

# Forensic Cognition: Theory, Research and Practice

[View Online](#)

What sort of thinking occurs in people who sexually molest children, rape adults, or commit acts of violence? Do these people think their actions are legitimate in some instances or do they know their actions are wrong but choose to offend nonetheless? Cognition, or thinking, is recognized as being a key component underlying the way people think and behave. Researchers and practitioners have spent endless time and resources investigating offenders' cognition, to shed light on offenders' antisocial behaviours. In this strongly research-based course, you will learn about some of the influential theories that have been developed to help explain offenders' antisocial actions, the latest cutting edge research designed to help understand why people offend, and widely used treatment programmes designed to alter cognitive characteristics associated with offending in order to reduce recidivism. This course will not be limited to offenders' cognition, however. You will also learn about fascinating social-cognitive phenomena associated with child and adult eyewitness testimony, and how memory can play havoc with the criminal justice system.

---

Abel, G. G., Becker, J. V., & Cunningham-Rathner, J. (1984). Complications, consent, and cognitions in sex between children and adults. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 7(1), 89-103.

[http://pmt-eu.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/44KEN\\_VU1:TN\\_sciversesciencedirect\\_elsevier0160-2527\(84\)90008-6](http://pmt-eu.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/44KEN_VU1:TN_sciversesciencedirect_elsevier0160-2527(84)90008-6)

Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, B. J. (2002). Human aggression. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 27-51.

[http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC\\_T\\_M&C=Annual Review of Psychology](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC_T_M&C=Annual Review of Psychology)

Arntz, A., & Jacob, G. (2013). *Schema therapy in practice: an introductory guide to the schema mode approach*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Beech, A., Fisher, D., & Ward, T. (2005). Sexual Murderers' Implicit Theories. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 20(11), 1366-1389. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260505278712>

Bindemann, M., Brown, C., Koyas, T., & Russ, A. (2012). Individual differences in face identification predict eyewitness accuracy. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, 1(2), 96-103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jarmac.2012.02.001>

Bles, M., & Haynes, J.-D. (2008). Detecting concealed information using brain-imaging technology. *Neurocase*, 14(1), 82-92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13554790801992784>

- Crick, N., and Dodge, & K. (1984). A Review and Reformulation of social information-processing mechanisms in children's social adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 115.
- Davies, G., & Griffiths, L. (2008). Eyewitness Identification and the English Courts: A Century of Trial and Error\*. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 15(3), 435–449. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13218710802101605>
- Evans, I. M. (2013). *How and why people change: foundations of psychological therapy* [Electronic resource]. Oxford University Press. <http://library.kent.ac.uk/cgi-bin/resources.cgi?url=https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/kentuk/detail.action?docID=1481005>
- Foa, E.B., Cascardi, M., Zoellner, L.A., & Feeny N.C. . (2000). Psychological and Environmental Factors Associated with Partner Violence. *Psychological and Environmental Factors Associated with Partner Violence*, 1(1).
- Gannon, T. A. (2009). Social cognition in violent and sexual offending: an overview. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 15(2–3), 97–118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10683160802190822>
- Gannon, T. A., & Polaschek, D. L. L. (2006). Cognitive distortions in child molesters: A re-examination of key theories and research. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 26, 1000–1019. [http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC\\_T\\_M&C=Clinical Psychology Review](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC_T_M&C=Clinical Psychology Review)
- Gannon, T.A., Polaschek, D.L.L. & Ward, & T. (2005). (2005). *Social Cognition and Sexual Offenders*. In *Social problem solving and offending: evidence, evaluation and evolution: Vol. Wiley series in forensic clinical psychology*. Wiley. <http://library.kent.ac.uk/cgi-bin/resources.cgi?url=http://www.kentuk.ebib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=239471>
- Gannon, Theresa A. (2007). *Aggressive offenders' cognition: theory, research, and practice: Vol. Wiley series in forensic clinical psychology*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Geer, J. H., Estupinan, L. A., & Manguno-Mire, G. M. (1999). Empathy, social skills, and other relevant cognitive processes in rapists and child molesters. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 5, 99–126. [http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=T\\_W\\_A&C=Aggression and Violent](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=T_W_A&C=Aggression and Violent)
- Gilchrist, E., Johnson, R., Takriti, R., Beech, A., Kebbell, M., Weston, & S. (n.d.). *Domestic Violent Offenders: Characteristics and Offending Related Needs (Findings No. 217)*.
- Gray, et al., N. S. (2005). An implicit test of the association between children and sex in pedophiles. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 114, 304–308. [http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC\\_T\\_M&C=Journal of Abnormal Psychology](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC_T_M&C=Journal of Abnormal Psychology)
- Holtzworth-Munroe, A. (2001). General and Spouse-specific anger and hostility in subtypes of maritally violent men and non-violent men. *Behavior Therapy*, 31(4), 603–630. [http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC\\_T\\_M&C=Behavior Therapy](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC_T_M&C=Behavior Therapy)

Holtzworth-Munroe, A., Meehan, J. C., Herron, K., Rehman, U., & Stuart, G. L. (2003). Do subtypes of maritally violent men continue to differ over time? *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 71(4), 728–740. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.71.4.728>

Huesmann, L. R. (1988). An information processing model for the development of aggression. *Aggressive Behavior*, 14, 13–24.  
[http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC\\_T\\_M&C=aggressive behavior](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC_T_M&C=aggressive%20behavior)

Ireland, J. L. (2009). Treatment approaches for violence and aggression: Essential content components. In J. L. Ireland, C. A. Ireland, & P. Birch (Eds.), *Violent and sexual offenders: Assessment, treatment and management* (pp. 153–178). Willan.

Kebbell, M. R. (2000). The law concerning the conduct of lineups in England and Wales: How well does it satisfy the recommendations of the American Psychology–Law Society? *Law and Human Behavior*, 24(3), 309–315. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005584020853>

Laws, D. Richard.; Thornton, D. (n.d.). *Cognitive Approaches to the Assessment of Sexual Interest in Sexual Offenders*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Marshall & W.L. (2001). Adult sexual offences against women. In *Handbook of offender assessment and treatment*. John Wiley.

Megreya, A. M., & Burton, A. M. (2008). Matching faces to photographs: Poor performance in eyewitness memory (without the memory). *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 14(4), 364–372. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013464>

Ó Ciardha, C., & Gannon, T. A. (2011). The cognitive distortions of child molesters are in need of treatment. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 17(2), 130–141.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13552600.2011.580573>

Ó Ciardha, C., & Ward, T. (2013a). Theories of Cognitive Distortions in Sexual Offending: What the Current Research Tells Us. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 14(1), 5–21.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838012467856>

Ó Ciardha, C., & Ward, T. (2013b). Theories of Cognitive Distortions in Sexual Offending: What the Current Research Tells Us. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 14(1), 5–21.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838012467856>

Polaschek, D. L. L., & Gannon, T. A. (2004). The implicit theories of rapists: What convicted offenders tell us. *Sexual Abuse*, 16, 299–315.  
[http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=T\\_W\\_A&C=Sexual Abuse](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=T_W_A&C=Sexual%20Abuse)

Sauerland, M., & Sporer, S. L. (2009). Fast and confident: Postdicting eyewitness identification accuracy in a field study. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 15(1), 46–62. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014560>

Shahinfar, A., Kupersmidt, J. B., & Matza, L. S. (2001). The relation between exposure to violence and social information processing among incarcerated adolescents. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 110(1), 136–141. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-843X.110.1.136>

Snowden, R. J., Craig, R. L., & Gray, N. S. (2011). Indirect Behavioral Measures of Cognition among Sexual Offenders. *Journal of Sex Research*, 48(2-3), 192-217.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2011.557750>

Thakker, J., Collie, R. M., & Gannon, T. A. (2008). Rape: assessment and treatment. In *Sexual deviance: theory, assessment, and treatment* (2nd edition, pp. 356-383). Guilford Press.

Ward, T., & Casey, A. (2010). Extending the mind into the world: A new theory of cognitive. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 15(1), 49-58.

[http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC\\_T\\_M&C=Aggression and Violent Behavior](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC_T_M&C=Aggression and Violent Behavior)

Ward, T., & Keenan, T. (1999). Child molesters' implicit theories. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 14(8), 821-838.

[http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC\\_T\\_M&C=Journal of Interpersonal Violence](http://df7sm3xp4s.search.serialssolutions.com/?V=1.0&N=100&L=DF7SM3XP4S&S=AC_T_M&C=Journal of Interpersonal Violence)

Wells, G. L., Memon, A., & Penrod, S. D. (2006). Eyewitness Evidence: Improving Its Probative Value. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 7(2), 45-75.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1529-1006.2006.00027.x>