

Child Abuse Within Religious Institutions

A Bibliography



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Scope

This bibliography to the research covers a wide variety of topics related to child abuse within religious institutions. While not comprehensive, a great deal of literature is covered across a variety of faiths and religions. International publications are included.

Organization

Publications are listed in date descending order. Links are provided to open access publications.

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Child Abuse Within Religious Institutions

A Bibliography

Taylor, R. M. (2023). [Religious organizations in Missouri continue to escape liability in negligence actions involving abuse of children under the guise of the First Amendment.](#) *Missouri Law Review*, 87(4), 12.

“Church allowed abuse by priest for years” was the headline of the Boston Globe on Sunday, January 6, 2002. Reporters at the Boston Globe exposed the truth about the horrendous decades of child sexual abuse at the hands of Catholic priests in the Boston area. This story launched the Catholic Church’s secrets into public view and helped unravel the pattern of abuse perpetuated by its leaders for decades. The abuse, however, was not limited to the city of Boston—or even just the United States. Claims of sexual abuse spanned the globe. Thousands of priests have been accused, and the Catholic Church has paid almost \$4 billion in lawsuits stemming from sexual abuse allegations. Church officials often swept these abuse allegations under the rug and effectively allowed priests to continue abusing children for decades. This represents a deeply-rooted systemic problem—church leaders protected priests and the image of the Catholic Church at the expense of children. When allegations came to light, rather than hold abusers accountable for their actions, church leaders would simply move the abusers to another diocese where they could continue harming children.

Winters, G. M., Jeglic, E. L., Terry, K. J., & Gilleran, K. (2023). Child sexual grooming of catholic clergy: A comparison between victims allegedly abused by clergy with single versus multiple victims. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 1-25. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2022.2163020>

There is evidence that clergy who commit child sexual abuse (CSA) may utilize sexual grooming behaviors in the offense process consistent with a content-validated model (Sexual Grooming Model; SGM). Although research has examined differences in characteristics between clergy with single versus multiple CSA victims, little is known about how sexual grooming behaviors may vary between these groups. The present study utilized a large sample of alleged clergy sexual abuse incidents (n = 10,667) to examine the differences in reported sexual grooming behaviors for victims who experienced abuse by an individual who had a single (V-SVOs) or multiple (V-

MVOs) victims. As part of a larger study, files of victim reports of CSA were reviewed from 195 dioceses/eparchies and 140 religious institutes in the United States; these data were analyzed based on behaviors in the SGM for the present study. Overall, the findings showed that the two groups (V-SVOs and V-MVOs) experienced similar tactics throughout the sexual grooming process outlined by the SGM. However, there were some differences for certain tactics within the gaining access and isolation, trust development, and desensitization to sexual contact and physical touch stages of sexual grooming. The implications for prevention, policy, and treatment, as well as future directions of research, are discussed.

Death, J., Richards, K., & McPhillips, K. (2022). Understanding clergy-perpetrated child sexual abuse as organised offending. In P. Birch, C. Murray, & A. McInness (Eds.), *Crime, Criminal Justice and Religion: A Critical Appraisal* (p. 236-249). New York: Routledge.

Hans Zollner. (2022). [The Catholic church's responsibility in creating a safeguarding culture. The person and the challenges. *The Journal of Theology, Education, Canon Law and Social Studies Inspired by Pope John Paul II*, 12\(1\), 5–21. <https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.15633/pch.4233>](https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.15633/pch.4233)

The safeguarding of minors and of vulnerable adult persons is an intrinsic aspect of the mission that the Lord has entrusted the Church and it is the responsibility of all the faithful to fulfil it, whatever capacity they hold in the Church. Unfortunately, it is not possible to eradicate child abuse entirely as it is a human reality, but much can be done by creating a culture of safe space and safe relationships within the Church and beyond. The Catholic Church, as the oldest and biggest institution in the world and with its religious and moral values, has a special responsibility in preventing any kind of abuse, in protecting the most vulnerable, and furthermore, in Safeguarding; in creating safe spaces and safe relationships. Listening to victims and survivors of abuse who have been harmed in the Church or outside, is key for being and acting in a responsible, accountable, and transparent way. This is the cornerstone for credibility and for promoting the faith.

Lusky-Weisrose, E., Fleishman, T., & Tener, D. (2022). “A little bit of light dispels a lot of darkness”: Online disclosure of child sexual abuse by authority figures in the Ultraorthodox Jewish Community in Israel. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(19-20), NP17758-NP17783. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211028370>

Social media sites such as Facebook have become popular platforms for promoting public awareness of sexual abuse by encouraging user engagement around this issue. There is, therefore, currently emerging research on the functions and implications of social media as a platform for sexual abuse disclosure. However, as yet, no study has examined this phenomenon specifically through a religious-cultural lens. This study explores perceptions of, barriers to, and motives underlying online disclosure of child sexual abuse (CSA) by religious authority figures (RAFs) in ultraorthodox Jewish society in Israel. The data were gleaned from the popular Facebook page of a nonprofit devoted to raising awareness of CSA in the ultraorthodox community. The analysis was based on admins’ posts, anonymous and nonanonymous survivors’ shares, users’ comments, and in-depth interviews of eight page users. The findings suggest a culture-oriented model of online CSA disclosure (OCSAD), identifying four primary factors (safety, benefit, relevance, and legitimacy) that, weighed against cultural barriers, influence the decision to engage in online CSA disclosure. This context-informed understanding highlights the importance of social media as an alternative platform for CSA disclosure in an isolated but changing cultural arena such as the ultraorthodox community in Israel. The theoretical model is of international interest for its conceptualization of the unique characteristics and perceptions of OCSAD within religious-cultural contexts.

Pereda, N., Contreras Taibo, L., Segura, A., & Maffioletti Celedón, F. (2022). An exploratory study on mental health, social problems and spiritual damage in victims of child sexual abuse by Catholic clergy and other perpetrators. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 31(4), 393-411. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2022.2080142>

The Catholic Church has faced a large number of complaints against its representatives for sexual crimes that involved children and adolescents as victims. The objective of this study was to characterize the dynamics of this type of event, its characteristics, and its effects in terms of mental health and social consequences, as well as the spiritual damage generated. The sample comprised 182 victims from Spain and Chile, divided into three mutually exclusive groups (n = 40 committed by a representative of the Catholic Church; n = 85 by a family member; n = 57 by a perpetrator

outside the family and the Church). The results show that victims of child sexual abuse (CSA) by a representative of the Catholic Church and other perpetrators are similar in many respects (e.g., religiosity, characteristics of the abuse, and mental health and social problems), but that the effects on religiosity are more serious for victims of the clergy, affecting their belief in God. Finally, the extreme decline in belief in God, due to CSA, is an important predictor for most mental health and social problems. Our results show the need to include the Catholic identity, faith and spirituality in the therapeutic context.

Russell, D. H., Stewart, J., & Higgins, D. J. (2022). Safeguarding in church: Children and young people's perceptions of safety in religious and other faith-based settings. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221117548>

Organizations that interact with children and young people have a duty of care to ensure the safety of those children and young people from any manner of abuse, particularly from child sexual abuse. Faith-based (“religious”) organizations are of particular interest due to the number of victims/survivors speaking out about their experiences of grooming, child sexual abuse, and other forms of harm in religious organizations. Focusing on addressing the risks and improving safeguarding efforts, prevention activities benefit from giving children agency and a voice. We conducted a study using two focus groups with children and young people involved with two different Christian denominations. We conducted activities and led discussions regarding their views about safety in the context of the faith-based organization with which they engage. Children and young people described different potentially unsafe situations, their likely frequency, and the level of impact such situations would have from their own point of view. They also described how they thought adults in their faith-based organization would see them. Thematic analysis of the data supported four themes related to young people's sense of safety: concerning behavior of adults and other young people, fear of judgment by others (adults and peers), sense of or lack of empowerment due to power dynamics, and the importance of a sense of “familiarity.” Visual comparisons of the data on scatterplots suggested differences not only in the level of impact and frequency of potentially unsafe situations between young people and adults but also between the two denominations. Children and young people can provide a wealth of information regarding their safety concerns when involved in programs and services at faith-based organizations. Clergy and other faith-based organizational leaders should consider how the context in which young

people are involved (including interdenominational and interfaith difference, as well as the diverse types of activities young people are involved with) can affect their safety concerns.

Choruby-Whiteley, A., & Morrow, S. L. (2021). "I was praying for my very salvation from my sexual abuse": Experiences of sexual abuse survivors in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. *Women & Therapy, 44*(3-4), 292-318.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2021.1961436>

Researchers have thoroughly documented the experiences of sexual abuse survivors; however, many complications may arise for adult survivors who are religious. To our knowledge, there have been no previous studies regarding childhood sexual abuse survivors who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This qualitative research project sought to explore the questions, "What are the gendered messages of femininity that Latter-day Saint childhood sexual abuse survivors have received, and how have these messages impacted their healing from sexual abuse?" Fourteen participants were interviewed as part of a qualitative investigation in a semi-structured format with open-ended questions from an emergent grounded theory design. The researchers analyzed the interviews to reveal results that are grounded in participants' reported experiences. Six themes arose under the category of Harmful Cultural Lesson and Social Norms. An additional theme, Healing through Advocating for Change, presented alongside a theoretical framework of healing, explores the relationship between the harmful cultural messages that Latter-day Saint sexual abuse survivors internalize, the subsequent impact on a survivor's sense of self, and alternative trauma-informed lessons that lead to healing. The author(s) present these results along with the implications for therapists working with Latter-day Saint sexual abuse survivors, recommendations for church policy changes, and future research directions.

Dallam, S., Hamilton, M., & Glocker, S. (2021). Survey of the written child protection policies of the 32 US archdioceses. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 30*(7), 869-889.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2021.1938770>

Amid considerable public scrutiny, Roman Catholic institutions in the United States have been called upon to address underlying organizational conditions that may facilitate child sex abuse and establish effective policies for early intervention and prevention. The development of child protection policies has largely been left to the discretion of local dioceses with little in the way of central oversight. This study examined the 32 U.S. archdioceses' written policies on child

protection and maintaining a safe environment. We found 14 distinct policies spread across the archdioceses which fit into four general categories or domains: (1) Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse; (2) Detection and Reporting of Abuse; (3) Response to Victims; and (4) Investigational Process and Response to Allegations of Abuse. Using a tool developed from a list of unique components selected from the better policies of all 32 archdioceses, we compared policies across archdioceses. On a group level, we found current policies to be inadequate. The average score for all 32 archdioceses was 100.9 out of 250 possible points or 40%. The range was 61 to 137 (SD 20.4). The variation and inconsistencies across multiple archdioceses within the U.S. reveal the need for the Catholic Church to establish evidence-based standards on appropriately and effectively addressing child sexual abuse within its dioceses. These standards should be based on empirically supported best practices and emerging consensus of experts on better practices for youth-serving organizations in relation to child abuse. This article points to parameters for consideration in developing such standards.

Dum, C. P., Socia, K. M., Long, B. L., & Yarrison, F. (2020). Would God forgive? Public attitudes toward sex offenders in places of worship. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research & Treatment*, 32(5), 567–590.

Previous research has explored the impact of faith and religion on recidivism. However, it focused primarily on violent offenders, drug users, tax evaders, and so on. Missing is an examination of registered sex offenders (RSOs) and the role religion and religiosity play in facilitating reentry. Religiosity and religious organizations may play a role in increasing social bonds and reducing isolation in RSOs. In addition, being surrounded by a faith-based community could act as a catalyst for identity transformation from a RSO to a community member. Using a national online sample of U.S. adults, this research investigates individual's support of policies controlling sex offenders in religious communities and how demographic characteristics affect these views. Results suggest that Protestants and Other (non-Catholic) Christians are the most accepting of RSOs in places of worship. In addition, the stronger an individual's faith, the less accepting they are of RSOs. Older, liberal, and educated respondents are more accepting of RSOs. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Harper, C. A., Perkins, C., & Johnson, D. (2020). Psychological factors influencing religious congregation members' reporting of alleged sexual abuse. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 26(1), 129–144.

The sexual abuse of children within religious institutions has become a topic of increasing public concern in recent decades. However, to date there has been little in the way of psychological analyses of the processes by which congregation members judge the credibility of alleged abuses, or whether they would intend to report such allegations to the police. In this study, we examined the roles of ingroup identity, moral foundations, and social dominance orientation on reporting intentions and allegation credibility assessments among Church of England congregation members (n = 454) and non-religious controls (n = 457). While there were few predictors of reporting intentions, we found that churchgoers were consistently more sceptical of allegations of abuse, with these trends being differentially moderated by ingroup identification, the endorsement of various moral impulses, and anti-egalitarianism. We discuss our data in light of ongoing attempts to improve reporting procedures within the Church. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Mendes, P., Pinski, M., McCurdy, S., & Averbukh, R. (2020). Ultra-orthodox Jewish communities and child sexual abuse: A case study of the Australian Royal Commission and its implications for faith-based communities. *Children Australia*, 45(1), 14-20.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/cha.2019.44>

To date, little is known about manifestations of child sexual abuse (CSA) within ultra-orthodox Jewish communities both in Australia and abroad. There is a paucity of empirical studies on the prevalence of CSA within Jewish communities, and little information on the responses of Jewish community organisations, or the experiences of Jewish CSA survivors and their families. This paper draws on a case study of two ultra-orthodox Jewish organisations from the recent Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to examine the religious and cultural factors that may inform Jewish communal responses to CSA. Attention is drawn to factors that render ultra-orthodox communities vulnerable to large-scale CSA, religious laws and beliefs that may influence the reporting of abuse to secular authorities, and the communal structures that may lead to victims rather than offenders being subjected to personal attacks and exclusion from the community. Commonalities are identified between ultra-orthodox Jews and other faith-based communities, and reforms suggested to improve child safety across religious groups.

Vieth, V. I. (2020). [Until the Blood Ran: A call to re-appraise the experience of child physical abuse in the life and works of Martin Luther](#). *Currents in Theology and Mission*, 47(4).

Although Martin Luther described experiencing three egregious acts of child physical abuse, most Luther biographers ignore, excuse, minimize, or make light of this violence. The notable exception is Erik Erikson, whose psychohistory biography contended the reformation is largely the product of Luther's conflict with his father. Although many scholars rightly conclude that Erikson's analysis went too far, these same scholars fail to adequately address the potential impact of child abuse on Luther's theology, his own treatment of children, his views on child discipline, and his thoughts on education. To address these shortcomings in Luther scholarship, this article takes a fresh look at Luther's statements about being beaten and critiques the decision of Luther biographers to dismiss or minimize these statements. Lastly, the article advocates for a more balanced view of the childhood beatings of history's most prominent Protestant, and suggests that a deeper, more honest assessment of these beatings will yield meaningful insights into Luther and his theology.

Foley, T. (2019). Changing institutional culture in the wake of clerical abuse – the essentials of restorative and legal regulation. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 22(2), 171–187.
<https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/10282580.2019.1610943>

The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse completed its final report in December 2017 after five years of hearings. The Royal Commission was the culmination of pressure from a series of public inquiries about institutional sexual abuse and sustained advocacy from victims and survivor support groups. The Commission made recommendations designed to change institutional leadership, governance and culture. The challenge is to have that change embedded in institutional culture. This paper considers how this might be done in a specific institution, the Catholic Church given that more than two-thirds of reported abuse in faith-based institutions occurred within its ranks. Regulatory theory suggests effective regulation must be responsive to past institutional behaviour. In the case of the Church, the task is profound given its strong self-protective culture which has long shielded abusers. The form of regulation must provide a balance where criminal sanctions loom large in the background while redress processes proceed in the foreground to repair both the harm suffered by survivors and renew Church culture. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Hurcombe, R., Darling, A., Mooney, B., Ablett, G., Soares, C., King, S., & Brähler, V. (2019). [Truth Project Thematic Report: Child sexual abuse in the context of religious institutions.](#) Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse.

This is the first publication in a series of thematic reports examining what victims and survivors have shared with the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse ('the Inquiry') as part of the Truth Project about their experiences of child sexual abuse and the institutional context in which it occurred. It details the research findings in relation to experiences of sexual abuse that occurred in 'religious contexts', based on the location or perpetrator of the abuse. This includes both sexual abuse that has taken place in a religious institution and sexual abuse that has taken place in a different setting but where the perpetrator was a member of the clergy or other staff affiliated with a religious institution (see section 1.2 for a more detailed discussion of our inclusion and exclusion criteria). The accounts in this report are from victims and survivors who came to the Truth Project between June 2016 and November 2018. The majority of participants reported sexual abuse by individuals from Anglican and Catholic Churches in England and Wales. However, such abuse within other Christian denominations and other religions – including the Jehovah's Witnesses, Islam and Judaism – was also reported and is included in the analysis. The analysis was undertaken by members of the Inquiry's Research Team between November 2018 and May 2019.

Raine, S., & Kent, S. A. (2019). The grooming of children for sexual abuse in religious settings: Unique characteristics and select case studies. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 48, 180-189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2019.08.017>

This article examines the sexual grooming of children and their caregivers in a wide variety of religious settings. We argue that unique aspects of religion facilitate institutional and interpersonal grooming in ways that often differ from forms of manipulation in secular settings. Drawing from Christianity (Catholicism, Protestantism, and Seventh-day Adventism) and various sects (the Children of God, the Branch Davidians, the Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints, a Hindu ashram, and the Devadasis), we show how some religious institutions and leadership figures in them can slowly cultivate children and their caregivers into harmful and illegal sexual activity. A number of uniquely religious characteristics facilitate this cultivation, which includes: theodicies of legitimation; power, patriarchy, obedience, protection, and reverence towards authority figures; victims' fears about spiritual punishments; and scriptural uses to justify adult-child sex.

Rashid, F., & Barron, I. (2019). [Why the focus of clerical child sexual abuse has largely remained on the Catholic church amongst other non-Catholic Christian denominations and religions.](#) *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 28(5), 564-585.

The current study considers reasons for the consistent focus of academic research and mainstream media on clerical child sexual abuse (cCSA) largely within the Roman Catholic Church, seeming to ignore cCSA in other Christian denominations and religions. This study includes an analysis of traditional mainstream media and case reports on cCSA in non-Catholic churches and other religious faiths. The authors highlight the inadequacy of research and identify a wide range of gaps in this so far neglected area. Commonalities of cCSA and institutional responses are identified across denominations and religions, and reasons for the apparent over focus on the Catholic Church are discussed. The main potential reasons identified were: (a) the centralized nature of the Church's universal organizational stature and management structure; (b) the anti-Catholic political and media bias in Protestant-dominated developed countries; (c) secular legal systems with access to powerful lawyers and insurance companies to locate responsibility at organizational level in order to seek compensation and finally; (d) the organized institutional power exercisable by respective bishops to silence victims. Future research needs to move beyond analysis of existing academic literature, press, and case review reports to comparative empirical studies across denominations and religions.

Vieth, V. I. (2019). [Child abuse and the Lutheran confessional: A call to elevate Christ's teachings on children above church traditions.](#) *Currents in Theology and Mission*, 46(3).

Veith, V. (2019). Vieth, V. I. [Working with Molly: A culturally sensitive approach to parents using corporal punishment because of their religious beliefs.](#) *APSAC Advisor*, 31(1), 52-58.

Briggs, S., & Whittaker, A. (2018). Protecting Children from Faith-Based Abuse through Accusations of Witchcraft and Spirit Possession: Understanding Contexts and Informing Practice. *British Journal of Social Work*, 48(8), 2157–2175. <https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcx15>

Faith-based abuse relating to the practice of witchcraft and spirit possession is a controversial and not well-understood form of child abuse. From its 'discovery' in the UK as a cause of abuse, serious injury and death for children, in 2000 to the present, the recent history of witchcraft and spirit

possession involves some high-profile cases, involving serious harm and death for some children, which attracted significant publicity. This article reviews research and commentary, including grey literature, and the emerging policy framework. It discusses the underpinning relationship between faith-based practices and abuse, and takes a post-colonial perspective to discuss the social explanations for the continuing practice of witchcraft and spirit possession in contemporary society. These discussions are then shown to inform practice. Practice priorities are informed assessment of suspected cases, through early and statutory interventions, care for survivors and an important focus on community engagement to prevent this form of child abuse. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Denney, A. S., Kerley, K. R., & Gross, N. G. (2018). [Child sexual abuse in protestant Christian congregations: A descriptive analysis of offense and offender characteristics](https://doi.org/10.3390/rel9010027). *Religions*, 9(1), 27. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel9010027>

Utilizing data from 326 cases of alleged child sexual abuse that occurred at or through activities provided by Protestant Christian congregations, this study examines demographic and contextual characteristics of alleged child sexual abuse that took place within the most prevalent religious environment in the United States. Research questions are addressed in this study. First, what type of child sexual abuse most commonly occurs at or through activities provided by Protestant Christian congregations? Second, where do such offenses physically take place? Third, who are the offenders and what role(s) do they assume in the congregations? We find that the overwhelming majority of offenses were contact offenses that occurred on church premises or at the offender's home, and that most offenders were white male pastors or youth ministers who were approximately 40 years in age. We conclude with policy implications and recommendations for future research.

Harper, C. A., & Perkins, C. (2018). [Reporting child sexual abuse within religious settings: Challenges and future directions](https://doi.org/10.1002/car.2484). *Child Abuse Review*, 27(1), 30-41. <https://doi.org/10.1002/car.2484>

The sexual abuse of children within religious settings is an issue that has gained increased popular and professional attention over the past two decades. Various reports have highlighted the scale of such abuse, along with shortcomings in reporting practices. In this article, we outline some

contemporary research that sought to understand the psychology that underpins variable reporting practices. In line with this research, we set out two conceptual frameworks that have some potential to help to explain such practices: system justification theory and moral foundations theory. Further, we describe how these frameworks could be adopted in research moving forward in order to make sense of the ways in which members of religious groups respond to allegations of child sexual abuse within their institutions. We close the article by arguing that by gaining a deeper understanding of the psychology underlying reporting practices, it may be possible to communicate more effectively about child sexual abuse within religious institutions, and therefore encourage more widespread reporting of allegations before more children are harmed.

King, E. B. L. (2018). Transitional justice and the legacy of child sexual abuse in the Catholic church. *Albany Law Review*, 81(1), 121-143.

Rashid, F., & Barron, I. (2018). The Roman Catholic church: A centuries old history of awareness of clerical child sexual abuse (from the First to the 19th Century). *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 27(7), 778–792. <https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/10538712.2018.1491916>

Debates in international forums and in mainstream media on the role, responsibility, liability, and response of ecclesiastical authorities of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) toward clerical child sexual abuse (cCSA) fail to take into account the historical roots and awareness of the problem. Reports also fail to mention the historic organizational laws RCC developed over centuries. In contrast, RCC documents evidence that the Catholic Church not only carried century's old history of cCSA, but also repeatedly condemned cCSA by successive papal authorities, organizational laws, and institutional management mechanisms. During the first millennium, however, church laws remained confined to the bookshelves and were not converted into appropriate management policies and infrastructural models. This was largely due to the absence of a central administrative organizational structure, which developed later in the 12th century, following the Second Council of Lateran (1139) when the Papacy asserted its authority to establish administrative control over the organizational church. It was only then that management policies started to be framed and institutional structures enacted to deal more appropriately with cCSA from the 14th to 20th centuries. Despite this, RCC developed a culture of secrecy using clandestine organizational management models and institutional laws prescribed in 1568, 1622, 1741, 1866, 1922, and 1962

which aimed to manage cCSA. The current study traces reported cCSA as far back as the first century and critically examines the organizational laws, and institutional policies developed by RCC to address clerical sexual misconduct up to the end of the 19th century. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Bartholomew, C. P. (2017). [Exorcising the clergy privilege](#). *Virginia Law Review*, 103(6), 1015-1075.

Berkovits, S. M. (2017). [Institutional abuse in the Jewish community](#). *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought*, 50(2), 11-49.

Katzenstein, D., & Fontes, L. A. (2017). Twice silenced: The underreporting of child sexual abuse in Orthodox Jewish communities. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 26(6), 752-767. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2017.1336505>

Child sexual abuse remains an underreported crime throughout the world, despite extensive research and resources dedicated both to improving investigative techniques and helping children disclose their experiences. The discovery of rampant cover-ups within the Catholic Church has exposed some of the ways religious and cultural issues can impede reporting to authorities. This article examines specific factors that contribute to the underreporting of child sexual abuse within Orthodox Jewish communities. It also explores ways in which these communities have handled child sexual abuse reporting in the past and describes recent progress. Implications are offered for CSA prevention, detection, and recovery in Orthodox Jewish communities as well as other minority religious groups.

Oakley, L., Kinmond, K., Humphreys, J., & Dioum, M. (2017). Practitioner and communities' awareness of CALFB: Child abuse linked to faith or belief. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 72, 276–282. <https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.08.024>

This paper reports the results of an online survey which aimed to explore practitioners' and faith community groups' awareness and understanding of child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB) and to identify their further training needs in this area. The survey was founded in the work of the National working group for CALFB; a multi-agency response group committed to raising knowledge and awareness of this form of child abuse. Despite the relatively small number of

recorded cases, CALFB continues to be a matter of concern to professionals and faith communities in the UK and beyond. One thousand three hundred and sixty two respondents comprising of frontline practitioners, faith and community group members completed the survey. A mixed-method analysis of the survey data illustrates a wide-ranging understanding of the term CALFB and disagreement about whether this is a specific form of child abuse. The results also indicate a relationship between confidence levels in identifying and responding to CALFB and specific training in this area. There is a call for specialised training to be more readily available. Further work is needed to develop a toolkit, which identifies indicators of CALFB and effective response pathways together with research across communities. The current research is timely and important in providing a foundation on which to build more effective identification of cases, policy and intervention. (Copyright © 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.)

Anderson, J. (2016). Socialization processes and clergy offenders. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 25(8), 846-865. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2016.1241333>

This article uses feminist theory to investigate how the socialization processes used to maintain the clergy community in the Roman Catholic Church contributes to a vulnerability in some clergy for sexually abusing children. This vulnerability is identified first in an examination of the literature on the impact of socialization processes on clergy offenders between the 1960s and 1980s. A comparison is then made with the implications of the apostolic exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, which provides a theological basis to clergy formation. The article argues that the document works to ensure a continuity of socialization processes that not only have been shown to create a vulnerability for committing child sexual abuse but compound existing vulnerabilities. The article concludes that constraints produced by the preservation of a hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy retain a threat of violence against children and require recommended reforms.

Minto, K., Hornsey, M. J., Gillespie, N., Healy, K., & Jetten, J. (2016). [A social identity approach to understanding responses to child sexual abuse allegations](#). *PloS one*, 11(4), e0153205

Two studies investigated the role of group allegiances in contributing to the failure of institutions to appropriately respond to allegations of child sexual abuse. In Study 1, 601 participants read a news article detailing an allegation of child sexual abuse against a Catholic Priest. Catholics were more protective of the accused—and more skeptical of the accuser—than other participants, an

effect that was particularly pronounced among strongly identified Catholics. In Study 2 (N = 404), the tendency for Catholics to be more protective of the accused and more skeptical of the accuser than non-Catholics was replicated. Moreover, these effects held independently of the objective likelihood that the accused was guilty. Overall, the data show that group loyalties provide a psychological motivation to disbelieve child abuse allegations. Furthermore, the people for whom this motivation is strongest are also the people who are most likely to be responsible for receiving and investigating allegations: highly identified ingroup members. The findings highlight the psychological mechanisms that may limit the ability of senior Church figures to conduct impartial investigations into allegations of child abuse within the Church.

Bottoms, B. L., Goodman, G. S., Tolou-Shams, M., Diviak, K. R., & Shaver, P. R. (2015). Religion-related child maltreatment: A profile of cases encountered by legal and social service agencies. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 33(4), 561–579. <https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.1002/bsl.2192>

Religion can foster, facilitate, and be used to justify child maltreatment. Yet religion-related child abuse and neglect have received little attention from social scientists. We examined 249 cases of religion-related child maltreatment reported to social service agencies, police departments, and prosecutors' offices nationwide. We focused on cases involving maltreatment perpetrated by persons with religious authority, such as ministers and priests; the withholding of medical care for religious reasons; and abusive attempts to rid a child of supposed evil. By providing a descriptive statistical profile of the major features of these cases, we illustrate how these varieties of religion-related child maltreatment occur, who the victims and perpetrators are, and how religion-related child abuse and neglect are reported and processed by the social service and criminal justice systems. We end with a call for greater research attention to these important offenses against children. (Copyright © 2015 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.)

Calkins, C., Fargo, J., Jeglic, E., & Terry, K. (2015). Blessed be the children: A case-control study of sexual abusers in the catholic church. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 33(4), 580-594. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2193>

Individuals working in churches and other youth-serving institutions have a unique level of access to children, yet the problem of sexual abuse in institutional settings has received scant research attention. To address this gap, we analyzed data from a large sample of clergy (N = 1,121) and

applied a social–ecological model of offending to identify risk factors for sexual abuse perpetration. Using a case–control study design that compared clergy sexual abusers with three control groups of clergy, this study focuses specifically on individual-, relationship-, and community-level factors associated with a higher risk of abuse in professional populations. Findings revealed that clergy sexual abusers tended to have more truncated pre-seminary dating histories, and that their dating and sexual partners were more likely to have been male than female. Self-reported sexual abuse history was associated with a greater likelihood of sexual abuse perpetration among clergy. Clergy abusers tended to be more involved with youth and adolescents in their ministries; however, they were observed to relate less well to youth and adolescents than their clergy counterparts. Given widespread changes in our cultural understanding of abuse as well as more specific changes in the organizational approach to seminary education, these differences underscore the role that youth-serving institutions and society can have in the primary prevention of child sexual abuse. Copyright © 2015 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Moore, S. E., Robinson, M. A., Dailey, A., & Thompson, C. (2015). Suffering in silence: Child sexual molestation and the Black Church: If God don't help me who can I turn to?. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 25(2), 147-157.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2014.956962>

The invasion by another of a child's inner self causes greater damage to the soul than perhaps any other type of abuse. Each year an estimated 90,000 children are victims of child sexual abuse. Many social institutions that are designed to help in healthy child development have failed to protect children from sexual abuse. The Black church is a major institution within the African American community that provides a plethora of supports for the community. However, it has also come under recent scrutiny for its failure to protect its children from sexual predators from within. The authors of this article discuss the role of the Black church, give theories to explain child sexual molestation, and make recommendations to church leaders and others for prevention and intervention of this problem. Implications for churches, human service providers, and research are also discussed.

Terry, K. J. (2015). Child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church: A review of global perspectives. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 39(2), 139-154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01924036.2015.1012703>

Child sexual abuse by Catholic priests is a global issue. Reports of abuse proliferated in the US in 2002, giving the appearance that it was an American phenomenon. However, by 2010, it was clear that abuse in the Catholic Church had affected countries around the world. Scholars in the US have published reports evaluating the nature, scope, and causes of the problem. Similarly, public inquiries and commissions have investigated the crises in other western and English-speaking countries, and research is ongoing. The reports have produced similar findings and recommendations for preventing abuse in the future, including better education and training about abuse; the need to respond quickly and thoroughly to victim-survivors; transparency in response to abuse; and coordinated responses with civil authorities.

Böhm, B., Zollner, H., Fegert, J. M., & Liebhardt, H. (2014). Child sexual abuse in the context of the Roman Catholic Church: A review of literature from 1981–2013. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 23(6), 635-656. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2014.929607>

Child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church has been increasingly recognized as a problem not limited to individual institutions. Recent inquiry commission reports provide substantial information on offense dynamics, but their conclusions have not been synthesized with empirical research to date. The aim of this systematic literature review was to bring together key findings and identify gaps in the evidence base. The three main focus points were (a) types of publications and methodology used, (b) frequency information on child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, (c) individual factors in offending, and (d) institutional factors in offending. It was found that reports, legal assessments, and research on child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church provide extensive descriptive and qualitative information for five different countries. This includes individual psychological factors (static risk predictors, multiple trajectories) and institutional factors (opportunity, social dynamics) as well as prevalence rates illustrating a high “dark figure” of child sexual abuse.

Collins, C. M., O'Neill-Arana, M. R., Fontes, L. A., & Ossege, J. M. (2014). Catholicism and childhood sexual abuse: Women's coping and psychotherapy. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 23*(5), 519-537. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2014.918071>

The long-term effects of child sexual abuse include numerous psychological, social, and behavioral difficulties in women survivors, ranging from poor self-esteem and depression to sexual disorders and posttraumatic stress disorder. The role that religious beliefs may play in the difficulties these women suffer has been largely unexplored. This qualitative study explored women's experience of healing within the context of Catholicism. Interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of eight women raised as Catholics who reported child sexual abuse and who had participated in at least two years of psychotherapy. Results suggest that Catholic identity can both compound and relieve the suffering many women experience in healing from child sexual abuse. Participants related that their Catholicism was rarely addressed during psychotherapy. These findings have implications for clinicians working with Catholic survivors of child sexual abuse.

Lueger-Schuster, B., Kantor, V., Weindl, D., Knefel, M., Moy, Y., Butollo, A., ... & Glück, T. (2014). Institutional abuse of children in the Austrian Catholic Church: Types of abuse and impact on adult survivors' current mental health. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 38*(1), 52-64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2013.07.013>

The aim of this study was to explore the nature and dimensions of institutional child abuse (IA) by the Austrian Catholic Church and to investigate the current mental health of adult survivors. Data were collected in two steps. First, documents of 448 adult survivors of IA (M = 55.1 years, 75.7% men) who had disclosed their abuse history to a victim protection commission were collected. Different types of abuse, perpetrator characteristics, and family related risk factors were investigated. Second, a sample of 185 adult survivors completed the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist (PCL-C) and the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI). Participants reported an enormous diversity of acts of violent physical, sexual, and emotional abuse that had occurred in their childhood. The majority of adult survivors (83.3%) experienced emotional abuse. Rates of sexual (68.8%) and physical abuse (68.3%) were almost equally high. The prevalence of PTSD was 48.6% and 84.9% showed clinically relevant symptoms in at least one 1 of 10 symptom dimensions (9 BSI subscales and PTSD). No specific pre-IA influence was found to influence the development of PTSD in later life (e.g. poverty, domestic violence). However, survivors with PTSD reported a

significantly higher total number of family related risk factors ($d = 0.33$). We conclude that childhood IA includes a wide spectrum of violent acts, and has a massive negative impact on the current mental health of adult survivors. We address the long-term effects of these traumatic experiences in addition to trauma re-activation in adulthood as both bear great challenges for professionals working with survivors.

Perry-Burney, G., Thomas, N. D., & McDonald, T. L. (2014). Rural child sexual abuse in the African American church community: A forbidden topic. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 24(8), 986-995. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2014.953413>

The church as an institution in the African American community has played a vital role from slavery to the present day, serving as an oasis from the maladies of the world. However, the African American church is not immune from sex abuse scandals. This article provides statistics, descriptive case studies, coping strategies for survivors of sexual abuse, solutions for reducing the incidence of sexual abuse in the church, and implications for social work practice and policies.

Robinson, M., & Hanmer, S. (2014). Engaging religious communities to protect children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation: partnerships require analysis of religious virtues and harms. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 38(4), 600–611. <https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2014.03.018>

This article aims to provide a framework for analysis on key issues, challenges, and opportunities related to working with religious communities in addressing child abuse and neglect. Strategies and practical guidance on seeking stronger relationships between child protection specialists and religious communities are also highlighted, and examples of successful program approaches are provided.

Parkinson, P. (2013). [Suffer the teenage children: Child sexual abuse in church communities.](#) Paper for the Center for the Study of Law and Religion, Emory University. NO. 13/09. 33 pp.

In recent years, an increasing amount of attention has been given to the problem of child sexual abuse in church communities. While all churches, and indeed all communities which care for children, have had experience of this problem, most attention has been paid to the problem of child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. This paper, given at Emory University's Center for the Study

of Law and Religion in January 2013, examines the issue of child sexual abuse in church communities, drawing particularly on Australian data. Most victims of child sexual abuse both in the Catholic and Anglican churches in Australia, are adolescent boys. This points to the importance of opportunity for abuse to occur, since priests and other ministers are more likely to have opportunities to be alone with teenage boys than with girls. While there are some similar patterns in terms of victims' age and gender, the incidence of abuse by Catholic clergy and religious appears to be many times that of ministers and pastoral staff in other Christian churches, and it may well be significantly higher than in the general population. The paper explores the reasons why this may be so. It also examines how churches in Australia have responded to the problem of child sexual abuse. Concerns about systemic failures in the response of the Catholic Church in particular have led to the establishment of a Royal Commission in 2013 which will examine child abuse in institutional settings across the country. (Author Abstract)

Gilligan, P. (2012). Contrasting narratives on responses to victims and survivors of clerical abuse in England and Wales: Challenges to Catholic church discourse. *Child Abuse Review*, 21(6), 414–426. <https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.1002/car.2251>

Accounts of the Catholic Church's response to those disclosing sexual abuse by clergy to diocesan safeguarding commissions (formerly child protection commissions) in England and Wales are analysed and compared. The accounts given and the conclusions reached by the Church and those it employs or has commissioned are considered alongside the experiences reported by survivors. The contrasts between these narratives are discussed using techniques underpinned by critical discourse analysis and highlighting service user perspectives. Reports for the period to 2010 and published in 2011 by the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission and Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors are discussed in detail, with the resulting analysis of the narratives emerging arguably reflecting a broader discourse. It is suggested that, despite attempts to present the situation differently, the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales continues to be hampered in its efforts to respond sensitively to the needs of those who have been abused, because, as an institution, it also continues to serve conflicting legitimacy communities, and that, as a result, it risks further alienating those victims and survivors who have been led to expect that their needs will be prioritised over the financial interests and reputation of the institution. Copyright © 2012 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. Key Practitioner Messages Accounts by institutions about how they

respond to victims and survivors of abuse need to be critically analysed using accounts offered by victims and survivors themselves., Institutions may seek to serve conflicting legitimacy communities and, as a result, risk alienating victims and survivors of abuse where they have been led to expect that their needs will be prioritised over matters such as the financial interests and reputation of the institution. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Kent, S. A. (2012). [Religious justifications for child sexual abuse in cults and alternative religions](#). *International Journal of Cultic Studies*, 3.

This article identifies eight religiously colored justifications that pedophiles have used to excuse child sexual abuse in cults and alternative religions operating in the West. These ideologies are a) Western scriptural patriarchalism; b) Western patriarchal incest; c) patriarchalism and polygamous child brides; d) millenarianism; e) antinomianism; f) sex as the means to salvation; g) sex as salvation; and h) levelling all forms of sex as equally fallen. By anchoring abuse within theologically based justifications that are readily available in one or more cultic or alternative religious groups, we gain insight into how sexual exploitation becomes legitimized within societal subgroups. Under leaders' directions, these subgroups receive theologies that enable forms of child sexual abuse to seem normative because they appear to have divine justification or support.

Parkinson, P. N., Oates, R. K., & Jayakody, A. A. (2012). [Child sexual abuse in the Anglican Church of Australia](#). *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 21(5), 553-570.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2012.689424>

This article reports on a retrospective study of cases of child sexual abuse complaints made against clergy, other employed pastoral staff, and volunteers in the Anglican Church of Australia between 1990 and 2008. There were 191 allegations of sexual abuse made by 180 complainants against 135 individuals. Twenty-seven of those 135 had more than one complaint made against them. Three-quarters of all complainants were male. The most likely explanation for the large proportion of abused males is that the church gives many more opportunities for abusers to be alone with boys than with girls. Prevention strategies need to focus on reducing the opportunities for abuse to occur as well as strategies concerning the recruitment of professional staff and volunteers.

Vieth, V. I. (2012). [What would Walther do? Applying law and gospel to victims and perpetrators of child sexual abuse.](https://doi.org/10.1177/009164711204000402) *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 40(4), 257-273. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009164711204000402>

Counselors and theologians failing to understand the dynamics of child sexual abuse cases often apply the concept of law and gospel incorrectly. When this happens, perpetrators are emboldened to offend again and many victims leave the church. To assist spiritual counselors in avoiding this pitfall, I provide an overview of the dynamics present in many cases of sexual abuse and the impact this has on children physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I also discuss the characteristics of many sex offenders and the efforts offenders make to manipulate both the victim and the church. In determining the proper application of law and gospel to victims and offenders, I discuss the law and gospel treatise of C.F.W. Walther. In doing so, I include examples of Walther's application of law and gospel in cases of domestic violence and sexual exploitation. Finally, I include practical suggestions for psychotherapists and theologians in applying law and gospel to victims and to perpetrators of child sexual abuse.

Lopiansky, R. A., Berman, R. Y., & Eisen, R. E. (2011). Child sexual abuse in the Frum Community—An overview. *Criminal Justice*, 429(1).

This article is the product of extensive research based on interviews with key professionals, Rabbonim, and activists who deal with CSA, both in the U.S. and in Israel, within the frum communities. The goal is to present clear information based on their responses, as well as information gathered from empirical and academic research and professional literature.

Tchividjian, B. J., & Vieth, V. (2011). [When the child abuser has a Bible: Investigating child maltreatment sanctioned or condoned by a religious leader.](#) *Center Piece: Official Newsletter of the National Child Protection Training Center*, 2(12). 1-7.

This article contains seventeen tips to assist law enforcement officers and other multidisciplinary team members investigating cases of child abuse condoned and, in some cases, actually sanctioned by a pastor or other church leader. The authors recognize this issue may arise in many religious contexts. However, this paper is primarily focused on abusive practices taking place in some Christian environments, and is based on the authors work in investigating or prosecuting abuse within these institutions.

Coughlin, J. J. (2009). Canon law and the clergy sex abuse crisis: The failure of the rule of law. Notre Dame Legal Studies Paper, (09-21).

This article discusses antinomian and legalistic approaches to canon law. Specifically, it explores these approaches to canon law by ecclesiastical authorities in dealing with the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests in the United States. When canon law functions properly, it maintains the balance between law and spirit in the life of the church. In the United States, the bishops' response to the problem of clergy sexual abuse of minors has combined antinomian and legalistic trends that have diminished the rule of canon law. If bishops had fulfilled their duty to abide by the rule of law, especially in the cases involving clergy who are serial child abusers, they would have communicated to victims, clergy and all concerned that church authorities were taking appropriate steps to protect children. In hindsight, it is easy to see that the bishops' focus on the psychological approach to the exclusion of the canonical has resulted in great injury. The clarity of hindsight, however, ought not result in blame and negativity but open the way for a more hopeful future. An important aspect of responding to the present crisis must entail re-commitment to the rule of law. No law or policy can eradicate sin from the fallen nature of the human situation, including that of the human beings who comprise the priesthood. The proper balance of law and spirit, however, can dispose injured individuals and communities to retrieve a sense of justice that facilitates healing and forgiveness.

Firestone, P., Moulden, H. M., & Wexler, A. F. (2009). Clerics who commit sexual offenses: Offender, offense, and victim characteristics. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 18*(4), 442-454. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538710903035305>

The aim of this investigation was to undertake an exploratory analysis of clerics who sexually offend and the circumstances related to these offenses. Thirty-three adult male religious leaders who had been charged with a sexual offense against a child or adolescent were included in the study. This study examined descriptive information about offenders, their victims, as well as characteristics of the crimes. Notable trends included the following: religious leaders tended to offend against boys living with both parents, the offense often took place at the clergy's residence, and the offense involved fondling the victim. The study also compared offenders with single versus multiple victims on crime variables and differences were noted with respect to victim access.

Walker, D. F., Reid, H. W., O'Neill, T., & Brown, L. (2009). Changes in personal religion/spirituality during and after childhood abuse: A review and synthesis. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 1(2), 130–145. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016211>.

Psychologists have begun to consider the potential role of traumatic experiences on the victim's spirituality and religiousness as well as the role personal religious and spiritual faith might have in recovery from abuse. In this review, the authors were particularly interested in these issues as they pertain to childhood abuse. The authors identified 34 studies of child abuse as they relate to spirituality and religiosity that included information on a total of 19,090 participants. The studies were classified according to both the form of abuse and the form of religiousness or spirituality that were examined. The majority of studies indicated either some decline in religiousness or spirituality (N = 14) or a combination of both growth and decline (N = 12). Seven studies gave preliminary indications that religiousness/spirituality can moderate the development of posttraumatic symptoms or symptoms associated with other Axis I disorders. The authors discuss implications for both therapy and future research. (PsycINFO Database Record © 2017 APA, all rights reserved)

Flynn, K. A. (2008). In their own voices: Women who were sexually abused by members of the clergy. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 17(3-4), 216-237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538710802329684>

Women remain perhaps the forgotten majority of persons to survive clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse. The impact of this abuse of women has been largely overlooked. Through a qualitative exploration of narratives from semistructured interviews of 25 women sexually abused by clergy (18 as adults and 7 as children), this study examined how the women experienced symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder and complex post-traumatic stress disorder. Consideration is given to clergy-specific factors related to CPSA. Other considerations included intensified captivity experiences for many and extreme isolation related to nonexistent “contexts” for validation and support. A change in personal spirituality among many subjects from structured traditional religious practice to spirituality strongly dependent on interpersonal and relational factors is also considered.

Fogler, J. M., Shipherd, J. C., Rowe, E., Jensen, J., & Clarke, S. (2008). A theoretical foundation for understanding clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 17*(3-4), 301-328. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538710802329874>

Incorporating elements from broadband theories of psychological adaptation to extreme adversity, including Summit's (1983) Child Sexual Abuse Accommodation Syndrome, Finkelhor and Browne's (1986) Traumagenic Dynamics Model of sexual abuse, and Pyszczynski and colleagues' (1997) Terror Management Theory, this paper proposes a unified theoretical model of clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse for future research. The model conceptualizes clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse as the convergence of interactive processes between the clergy-perpetrator, the parishioner-survivor, and the religious community.

Isely, P. J., Isely, P., Freiburger, J., & McMackin, R. (2008). [In their own voices: A qualitative study of men abused as children by Catholic clergy.](https://doi.org/10.1080/10538710802329668) *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 17*(3-4), 201-215. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538710802329668>

This study examines the impact of child sexual molestation on men assaulted as children by Catholic clergy. In-depth interviews were used to conduct a qualitative analysis of how clergy-perpetrated childhood sexual abuse affected the adult psychological and/or psychosocial functioning of nine men. Subjects were selected in coordination with a nationally recognized advocacy group established for victims of clergy abuse, The Survivor Network of those Abused by Priests. The study found that the sexual abuse acted as a developmental insult and resulted in systemic influences throughout the victims' lives. The article concludes with considerations for treatment.

Mercado, C. C., Tallon, J. A., & Terry, K. J. (2008). Persistent sexual abusers in the Catholic Church: An examination of characteristics and offense patterns. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 35*(5), 629-642. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854808314389>

This study aims to enhance understanding of clergy offending patterns through a comparison of low-rate and high-rate clergy offenders. Data for these re-analyses are derived from 3,674 cases from the Nature and Scope of Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church. This article compares those clerics who had just one allegation with those who had a moderate (2 to 3), high (4 to 9), or exceptionally high (10-plus) number of allegations of sexual abuse. Findings reveal that the 3.7% (n = 137) who had 10 or more victims accounted for a disproportionate 24.8% of the abuse. Priests

with the most victims began perpetrating offenses at an earlier age and were more likely to have male victims than those who abused fewer victims. The importance of research addressing the causes and situational correlates of sexual offending by priests, as well as the need for more refined management strategies, are discussed.

Neustein, A., & Leshner, M. (2008). A single-case study of rabbinic sexual abuse in the Orthodox Jewish community. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 17*(3-4), 270-289. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538710802329783>

This paper considers a case of sexual abuse allegedly perpetrated by a rabbi within an Orthodox Jewish community. The material is drawn from public records and interviews conducted with the family of the reported victim and others involved in the matter. Consideration is given to judicial procedures unique to the traditional Jewish community and how such procedures, while developed to foster justice within the Jewish community, at times may interfere with secular criminal procedures.

Pargament, K. I., Murray-Swank, N. A., & Mahoney, A. (2008). Problem and solution: The spiritual dimension of clergy sexual abuse and its impact on survivors. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 17*(3-4), 397-420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538710802330187>

In this paper, we offer a way to understand the spiritual dimension of clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse. Spirituality is defined as a search for the sacred—a process of discovery, conservation, and transformation that evolves over the lifespan. We describe the ways in which clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse impacts negatively on the individual's search for the sacred and the ways in which spirituality can serve as a valuable resource for survivors. We then consider how clinicians can draw on the client's spirituality as a source of solutions to problems and how clinicians can address the spiritual problems raised by clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse. Perhaps the greatest challenge for mental health professionals is to become better acquainted with the multifaceted nature of spiritual life.

Smith, M. L., Rengifo, A. F., & Vollman, B. K. (2008). Trajectories of abuse and disclosure: Child sexual abuse by Catholic priests. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 35(5), 570-582.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854808314340>

The distribution of the incidents of sexual abuse by Catholic priests in the United States (event structure) and the reports of these abuse events (reporting structure) present two distinct trajectories, confounding existing individual-level research results. Data from an institutional census of records of abuse between 1950 and 2002 show a steady increase in cases through the late 1970s and early 1980s, followed by a surge in reporting in the mid-1990s and again in 2002. These patterns are stable throughout all regions of the Catholic Church in the United States. Rather than analyze the abuse or reporting from a conventionally individual, psychological framework, this research reframes the analyses for the event structure and the reporting of abuse by priests.

Terry, K. J. (2008). Stained glass: The nature and scope of child sexual abuse in the Catholic church. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 35(5), 549-569.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854808314339>

This article presents the results of the Nature and Scope of Child Sexual Abuse by Catholic Priests from 1950 to 2002. Ninety-seven percent of dioceses (representing 99% of diocesan priests) and 64% of religious communities (representing 83% of religious priests) responded to the request for data. Findings showed that 4,392 priests (4%) had allegations of abuse, 10,667 victims made allegations, and the Church paid (at the time surveys were completed) \$572.5 million for legal and treatment fees and as compensation to the victims (more than \$1.3 billion to date). The study also provided information on the circumstances of the abuse (e.g., types of sexual acts, location, duration), the offenders (e.g., year of ordination, age, ministry duties, other behavioral problems), the victims (e.g., age and gender, family situation), and the dioceses (e.g., differences in abuse rates by region and population size). Importance of these results for policy and practice is discussed.

Terry, K. J. (2008). Understanding the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church: Challenges with prevention policies. *Victims and Offenders*, 3(1), 31-44.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15564880701750482>

Child sexual abuse by Catholic priests was recognized as a crisis in 2002, and in response the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) created the Charter for the Protection of Children and

Young People. At the time little was known about clergy abusers, their victims, or the situations regarding their abusive behavior. John Jay College researchers published two reports on the nature and scope of child sexual abuse by Catholic priests that provided descriptive information about this problem (John Jay College, 2004, 2006). This article provides descriptive information about clergy abusers—including demographics, victim choice, grooming behavior, duration of abusive behavior, and issues related to the reporting of offenses by victims. Policy implications are discussed based upon the comparison of clergy to nonclergy abusers. As with child sexual abuse in any population, effective prevention policies are challenging to implement due to the interaction of many variables related to the abuse process.

White, M. D., & Terry, K. J. (2008). [Child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church: Revisiting the rotten apples explanation](#). *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 35(5), 658-678.

The Catholic Church response to its sexual abuse crisis and how the problem should be addressed parallels the “rotten apple” assertions of police deviance. The rotten apple theory, however, does not fully explain police deviance, as there are often also structural explanations. This article employs Kappeler, Sluder, and Alpert's (1998) police deviance framework to characterize and understand the Catholic Church sex abuse scandal, drawing specific comparisons to the intentional use of excessive force by police. Though the analogy has limitations, there are similarities at both the individual and organizational levels, particularly because the Church has implemented accountability mechanisms similar to the police. The article concludes with a discussion of lessons the Church can learn from the police organization as they seek to prevent, control, and effectively respond to sexual abuse of children by their clergy.

Dale, K. A., & Alpert, J. L. (2007). Hiding behind the cloth: Child sexual abuse and the Catholic Church. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 16(3), 59-74.
https://doi.org/10.1300/J070v16n03_04

The existence of child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church has shocked many. In this article, the authors review the history of child sexual abuse in the church, the recent events that brought this tragedy into societal consciousness, and the efforts by the church to conceal the abuse. Two sources of empirical literature, the general psychological writing on priest sex abuse and the psychoanalytic literature, on child sexual abuse are compared. Both sources of literature seek explanation for priests' child sexual abuse within the structure and culture of the church rather than

viewing the priest as a “typical” sex predator. The authors argue that, in fact, the guilty priests are child predators who differ little from other child predators.

Bennion, J. (2006, September). Abbas raptus: Exploring factors that contribute to the sexual abuse of females in rural Mormon fundamentalist communities. In *Forum on Public Policy: A Journal of the Oxford Round Table*. Forum on Public Policy.

This paper traces the causes of the sexual abuse of females, particularly father-perpetrated rape, in rigid patriarchal communities in Montana, Mexico, and Utah. Based on 15 years of research among fundamentalists in the Intermountain West (Bennion 1997, 2004), the predicting variables were found to consist of 1) a male supremacist ideology that is sanctioned by both scriptural and economic prerogatives, 2) female circumscription, which is the geographic and social isolation of women and children from the mainstream, and 3) economic deprivation, leading to an increase in male underemployment and general dissatisfaction with their masculine role. It is my premise that the combination of these factors within contemporary millenarian fundamentalist movements contribute to the expression of child sexual molestation and domestic violence against women.

Wolfe, D. A., Francis, K. J., & Straatman, A.-L. (2006). Child abuse in religiously-affiliated institutions: long-term impact on men’s mental health. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 30(2), 205–212. <https://doi-org.calio.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2005.08.015>

The study objective was to describe the long-term impact of physical and sexual abuse of boys by someone in a trusting, non-familial relationship. This clinical study reports on the psychological functioning of men (N = 76) with substantiated claims against a residential religiously-affiliated institution for multiple and severe incidents of sexual, physical, and/or emotional abuse during childhood. The abuse was perpetrated by several adults in positions of authority and trust at the institution. Each participant received a clinical interview and was administered psychological tests and a structured interview for DSM-IV diagnoses. The same clinician completed all of the assessments. DSM-IV criteria were met for current PTSD (42%), alcohol (21%), and mood-related disorders (25%). Over one-third of the sample suffered chronic sexual problems, and over one half had a history of criminal behavior. The clinical findings provide direction for assessing victims of historical abuse, and underscore the importance of awareness, prevention, and treatment needs for those who have been abused in institutional settings. Conclusions are limited due to participants'

involvement in civil action, unknown pre-existing conditions, and the lack of a suitable comparison group.

Finkelhor, D. (2003). [The legacy of the clergy abuse scandal](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 27(11), 1225-1229.
Commentary

Higgins, D. J. (2001). A case study of child sexual abuse within a church community. *Journal of Religion & Abuse*, 3(1/2), 5.

A case study is presented of child sexual assault within a church community. How does a church community deal with the accusation of an adolescent female that—as a 13-year-old—she was sexually victimised and assaulted by her then 18-year-old boyfriend, five years her senior? Practical and pastoral issues, as well as ethical and legal concerns are addressed. Consideration is also given to the theological context of the church environments in which the situations arise. The implications for victims, perpetrators, leaders, and the church community of our actions—and failure to take appropriate action—are described, along with recommendations for prevention, and best practice in dealing with the sexual abuse of minors within church communities. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Gerdes, K. E., Beck, M. N., Cowan-Hancock, S., & Wilkinson-Sparks, T. (1996). Adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse: The case of Mormon women. *Affilia*, 11(1), 39-60.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/088610999601100104>

Adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse who are members of patriarchal religions face a particular challenge because church teaching and interactions with church members may present barriers to the full recognition and healing of their abuse. This article reports on a study of the experiences of 71 Mormon women survivors of abuse in their dealings with church leaders and the women's responses to these interactions.