



E18 Obscene Phone Calls: How to Consider This Hands-Off Offense

Ingrid Bertsch, MA, University Hospital Center of Tours, Hopital Trousseau, Tours 37044 Cedex 9, FRANCE; and Sebastien Prat, MD, Forensic Psychiatry Department, St. Joseph's Centre for Mountain Health Services, 100 W 5th Street, Hamilton, ON L8N 3K7, CANADA*

After attending this presentation, attendees will be informed about obscene phone callers and their victims, their different profiles and associated behaviors, and the risk and impact of this type of hands-off offense.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by highlighting an offense that is always considered as a non-dangerous behavior.

Introduction: For more than two decades, sexual offenses have been extensively studied. From those studies, many categories and profiles have been developed. This study makes a notable difference between hands-off and hands-on sexual offenses, and one particular type of offense came to light during this study — obscene phone calls. Most of these calls contain sexual words or are driven by sexual fantasies. One of the characteristics of this offense is that it impacts random victims, sometimes in the offender's professional area. In addition, this type of offense contains a wide range of behavior, from silent calls to the most pornographic and vulgar speeches.

Methods and Results: A literature review was conducted to analyze existing knowledge regarding the matter, particularly in terms of understanding this behavior. Unfortunately, this topic does not seem to have been something of interest as less than 20 scientific papers, over a period of more than 40 years, were collected.

Discussion: The apparent low level of interest of this offense seems to be in relation to the fact that obscene phone call are often disregarded and not considered as psychological violence; however, these offenders truly suffer from a mental condition. This presentation will describe the offenders' and victims' profiles and the psychopathological theories underlying this behavior. Prevention of re-offense by leading the callers to a therapeutic program seems to be hard to develop, since the victims often do not report the calls to the police. Raising public awareness of the reality of this behavior could help to protect both the victims and the offenders.

Obscene Phone Call, Hands-Off Offense, Phone Scatologia