

# The Crimes of The Unidentified; A Need for The Typography for Child Victims of Exploitation

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## Abstract

**“The true character of a “society is revealed in how it treats its children” - Nelson Mandela**

In the present study, I will explore legal decisions involving online child exploitation in Canada, and within these cases, I will examine if the victims are identified or not. The details of these cases are pivotal in having the offender charged, creating a victim typology, and preventing future offences. Without specific details of the victim, there is a risk of not being able to prevent future crime, meaning the pattern will just continue to repeat itself. These cases are stored in The Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII), which is an online database. The Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII), provides real cases of child exploitation within Canada and the dates they took place. From just July 30th, 2021, to October 10th, 2022 there were a total of 500 reported and documented cases of child exploitation in Canada alone. These cases were all tried in a court of law, and the written legal decisions are made available to the public. These cases are the minority, not the majority, as it is likely that the true number of child exploitation acts go undocumented, unreported, and undisclosed. Of these documented cases, many still featured unidentified child victims, this has a large impact on the typology which could be made for Canada.

## Introduction

A victim being identified enables the opportunity for support and protection of this child, and furthers the possibility of eradicating crimes against children, by creating a typology. However, this is limited to some of the victims declining to be identified and/or assisted. In Canada, the RCMP plays an important role in identifying these victims, through services like: Cybertip or Reporting Form, The National Child Exploitation Crime Centre (NCECC), and the Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT).

Today, little is known about the amount or frequency of online child exploitation within the context of Canada, The Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR), and the Integrated Criminal Court Survey (ICCS), found that when a sexual offence involves child victims, it is likely to be underreported (Statistics Canada, 2022).

When the child victims are identified, the cases are then reported to UCR, as the most serious violation of sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or other sexual violations against children. Meaning those child victims who can be identified have a higher possibility of their cases being solved, and their offender charged.

## Method

### Case Coding:

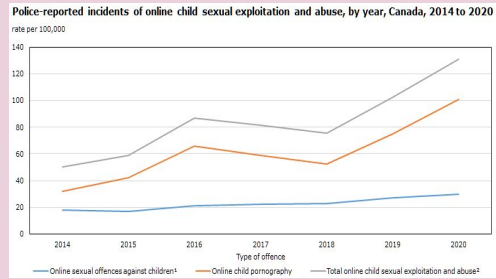
- Coding was referencing INTERPOL's 2018 study where age, gender, and ethnicity were coded.
- To examine the characteristics of children, offenders, and abuse involving online child exploitation in Canada, I selected 10 cases from the CanLII website using the following search criteria: child predator, child exploitation, online child exploitation, predator, online, and child luring. Possible search results: child predator; 5,826 cases, child exploitation; 8,696 cases, online child exploitation 1,921 cases, predator; 21,893 cases, online; 38,555 cases, and child luring; 2,362 cases.
- Cross-referenced with a timeline restriction of two years; 2021-2022 12 cases; R. v. Ditoro 2021, R. v. Pyc 2021, R. v. Dew 2022, R. v. Gould 2022, R. v. J.H. 2022, R. v. K.R. 2022, R. v. Mootoo 2022, R. v. Rodrigues 2022, R. v. R.R. 2022, R. v. R.S.F. 2022, R. v. Sinclair 2022, R. v. X. 2022.
- Coded each for: the age of the victim, gender of the victim, ethnicity of the victim, whether or not the victim was identified, the nature of the offence, and the dates for when they occurred.

\*coding values shown in chart  
\*two additional cases were examined but they were artificially created, covert cases, so findings did not enhance the determination for a typology sought out from predators in online exploitation cases.

## Retrospective Review

### Data from 2014 - 2020

- From 2014 to 2020, there was a reported total of 10,739 incidents of online sexual offences against identified children and 29,028 incidents of online unidentified child pornography in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022).
- Upon reflection of the pandemic, it was shown through medical literature that children are less susceptible to the virus (COVID-19), but it is now clear that they were the most impacted psychosocially (Ghosh et al., 2020).
- In 2020, Canadian police forces reported that the rate of online child pornography access and distribution went up 35%, compared to 2019, and the rate of online sexual offences against children went up 10% in the same year (Statistics Canada, 2022). Around four in ten (44%) of police-reported incidents of online sexual offences against children were solved, but a staggering 85% of the incidents involving child pornography were not solved (Statistics Canada, 2022).



## Results

### Coding Results:

- The majority of the cases featured the age of the victims \*R. v. Sinclair 2022, R. v. R.S.F. 2022, and R. v. J.H. 2022, the age is obscured and a window is given
- Gender was a fairly universally addressed feature of the victims
- Ethnicity was not disclosed in any of the overall 14 cases examined  
\*including covert operations

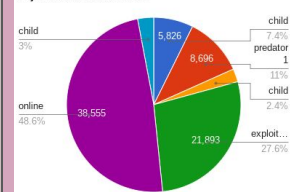
### Unintentional Coding Results: The Presence of Social Media

- R. v. Ditoro
  - R. v. Rodrigues 2022
  - and R. v. Dew 2022
- All involved the usage of the applications: Discord, Snapchat, Instagram, or other online messaging services.

The features examined were the basic features reported on in INTERPOL's 2018 study and were on par with what the cases disclosed within their reporting.

## Coding Values

### Keyword Selection for Cases



“Children are the future of our country and our communities. They are also some of the most vulnerable members of our society. They deserve to enjoy a childhood free of sexual violence. Offenders who commit sexual violence deny thousands of Canadian children such a childhood every year.” (CanLII, R. v. X, 2022).

## Discussion

- The age of the victim being cross-correlated with their gender could possibly assist in creating a typology by examining if there is desirability of gender based on a given time period age. This might be something worth examining but would require a larger pool of subject cases to determine this to be something valid and reliable.
- Ethnicity not being reported on within these Canadian cases does not correlate to anything seen on the Global scale, and could be due to gain a limited pool of cases examined, but could also be an area that needs expansion within the Canadian legal system.
- Creating victimology is pivotal in diminishing future offences and protecting children globally. However, in cases where the child has been identified, post-identification can have some impairments, “emerging evidence strongly suggests that online sexual exploitation adversely impacts the mental health in children and adolescents, improved detection and prevention is critical.” (Eke et al., 2022). That being said, with more advancements in the understanding of life for victims and the development of prevention tools, we are reaching toward a more supportive system.

## References

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Table 1. Identification, Gender, and Age across 12 cases from 2021-2022.

Cases: "Crimin v. ___"	Identification Status:	Gender (M/F)	Age: (Yrs/OM)
1. R. v. Ditoro 2021	Identified	M	14
2. R. v. Pyc 2021	Identified	M	6
3. R. v. Dew 2022	Identified	M	15
4. R. v. Gould 2022	Identified	M	12
		F	13
		M	13
5. R. v. J.H. 2022	Identified	F	gp <sup>1</sup>
		M	
		M	
		M	
6. R. v. K.R. 2022	Identified	M	5
		F	6
7. R. v. Mootoo 2022	Identified	F	15
8. R. v. Rodrigues 2022	Unidentified	M	2-3
		F	12-13
9. R. v. R.R. 2022	Identified	F	17
		M	18
10. R. v. R.S.F. 2021	Same identified, case unidentified	gp <sup>2</sup>	Thirteen to seven
11. R. v. Sinclair 2022	4 Identified	Female	12-3 <sup>3</sup>
12. R. v. X. 2022	Identified	Female	12 - 15

<sup>1</sup>Only the female-identifying child had her age identified.

<sup>2</sup>Same were identified, case were not - no given figures. Majority of victims were identified as female. Ages were given in window.

<sup>3</sup>Age range was specified as 12 years-old and up, but no ages given beyond.