

3.2.2.3.2.73 Over-reporting “sexual predators”

The legal systems of many countries should be modified so that the media can be held responsible for the damage they do by their reporting. This should include, but not be restricted to, inciting hatred and invading privacy.

Nowadays, any man who is convicted or even just suspected of having had sexual contact, even consensual sexual contact, with a person below legal age, is portrayed in the media as a monster.

Terms like “sexual predator” are no longer found in tabloids only but have made it into the vocabulary of conservative papers. They are no longer just used for men who have abused and murdered children. In some countries, they are common for men who have had consensual sex with a person below the age of 18.

And because the US and the UN internationally consider anybody below 18 uniformly as a child, the distinction between 7-year olds and 17-year olds somehow gets lost (tabloids don't want to diminish the emotional impact of a story on a sexual predator by citing prominently that a victim was, for example, a consenting 17-year old prostitute).

It appears that an ever increasing number of children that have been sexually molested are subsequently murdered, most commonly by strangulation. And when the perpetrators are caught, it surfaces that in most cases, the murder was not planned.

In most cases, a child abuser suddenly fears all the publicity he will get if his acts are reported to the police, which releases all details to the press, which definitely will treat the matter as front-page topic.

An abuser who fears the media frenzy more than the punishment may therefore decide to silence the witness (the abused child).

The media, with all the coverage about “sexual predators” and “monsters”, thus bears some responsibility for every sexually abused child that is subsequently strangled.

The media anyway doesn't play the theme for its deterring aspects, but plainly for commercial benefits. Sex sells.