

Chapter Three

**PC “Just-do-enough” – A retrospective case study of a police officer who abused his position
for a sexual purpose.**

In preparation: Sweeting & Cole (2021)

Opening statement on the paper

This section has been redacted as it contains confidential methodological information.

Abstract

Abuse of position for a sexual purpose (APSP) is an under-researched form of police corruption. Officers involved in APSP often target some of the most vulnerable people in society; victims of sexual assault, domestic abuse and/or those with severe mental health issues. When officers engage in this behaviour, it puts their victims at risk of harm and damages the reputation of the police. To understand the behaviour and characteristics of APSP perpetrators, this case study focuses on the in-depth analysis of an investigation into APSP by a serving Police Officer in the UK. "Officer S" abused his role to establish sexual relationships with three highly vulnerable women. A qualitative analysis of the internal police investigation documents, supplemented with interviews of the detectives who investigated Officer S, were used to establish a full history of Officer S' involvement with the victims: supplemented with information from his sickness records, disciplinary history and yearly appraisals. The findings suggest Officer S behaved in a sexually deviant way towards two of his victims and his descent into serious sexual misconduct was rapid. Aspects of the investigation are discussed as well as an analysis of Officer S' behaviours and a comparison to theories of sexual offending.

Introduction

Abuse of position for a sexual purpose (APSP) is defined by the National Police Chief's Council as:

“any behaviour by a police officer or police staff member, whether on or off duty, that takes advantage of their position as a member of the police service to misuse their position, authority or powers in order to pursue a sexual or improper emotional relationship with any member of the public” NPCC (2017a, p6).

In the same document, Chief Constable Stephen Watson (Chair of the National Counter Corruption Advisory Group) described APSP as “a fundamental betrayal... reprehensible behaviour which can never be justified or condoned.” The impacts of APSP are far-reaching and severe. APSP victims have often experienced domestic abuse or rape and may have additional vulnerabilities such as mental health issues; therefore, they may be re-victimised and at risk of suffering further psychological harm (Cottler et al, 2014; Sweeting et al, 2020). For the police service, such behaviour causes damage to both its reputation and colleagues' morale.

APSP is an under-researched type of police corruption. Accessing this kind of highly sensitive, raw police data can be challenging to researchers and therefore some of the previous work has used publicly available information (Porter & Prenzler, 2016). For example, some have used US media reports to understand the extent of sexual misconduct in police officers and assess the outcomes of cases (Lopez et al, 2017; Stinson et al, 2015). These studies established that the majority of officers who engage in APSP are male, the victims mostly female, and there are

regional variations in disciplinary outcomes: findings that were echoed in similar research using sexual misconduct cases in England (Sweeting et al, 2020).

Another approach has been to assess police officer perceptions of sexual misconduct; notably, Maher explored this with high ranking officers, street level officers and female officers (Maher, 2003; 2008; 2010). These findings suggested that although serious sexual violence is rare, other behaviours such as voyeurism, relationships with victims of crime and sex on duty were more common. Additionally, the working environment of the police - characterised by power and authority, frequent unsupervised working and the masculine culture, may be enabling factors for officers involved in PSM (Maher, 2003). Summers, Cole, Hills & Sweeting (in preparation) also identified the working environment as a potential causal factor, in addition to officers' prior complaint histories and deviant behaviour e.g., making unnecessary visits to victims of crime.

Police corruption – including APSP – is thought to be caused by either individuals who are pre-disposed to abuse their roles (bad apples) or a result of the poor moral ethos of the police – bad barrels (Porter & Warrender, 2009; Melig, 2012). Maher (2008) found that sexual misconduct in the US was likely to be a combination of both bad apples and bad barrels. In contrast, the findings of Gottschalk et al, (2012) supported bad apple theory. Lopez et al (2017) criticised the bad apple/bad barrel theory as being too simplistic to explain the complexities of sexual misconduct in the police. Key elements missing from this theory is an explanation of the motivations and behaviours of officers involved in sexual misconduct. In some cases, APSP has been treated as criminal sexual offending with officers sentenced to prison for rape and sexual assault (BBC, 2021; Daily Mail, 2010). It is therefore possible that some officers involved in APSP might engage in behaviours seen in sexual offending such as grooming of victims.

To the best of the author's knowledge, there has been no published work on APSP and police sexual misconduct (PSM) using an idiographic approach such as a case study. Case studies in the field of investigative forensic psychology are less common than in clinical research but may provide useful information on the behavioural characteristics of offenders (Gunjonsson & Gunn, 1982). This has been demonstrated by Brankley, Goodwill and Reale (2014) whose analysis of serial murderer D. Russell Williams provided valuable insight into the mechanism of offence escalation. Applying the case study approach to APSP will assist in expanding the currently limited knowledge base held on such individuals.

A current priority of the NPCC is to develop a working risk assessment tool that will allow police forces to promptly identify officers who abuse their positions for a sexual purpose. To create an effective risk assessment tool, there must be a balance between information drawn from nomothetic research from larger samples and consideration of individual cases (Brankley et al, 2014; DeMatteo, Batastini, Foster & Hunt, 2010).

The purpose of this study is to examine a complete case of APSP in detail. The case study will focus on the behaviour of the officer involved, the manner in which he targeted his victims, and his behaviour towards them. It is hoped this analysis will add to the current knowledge of APSP and identify potential risk factors which may assist in the early identification of officers involved in this type of sexual misconduct.

Method

In this study, a complete case of APSP will be examined in detail. The case concerns a male police officer who until recently, was serving in a front line role in an English police force. Through his role, he targeted three vulnerable women for the purposes of establishing a sexual relationship. The counter-corruption unit of this officer's force have provided a full case history of the investigation from start to finish, supplemented with information pertaining to the officer's career. Utilising a similar methodology to Brankley et al (2013) and Gottschalk et al (2012), what follows is a detailed account of Officer S' career, personal circumstances, victim selection and behaviour.

The first author – who is a serving police officer - contacted the participating police force and was offered full access to a proven case of abuse of position for a sexual purpose where the officer had left the force. The first author travelled to the headquarters of the police force to access the case in situ, as no police documents were permitted to leave the police station. On arrival, the officer was shown to the Counter-Corruption Unit (CCU) and into an office with the original investigating officers for this particular case. The officers verbally briefed the first author on the case from start to finish and this was recorded with their permission. The first author was then allowed to view the investigation log, ask questions and to request specific information not covered by the log and the briefing. The first author later transcribed the recording which lasted just over four hours. This, when added to the written notes made at the time, proved a comprehensive history of the offending officer's behaviour and career.

To preserve the anonymity of the victims, the offending officer, and the participating police force, all names and places have been redacted.

A case history of Officer S:

Police history

Officer S was in his late 40's at the time he came to the notice of the force CCU. Officer S had spent his entire police career in the same English police force and was a "career PC", meaning he never progressed above the rank of constable and did not become a detective. The force was typical of many English forces outside of metropolitan areas, a combination of countryside, market towns and the occasional urban area. Officer S had policed his force's largest town since joining, both as a neighbourhood officer and as a response PC. Prior to joining the police, Officer S had worked in the Civil Service and was therefore able to carry forward some years of service, allowing him to retire before reaching the standard 30 years career span.

Professionally, Officer S was a below average police officer. His yearly appraisals placed him at average, but mostly under average performance, across the key competencies such as resilience, communication and team working. His colleagues and supervisors reported that he had a reputation for "cuffing" incidents –going out of one's way to avoid dealing with an incident correctly; for example, minimising it or talking a victim out of making a complaint. He was also known for laziness, doing the bare minimum and would constantly try to swap shifts he did not care to work. However, he was known to readily volunteer to take statements from victims of domestic abuse. Despite this, he was charming and entertaining around colleagues, but careful not to share details of his personal life with them.

Conduct

For 16 years, until coming to the attention of the CCU, Officer S had a complaint record of 23 separate conduct issues. These were mainly for neglect or failure of duty with a smaller number of incivility¹ allegations. He was issued with a written warning for one of the neglect of duty complaints, but the rest were locally resolved with words of advice². The written warning³ was issued during the last few years of his service. Officer S also had an extensive sick leave record for a variety of minor illnesses and several periods of depression. On examining his sickness record, CCU officers discovered that periods of ill health often corresponded with a period of annual leave. This suggested to them that Officer S was using paid sick leave to extend his annual leave.

Personal

Officer S was married and had one child. However, his marriage had broken down some years before when his wife discovered he was having extramarital affairs. Due to financial reasons, they continued to share a house, although living separate lives. Their child was involved with crime and was a source of concern and stress for them. After the breakdown of his marriage, Officer S became well known in local pubs and nightclubs in the same town he worked. He

1 Neglect/failure of duty may refer to a failure to deal with police incidents thoroughly, it may also refer to poor timekeeping. Incidents of incivility are generally complaints of rudeness from members of the public.

2 Words of advice – normally delivered by a Sergeant advising the officer of the complaint and informal guidance re the officer's conduct

3 Formal disciplinary action, a record of which is held for two years. Further misconduct within the two year period of the warning may result in dismissal.

described this period of his life as “*rediscovering my youth*”⁴. He was described as by CCU officers as tall and athletic, and always well groomed. He described himself to CCU officers as a “*new age man*”; interested in wellness, diet and self-care. Well-read and comfortable initiating conversations, he became known in town for his confidence and charm, and this attracted some female attention. He had no concerns disclosing socially he was a serving police officer.

Officer S had two Facebook accounts in his name, both featuring profile photos of him. The first account appeared to be for work colleagues and friends with some posts being visible to the public, although he did not use it frequently. The second account only had women in the “friends” list and was not publicly accessible. The CCU investigation did not identify any other social media accounts.

Victim A

Victim A was in her late 20’s at the time she met Officer S. She was a white female with dark hair, of slim build and large brown eyes. She lived in a rural area of the force and was known to the police as a victim of domestic abuse. She suffered from several serious health conditions and was physically disabled. At the time of her involvement with Officer S, she was involved in a minor but long-running neighbour dispute.

Although Officer S claimed to have met Victim A when he was off duty, he would frequently visit her home address when he was on duty. Neighbours noticed the marked car often parked

⁴ Source of quote CCU officer in charge of the case

outside her address and reported it to the police. The CCU were notified and quickly identified that it was Officer S. Using duty logs, they established he was making these visits when he should have been working in another area or he would manipulate legitimate journeys to include a stop at Victim A's address.

When CCU officers interviewed Victim A, she denied being in a sexual relationship with Officer S and stated they were only friends. When checking Officer S' police computer access, they discovered he had conducted one check on Victim A's records when he did not have a legitimate reason for doing so. CCU suspected Officer S was abusing his position for a sexual purpose but could not produce enough evidence to support this and, therefore, issued a final written warning to him for the unauthorised computer check and failing to report his association with Victim A. Officer S was reasonably co-operative during the investigation and admitted to being in a relationship with Victim A. He justified checking her records as being a response to her declaring that she had once shoplifted. He also justified calling in to her home whilst on duty as part of a legitimate rest break – despite not updating his status to the control room as is required.

Shortly after this, Officer S found Victim A deceased at her home address – her death was caused by pre-existing health conditions. Officer S then took an extended period of sick leave before returning to work.

Victim B

Victim B was in her mid-thirties, female and with similar dark hair, slim build and large brown eyes to Victim A. She had an extensive history of domestic abuse from previous partners, bi-

polar disorder, depression and was an alcoholic. Victim B had one child who had been permanently taken into the care of Social Services due to cruelty allegations by her, precipitating an escalation of her mental health issues. Victim B also had a criminal history for assault and assaulting police officers. Additionally, when arrested, Victim B would claim to be an undercover police officer and/or friends with senior police officers. CCU investigated this and found no evidence this was true.

One evening, Victim B was accused of assaulting a member of door staff at a pub in the town centre. Officer S was on duty with a Special Constable, and they were directed to attend the allegation. When they arrived, Victim B had left the scene and no complaint of assault was forthcoming. The victim of the assault expressed his concerns regarding Victim B's welfare and therefore, Officer S decided to search for Victim B.

Victim B was very well known in the local pubs and bars and was quickly located by Officer S who, together with the Special Constable, took her back to her home address. On leaving, Officer S gave Victim B his personal mobile phone number and within minutes, they were exchanging explicit sexual messages. Officer S returned to Victim B's address within an hour – leaving the Special Constable at the police station – and had sex with her for the first time.

Victim B had a long-held fixation with a senior officer at Officer S' force and had tried to engage with him via social media channels and over email. At some point during her relationship with Officer S, Victim B thought she might be pregnant. When she advised Officer S, he blocked all channels of communication with her. Victim B then emailed the senior officer to advise him that she was sleeping with an un-named police officer – the result of this was an immediate referral to CCU for investigation. That day, the CCU received a panicked phone call from Officer S stating

he had “girl trouble”. Following this call, Officer S immediately re-set his mobile phone to factory settings and handed the device along with a second, wiped handset into a pawn shop. These mobile phones were recovered but no information could be retrieved from them. CCU officers visited Victim B who confirmed she was in a relationship with a police officer. Although she would not initially name Officer S, she provided details of how they met and details of their sexual relationship – which enabled CCU to confirm their suspicions that the officer involved was Officer S. Victim B later confirmed this.

Victim B disclosed to the CCU that she liked to practise BDSM (bondage, discipline, sadism, masochism) sex with Officer S, where she would be the submissive party and he, the dominant. However, in other relationships, Victim B would be the dominant party. Victim B expressed that she felt used by Officer S because he would push the boundaries of pre-agreed behaviour and failed to provide aftercare following their encounters. Victim B felt that over the course of the relationship, Officer S had become more controlling and domineering over her. She would not provide a statement against Officer S on the grounds that she was in love with him and her belief that, other than the aftercare issue, there was nothing wrong with him having a relationship with her. Victim B disclosed that Officer S often asked her to dress as a schoolgirl for sex and to wear clothing belonging to deceased Victim A.

Officer S was arrested and, when interviewed, offered a prepared statement rather than speak to CCU. Officer S’ statement suggested he was merely friends with Victim B and had extricated himself from the friendship when her alcohol abuse and mental health issues worsened. Officer S disputed that the first time he had met Victim B was when he was on duty and claimed to have met her in a coffee shop when off duty some months prior. When asked why he took his two phones to a pawn shop, he claimed this was to raise money. Officer S tried to suggest that his

supervisor was aware of his involvement with Victim B and provided an example of where she had called him at work for assistance. Officer S claimed to have asked his supervisor for permission to help her, and this was granted. When CCU asked the supervisor about this, they had no recollection of Officer S' request.

Following the interview, Officer S was asked to sign a statement declaring that he would have no further contact in any form with Victim B. He signed this and shortly after began a period of sick leave.

By this time, Officer S had reached the level of service needed to retire. CCU were conscious of the need to urgently build a case of gross misconduct against Officer S to ensure he was removed from policing and barred from similar work in future. Without the support of Victim B, this proved difficult.

Around this time, Victim B began sending explicit photographs of herself and messages indicating that she was about to commit suicide to a CCU officer. On each occasion, police officers would attend her address to check her welfare and find she'd attempted suicide. At the point where Officer S retired from the force, Victim B sent an image of herself wearing his stab vest upon which his collar number was visible to a CCU officer. Although this information came too late to act upon, the CCU referred the case to the Independent Office for Police Conduct, who placed Officer S on the advisory list – meaning a potential employer would be made aware of his conduct history.

Following this interview, Victim B stated that she was still engaged in sexual activity with Officer S but refused to provide a statement.

Victim C

Victim C was, again, incredibly similar in physical appearance to Victim A and B and was in her early thirties at the time she became involved with Officer S. Victim C was a long-term victim of domestic abuse from previous partners and had an extensive history of drug - in particular, cocaine - and alcohol abuse. Victim C was pregnant and had been advised the baby may be taken from her after birth. She told an NHS worker the baby had several potential fathers, one of whom was a police officer. The NHS worker contacted the CCU who began investigating

Victim C told the CCU that the officer was Officer S . Using police radio data, the CCU were able to confirm that he had visited her when on duty despite Victim C's home address being outside of his working area. Records found that Officer S had dealt with Victim C in a professional capacity, and they would both go clubbing together. Victim C alleged that Officer S had supplied her with drugs but would not provide a formal statement or allow officers access to her mobile phone. This relationship commenced just before Officer S' arrest for involvement with Victim B for which he was soon to take sick leave.

Victim C told CCU that she would drink heavily and take drugs with Officer S, to the point where she would pass out. She would then wake up in bed next to him and realise that they had had sex. CCU were concerned that she was implying rape or sexual assault, but Victim C was adamant all contact was consensual.

Possible Victim D

Towards the end of Officer S' service, the CCU received intelligence which suggested a fourth victim. The only information known about her was that she was between 18-20 and frequented the same nightclubs as Officer S – the concern being that he was interested in her sexually and was trying to initiate a relationship. Victim D was never identified and how Officer S met her remains unknown.

Officer conduct after retirement

Following his retirement, Officer S appeared to continue his relationship with Victim B and has come to the attention of the police on multiple occasions. Victim B has alleged assault and rape by Officer S but on each occasion, she refuses to engage with the police.

Officer S has tried to train or obtain licences in at least two professions which would allow him access to potentially vulnerable women but has to date been unsuccessful. The CCU fully expect him to come to police notice in the future.

Discussion

Officer S was an experienced police officer, entrusted to uphold the high ethical standards and values of policing. Within a period of two years, he had identified and targeted three highly vulnerable women, two of whom he had been directly allocated to deal with as

victims/offenders of crime. Officer S was able to establish a sexual relationship with these three victims and, in the case of Victim B, the first sexual contact was achieved in less than one hour after their first meeting. Officer S provided his personal mobile number to his victims, was careful not to make excessive checks on their records and, despite an extensive complaint history, there were no prior concerns about sexual misconduct held on his file. These characteristics place Officer S in the “shark” category of APSP perpetrators as identified by Sweeting & Cole’s (2021, in preparation) qualitative analysis of ten complete APSP investigations.

Officer behaviour

Officer S was married but separated due to his wife discovering he had had extramarital affairs. Research into infidelity within the police, suggests that engaging in extramarital affairs is a coping mechanism to offset the stress of the role (Aremu, 2009; Rivera-Vasquez, 2014). Many of the higher profile cases of police corruption and misconduct covered in the media, mention that the officer was having extramarital affairs. For example, the case of Dorset PC Timothy Brehmer, married to a police officer, and who killed his lover: and the Metropolitan Police’s “Special Demonstration Squad”, a number of whose undercover officers started second families with intelligence targets (The Daily Mail, 2014; The Guardian, 2020). In an analysis of ten officers who had been proven to abuse their positions for a sexual purpose, eight were married or in a serious relationship (Sweeting & Cole, 2020, in preparation). Although the rate of police officer infidelity is comparable to other high stress professions which involve shift work, police officers with complaint and misconduct histories – like Officer S – are more likely to engage in extramarital affairs (Griffin, Kruger & Maturana, 2019; Miller, 2007).

Officer S' complaint history mostly comprised of "neglect and failure of duty." Behaviour covered in this type of allegation could range from more minor issues such as failing to properly update an investigation log or not making sufficient checks to locate a victim, to more serious issues such as failing to intervene when someone is being assaulted (CPS, 2018a). Neglect and failure of duty is the most common type of police complaint with 41% of all complaints regarding police conduct falling within this category (IOPC, 2020b). However, Officer S had 23 complaints regarding his conduct: with all of these falling between 2005 and 2017 – an average of just under two a year. Recent US research has identified that excessive complaints may predict future officer involvement in serious misconduct and, in a qualitative analysis of 89 cases of English police sexual misconduct, the majority of officers had 5-20 prior complaints (Rozema & Schanzanbach, 2019; Summers et al 2021, in preparation).

Officer S' history of neglect of duty allegations is compounded by his general performance as a police officer. He was known to do the bare minimum and to "cuff" incidents by failing to deal with them correctly. In his yearly performance appraisals, he was mainly below average; the investigating CCU officer described him as "PC-just-do-enough". There are conflicting findings with regards to poor performance being an indicator of corruption. Psychometric-based research finds that lower conscientiousness may be a predictor of future corruption (Arrigo & Clauson, 2003; Detrick et al; 2004). However, Miller (2003) found no significant relationship between corruption and performance. In addition to below average performance, Officer S appeared to have honesty and integrity issues in the use of his annual leave, such as adding sick leave to extend his time off. This only came to light after initial CCU investigations.

CCU analysis of Airwave radio data provides a GPS signal enabling the control room to allocate officers to the nearest incidents. GPS identified he was frequently visiting victims A and C whilst

at work and confirmed Victim B's account that Officer S had returned to her address 30 minutes after first meeting her. This behaviour again demonstrates Officer S' lack of honesty and integrity in relation to his police work.

Victim selection

Officer S selected victims of similar age and "so identical in looks, you would not be able to distinguish one from the other if you were to put them in a line"⁵. All three women were young-looking, slim with noticeably large eyes and long dark hair. It is of note however, that the member of police staff with whom he was in a relationship simultaneously, did not have the same physical appearance. All three women would also meet the criteria for being classed as vulnerable in the context of APSP, due to their histories of domestic abuse and other factors present such as drug abuse and mental health issues (NPCC, 2017a): although victim B's chronic domestic abuse history, alcohol addiction, severe mental health issues and traumatic life set her apart. In addition, both Victims B and C had many of the factors identified as potential predictors for being a victim of police sexual misconduct according to previous research, including life trauma, significant arrest history, mental illness and addiction (Cottler et al, 2014).

The behaviour of Officer S draws comparisons with what is known about victim selection in sex offenders more generally. Accessibility, physical appearance and vulnerability have been identified as important factors (Rebocho & Silva, 2014; Horan & Beauregard, 2017). Although it is not clear how Officer S met Victim A, it is known that he met Victims B and C through his role as a police officer.

⁵ Quote from CCU officer in charge of the case

An additional complication was Victim B had a known history of making false allegations to the police - previously claiming to have been an undercover police informant and having a serious fixation with a senior officer. It is possible that Officer S felt that Victim B would not be believed if she did make a complaint about him due to this, enhancing her potential vulnerability to abuse. It is well documented in police sexual misconduct research that victims do not report the behaviour for fear of not being believed (Cottler et al, 2014; Maher, 2008; Stinson et al, 2014). Sweeting and Cole (2021, in preparation) also found victims of shark officers only tended to report the officer when the relationship reached a crisis point – this appears to have been the case for both Victim B and Victim C when they suspected they were pregnant by him.

Sexual behaviour

The sexual relationship between Officer S and Victim B was fairly well documented, with Victim B providing detailed information about this aspect of their relationship. Victim B described herself to Investigating officers as a dominatrix and explained her interest in BDSM. BDSM involves “erotising intense sensation” and although causing and receiving pain may feature in this, BDSM also erotises power dynamics between partners (Spratt & Williams, 2019). Victim B described herself as a dominant (the partner with control) with other partners but as a submissive (the partner relinquishing control) when having sex with Officer S. Although it is not uncommon within BDSM to change roles, termed as “switching” (Wismeijer & van Assen, 2013; Martinez, 2018), it is interesting that Victim B switched roles only for Officer S.

Victim B complained to investigating officers that Officer S would not provide her with the necessary aftercare following sex. For the vast majority people who engage in BDSM, “aftercare” is an important part of the encounter. Aftercare comprises a range of behaviours, but typically includes emotional and physical re-assurance and is an important component of fulfilling the consent of the encounter (Pitagora, 2013). The aim of aftercare is to bring the submissive partner back to the same psychological state they were in beforehand. Aftercare is neither compensation or payment for the encounter but failing to provide it is potentially abusive and may raise consent issues - for example if Victim B only agreed to the encounter on the basis that aftercare would follow (Bennett, 2018; Jovifkova,2013). Consent issues are raised again with Victim C, who was so affected by alcohol and drugs that she was unaware she had had sex with Officer until the next morning. However, Victim C never alleged rape by Officer S. Case law has highlighted the responsibilities of judges to adequately brief jurors on the adverse impact of voluntary intoxication on the ability to consent (Rumney & Felton, 2008). Furthermore, as a police officer, Officer S would be adept at assessing intoxication; police officers are expert witnesses in this regard (College of Policing, 2016i) and yet despite her intoxicated state, still had sex with Victim C. Following his retirement from the police, Victim B alleged that Officer S had raped her on more than one occasion.

Another behaviour exhibited by Officer S was his request that Victim B should wear the clothing belonging to the deceased Victim A during sex. This would potentially be classed as a paraphilia in that this is a sexual behaviour/fantasy that deviates from cultural norms (Joyal, 2018; Moser; 2011). Considering that Victim A held a close physical resemblance to Victim B, Officer S’ behaviour here suggests he may have been visualising Victim A during sexual encounters. The taking of clothing and other personal items is often recorded in sexual offenders and violent offenders (Gunn & Caissie, 2016; Chopin & Beauregard, 2019). In some cases, the offender then gifts these items to their partners, for example, Ryan Meek who gave his girlfriend a

bloodstained necklace belonging to his victim (The Mirror, 2014). These items, termed souvenirs or trophies, serve to remind the offender of the crime and to create a psychological link between victim and offender (Warren, Dietz & Hazelwood, 2013). It is known that Officer S found Victim A deceased and, in the opinion of the investigating officer, seemed genuinely affected by her death. Although it is not known which items of clothing he took, or when he took them, he managed to conceal them – presumably at his marital home or possibly at work – for just under two years before giving them to Victim B.

The information provided regarding Officer S' sexual behaviour suggests that at the time of his involvement with Victims B and C, he was willing to take risks. Having a sexual relationship with a victim of crime presents a significant risk in itself, but Officer S appeared to engage in activities which would only serve to increase this risk. For example, the lack of aftercare with Victim B and his controlling behaviour caused her distress and this may have increased the risk of her reporting him; as well as having sex with Victim C when she was under the influence of class A drugs and alcohol. Furthermore, Victim B suspected she was pregnant, and Victim C was at one point pregnant, suggesting some of the sexual encounters were unprotected. Less is known about Officer S' sexual relationship with Victim A but she was not known to have mental health issues or addictions. Potentially, only being issued with a warning for his association with Victim A gave him the impression that he would not be caught and increased his confidence. This may be supported by the fact that his relationships with Victims B, C and the member of police staff overlapped each other.

Escalation of behaviour

As far as can be ascertained, there were no significant changes in Officer S' behaviour at work prior to meeting Victim A. Although he was not a high performer and had a complaint history, there was no suggestion of previous sexual misconduct; however, this cannot be established beyond all doubt. As he went from victim to victim, his behaviour seemed to escalate. With Victim A, there was no suggestion that Officer S was abusive or in any way unkind towards her and the investigating CCU officer felt that Officer S did care for her and was genuinely distressed by her death. Victim B was well known to the police with a highly chaotic lifestyle. Here he exceeded sexual boundaries during sex and did not respect her requirement for aftercare. Victim C was alleged to have been supplied with class A drugs, having sex whilst heavily intoxicated. It seems, therefore, that potentially within a fairly short period of time, Officer S transitioned from a below average officer to one engaged in serious corruption. If Officer S' sexual behaviour was paraphilic – as is suggested above – there is some research to suggest this can lead to an escalation in criminal behaviour as the stimulus becomes less novel and exciting (Arrigo & Purcell, 2001; Brankley et al, 2012). Another potential factor to explain Officer S' motivation to escalate his offending may be due to his confidence that Victim B had not made a formal complaint against him. Interestingly, two of Officer S' victims claimed to be in love with him; a major cause of non-reporting and attrition in domestic abuse research (Barrow-Grint, 2016; Hester, 2006).

In police corruption literature, officers can start with minor infractions such as accepting gratuities and gradually slide into more serious forms of corruption – termed the “slippery slope” (Coleman, 2004). Although this theory is not specifically applied to sexual misconduct, elements of it may apply. Slippery slope corruption typically begins with the re-orientation of beliefs about

certain behaviour to make them more acceptable (Brown, Rennekamp, Seybert & Zhu, 2011). For example, Officer S justified his on duty visits to Victim A as rest breaks he was entitled to, despite the fact that Victim A did not live within his working area, and he did not update his force control room. It is possible that Officer S continued this re-orientation process to justify having sex with Victims B and C. However, given the short time frame, Officer S' slide into corruption was perhaps less of a gradual slope and more of a steep cliff. With steep cliff corruption, the individual is overwhelmed by the benefits of the unethical behaviour and is fully immersed in it (Kobis et al, 2017). In the case of Officer S, the benefits appeared to be sexual and emotional control over two vulnerable women.

Conclusion

Until 2016 and after 17 years of service, Officer S was a below average police officer with a reputation for laziness. In the last three years of his police career, he met and began sexual relationships with three vulnerable women. Officer S engaged in high risk activities with two of these victims; he was alleged to be emotionally abusive and controlling with one and was alleged to have supplied class A drugs to another. Despite this, his victims claimed to be in love with him and were not willing to make formal complaints. This made it difficult for the CCU to build a case against Officer S and as such, he was able to retire from the police rather than be dismissed for the gross misconduct it is believed he committed. The behaviour exhibited by Officer S was that of a "shark", with swift victim selection and sexual contact. As he progressed through his victims, his corrupt behaviour appeared to escalate, and it is alleged to have continued after his retirement as evidenced by continued allegations from one of his victims.

It is crucial that such officers are identified as soon as possible. To aid in this, the first author has planned further research into the personal, service and behavioural characteristics of officers involved in APSP using a national sample of over 500 proven cases (Chapters 10 and 11).

Limitations

The case study of Officer S is useful to increase the understanding of the behaviour of officers who abuse their position for a sexual purpose. However, due to a lack of research in this type of police corruption, it is not known how generalisable these findings are to other cases of APSP. This is a frequently cited limitation of a case study approach and whilst there may be similarities to other cases of APSP, some behaviours detailed in the research such as paraphilias and BDSM may be unique to this particular Officer.

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