

Escalation from fetish burglaries to sexual violence:
A retrospective case study of former Col., D. Russell Williams

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Dedication

The authors would like to dedicate this article to the lives and memories of the victims discussed herein and all individuals affected by these offences. We hope that future crimes may be prevented through further understanding of sexual offending behaviour.

ESCALATION FROM FETISH BURGLARIES TO SEXUAL OFFENDING

Abstract

Criminal history narrative studies reveal an escalation in sexual offender behaviour from non-contact to contact offending, with an ever-increasing likelihood of sexual violence and homicide. In particular, researchers have found that sexual offenders often have a history of committing burglaries prior to contact offences. Accordingly, researchers have suggested that burglaries may be associated with an increased likelihood of future sexual offending, particularly when they have a sexual element to them. However, to date, there has been little quantitative research focusing on the mechanisms of escalation in sexual offences. This paper seeks to study factors associated with sexual offence escalation in terms of changes in offence seriousness and frequency. Specifically, case evidence was analyzed, gleaned from a series of fetish burglaries and subsequent sexual assaults and murders committed by the former Canadian Colonel David Russell Williams (RW). Cluster analysis, chi-square, ANOVA, and regression analyses were conducted on the crime scene information of RW's 82 cases of fetish burglary. Analyses revealed a significant escalation in the frequency and seriousness of RW's fetish burglary offences prior to committing acts of sexual violence and ultimately sexual homicide. Recommendations for future research predicting escalation of non-contact into contact sexual offending by frequency and seriousness of offending behaviour is discussed.

Keywords: escalation, sexual offenders, fetishism, burglary, non-contact offending

Escalation from fetish burglaries to sexual offending: A retrospective case study of former Col. D. Russell Williams

The current scientific framework to psychological research provides for both nomothetic and idiographic approaches, but the latter is sadly underutilized, particularly in criminal, forensic and investigative psychology. In clinical forensic case studies, idiographic approaches are thought to be useful in identifying variations in assessment and treatment efficacy at the individual level (Smith, 2012). Within criminal and investigative contexts it is argued, that although police investigations tend to work in a reverse manner, where the intent is to identify the offender from behavioural and crime scene details (Rainbow & Gregory, 2011), the reverse, idiographic approach, can still be fruitful. One clear example is provided by Dan Fishman (1999) who suggests the systematic study of individual cases can be used to build a pragmatic nomothetic evidence base. Indeed, case studies of offenders have been used in the past to test and optimize current investigative methodology (Aggrawal, 2011; Cooper, Swaminath, Baxter, & Poulin, 1990; McCann, 2000; Schlesinger, 2002; White, 2007; Wilcox, Foss, & Donathy, 2005). Therefore it becomes increasingly important to evaluate aggregated nomothetic-based understanding of sexual offending behaviour from the individual idiographic level for congruent and conceptual validity. This transaction between the experimental, deductive approach and the clinical, inductive approach is the core of pragmatic psychology and provides the substantive framework for this manuscript.

In the current study, the details from the case of former Canadian Air Force Colonel David Russell Williams (RW) will be analyzed in hopes of gleaning a deeper understanding of offending behaviour for both behavioural research and criminal investigations. RW was convicted in 2010 of 88 counts, including two counts of first-degree murder, two counts of

sexual assault, two of forcible confinement and 82 break-and-enter¹ charges, dating back to 2007. A majority of RW's offending behaviour focused on the acquisition of fetish items (usually undergarments) and the extensive photographing of these items; typically neatly laid-out on a flat surface (e.g. floor, beds, tables) and/or on his person in various states of undress. The investigation and conviction of RW provides a useful investigative case study, as a large amount of forensic evidence (e.g. photographs and undergarments) was collected from both the crime scenes and from RW's homes, providing much insight into his offending behaviour. As such, the current paper will provide a quantitative analysis of escalation in frequency and seriousness in his offending behaviour over time and contextual life events, based on available data (*R v Williams*, 2010).

Case History of Russell Williams

RW was named the Canadian Press Newsmaker of 2010 in a poll of radio station news directors and newspaper editors for his string of fetish burglaries, sexual assaults, and murders (Morrison & Liberrto, 2011). RW's notoriety was clearly due not only to the nature of his crimes but also to the fact that, when arrested, he was an acting Colonel in the Canadian Air Force, as well as being the commander of the country's largest military airfield, Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Trenton, in eastern Ontario, Canada.

Background

While born in England, RW immigrated to Ontario and was educated in one of Canada's finest independent high schools before proceeding to complete a degree in politics and economics from the University of Toronto (Appleby, 2011). At the age of 23, RW travelled to

¹ Breaking and entering - prohibited in Canada by s.348(1) of the *Criminal Code* (1985) - involves trespassing along with intent to commit an indictable offence or actually committing an indictable offence once inside. To make the article as accessible as possible to an international audience we will use the terminology "fetish burglary" to refer to Break and Enters with a supposed sexual paraphilic intent.

British Columbia for basic training in the Canadian Forces with aspirations of becoming a pilot. He married at the age of 28 and continued his career in the Canadian Forces, moving across Canada frequently before settling in Orleans, a suburb of Ottawa, Ontario in 1995 (Appleby, 2011). RW and his wife also kept a modest cottage home in the town of Tweed, roughly 160 kilometres west from Orleans, which they visited regularly. RW excelled in his duty and services to the Canadian Forces, culminating in his appointment of commander of CFB Trenton on July 15, 2009.

Fetish Burglaries

RW plead guilty to 82 counts of breaking and entering that occurred over a period of two years. At the time of his first offence (September 9th, 2009), RW was 44 years old, held the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and worked at the Directorate of Air Requirements at the National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa. All of the fetish burglaries took place in close proximity (less than 2 kilometres) to either his home in Orleans or his cottage in Tweed. Although the Agreed Upon Statement of Facts from RW's trial is partially incomplete in regard to victim age, it is a matter of fact that RW stole items (e.g. undergarments) indiscriminately from both children and adults (*R v Williams*, 2010). RW would 'skilfully' (many victims did not even know they had been victimized) break into homes (often unoccupied) and procure panties, bras, girdles, thongs, swimsuits, and occasionally bathrobes and shoes. Interestingly, although items of objective worth (e.g. money, jewellery, electronics) were readily available to steal, RW never stole any such item on any occasion (Appleby, 2011; *R v Williams*, 2010). Further, he meticulously catalogued the number and type of each undergarment stolen, invariably taking photographs of the clothing carefully displayed by type and/or colour. After, and later during, the offences RW would also take pictures of himself dressed in the female undergarments – many of which

showed him masturbating. In later offences within this series he began taking pictures of objects and items from within the homes he entered, such as pieces of identification, a screenshot of a victim's Facebook page, and screenshots of police websites reporting the crimes. As he continued to commit fetish burglaries he became even more brazen, masturbating in the victim's home, entering occupied homes, stealing sex toys and leaving notes for his victims, written in an increasingly aggressive manner. All fetish burglaries were committed during the hours of darkness, typically around midnight.

Sexual Assaults

RW committed his first contact offence on September 17th, 2009, against a woman in her twenties who had recently given birth. At the time of the offence, the victim's boyfriend was out of town and she was home alone with her baby. RW broke into the home through a window by cutting a screen (Appleby, 2011, p. 130). The victim awoke to RW pressing down upon her, at which time a brief struggle ensued. RW continued to hold her down and, for a period of roughly 30 minutes, a conversation took place in which RW told her that he did not plan to kill her, but rather take pictures of her. With his hands, RW then struck the woman three times in the head and threatened her into submission (Appleby, 2011, p. 130). RW then blindfolded her with a pillowcase, tied her up, posed her, and took pictures of her for approximately two hours. Before leaving, RW went to the bedroom and took six pieces of her underwear (*R v Williams*, 2010).

Thirteen days later, RW committed his second sexual assault. Again, RW targeted a sleeping woman home alone, just as he had done in his first sexual assault. However, instead of waking the victim with a verbal warning as he did previously, RW jumped on top of the sleeping woman, placing a blanket over her head and beating her savagely, warning her not to look at him (Appleby, 2011, p. 12). As with the first victim, he then blindfolded her and proceeded to take

photos of her for approximately three hours, forcing her to display herself in various sexual poses. RW eventually left, taking no articles of clothing (*R v Williams*, 2010).

Although both crimes are sexual assaults, no penetration occurred (Appleby, 2011; *R v Williams*, 2010). Instead, RW forced his victims to pose in various stages of undress whilst taking pictures of them, likely in an attempt to procure more (deviant) fetishistic material. RW did fondle each woman's breasts but stopped short of further assault, notably when the second victim protested his advances (Appleby, 2011). In both cases, RW entered the victim's home and used a surprise (or blitz) attack to initially gain control of the victim.

Murders

Over the winter of 2009 - 2010, RW escalated from sexual assault to commit sexually-motivated murders of two young women. In these offences there is clear behavioural escalation in fetishistic and violent behaviour from the previous two sets of offences, as RW now engaged in sexual penetration, torture, and ultimately murder. Moreover, RW showed significant escalation in his pursuit to procure ever more deviant and arousing fetishistic and paraphilic material by extensively videotaping both offences. The first victim was a 37-year-old flight attendant at CFB Trenton; it is possible RW may have met her there (Appleby, 2011), but, perhaps more notably, he would have had access to her work schedule. RW horrifically spent over 5 hours violently sexually assaulting this victim. She was found dead in her home, just west of CFB Trenton, on November 25th, 2009. RW had tied her up so tightly that the ropes left burn marks on her forearms and wrists (Appleby, 2011, p. 151).

On January 29th, 2010, RW broke into his second sexual murder victim's home and lay in wait for her to return from work. RW had previously observed this victim while driving on his regular route home from CFB Trenton to his cottage in Tweed (Appleby, 2011; Gibb, 2011). RW

spent a considerably longer time with the second victim (close to a day) and conducted several separate photo sessions lasting over three hours each. In a video of the offence, RW can be seen taunting the victim with hope of freedom (Appleby, 2011, p. 180-183). He showed a diverse range of behaviour from choking her with a zip tie while she performed oral sex to feeding her to maintain her strength. In both cases the women were ultimately killed through asphyxiation.

Investigation and Conviction

The police eventually identified RW by matching tire tracks left at the second murder victim's house and those of his Nissan Pathfinder through the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Service Identification Centre (Choinard, 2011). After an intensive police interview, RW confessed, leading the police to the body of the second murder victim. While RW plead guilty to all charges discussed previously, he refused to address a hidden cache of child pornography found on his computer – as part of his plea bargain and full confession no charges were brought forth on this matter (Appleby, 2011).

Escalation in Sexual Offending: Frequency and Seriousness

Despite its importance within the criminal career and offending trajectory (Ward, Day, Bevc, Sun, Rosenthal, & Duchesne, 2010; Warren, Reboussin, Hazelwood, Gibbs, Trumbetta, & Cummings, 1999), there is a paucity of research regarding the mechanism(s) of offence escalation in comparison to other aspects of sexual offending (Liu, Francis, & Soothill, 2011). Clarke and Cornish's (1985) continuance model for general offenders predicts a temporary escalation in offence frequency, through the mechanism of positive reinforcement, until the offender plateaus at the optimal rate of offending. Liu and colleagues (2011) acknowledge the importance of escalation in terms of frequency of offending but also emphasize that, for violent offenders, one must consider changes in offence seriousness. However, only a handful of

researchers have studied both seriousness and frequency in escalation (Armstrong & Britt, 2004; Cochran, Sellers, Wiesbrock, & Palacios, 2011; de Boer, Caramaschi, Natarajan, & Koolhaas, 2009), with most defining escalation either in terms of frequency (Cale & Lussier, 2011; Nieuwbeerta, Blokland, Piquero, & Sweeten, 2011; Sherman et al., 1991; Wallace, Mullen, & Burgess, 2004) or seriousness (Blumstein, Cohen, Roth, & Visher, 1986; Carrington, 2013; Hoeve, McReynolds, Wasserman, & McMillan, 2013; Soothill, Francis, & Liu, 2008). This lack of definitional consistency in the literature may help explain the lack of consensus surrounding the mechanisms of escalation. In order to provide a theory to bridge these often disparate interpretations of escalation, evidence for the importance of paraphilia and life events in considering patterns of escalation in sexual offences will be discussed.

The Relationship between Paraphilia and Escalation

Present research has suggested that the presence of a paraphilia has important implications for escalation (Harris, 2011). In the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, paraphilia are defined as disorders that involve intense, sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviours along with at least one of the following: (1) nonhuman objects, (2) the suffering or humiliation of oneself or one's partner, or (3) children or other non-consenting persons that occur over a period of at least six months (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013, p. 522-523). Paraphilia are more common in sexual offenders who commit homicide than sexual offenders who do not (Koch, Berner, Hill, & Briken, 2011). A potential explanation for this finding is that despite efforts to conceal the fantasies, over time, offenders' paraphilia tend to become increasingly erotic and potentially violent in nature (Arrigo & Purcell, 2001). Paraphilic behaviour is enacted through a cyclical, reinforcing process, which consists of a relationship between the paraphilic stimuli, fantasy, and

orgasm, often enhanced through facilitators such as drugs or pornography (Arrigo & Purcell, 2001). The repeated exposure to a particular stimulus will decrease the size of the response through the process of habituation; causing an ever-increasing desire for greater and increasingly novel stimulus. If the individual's fantasies and imagery increase in violence and sexuality, then the actual paraphilia tends to escalate in intensity and frequency (Arrigo & Purcell, 2001). Progressively violent behaviours that develop from the paraphilia can manifest in criminal activity, including burglary, assault, rape, and murder, even developing into sadistic sexual activity involving torture, mutilation, and necrophilia (Burgess et al., 1986) – all of which are behaviours RW engaged in.

Two paraphilia particularly relevant to the present case are Fetishistic Disorder and Transvestic Disorder. Fetishistic Disorder (known commonly as fetishism) is characterized by the repetitive use of, or dependence on, nonliving objects as the primary elements associated with sexual arousal (APA, 2013, p. 700-701), the most common of which are female undergarments (Schlesinger & Revitch, 1999; Wiederman, 2003). Transvestic Disorder refers to the recurrent and intense sexual arousal from cross-dressing, as manifested by fantasies, urges, or behaviours (APA, 2013, p. 702-703) and found exclusively in males (Wiederman, 2003). Men with transvestic fetishism typically portray traditional male gender roles and sexual identity, but cross-dress to varying degrees for sexual arousal (Wiederman, 2003). Regardless, there is typically recognition by the individual that their sexual behaviours are not within the norm and they may make immense efforts to conceal them (Wiederman, 2003).

In an early study by Revitch (1978), transvestism was found to be associated with fetish burglaries. Later, in a sample of 52 serial sexual homicides, Schlesinger and Revitch (1999) found that over a third of the sexual murderers had prior convictions for burglary. In those cases,

the theft of fetishistic objects was found to be directly related to escalation to obtain (more of) the object, and then, although less frequently, to assault or murder of the female that occupied the home. Interestingly, the study also found that peeping behaviour commonly preceded burglaries, and, in a small amount of cases, also led to assault and murder (Schlesinger & Revitch, 1999) – a tactic that many speculated RW used in order to plan his offences (Appleby, 2011; Gibb, 2011). Further, Langstrom & Zucker (2005), in a large study of 5,250 men from 18-74 years of age, found that individuals who engaged in transvestic fetishism were significantly more likely to spy on what others are doing sexually and be sexually aroused by the use of pain – again, behaviours in which RW knowingly engaged in (Appleby, 2011; Gibb, 2011; *R v Williams*, 2010).

The Impact of Life Events on Escalation

Although Clarke & Cornish's (1985) continuance model acknowledges the importance of situational variables associated with an offender's likelihood of committing a crime, little effort has been made to formally account for life events as a mechanism related to escalation. One notable exception is Pino (2005) who suggested that a comprehensive approach to the study of escalation must focus on the various contextual and situational life events surrounding the behavioural escalation, including detailed analysis of the offender, the victim, and the police response. Although not directly related to escalation, Hanson and Harris (2000) advocated a similar examination of the life events of offenders, finding that acute stressful events typically preceded sexual offending. Interestingly, research conducted on life events and paraphilia indicate that periods of stress are often associated with engagement in Transvestic behaviour (Wiederman, 2003).

A cognitive-behavioural explanation for positing paraphilia and life events as mechanisms in the escalation patterns of sexual offending can be made by modeling sexual deviancy as addictive behaviour (Carnes, 1985; Herman, 1988; Irvine, 1995). Some social learning theorists have proposed a “buffering hypothesis” based on a dynamical systems model of addiction. Proponents of this theory (Gorman et al., 2004) hold that the rate at which an individual engages in the maladaptive target behaviour is moderated by social support that reduces their perceived stress and increased abstinence. For example, Ames and Roitzsch (2000) found that in a sample of individuals diagnosed with substance dependence, perceived stress predicted cravings but the level of social support moderated this relationship. As the operant conditioning model of paraphilia (discussed previously by Arrigo & Purcell, 2001) is consistent with addiction models (Brown, 1986; Olsen & Winder, 2010; Van Ree, Gerrits, & Vanderschuren, 1999), it stands to reason that life events, potentially those related to stress and social support, may be related to escalation in sexual offending.

The Current Study

The current study presents a comprehensive case study analysis of the life events and criminal activity of RW with the aim of eliciting better understanding of escalation within an offender’s criminal trajectory. Specifically, four hypotheses will be investigated. It is expected that increases in escalation will be detected in terms of (1) frequency at which offences are committed and that (2) life events will influence this relationship. Based upon the research discussed previously, it stands to reason that (3) a relationship between paraphilic behaviour and offence escalation exists (Arrigo & Purcell, 2001; Burgess et al., 1986; McCann, 2000; Schlesinger & Revitch, 1999). Lastly, (4) life events will be related to increases and decreases in offence seriousness.

Methods

RW's case history provides a unique opportunity to study the link between paraphilia and escalation in offence frequency and seriousness, as RW not only collected an immensely large set of fetish items, he was also extremely fastidious in documenting the items taken. RW kept detailed records of his offences through digital photography (of items and premises) and through his personal journal. Each photograph was time stamped, allowing us to know when he started taking pictures of the house (usually documenting his arrival to the house) and when he approximately left and/or the cessation of the offence. This allowed conservative estimates of the time spent in the house to be made (Appleby, 2011; *R v Williams*, 2010). RW was so conscientious in his record keeping that on one occasion when he realized that he had failed to reset his digital camera for daylight savings, he re-opened saved an additional corrected set of photographs, documenting the error in his journal (Gibb, 2011, p. 373). Most research on crime scene behaviour relies largely on police records (Santtila, Hakkanen, Canter, & Elfgren, 2003) or self-report offender interviews (Beauregard & Leclerc, 2007). The former are limited by the variables collected by the investigators and the latter may be unreliable due to deliberate biased recall by the offender or simply through memory decay. By utilizing the Agreed Statement of Facts presented in the trial (*R v Williams*, 2010), which included information based upon the digital photos taken by RW, a more objective and reliable account of the offences is possible. Further, due to the fact that RW was a public figure with a prominent public record, including appearances, promotions, and other professional and social engagements, it is also possible to identify some of the possible significant life events and stressors that occurred prior to and during his offending.

Data Collection

The Access to Information Act (1985) provides Canadian citizens or permanent residents the right to request and be given access to any record under the control of a government institution (s.4[1]). The Agreed Statement of Facts is a list of the objective facts (e.g. offence details) relevant to sentencing a convicted offender. In the case of RW, the Agreed Statement of Facts (*R v Williams*, 2010) was based upon a combination of RW's own confession of the crimes and evidence garnered by police at crime scenes and RW's residences. The Agreed Statement of Facts was read during his 'guilty plea' trial in 2010 and provides a detailed documentation of the 88 offences committed by RW in chronological order (*R v Williams*, 2010).

The Agreed Statement of Facts was analyzed to create a database detailing various offence parameters and behaviours, coded as categorical or continuous variables. If the presence or absence of a variable could not be determined by the Agreed Statement of Facts then the behaviour was considered as missing. Time of entry was based upon the timestamps of the digital photographs. Detailed information regarding RW's method of entry into homes was categorized into skilled (e.g. picked the lock), force (e.g. break a window), easy (e.g. door was unlocked), and unsuccessful (e.g. intent was present but did not enter). Details of the numbers and types of clothing items taken in each offence were provided in the Agreed Statement of Facts. This allowed for the total amount stolen during each offence to be recorded, and then broken down into separate variables depending on the articles of clothing (for example, undergarments, bathing suits, house robes). In the majority of offences the number of pictures taken by RW of fetish objects (e.g. undergarments, RW dressed in undergarments, RW masturbating, sex toys found in the home, etc.) were also known. There was also information

regarding each offence on whether or not the victims were aware that someone had broken into their home.

A crime scene variable glossary was constructed for the current study (see Appendix A). An inter-rater reliability analysis performed on a subset of the variables ($N=10$) to determine consistency between two raters by using the Kappa statistic for nominal variables and inter-class correlation (ICC) for continuous variables. While Kappa statistics ranged from 0.75 to 1.00 ($M=0.98$, $SD=0.07$), all ICC statistics were 1.00 demonstrating high reliability.

Results

Descriptive Statistics for Fetish Burglaries

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics for the variables coded from RW's fetish burglaries used in the present study. In total, during the fetish burglaries, RW stole 1,366 articles of clothing ($m=17.5$, $SD=28.5$), the majority of which (59.2%) were bras and panties. The largest theft of clothing occurred on June 19th, 2009, when RW spent over two hours in the house of a 24-year old woman, taking 186 pieces of clothing. In general, RW burgled homes when victims were not present (87.4%) and spent on average 22.5 ($SD=47.2$) minutes in each house. Offences were evenly split between both first time victims (55.4%, $n=46$) and repeat victims (44.6%, $n=37$) and between locations, Tweed (57.8%, $n=48$) and Orleans (42.2%, $n=35$). Interestingly, victims notified the police in only 26.5% of the cases ($n=22$); potentially, suggesting that many did not know they had even been burglarized. This could attest to RW's skill, the vulnerability of the homes or non-disclosure due to the potential embarrassment for the victim in reporting the crime..

< Insert Table 1 here >

Escalation in Frequency of Fetish Burglaries

Regression. Regression analyses were conducted to model the frequency of RW's burglary offences, measured by the number of days between his offences in the burglary series, referred to here as "cool-down". Figure 1 illustrates the increases, plateaus and decreases in RW's offences across both geographical series of offences combined. The number of days that RW cooled-down by the number of days elapsed from the beginning of the series was analyzed by linear and cubic regression estimate functions, as indicated in Figure 1.

< Insert Figure 1 here >

Both the linear ($\beta = -.018, SE = .008, p = .028$) and cubic ($\beta = -.217, SE = .074, p = .004$) regression models significantly predicted cool-down days from days elapsed across the series. The linear model accounted for 5.7% while the cubic model accounted for 15.1% of the variance; suggesting the cubic model was a better fit for the data.

Offending Phase. Figure 1 indicates the temporal time points of major transitions in RW's life based on a sampling of qualitative information gleaned from data sources (Appleby, 2011; Gibb, 2011; Morrison & Liberto, 2011; *R v Williams*, 2010). Due to the superior fit of the cubic regression model, an attempt was made to search RW's life history to associate significant changes and/or events in RW's working life with periods of increases and decreases in offending. Unfortunately, due to the archival nature of the current study, the authors limited the characterizing of life phases to verifiable events (i.e. usually comprising work or offence events), as it was not possible to confidently make assertions regarding personal life events. Referring to

both the subjective content of each transition phase and the nature of the escalation (e.g. whether it was increasing, decreasing or stable); each offending phase was named in order to ease interpretation and discussion.

The first phase, labelled *exploratory*, represents the beginning of RW's offending history at the age of 44. This stage extended from his first offence on September 9th, 2007 to a 'close call' incident on November 1st, 2007. During the November 1st offence, the residents (who were next door for a barbeque) returned home briefly to find an assailant (RW) inside their home (Appleby, 2011). RW fled the house immediately and although RW was actually acquainted with the family residing there, they were not able to identify him as the intruder. Following that incident RW did not offend for 135 days, marking the longest gap in his offending history. The second phase, labelled *intensification*, includes offences occurring between March 15th, 2008 and November 8th, 2008. This phase begins RW's return to offending after almost being caught during the *exploratory* phase and continues until he becomes aware that he may be, imminently, promoted to Colonel and is tasked to begin activities relevant to promotion (e.g. visiting a Canadian Forces base in Kandahar [Appleby, 2011]) and transfer to a new position. Upon visual inspection of Figure 1, this phase appears to be marked by a clear increase in offence frequency associated with shorter cool-down periods. The *maintenance* phase begins November 12th, 2008, when RW is posted to the Canadian Forces Language School at the Asticou Centre in Gatineau to learn French (an essential step in attaining the promotion to Colonel) (Appleby, 2011). This phase sees RW stabilize in offending frequency with relatively longer cool-down periods between offences. It seems at this increasingly busy phase of his work-life, RW offends approximately once a month, with some regularity, suggesting a possible mediating effect of the social changes in this offence phase. The final phase, *deterioration* (June 2nd, 2009 – January

29th, 2010), occurs prior to the sexual murders and is suggestive of a broad and significant escalation in frequency and deviancy in his offending. This phase, beginning with RW's transfer to Commander of CFB Trenton, is clearly marked by a number of incidents of unusual and uncharacteristic behaviour beginning in September, 2009. RW missed several compulsory events formally attended by the base Commander as well as reportedly "blacking-out" (potentially an acute dissociative episode) for several minutes during a speech given at the Canadian Air Force flying school in Portage La Prairie, near Winnipeg (Appleby, 2011). According to attendees, RW stood blankly staring into the crowd for several minutes before simply continuing as if nothing had occurred. During this period, it was also brought into evidence that RW wrote, but did not actually send, a letter to the fetish burglary victim (described previously) from whom he stole 186 items of clothing (see Appendix B, *R v Williams*). In the letter, RW writes in a child-like manner, attempting to divert the police investigation to a young anonymous male. The letter is vulgar, abusive, filled with spelling and grammatical errors. Regardless of whether RW purposely wrote the letter in this fashion or not, it is wholly immature and likely provides some insight into his mental state during this period.

ANOVA. In order to determine if cool-down rate differed significantly between offending phases, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The cool-down periods significantly differed between offending phases, $F(3,83) = 5.69, p < .001$. Specifically, the *exploratory* phase was significantly different from the *intensification* phase (mean difference = 30.88 days, $p < .001$), the *maintenance* phase (mean difference = 25.72 days, $p = .013$), and the *deterioration* phase (mean difference = 29.29 days, $p = .002$).

Escalation in Offence Seriousness

Cluster Analysis of Fetish Burglaries. Four clusters of offence type were identified, as summarized in Table 2, with variables presented in order of their ability to discriminate fetish burglary offences. Cluster 1, labelled *unsuccessful*, contained (13.3%) offences in which RW did not successfully enter the victim's home, but where he attempted to do so. Clusters 2, 3, and 4 are described in relative terms of increasing from *low* to *medium* to *high* deviancy, respectively. The *low* deviance cluster (31.3% of offences) identified burglaries in which RW was not naked nor did he masturbate during the offence. In comparison to *medium* and *high* deviancy clusters, in *low* deviancy offences RW stole the least amount of clothing, took the least number of pictures, and stayed less than 20 minutes on average inside the house. Interestingly, the houses in which his behaviour was of *low* deviancy were also houses devoid of children under the age of 13. *Medium* deviance offences (27.7%) were characterised by RW being naked and masturbating only once (4.3%) during the crime but nearly a third (30.4%) of the time after the offence. Burglaries in homes where a child under the age of 13 lived occurred significantly more often (78.3%) than not in *medium* deviancy offences compared to others ($\chi^2(3)=32.8, p<.001$). *High* deviance offences (27.7%) were the most serious of all fetish burglaries. RW was naked inside the victim's home (86.4%) significantly more often than not in these offences, representing a significant difference to other deviancy clusters ($\chi^2(3)=67.5, p<.001$). *High* deviance offences were also characterized by RW masturbating significantly more often during (63.6%) these offences compared to other clusters ($\chi^2(9)=67.8, p<.001$) and in 9.1% of offences he would also masturbate after the crime. Moreover, RW spent significantly more time (*mean*=50.8 minutes) in the house than in other offence clusters ($F(3,81)=, p<.001$) and took significantly more pictures (*m*=62.3) of fetishistic items during these offences ($F(3,81)=, p<.001$).

< Insert Table 2 here >

Clusters and Offence Phase. Offence type (as defined by the cluster analysis) significantly differed by offence phase, $\chi^2(9) = 22.4, p = .008$. Significantly, RW's *exploratory* phase (n=5) was characterized by a few *medium* (40% of offences in this phase) and *high* (40%) deviance offences. The *intensification* phase was characterized by *low* deviance offences (42.5%) but with greater frequency and number (n=36). The *maintenance* phase (n=17) was characterized mainly by unsuccessful offences (46.2%). Lastly, the *deterioration* phase (n=25) was characterized mainly by *high* deviance offences (41.4%). Refer to Table 3 for further details.

< Insert Table 3 here >

Escalation in the Sexual Assaults and Murders

Near the middle of the last phase, the *deterioration* phase, while still committing fetish burglaries, RW commits his first sexual assault. This first sexual assault (739 days elapsed from the first fetish burglary), as described earlier, signifies a marked increase in deviancy (e.g. contact versus non-contact offending) and an increase in the risk and brazenness of RW's offending. RW's second sexual assault occurring near the end of the *deterioration* phase (776 days elapsed) indicates a substantial increase in violence and callousness towards the victim. However, in neither of these assaults does RW sexually penetrate the victim; instead, he subjects them to increasing physical and mental assaults, posing, binding, fondling, and taking pictures of them naked and in undergarments.

The first sexual murder occurs during the *deterioration* phase (807 days elapsed) and is of a female military officer who may have been acquainted with RW (Appleby, 2011). This offence shows clear escalation from the sexual assaults and burglaries in the amount of violence used, time spent with the victim, increased callousness, sexual penetration and, ultimately, murder. Interestingly, given the fact that this victim could potentially recognize RW, there are also signs of increases in risk taking behaviour. It is posited that RW, realizing the increased chance of being identified, may have actually planned to kill this victim before driving to her home the night of November 23rd, 2009.

The second sexual murder (873 days elapsed), also reveals an increasing level of violence (e.g. batters the victim to unconsciousness on several occasions), sexual deviance (e.g. uses sex toys, takes photos, makes her perform sexual acts on him), and callousness (e.g. videotaping the entire offence). RW brutalizes this victim, even abducting her and taking her back to his house, repeatedly raping and torturing her, and eventually killing her by strangulation and asphyxiation. Moreover, there is video evidence that sexual acts occurred while the victim was semi- and unconscious as well as post mortem; although in the latter case the evidence obtained indicated the body was posed and manipulated and it is unclear if penetration actually occurred (Gibb, 2011, p. 496). Notably, a sexual act with a semi- or un-conscious individual is typical of Aggrawal's (2011) Class I Necrophilia: Role Players; which may be indicative of a risk for more serious necrophilia behaviours, a further escalation in sexual deviance.

Discussion

With the ability of hindsight, we are able to extract information about RW's behaviour that generates new understanding about sexual offending. Not only was escalation observed in terms of both offence frequency and seriousness, but also, in contrast to escalation models

generated by nomothetic research (Armstrong & Britt, 2004; Hoeve et al., 2013; Soothill et al., 2008), non-linear patterns of both types of escalation were observed. Therefore, this study has both academic importance and practical investigative utility in the understanding of escalation in sexually motivated offences.

Overall, statistical analyses confirmed all four hypotheses. Regression analyses confirmed the first hypothesis of a significant escalation in the frequency of RW's fetish burglaries. However, perhaps the most interesting aspect revealed in this analysis was that cubic non-linear model fit the data significantly better than a simpler linear model, suggesting that the overall escalation was not unequivocally linear. This finding guided our attempts to explore the available evidence in RW's life for specific events corresponding to observable phases of escalation and de-escalation of offending behaviour, as suggested by Pino (2005). While future research should strive to gather primary data from the offender and individuals close to them, the current study was based on archival data and thus life events considered were based primarily upon RW's professional history. Three major life events (very nearly being caught, preparing for command of CFB Trenton, and taking command of CFB Trenton) were identified as corresponding to four distinct phases of escalation and de-escalation in offending. Figure 1 illustrates an initial escalation in frequency during the *exploratory* phase up to the point where he is almost caught (days elapsed 53). After a relatively long break from offending RW resumes offending with a marked increase in frequency corresponding to a phase of *intensification* (days elapsed 188 days). The first cubic asymptote occurs nearing the end of the *intensification* phase as RW begins to be groomed and prepared by high-ranking military officials for promotion to Colonel, marking a decrease in his offending frequency over the *maintenance* phase. During the *maintenance* phase, a time of stable (e.g. non-increasing) escalation there was a significant

increase in social support and immediacy in RW's professional life as he was groomed for command of CFB Trenton. Accordingly, the second, downward-spiralling, asymptote occurs at the conclusion of the grooming, professional and social support when RW actually takes command of CFB Trenton. This transition is marked by a clear *deterioration* in RW's psyche coupled with a rapid increase in offence frequency and deviancy.

While originating in addiction literature, the buffering hypothesis provides a powerful means to illuminate the non-linear offending patterns evident across the four identified phases. Regardless, it is postulated that the social support (e.g. "grooming") RW received when he was tipped for the position of Colonel in the Canadian Air force (e.g. *maintenance* phase) satiated and/or decreased his motivation to offend. Although this motivational explanation has considerable merit as a theoretical explanation it is acknowledged that more practical aspects may also be relevant to the plateau of offence frequency at this point. For example, RW was considerably busier during this grooming phase and would have had a more restrictive schedule, potentially limiting his ability to offend. Further, RW was likely more "under the microscope" during this period with others more aware of his comings and goings, at least, during his daily working activities. Both of these factors may have impinged on his ability to offend, even though his motivation to offend may well have been the same or even escalating. Nonetheless, the buffering hypothesis also facilitates a reasonable explanation for the second asymptote; specifically, the escalation seen in the *deterioration* phase – the stage at which he becomes Colonel and commander of CFB Trenton. It is suggested that the increase in frequency and seriousness of offending in this phase were triggered by the increase in stress (e.g. taking over command of CFB Trenton) un-buffered by the now diminishing social support he had been receiving during the grooming period. Finally, it is important to again note that only life events

that pertained to RW's working life were considered as they were a matter of verifiable public record. Ultimately, it is still unclear whether personal life events may have relatively greater explanatory power in relation to the increases and decreases in RW's frequency of offending.

The application of the buffering hypothesis in the context of sexual offending is an important contribution that will aid future researchers and clinicians. In particular, it would be difficult to explain the non-linear patterns of offending displayed by RW without detailed examination of the particular life stressors surrounding his offending (Ward & Beech, 2006). Future research could apply the buffering hypothesis in nomothetic studies in order to investigate non-linear patterns of offending that are moderated by social support and perceived stress to generate generalizable instances of life event stressors. In addition, clinicians subscribing to the risk-need-responsivity principles of effective offender rehabilitation (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990) could potentially utilise the buffering hypothesis to aid in case conceptualization, particularly in the identification of dynamic risk factors.

The one-way ANOVA confirmed the second hypothesis, that rate of offending differed significantly by life phases. While the only significant difference in offence rate was observed in comparing the *exploration* phase with the other phases, examining the mean differences reveals that RW offended most frequently in the *intensification* and *deterioration* phase.

In addition to evidence found confirming escalation of offence frequency, there was also confirming evidence of escalation in terms of offence seriousness (hypotheses three and four). The cluster analysis of crime scene behaviours during the fetish burglary series produced four types of offences, varying in levels of sexual deviance and overall seriousness. The most discriminative variables between clusters were those related to paraphilic behaviour such as masturbation, being naked and, of course, the theft of erotic clothing (see Table 2). Sexual

behaviour in burglary is certainly rare and highlights just how unique these burglaries would be amongst an aggregate sample of burglaries (Goodwill & Alison, 2006). However, the collection of erotic clothing items, through burglary, suggests some level of excitement and thrill of the direct association of these female undergarments and the deviant way in which they are acquired (Prentky et al., 1989).

The escalation of frequency and deviance of the offending can also be explained through particular behavioural mechanisms of reinforcement and compulsion (Coleman, Raymond & McBean, 2003; Kafka, 1997). It is likely that RW became quickly (and perhaps increasingly quickly) sensitised to the undergarment(s) stolen soon after it was collected, worn and masturbated to, motivating him to re-offend to collect novel stimulus. Similar to other fetishistic sexual offenders, RW's masturbation enabled a process of behavioural sensitization and desensitization to the female undergarments, reinforcing a recurring cyclical pattern of compulsive behaviour on each occasion (Mick & Hollander, 2006). In fact, RW's repeat victimization of houses (one house in particular was re-victimized eight times) could be suggestive of a recurring compulsive cycle; returning to the same house to achieve the same thrill and sexual excitement as previously experienced.

However, little is still known of how RW's sexual paraphilia's developed and, although they are seemingly necessary as explanatory factors in his sexual offence escalation, it is still unclear if they are absolutely sufficient to do so (Donnelly & Fraser, 1998; Proulx, Beaugard, Cusson & Nicole, 2007). It would be beneficial for future researchers to expand our understanding of this connection between paraphilia and offence deviance in the context of predicting sexual and violent escalation.

From the conceptualization of RW's offending as phases of *intensification* and *maintenance*, it is perhaps unsurprising that offence deviance significantly differed by offence phase. In particular, it is convergent with the buffering hypothesis that RW's offences during the *maintenance* phase were largely *unsuccessful* or of *low* deviance. Indeed, if he was not as invested in offending during this period, as one might suspect with the decrease in offence frequency, he may not be motivated to be as deviant as when he did offend. Contrarily, the larger proportion of high seriousness fetish burglaries during the *deterioration* phase, as well as the contact offences that were more deviant in nature and by definition more serious, indicate an escalation in RW's deviancy during this phase. Moreover, during the *deterioration* phase there were a number of more deviant behaviours present that were rarely or not present in the other phases – such as writing the victim letters, masturbating frequently, and being naked during the offence (*R v Williams*, 2010). Generally, it would be helpful in nomothetic studies to examine which crime scene behaviours are most indicative of deviant behaviour and which are most discriminating between offenders.

As unusual as RW was in terms of his professional position and age of known criminal onset, his escalation in offending behaviour was not particularly unique in relation to research on fetish burglary and sexual violence (Harris, 2011; Lui et al., 2011; Schlesinger & Revitch, 1999). The current study findings provide evidence for the importance of studying escalation of both offence frequency and offence deviance and seriousness, particularly in non-contact offences. Moreover, offence frequency and seriousness, evidenced through behavioural examination of multiple paraphilias were meaningfully related to specific life events. By challenging the mainly linear models of escalation generated by nomothetic research, this case study provides new insight regarding the trajectory of criminal careers and narratives; in particular, that we may have

erred in assuming that escalation was a simple linear phenomenon. Moreover, clearly, as evidenced by RW's gradual escalation from non-contact to contact offending, it is of the utmost importance for researchers and professionals investigating non-contact offences, such as burglary, to attend to aspects and behaviours that are sexually deviant in nature. In light of this, it is strongly advocated that paraphilic non-contact offenders be considered as dangerous sexual offenders with substantive efforts to be made in tracking and capturing these offenders. Likewise, it is imperative that awareness is increased, particularly in the Policing and investigative communities, that non-contact paraphilic offence(s) may be linked to other contact sexual offences. Investigators should give particular notice to burglaries in their jurisdiction that are saturated with sexual motivation (e.g. fetish items taken, evidence of masturbation) and bereft of the elements that comprise more common burglaries (e.g. loss of money and valuable items). Overall, the nature of paraphilic influence on criminal behaviour has considerable importance and utility for understanding the mechanisms of escalation from non-contact to contact sexual crimes.

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Table 1.
Descriptive statistics of offence variables for fetish burglaries (*n*=83)

| Variable | Count or total* | % | Mean | <i>SD</i> | Maximum |
|---|-----------------------|-------|------|-----------|---------|
| Series Tweed | 48 | 57.8% | | | |
| Series Orleans | 35 | 42.2% | | | |
| Cool-down | | | 9.2 | 16.4 | 135 |
| Previously victimized | 37 | 44.6% | | | |
| Method of Entry: | | | | | |
| Easy | 57 | 69.5% | | | |
| Used Force | 11 | 13.4% | | | |
| Skilled | 6 | 7.3% | | | |
| Unsuccessful | 8 | 9.8% | | | |
| Time in house (minutes) | 1645 | | 22.5 | 47.2 | 171 |
| Interrupted during crime | 11 | 13.3% | | | |
| Victim present during offence | 8 | 9.6% | | | |
| Children lived at victimized home | 31 | 37.3% | | | |
| Masturbation: | | | | | |
| None | 58 | 70.7% | | | |
| After crime | 7 | 8.5% | | | |
| During crime | 15 | 18.3% | | | |
| Both | 2 | 2.4% | | | |
| Naked during offence | 20 | 24.4% | | | |
| Naked outside residence | 2 | 2.4% | | | |
| Naked inside residence | 19 | 23.2% | | | |
| Total clothing stolen | 1366 | | 17.5 | 28.5 | 186 |
| Bras & panties | 808 | | 11.7 | 19.3 | 115 |
| Slips & camisoles | 24 | | 0.3 | 1.2 | 10 |
| Swimwear | 10 | | 0.1 | 0.3 | 1 |
| Pajamas & housecoats | 9 | | 0.1 | 0.4 | 2 |
| Dresses & tops | 19 | | 0.2 | 1.0 | 8 |
| Total pictures taken | 2937 | | 37.2 | 48.2 | 284 |
| Pictures of RW dressed in clothing | 322 | | 5.0 | 12.6 | 78 |
| Pictures of clothing laid out | 896 | | 13.6 | 23.6 | 126 |
| Pictures of RW masturbating | 208 | | 3.4 | 10.1 | 62 |
| Pictures of RW erect | 97 | | 1.8 | 4.6 | 20 |
| Pictures of victim's personal items | 31 | | 0.5 | 1.3 | 6 |
| Total of other objects stolen (e.g. personal items) | 38 | | 0.7 | 1.5 | 7 |
| Victim notified police | 22 | 26.5% | | | |

* Counts and totals reflect only known evidence/data

Table 2. Cluster Analysis of fetish burglary offence variables

| Deviance (Clusters) Variable | Unsuccessful | | Low | | Medium | | High | | χ^2 or <i>F</i> value |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| | Count or mean | % within | Count or mean | % within | Count or mean | % within | Count or mean | % within | |
| Naked during offence | 0 | | 0 | | 1 _a | 4.3% | 19 _b | 86.4% | 67.5*** |
| Masturbation | | | | | | | | | |
| After crime | 0 | | 0 | | 7 | 30.4% | 0 | | |
| During crime | 0 | | 0 | | 1 _a | 4.3% | 14 _b | 63.6% | 67.8*** |
| Both | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | | 2 | 9.1% | |
| Method of entry (Easy) | 1 _a | 9.1% | 15 _b | 57.7% | 20 _{b,c} | 87.0% | 21 _c | 95.5% | 76.1*** |
| Child lived t in home | 3 _a | 27.3% | 0 | | 18 _b | 78.3% | 10 _a | 43.5% | 32.8*** |
| Interrupted during crime | 5 _a | 45.5% | 1 _b | 3.8% | 4 _{a,b} | 17.4% | 1 _b | 4.3% | 13.9** |
| Previously victimised | 4 _a | 36.4% | 8 _a | 30.8% | 11 _a | 47.8% | 14 _a | 60.9% | 4.90 |
| Total clothing stolen (mean) | 0 | | 16.5 _a | | 24.2 _a | | 18.0 _a | | |
| Total pictures taken (mean) | 0 _a | | 21.8 _{a,b} | | 55.6 _b | | 54.1 _{b,c} | | |
| Time in house (mean) | 0 _a | | 19.3 _{a,b} | | 12.1 _{a,b} | | 50.8 _b | | |
| <i>N</i> | 11 | 13.3% | 26 | 31.3% | 23 | 27.7% | 23 | 27.7% | |

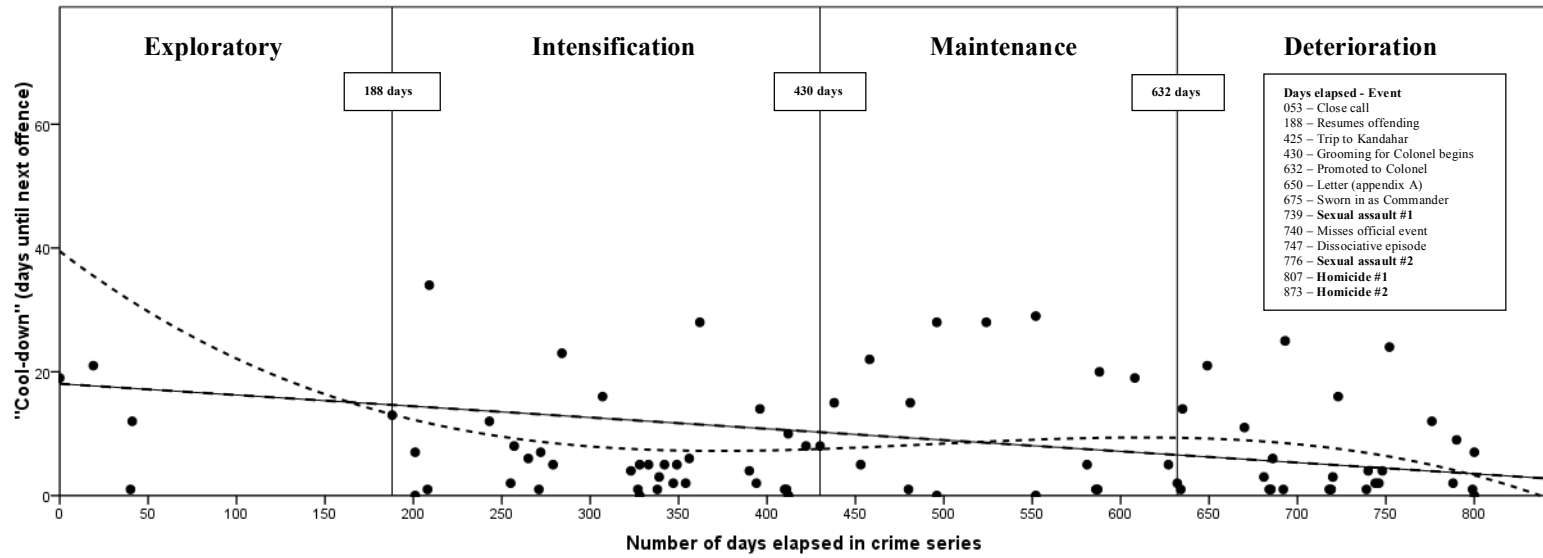
Note: Values in the same row not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons using the Bonferroni correction. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

Table 3.
Frequency of offence (deviance) cluster by offence phase

| Deviance (Clusters) | | Offence phase* | | | | Total |
|------------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------|
| | | Exploratory | Intensification | Maintenance | Deterioration | |
| Unsuccessful | count | 0 _{a,b} | 2 _b | 6 _a | 3 _{a,b} | 11 |
| | within phase % | 0 | 5.6% | 35.3% | 12.0% | 13.3% |
| Low | count | 1 _a | 16 _a | 3 _a | 6 _a | 26 |
| | within phase % | 20.0% | 44.4% | 17.6% | 24.0% | 31.3% |
| Medium | count | 2 _a | 12 _a | 4 _a | 5 _a | 23 |
| | within phase % | 40.0% | 33.3% | 23.5% | 20.0% | 27.7% |
| High | count | 2 _a | 6 _a | 4 _a | 11 _a | 23 |
| | within phase % | 40.0% | 16.7% | 23.5% | 44.0% | 27.7% |
| Total | | 5 | 36 | 17 | 25 | 83 |

* Note: Values in the same row not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

Figure 1.
RW “cool-down” period between offences by days elapsed in offence series



Appendix A. Crime Scene Variable Glossary

Clothing stolen: RW stole women's clothes from the individuals he victimized. Clothing was divided into **bras & panties, dresses & tops, pajamas & housecoats, slips & camisoles, and swimwear.**

Cool-down: ~ period was measured by the number of days in-between offences.

Method of Entry: RW used a variety of methods to enter break into houses; these were grouped into skill.

Easy: No skill or technique was required to enter the house (e.g. open door, open window).

Used Force: No skill was used but RW used force to enter the house (e.g. broke window, patio door).

Skilled: RW used locking picking skills or his knowledge about the house to gain entry (e.g. hidden key)

Unsuccessful: RW was not successful in gaining entry to the house.

Interrupted during crime: RW was interrupted during the commission of the crime.

Children lived at victimized home: Persons under the age of 18 lived in the house.

Masturbation: RW masturbated during some of his crimes. Occurrences of masturbation were categorized by the time they occurred, i.e. **after crime, during crime, both, or none.**

Naked: RW was occasionally naked at some point during his crimes. Incidences of nudity were categorized by where he was naked, i.e. **during the offence at some point, inside the residence, or outside the residence.**

Other objects stolen: While RW mainly stole women's clothing, he occasionally stole other personal items.

Pictures taken: RW took several pictures related to the crimes he committed. The pictures found in his possession were categorized into the following groups;

RW dressed in clothing: Pictures RW wearing women's clothing he stole.

Clothing laid out: Pictures of women's clothing laid out.

RW masturbating: Pictures of RW engaged in masturbating.

RW erect penis: Pictures of RW where his penis is visibly erect.

Victim's personal items: Pictures of victim's personal items (not including clothing).

Previously victimized: RW had victimized the house previously

Series Orleans: The crime took place in Orleans, a the suburb of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Series Tweed: The crime took place in Tweed, a municipality and village located in central-eastern Ontario, Canada.

Time in house (minutes): The time RW spent in each house was conservatively estimated, in minutes, by the time and date information imbedded within each digital picture.

Victim notified police: Whether a member of the house RW broke into notify the police.

Victim present during offence: Whether a victim was present when RW broke into the house.

Appendix B. Letter to Victim (*R v. Williams*, 2010)

“[daughter’s name].doc”, which reads:

“Beautiful [daughter]. I’m sorry I took these because I am sentimental [sic] to. Don’t worry because I didn’t mess with them. Also I am sure you know your beautiful but trust me your pussy smells fucking awesome! I should know because I been doing this for awhile. But I am going to stop because my moms will fucking kill me if I get caught. She is pretty sure I can be something. Besides your place was kinda like the motherload and I really like that I have a bunch of undies you put on just after you got fucked. I started this with a chick I knew from high school called ... who lives down the road from you. I thought it would be cool to have some of her undies. It seems right that I finish with a special chick like you. If you decide to call the cops tell them that I am sorry for the trouble and they won’t here from me again. Now that I know all about you I think it might be cool to meet you. Maybe younger guys don’t turn you on but I think we could be good together. To me teenage chicks are impressed to easy. I guess I would like to be with somebody more experienced. You guys really need to clean out the bath in the basement. It is some gnarly. I hope what I did ain’t pissed you off to much.

JT

Ps Since I sorta feel guilty about wasting the cops time these are the places I hit, so they can close there books.” [sic]