000).

Le modèle de Rossmo (1997) permet d'apprécier l'interaction entre les comportements criminels du délinquant pour commettre son crime et ses comportements géographiques. La modélisation de cette interaction a des implications pratiques lors des enquêtes sur les crimes violents, en particulier dans le cas du profilage géographique. Toutefois, ce modèle n'est pas assez détaillé, ayant négligé plusieurs caractéristiques essentielles aux processus de passage à l'acte (sélection de la victime, moyens de déplacement de l'agresseur, stratégies employées pour initier le contact, pour emmener la victime à l'endroit du délit, pour commettre le crime, etc.).

## PROBLÉMATIQUE

Les théories existantes de l'agression sexuelle ont permis de découvrir différents facteurs qui pouvaient être reliés à ce type de crime. Ainsi, des facteurs biologiques, développementaux, psychologiques, sociologiques, culturels et situationnels ont été avancés afin d'expliquer l'agression sexuelle. Cependant, ces macrothéories font rarement mention d'une donnée importante dans l'étude d'un type de crime spécifique : le processus de passage à l'acte. Afin de remédier à cette situation, des microthéories du processus de passage à l'acte ont été élaborées, souvent sous forme de typologies ou de modèles séquentiels. Cependant, ces microthéories de l'agression sexuelle présentent de nombreuses limites : 1) elles négligent de s'attarder à l'analyse de l'événement criminel en entier, c'est-à-dire à la combinaison de l'analyse de l'agresseur, de la victime et du contexte; 2) elles présupposent que le processus de passage à l'acte est stable et qu'il ne fluctue pas; 3) elles impliquent que les caractéristiques personnelles de l'individu



(personnalité, cognitions, préférences sexuelles) représentent les facteurs principaux influant sur le processus de passage à l'acte; 4) elles prennent pour acquis la spécialisation des délinquants sexuels, négligeant les études criminologiques qui démontrent le caractère polymorphe de la carrière criminelle des délinquants; 5) elles ne sont pas suffisamment détaillées, ne rendant pas compte de la complexité de chacune des phases du processus de passage à l'acte; 6) elles ont négligé l'inclusion de facteurs géographiques (environnementaux) dans leurs modèles; 7) elles n'ont pas exploré les processus décisionnels sous-jacents des processus de passage à l'acte.

### BUTS DE L'ÉTUDE

Afin de mieux saisir la nature et la dynamique du processus de passage à l'acte de l'agression sexuelle, cette étude s'est efforcée d'examiner la question des agresseurs sexuels sériels selon une approche théorique différente mais également en fonction d'analyses distinctes et complémentaires. Tout d'abord, le processus décisionnel derrière le processus de prédation a été exploré de façon qualitative auprès des agresseurs sexuels sériels de notre échantillon. Deuxièmement, on a établi des scripts de prédation d'après des méthodes quantitatives complémentaires, soit les méthodes d'analyse factorielle des correspondances et de classification hiérarchique.

Cette thèse s'articule autour de trois articles scientifiques. Tout d'abord, la première étude effectue une recension des écrits sur la question des comportements géographiques des agresseurs sexuels, en rapport avec différents aspects de leurs comportements criminels, afin de bien démontrer l'importance des facteurs géographiques (environnementaux) dans le processus de passage à l'acte. Le deuxième article est une exploration qualitative du processus décisionnel dans les comportements

de prédation (*hunting process*) des agresseurs sexuels sériels. Faite d'après une perspective de choix rationnel, cette étude vise non seulement à découvrir la nature du scénario délictuel mais surtout l'explication des choix effectués par l'agresseur lors du passage à l'acte, et ce, tant pour les variables comportementales que géographiques. Enfin, toujours selon une perspective de choix rationnel, le troisième article permet d'établir des scripts de comportements de prédation en fonction de deux méthodes quantitatives complémentaires.

Ces trois articles ont été rédigés en anglais et seront présentés dans cet ordre : (1) *Spatial Patterns of Sex Offenders : Theoretical, Empirical, and Practical Issues*, (2) *A Descriptive Model of the Hunting Process of Serial Sex Offenders : A Rational Choice Perspective*, et (3) *A Script Analysis of Patterns in the Hunting Process of Serial Sex Offenders*. Une conclusion générale suivra.

Deuxième chapitre

Spatial Patterns of Sex Offenders : Theoretical, Empirical, and Practical Issues

## INTRODUCTION

Environmental criminology could be described as "the study of crime, criminality, and victimization as they relate, first, to particular places, and secondly, to the way that individuals and organizations shape their activities spatially, and in so doing are in turn influenced by place-based or spatial factors" (Bottoms & Wiles, 1997, p. 305). It may also be defined as the scientific study of "spatial patterns in crime, the perceptions and awareness spaces of potential criminals, criminal mobility patterns, and the process of target selection and decision to commit the crime" (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1981, p.7). Environmental criminology's primary concern is with the "where and when" of the criminal event, what Brantingham and Brantingham designated as the fourth dimension of crime. Three theoretical approaches of environmental criminology have been associated with geographic profiling because of their common concern for context: routine activity, rational choice and crime pattern theories.

### Theoretical Models

#### *The Routine Activity Approach*

The central hypothesis of routine activity theory is that "the probability that a violation will occur at any specific time and place might be taken as a function of the convergence of likely offenders and suitable targets in the absence of capable guardians" (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 590). All three elements are necessary for the crime to occur. The routine activity approach does not deny that offenders may vary in their inclination to commit crime, but takes such inclination as given (Felson, 1992). According to Felson (1998, 2002), there are four dimensions of a suitable target to consider: (1) the value or

desirability of the target, (2) the visibility of the target, (3) the accessibility of the target (and the escape from it), and (4) the inertia of the target, which includes all that can facilitate or inhibit the transportation of the target, such as weight, mobility, resistance, and locks. These four dimensions describe the salient risk factors associated with crime.

For predatory crime, which usually depends on direct physical contact between the offender and the crime target, the routine activity approach emphasizes the importance of the daily activities of offenders and targets. In their study of the spatial and temporal behavior of child molesters, Ouimet and Proulx (1994) found that the risk of recidivism was higher for those offenders whose routine activities put them in contact with places frequented by children, such as playgrounds, schools, and parks.

#### *The Rational Choice Approach*

Another theoretical perspective, related to the routine activity approach, is the rational choice approach to crime (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). “Its starting point was an assumption that offenders seek to benefit themselves by their criminal behavior; that this involves the making of decisions and of choices, however rudimentary on occasion these processes might be; and that these processes exhibit a measure of rationality, albeit constrained by limits of time and ability and the availability of relevant information” (Cornish & Clarke, 1986, p.1). The presumption of rationality of human action, criminal or not, is the most important dimension of this perspective (Cornish, 1993). Criminals will decide whether or not to commit a crime by weighting the efforts, rewards, and costs involved in alternative courses of action. This rational evaluation may seem limited or “bounded” in some crimes by time, effort, and available information, but even violent criminals, including sex offenders, will exhibit a substantial degree of rationality

(Rossmo, 2000). Further, “people commonly adopt minimal accounts because this mode of framing (1) simplifies evaluation and reduces cognitive strain, (2) reflects the intuition that consequences should be causally linked to acts, and (3) matches the properties of hedonic experience, which is more sensitive to desirable and undesirable changes than to steady states” (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981, p. 455). In a date-rape situation, for example, the decision to commit coercive sexual actions by the offender may arise only in the heat of the moment, when the victim refuses to go further.

The rational choice approach also emphasizes the interactional, transactional, and adaptive nature of human behavior. According to Cornish (1993), criminals, just like non-criminals, may improve their decision-making through experience; and they can learn to modify their information processing. In such a perspective, it becomes important to study situational variables, such as crime scene and victim characteristics, and their choice structuring properties, in order to stress the distinctive nature of different person-situation criminal interactions (Cornish, 1993).

To our knowledge, only one study has investigated the decision processes underlying sexual offenses. In their study of the rational choices of pedophiles, Proulx, Ouimet, and Lachaine (1995) identified a five choice-model. First, a pedophile has to choose his hunting ground, meaning the places where he is likely to encounter potential targets. These hunting grounds may be domestic (e.g., victim’s or offender’s home), occupational (e.g., offender’s workplace), or public (e.g., streets, parks, recreational sites). Second, after having chosen the hunting ground, the pedophile has to choose the time when he is going to risk an offense. Children will find themselves in parks or on the street only at certain hours of the day, and are usually at home during the evening. Third,

if the pedophile finds himself in a place and at a time where children are present, he has to select his target according to its erotic value (sex, age, physical characteristics), its vulnerability (physical and/or psychological) and its familiarity. Fourth, when the victim has been chosen, the offender has to select a strategy to make initial contact and then to have sexual contact with the victim. The strategies usually used by pedophiles are manipulation, threats, coercive actions, seduction, and money. For every step of the decisional process, there is an assessment of the risk of negative consequences: What is the probability of someone interfering, of being caught, of being denounced by the victim, to be accused, to be convicted, and to be incarcerated? Proulx et al. (1995) conclude by stating that this decision process is related to stable personal characteristics of the offender (e.g., personality disorders, deviant sexual preferences) and to his internal scenario which includes emotional states, deviant sexual fantasies, and cognitive distortions.

According to Felson (1986), the main difference between rational choice and routine activity theory is that the former deals with the content of decisions, while the latter deals more with the ecological context that supplies the range of options from which choices are made. "People make choices, but they cannot choose the choices available to them. Nor they can be sure what chain of events will follow from their choices, including choices made by others" (Felson, 1986, p.119).

#### *Crime Pattern Theory*

Pattern theory, another theoretical framework underpinning geographic profiling, "is derived from the multidisciplinary approaches to understanding crime and criminality found in rational choice theory, routine activities theory, environmental criminology,

strategic analysis, life-style theory, crime prevention through environmental design, situational crime prevention, hot spot analysis, and, opportunity theory” (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1993a, p. 284). Crimes are not distributed randomly in time and space, but are best viewed as an action occurring within a situation at a site on a nonstatic backcloth. The term backcloth is used to describe the variables or elements that surround and are part of the daily lives of individuals, and that may be influenced by or may influence their criminal behavior (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1993b). Thus, the probability of a criminal event will not only depend on the backcloth, but also on the site, the situation, the criminal readiness of the offender, routine activity patterns, and the distribution of targets.

The dynamic model of crime site selection developed by the Brantinghams (1978; 1981) presents a series of propositions related to the understanding of geographic patterns of criminal behavior. First, some people are motivated to commit certain types of crime. An event may occur that will trigger the readiness or willingness of the individual to commit a crime. The source and strength of the motivation may vary, as well as the nature of the crime, ranging from expressive to instrumental. Motivation is linked to past criminal events, the site and situation of a potential crime, and to the triggering event, in order to create a feedback effect. “That is, the relationship between readiness and site and situation are mutually nonrecursive over time, with site and situation experiences feeding back into readiness as amplification or suppression loops; and reinforced or suppressed readiness feeding back into the crime template and the assessment of site and situation” (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1993a, p. 276). The triggers are usually found



in daily routine activities and are shaped by the environment, past experience, and the crime templates.

Second, these templates, which can also be called prototype or place schemata, are the sets of cues, cue sequences, or holistic cue clusters used to identify suitable targets. They form cognitive images and maps, representing a process-based perception of objects within a complex environment (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1993a). The templates are incorporated in the target selection at either conscious level or automatically. When the template is constructed, it becomes relatively fixed and will influence future search behavior, thus becoming reinforced. It may vary by crime, by site and situation, and also according to the offender and his reason for the crime. The templates present similarities that can be identified because the spatial and temporal distribution of offenders and victims are patterned and because human environmental perception has some universal properties.

Third, the crime is seen as the end result of a multistaged decision process, which aims to identify a potential target, positioned in time and space. This decision process involves fewer stages in expressive crimes and more in instrumental crimes.

Targets or victims are selected from the offender's awareness space. Awareness space is defined as "all the locations about which a person has knowledge above a minimum level even without visiting some of them ... Awareness space includes activity space (the area within which most of a person's activities are carried out, within which the individual comes most frequently into contact with others and with the features of the environment), and its area enlarges as new locations are discovered and/or new information is gathered" (Clark, 1990, pp. 24-25). The targets will then be assessed

against the criteria of suitability and risk, and evaluated in relation with the offender's template. Finally, rational choices are made by the offender and specific targets are selected (Rossmo, 2000).

This search process proposed by the Brantinghams follows a distance-decay function. In the distance-decay pattern in human spatial behavior, people interact more with people and things that are close to their home location than with people or things that are far away (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1984). Some of this decrease in activity as distance increases is the result of the monetary costs and time of overcoming distance. In the same way as general human spatial behavior, crime trips follow a distance-decay pattern with the number of crime occurrences decreasing with distance from the offender's residence (Rhodes & Conly, 1981). According to this function, sex offenders approach and attack most of their victims within an area near their home base.

Related to the concept of distance-decay is the nearest or least-effort principle (Zipf, 1950). This suggests that if a person is given various possibilities for action, he will select the one requiring the least expenditure of effort (Rossmo, 2000). Criminals, like noncriminals, are influenced by this principle. In cases where multiple targets of equal desirability are available, they tend to select the one closest to them. Brantingham and Brantingham (1984, 1991) postulate that the bias of greater density of interaction close to the home base is also the result of biased spatial knowledge. People have more experience of and are more aware of what exists around them.

Alston (1994) was the first to apply the Brantingham and Brantingham model to serial rapists. He examined how cognitive elements related to crime pattern theory (e.g., routine pathways, primary activity nodes other than the residence of the offender, and

probable travel routes), would affect the target selection process of serial rapists. Information about activity nodes and routine pathways was compared with information about the initial contact locations of the offenses. Using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on a sample of 30 British Columbia (Canada) serial rapists, his results suggested that searching patterns were not normally distributed and were non-uniform, possibly making them predictable. The initial contact scenes were consistently clustered around the rapists' activity nodes and routine pathways. Moreover, one of the tests performed confirmed the possibility of a buffer zone (which represents an area centered around the criminal's residence within which targets are viewed as less desirable because of the perceived risk associated with operating too close to home) near activity nodes, as suggested by Brantingham and Brantingham (1984, 1991). Mowbray (2002) obtained similar results in his study of 37 serial rapists in Edmonton, Alberta (Canada). Results showed that there was a spatial cluster of offenses surrounding the residence of the offender and also the presence of a buffer zone surrounding the same offender's residence. Mowbray (2002) was not able, however, to include other primary activity nodes in his study as did Alston (1994). Nonetheless, the two studies demonstrated the importance of the serial rapists' awareness space in shaping target selection patterns.

### Journey-to-crime Research

#### *Spatial Behavior and Types of Crimes*

Most environmental criminology studies on the journey-to-crime show that offenders travel a longer distance to commit property offence compared to crimes against people (Amir, 1971; Baldwin & Bottoms, 1976; Brantingham & Brantingham, 1981;

Erlanson, 1946; Lebeau, 1987; Pyle, 1974; Repetto, 1974; Rhodes & Conly, 1981; White, 1932). Results from White's (1932) study in Indianapolis showed that rapists traveled an average distance of 1.52 miles as compared to 1.72 for property offenses. Rhodes and Conly (1981) found similar results; in their Washington, DC, study, rapists traveled an average distance of 1.15 miles to commit their crimes (almost half the rapes occurred within one-half mile of the offender's home), while burglars and robbers traveled respectively an average distance of 1.62 and 2.1 miles. Baldwin and Bottoms (1976) carried out an analysis of the types of crime committed in Sheffield and noted that violent as well as sex offenses were the most local (over 60% being committed within one mile of the offender's residence), whereas larceny, taking and driving, and fraud were the least local. Finally, Gabor and Gottheil's (1984) study of different types of crime committed in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, found that violent offenders were more likely to live in the city (in-towners) in comparison with profit-oriented offenders who were more frequently out-towners. These results are in agreement with the hypothesis that the motivation of the crime could observed travel differences: "situationally induced crimes, like rape, occur closer to home, while offenses involving more planning (burglary and robbery) result in more travel" (Rhodes & Conly, 1981, p. 178).

However, there seems to be some exceptions to these generally accepted findings. Turner's (1969) study in Philadelphia did not find any significant differences between crime types and distance traveled. Therefore, the type of offense that is committed does not fully explain individual differences in criminal spatial behavior. It may be that there are other factors, such as offender characteristics and modus operandi, which are more influential in determining distances traveled by offenders.

### *Journey-to-crime Research on Sex Offenders*

Journey-to-crime research has been conducted on numerous types of crime. Twenty studies were identified that examined crime trips of sex offenders in North American and European cities. Table 1 shows the 20 studies indicating the different type of crime, the location of the study and the crime trip distance. For all of these studies, it is interesting to note that the crime trip distance traveled by different types of sex offenders varies between no distance traveled (the offender committing the crime at home) and 40 km. Also, the studies reported in table 1 show that the majority of these sex offenders commit their crimes relatively close to their home base, one exception was the study of Canter and Hodge (1997) on serial murderers.

### Correlates of Crime Spatial Behavior

#### *Spatial Behavior and Individual Characteristics*

Some studies have examined the relationships between spatial behavior and different characteristics of the offender. The underlying principle of the relationship between offender characteristics and criminal mobility is that these characteristics influence the cognitive map of individuals. According to Brantingham and Brantingham (1991, 1993), cognitive maps are a representation of the awareness of space, which consists of subjective images of an individual's environment that are fundamental in determining the areas where the criminal's offense will be carried out. Research has shown that cognitive maps vary with the characteristics of individuals. "In general, the young, the old and the poor have more restricted perceptual environments, and males have broader perceptual environments than females. Further, differences have also been found between people of different ethnic origins. Typically, those of European origin

Table 1: Journey-to-Crime Research on Sex Offenders

Source	Crime	Location	Distance traveled
Aitken et al. (1996)	Child sexual homicide	Great Britain	91,6% < 5 mi
Alston (1994)	Stranger serial sexual assault	British Columbia (Canada)	31,1% < 0,5 km; 44,4% < 1 km; 55,6% < 1,5 km; 60% < 2km; 75,6% < 3 km.
Amir (1971)	Rape	Philadelphia (USA)	72% within home area (5 blocks)
Boggs (1965)	Rape and robbery	St-Louis (USA)	Most likely within nonresidential area
Canter & Hodge (1997)	Serial murder	USA	40 km; body dump site: 9 km/90 km mean min./max. (25% < 5 km and 50% < 15 km)
Canter & Larkin (1993)	Serial rape	England	1,53 mi mean crime trip distance
Davies & Dale (1995)	Stranger rape	England	17% < 0,5 mi; 29% < 1 mi; 52% < 2 mi; 60% < 3 mi; 76% < 5 mi
Gabor & Gottheil (1984)	Rape and indecent assault	Ottawa (Canada)	1,43 mi (90% in-towners)
Hanfland (1982)	Rape / sodomy	Eugene, Oregon (USA)	2,66 mi
Lebeau (1987)	Rape	San Diego (USA)	2,5 mi
Lebeau (1987)	Serial rape	San Diego (USA)	1,77 mi
Lebeau (1987)	Nonserial rape	San Diego (USA)	3,5 mi
Lebeau (1992)	Serial rape and related crime	San Diego (USA)	25,88/1,89/0,52/3,33 km (4 serial rapists)
Pyle (1974)	Rape	Akron (USA)	1,34 mi
Rhodes & Conly (1981)	Rape	Washington D.C. (USA)	1,15 mi; 0,73 mi median; 62% < 1 mi
Rossmo & Baeza (1998)	Serial rape	New York city (USA)	2,5 mi. (residence); 1.0 mi (anchor point)
Safarik et al. (2002)	Sexual homicide of elderly females	USA	0.42 mi; 56% within six blocks of the victim; 30% living on the same block
Shaw (1998)	Sexual homicide	United Kingdom	2,4 mi / 1.0 mi median (encounter site) 2.2 mi / 1.0 mi median (body dump site); 25% in offender's home and 85% < 9.5 km
Topalin (1992)	Serial rape	London (England)	2,81 mi; 20% in or close to home
Warren et al. (1995)	Serial rape	USA	3,14 mi; 1.66/4.93 mi average closest/furthest (local offenders, travel < 20 mi)

Source: adapted from Rossmo (2000).

(white) have less restricted perceptual environments than their non-white counterparts” (Hodge, 1998, p. 34-35).

Age is one of the characteristics associated with spatial behavior. Most studies of sex offenders that investigate the relationship between age and distance come to the same conclusion as for other types of criminals. In a study undertaken by Davies and Dale (1995) on a sample of 79 stranger rapists who committed a total of 300 sexual offenses, results support the view that younger men tend to offend nearer to home. Offenders of 26 years or less were within 1.8 miles of home base when they approached the victim, as compared to only 32% of the men aged older than 26 years old. In their study of 108 serial rapists, Warren et al. (1998) found that older rapists (20 years or more) traveled farther than younger rapists. This difference could be attributed to a greater impulsivity in the offense behavior of younger offenders, a greater access to vehicles by older offenders, or simply because of the age-related development of the cognitive map. However, recent studies have not confirmed this age-distance relationship (see Rossmo, Davies, & Patrick, in press).

There is a lack of research on gender most likely because the majority of sex offenders are male and it is difficult to obtain large enough samples for comparison. However, studies of non-criminal geographic behavior revealed that females appear to operate in more restricted environments than males (Hodge, 1998).

There also appears to be a clear relationship between race and the criminal mobility of offenders. Results from studies on serial rapists by Warren et al. (1998) and Canter and Gregory (1994) show that white rapists traveled farther than non-white offenders.

These results may reflect class distinctions or cultural differences in the cognitive mapping of space. However, Rossmo et al. (in press) found contrary results.

Gabor and Gottheil (1984) carried out a study that examined crime trip distances (in-towners versus out-of-towners) for a variety of offenses. Their sample consisted of 20 people arrested in 1981 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, for the following offenses: homicide, rape and indecent assault, armed robbery, unarmed robbery, breaking and entering, motor vehicle theft, theft over \$200, theft under \$200 and check fraud. They found that those with a criminal record were substantially more likely to be transient than those without one, suggesting a positive relationship between criminal career and mobility.

Sexual fantasy is another factor suggested by Davies and Dale (1995) as possibly related to longer sexual crime travel distance. These offenders spend long periods of time prowling for victims, and sometimes record a diary of their movements. In addition, they are willing to travel long distances to commit a crime that will reflect their fantasies. Dietz, Hazelwood, and Warren (1990) observed excessive driving in their sample of sexual sadists.

Hunter (2004) examined the relationship between psychopathy and geographic mobility in a sample of 311 male offenders. Her results show that psychopaths displayed greater geographic mobility than did nonpsychopaths. In addition, Cooke (1998) found that the probability of offending in both England and Wales increased as PCL-R scores increased (more strongly with factor 2), suggesting a greater mobility. The psychopath's impulsivity, irresponsibility, short-term relationships, unstable employment, sexual promiscuity, lack of realistic long-term goals, and need for stimulation / proneness to boredom may predispose them to geographic mobility (Cooke, 1998). Another explanation suggests that psychopaths frequently move locations, as



their tendency to con and exploit others eventually becomes known and they are no longer able to take advantage of people in their surroundings.

Few studies have investigated the relationship between personal characteristics and crime trip distance of criminals. Such studies are even scarcer with sex offenders. Research on journey-to crime has neglected to take into account psychological variables, however, results by Hunter (submitted for publication) and Cooke (1998) suggest a direct correlation with psychopathy levels. These findings are evidence of the influence of offender characteristics on individuals' perceptual environments and consequently their spatial mobility, indicating their importance for geographic profiling research.

#### *Modus operandi and spatial behavior*

Some studies of journey-to-crime differences have considered offense category and offender characteristics. There appears, however, to be a lack of similar research on the relationship between the distances traveled by offenders and their modus operandi, especially regarding sex offenders.

Lebeau (1987a) focused on how the journey to rape varies as a function of the offender's approach method and the number of reported rapes committed by the same offender. He studied 320 cases of rapes reported to the San Diego, California, Police Department between the years 1971 and 1975. Of these 320 cases, 156 were single rapes and 164 were serial (two or more) rapes, committed by 39 offenders. The residence of the offender and the location of the initial contact between the victim and offender were used to calculate the journey distance. Results revealed that offenders, both single and serial, traveled the shortest mean distance to assault their victims when they illegally entered the victim's residence. This suggests that offenders travel

shorter distances when using a method linked to crimes against property. Finally, Lebeau found that approach methods were more significant in accounting for the journey to rape distances than offender type.

In a subsequent study on the same data set, Lebeau (1987b) investigated the application of centrography to the spatial patterns of single, serial, and open unknown rapists (where the number of rapes committed by the same individual is unknown because a specific suspect has not been apprehended). Results revealed that spatial patterns differ according to the type of rapists, that spatial patterns may vary over time and, that the temporal influences on spatial patterning vary across type of rapists. As such, serial rapists were the most mobile while the open offenders exhibited a great deal of spatial stability. Lebeau (1987c) suggests two explanations to account for such a result. First, it seems that serial offenders use the same space repeatedly and pattern themselves geographically. After a number of rapes, they tend to backtrack and commit rape close to the sites of previous attacks (Lebeau, 1985, 1990). Second, it may be that some serial rapists behave like open offenders and attack only strangers, while others serial rapists will prey on known victims and, therefore, behave like single rapists (Lebeau, 1987c).

Canter and Gregory (1994), in a study on 45 British serial rapists, tested two characteristics that could be linked to a greater crime trip distance: offense timing and offense venue. It seemed that rapists who offend during the weekend travel farther than those who commit rape during a weekday. Because the range of values was so great however, differences were not significant. Outside rapists (those who attack outdoors) traveled approximately 2.7 times farther to offend as those who raped indoor (e.g., in a house) or in mixed locations.

Davies and Dale (1995) investigated the spatial behavior of 79 stranger rapists. Their results showed that most rapists travel less than five miles to commit their assaults. However, some of the rapists tend to travel longer distances (between 10 and 100 miles, or even greater), and this particular behavior is postulated to be more related to offense characteristics than to personal characteristics. Therefore, rapists who target victims from a particular area (e.g., prostitutes from a red-light district), who commit sophisticated property offenses during a sexual assault, who spend large amounts of time roaming and using public transportation, and who are familiar with numerous neighborhoods (previous habitation, locations of significant people, current or past workplace locations, or even holiday sites), travel longer distances to commit their crimes (Davies et al., 1995).

Davies et al. (1995) conclude that sophistication of the offense is another characteristic that could be related to longer crime trip distance in rape. A sophisticated sexual assault could be identified by the rapist's appearance and demeanor; by his vehicular transport (sometimes up-market); by his degree of planning and organization; by attacking a victim in an up-market accommodation; by taking various precautions to protect his identity (forensic awareness) and by having specific requirements in regards to any objects stolen when burglary occurred.

Warren et al. (1998) found similar results in relation to the sophistication of the crime. They examined the relationship between the crime scene characteristics and the distance traveled in order to offend, in a sample of 108 serial rapists who committed a total of 565 rapes. Their results showed that rapists who had more extensive criminal antecedents, who used forced entry, and who burglarized the victim during the assault tended to travel farther. According to the authors, this could reflect a more generalized criminal motivation and a more experienced

offender in terms of nonsexual crimes. Interestingly, they also found a positive relationship between the presence of ritual, the use of bindings, the manner in which the bindings for the rapes were obtained, and the distance traveled (e.g., sexual sadists may bring their own bindings to the crime sites). Thus, “manifestation of ritualized behavior and the use of restraints have been associated with specific sexual fantasies that are driving the sexual assault and, as such, may also be associated with the choice of a more specific victim and / or more sophisticated cognitive processing of all aspects of the crime” (Warren et al., 1998, p. 56).

Ouimet and Proulx (1994) investigated the spatial and temporal behavior of 10 pedophiles while in treatment. Their observations led them to suggest that, as with other types of crimes, such as burglary or robbery, most of the child molesters offended near their residence. But the explanation for such a phenomenon is different in the case of pedophilia. For child molesters, the offender's home appears to be the best possible location to commit an offense because it offers several advantages over competing locations. In a home, the child might feel more secure and more willing to participate in sexual contact, allowing the offender to engage in satisfying sexual activities. Child molesters are also skillful in manipulating children in order to keep the victim from telling someone about the sexual contacts (Leclerc, Proulx, & McKibben, 2004). These factors might explain why most child molesters hunt for targets in the immediate vicinity of their residence. The authors observed, however, that the level of violence of the crime is positively related to the distance traveled by the offender from his home to the target. If child molesters are not able to find a suitable victim near their home, they may have to go further. As they go further from home, it will become harder to attract a child home (few are willing to take a car trip with a stranger). The offender has to adapt his hunting strategies and use a more direct

approach method, such as a direct attack or an ambush, which in turn could lead to an increase in the level of violence of the crime. Table 2 presents characteristics of the sex offenders and their modus operandi related to their journey-to-crime.

Studies concerned with the relationship between modus operandi characteristics and the distance traveled by sex offenders are clearly of value both in terms of the development of a criminological model of spatial behavior, and from an investigative standpoint, especially within an integration of psychological profiling and geographic profiling.

#### Typologies of Spatial Behavior

Some authors identified typologies of geographic behavior. Two types of geographic behavior were common to these typologies: the geographically mobile and the geographically stable offender. This section discusses the details of these typologies. In Table 3, the different types of offenders are presented according to their classification and are regrouped as to their geographic mobility or stability. It should be noted that most of these typologies have been constructed from analyses of serial murderers.

Table 2: Personal and Modus Operandi Characteristics of Sex Offenders Related to Geographic Mobility

Source	Type of offender	Number of subjects	Location	Personal and modus operandi characteristics related to a greater geographic mobility
Canter & Gregory (1994)	Serial rapists	45	Great Britain	Race (white); Offense timing (rapists who offend on week-ends, but not statistically significant); Offense venue (rapists who attack outside)
Davies & Dale (1995)	Rapists	79	England	Age (older); Sexual fantasy and sadism; Targets victims from a particular area; Commits sophisticated property offence during sexual assault; Spends large amount of time roaming for victims; Uses of public transportation; Familiarity with numerous neighborhoods; Sophistication of the offence (appearance, organization, planning, forensic awareness, etc.)
Gabbor & Gottheil (1984)	Sex offenders	20 per type of sex offense	Canada	Criminal record
Lebeau (1987)	Single and serial rapists	320	USA	Method of approach; Type of rapist (serial)
Ouimet & Proulx (1994)	Pedophiles	10	Canada	Level of violence
Warren, Reboussin, Hazelwood, Cummings, Gibbs, & Trumbetta (1998)	Serial rapists	108	USA	Age (older); Race (white); More extensive criminal records; Forced entry; Burglarizes victim; Ritual; Use of bindings; Manner in which the bindings were obtained (brought)

Table 3: Spatial Typologies of Sex Offenders According to Their Geographic Mobility or Stability

Source	Geographically mobile	Geographically stable	Use of mixed classification
Ressler, Burgess, & Douglas (1988)	Organized	Disorganized	Yes
Hazelwood & Warren (2000)	Ritualistic	Impulsive	No
Egger (1990)	Megamobile	Megastat	No
Holmes & De Burger (1985, 1988)	Geographically transient	Geographically stable	Yes
Hickey (1991)	Traveling or Mobile	Local & Place-specific	No
Newton (1992)	Nomadic	Territorial & Stationary	No
Canter & Larkin (1993)	Commuter	Marauder	No
Rossmo (1997, 2000)	Poacher	Hunter, Troller, & Trapper	No

*Ressler, Burgess, and Douglas (1988)*

In their *organized/disorganized* typology of sexual murderers, Ressler, Burgess, and Douglas (1988) briefly discussed spatial behavior associated with the different types of offenders. They suggest that the *disorganized* murderer is likely to remain close to home while the *organized* sexual murderer will travel a longer distance.

*Hazelwood and Warren (2000)*

Derived from their criminal investigative analysis experience and research, Hazelwood and Warren (2000) suggested a typology that can assist in identifying and organizing observations regarding different parameters of a sex offender's criminal behavior, including his spatial mobility. The *Impulsive* sex offender is generally the least successful at evading identification and apprehension. His fantasies are simplistic and concrete. The *Impulsive* sex offender's personality is often characterized by psychopathic traits and he tends to perceive that anything in his environment is there for the taking. Preoffense factors may include consumption of alcohol and an approach method that lacks complex ruses or attempts at deceptive disguises (Hazelwood & Warren, 2000). His criminal behavior is designed to obtain and to control his victim, but with little verbalization. The level of force used is frequently excessive, and he acts out his underlying motivation of anger. His criminal career is polymorphic. The *Impulsive* sex offender travels a shorter distance to offend and commits rapes over a smaller area, reflecting less specific victim selection criteria and unsophisticated attempts to prevent recognition and identification.

The *Ritualistic* sex offender is less common, but he is the most difficult to identify and apprehend. This type of sex offender is characterized by some as withdrawn and isolated, or as



charming and gregarious by others. He invests a great amount of time in his deviant sexual fantasies, which are multidimensional and complex. The *Ritualistic* offender acts out his sexual fantasies with inanimate objects (dolls, clothing, pictures), paid partners, or with consensual partners. He possesses theme-oriented pornography which may come to complement the underlying fantasy that is the base for how the crimes are committed. The *Ritualistic* sex offender may have no criminal history prior to arrest, but if he does, most of it will be of a sexual nature. Because of the ritual aspect of his crimes, this type of offender tends to travel longer distances.

*Egger (1990)*

Egger (1990) also reports that Cecil Wingo, chief investigator for the Harris County, Texas Medical Examiner, describes serial murderers with regard to their mobility. He used the term *megastat* for an individual killing over time in a single restricted urban environment. The *megamobile* is geographically mobile and moves over great distance during his killing career.

*Holmes and De Burger (1985, 1988)*

Holmes and De Burger (1985, 1988) developed their classification through analysis of materials (court transcripts, interview data, clinical reports and biographical accounts) pertinent to 110 known serial murderers. They proposed a typology that distinguishes between concentrated and dispersed murders. Thus serial murderers are geographically *stable*, geographically *transient*, or *mixed* (a combination of stable and transient). The geographically *stable* killer usually kills within the area of his residence. These murderers also dispose of bodies in the same or nearby areas. Usually, they are individuals employed in the community, well-known, respected, and with little or no overt indications of their homicidal tendencies. In

the geographically *stable* murderer, very often the motive to kill is sexual in nature, and they may target a selected group of victims (Holmes & De Burger, 1988). Usually, these murderers are white males, aged 18 to 34, who operate in a geographic area comprised of persons of their own race. They are of average to above-average intelligence, over half of them having some type of higher education. Their victims, who are most often a stranger or loosely affiliated, are usually transported from the crime scene to a disposal site, and the killing is carefully planned with the method, location, and dumpsite chosen before abduction is attempted.

In contrast, the geographically *transient* killer travels continually throughout his criminal career, from one area to another, not so much to find victims but to better avoid apprehension (Holmes & De Burger, 1988). These murderers are white males, aged 25 to 54, with average to above average intelligence. Only a small number have a higher education. Many of *transient* killers work odd jobs and are usually single or divorced. The crime phase is likely to be organized and planned carefully. The victims are usually strangers but possess certain specific traits. These murderers kill for different reasons, ranging from the thrill to the desire to have absolute power over his victims. After the murders, the *transient* killers are not likely to engage in necrophilia or in decapitating the victims' bodies, but in some cases, cannibalism is found.

Although this typology is an interesting one, the distinction between transient and stable killers suffers from a lack of precision in that there is no attempt to measure the distances traveled or the size of area for each group (Lundrigan & Canter, 2001). Also, the characteristics (other than geographic) associated with the two types have been found solely on the basis of a study of 20 cases of serial murderers. Finally, these characteristics are sometimes contrary to what has been found in previous studies and there is no attempt to explain the discrepancies.

### *Hickey (1991)*

Hickey's (1991) typology is based on a historical review in which he identified 117 cases of serial murderers in the United States and 47 others from foreign countries. Hickey's geographic typology identifies three different types of serial murderers: the *traveling* or *mobile*, the *local*, and the *place-specific*. The *traveling* or *mobile* killer is almost exclusively a male that kills at random or seeks out a specific type of victim while traveling through United States. This type of murderer will approach his victim in a friendly or helpful fashion and takes considerable precaution against being caught (Egger, 1998). The *local* murderer usually remains within a certain urbanized area and will target a specific type of victim such as prostitutes. Finally, the *place-specific* murderer can be male or female, and usually operates in specific places such as nursing homes, hospitals or even private homes. Their motivation is often financial gain, mercy killing, hatred of a particular group of people, but also for sex and violence (Egger, 1998).

According to Lundrigan and Canter (2001), the classification elaborated by Hickey is of real value, but neglected to take account the possible role of a base (e.g., home or workplace), even for the offenders who cover great distances. As with the typology of Holmes and De Burger (1988), Hickey's classification lacks precision in that no distance ranges are proposed to differentiate the three groups.

### *Newton (1992)*

Newton (1992) identified a three-part typology of serial killers similar to Hickey's, based on the analysis of 357 cases (301 from the U.S. and 56 from foreign countries). The *territorial* killer stakes out a defined area (a city, or a particular neighborhood) and rarely deviates from the selected game preserve. *Nomadic* killers travel widely in their search for victims, drifting

aimlessly from one jurisdiction to another. Finally, the *stationary* killer commits his crimes at home or at work (clinics, hospitals, nursing homes). This murderer may be active for years, being adept of covering his tracks. Self-protection and victim accessibility dominate his choice of murder sites. According to Newton (1992), serial murderers follow the same hunting style, expressing who and what they are, as well as their view of life and of themselves.

*Canter and Larkin (1993)*

Canter and Larkin (1993) examined the spatial activity of 45 British male serial sex offenders who had committed at least two assaults. This study sought to test two hypothetical models regarding geographic mobility of sex offenders - the *commuter* and the *marauder* - suggesting that the selection of targets is highly dependant on the physical environment. The *commuter* model proposes that the offender will travel out from his base (home) to a different area to commit his offenses. "Central to this hypothesis is that although there will be a domain in which the crimes are committed and this domain will have some distinct relationship to where the offender lives, there will be no clear relationship between size or location of the criminal domain and the distance it is from any given offender's home. The *commuter* model suggests that there is little or no overlap between these two areas and that the offender moves to a district which is outside his home range to offend. This is not to suggest that the criminal range is not familiar to the offender, but that it is at an appreciable distance from the area in which he habitually operates as a non-offender" (Canter & Larkin, 1993, p.65).

The *marauder* model asserts that by using the two most distant crimes in a series as the diameter of a circle, the offender's base (home) will be found within this circle. In this model, the rapist uses his home as a base from which to commit his crimes. The further the distance

between the crimes, the further is the distance that the offender is travelling from his home base or activity nodes. "The marauder hypothesis suggests that there is a large or total overlap of the home range and criminal range areas. The offender operates from a base (home) definitely located within the boundaries of his safe area for criminal activity" (Canter & Larkin, 1993, p.65). Their study found support for the *marauder* model, with 87% of their sample traveling from their home base to the surrounding region to commit their sex offenses.

Alston (1994) identified some limits associated with the *marauder* and *commuter* models proposed by Canter and Larkin (1993). The problems with the circle hypothesis tests is that: (1) it fails to deal with offenders who live in the midst of their crime series; (2) it fails to deal with longer distance moves; (3) it fails if the offender attacks a victim really close to his home base; (4) it does not suggest how the researcher might incorporate other activity nodes; and (5) it does not control for crimes occurring in a specific geographical area such as a prostitution stroll (Alston, 1994, p. 66-68).

*Rossmo, (1997)*

According to Rossmo, the "hunting method affects the spatial distribution of offense sites and any effort to predict offender residence from crime locations must consider this influence" (Rossmo, 2000, p. 139). Thus, Rossmo developed a hunting typology (which represents the search and attack processes engaged in by the offender) relevant to the identification of spatial patterns of serial predators, which is based on geography of crime theory, empirical data, and investigative experience. As not all sites related to a crime are known to police, the hunting typology is concerned specifically with offender behavior related to victim encounter sites or last

known locations, and body dump sites or victim release sites. These sites have the greater probability of being known by the police after a crime.

Rossmo (1997) proposed that the hunting process of offenders include the search for a suitable victim and the method of attack; the first determines the selection of victim encounter sites, and the latter, disposal sites. Rossmo identified four victim search methods: (1) *Hunter*: the crimes of the *hunter* are generally committed within his city of residence. This method is the most used by predators. The offenders set out from their home base, and search for suitable victims in the area within their awareness space. The *hunter* is similar to the marauder model of Canter and Larkin (1993) discussed earlier; (2) *Poacher*: the *poacher* will commit his crimes by travelling outside of his home city, or by operating from an activity node other than his home base. The *poacher* is similar to the commuter model of Canter and Larkin (1993); (3) *Troller*: the *troller* is an opportunistic offender that encounters his victims through routine activities. His crimes are often spontaneous, although sometimes, this type of offender may have fantasized or planned his offense in advance so that he is ready when an opportunity presents itself; (4) *Trapper*: the *trapper* has an occupation or a position where potential victims come to him, or he can entice suitable victims into his home or a location he controls by means of subterfuge (e.g., placing want ads, taking in boarders) (Rossmo, 2000).

Rossmo suggests three different types of attack methods:

(1) *Raptor*: this type of offender is characterized by attacking almost immediately upon encountering his victims. This is the most frequently used method for predators.

(2) *Stalker*: the *stalker* will follow, watch his victim, and will wait for an opportune moment to attack. The attack, murder, and victim release sites will thus be strongly influenced by the victim's activity space.

(3) *Ambusher*: the attacks of the *ambusher* are committed someplace where the offender has a great deal of control, such as his residence or workplace. This offender sometimes hides the bodies of the victims, most often on his property. Rossmo points out that “while victim encounter sites in such cases may provide sufficient spatial information for analysis, many ambushers select marginalized individuals whose disappearances are rarely linked, even when missing person reports are made to the police” (for example, the case of Robert Pickton, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, who is accused of multiple murders of prostitutes, most of them being natives) (Rossmo, 2000, p.141-142).

Table 4 lists personal, modus operandi, and spatial behavior characteristics related to the geographically mobile and stable offender. These characteristics were taken from all the studies reviewed on sex offenders that established a differentiation between stable and mobile offenders. As can be seen from the table, the geographically mobile offender is generally older, of above average intelligence, socially competent and with no criminal career or with one that reflects sexually related offenses. His offenses are planned, sophisticated and a great amount of time is invested in the pursuit of his fantasies. The geographically mobile offender tends to target a stranger victim and considerable precautions are taken against being caught. The crime scene reflects overall control with no weapon or evidence found. Spatially, this offender is mobile, operating outside his home range or even his home city. He may transport the victim's body to hide it and may travel throughout his criminal career to better avoid apprehension.

The geographically stable offender, however, is younger, socially immature, of an average intelligence and is characterized by psychopathic personality traits. He usually lives alone and has a criminal career indicating his antisocial nature. His offenses are spontaneous and he most often encounters his victims, who are usually known, during his routine activities. His crimes are unsophisticated and exhibit excessive force. The crime scene is most often random and sloppy, with the weapon or physical evidence present. The geographically stable offender commits his crimes over a smaller area and tends to live and/or work near the crime scene. In most cases, the victim's body will be left at the death scene.

#### Spatial Behavior and Investigative Strategies

As empirical and theoretical research have demonstrated that crimes were not randomly distributed in space, some practitioners and academics developed investigative strategies and tools related to the spatial behavior of criminals in order to increase the probability of their apprehension.

##### *Navigational Tests*

Kind (1987) reported that two navigational tests were used in the late stage of the Yorkshire Ripper investigation. After 13 murders and 4 assaults assumed to be linked to the Ripper remained unsolved after five and a half years, the detectives became divided as to where the offender lived. The first test to resolve this question was to compute the center of gravity (spatial mean) of the offenses without regard to the time of occurrence.



Table 4: Characteristics of Geographically Mobile and Stable Sex Offenders

	Personal characteristics	Modus operandi and crime scene behavior	Spatial behavior
Geographically Mobile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- almost exclusively males</li> <li>- older</li> <li>- above average intelligence</li> <li>- socially competent</li> <li>- short attention spans</li> <li>- low level of formal education</li> <li>- skilled work preferred</li> <li>- record of working odd jobs</li> <li>- sexually competent</li> <li>- paraphilic interest in coercive sexuality</li> <li>- possesses theme-oriented pornography</li> <li>- inconsistent childhood discipline</li> <li>- controlled mood during crime</li> <li>- use of alcohol with crime</li> <li>- lives with partner but with more marital breakdowns</li> <li>- follows crime in news media</li> <li>- personality: withdrawn and awkward or charming and gregarious</li> <li>- no criminal career, or one that reflects sexually related offenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offense planned and sophisticated</li> <li>- offender invests a great amount of time in the pursuit of his fantasies</li> <li>- victim a stranger</li> <li>- less victim specific</li> <li>- offender tends to appear friendly and helpful</li> <li>- victim personalized</li> <li>- controlled conversation</li> <li>- crime scene reflects overall control</li> <li>- restraints used</li> <li>- weapon may change</li> <li>- aggressive acts prior to death</li> <li>- biting and cannibalism</li> <li>- body hidden, unclothed</li> <li>- weapon / evidence absent</li> <li>- considerable precaution taken by offender against being caught</li> <li>- victim remains less likely to be discovered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- victim or body transported</li> <li>- high offender mobility, with car in good condition</li> <li>- offender may change jobs or leave town</li> <li>- offender travels long distances to commit crime</li> <li>- crimes committed while offender traveling or relocating to other areas</li> <li>- crimes outside offender's home range</li> <li>- offender operates outside from his home city or from an activity site other than his residence</li> <li>- offender travels continuously throughout his criminal career to better avoid apprehension</li> </ul>
Geographically Stable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- male or female</li> <li>- young</li> <li>- average intelligence</li> <li>- socially immature</li> <li>- poor work history or employed in the community</li> <li>- is well-known</li> <li>- sexually incompetent</li> <li>- harsh discipline in childhood</li> <li>- anxious mood during crime</li> <li>- may use alcohol or drugs with crime</li> <li>- lives alone</li> <li>- minimal interest in news media</li> <li>- minimal change in life-style</li> <li>- psychopathic personality</li> <li>- antisocial criminal career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- spontaneous offense</li> <li>- encounters victims during routine activities (or other crimes)</li> <li>- premeditated opportunism</li> <li>- victim or location known to offender</li> <li>- specific type of victim targeted</li> <li>- victims searched for offender's awareness space</li> <li>- occupation or position where potential victims come to them</li> <li>- controls victims by means of subterfuge</li> <li>- depersonalizes victim</li> <li>- minimal conversation</li> <li>- crime scene random and sloppy, crime is unsophisticated</li> <li>- minimal use of restraints</li> <li>- excessive level of force used</li> <li>- sexual acts after death</li> <li>- injuries to sexual areas</li> <li>- body left in view, clothed</li> <li>- evidence / weapon often present</li> <li>- little or no measures to protect offender's identity</li> <li>- decapitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- body left at death scene</li> <li>- disposes bodies in the same or nearby area but different from murder scenes</li> <li>- lives / works near crime scene</li> <li>- remains within a certain state or urbanized environment</li> <li>- crimes committed in their own home, places of employment, or other specific sites</li> <li>- base acts as a focus of each crime</li> <li>- crimes committed over small area</li> </ul>

Results showed that the center of gravity was in all cases near the city of Bradford. The second test performed on the seventeen attacks was to consider the possible effects of time on the location of the crimes. The method adopted was to plot a graph with time on the ordinate and day length (approximated by the month) on the abscissa. This was done because it was hypothesized that the Ripper would be unwilling to strike late at night if his return home was too far. Results showed that the later attacks were those located near the city of Leeds and Bradford. Even though the apprehension of the killer, Peter William Suttcliffe, was independent of the recommendation based on the two navigational tests, results cautioned the original hypothesis that the offender was local and may have led to an earlier arrest if applied sooner (Rossmo, 2000).

### *Geographic Profiling*

Geographic profiling is another investigative strategy that is efficient in many serial crime investigations. Instead of using an offender's activity space in order to predict where crimes are likely to occur, as in the Brantingham model, geographic profiling is an attempt to invert this premise by using the crime locations in order to predict the most probable area where the offender resides or works. These studies have led to the development of the criminal geographic targeting (CGT) algorithm which has been developed into a computerized geographic profiling system called Rigel (Rossmo, 2000). Rigel is a strategic information management system that allows investigators to prioritize those areas most likely to lead to the offender. In such a system, "crime site coordinates are analyzed with a patented criminal hunting algorithm that produces a probability surface showing likelihood of offender residence within the hunting area" (Rossmo, 2000, p. 197). This three-dimensional probability map is referred to as a jeopardy

surface whereas the two-dimensional perspective integrated with a street map is termed a geoprofile (Rossmo, 1993a, b; 1994; 1995a, b; 1996, 1997, 1998, 2000). The geoprofile does not indicate an “x” where the offender lives but instead, it describes an optimal search process. According to Rossmo (1997), the predictive power of the CGT is directly related to the number of known crime sites attributed to one offender; the more locations, the better the performance.

While primarily empirical, geographic profiling includes both objective and subjective components. The objective or quantitative component refers to all the statistical methods and measures used to analyze and interpret the point pattern formed by the crime sites. The subjective or qualitative component concerns the reconstruction and interpretation of the offender’s mental map. For example, a prostitute rapist will target his victims in the red-light district of a city where such activity is happening instead of hunting in wealthy residential neighborhoods.

Moreover, geographic profiling has to consider several factors linked to the crime and the environment such as the locations associated with the crime (e.g., victim encounter, attack, murder or assault, body dump sites), offender type, hunting style, target backcloth, arterial roads and highways, psychological and physical boundaries, zoning (industrial, commercial, residential) and land use (e.g., stores, bars, businesses), neighborhood demographics (e.g., race), victims’ routine activities, and displacement (Rossmo, 2000).

In general, a case may be geographically profiled when a series of crimes has occurred that are linked together with a reasonable degree of certainty. There must also be at least five crime sites in the series or five crime locations (e.g., one crime with multiple locations such as victim encounter, attack, murder, body dump site, or vehicle dump site). Geographic profiling has been

mainly used in cases of serial murders and serial sexual assaults. However, the technique can also be applied in cases of arson, robbery, burglary, and kidnapping. Further, geographic profiling has proven helpful in investigations when used in conjunction with other police strategies and tactics such as suspect prioritization, task forces, database searches (e.g., sex offender registries, government and business databases, motor vehicle registration), patrol saturation, stakeouts, neighborhood canvasses, peak-of-tension polygraphy, missing bodies, and trial court expert evidence (Rossmo, 2000). This tool can also serve for geographic modus operandi analysis, geographic search analysis, post-offense movement analysis, victim activity overlap analysis, and geographic assessment (Moore, 2002).

Geographic profiling has not only proven useful to police agencies, but it has also shown its efficiency. Contrary to other profiling methods that rely only on anecdotal accounts of their performance, Rossmo (2001) developed the CGT hit score percentage, which is used as a quantitative measure of its performance. The CGT hit score percentage represents the area searched using a geoprofile until the offender's residence is encountered, divided by the total area covered by the crime sites (Rossmo, 2001). For example, if a rapist's residence is encountered after searching  $0.6 \text{ km}^2$ , and the rapes committed by this rapist covered  $12 \text{ km}^2$ , then the CGT hit score percentage would be of 5% ( $0.6/12$ ). The smaller the CGT percentage, the better the focus of the geoprofile. Between 1991 and 2001, Rigel has been used by different police agencies such as the Vancouver police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Ontario Police Patrol (OPP), and the British National Crime Faculty. During this period, 1426 crimes including 1726 crime locations were analyzed by Rigel. The average CGT hit score percentage was 4.7% (median = 3.0 and S.D. = 4.4). If the average CGT hit score percentages

are broken down for each type of crime, Rossmo (2001) obtained a score of 5.1% for murder, 4.7% for rape, 2.2% for arson, 7.1% for robbery, and 6.5% for sexual assault.

Moore (2002) conducted an exploratory study to examine how geographic profiling techniques could be used to predict the most likely location in which a serial offender will choose to offend in the future. Although it did not seem feasible to predict the next crime of a serial offender using CGT, Moore found that it was reasonable to use this tool in order to predict the location of at least one of the next five crimes in a series with some degree of accuracy. Such a technique could be useful during criminal investigations, especially with prolific serial offenders.

### Conclusion

This literature review of the spatial behavior of sex offenders suggests that, in general, most of these offenders commit their crimes close to home. Some of the sex offenders, however, travel longer distances to commit their assaults. In order to better comprehend why some sex offenders travel longer distance than others, studies have been conducted to test the relationship between offender characteristics and the distances they traveled, as well as between their modus operandi and the distances they traveled.

Realizing that not all sex offenders travel the same distance to commit their crimes, researchers developed spatial typologies in order to differentiate the geographically stable from the geographically transient sexual offender. Although interesting and informative, these existing spatial typologies have several limits.

First, as Lundrigan and Canter (2001) noted, almost all the typologies identified so far are imprecise in that there is no attempt to measure the distances traveled or the size of the area for

each group. Second, most of these typologies have not been identified in an empirical way, using statistical analysis. Third, very few typologies have considered results from studies that investigated the links between personal characteristics, modus operandi variables and the distance traveled by sex offenders. Fourth, even if most typologies have been developed from an offender profiling perspective, few included measurable psychological variables. Finally, none of the typologies except one (Rossmo, 1997, 2000) take into account the hunting pattern of the offender.

Although most researchers recognize the importance spatial behavior plays in any analysis of sex offenders, there is surprisingly little empirical research that examines the links between offender characteristics, modus operandi, crime scene variables, and spatial behavior. Such research could permit a better understanding of sex offender criminal behavior and may also enhance police investigative techniques, such as geographic profiling. In order to continue the work that has been done, studies should be carried out on the hunting patterns of serial sex offenders. These patterns should then be put in relationship with psychological characteristics of the offenders and modus operandi variables. Finally, researchers should investigate the rationality underlying these hunting patterns in order to better comprehend the choices made by criminals during the offending process.

## **Troisième Chapitre**

**A Descriptive Model of the Hunting Process of Serial Sex Offenders:**

**A Rational choice Perspective**

## INTRODUCTION

Studies exploring crime from the offender's perspective is the most neglected area of criminological research, and yet it is of crucial importance to the formulation of both theory and policy (Wright & Bennett, 1990). Reasons for the neglect of this perspective include:

- this kind of research is time consuming;
- such an approach requires that researchers deal directly with offenders, something that many criminologists have been reluctant to do; and
- the use of a research design that allows offenders to speak for themselves was considered "unscientific" by positivists (Bennett & Wright, 1984).

Nonetheless, it has been noted that the face-to-face interaction which is part of collecting this information represents "the fullest condition of participating in the mind of another human being" (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, p. 12). According to Ward and Hudson (1998), this tendency of most theorists to overlook the descriptive or microtheoretical level is unfortunate, as "such models serve to identify possible clinical phenomena and therefore describe the puzzles that subsequent theory sets out to explain" (Ward & Hudson, 1998, p. 55).

Most of the work using the offender's perspective to investigate decision making of criminals has been limited to property crimes. Such studies have been conducted on burglars (Bennett & Wright, 1984; Cromwell, Olson, & Avary, 1991; Rengert & Wasilchick, 1985; Walsh, 1986; Wright & Decker, 1994; Wright & Logie, 1988), robbers (Feeney, 1986; Petrosino & Brensilber, 2003; Walsh, 1986; Wright & Decker, 1997), shoplifters (Carroll & Weaver, 1986; Cromwell, Parker, & Mobley, 1999), and auto theft



(Fleming, 1999). Only a few studies have been completed that aim at building descriptive models of the offense process directly from data provided by sex offenders.

#### *Descriptive Models of Offense Processes in Sex Offenders*

Using a grounded-theory approach, descriptive models of offense processes in child molesters (Ward, Loudon, Hudson, & Marshall, 1995) and in rapists (Polaschek, Hudson, Ward, & Siegert, 2001) have been developed. Grounded theory consists of concepts that “are inductively derived from an initial set of qualitative descriptions or scripts, which, once coded into rudimentary categories, lead to the collection either of more descriptions or of quantitative data” (Ward et al., 1995, p. 454). Their models of offense processes provided a description of the cognitive, behavioral, motivational, and contextual factors associated with a variety of sex offenses. Although interesting and informative, these models present several limitations. First, as noted by the authors, their samples were small (26 child molesters and 24 rapists). Considering the heterogeneity of sex offender populations (Knight & Prentky, 1990; Proulx, St-Yves, Guay, & Ouimet, 1999), small samples may not contain a representative range of sexual assault behavior. Second, research on offense processes should not rely on study of the offender alone, but also on the entire criminal event, combining analysis of the offender, the victim, and the context (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001). Third, these offense process models were too general, and neglected to describe in detail the different components of the *modus operandi* exhibited by sex offenders during the offense.

#### *Hunting Process*

Rossmo (1997) proposed that the hunting process of offenders include the search for a suitable victim and the method of attack; the first determines the selection of victim

encounter sites, and the latter, attack sites. Rossmo identified four victim search methods in a sample of serial murderers. The crimes of the *hunter* (31.6%) are generally committed within the offender's city of residence. The offenders set out from their home base, and search for suitable victims in the area within their awareness space. The *poacher* (54.8%) commits crimes by travelling outside its home city, or by operating from an activity node other than its home base. The *troller* (11.6%) is an opportunistic offender that encounters its victims through routine activities. Its crimes are often spontaneous, although sometimes this type of offender may have fantasized or planned its offense in advance so that he is ready when an opportunity presents itself. *Trappers* (1.9%) have an occupation or a position where potential victims come to them, or they can entice suitable victims into their home or a location they control by means of subterfuge (e.g., placing want ads, taking in boarders) (Rossmo, 2000).

Three different types of offender attack methods were identified by Rossmo (1997). The *raptor* (78.7%) is characterized by attacking almost immediately upon encountering its victims. This is the most frequently used method for predators. The *stalker* (0%) follows, watches its victim, and waits for an opportune moment to attack. The attack, murder and victim release sites are thus strongly influenced by the victim activity space. Finally, the attacks of the *ambusher* (21.3%) are committed someplace where the offender has a great deal of control, such as its residence or workplace. This offender sometimes hides the bodies of the victims, most often on its property. Although Rossmo's typology of hunting patterns illustrates well how the search for a suitable victim and the attack method influence each other and the geography of the crime

(encounter sites and disposal/or victim release sites), no explanation is provided as to why offenders choose one method over another.

Many studies on serial rapists have focused on a quantitative description of modus operandi and personal characteristics of these criminals so that they can be used in offender profiling (Hazelwood & Burgess, 1987; Hazelwood & Warren, 1989; 1990). Although informative and useful, these studies neglect the cognitive processing of sexual aggressors during the commission of their crime. The use of a rational choice approach is an efficient way to further comprehend not only the “what” and the “why” behind criminal actions, but more importantly, their underlying rationality.

#### *Rational Choice Perspective*

In the rational choice approach to crime, the most important dimension is the presumption of rationality of human action, criminal or not (Cornish, 1993). “Its starting point was an assumption that offenders seek to benefit themselves by their criminal behavior; that this involves the making of decisions and of choices, however rudimentary on occasion these processes might be; and that these processes exhibit a measure of rationality, albeit constrained by limits of time and ability and the availability of relevant information” (Cornish & Clarke, 1986, p.1). Criminals will decide whether or not to commit a crime by weighing the efforts, rewards, and costs involved in alternative courses of action. This rational evaluation may seem limited or “bounded” in some crimes by time, effort and available information, but even violent criminals, including sex offenders, will exhibit a substantial degree of rationality (Rossmo, 2000). According to Cornish (1993), in such a perspective it becomes important to study situational variables such as crime scene and victim characteristics, and their choice structuring properties, in

order to emphasize the distinctive nature of different person-situation criminal interactions.

#### AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to provide a descriptive model of a specific component of the offense process, namely the hunting process of serial sex offenders from the offenders' account. Based on the rational choice perspective, the model presents a description of the decision making surrounding the hunting process used by serial sex offenders to commit their crimes. Finally, the model may be employed to better understand the criminal behavior of serial sex offenders and thus inform clinical practice, crime prevention, and offender profiling.

#### METHOD

##### *Participants*

The participants in this study included any individual who committed two or more sexual assaults or sex-related crimes (e.g., sexual homicides) on a stranger victim (i.e., offenders with no personal relationship with the victim prior to the day the offense was committed) of any age (there is no universally accepted definition of serial sex offenders). Events, such as incarceration, that interrupt a series do not preclude offenses taking place before or after the said event from being included in a series (Alston, 1994). The serial sex offenders selected were all incarcerated in a Correctional Service of Canada penitentiary (institution where inmates serve a sentence of two years or more), located in the province of Quebec, Canada. They were recruited from institutions of different security levels in order to obtain a broad range of offenders, and therefore a wide range of responses. A record was kept by the first author of all sex offenders

convicted of a sentence of greater than two years in the province of Quebec, Canada, between 1995 and 2004. This list was subsequently used to identify and select the offenders in this study. Among more than a thousand sex offenders, 92 matched to our criteria, and 72 agreed to participate in the research, though only 69 provided qualitative material for the analysis. Among the 20 participants who were not included, only 9 offenders refused to participate in the study and the others 11 were not available to meet because of their mental state, discipline problems, or because of a transfer to another institution. The majority of our sample was white (91.3%), and they were on average 30.7 years old when they started their series of crime (S.D. = 9.4). Almost half (46.4%) of the offenders were married or in a relationship at the time of their crimes. The majority (89.9%) were French speaking, 39.6% were unemployed, and only 10.1% had no prior criminal record before starting their series of crimes. For those with a record, they had an average of 1.0 criminal charge (S.D. = 3.1) for sexual nonviolent crime, 2.9 charges (S.D. = 6.3) for sexual violent crimes, 11.9 charges (S.D. = 19.6) for nonsexual and nonviolent crimes, and 2.5 charges (S.D. = 4.4) for nonsexual and violent crimes. It is also noteworthy that 39.1% of our sample have never owned a car.

### *Procedure*

The rational choice perspective provided the main set of theoretical principles used to guide our data collection. A specially constructed instrument was built to collect information from police investigative reports (present in the institution's case file) and to conduct in-depth semi-structured interviews. This questionnaire includes five sections that permit the collection of information on pre-crime factors, hunting patterns, modus operandi, post-crime factors and geographic behavior. The main advantage of semi-

structured interview over other methods is that it allows subjects to speak freely and at length using their own concepts and terminology. It can also be conducted in a relatively informal, nonthreatening manner, providing the researcher the opportunity to develop a relationship of trust and confidence (Bennett & Wright, 1984). The reliability of responses in our study was monitored by checking for and questioning inconsistencies, but most of the subject matter covered in the interviews was not included in official reports. Nonetheless, one study comparing the responses of offenders to official records revealed close agreement between the two (West & Farrington, 1977). In order to minimize response distortion, offenders were promised complete anonymity and confidentiality, and a guarantee that their information provided could not be used in any way against them by the Correctional Service of Canada. Inmates, however, were told that if during the course of the interview, the name of a potential victim or someone who is in danger was brought up, the interviewer would have an obligation to inform the concerned authorities. Interviews were conducted in a private office, isolated from correctional staff and other inmates. They lasted from 2 to 12 hours, depending on the number of crimes committed and the participants' verbosity. Due to the sensitive nature of the conversations, permission was not requested to tape record the interviews, although extensive verbatim notes were taken whenever possible. No participant was paid for participating in the study.

### *Data Analysis*

As dictated by the rational choice perspective, the serial rapists' hunting process has been broken down into a series of sequential events or steps that allow exploration of the different aspects of their decision making related to their assaults. The rational choice

perspective has been used as a heuristic device to frame offender decision making regarding their hunting process (Petrosino & Brensilber, 2003). Following Clarke and Cornish's (1985) decision making model, qualitative responses from serial sex offenders were organized into two major areas: (1) victim search methods, and (2) offender attack methods (see Figure 1).

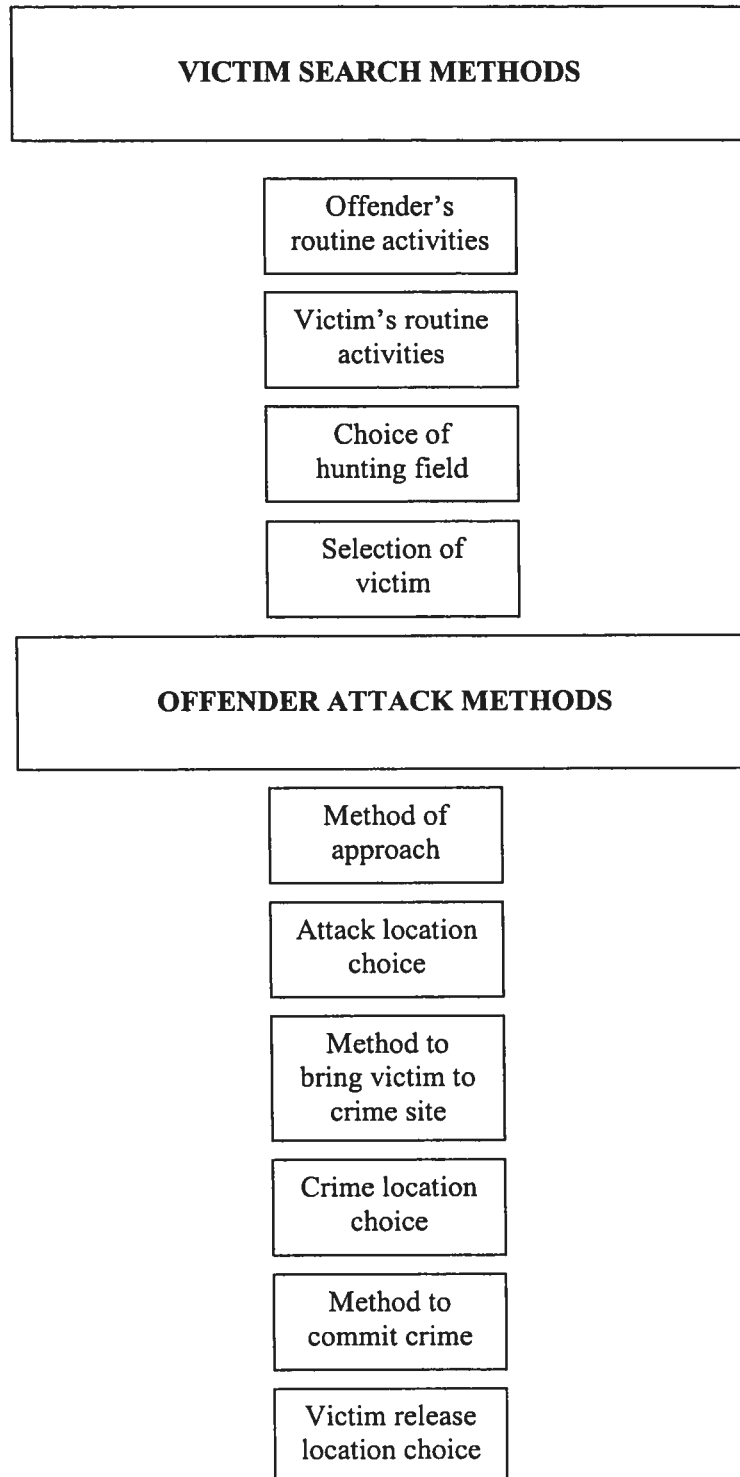
## RESULTS

### Victim Search Methods

#### *Phase 1: Routine Activities of Offenders and Victims*

Offenders were asked about their routine activities just before the commission of their crimes. Routine activities are defined as the activities and behavior engaged in by people on a regular (daily or weekly) basis (Rossmo, 2000). Brantingham and Brantingham (1984) note that "most criminals are predominantly non-criminals; that is, they spend most of their time in non-criminal pursuits" (p. 350). Phase 1 of the model shows that a majority of serial rapists were engaged in non-criminal routine activities prior to their crimes. Table 1 reports that 25% of the offenders were engaged in an occupation where they could come into contact with potential victims. Such occupations include work in facilities that have potential victims in vulnerable positions (e.g., hospitals, nursery homes, kindergartens, babysitting), and team sports coaching or other activities that attract potential victims (e.g., bike repairing, operating a convenience

Figure 1 : Rational Choice Heuristic





store). Some offenders (20%) reported that they were engaged in an inside recreational activity, such as drinking and/or taking drugs at home, at a bar or a party, or watching a movie (*"I was in a bar to celebrate getting my income tax cheque and was drinking a few beers"*). Some serial sex offenders encountered their victims while traveling from one place to another (17%) (*"I was on my way home from a bar and I noticed a girl walking alone"*). Others (3%) were engaged in drug-related activities (e.g., waiting or looking for drug dealer), and 6% were not able to recall what they were doing prior to committing their crimes. For a significant proportion of serial sex offenders (42%), however, most of their time was spent prowling for victims, working towards achieving their sexual goals. While they were seemingly engaged in normal activities such as shopping, walking, and driving, they were really searching for a potential target (*"I was walking through the different stores in the mall looking for a good looking girl that I could attack"*). These offenders often prowl for long hours before selecting a victim corresponding to their suitability criteria. This is in agreement with the findings of Davies and Dale (1995) who reported that several serial rapists in their sample were extensive prowlers, some of whom covered relatively long distances using a vehicle or public transportation. Ouimet and Proulx's (1994) study on serial child molesters suggested that because some of these individuals lack occupational stability, they spend a disproportional large amount of their time and energy on making contacts with potential victims and as such, their routine activities may be determined by the opportunity structure associated with their crimes. (Note that the percentages may add to more than 100 because of multiple responses).

In order for a crime to occur, a victim's routine activities must intersect with the offender's in time and space, and within an environment appropriate for criminal activity (Felson, 1998). The activity in which victims were most often engaged in prior to a crime occurring was traveling from one place to another (39%) (see Table 1). Victims were leaving work, driving home after shopping, hitchhiking, getting off bus, walking home, or leaving a bar. Other victims (25%) found themselves in the offender's home or workplace prior to the crime. Offenders were able to attract the victims to their homes and workplaces by a subterfuge or manipulation, or were simply put in contact with them through offender's occupation. In 22% of the cases, victims were home, most often sleeping. Another 22% of the victims were participating in outdoor recreational activities (e.g., playing outside on the street, in a park or at a swimming pool), whereas in 20% of cases, victims were engaged in indoor recreational activities (e.g., in a bar, at a rock concert, at a party, or shopping). Finally, in 12% of the cases, victims were at work, either as clerks in a store or business, or on the street as prostitutes.

Results from Rossmo's (2000) study on serial murder showed that most of the victims were at home (30.9%), engaged in prostitution activities (22.5%), or walking/jogging (21.9%). No victims were at an outdoor recreation site and only 1.1% were at work. Some victims were at a bar or nightclub (10.7%), at another type of social event (5.1%), or commuting (6.2%). Victims of our sample were engaged in similar routine activities than the victims in Rossmo's study, but in slightly different proportions. It can be hypothesized that serial sex offenders differ from serial murderers on their choices of targets, which will influence their hunting fields.

Table 1: Variables Related to Victim Search Methods

	N (%)	YES	NO	?
<b>OFFENDER'S ROUTINE ACTIVITIES</b>				
- Prowling for victims	29 (42%)			
- Commuting	12 (17%)			
- Occupational	17 (25%)			
- Recreational activities (inside)	14 (20%)			
- Other activities	2 (3%)			
- Don't know / Can't remember	4 (6%)			
<b>CHOICE OF HUNTING FIELD</b>		39 (57%)	30 (43%)	
- Through a family	11 (16%)			
- Through an occupation	13 (19%)			
- Through a local visibility	39 (57%)			
- Through the prostitution market	2 (3%)			
- Through ads in newspapers	2 (3%)			
- Don't know / Can't remember	3 (4%)			
<b>VICTIM'S ROUTINE ACTIVITIES</b>				
- Recreational activities (inside)	14 (20%)			
- Recreational activities (outside)	15 (22%)			
- Commuting	27 (39%)			
- Home	15 (22%)			
- Working	8 (12%)			
- Offender's home or workplace	17 (25%)			
- Don't know / Can't remember	5 (7%)			
<b>SELECTION OF VICTIM</b>		51 (74%)	9 (13%)	9 (13%)
- Physical appearance (general)	26 (38%)			
- Physical appearance (sexual)	5 (7%)			
- Victim's personality	15 (22%)			
- Victim's behavior	7 (10%)			
- Location / availability	31 (45%)			
- Vulnerability	21 (30%)			
- Victim's age	15 (22%)			
<b>SELECTION OF VICTIM CHANGED</b>		19 (28%)	46 (67%)	4 (5%)

## *Phase 2: Choice of Hunting Field*

Hunting fields designate the type of area where offenders hunt for victims. It must be distinguished from hunting grounds defined by Rossmo (2000) as the territory (a geographic area) within which an offender searches for victims (Rossmo, 2000).

More than half of the subjects (57%) interviewed reported hunting in specific places to find a victim. As can be seen in Table 1, six different hunting fields were identified from the answers given by offenders. Hunting fields used by serial sex offenders were most often acquired through local visibility (57%). In these cases, the offender contacts the victim in a public place often frequented by the offender himself, such as a bar, a park, a shopping mall, or on the street. Offenders explained that this choice of hunting field was motivated by the fact that it is an easy way to find attractive targets, to gain access to them, and to estimate their vulnerability. Some of these places were also known by offenders to be both isolated and attractive to potential victims (*"when I talk to women I get rejected because I don't look good. When I go to the mall, I see plenty of good looking women, so instead of being told 'no', I jump them on their way back to their cars "*). Furthermore, some offenders (19%) decided to search for victims through their own occupation. These offenders get involved in a type of work, volunteering or leisure activity that brings potential victims to them (e.g., hockey coach, janitor, owner of convenience store, kindergarten teacher). According to the offenders, their occupation serve as an effortless hunting field because the victims, most often children, come to them on their own. Moreover, because of the offenders' positions, victims were in a vulnerable situation and could be easily manipulated, reducing the risk of the crime being reported. (*"I told them that I had the power to cure their sicknesses*

*and help them in their studies. They'd come over, I'd have them smoke up and tell them that they'd have to release all tension and take off their clothes. I could then touch them and they'd think that it was part of the healing". "At the daycare, the kids are there, available and very vulnerable, especially during their afternoon naps. Parks and schoolyards demanded too much effort and was too risky because anything could happen." )*

Some serial sex offenders hunt for victims through families (16%). The offender first gets acquainted with a family (most often with a female living alone with her children or vulnerable because of a drug and/or alcohol problem), and then offers different services, particularly babysitting, in order to gain access to the children. Offenders explained that it was easy to find single mothers who need some kind of help, especially in poorer neighborhoods. By offering their services and not requesting anything in return, the offender is able to gain the mother's trust and get access to her children. The offender invests some time in the pseudo-relation with the mother, and then exploits any opportunities to offend.

A few serial sex offenders (13%) targeted their victims by hunting in private or semi-private places. According to Rossmo (2000), "there is a hierarchy of spaces that influence criminal action: (1) public space (e.g., street); (2) semi-public space (e.g., open front yard); (3) semi-private space (e.g., fenced backyard); and (4) private space (e.g., house). As an offender moves from the street to an apartment building parking lot, to inside the building itself, and to the interior of an individual apartment, he is progressively entering more private space and concomitantly increasing his risk" (p. 124). The victim's home, most often an apartment, was the type of private place

preferred by offenders, whereas elevators or laundry facilities found in apartment buildings were typical of semi-private places. Offenders explained this choice of hunting field by its highly arousing quality (e.g., thrill, excitement). Finally, two offenders (3%) reported hunting for victims through prostitution areas and two others (3%) through newspaper advertisements. The choice of the hunting field is directly influenced by the selection of a specific victim type (i.e., prostitute) for the former. For the latter, advertisements was a mean to meet potential victims as the offenders did not know any potential victims in their own neighborhood.

For most of the serial sex offenders in our study, hunting fields were characterized by what Brantingham and Brantingham (1995) call crime attractors, places that attract offenders through their reputation for crime opportunities that trigger their criminal intent. In his study on 357 cases of serial murder, Newton (1992) found such killers hunted their victims in public places (31%), in homes or private places (16%), in the victim's home (10%), on prostitution strolls (5%), in occupational settings (5%) (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, clinics), at work (3%), on the road with hitchhikers (1%), and through classified advertisements (0.5%). In 23% of the cases, serial murderers used different hunting fields to find a victim. These results are similar to ours.

### *Phase 3: Victim Selection*

Targeting of a specific victim was done by 51 offenders (74%). Nine offenders (13%) could not recall or did not want to answer the question. Nonrandom victim selections, or victim selection based on specific criterion, requires more searching on the part of the offender as compared to random victim selection. For example, the target backcloth of an offender who specifically seeks out prostitutes is determined by the red-

light districts, while the attack sites of a random offender may be anywhere. These target backcloths are defined as spatial opportunity structures configured by both geographic and temporal distributions of suitable crime targets or victims across the physical landscape (Rossmo, 2000).

Seven factors have been identified as being related to victim selection. The most important one was the location and availability of the victim (45%). For offenders, easy victim access, low socioeconomic status neighborhoods, geographic isolation, and houses with large windows where the victim's behavior can be observed from outside, are all helpful features (*"she was there, all alone and no one was around"*). Other offenders mentioned some of their victims were outside (e.g., leaving a bar, waiting for the bus), but close to their homes.

The general physical appearance of the victim was the second most important factor (38%). The offenders explained that they chose their victim because he/she was beautiful, sexy, had blond hair and blue eyes, dressed in a specific fashion (skirt, shorts, bathing suit), delicate, tall, and with nice skin. However, only 7% of offenders mentioned that the victim's sexual physical appearance played a role in their choice of target. For these offenders, the victim had to have big breasts, a nice figure and no pubic hair. As one offender said, *"she had to have big breasts, otherwise I didn't get excited, I wouldn't get hard."*

The victim's vulnerability is another important factor associated with choice of specific victims (30%). Features associated with victim vulnerability include : young, alone or alone with children, on the street (hitchhiking), naïve, handicapped, and fragile. When the victim was a child, most often a young boy, vulnerability is associated with

specific characteristics, for example, a child with family problems, without supervision, always on the street and in need of help (*"when I saw a kid that always had a key around his neck and who was badly dressed, I knew that his parents didn't take care of him and that I could easily approach him to offer him things... I knew that he'd accept because he had nothing"*).

For some offenders (22%), the victim's age (pre-pubescent, pubescent, or adult) was an important factor in their choice, whereas for others (22%), it was the victim's personality. Victim personality types of interest to offenders include "easy girls", or a caring, affectionate, and extraverted victims willing to smile. Finally, 10% of offenders claimed that it was the victim's behavior which guided their choice. Behavioral characteristics reported include a victim who dance and move well, victim exhibitionists, and victim who talk sexually "dirty" or in an open manner.

Stevens (1998) investigated the rationale behind certain characteristics of the modus operandi and the hunting patterns of serial rapists from the offender's perspective. Using a grounded-theory approach, the author surveyed 61 serial rapists on their targeting techniques and identified three rationales of reason for victim selection. Most rapists (69%) mentioned vulnerability as the strongest reason to attack a female. Youth, helpfulness, submissiveness, and females who decrease their defense capabilities (placing themselves in risky situations such as getting drunk at a party) were reported characteristics of vulnerable targets. For 15% of the sample, the situation provided the main reason for targeting a specific victim. Some offenders seek specific situations or circumstances, as opposed to specific individuals, and generally encountered their victims in particular social environments, such as at a place of employment. Finally, 11% of the



serial rapists reported that encounter of a random victim was the reason to assault her. While these offenders were engaged in other criminal activities (e.g., burglary, robbery), they came upon a victim by chance and spontaneously assaulted her (Stevens, 1998). A study conducted by the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC), which included interviews with 41 incarcerated serial rapists responsible for more than 837 rapes (Hazelwood & Warren, 1989) showed, however, that criterion most reported by serial rapists for target selection was victim availability (98%), gender (95%), age (66%), location (66%), and race (63%). Physical characteristics were reported by only 39% of offenders, similar to the results found in our study.

Interestingly, 28% of offenders admitted that in some cases they had targeted another specific victim but were unable to assault her. Reasons for such changes of plan were diverse. For example, some rapists claimed that the situational factors were just not right because the victim was not alone, the victim was not easily available, someone nearby might interfere, or simply that the location was too risky. For others, the victim's behavior made them change their mind. In one case, the victim's speech prior to the crime lowered the offender's sexual arousal, whereas in another case, the offender lost his patience and left before the victim became available (*"I was waiting for her, she had finished working but she didn't want to come out, she wouldn't stop talking with the other one... I couldn't take it anymore, I was fed up and left"*). Moreover, in some criminal events, victims were able to escape from offenders prior to the sexual assault. In explaining why he did not assault the selected victim, one offender claimed that he was able to resist his desire to offend.

Although the part of our model related to victim search methods is presented in a linear fashion, it should be seen as a dynamic process, much like the dynamic model of crime site selection developed by the Brantinghams (1978). In their model, the motivated offender is influenced by past criminal events and by the site and situation of a potential crime, and is triggered by events typically part of daily routine activities, and shaped by the environment, past experience, and the crime templates. These templates are the set of cues, cue sequences, and holistic cue clusters used to identify suitable targets, and that are incorporated in the target selection either at a conscious level or automatically. When the template is constructed, it becomes relatively fixed, and influences future search behavior, thus becoming reinforced. The templates present similarities that can be identified because the spatial and temporal distribution of offenders and victims are patterned and because human environmental perception has certain universal properties. Finally, targets are selected from the offender's awareness space. Awareness space is defined as "all the locations about which a person has knowledge above a minimum level even without visiting some of them ... Awareness space includes activity space (the area within which most of a person's activities are carried out, within which the individual comes most frequently into contact with others and with the features of the environment), and its area enlarges as new locations are discovered and/or new information is gathered" (Clark, 1990, pp. 24-25). The targets will then be assessed against the criteria of suitability and risk, and evaluated in relation with the offender's template. Finally, rational choices are made by the offender and specific targets are selected (Rossmo, 2000). Our results are congruent with this model as offenders, through their routine activities will encounter potential victims and select them in places suitable for an attack.

These hunting fields, if successful, will be reinforced and will be used again during the search process for suitable victims.

### Offenders' Attack Methods

#### *Phase 4: Method of Approach*

Once a victim has been targeted, the serial sex offender uses different methods of approach. The results in Table 2 show that the preferred method used by serial sex offenders is the trick/false identity approach (48%). Offenders explained that such a method allows them to gain the victims' trust, avoiding scaring the victims and hurting them physically. Moreover, some offenders explained that the trick/false identity method was only used to get close physically to the victims, to gain access to them, and sometimes, to distract the victim just before the attack. One offender explained that:

*"when I saw a girl that I wanted to attack, I would ask her for the time and when she looked at her watch I had my chance to push her right away and then rape her".*

Some serial sex offenders are far more violent and will use physical violence from the start in their victim approach (25%). Offenders explained that violence helps to surprise the victim and prevent them from resisting or escaping. Some offenders use this method to make the victim lose consciousness and then do whatever they want to them, while for others, it is only for the thrill. For only a few offenders (9%), threats are used alone or in conjunction with physical violence to approach the victims. Threats are thus mainly used to scare the victims, to "freeze" them, to prevent them from alarming witnesses or resisting, and to make sure they will be completely submissive during the sexual assault.

Table 2: Variables Related to Offender Attack Methods

	N (%)	YES	NO	?
<b>METHOD TO APPROACH VICTIMS</b>				
- Seduction / persuasion	9 (13%)			
- Money / gift	11 (16%)			
- Games	6 (9%)			
- Trick / false identity	33 (48%)			
- Using drugs and/or alcohol	0 (0%)			
- Direct act on victim	10 (15%)			
- Threat	6 (9%)			
- Physical violence	17 (25%)			
Method to approach victims changed		25 (36%)	44 (64%)	0 (0%)
<b>METHOD TO BRING VICTIMS TO CRIME SITE</b>				
- Seduction / persuasion	6 (9%)			
- Money / gift	6 (9%)			
- Games	2 (3%)			
- Trick / false identity	24 (35%)			
- Using drugs and/or alcohol	0 (0%)			
- Direct act on victim	2 (3%)			
- Threat	6 (9%)			
- Physical violence	12 (17%)			
- Victim not moved	28 (41%)			
Method to bring victims to crime site changed		23 (33%)	46 (67%)	0 (0%)
<b>METHOD TO COMMIT CRIME</b>				
- Seduction / persuasion	1 (1%)			
- Money / gift	5 (7%)			
- Games	4 (6%)			
- Trick / false identity	10 (15%)			
- Using drugs and/or alcohol	2 (3%)			
- Direct act on victim	23 (33%)			
- Threat	17 (25%)			
- Physical violence	36 (52%)			
Method to commit crime changed		29 (42%)	40 (48%)	0 (0%)
<b>RATIONALE FOR ATTACK LOCATION</b>				
- Availability / access to victim	19 (28%)			
- Isolated area	24 (35%)			
- Before victim out of reach	2 (3%)			
- Location frequented by victim	8 (12%)			
- Victim was there	16 (23%)			
- Don't know / can't remember	8 (12%)			
<b>RATIONALE FOR VICTIM RELEASE LOCATION</b>				
- Victim resistance or escape	6 (9%)			
- Interrupted or surprised by witnesses	5 (7%)			
- Sexual assault was completed and victim not moved	53 (79%)			
- Area where victim's body will not be discovered	5 (7%)			
- Busy area where victim can get help	6 (9%)			
- Area far from offender's residence	3 (4%)			

Three methods are used by sexual offenders specifically against children: seduction/persuasion (13%), money/gift (16%), and games (9%). These methods help offenders make contact with the victims slowly and to gradually estimate their chance of succeeding in getting the victim involved in sexual activities. Offenders have mentioned that by acting in such a manner they were able to get the victim to consent to the sexual contacts and to regularly return to them, often with other potential victims.

Acting directly on the victim (15%) is a method that serial sex offenders use to take advantage of the surprise effect, often because they are not able to otherwise approach the victims (e.g., by talking to a woman). These offenders mentioned that they do not want to risk being rejected, or they simply wanted to take advantage of the fact that the victim was sleeping. It is interesting to note, however, that 36% of serial sex offenders use more than one method to approach their victims (*"it always depended on the victim, when they were sleeping, I'd touch them directly, otherwise I would do it through a game because its more subtle, otherwise, with the babysitter, I pretty much just jumped her"*).

Ouimet and Proulx's (1994) study perfectly illustrates the switch of methods used to approach victims. The authors argue that if child molesters are not able to find a suitable victim near their home, they may have to travel further. As they journey further distances, convince children to return home with them becomes harder (few are willing to take a car trip with a stranger). The offender has to adapt his hunting strategies and use a more direct approach, such as a direct attack or an ambush, which in turn can lead to an increase in the level of violence of the crime.

Hazelwood and Warren (1990) found the surprise approach, which involves the rapist waiting for the victim or subduing her while she was sleeping, was the most frequently used. The con approach, the second most commonly used by serial rapists, involves subterfuge and the ability of the offender to interact with women. The blitz approach (a direct, physical assault that subdues and injures the victim) was the method used least often. These results are different from our findings and one explanation might be that Hazelwood and Warren (1990) only focused on adult female victims. It can be hypothesized that different types of victim will trigger different strategies to approach them.

Lebeau (1987) focused on how the journey to rape varies as a function of the offender's approach method. He studied 320 cases of rape committed by single and serial offenders. He found that offenders, both single and serial, traveled the shortest mean distance to assault their victims when they illegally entered the victim's residence. This suggests that offenders travel shorter distances when using a method linked to crimes against property. Thus, in relationship with our results, this could mean that offenders who break into the victim's house live nearby.

#### *Phase 5: Attack Location Choice*

Serial sex offenders were asked why they assaulted their victims where they did. Their answers were varied. For some offenders (23%), the only reason for the location was because the victim was there. These offenders admitted that the situational and environmental cues were not taken into consideration when they decided to attack the victim (*"the victim was there and I didn't even see the witnesses that were close by, I didn't care, I just wanted to grab her boobs"*). A few others (3%) mentioned that they

had no choice but to attack the victim at that particular location because he or she was going to escape or be no longer available (*"I had to attack her there because she was getting in her car and she'd be gone, I didn't have a choice on the place"*). Not all serial sex offenders were not selective in their choice of attack location. Table 2 shows that 35% of offenders have specifically chosen an isolated area (such as the offender's home) to attack the victim in order to prevent being seen or disturbed by witnesses, and to have some time alone with the victim (*"I always hung out in the woods near the bike path, plenty of people went through there because it was a shortcut. I noticed that women used the path too."*). Davies and Dale (1995) observed that such areas are often more hazardous for potential victims but safer for the offender, their disadvantage being smaller numbers of available targets. Fisher (1980) suggested that the choice of an isolated area to attack a victim might be indicative of an intention to injure. Ouimet and Proulx (1994) observed that in the case of child molesters, the offender's home appears to be the best possible location to commit an offense because it offers several advantages over competing locations. In a home, the child might feel more secure and more willing to participate in sexual contact, allowing the offender to engage in satisfying sexual activities. Child molesters are also skillful in manipulating children in order to keep the victim from telling someone about the sexual contacts (Leclerc, Proulx, and McKibben, in press). These factors might explain why most child molesters hunt for targets in the immediate vicinity of their residence as the shorter the distance from the victim encounter site to the offender's home (the attack site), the greater the likelihood of the offender convincing the victim to voluntarily accompany him.

Another group of offenders (12%) revealed that their choice of attack location was mainly motivated by places known to be frequented by victims. In these cases, the offender is looking for a specific type of victim and he knows where he can find them (*"for a whore, you go to the whore district"*). Attack location choice has also been influenced by the availability / accessibility of the victims. They explained that they engaged in their offending process not only because the victims were there, but because they could have easy access to them. Finally, 12% of offenders reported not knowing or having forgotten what was the reason for their attack location choice. In Hazelwood and Warren study (1989), the scene of the sexual assault was relatively consistent from one rape to another; in 50% of the cases, the rape occurred in the victim's home. In 6% of the cases the sexual assault occurred on the street, while in another 6%, the rape was committed in a parking lot or a highway. Few offenders attacked their victims in their own residence, a public facility, or at the victim's place of work. Again, these inconsistencies in results may be linked to the different types of victims involved in serial sex crimes.

#### *Phase 6: Method to Bring Victims to Crime Sites*

The methods used by offenders to bring a victim to the crime site vary slightly from the methods to approach a victim, mainly because in 41% of the cases the victims are not moved. Some offenders (9%) use seduction/persuasion, money/gift, or threats to bring the victim to the crime site. Only 3% of the offenders used games or acted directly on the victims without any strategy, whereas 35% tricked the victims. Use of physical violence only occurred in 17% of the cases. Serial sex offenders (33%) sometimes used



more than one method to bring the victims to the crime site. The rationale for these methods was similar to that for the method of approach.

*Phase 7: Crime Location Choice*

As almost half of the participants (41%) did not move the victims between the attack and the crime, the underlying rationale was very similar to that for the attack location choice. Most offenders who moved the victim between that attack and crime locations mentioned that they chose the crime location because it was the victim's residence, it was in an isolated area, or the victims was in her residence.

*Phase 8: Method to Commit the Crime*

The methods used to commit the crime are more violent than the methods used to approach the victims or to bring them to the crime site. Seduction/persuasion (1%), money/gift (7%), and games (6%) were methods used only by a minority of offenders, reportedly most often so as not to scare the victims, avoid using violence, and prevent police reporting (*"I just wanted to have sexual contacts with the kid, I didn't want to scare or hurt him, when he started screaming I stopped right away"*). Two offenders (3%) used drugs and/or alcohol to commit their crimes because it helped to decrease the victim's inhibitions and prevented them from resisting during the crimes. Tricking or using a false identity was used by 15% of serial sex offenders to impress their victims, convince them not to resist and to consent to the sexual contacts, and prevent them from reporting the crimes to the police.

Violent methods were used by more offenders at this stage of the hunting process. Some offenders (25%) reported the use of threats to prevent victims, especially younger victims, from resisting (verbally and physically) and escaping. Offenders explained that

the use of threats during the sexual assaults served to scare, intimidate, humiliate and control their victims. When victims were older, more offenders (52%) resorted to physical violence to commit their crimes. Again, physical violence was mainly used to surprise the victims, prevent them from resisting, and to control them during the assaults. For some offenders, physical violence was also a part of their deviant sexual fantasies and the killing of the victim after the rape was their primary goal. Other offenders stated that they wanted to render the victim unconscious, so they could do whatever they wanted to the victims during the sexual assault. Almost half of the offenders interviewed (42%) showed a change in crime commission methods from one victim to another. One serial sex offender reported:

*"I would always use a knife or my gun, that way I could hold the victim in place and stop her from resisting. I would go into her room and I would stare at my triumph: it's my victim, I succeeded, this is it. There was a feeling of anticipation, she is going to be mine. I put my hands over her mouth so that she couldn't scream and I could threaten her with the knife or gun, depending on the distance between us. When I was close it was the knife because the victim would stay still so she wouldn't get cut. I would also verbally threaten her, shut up or I'm gonna kill you... do as I say and everything will be alright. When I followed the victims I threatened with my gun because it was more effective during the day. When I was on the subway, I would rub myself directly on them or I'd wait to be alone in the wagon and I would jump them... it wasn't as long that way"*

Results from Hazelwood, Reboussin, & Warren's (1989) study are somewhat different. They found most offenders used a threatening physical presence and/or verbal threats to control the victim and in half of the cases, a weapon (most often a knife) was displayed. The majority of the serial rapists they studied used minimal to no physical force during the rapes. It can be hypothesized that the more frequent use of a weapon may influence the level of violence displayed during the crime.

Results from Stevens' (1998) study show only a minority of serial rapists exhibited an excessive use of force before, during, and after the attack. These individuals often lacked control during their crimes. Most serial rapists, however, claimed that minimal violence was used, and only then to gain the victim's compliance. In 13% of the accounts, no violence was used during the rape. Some offenders (16%) described intimidation as a way to shock victims into submission. Finally, almost half of the subjects used either moderate violence (a blow, slap, push, threat to use a weapon) to gain the victim's attention, or limited violence (a level of violence more than necessary to gain the victim's submission). Most stopped their attacks when the victim refused to submit, rather than resort to an escalation of violence (Stevens, 1998). As we can observe, results from Stevens are closer to ours in terms of the level of violence used.

Finally, it is possible that the level of violence displayed during the crime commission is influenced by other factors not mentioned by our subjects. For example, results by Warren, Reboussin, Hazelwood, Gibbs, Trumbetta, and Cummings (1999) found serial rapists who sexually assaulted their victims for long periods of time and used more profanity were more likely to escalate in their level of violence than sex offenders who did not exhibit such behavior.

#### *Phase 9: Victim Release Location Choice*

This crime process ends with the victim release. The majority of offenders (79%) stated they left their victims at the crime scene after the sexual assault was completed. Either the offender or the victim left after the sexual assault was completed ("*I was finished so I got out of there, I think that she stayed to get dressed, I didn't care*"). Some offenders had no choice as to the victim release location because the victims were able to

escape, they resisted too much (9%), or because the offenders were interrupted or surprised by witnesses or bystanders (7%). Other offenders, however, were careful in their choice of victim release location. In the sexual homicide cases, offenders disposed of the victim's body in an area where it would not be discovered (7%) (e.g., a wooded area, in the garbage).

*I had to get rid of the body because it would smell in my apartment. I had a large box that I wasn't using so I put her in and put all kinds of garbage on top so that no one would feel like going through the box. Afterwards, I threw it in the garbage. When the garbage men came, I was nervous, I was scared that they would take a look inside because of the weight. They ended up taking it and they never found it. For the second one, I didn't have a box, so I decided to cut her into pieces and put the parts in different garbage bags. So that it would look like real garbage, I put my garbage into the bags. Then, I put them in the alley for garbage pick-up like the first time. Except this time, some kids were playing hockey in the alley and one of them opened a bag with his stick and saw the victim's head. The cops came and they found the bags. On top of it, there was a bill in one of the bags with my name and address on it. They came straight to me.*

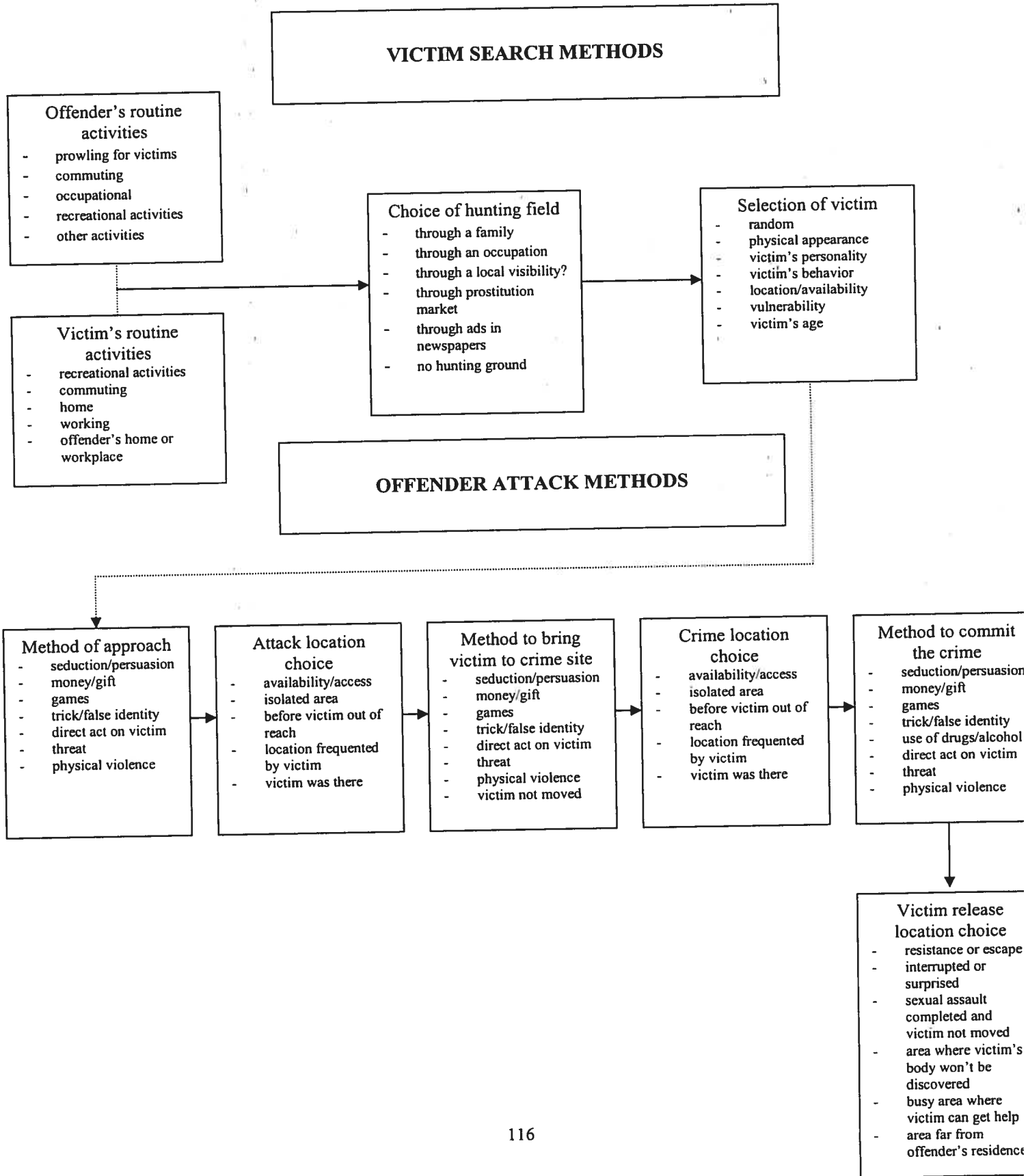
Some offenders took special care to release the victim far from the offender's home (4%) in order not to be associated with the victim or so the victim would not recognize the offender's residence or neighborhood (*"I didn't want her to be able to recognize my place, so I brought her very far, in another neighborhood"*). A few remorseful offenders (9%) took the time to release their victims at busy locations where they were sure the victims would be helped and take home (*"I felt bad about what I did, and I didn't want to leave her alone on the road, there was no one around... I took her near the place where she said that her ride was going to pick her up later"*).

## DISCUSSION

This study explores the hunting process of serial sex offenders based on the offenders' accounts. "Descriptive models represent the most fundamental level of theory building; they are judged successful to the extent that they capture the essential elements of how offenders go about committing their criminal acts" (Polaschek et al., 2001, p. 537). The major purpose of our investigation was to thus identify a descriptive model specific to the hunting process of serial sex offenders from a rational choice perspective in order to better comprehend the choices made by offenders during this process (see Figure 2).

Although few studies have been conducted on the rationality of sex offending, this study clearly demonstrates that even sex offenders act in a rational, although sometimes bounded, way during the commission of their crimes. Despite the fact that not all serial sex offenders hunt for victims in the same way, our descriptive model shows that the decision making surrounding the hunting process fluctuates according to offenders' strategies, type of victim and their reaction, situational context of the crime, and environment. For example, the rationale behind the use of a trick/false identity victim approach strategy may change during the commission of the crime. Moreover, the strategy used to approach a specific victim may vary by contextual setting (different time or location), or by victim type. Our model is in direct accordance with Rossmo's hunting typology and the dynamic target site selection model of Brantingham and Brantingham (1978; 1993).

Figure 2 : A Descriptive Model of the Hunting Process of Serial Sex Offenders



Though preliminary, we believe our model may have several implications for clinical practice with sex offenders, crime prevention strategies, and offender profiling. First, the hunting process model could be used in treatment programs in order to better detail the offense chain of the criminal, and it would complement the relapse prevention model (Pithers, 1990) and the offense models of Ward et al., (1995) and Polaschek et al., (2001). These models emphasize the cognitive, emotional, and motivational factors associated with the offense, but neglect to detail the offending behavior, including the hunting process.

Second, the different components of the model could be used by crime prevention strategists to adapt victim responses to different behaviors of attackers. Knowing why a sex offender acts in such a manner might help victims prepare different strategies to escape or resist the offender. We can improve on uninformed confrontational or nonresistance advice, by learning from the decision making of serial sex offenders and creating of new advice adapted to the situation and the offending behavior. Our model emphasizes the fact that the majority of victims of serial sex offenders are encountered in public places, where the risk for the offender is high. Also, many offenders use different strategies during the assault to prevent or stop the victim from resisting (verbally or physically) in order not to have to harm physically the victim. This suggests these offenders are concerned the victim might alert someone. It also indicates that some are willing to resort to physical violence. Moreover, it seems that offenders prefer to attack their victims in isolated areas. Finally, our results show that violence is intensified in the later stages of the crime (during the commission of the assault), as compared to the earlier stages. It may be that victims should try to resist the offender during the initial encounter

or when he is trying to bring them to the crime scene, instead of when he is about to commit the sexual assault.

Third, the descriptive model may prove useful in both geographic and psychological profiling. Pioneers of criminal profiling have stated that in order to correctly predict the offender's characteristics, the profiler has to be able to get "inside the criminal mind." Until now, studies on psychological and geographic profiling have focused on the "how," the "where," the "when," and the "who," but have neglected the "why". Our study was not interested in the different motivations of offenders. This is something that has been studied by several researchers (e.g., Groth, Burgess, & Holmstrom, 1977; Knight & Prentky, 1990). The goal of our study was to learn why serial sex offenders acted the way they did during the criminal hunting process; in other words, why they committed the assault the way they did it. We investigated the decision-making process of these offenders in order to better understand why an offender acted in a certain way during the criminal event. Criminal investigators must understand the rationale of this "seemingly irrational" behavior in order to better infer the type of criminal, and to establish proactive strategies that might prevent another sexual assault.

Our model also makes a contribution to the theoretical assumptions underlying offender profiling. Results from a previous study (Beauregard, Lussier, & Proulx, in press) indicated the modus operandi of sex offenders was not immutable, but instead is a dynamic process more influenced by situational factors than personal characteristics (e.g., sexual interests). The present study demonstrates again that serial sex offenders do not always exhibit a consistent modus operandi during their crimes, but rather are affected by the context and situationally factors. Our results underline the necessity of including



situational factors in any model of offender profiling in order to reliably infer offender characteristics.

There are, however, a number of limitations to this study. First, the small sample size means that we may not have captured the complete range of serial sex offenders' hunting methods. Second, not much is known about the external validity of our results. For example, the decision making of incarcerated serial sex offenders may be different from perpetrators who have not been apprehended (Petrosino & Brensilber, 2003). Third, the data collection methodology relied mainly on retrospective self-reports. This type of research may suffer from intentional or unintentional retrospective distortion, even if appropriate interviewing techniques are employed to enhance the level of detail (Polaschek et al., 2001). Finally, the methodology we used did not permit us to examine every relationship between each of the components and phases of the model.

In future studies we plan to identify different scripts that take into account every phase of the model, as well as all relevant situational factors. The script is "generally viewed as being a special type of schema, known as an event schema, since it organizes our knowledge about how to understand and enact commonplace behavioral processes or routines" (Cornish, 1994, p. 32). Quantitative methods such as corresponding analysis and clustering techniques will enable us to examine the relationships between the behavioral and geographic components of the hunting process. Furthermore, it is important for other researchers interested in this matter to collect descriptions of criminal hunting processes in order to test the existing model and establish its validity and reliability (Polaschek et al., 2001). Other offense process variables also need to be investigated and incorporated into the model. These should include pre-crime factors

(alcohol and/or drug consumption, use of pornography, deviant sexual fantasies, affective state), modus operandi variables (use of weapons, restraints, and/or rape-kits, forensic awareness, acts committed), and post-crime behavior (reasons for leaving the crime scene, attitudes during police interrogation) in order to establish a complete and detailed decision-making model of offense patterns.

## Quatrième Chapitre

### Script Analysis of the Hunting Patterns of Serial Sex Offenders

## INTRODUCTION

Studies concerned with the relationship between the behavioral and geographic aspects of crimes committed by sex offenders are clearly of value, both in terms of the development of a criminological model of offending behavior, and, especially when combined with psychological and geographic profiling, from an investigative standpoint.

Typologies of offending behavior that take geographic aspects of crime into account have been developed by several authors (Canter & Larkin, 1993; Hazelwood & Warren, 2000; Hickey, 1991; Holmes & De Burger, 1988; Ressler, Burgess, & Douglas, 1988). These typologies identify two types of offender: the geographically mobile and the geographically stable (Beauregard, Proulx, & Rossmo, in press). However, these typologies are subject to three criticisms. First, most of these typologies have not been developed empirically, on the basis of statistical analysis. Second, very few typologies have considered results from studies of the links between sex offenders' criminal and geographic behaviors. Third, most of these typologies assume that the offending process is stable, which clearly disregards situational aspects of criminal behavior (Beauregard, Lussier, & Proulx, in press).

### *Hunting process*

Rossmo (1997), based on the analysis of serial murder cases, proposed the concept of hunting pattern to describe offenders' search for suitable victims and methods of attack; the first determines the selection of victim encounter sites, and the latter, attack sites. Four victim search methods were identified in a sample of serial murderers. The *hunter* generally commits his crimes within his city of residence. These offenders set out from their home base, and search for suitable victims in the area within their awareness

space. The *poacher* commits crimes by traveling outside his city of residence, or by operating from an activity node other than his home base. The *troller* is an opportunistic offender who encounters his victims in the course of routine activities. Although his crimes are often spontaneous, *trollers* may in some cases have fantasized about or planned their offences, and so are ready when opportunities present themselves. *Trappers* have an occupation or a position which brings potential victims to them, or use subterfuge (e.g., placing want ads, taking in boarders) to entice suitable victims into their home or to a location they control (Rossmo, 2000).

Three different types of attack methods were identified by Rossmo (1997). The *raptor* attacks his victims almost immediately upon encountering them. The *stalker* follows or watches his victim, and waits for an opportune moment to attack. The attack, murder, and victim release sites are thus strongly influenced by the victim activity space. Finally, the attacks of the *ambusher* are committed at locations at which the offender has a great deal of control, such as his residence or workplace. This offender sometimes hides the bodies of the victims, most often on his property.

The concept of hunting process proposed by Rossmo (1997) has several strengths. First, it takes into account the behavioral, as well as geographic, components inherent to every crime. Second, in contrast to other typologies, the hunting process concept takes into account the dynamic nature and the adaptability of offending patterns. Moreover, it identifies possible victim search and attack methods, and, since search and attack methods are correlated, the most common hunting styles (e.g., *hunter/raptor* and *trapper/ambusher* are more common than *hunter/ambusher* and *trapper/raptor*) (Rossmo, 2000). However, Rossmo's hunting process lacks details and does not include important

parameters related to criminal decision-making (e.g., hunting field, victim selection, strategies to encounter victims and commit crimes, travel methods of offenders; see Beaugard, Rossmo, Proulx, submitted for publication).

### *Rational Choice and the Crime as Script*

The rational choice perspective assumes that criminals offend because crime provides the most effective means of achieving desired benefits (e.g., money, material goods, excitement, prestige, sexual gratification, domination of others). As a corollary, the choice of methods for carrying out these crimes, as well as the decision-making involved, are best regarded as instrumental behaviors to achieve these goals (Cornish & Clarke, 2002). The making of decisions and choices, however rudimentary this process might sometimes be, exhibits a measure of rationality, albeit constrained by limits of time, ability, and the availability of relevant information (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Criminals decide whether or not to commit a crime by weighing the effort, rewards, and costs involved in alternative courses of action. This being so, specification of the situational variables influencing the nature and sequence of offenders' actions requires a conceptual framework for the whole decision-making process related to crime commission (Cornish, 1994a).

In order to facilitate the analysis of the entire crime commission process and help identify the decisions and actions that offenders must make at each step of their crimes (preparation, target selection, commission of the act, escape, and aftermath), as well as the situational variables that must be taken into account during the criminal activity, Cornish (1994a; 1994b) proposed the concept of crime script. The concept of script is borrowed from the field of cognitive science (Schank & Abelson, 1977) and "is generally

viewed as being a special type of schema, known as an event schema, since it organizes our knowledge about how to understand and enact commonplace behavioral processes or routines” (Cornish, 1994b, p. 32). Scripts are acquired through social learning and involve modeling and reinforcement. “When the behavior associated with a script has been used repeatedly and successfully in the past, it will be activated more readily. If strong enough, an activated script will be followed by the scripted action, unless there are strong inhibitory factors present” (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994, p. 181).

The script concept has been used in different ways, such as: (1) templates which provide a guide for routine goal-directed actions; (2) a basis for the understanding of social situations; (3) a set of rules for predicting, interpreting, responding to, and controlling interpersonal scenes; and (4) a template with which to structure fundamental social interactions (Ward & Hudson, 2000). In the context of rational choice theory, crime scripts represent the complete sequence of instrumental actions prior to, during, and following the criminal act. “All crimes, even the simplest, involve such chains of decisions and actions, separable into interdependent stages, involving the attainment of sub-goals that serve to further the overall goals of the crime” (Cornish & Clarke, 2002, p. 47). Crime scripts are closely related to choice-structuring properties of crimes (Cornish & Clarke, 1987), the former listing procedural requirements for crimes, the latter, casting requirements for the offender (e.g., skills, resources, effort, preferences, values). Cornish and Clarke (2002) suggest that scripts should be viewed as routinizations of criminal decision-making, and thus represent solutions to the issues of risk, effort, and benefits related to specific crimes and situations.

Previous researchers have developed scripts for specific types of crime, such as check forgery, professional auto theft, resale of stolen vehicles, subway mugging, joy-riding, and tag-writing (Cornish, 1994a; 1994b; 1999; Lacoste & Tremblay, 2003; Tremblay, Talon, & Hurley, 2001). Cornish (1999) identified two scripts related to the sexual abuse of male victims in different settings - stranger-perpetrator in public places, and staff-perpetrator in residential institutions. The script for the stranger-perpetrator in public places includes:

- preparation phase: elaboration of sexual fantasies and of offending strategies, inducements, selection of a victim-rich setting;
- entry to setting phase;
- preconditions: legitimate roles, absence of managers, disorganized settings;
- instrumental preconditions: identification of suitable victims;
- instrumental initiation: non-threatening approach, initiation of interaction, preliminary grooming;
- instrumental actualization: isolation from others, removal to unsupervised area;
- commission of the sexual assault;
- postconditions: successful disengagement; and
- exit from setting: disposal of evidence.

This script illustrates how complex the crime commission process of even unsophisticated “simple” or “expressive” crimes, such as sexual assault, may be.

Although interesting, these scripts, in order to cover the entire crime commission process, do not address the specificity of each stage, which means that important decision-making and actions are neglected. Moreover, no information is provided on the



actual development process of these scripts. Finally, geographic components are not well defined. The aim of the present study, therefore, was to identify hunting process scripts in a sample of serial sex crimes, using multivariate statistical methods. Taking into consideration the multistage decision-making involved in the crime commission process, as illustrated by the rational choice approach, we argue that scripts should be developed by an extensive description of each phase, in order to capture every important component (behavioral and geographic) of these phases. Thus, the hunting process served as a framework for the identification of key variables for our scripts.

## METHOD

### *Participants*

The participants in this study were all incarcerated in a Correctional Service of Canada penitentiary (an institution where inmates serve a sentence of two years or more), located in the province of Quebec, Canada. They included any individual who had committed two or more sexual assaults or sex-related crimes (e.g., sexual homicide) on a victim of any age who was a stranger to him (i.e., offenders with no personal relationship with the victim prior to the day the offense was committed); it should be noted that there is no universally accepted definition of serial sex offenders. Events that interrupt a series of offences, such as incarceration, do not preclude the inclusion of offences that occurred before or after the interruption in the series (Alston, 1994).

A record was kept by the first author, of all sex offenders convicted of a sentence of more than two years in the province of Quebec, Canada, between 1995 and 2004. This list was subsequently used to identify and select the offenders in this study. Among more

than 1,000 sex offenders, 92 matched our criteria, and 72, responsible for a total of 361 sexual assaults (ranging from 2 to 37 sexual assaults), participated in the research. Among the 20 excluded participants, only 9 actually refused to participate, the remaining 11 being unavailable because of their mental state, discipline problems, or transfer to another institution. The majority of our sample was white (91.3%), and the average age at the beginning of the crime series was 30.7 years (S.D. = 9.4). Almost half (46.4%) of the offenders were married or in a relationship at the beginning of their series of crimes. The majority (89.9%) was French speaking, 39.6% were unemployed, and 89.9% had a prior criminal record before the onset of their series of crimes. Participants with a criminal record had an average of 2.9 charges (S.D. = 6.3) for violent sexual crimes, 1.0 criminal charges (S.D. = 3.1) for non-violent sexual crimes, 2.5 charges (S.D. = 4.4) for violent non-sexual crimes, and 11.9 charges (S.D. = 19.6) for non-sexual non-violent crimes.

### *Procedure*

A specially constructed instrument was developed to collect information from police investigation reports (present in the penal institution's case files) and guide in-depth semi-structured interviews. A previous study analyzed the material provided by offenders during the semi-structured interviews (see Beauregard, Rossmo et al., submitted for publication for a complete description of the procedure). The present study analyses the 361 criminal events reported by the 72 serial sex offenders for whom police reports were available. Data, especially on hunting patterns, modus operandi, and geographic behavior, were collected from the police reports and coded in our questionnaire. Variables included in the study were either dichotomous (0 = no, 1 = yes)

or categorical, and were correlated to behavioral and geographic components of the hunting process (see Table 1 and 2).

### *Data Analysis*

#### *Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA)*

The data was first submitted to multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) using multi-way tables. MCA is a geometric technique that provides a powerful representation of the association between multi-level categorical variables, in the form of a low-dimensional graphical representation of the association between rows and columns of a table. The comprehensive view of the data afforded by this sophisticated inductive statistical method facilitates effective interpretation (Clausen, 1998). Transformation of the frequencies of the variables into row and column percentages, termed *profiles*, allows direct between-category comparison of the frequencies of occurrence. While profiles, which are mathematical vectors, represent the proportional frequencies of categories relative to the group total, *masses*, obtained by dividing each group total by the grand total, are adjusted values. Distances between points in space were computed as chi-square distances, which are equivalent to Euclidean distances with adjustment for proportions in frequencies of categories using profiles (Greenacre & Blasius, 1994). This provides a visualization of the association, along with some descriptive statistics that indicate the number of dimensions between the associations.

Developed initially by Benzécri in Europe in the early 1970s, MCA has not received as much attention in North America, although similar approaches, such as multidimensional scaling, have been used (see Salfati & Canter, 1999). MCA may be seen as similar to principal component analysis, since it allows researchers to reduce a

complex data matrix into a simpler one without loss of meaningful information. One of the main advantages of MCA is that principal axes are simultaneously defined for both columns (variables) and rows (cases). Moreover, the symmetry of frequency tables and the use of chi-square distances allow the representation, on the same graph, of both variables and cases.

In this study, MCA was used in order to: (a) explore the relationship between behavioral and geographic components related to hunting patterns; and (b) reduce the number of significant variables used in the identification of hunting pattern scripts. There were 33 variables selected for this study, with a total of 166 categories.

#### *Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA)*

Although MCA provides a good configuration of the data, a more comprehensive approach is needed for crime scripts. One such approach involves the use of complementary clustering techniques. As the starting points of MCA and clustering techniques, as well as their outputs, are different, the use of both types of techniques is recommended when dealing with complex data sets (Lebart, 1994). "It is much easier to describe a set of clusters than a continuous space, even if it is two-dimensional. The most significant categories or variables characterizing each cluster are automatically selected and sorted, therefore producing a computer-aided description of the classes, and, hence, of the whole multidimensional space" (Lebart, 1994, p. 163). However, it is often more efficient to perform clustering techniques with a limited number of factors obtained from MCA. Thus, the clustering technique provides a hierarchical classification of the set of cases characterized by the first set of coordinates created by the MCA procedure. Ward's aggregation criterion was applied, as it has been shown that it results in a minimal loss of

inertia, (variance) at each step and ensures good compatibility between MCA and classification (Greenacre, 1988). Following clustering, the aggregation tree created can then be cut into a number of terminal data elements (Lebart, Morineau, & Piron, 1995).

MCA and hierarchical clustering were performed using SPAD (Decisia, version MN 5.6.0), a specialized software package (Lebart, Morineau, & Lambert, 2003).

## RESULTS

Applying the Cattell criteria (Cattell, 1966), the results from the correspondence analysis extracted a 4-dimensional solution. These four dimensions explained a total of 39.08% of the inertia (Dimension 1: 14.71%; Dimension 2: 10.35%; Dimension 3: 7.38%; Dimension 4: 6.65%). More detail on the actual decomposition of the variance, based on individual contributions of column and row cells in the contingency table, and on the correspondence of the behavioral and geographic components of hunting process to the dimensions, is presented in Tables 1 (behavioral components) and 2 (geographical components). The coordinate values of each hunting process component, which explain the magnitude and direction of the contribution of each point to each dimension are shown across the 4 dimensions, the contribution of each category to the total inertia of the dimension is also presented. Higher contributions were retained for interpretation of the dimension. The squared cosines indicate the extent to which a category is represented in a dimension. According to Morineau and Morin (2000), higher squared cosines (at least approximately 50%) should be retained for interpretation, since their high representation means their distance is less altered by the projection.



- no	280 (77.56)	0.43	-0.07	-0.02	-0.11	1.20	0.10	0.00	0.20	0.64	0.02	0.00	0.05
- yes	81 (22.44)	-1.49	0.26	0.08	0.40	4.30	0.20	0.00	0.70	0.64	0.02	0.00	0.05
Strategies to bring victim to crime site													
- seduction	13 (3.60)	0.45	0.69	-0.44	-1.10	0.10	0.20	0.10	0.80	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.04
- gifts	27 (7.48)	1.00	0.68	0.02	1.04	0.60	0.40	0.00	1.50	0.08	0.04	0.00	0.09
- games	31 (8.59)	0.87	0.90	0.36	0.08	0.60	0.80	0.20	0.00	0.07	0.08	0.01	0.00
- tricks	81 (22.44)	0.41	0.54	-0.23	-0.51	0.30	0.80	0.20	1.10	0.05	0.09	0.01	0.08
- drugs/alcohol	13 (3.60)	1.33	0.48	0.31	1.78	0.60	0.10	0.10	2.20	0.07	0.01	0.00	0.12
- direct action	21 (5.82)	0.61	-0.36	1.37	-1.28	0.20	0.10	1.90	1.80	0.02	0.01	0.12	0.10
- threats	47 (13.02)	0.01	-1.16	-0.52	0.42	0.00	2.10	0.60	0.40	0.00	0.20	0.04	0.03
- physical violence	128 (35.46)	-0.96	-0.34	0.03	0.07	2.80	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.51	0.06	0.00	0.00
Strategies to commit crime													
- seduction	0 (0)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- gifts	43 (11.91)	0.97	0.80	0.25	0.60	1.00	1.00	0.10	0.90	0.14	0.09	0.01	0.05
- games	6 (1.66)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- tricks	1 (0.28)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- drugs/alcohol	21 (5.82)	1.30	0.56	0.38	1.34	0.90	0.20	0.20	2.10	0.11	0.02	0.01	0.12
- direct action	57 (15.79)	0.52	0.24	0.74	-1.04	0.40	0.10	1.60	3.40	0.05	0.01	0.11	0.22
- threats	72 (19.94)	-0.84	0.12	0.40	0.47	1.20	0.00	0.50	0.90	0.18	0.00	0.04	0.06
- physical violence	161 (44.60)	-0.27	-0.44	-0.58	-0.18	0.30	1.10	2.50	0.30	0.06	0.16	0.27	0.03

TABLE 2: Frequencies, Coordinates, Contributions, and Squared Cosines of the Multiple Correspondence Analysis of Geographic Components of Hunting Processes

Variables	N (%)	Coordinates				Contributions				Squared Cosines			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Encounter site													
- indoor private	108 (29.92)	0.80	-0.46	-0.06	0.81	1.60	0.80	0.00	3.70	0.27	0.09	0.00	0.28
- indoor semipublic	16 (4.43)	0.09	-2.25	-0.10	-0.68	0.00	2.70	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.02
- indoor public	71 (19.67)	-0.09	-0.08	1.26	-0.57	0.00	0.00	5.40	1.20	0.00	0.00	0.39	0.08
- outdoor private	8 (2.22)	0.23	0.17	-0.09	-0.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
- outdoor semipublic	1 (0.28)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- outdoor public	157 (43.49)	-0.53	0.57	-0.51	-0.22	1.10	1.70	2.00	0.40	0.22	0.25	0.20	0.04
Encounter familiarity													
- no	0 (0)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- to offender	60 (16.62)	1.10	0.48	0.34	1.08	1.70	0.50	0.30	3.70	0.24	0.05	0.02	0.23
- to victim	78 (21.61)	0.15	-1.54	-0.41	0.17	0.00	6.30	0.60	0.10	0.01	0.65	0.05	0.01
- to both	223 (61.77)	-0.35	0.41	0.05	-0.35	0.70	1.30	0.00	1.40	0.20	0.27	0.00	0.20
Attack site													
- indoor private	174 (48.20)	0.63	0.00	-0.31	0.39	1.70	0.00	0.80	1.40	0.38	0.00	0.09	0.14
- indoor semipublic	18 (4.99)	0.07	-1.93	-0.10	-0.73	0.00	2.30	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.03
- indoor public	43 (11.91)	0.45	-0.33	1.28	-1.25	0.20	0.20	3.50	3.70	0.03	0.02	0.23	0.22
- outdoor private	3 (0.83)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- outdoor semipublic	2 (0.55)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- outdoor public	121 (33.52)	-1.08	0.41	-0.02	0.01	3.40	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.09	0.00	0.00
Attack familiarity													
- no	3 (0.83)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- to offender	136 (37.67)	0.64	0.70	-0.23	0.35	1.30	2.30	0.30	0.90	0.25	0.31	0.03	0.07
- to victim	89 (24.65)	0.09	-1.34	-0.45	0.05	0.00	5.50	0.90	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.07	0.00
- to both	133 (36.84)	-0.72	0.18	0.54	-0.39	1.60	0.10	1.90	1.10	0.30	0.02	0.17	0.09
Crime location													
- location victim last seen	0 (0)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- encounter site	171 (47.37)	0.58	-0.58	0.32	0.02	1.40	2.00	0.80	0.00	0.30	0.31	0.09	0.00
- attack site	113 (31.30)	0.15	0.74	-0.57	-0.35	0.10	2.10	1.70	0.70	0.01	0.25	0.15	0.06
- offence scene	77 (21.33)	-1.49	0.21	0.13	0.47	4.10	0.10	0.10	0.90	0.61	0.01	0.00	0.06
Crime familiarity													
- no	34 (9.42)	-1.89	0.30	1.35	0.93	2.90	0.10	3.00	1.60	0.37	0.01	0.19	0.09



- to offender	174 (48.20)	0.26	0.64	-0.40	0.27	0.30	2.40	1.30	0.70	0.06	0.38	0.15	0.07
- to victim	83 (22.99)	0.15	-1.51	-0.43	0.10	0.00	0.00	2.30	5.70	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.37
- to both	70 (19.39)	0.10	0.06	0.84	-1.24	0.00	0.00	2.30	5.70	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.37
Victim release site													
- indoor private	145 (40.17)	0.72	-0.22	-0.16	0.60	1.80	0.20	0.20	2.80	0.35	0.03	0.02	0.25
- indoor semipublic	15 (4.16)	0.04	-2.21	-0.05	-0.68	0.00	2.60	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.02
- indoor public	42 (11.63)	0.57	-0.29	1.39	-1.36	0.30	0.10	3.90	4.10	0.04	0.01	0.25	0.24
- outdoor private	36 (9.97)	-1.55	0.41	1.32	0.89	2.20	0.20	3.20	1.60	0.29	0.02	0.21	0.10
- outdoor semipublic	6 (1.66)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- outdoor public	117 (32.41)	-0.58	0.54	-0.73	-0.46	1.00	1.20	3.00	1.30	0.17	0.14	0.26	0.10
Victim release familiarity													
- no	32 (8.86)	-1.98	0.31	1.43	1.06	3.00	0.10	3.10	1.90	0.38	0.01	0.20	0.11
- to offender	144 (39.89)	0.25	0.55	-0.34	0.45	0.20	1.50	0.80	1.60	0.04	0.20	0.08	0.14
- to victim	87 (24.10)	0.21	-1.35	-0.44	0.12	0.10	5.40	0.80	0.10	0.01	0.58	0.06	0.00
- to both	98 (27.15)	0.10	0.29	0.43	-1.12	0.00	0.30	0.80	6.50	0.00	0.03	0.07	0.47
Crime location set													
- eacvr	157 (43.49)	0.59	-0.63	0.25	0.12	1.30	2.10	0.50	0.10	0.27	0.31	0.05	0.01
- eac_vr	5 (1.39)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- e_acvr	63 (17.45)	0.15	0.58	-0.49	-0.17	0.00	0.70	0.70	0.10	0.01	0.07	0.05	0.01
- ea_cvr	34 (9.42)	-1.44	0.08	0.32	0.34	1.70	0.00	0.20	0.20	0.21	0.00	0.01	0.01
- ea_c_vr	21 (5.82)	-1.16	0.41	-1.44	0.19	0.70	0.10	2.20	0.00	0.09	0.01	0.13	0.00
- e_ac_vr	62 (17.17)	0.15	0.76	-0.31	-0.71	0.00	1.20	0.30	1.70	0.00	0.12	0.02	0.11
- e_a_cvr	17 (4.71)	-1.94	0.10	1.60	0.99	1.80	0.00	2.40	1.00	0.22	0.00	0.15	0.06
- e_a_c_vr	2 (0.55)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Note: Crime location set: e = encounter; a = attack; c = crime; vr = victim release

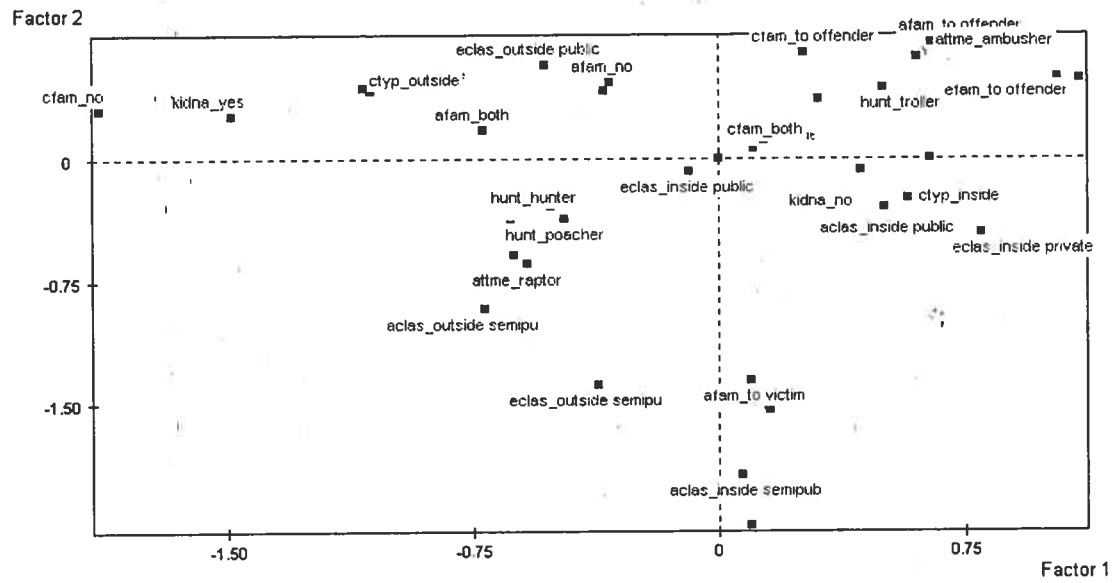
Dimension 1 discriminates between offenders who act indoors (e.g., house, public facility, business) and those who act outdoors. “Outdoor” serial sex offenders encounter their victims outdoors, abduct them, attack them outdoors, and commit the sexual assault outdoors (e.g., in an alley, on the street). In contrast, “indoor” offenders encounter their victims indoors, do not abduct them, and attack and commit the sexual assault indoors.

Dimension 2 represents familiarity of location. This dimension describes serial sex offenders who encounter, attack, commit their crime, and release their victims only in locations familiar to them, as opposed to offenders who act in locations only familiar to the victim, such as the latter's residence. Dimension 3 contrasts those who commit predatory offences (involving the use of seduction to approach victims, coercion to commit crimes, and a vehicle during a crime) to more opportunistic offenders (who act directly and non-coercively on victims upon encountering them, and who walk during the crime). Finally, Dimension 4 describes the investment of offenders in the commission of the crime. Offenders with low investment hunt in the prostitution market or a local visibility (e.g., street, park, arcades, store), act directly on the victim, and are characterized by *poacher* and *troller* hunting styles, whereas those with high investment infiltrate families to access victims, give gifts and/or money to approach victims, and are characterized by a *trapper* hunting style. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the most significant variables included in the analysis for the first two dimensions emerging from the MCA<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The 5 other MCA graphs are not presented here due to space constraints. They are available upon request from the first author.

Figure 1: MCA Joint-Plot of Factor 1 and Factor 2



Tables 3 and 4 show the distribution of serial sexual assaults in the six clusters resulting from the HCA, and characterize the clusters in terms of the values of the active variables most strongly associated with each class.

Table 3 presents the three first clusters or tracks. The first track represents 22.16% of the serial crimes. The typical profile is that of an offender who hunts for a solitary victim, and relies upon ambush or direct attack. All locations associated with the crime (encounter, attack, crime, and victim release)<sup>2</sup> are outdoors. Encounter and attack happen at the same location, usually familiar to both offender and victim, whereas the crime is committed in place unfamiliar to either the offender or the victim. Victim release may happen in locations unfamiliar to either offender or victim but typically occurs at a location familiar only to the offender. Offenders described by this track use a *hunter* hunting style and *raptor* attack method, most often abducting the victim. They may employ threats or physical violence during their approach and commission of the crime, but use only physical violence to bring the victim to the crime site.

The second track (3.60%) is similar to the first one. However, all offenders using this track encounter their victims in indoor public places and use only physical violence to approach and bring their victims to the crime sites. Threats are used to commit the sexual assault, and victim release is at an outdoors private location (e.g., a backyard). In the third track (11.91%), some offenders hunt through local visibility (most often the victim's residence). They thus encounter, attack, offend, and release the victim in the same location, which is familiar only to the victim. The hunting style and attack methods

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<sup>2</sup> Encounter site refers to the location where an offender first comes into contact with the victim. Attack site refers to the location where an offender first attacks the victim. Crime site refers to the location where the sexual assault is committed. Victim release site refers to the location where an offender releases the victim.

are the same as those used as in the first two tracks, but the victim is not abducted. Physical violence is used during the approach and commission of the crime, whereas threats may be used to move the victim to the crime site.

Table 4 presents the three other tracks of the hunting process. The fourth track (11.91%) represents offenders who hunt through a local visibility (most often on the street) for a victim who may or may not be alone. The encounter, attack, crime and victim release all occur at the same location, usually an indoor public place. These offenders show no particular hunting style or attack method, but act directly to approach, bring the victim to the crime site, and commit the crime.

In the fifth track (26.87%), offenders hunt for victims through an occupation or the prostitution market. These offenders are characterized by a *troller* hunting style and an *ambusher* attack method. They use seduction, tricks, or games in order to approach and bring the victim to the crime site. After an encounter in a public place, offenders attack and commit the crime in an indoors private location familiar only to them. Victim release is in an outdoor public location, usually where the encounter occurred. Offenders use money/gifts to commit the crime.

Finally, the last track (16.34%) describes offenders who gain access to their victims by their occupation or by infiltrating families. Victims are usually not alone, and are encountered, attacked, victimized and released in the same indoor private location, familiar only to the offender. Some offenders rely on a strategy of giving money/gifts in

TABLE 3: Percentages of Events and Test-Values for the First Three Hunting Process Clusters

	Cluster 1 N = 80 (22.16%)	%	Test- Values	Cluster 2 N = 13 (3.60%)	%	Test- Values	Cluster 3 N = 43 (11.91%)	%	Test- Values
Hunting fields	Ambush	95.00	8.74	Ambush	100.00	3.38	Local visibility	33.33	4.42
Victim alone	Alone	87.50	6.34	Alone	100.00	3.21	Alone	78.26	3.83
Encounter site classification	Outdoor public	95.00	11.01	Indoor public	100.00	6.22	Indoor private	63.77	6.43
Encounter familiarity	Both	92.50	6.83	Both	100.00	2.94	Indoor semi-public	20.29	5.86
Strategies to approach victim	Physical violence	32.50	3.24	Physical violence	100.00	6.31	Victim	95.65	15.67
	Threat	13.75	2.93				Physical violence	40.58	4.65
Offender hunting style	Hunter	81.25	5.43	Hunter	100.00	3.40	Hunter	82.61	5.21
Offender attack method	Raptor	70.00	5.54	Raptor	100.00	4.25	Raptor	81.16	7.20
Kidnap style attack	Yes	83.75	14.05	Yes	100.00	5.92	No	98.55	5.27
Attack site classification	Outdoor public	93.75	12.97	Outdoor public	100.00	4.92	Indoor semi-public	20.29	5.35
Attack familiarity	Both	82.50	9.46	Both	100.00	4.66	Indoor private	68.12	3.57
Strategies to bring victim to crime site	Physical violence	85.00	10.36	Physical violence	100.00	4.77	Victim	100.00	15.76
Crime location type	Offence scene	73.75	12.02	Offence scene	100.00	6.03	Threat	42.03	6.92
Crime familiarity	No	22.50	3.98	No	100.00	7.77	Encounter site	89.86	8.10
Strategies to commit crime	Physical violence	65.00	4.03	Threat	0.00	6.19	Victim	100.00	16.36
	Threat	32.50	2.92				Physical violence	79.71	6.49
Victim release site classification	Outdoor public	73.75	8.61	Outdoor private	100.00	7.65	Indoor semi-public	18.84	5.57
	Outdoor private	22.50	3.74				Indoor private	69.57	5.37
Victim release familiarity	No	21.25	3.86	No	100.00	7.89	Victim	97.10	15.11
	Offender	53.75	2.72						
Crime location set	ea_cvr	38.75	9.03	e_a_cvr	100.00	9.26	ea_cvr	86.96	8.18
	ea_c_vr	26.25	7.87						

TABLE 4: Percentages of Events and Test-Values for the Three Other Hunting Process Clusters

	Cluster 4 N = 43 (11.91%)	%	Test- Values	Cluster 5 N = 97 (26.87%)	%	Test- Values	Cluster 6 N = 59 (16.34%)	%	Test- Values
Hunting fields	Local visibility	34.88	3.49	Prostitution market Occupation	8.25	3.61	Family	55.93	9.55
Victim alone	No	65.12	3.04	-----	23.71	2.48	Occupation No	35.59	4.19
Encounter site classification	Indoor public	83.72	9.78	Outdoor public	76.29	7.57	Indoor private	83.05	9.25
Encounter familiarity	Both	97.67	5.70	Both	84.54	5.51	Offender	84.75	13.46
Strategies to approach victim	Direct action	30.23	5.68	Seduction	24.74	6.64	Money/gifts	38.98	6.63
				Tricks	55.67	3.03	Drugs/alcohol	20.34	6.32
Offender hunting style	-----	-----	-----	Games	12.37	2.47			
Offender attack method	-----	-----	-----	Troller	43.30	6.70	Trapper	86.44	12.25
Kidnap style attack	No	100.00	4.31	Ambusher	92.78	10.46	Ambusher	100.00	9.39
Attack site classification	Indoor public	79.07	11.51	No	100.00	7.29	No	100.00	5.30
Attack familiarity	Both	93.02	8.10	Indoor private	65.98	4.00	Indoor private	94.92	8.29
Strategies to bring victim to crime site	Direct action	34.88	6.50	Offender	69.07	7.29	Offender	98.31	10.87
				Seduction	11.34	4.16	Money/gifts	32.20	6.44
Crime location type	Encounter site	97.67	7.51	Tricks	54.64	8.36	Drugs/alcohol	22.03	6.62
Crime familiarity	Both	93.02	11.41	Games	20.62	4.43			
Strategies to commit crime	Direct action	60.47	7.18	Attack site	90.72	14.79	Encounter site	88.14	7.00
Victim release site classification	Indoor public	81.40	12.06	Offender	69.07	5.71	Offender	98.31	9.12
Victim release familiarity	Both	95.35	10.13	Money/gifts	21.65	3.14	Money/gifts	37.29	5.60
Crime location set	eacvr	74.42	4.21	Outdoor public	53.61	4.99	Drugs/alcohol	35.59	8.76
				Both	38.14	2.67	Indoor private	93.22	9.26
				e_ac_vr	50.52	9.49	Offender	94.92	9.67
				e_acvr	40.21	6.39	eacvr	86.44	7.32

order to approach, bring the victim to the crime site and commit the crime, whereas others use drugs/alcohol.

## DISCUSSION

The six identified clusters can be broken down into three different hunting process scripts.

### *The Coercive Script: Home-Intrusion Rape and Outside Rape Tracks*

The Coercive Script comprises three hunting process tracks used by serial sex offenders. The three tracks exhibit the same hunting style and attack methods as defined by Rossmo (1997). In the *hunter* hunting style, crimes are generally committed within the offender's city of residence: offenders set out from their home base and search for suitable victims within their awareness space. In the *raptor* attack method, offenders attack almost immediately upon encountering their victims. It confirms Rossmo's results (2000) concerning the correlation between hunting styles and attack methods.

The three tracks show similar crime strategies. However, the third track, which might be designated as the *Home-Intrusion Rape Track* (Warr, 1988), is clearly different from the two others in terms of different hunting fields and crime locations. Hunting field designate the type of area where offenders hunt for victims. It must be distinguished from the hunting ground defined by Rossmo (2000) as a geographic area where offenders hunt for victims. Offenders identified by such a track (11.91%) break into the victim's residence and commit the sexual assault while she is alone. This result is similar to those of Rossmo (2000) in which 12.8% of crime locations of serial murder cases were in the victim's residence. It has been suggested that this type of hunting pattern is related to greater experience in non-sexual crime and a higher motivation for crime (Warren,



Reboussin, Hazelwood, Cummings, Gibbs, & Trumbetta, 1998). Although this track involves some risks (alerting the victim while breaking and entering, offender's unfamiliarity with the location, leaving evidence such as fingerprints at the crime scene), it provides high benefits to the offender (e.g., more time to commit the sexual assault), and, further, lower exposure to high-risk situations (e.g., no witnesses to interfere, victim is not moved once on the crime scene).

The *Home-Intrusion Rape Track* represents a good opportunity for offenders to minimize their risks of being apprehended and to maximize their gains, such as a higher rape completion ratio (completed rapes/attempts) (Warr, 1988) than does track 1 and 2 (*Outside Rape Track*) of the Coercive Script, which entails higher risk (e.g., witnesses observing or interfering, victim resistance during abducting) and fewer benefits (e.g., less time to commit or complete the sexual assault). It might be thought that opportunity, offender motivation, and the presence or absence of capable guardians condition the choice of one track over another (Felson, 1998). However, it seems that the adoption of the *Home-Intrusion Rape Track* is more dependent on victim selection, planning, the use of a weapon, and a greater amount of force (Amir, 1971; Rossmo, 2000). Findings from Warr's (1988) study show that *Home-Intrusion Rape* resembles a hybrid offense, that is, a violent crime with the opportunity structure of a property crime. Hence, the same characteristics that make a dwelling attractive to a burglar, for example, (easy access, easy escape, a clear view inside the home) are also likely to make it attractive to sex offenders.

### *The Manipulative Script: Sophisticated Rape and Family-Infiltrator Rape Tracks*

Track 5 describes the *Sophisticated Rape track*. This hunting process track is more sophisticated. Offenders in this track invest more time preparing the crime and selecting targets. They wait for or create opportunities (through their occupation) or go to locations where opportunities already exist (prostitution market) in order to establish their ambush. Offenders using the *Sophisticated Rape Track* exhibit a *troller* hunting style and an *ambusher* attack method: they may plan their offence in advance, in order to be ready when an opportunity presents itself at a location at which they have a great deal of control (e.g., residence, workplace) (Rossmo, 2000). Some of these sex offenders work or are involved with children. They have been described as very sophisticated and experienced (Leclerc, Proulx, & McKibben, in press). It has been reported that that these offenders, due to their position and status, may appear non-threatening to their victims. They benefit from a context which affords them the opportunity to be in the presence of potential victims and, therefore, to establish intimate relationship with some of them through different manipulative strategies (e.g., seduction, tricks, games). Moreover, they can easily create situations which allow them to be alone with a potential victim (e.g., staying after school, camping trips, movies), not only to gain the victim's trust but also to provide a favorable context for sexual activity. This is worthy of attention, as it stresses the relevance of the role of situation and opportunity in offending (Clarke & Cornish, 2001). In fact, contextual factors of the sexual assault influence the opportunities to offend, as well as the strategies that are adopted by offenders to successfully commit their crimes.

The *Family-Infiltrator Rape Track* (cluster 6) is primarily distinguished from the *Sophisticated Rape Track* by the hunting field in which the offenders operate. Offenders using this hunting process use their occupation, and are more likely to infiltrate a family. In these cases, offenders become acquainted with a family and offer different types of services, in particular babysitting. Offenders specifically target women living alone with children, vulnerable victims (e.g., those with alcohol or drug problems) and victims not too far from their residence (Beauregard, Rossmo, & Proulx, submitted for publication; Ouimet & Proulx, 1994). This type of *trapper/ambusher* uses not only money and gifts to commit his crimes but also, in order to decrease the victim's resistance or inhibitions, drugs and alcohol. These offenders are able to attract potential victims to locations (home or work) familiar only to offenders', which places the victims in more vulnerable situations.

*The Non-Persuasive Script: Direct Action Rape Track*

Track 4 illustrates the *Direct Action Rape Track* of the Non-Persuasive Script. Acting directly on victims, that is engaging in sexual activity without initial interaction with the victim, requires only an opportunity. This type of crime is often spontaneous and is not associated with the use of any particular strategy (Leclerc, Carpentier, & Proulx, in press). This form of hunting process exhibits little or no investment from the offender, no sophistication, and low risk (mainly because of the indoor public locations associated with the crime), and may be seen as a "hit and run" attack. This type of strategy has also been observed by Leclerc et al., (in press), who found that nearly half of the child molesters in their sample had acted directly on their victims to get them involved in sexual activities. It is interesting to note, however, that the present study and the one by

Leclerc et al., (in press) are the first to identify such a pattern of behavior in different types of sex offenders.

Results from the MCA show how important geographic variables, such as the nature (indoor versus outdoor locations) and familiarity of the offence location, are in serial sex offenders' hunting processes. These two dimensions alone were responsible for more than 25% of the inertia (variance) explained by the 4-dimensional solution. Such results are congruent with the environmental criminology perspective which states that the spatial and temporal distribution of offenders and victims are patterned (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1993). Such results also demonstrate that target selection is highly dependent on the physical environment (Canter & Larkin, 1993). Hence, any study that looks at the offending process and does not include geographic or environmental components related to the crime neglects an important dimension of crime.

The identified scripts permit us to appreciate the interaction between the behavioral and geographic aspect of criminal behavior. As we can observe from the different scripts, certain types of location are related to the types of strategy exhibited by an offender during the hunting process or, conversely, certain strategies might well be triggered by the types of location at which the offender and the victim meet. These results are in agreement with several studies that have looked at the correlates of spatial behavior (e.g., Beauregard, Proulx, & Rossmo, in press; Canter & Gregory, 1994; Davies & Dale, 1995; Lebeau, 1987; Warren et al., 1998). As an illustration, results from the study of Ouimet and Proulx (1994) on child molesters suggest that, as with other types of crimes, most of the child molesters offended near their residence. Explanation for such a phenomenon is, however, different in the case of child molesters. The offender's home

appears to be the best possible location at which to commit an offence because it offers several advantages over competing locations (e.g., children might feel more secure, or more willing to participate in sexual contact). The authors observed, however, that the level of violence of the crime is positively associated with the distance traveled by the offender from his home to the target. If child molesters are not able to find a suitable victim near their home, they may have to go further. The further they travel, the harder it becomes to convince a child to return to the offender's home, as few are willing to take a car trip with a stranger. The offender has to adapt his hunting strategy and use a more direct (coercive) approach method, which in turn often leads to an increase in the level of violence of the crime. This interaction between the behavioral and geographic components of the crime is an eloquent illustration of the very nature of the rational choice model of crime: it emphasizes the interactional, transactional, and adaptive nature of human behavior. Criminals, just like non-criminals, improve their information processing and decision-making through experience. In this light, it is important to study environmental variables, such as crime scene characteristics, and their choice-structuring properties, in order to stress the distinctive nature of different person-situation criminal interactions (Cornish, 1993). The rational choice approach has demonstrated that offenders act differently, depending on environmental cues associated with the crime (Beauregard, Rossmo et al., submitted for publication).

## CONCLUSION

This study explores the use of a script approach in the analysis of hunting patterns of serial sex offenders. Three different scripts have been identified: the Coercive Script (*Home-Intrusion Rape Track* and *Outside Rape Track*), the Manipulative Script

(*Sophisticated Rape Track* and *Family-Infiltrator Rape Track*), and the Non-Persuasive Script (*Direct Action Rape Track*). Table 5 presents the different scripts as well as the hunting styles, attack methods, and hunting fields associated with each tracks.

This research integrates behavioral and geographic components in the hunting process, as well as detailing further the hunting process model suggested by Rossmo (1997). This study, however, suffers from certain limitations. First, as it is often the case with this type of research, our sample included only incarcerated offenders. It may be that the hunting process of offenders who have been able to avoid detection is different from those offenders who have been apprehended by the police, the former hypothetically being more sophisticated and successful. Moreover, despite the dynamic process of hunting patterns, data were only collected for the main type of strategy used by the offenders at each phase of the crime (e.g., strategies to approach, to bring victim to crime site, and to commit the crime). For example, if an offender used more than one strategy during a specific crime phase, only the one leading to the completion of the sexual assault was recorded.

Despite these limitations, the use of a script analysis has practical implications for both situational prevention and offender profiling. According to Cornish (1994a), "both require a comprehensive understanding of the crime-commission process in terms of its procedural requirements: in the case of situational prevention, to identify potential intervention points; and in the case of profiling, to focus investigatory activities on all aspects of the modus operandi. Both may exploit knowledge of other choice-structuring properties of crimes: in the case of situational prevention, as a means of tentatively

Table 5: Scripts of hunting process

SCRIPT	Coercive		Manipulative		Non-Persuasive
TRACK	Home-Intrusion	Outdoor	Sophisticated	Family-Infiltrator	Direct Action
HUNTING STYLE	Hunter	Hunter	Troller	Trapper	N/A
ATTACK METHOD	Raptor	Raptor	Ambusher	Ambusher	N/A
HUNTING FIELD	Local visibility	Ambush	Prostitution market Occupation	Family Occupation	Local visibility

identifying potential groups of perpetrators in order to target situational measures cost-effectively and avoid technological overkill; and in the case of profiling, to guide the search for suspects” (p. 187).

Examples of situational prevention measures based on our findings might include the restriction or monitoring of access to unsupervised areas where offenders could use their occupation or position (e.g., sport coach, babysitter, business owner) to commit their crimes (Leclerc, Carpentier, & Proulx, in press). Further, the Manipulative Script may sensitize the public about the more subtle strategies used by offenders to approach, bring the victims to crime sites, and commit their crimes. Potential victims may find the information provided by the Coercive Script helpful in identifying environmental cues and locations in their daily routines that could be used by offenders for ambushes, attacks, or sexual assaults (e.g., isolated areas, private yards with high bushes, dark alleys, bicycle paths within wooded areas) (Beauregard, Rossmo et al., submitted for

publication). Moreover, as illustrated with the *Home-Intrusion Rape Track*, the notion that women are safe from rape at home and in danger outside the home is a misreading of the evidence. "Instead, the home should be regarded as a major locus, and perhaps the major locus, of rape" (Warr, 1988, p. 286). Sexual assault investigators should inform women that some sex offenders are environmentally aware and will be attracted by any cues on the outside building that indicate on occupants. Therefore, women should be educated on how to secure their windows, on the potential dangers of leaving only the screen door closed during hot summer nights, and on the type of environmental cues attractive for offenders, such as any evidence that a woman is living alone.

Our results may also prove useful for geographic profiling. Offenders' hunting styles and attack methods have been linked to location types, something that has to be taken into account in geographic profiling. According to Rossmo (2000), hunting style is helpful in determining which crime locations are the best predictors of an offender's anchor point under different circumstances. Also, it permits the identification of these situations in which an analysis of the relationship between offender activity space and crime location geography is appropriate, allowing the elimination of those cases where such an analysis is either impossible or redundant (Rossmo, 2000). Further, the familiarity of location explores the offender's awareness of space and may help to reconstruct and interpret his mental map. These mental maps have an influence on crime site selection, as a target cannot be victimized unless an offender is first aware of the site (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1981; Rossmo, 2000). Finally, the relationship between offending and geographic behavior, as revealed by our results, may serve as the basis for integrated criminal-geographic profiling as a unique investigative strategy. For example,



the *Home-Intrusion Rape Track* identified in our study and by Warr (1988) may help police investigators identify similarities between burglary and residential rape. Also, this specific type of hunting process may be associated with other crime/offender characteristics, such as the distance to travel to commit the crime, greater experience in non-sexual crime and a higher offending motivation (Warren et al., 1998).

Future studies should take into account each phase of the crime commission process (i.e., preparation, target selection, commission of the crime, escape, and aftermath) in order to offer crime-prevention strategists the widest range of potential intervention-points, and help anticipate displacement and alternative pathways that could be used by offenders who encounter obstacles during the crime commission process (Leclerc et al., in press). Furthermore, in an offender profiling perspective, it is important to examine if these scripts of hunting process are linked to personal characteristics of offenders (e.g., personality, sexual fantasies, age) (Salfati & Canter, 1999). Studies by Proulx and colleagues on sexual aggressors against women (Proulx, St-Yves, Guay, & Ouimet, 1999) and on sexual aggressors against children (Proulx, Perreault, Ouimet, & Guay, 1999) have already found a significant relationship between personality and the offending process.

## Cinquième Chapitre

### Conclusion

## LA GÉOGRAPHIE DU CRIME : UNE DIMENSION NÉGLIGÉE DANS LE PROCESSUS DE PASSAGE À L'ACTE

Les macrothéories de l'agression sexuelle ont permis de vérifier le rôle de différents facteurs dans la propension à commettre une agression sexuelle. Les théories unidimensionnelles ont lentement cédé la place aux théories multifactorielles combinant différents types de facteurs (Marshall et Barbaree, 1990). Toutefois, ces théories générales de l'agression sexuelle ont négligé une composante cruciale de ce type de crime, soit la compréhension du processus de passage à l'acte.

C'est ainsi qu'a émergé une approche typologique et séquentielle du processus de passage à l'acte des délinquants sexuels. Ces typologies ont pour but de classer les agresseurs sexuels selon différents critères, parmi lesquels les éléments du scénario délictuel (*modus operandi*) occupent une place prépondérante. Cependant, ces typologies souffrent de plusieurs limites. Premièrement, les typologies sur le processus de passage à l'acte ont l'agresseur comme objet principal d'étude, négligeant ainsi l'analyse de l'événement criminel en entier, c'est-à-dire l'agresseur, la victime et le contexte (Meier, Kennedy et Sacco, 2001). Deuxièmement, ces typologies présupposent que le processus de passage à l'acte, tout comme le *modus operandi* d'ailleurs, est stable et qu'il ne fluctue pas chez un agresseur sexuel donné. Cette conception suggère que les agresseurs sexuels agissent toujours de la même façon, qu'ils sont « spécialisés » dans un seul type de victime et qu'ils sont insensibles aux facteurs situationnels et aux opportunités. Troisièmement, les études réalisées jusqu'ici sur le processus de passage à l'acte des délinquants sexuels ont grandement négligé les facteurs situationnels. Tant les typologies établies par Proulx et ses collègues que celles de Ward et ses collaborateurs, suggèrent

que ce sont les caractéristiques personnelles de l'individu (personnalité, préférences sexuelles, cognitions) qui sont les principaux facteurs qui influent sur le processus de passage à l'acte.

Certaines études ont pourtant démontré l'impact des facteurs situationnels sur le processus de passage à l'acte des délinquants sexuels. Ainsi, la consommation d'alcool, de pornographie, la présence d'un affect de colère, de distorsions cognitives, d'une arme et la résistance de la victime sont tous des éléments qui ont été associés au processus de passage à l'acte. Cependant, ces recherches ont négligé l'environnement ou la géographie du crime comme facteur situationnel.

La géocriminologie, ou criminologie environnementale, vient pallier les différentes limites qui ont été déterminées. Elle est principalement formée des modèles théoriques de la théorie des « activités routinières », de la théorie des « patterns » criminels et de l'approche du « choix rationnel » et elle se propose d'étudier le phénomène criminel dans l'espace. Le crime est alors considéré comme la rencontre de délinquants, de victimes ou de cibles potentielles et de cadres légaux à un endroit et en un temps spécifique. D'ailleurs, les études qui se sont intéressées aux comportements géographiques des délinquants sexuels ont démontré l'importance de ces facteurs dans le processus de passage à l'acte, sans pour autant négliger les caractéristiques personnelles (âge, sexe, race, fantasmes sexuelles, psychopathie) et les caractéristiques du *modus operandi* (méthodes d'approche, sophistication, sélection des victimes, degré de violence, utilisation de contentions physiques).

C'est d'ailleurs sur la base de ces connaissances acquises sur les interactions entre les comportements géographiques et criminels que Rossmo (1997) a conçu un modèle du

processus de prédation (*hunting process*) des criminels sériels. Ce modèle divise en deux dimensions les comportements de prédation : la méthode de recherche d'une victime potentielle et la méthode d'attaque. Ce concept de processus de prédation suggéré par Rossmo présente certains avantages comparativement aux typologies du processus de passage à l'acte. Premièrement, ce modèle intègre à la fois les composantes comportementales (de *modus operandi*) et géographiques que l'on retrouve dans tous les types de crime. Deuxièmement, le processus de prédation reconnaît la nature dynamique et adaptative du processus de passage à l'acte, suggérant quelles sont les méthodes de recherche de victimes et les méthodes d'attaque le plus susceptibles d'être employées selon les différents contextes. Cependant, nous constatons que ce modèle de prédation n'est pas suffisamment détaillé et qu'il néglige des paramètres importants qu'on doit inclure dans le processus décisionnel associé au processus de passage à l'acte.

#### VERS UN CHANGEMENT DE PERSPECTIVE : DES TYPOLOGIES AUX SCRIPTS

Afin de mieux saisir la nature et la dynamique du processus de passage à l'acte de l'agression sexuelle, cette thèse s'est efforcée d'examiner spécifiquement le processus de prédation chez des agresseurs sexuels sériels selon une approche théorique différente, celle du choix rationnel, et aussi d'après des méthodes d'analyse distinctes et complémentaires.

Tout d'abord, le processus décisionnel qui sous-tend le processus de prédation a été exploré de façon qualitative auprès des agresseurs sexuels sériels de notre échantillon. Nos résultats démontrent que ces agresseurs, en plus de changer de stratégies pour pressentir, emmener la victime au lieu du délit et commettre le crime, prennent leurs décisions à ce sujet selon différents facteurs tels que le type de victime et ses réactions,

des facteurs situationnels ainsi que l'environnement. Par exemple, un agresseur peut changer sa façon d'approcher la victime selon qu'elle est seule à l'extérieur ou seule à l'intérieur de sa résidence. Certains agresseurs sexuels sériels mentionnaient également une façon différente de commettre l'agression sexuelle selon qu'elle se produit le soir ou en plein jour. Le modèle dégagé d'après une approche du choix rationnel démontre qu'il est tout à fait compatible avec les modèles de sélection de victimes de la criminologie environnementale. Les agresseurs sexuels sériels évaluent, parfois de façon très limitée, les coûts et les bénéfices associés à une façon de s'y prendre et vont s'adapter aux différents facteurs situationnels et environnementaux lors du passage à l'acte.

Deuxièmement, on a trouvé des scripts de prédation grâce aux méthodes quantitatives complémentaires, soit les méthodes d'analyse factorielle des correspondances et de classification hiérarchique. Encore une fois, les résultats mettent en lumière des façons différentes d'agir chez des agresseurs sexuels sériels. De fait, les scripts établis permettent de mieux comprendre l'interaction entre les composantes géographiques (type de lieu et familiarité des lieux associés au crime) et comportementales (stratégies d'approche, pour emmener la victime au lieu du délit et pour commettre le délit, méthode de recherche de victime, moyen d'attaque) associées au processus de prédation. C'est cette interaction qui donne justement lieu à des façons différentes d'agir chez un même agresseur selon les contraintes de la situation, comme le suggère le courant de la criminologie environnementale.

Ainsi, nos résultats permettent d'appuyer le fait que les délinquants sexuels, tout comme les autres criminels, sont capables d'adaptation et que leur façon d'agir est changeante selon différents facteurs situationnels et environnementaux. Une approche

typologique, où un agresseur est associé à un type précis de processus de passage à l'acte, nie cette variation et cette plasticité du processus de passage à l'acte chez les criminels. C'est d'ailleurs pour ces raisons que l'approche du choix rationnel et la notion de script s'avèrent à notre avis plus souples pour l'étude du processus de passage à l'acte. Chaque script comporte différentes phases, lesquelles comportent des facteurs de différentes natures, à savoir comportementaux et géographiques. Cette façon de considérer le processus de passage à l'acte, plus particulièrement le processus de prédation, offre une plus grande liberté et permet d'apprécier les facteurs proximaux qui peuvent influencer sur le cours de l'agression sexuelle.

Ainsi, nos résultats nous ont permis de découvrir trois scripts différents du processus de prédation chez des agresseurs sexuels sériels (*Coercive*, *Manipulative* et *Non-persuasive*). Chacun de ces scripts comporte deux séquences (*tracks*) différentes, sauf pour le dernier. Des cas sont présentés afin d'illustrer chacun de ces scripts.

#### PRÉSENTATION DE CAS

Script : *Coercive*

Séquence : *Home-intrusion rape track*

Paul est un agresseur sexuel sériel ayant commis plusieurs délits échelonnés sur des années. Lors de certaines de ses agressions sexuelles, il se promenait le soir à bicyclette dans les rues avoisinantes de sa résidence. Il prenait le temps d'observer les maisons qui lui offraient une vue directe sur ses occupants. Paul disait ne pas aimer les immeubles d'appartements, car ils impliquaient souvent de devoir monter dans des escaliers et ainsi de s'exposer à de plus grands risques lors de la fuite. Les maisons unifamiliales étaient ses cibles de choix, puisqu'elles lui offraient un accès facile. Cette

observation pouvait durer plusieurs heures ou même s'échelonner sur des jours. Paul s'efforçait de confirmer que la maison ciblée était habitée par une femme seule ou une femme avec des enfants. Il prenait en considération différents indices : décoration, sac à main laissé à la vue, présence d'une seule voiture dans l'entrée, déplacements de la femme observés à travers les fenêtres de la maison. Pour le passage à l'acte, il attendait souvent aux petites heures du matin afin que la victime se trouve dans un sommeil profond. Il se dirigeait ensuite avec sa bicyclette dans la cour arrière de la résidence. Paul expliquait que sa bicyclette pouvait lui servir d'échelle lorsque les fenêtres étaient trop difficiles à atteindre. Dans la plupart des cas, il passait par une fenêtre mal fermée ou la porte-fenêtre. Il affirme que les portes-fenêtres sont souvent laissées entrouvertes durant les nuits de canicule. Sinon, il parvenait à ouvrir la porte-fenêtre en la soulevant suffisamment, le plus souvent lorsqu'il y avait seulement un loquet.

Une fois à l'intérieur, il se dirigeait directement vers la chambre des maîtres afin d'y trouver la victime, le plus souvent une jeune femme. Il avait immédiatement recours à la violence physique pour surprendre la victime et l'empêcher de crier. Les menaces étaient souvent nécessaires pour l'emmener à l'endroit où il désire l'agresser. Paul expliquait qu'il pouvait frapper la victime lorsqu'elle n'agissait pas comme voulu ou qu'il pouvait l'étrangler afin de la rendre inconsciente. Après l'agression sexuelle, il quittait les lieux sans rien dire. À au moins deux occasions, il aurait également abusé d'enfants lors de ces intrusions.

Script : *Coercive*

Séquence : *Outside rape track*



Marc est un agresseur sexuel sériel qui a fait rage durant environ deux ans. Il s'est attaqué principalement à des femmes adultes, pour un total de 12. Une des victimes était âgée de 14 ans. Lorsqu'il ressentait le désir d'agresser sexuellement une femme, il partait en voiture à la recherche d'une victime potentielle. Cette « chasse » pouvait avoir lieu le jour comme le soir. Lorsqu'il repérait une victime, il allait garer sa voiture plus loin. Ensuite, il suivait la jeune femme pendant un certain temps. Une fois arrivé à un endroit propice (près d'arbustes lui procurant une protection, à l'entrée d'une ruelle), il agrippait la victime par derrière. Tout en l'étranglant et en la menaçant, il l'emmenait à l'écart afin de pouvoir l'agresser sexuellement. Le plus souvent, le délit était de courte durée. Marc exigeait une fellation ou pénétrait la victime jusqu'à l'éjaculation. Marc repartait aussitôt après l'agression en courant, pour aller trouver son véhicule, non loin de la scène de crime.

Script : *Manipulative*

Séquence : *Sophisticated rape track*

Luc est un agresseur sexuel sériel qui a commis trois agressions sexuelles en un mois. Il se promenait souvent dans un quartier reconnu pour la prostitution. Bien que ce quartier donnait accès à des prostituées adultes, il était également réputé pour abriter des prostitués juvéniles. Alors qu'il se promenait en voiture, il aurait aperçu deux jeunes garçons qui tentaient d'entrer dans un camion stationné dans une ruelle. Luc se serait arrêté pour demander aux deux garçons ce qu'ils faisaient là. C'était l'après-midi, un jour de semaine. Habituellement, à une telle heure, les enfants sont à l'école. Après leur avoir posé quelques questions, Luc comprit que les jeunes vivaient en centre d'accueil et étaient en fugue. Il leur proposa alors de ne pas les dénoncer et de les emmener prendre

une bouchée. Les victimes ont tout de suite accepté. Une fois au restaurant, Luc se ravisa et expliqua aux garçons qu'il serait plus prudent de commander et d'aller manger à son appartement, afin d'éviter que les policiers à leur recherche ne les trouvent. Les deux jeunes ont trouvé qu'il s'agissait d'une bonne idée. Arrivés à son appartement, ils ont pris le temps de manger leur pizza. Ensuite, Luc leur expliqua qu'il devait prendre une douche et il les invita à faire de même. Les victimes ont encore une fois accepté, profitant de son hospitalité. Cependant, après la douche, Luc commença à jouer et à se tirer avec les deux jeunes garçons qui n'étaient vêtus que d'une serviette. Il se sentait très excité sexuellement et il avait le désir de passer à l'acte, surtout que les victimes semblaient bien collaborer. Ensuite, il se mit à leur parler de sexualité et à leur montrer ce qu'était la masturbation. Pour les amener à commettre des actes sexuels, il leur offrit chacun 10 dollars pour qu'ils se laissent faire et pour qu'ils se masturbent mutuellement. Les deux jeunes, qui avaient besoin d'argent pour leur fugue, ont accepté. Après avoir éjaculé, Luc alla reconduire les deux victimes dans un lieu public afin d'éviter d'être associé aux deux jeunes fugueurs.

Script : *Manipulative*

Séquence : *Family-infiltrator rape track*

Carl est un agresseur sexuel sériel qui a fait un total de sept victimes. Pour certaines de ces victimes, il expliquait que son terrain de chasse de prédilection était la famille. Selon lui, les familles monoparentales, où la mère vit seule avec un ou des enfants, représentent un bassin de victimes potentielles facilement accessibles et très vulnérables. Dans un cas en particulier, il était concierge dans un immeuble d'appartements pour personnes à faible revenu. Alors qu'il effectuait des travaux dans un

logement, il aurait fait connaissance avec une femme qui avait la garde de ses deux garçons. Carl se serait montré aimable et serviable avec la dame, sans rien demander en retour. Il lui aurait même offert de garder ses enfants si elle devait s'absenter pour travailler.

Carl expliquait que le fait de discuter avec la mère des enfants avait pour effet de faire disparaître les craintes des enfants à son égard, comme si désormais il était un ami de la famille. Quelques jours après cette rencontre, Carl a de nouveau offert de garder les enfants, prétextant qu'il devait garder d'autres enfants de toute façon. Selon lui, le fait de mentionner qu'il avait la garde d'autres enfants pouvait rassurer la dame. Il serait donc parvenu à emmener les deux garçons chez lui, la mère de ces derniers profitant de l'occasion pour sortir. Rapidement, Carl leur aurait offert de regarder des bandes dessinées. Les deux jeunes garçons l'auraient suivi jusque dans sa chambre à coucher. C'est là que Carl leur aurait montré les bandes dessinées en leur proposant de les donner s'ils se laissaient faire. Ainsi, Carl a pu commettre des attouchements sexuels sur les deux victimes et leur faire des fellations. En échange des faveurs sexuelles, Carl leur laissa les bandes dessinées.

Script : *Non-persuasive*

Séquence : *Direct action rape track*

Alain est un agresseur sexuel sériel qui a fait un total de 17 victimes, dont 8 sur une période de deux semaines. À cette époque, il consommait beaucoup d'alcool et de drogue. Il fréquentait différents débits de boisson. Lorsqu'il en ressentait le désir, il se postait près des toilettes des femmes et quand il jugeait le moment opportun, il commettait des contacts sexuels (plus ou moins intrusifs) sur la jeune femme qui sortait

des toilettes. Il n'y avait pas de violence ni aucune stratégie particulière pour approcher de la victime ou commettre les délits. Le même type d'agression se serait produit sur un agent de sécurité dans un aéroport ainsi que sur deux jeunes femmes sortant des toilettes d'un centre commercial.

Ces quelques cas permettent d'illustrer brièvement chacun des scripts du processus de prédation que notre étude examine.

### LIMITES MÉTHODOLOGIQUES

Cette thèse comporte certaines limites méthodologiques. Premièrement, dans l'exploration du processus décisionnel associé au processus de prédation, le petit nombre de sujets peut ne pas avoir permis d'apprécier l'étendue complète des comportements de prédation des agresseurs sexuels sériels. De plus, la validité externe des résultats n'a pas été vérifiée, c'est-à-dire, par exemple, que les agresseurs sexuels sériels appréhendés peuvent être différents de ceux qui sont parvenus à éviter jusqu'ici d'être identifiés par la police. Troisièmement, certains des items analysés reposent sur des informations autorévéloées qui peuvent être influencées par des distorsions intentionnelles ou non de la mémoire. Enfin, même en tentant de tenir compte le plus possible du caractère dynamique du processus de passage à l'acte, l'information quantitative colligée quant aux différentes stratégies utilisées lors du processus de prédation devait être unique. En ce sens, dans le cas de l'utilisation de plusieurs stratégies durant une phase particulière de l'agression, on tenait seulement compte de celle qui menait à la réalisation de l'agression sexuelle.

### IMPLICATIONS THÉORIQUES DES RÉSULTATS

Malgré ces limites, les travaux de cette thèse constituent une contribution aux théories existantes, tant celles sur l'agression sexuelle que sur la criminologie environnementale.

Tout d'abord, le tableau 1 présente la répartition des scripts établis selon les différentes méthodes de recherche de victimes et les méthodes d'attaque telles que Rossmo (1997) les a définies. Même si nos résultats ont permis de dégager différents scripts du processus de prédation pour les agresseurs sexuels sériels, nous constatons que deux méthodes de recherche de victimes (*poacher* et *troller*) ainsi qu'une méthode d'attaque (*stalker*) sont absentes de notre échantillon. Il est possible que ces stratégies particulières ne soient pas compatibles avec le processus de prédation des agresseurs sexuels sériels. Toutefois, il est plus probable que notre échantillon n'ait pas permis de couvrir l'ensemble des comportements de prédation des agresseurs sexuels et qu'il existe donc d'autres scripts à découvrir. Il serait d'ailleurs important de pouvoir questionner des agresseurs sexuels qui ont employé ces stratégies particulières afin de mieux comprendre ce qui les différencient des sujets de notre échantillon. Rossmo (1997) a trouvé toutes ces stratégies de recherche de victimes et d'attaque à l'intérieur de son échantillon de meurtriers en série, sauf une, soit la méthode d'attaque *stalker*.

Tableau 1 : Répartition des scripts selon les méthodes de recherche de victimes et les méthodes d'attaque

	RAPTOR	STALKER	AMBUSHER
HUNTER	“Outside Rape ” “ Home Intrusion Rape ”	S/O	S/O
POACHER	S/O	S/O	S/O
TROLLER	S/O	S/O	“ Sophisticated Rape ”
TRAPPER	S/O	S/O	“ Family-Infiltrator ”

Ensuite, nos résultats appuient la prémisse de base de la géocriminologie, c'est-à-dire que les crimes ne sont pas commis de façon aléatoire, mais plutôt lors de la convergence dans le temps et l'espace d'un délinquant motivé et d'une victime attrayante lors de l'absence de gardien (Felson, 1998). La géographie du crime, en plus de déterminer où les crimes ont le plus de probabilité d'être commis, influe sur le déroulement de l'événement criminel. D'ailleurs, des facteurs environnementaux tels que la familiarité des lieux ou le type d'endroit (intérieur versus extérieur) peuvent avoir un impact sur les stratégies et les méthodes de chasse d'un agresseur. Nos résultats illustrent la nature de cette relation.

Nos résultats permettent également de confirmer de façon empirique la pertinence du modèle de prédation élaboré par Rossmo (1997) en plus de l'approfondir et de le détailler. Les résultats obtenus au regard des scripts a permis de trouver des éléments comportementaux et géographiques supplémentaires et cohérents avec la logique du modèle original. Ainsi, les résultats illustrent bien la relation entre les méthodes de recherche de victimes et les méthodes d'attaque, en plus de suggérer des stratégies détaillées relativement à l'approche de la victime, la façon de l'emmener au lieu du délit et la manière de commettre le délit. Encore une fois, les facteurs environnementaux sont en relation avec le choix de ces méthodes et de ces stratégies, pouvant ainsi modifier certaines phases du processus de passage à l'acte.

La criminologie environnementale suggère également que les délinquants ont une certaine forme de rationalité. Cette rationalité, même si elle est parfois limitée, a été mise en évidence dans notre thèse. Les délinquants sexuels, tout comme les autres délinquants, procèdent à une évaluation des coûts et des bénéfices liés à la commission d'une

agression sexuelle dans un contexte donné. Ils sont influencés par cette évaluation et démontrent une capacité d'adaptation à la situation. Le choix du lieu du crime, tout comme le choix des stratégies employées est le résultat de décisions prises en fonction de différents facteurs (type de crime, motivation pour le crime, expériences passées) dont l'environnement.

Quant aux théories de l'agression sexuelle, elles ont jusqu'ici endossé l'hypothèse de la « spécialisation » des agresseurs sexuels. C'est d'ailleurs en rapport avec cette hypothèse que la plupart des travaux effectués ont eu tendance à étudier des groupes homogènes d'agresseurs sexuels de femmes adultes ou d'agresseurs sexuels d'enfants. Plusieurs études criminologiques ont démontré le caractère polymorphe de la carrière criminelle des délinquants. Nos résultats vont dans cette même direction et démontrent que certains agresseurs sexuels peuvent s'attaquer à une femme adulte ou à un enfant, selon l'occasion qui se présente à eux. D'ailleurs, l'agresseur sexuel voit ces opportunités changer selon des facteurs environnementaux tels que son terrain de chasse, la familiarité des lieux et le type d'endroit. Toutefois, il est important de se demander si le cas des agresseurs sexuels sériels est différent de celui des agresseurs sexuels à victime unique. Peut-être que les agresseurs sexuels sériels, étant souvent considérés comme des prédateurs, sont moins sélectifs lors du passage à l'acte? Peut-être ont-ils aussi des préférences sexuelles non exclusives pour un type de victime, favorisant l'agression sexuelle de plusieurs types de victimes ? Nous sommes d'avis qu'il s'agit de questions qui méritent une attention particulière.

Concernant les microthéories du processus de passage à l'acte des agresseurs sexuels, nos résultats démontrent l'importance des facteurs environnementaux sur le

déroulement de l'événement criminel. Différents travaux provenant de la criminologie environnementale ont déjà permis de constater cette influence, mais d'après d'autres types de crimes (cambriolages, vols à main armée, etc.). Les travaux de Proulx et de Ward sur le processus de passage à l'acte des délinquants sexuels ont négligé ces facteurs, mais ils ont aussi montré des résultats intéressants en privilégiant les caractéristiques personnelles de l'agresseur (cognitions, personnalité, préférences sexuelles). Loin d'être contradictoires, nous croyons que ces deux approches différentes témoignent de la complexité du processus de passage à l'acte. À la lumière de nos résultats, nous pouvons émettre l'hypothèse selon laquelle les caractéristiques personnelles auraient un rôle différent et à un moment différent sur le processus de passage à l'acte, comparativement aux facteurs environnementaux. Par exemple, la personnalité peut être un facteur crucial dans la préparation de l'agression sexuelle (une des premières étapes de l'événement criminel), alors que le type de lieu du crime sera plus important lors de la commission de l'agression sexuelle (une des dernières étapes de l'événement criminel), pour certains agresseurs du moins. Bien que cette hypothèse soit à vérifier, elle suggère néanmoins la nécessité de bien détailler les différentes phases du processus de passage à l'acte afin de déterminer les facteurs qui peuvent influencer sur chacune.

Enfin, cette thèse démontre que l'étude du processus de passage à l'acte est complexe et qu'elle doit savoir tirer profit de différentes approches théoriques. Nous sommes d'avis que l'approche de la criminologie environnementale vient bonifier la compréhension des différents mécanismes qui sous-tendent le processus de passage à l'acte.



## IMPLICATIONS PRATIQUES DES RÉSULTATS

Nos résultats impliquent également des applications pratiques, et ce, sur différents plans. Tout d'abord, les résultats obtenus peuvent être mis à contribution lors de l'élaboration du cycle de la délinquance et de la chaîne délictuelle dans les programmes de traitement en délinquance sexuelle axés sur le modèle de la prévention de la rechute. Le modèle spécifié ainsi que les différents scripts peuvent compléter le modèle de la prévention de la rechute de Pithers (1990) et ceux de Ward et ses collègues (1995) en apportant une attention particulière aux aspects comportementaux et situationnels associés à l'agression sexuelle.

De plus, nos résultats présentent une certaine utilité quant à l'élaboration de stratégies de prévention du crime. En connaissant mieux le processus décisionnel lié aux comportements des agresseurs sexuels, il devient plus facile d'élaborer des stratégies adaptées pouvant servir aux victimes potentielles afin d'échapper ou de résister aux agresseurs. Par exemple, certaines restrictions ou une surveillance accrue pourrait être imposée dans des endroits isolés où un agresseur potentiel pourrait se servir de sa position ou de son statut (gardien, propriétaire d'un commerce, entraîneur) pour commettre un délit sexuel. En outre, nos résultats pourraient permettre d'informer le public quant aux stratégies les plus subtiles (séduction, persuasion) utilisées par certains agresseurs sexuels afin de pressentir une victime, de l'emmener au lieu du délit et de commettre l'agression sexuelle. Les résultats peuvent aussi servir aux victimes potentielles à identifier, dans leurs activités routinières, les lieux et les indices propres à l'environnement qui pourraient être propices à une agression sexuelle (endroit isolé, ruelle, piste cyclable qui traverse un boisé). À la lumière des résultats, il serait également

important d'informer les femmes en particulier qu'elles peuvent être en danger autant lorsqu'elles sont seules dans leur logement que lorsqu'elles sont seules à l'extérieur. Ainsi, des mesures axées sur la sécurisation des fenêtres, des portes-fenêtres et sur les dangers potentiels de les laisser ouvertes ou entrouvertes durant l'été pourraient être efficaces.

Enfin, nos résultats ont des implications concernant la technique du profilage. Ainsi, les résultats qui démontrent le caractère dynamique du processus de prédation viennent appuyer le fait que les modèles de prédiction associés au profilage criminel doivent absolument inclure les facteurs situationnels afin d'être valides et fidèles à la réalité. De même, l'exploration du processus décisionnel peut servir à mieux comprendre le comportement de l'agresseur et ainsi préciser son profil. En ce qui concerne spécifiquement le profilage géographique, la relation établie entre les méthodes d'attaque/méthodes pour trouver des victimes et les lieux associés au crime est d'une utilité certaine lors de l'établissement du profil. Selon Rossmo (2000), « *hunting style is helpful in determining which crime locations are the best predictors of an offender's anchor point under different circumstances* » (p. 142). De plus, la familiarité des lieux associés au crime permet d'explorer, en partie du moins, la connaissance de l'espace de l'agresseur, ce qui peut être utile à la reconstruction de la carte mentale de l'individu lors de la réalisation du profil. La carte mentale de l'agresseur influe directement sur le choix du lieu de crime. Enfin, les relations soulignées entre les composantes comportementales et géographiques du processus de prédation peuvent servir de point de départ à l'intégration des techniques du profilage criminel et géographiques en un seul outil d'enquête.

## ÉTUDES FUTURES

Les recherches futures devraient tenter de détailler encore plus chacun des scripts trouvés, afin d'en arriver à une image complète du processus de passage à l'acte. Ainsi, chacune des phases du processus de passage à l'acte devrait être représentée dans chacun des scripts. De plus, il serait important de pouvoir vérifier à quelles phases les caractéristiques personnelles des agresseurs (telles que la personnalité, les fantaisies sexuelles, les distorsions cognitives, l'âge) ont le plus grand impact, dans le but de mieux comprendre la dynamique du processus de passage à l'acte et quels sont les facteurs importants à considérer. Finalement, il serait intéressant de pouvoir élaborer un ensemble de mesures de prévention du crime basées spécifiquement sur les comportements des agresseurs sexuels et leur processus décisionnel.

Enfin, nous croyons que pour en arriver à une théorie complète de l'agression sexuelle ou du processus de passage à l'acte des agresseurs sexuels, les deux niveaux théoriques, macro et micro, doivent être complémentaires. En ce sens, ces deux niveaux de théorie fournissent des informations différentes qui doivent être intégrées dans un seul modèle afin d'en arriver à une image globale de ce type de crime particulier. Ainsi, l'inclusion des différents facteurs (qui agissent à différents niveaux) permettra de mieux comprendre les mécanismes qui sous-tendent l'agression sexuelle.

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