

POSTER

The Commission of Homicide in Sexual Assaults: Research Informing New Psychology Practice

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In the first position of its kind in Australia, the presenter manages a team of forensic psychologists in NSW Police Force providing full-time support to criminal investigations, primarily relating to sexual assaults and homicides. The aim is to bridge a gap between clinical practice in the assessment of offenders and the application of this expertise in an investigative context, to improve the contribution by police to reducing offence recidivism. Emerging research is enhancing the empirical basis of investigative psychology in the Australian context, and two related projects will be presented:

1. Comparison of sexual homicide and sexual assault offenders from a risk assessment perspective:

Results demonstrated significant differences in relation to presence of a criminal history, extent of physical violence perpetrated, relationship to the victim, and total risk assessment on static factors. These results are also considered in the context of motivational differences, and investigative implications.

2. Current qualitative research comparing behavioural factors in serial sexual assaults and serial homicides, including consideration of the following issues:

- the assumption of sexual motive to serial homicides
- offence specialisation and behavioural consistency
- investigative psychology implications: offender typologies, behavioural crime linkage, psychological profiling.

Results will be discussed in the context of the psychological services provided by this formative Australian team. The presenter has five tertiary qualifications in psychology, including two masters degrees, and is currently completing a PhD. She is a research and clinical member of ATSA.