Summaries

Justitiële verkenningen (Judicial explorations) is published nine times a year by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice in cooperation with Boom Juridische uitgevers. Each issue focuses on a central theme related to judicial policy. The section Summaries contains abstracts of the internationally most relevant articles of each issue. The central theme of this issue (vol. 31, nr. 1, 2005) is Sexual delinquency.

How to protect society from sexual delinquents placed under TBS-order; a simple or complex question?
D.J. van Beek
Public safety is a big issue. Media and politicians play a major role in regulating the sentiments surrounding it. However most of the time it leads to simplistic, over generalized views of delinquents and victims and politically opportunistic solutions to a complex problem. On the other hand there is a lot of progress made in the forensic field in recognizing and dealing with dangerous delinquents and the view on delinquents and treatment needs has become more and more differentiated. In this article the authors argue that this divergent development will in the long run pose a threat to public safety. Treatment providers will be forced to prevent risk at all costs and further progress in the field will be hampered. The authors plead for convergence and strong cooperation to reach a common goal: the promotion of (realistic) public safety demands.

TBS; once a special, now a normal measure?
T.I. Oei
The author describes the social, clinical and financial causes of the strong increase of detainees under a hospital order in The Netherlands in the past twenty years. He observes that the sentence of detention under a hospital order (TBS) is pronounced more and more because of security motivations so that dangerous and mentally deranged criminals can be excluded from society for a long time. This has resulted in long waiting lists for TBS clinics as well as for so called longstay facilities. The expensive treatment facilities the TBS system offers are decreasingly tuned to the changing clinic’s population. The author points out that originally the TBS order was meant as a
A humane measure complementary to a prison sentence. He gives suggestions for measures that could lead to restoring this original purpose.

**The prevalence of sexual delinquency in the Netherlands in 1997-2003**
M. Brouwers and P.R. Smit

This article gives victimisation rates and police, prosecution and conviction statistics, as well as some characteristics of victims and offenders. An international comparison is made wherever possible. The sexual offences are (attempted) rape, indecent assault and sexual abuse of minors. From victim survey data the number of (attempted) rapes and indecent assaults is estimated to be 15,000 to 16,000 a year. Police-registrations show about 4,500 rapes and indecent assaults yearly, as well as some 2,500 instances of sexual abuse of minors. All sexual offences, but especially rape, are hard to prove: one in every four cases is dismissed by the prosecutor for lack of evidence and the court acquits 15% of the suspects brought before them. 55% of all cases end with some sanction, a third of those brought before the court with an unconditional prison sentence with an average length of 16 months.

**Fear of the big bad wolf; social responses to sexual abuse**
S. Bogaerts and S. Vanheule

It is very clear that we are living in dangerous times. Sex abuse hysteria is omnipresent. There is no question that many accusations of child sex abuse are true, however, some accusations are false. Human beings are amazingly suggestible and can, under proper circumstances, be brought to the point of believing anything. In this article, the authors hypothesise individual anxiety as the basic condition of mass hysteria. They use the Freudian concept 'das Unheimliche' to understand deeper feelings of anxiety. Das Unheimliche could be described as a twilight zone where fantasy and reality intertangle. The authors propose to reconsider in this context Freud’s essay on the uncanny, and how it might help us rethink our private and public responses to traumatizing images of the real.
The short sightedness of attitude research into interpersonal skills of pedosexual delinquents; too skilled or lacking in skills?
S. Bogaerts, A.L. Daalder and A.A.M. Essers
Traditional research emphasises interpersonal factors as influential factors in the aetiology of sexual behaviour. The present study criticizes traditional attitude research among sexual delinquents. The most important reason is the fact that current research only confirms what already has been examined in the past. There is a lack of substantial explanatory contribution to the aetiology of paedophilic deviant behaviour. Social and personal networks were introduced in this paper as an alternative point of view. A case-study (‘Piet’) was used to clarify the development of social networks. It was remarkable to find the replication or duplication of Piets’ social and personal network. Can we conclude that paedophiles possess the same interpersonal qualities as normal people or must we consider the existence of a pervert system?

The effectiveness of sex offender treatment; an overview of international literature
V.Veen and C. de Ruiter
The effectiveness of sex offender treatment is discussed on the basis of a review of the international literature. Several meta-analyses demonstrate that promising interventions target criminogenic needs of sex offenders, such as impulsivity and deviant sexual preferences. Inpatient as well as outpatient interventions, and cognitive-behavioural as well as pharmacotherapeutic interventions seem effective in reducing sexual recidivism. The current research base suffers from a number of methodological shortcomings, so definite conclusions regarding the effectiveness of specific interventions with subgroups of sex offenders could not be drawn.

Juvenile sex offenders; learn young, learn fair?
C. Bijleveld and J. Hendriks
Juvenile sex offenders are a homogeneous group. Based on the available literature and their own research, the authors show that not more than half of adult sex offenders are known to have committed sex offences previously. Juvenile sex offending is therefore not a necessary condition for adult sex offending. Secondly, they show that an in all likelihood smaller proportion of juvenile sex offenders reoffend to new sex offences. It has by now been well documented that certain
risk factors predispose to sexual reoffending, with well-established risk factors being paraphilia, social isolation and the choice of a stranger victim. The authors argue that typologies are necessary for assessing risk factors for reoffending. Much better data and many more studies are needed to authoritatively answer the questions that this article addresses.

Juvenile sex offenders and non-sex violent offenders; a comparison on the basis of the Pittsburgh Youth Study
A.Ph. van Wijk, R. Loeber, H. Ferwerda, A. Smulders and R. Vermeiren
An unresolved but important issue in the literature on juvenile delinquency is to what extent juvenile sex offenders resemble non-sex offenders with respect to individual-, family, peer- and demographic characteristics. Data from a prospective longitudinal study (Pittsburgh Youth Study) were used in order to compare sex and non-sex violent offenders on a large number of risk factors. The findings show that the sex offenders resembled the violent offenders on almost all risk factors. Some references are made with regard to future research in the Netherlands.