APPENDIX A

SEXUAL OFFENDER ASSESSMENT MEASURES

# Abel and Becker Cognitions Scale

A 29 item self report questionnaire which is intended to assess the cognitive distortions of adults who commit sexual offenses against children. Although used quite frequently to assess maladaptive beliefs of child molesters, this scale was noted to be somewhat transparent and allowed for the possibility of a socially desirable response bias.

# Burt Rape Myth Scale

A scale used to assess cognitive distortions about adult rape victims that is also commonly used with sex offenders. Little is known about the discriminative validity of this scale and the face validity of the items suggests that it might be easy to guess what the “appropriate” answers are.

# Multiphasic Sex Inventory

This is a 300-item self-report questionnaire intended to assess many psychosexual characteristics of male sexual offenders. The test consists of twenty subscales and a portion of the test provides a sexual history.

# The Justifications Scale

This scale is intended to assess the degree to which an offender justifies his behavior by projecting blame onto others, or onto stressors in his environment. This scale is offense specific and does not assess general distortions about sexual abuse. It will not provide any useful information about those offenders who completely deny committing any sexual offense.

# Bumby MOLEST and RAPE scales

These scales contain derivations of the Abel and Becker Cognitions Scale and the Burt Rape Myth Scale, preventing a “neutral” or indifferent response. Preliminary investigation suggest that these scales are valid and reliable measures of the cognitive distortions of sex offenders and can discriminate between sex offenders and non-sex offenders.

Schlank A: Issues in the Assessment of Sexual Offenders’ Cognitive Distortions, in The Sex Offender-Theoretical Advances, Treating Special Populations and Legal Developments, Volume EEE (Editor: Barbara Schwartz), Civic Research Institute: Kingston, New Jersey, 1999

Sexual Violence Risk-20 (SVR-20) (Described by Campbell, 2000)

This risk assessment instrument directs users to assess recidivism risk for previously convicted sexual offenders by addressing 20 risk factors. Each factor is coded according to whether it is definitely present, possibly present, or not present. The manual advises evaluators to summarize their ratings into an overall risk rating of low, moderate, or high but does not give specific numbers corresponding to different risk levels.

Rapid Risk Assessment for Sexual Offender Recidivism (RRASOR)

Hanson (1997) has developed an actuarial formula for predicting sexual offender recidivism. Four variables remained that showed predictive accuracy:

1. Prior sexual arrests
2. Age (1=under 25 at time of release, 0=25 or older at time of release)
3. Ever targeted male victims
4. Whether any victims were unrelated to offenders.

The RRASOR had only a modest correlation with sexual offender recidivism (.27)

Risk Matrix 2000 (RM 2000):

Developed by Thornton and colleagues from the Structured Anchored Clinical Judgement-Minimum (SACJ-Min) an instrument widely used in the United Kingdom. The RM 2000 consists of two subscales: The RM Sexual (RM/S) and the RM Violence (RM/V), as well as providing a combined risk score.

STATIC-99 AND STATIC 99-R

Recently developed from the merger of a North American database and a British database. (The British tool was SACJ)

Performed better than the RRASOR in predicting both sexual offense recidivism and any type of sexual violent recidivism though not a statistically significant improvement. VRAG performs better than STATIC-99 for predicting violent recidivism.

This instrument considers non sexual offenses.

Does not consider dynamic factors, so it should not be used to select treatment targets, measure change, or evaluate whether offenders have benefited from treatment.

The Static 99-R has a slightly modified scoring system that takes into account older aged offenders and their decreased risk of recidivism.

Static-2002:

The Static-2002 was developed by Hanson and Thornton using 10 samples of sexual offenders (n >4,500). This instrument is a revision of the Static-99 that increased the number of items (13 vs. 10) and removed Marital Status from the scale. The Static 2002 is divided into five subscales.

Minnesota Sex Offenders Screening Tool (MnSOT)

This is an actuarial instrument with 21 items addressing sexual and nonsexual offense history, substance abuse history, and treatment compliance. Viewed at the present time as “experimental” and inter-rater reliabilities have not been identified.

Sexual Offender Risk Appraisal Guide (SORAG)

This is a 14-item actuarial instrument for assessing the recidivism risk of previously convicted sexual offenders. This instrument includes the PCL-R. Relies on phallometric assessment to determine “deviant sexual preferences.”

Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol (J-SOAP)

An actuarial scale for assessing risk among adolescent sexual abusers. This instrument is a checklist whose purpose is to aid in the systematic review of risk factors that have been identified in the professional literature as associated with sexual and criminal offending. It is designed to be used with boys who are ages 12 through 18 years old.

Screening Scale for Pedophilic Interests (SSPI) (Seto et al, 2005)

The Screening Scale for Pedophilic Interests is a brief measure of sexual attraction to prepubescent children that is based on victim characteristics. Has been shown to be significantly and positively correlated with both violent and sexual recidivism.

Violence Risk Scale: Sexual Offender Version (VRS:SO):

A sex offender risk-need assessment instrument which is designed to assess risk and measure change in risk using 7 static and 17 dynamic items, each rated on a 4-point (0, 1, 2, 3) scale. The VRS:SO was developed and validated on a sample of 321 sex offenders.