

# Reaching the Redemption Threshold

# Outline

- What is the Redemption Threshold?
- What proportion of Sexual Offenders reach the redemption threshold at the time of sentence?
- Can time-free in the Community without sexual offending lead a sexual offender to reach the redemption threshold?
- Can aging lead a sexual offender to reach the redemption threshold?
- Can treatment response lead a sexual offender to reach the redemption threshold?

# What is the Redemption Threshold?

- Why do we manage known sexual offenders differently from offenders released from prison who have no known history of sexual offending?
  - The social policy reason is because we expect the ones with a known history of sexual offending to be more likely to commit sexual offenses in the future
  - We may also have other motives: hostility; wish to punish etc.
- The Redemption Threshold is the level of risk for future sexual offending that is comparable to that of non-sexual offenders released from prison
- Called “Redemption Threshold” because from a social policy sense it is irrational to manage persons with a known history of sexual offending differently when their risk for sexual offending is comparable that of non-sexual offenders

# It is worth attending to our use of language here

- Person known to have committed a sexual offense at some point in their past

Vs

- Sexual Offender
- The latter term implies a continuing tendency to commit sexual offenses

# Empirical Estimates of the Redemption Threshold

- Kahn presented data showing this to be a little above 1% over a five-year follow up.
- I am going to treat the threshold as 2% because
  - Most of Kahn's data sets would have only counted someone as committing a sexual offense if they had been convicted while studies of known sexual offenders often use Charges
  - Re-offending by known sexual offenders is probably more easily detected than “out of the blue” offenses
  - 2% is close enough to be “comparable”
- So I am going to be looking at whether five-year recidivism rates fall to 2% or less

# What percentage of known sexual offenders start at or below the Redemption Threshold?

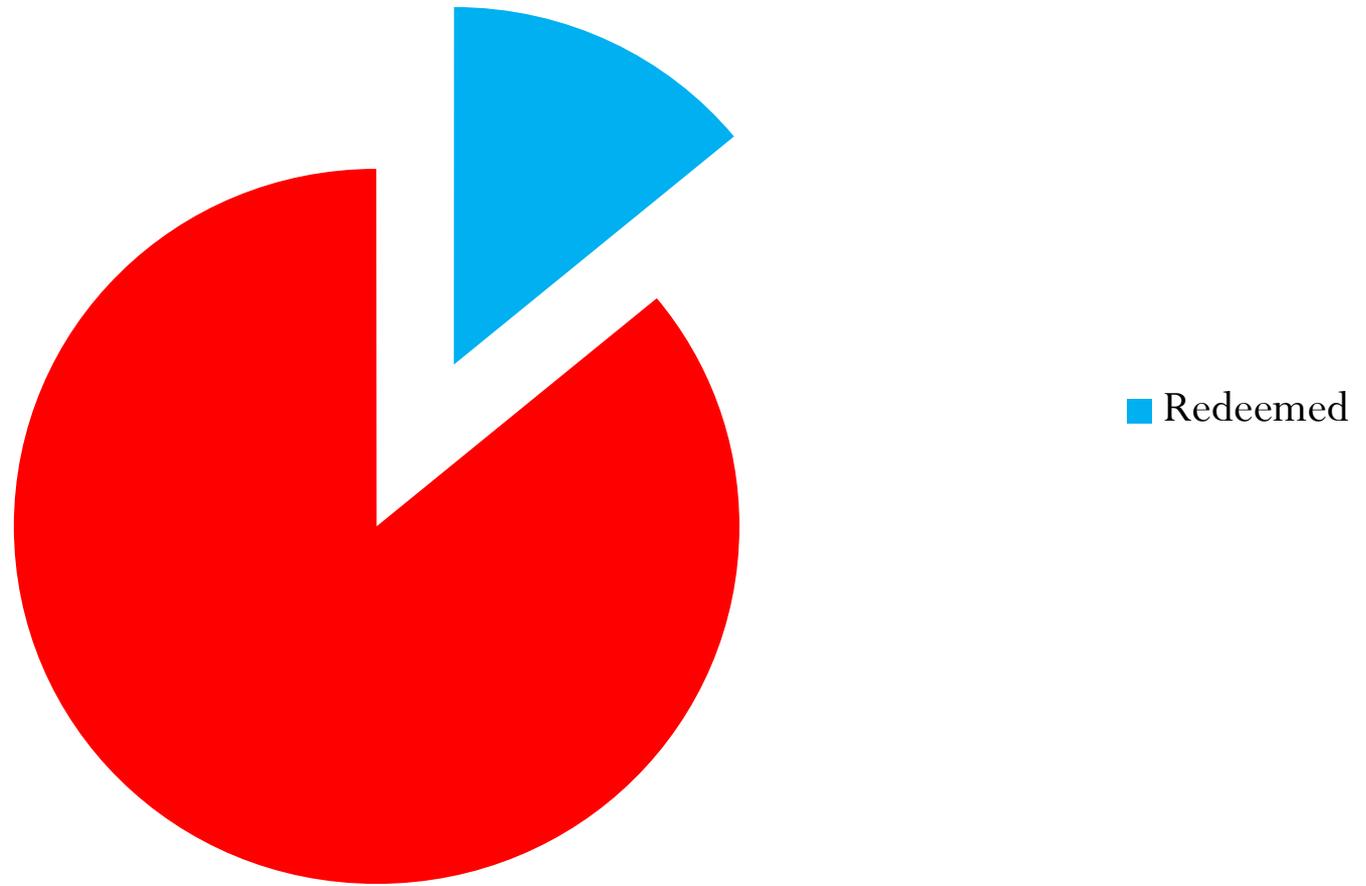
- 2015 Static-99R Routine Norms (from the Evaluators Workbook)

[www.static99.org](http://www.static99.org)

- 14% of the population of known sexual offenders have scores of -1 or less
- About one in seven

Score	5-Year Recidivism
-3	0.9
-2	1.3
-1	1.9
0	2.8
1	3.9
2	5.6
3	7.9

# Proportion of Sex Offenders Meeting Redemption Threshold on Release



# So are there ways that more can be redeemed?

- What about the individual who lives in the community for a long time without known sexual offending
  - Does his risk stay the same regardless of time free in the community without sexual offending (the ticking time bomb; Hannibal Lecter biding his time)?
  - Or does his risk steadily decline the longer he is in the community?
- There are two theoretical reasons for expecting his risk to decline
  - Winnowing – the riskier guys reoffend more often and then are removed from the community, leaving on average a less risky population
  - Building prosocial resources – the struggle to live in a law-abiding way steadily creates resources which makes this easier

# Time Free without Known Sexual Offending

- Hanson, R.K., Harris, A.J.R., Helmus, L., & Thornton, D. (2014) High-risk sex offenders may not be high risk for ever. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, published online 24 March 2014. DOI: 10.1177/0886260514526062
- Aggregated 7,740 sexual offenders from 21 samples
- Results indicate that risk falls steadily the longer sexual offenders are in the community without known sexual offending.
- Overall risk roughly halves for every five years offenders are in the community without reoffending, but the rate varies a bit depending on initial risk level
- So how does this apply to those offenders who are close to the redemption threshold (moderate initial risk)?

	Sample Size at Start of Follow-up	Initial 5-Year Recidivism Rate (Years 1-5)		Relative Rate After 5 Years Offense-Free (Years 6-10)		Relative Rate After 10 Years Offense-Free (Years 11-15)	
		%	( <i>n</i> )	Risk Ratio	( <i>n</i> )	Risk Ratio	( <i>n</i> )
Complete sample	7,740	10.1	(4,735)	0.46	(1,847)	0.28	(755)

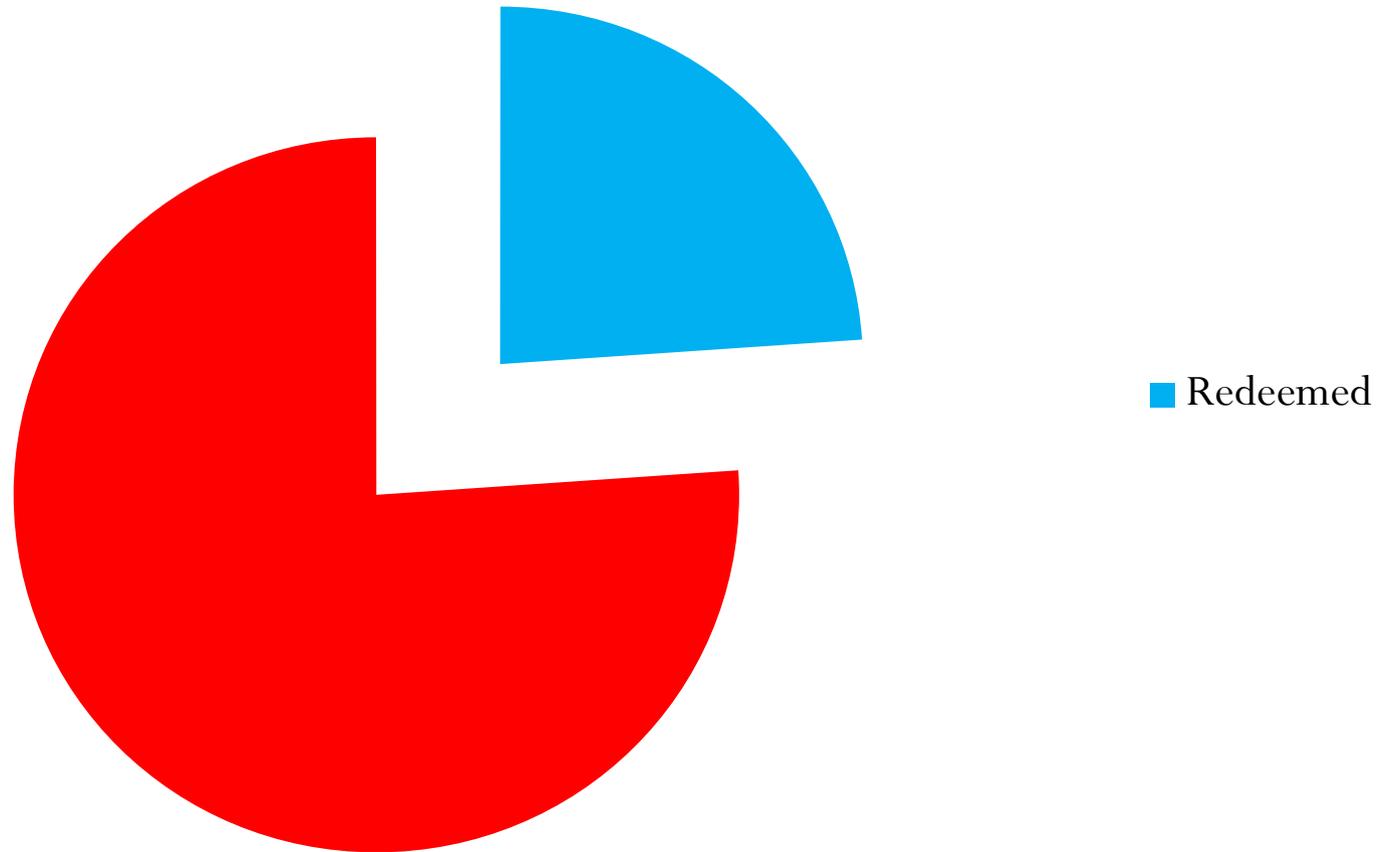
- For those with moderate risk scores (0 to 4)
  - After five years free of sex offenses, risk falls to 0.59 of risk in the first 5 years
  - After ten years free of sex offenses, risk falls to 0.39 of risk in the first 5 years
- Let's apply these adjustments to the Static-99R recidivism norms

<b>Static-99R Score</b>	<b>Initial Recidivism Estimate</b>	<b>After 5-Years sex offense free</b>	<b>After 10-years sex offense free</b>
0	2.8%	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
1	3.9%	2.3%	<b>1.5%</b>
2	5.6%	3.3%	2.2%
3	7.9%	4.7%	3.1%
4	11.0%	6.5%	4.3%

# So after 5-years Sex Offense Free

- Those with a Static-99R score of 0 reach the Redemption Threshold
- 23.9% of the known sexual offender population would have reached the threshold by that time (those with scores lower than 0 now joined by those with a score of zero who had been in the community for 5 years)
- Nearly a quarter

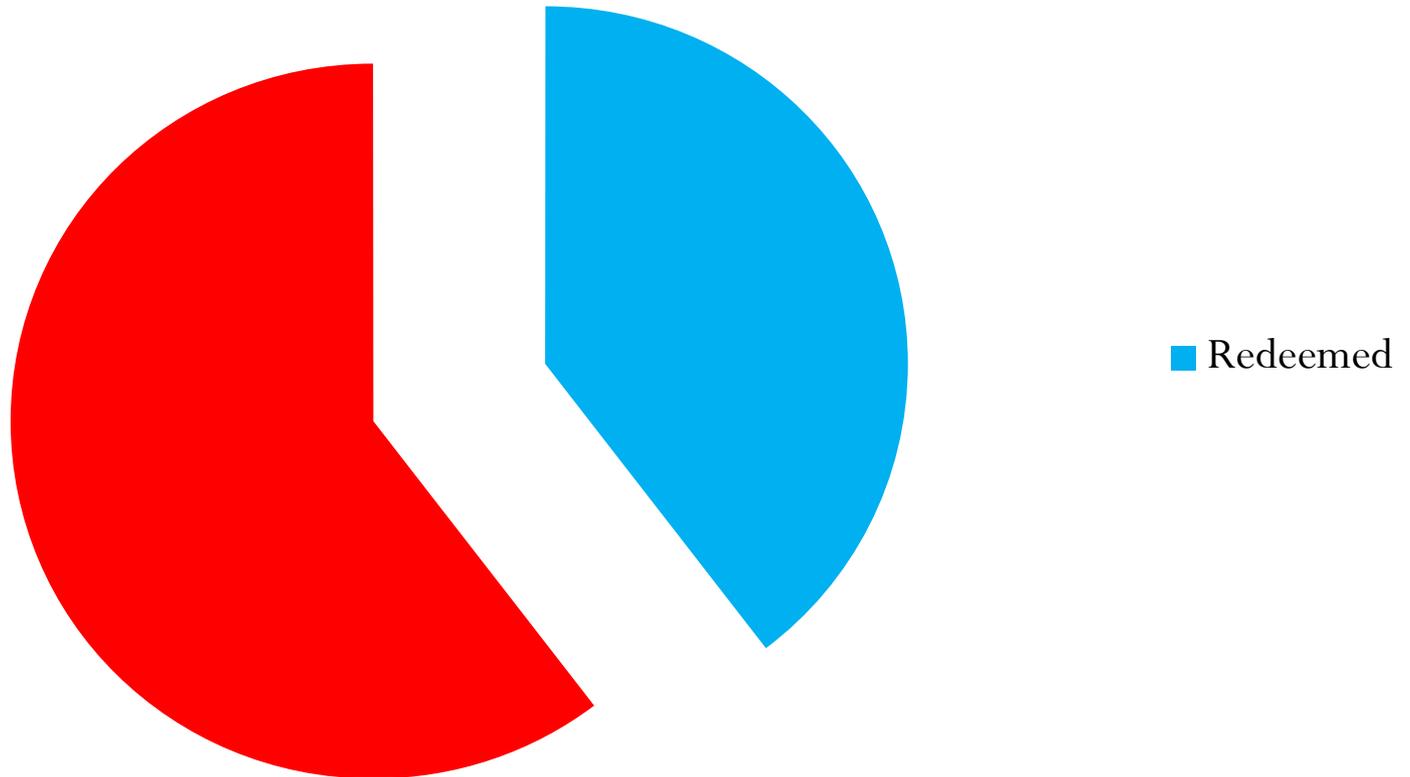
# Proportion of Sex Offenders Meeting Redemption Threshold after 5 Years



# After 10 years Sex Offense Free

- Those with a Static-99R score of 1 or lower now reach the Redemption Threshold
- 39.6% of the known sexual offender population
- About four in ten

# Proportion of Sex Offenders Meeting Redemption Threshold after 10 Years



# Aging

- America presently gives longer prison sentences to offenders than do most other countries
- Norway vs America

- It is not uncommon for sexual offenders here to spend 10 years in prison while in the international normative data set for the Static-99R spending 2 years in prison was typical

## National Corrections Reporting Program: Bonczar (2009): First Releases from State Prisons (Male Sexual Offenders)

	<i>Mean time served in prison</i>
Rape	92 months
Other Sexual Assaults	51 months

## Lets consider those who served 10+ Years

- This population is materially older at the time of release than they would have been in a pre-sentence assessment
- Does this aging potentially move people into the Redemption zone?

# Aging

- A person might have a particular Static-99R risk at sentence but given long and/or indeterminate sentences may appropriately receive a different risk score as they age
- Age-related risk points on Static-99R are as follows
  - 18-34.9 = +1
  - 35 -39.9 = 0
  - 40 - 59.9 = -1
  - 60+ = -3
- Assuming that in an “aid to sentencing” assessment the individual was given a particular static score and then spent 10 years in custody before being released. His Static-99R score would now fall materially.
- Let’s suppose initial scores are distributed like the overall population of sexual offenders, how will the proportion redeemed be affected by aging in custody?
- Note: the effect will vary depending on his age at sentencing

# For Offender aged 27 at sentence

S99R at Sentence	Expected Recidivism	S99R when released after 10 yrs	Expected Recidivism
0	2.8	-1	<b>1.9</b>
1	3.9	0	2.8
2	5.6	1	3.9
3	7.9	2	5.6
4	11.0	3	7.9

# For Offender aged 33 at sentence

S99R at Sentence	Expected Recidivism	S99R when released after 10 yrs	Expected Recidivism
0	2.8	-2	<b>1.3</b>
1	3.9	-1	<b>1.9</b>
2	5.6	0	2.8
3	7.9	1	3.9
4	11.0	2	5.5

# For Offender aged 43 at sentence

S99R at Sentence	Expected Recidivism	S99R when released after 10 yrs	Expected Recidivism
0	2.8	0	2.8
1	3.9	1	3.9
2	5.6	2	5.6
3	7.9	3	7.9
4	11.0	4	11.0

# For Offender aged 53 at sentence

S99R at Sentence	Expected Recidivism	S99R when released after 10 yrs	Expected Recidivism
0	2.8	-2	<b>1.3</b>
1	3.9	-1	<b>1.9</b>
2	5.6	0	2.8
3	7.9	1	3.9
4	11.0	2	5.5

# Consequences of Aging Custody

- Depend on age the offender was at sentence, spending 10 years in custody can
- Reduce score by 0, 1 or 2 points
- Which will make no difference , or take those who were initially a 0, or initially a 0 or a 1, below the redemption threshold
- These scores are well populated in representative sexual offender populations (10% score a 0 and 16% score a 1)
- So a shift of 2 points can pretty well double the proportion redeemed (from 14% to 30%)

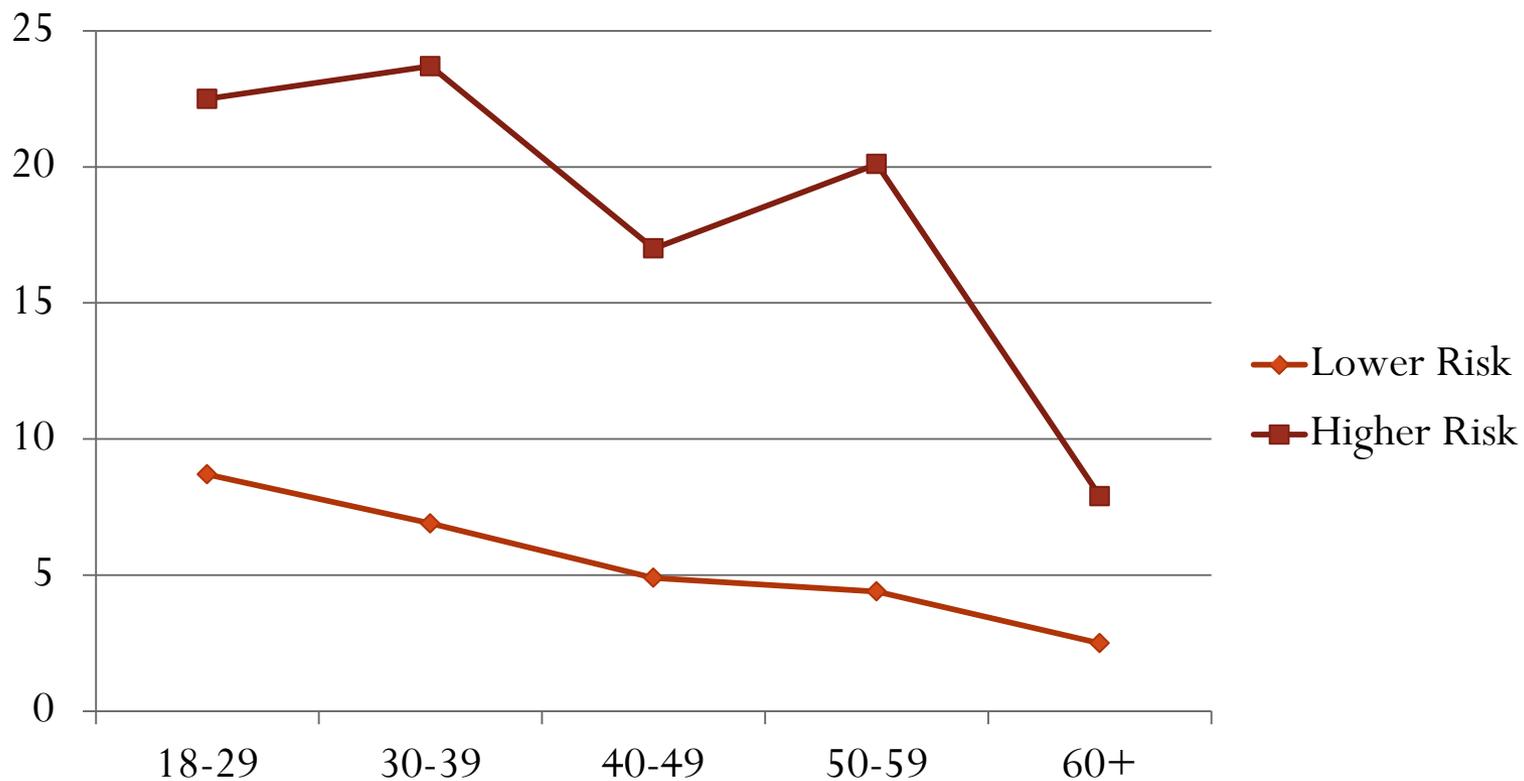
# You may be wondering whether risk really declines so abruptly at 60

- Cases (from the Static-99R normative data set) categorized by number of points from non-age Static items
- Then split into a lower risk (scores up to 4) group and a higher risk group (scores 5+)
- Tabulated the 5-year sexual recidivism group by age

# Non-Age Risk Scores and Ns

<b>Age at Release</b>	<b>Lower Non-Age Risk</b>		<b>Higher Non-Age Risk</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Risk Score</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Risk Score</b>
18-29	1064	2.1	748	5.0
30-39	1582	1.7	881	5.4
40-49	1320	1.5	616	5.5
50-59	679	1.4	259	5.6
60+	396	1.3	114	5.8

# Recidivism by Age for Lower and Higher Non-Age Static Risk Groups



# Aging and Sexual Deviance

- A common question is whether aging really makes a difference for those with a high level of sexual deviance
- Perhaps it is only really affecting antisocial rapists?
- Advocates of this view have often used RRASOR as a way of indexing sexual deviance with scores of 4+ being taken as particularly indicative
- The next slide shows 5-year sexual recidivism rates broken down by RRASOR score and whether or not the person was aged 60+ at release
- The sample is the combined Static-99 sample (all sample types)

# Older age seems to at least halve the risk regardless of sexual deviance

RRASOR Score	0	1	2	3	4+
Young (under 60)	3.9% (1357)	7.2% (2137)	13.2% (1464)	21.9% (721)	29.2% (599)
Old (60+)	0.8% (118)	3.8% (160)	2.5% (80)	3.6% (28)	12.2% (55)

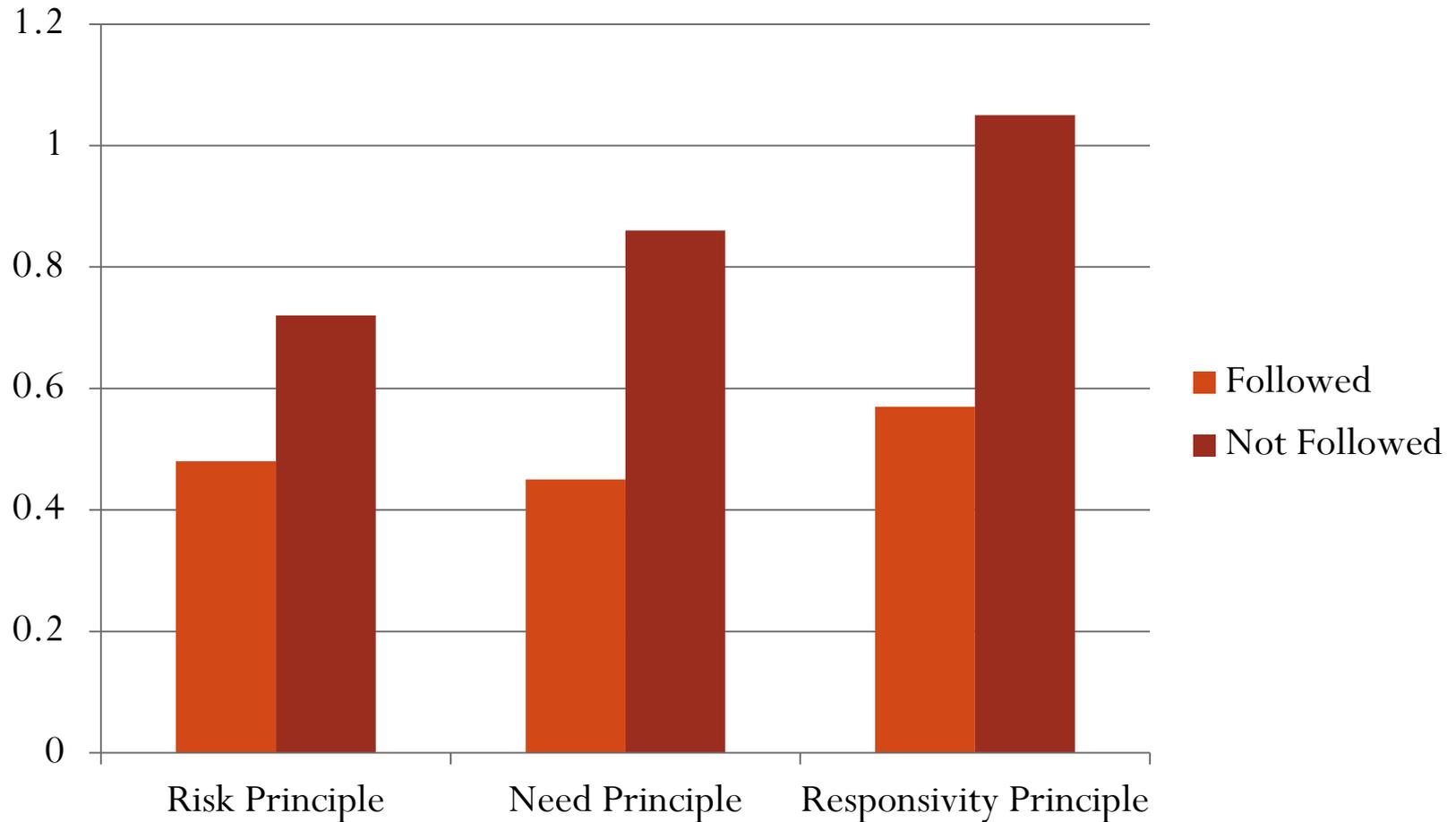
# What about treatment?

- Aging is something that happens anyway, regardless of attempts to change
- What about deliberately attempting to reduce risk through treatment
- Can treatment lead to redemption?

# It depends on the treatment

- Hanson, R.K., Bourgon, G., Helmus, L., & Hodgson, S. (2009) The principles of effective correctional treatment also apply to sexual offenders: a meta-analysis. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 36, 865-891.
- Risk Principle
  - Make treatment intensity proportionate to risk
- Need Principle
  - Target social and psychological risk factors
- Responsivity Principle
  - Use methods appropriate to motivational and learning style

# Treatment Group Recidivism as a proportion of Control Group Recidivism



# And it depends on how the individual responds to treatment

- A useful way to conceptualize this is with some version of the stages of change model and/or MI
  - Does he recognize that factors that contributed to his sex offending are a problem?
  - How important/urgent does he think it is to change them?
  - Does he believe he can change them?
  - Is he working to change them and having some success?
  - How reliably regulated?

# Response to Treatment

- Recently research with the VRS-SO has been able to measure response to treatment and quantify its effect on recidivism.
- Logistic regression has been used to model the effect of different degrees of treatment response
- Mundt's calculator operationalizes this
- Let's explore how plausible levels of treatment response might move people over the redemption threshold

# Treatment Change and Redemption

Static-99R Score	PreTx Dyn	Change	5-yr Recid
0	14 (Low)	0 (No Change)	3.2%
		4 (Average Change)	<b>1.9%</b>
		8 (Large Change)	<b>1.1%</b>
	21 (Moderate)	0 (No Change)	4.8%
		4 (Average Change)	2.9%
		8 (Large Change)	<b>1.7%</b>
1	14 (Low)	0 (No Change)	4.1%
		4 (Average Change)	2.4%
		8 (Large Change)	<b>1.7%</b>
	21 Moderate	0 (No Change)	6.1%
		4 (Average Change)	3.7%
		8 (Large Change)	2.2%

- The person has to be relatively close to the threshold for them to reach redemption based on treatment
- Large amounts of treatment change can bring scores of 0 or 1 down to the redemption threshold
- Typical amounts of treatment change can bring a score of 0 down to the redemption threshold
- These scores are well populated in representative sexual offender populations (10% score a 0 and 16% score a 1)
- So a shift of 2 points can pretty well double the proportion redeemed (from 14% to 30%)

# Do these effects stack?

- If you combine 10 years aging and treatment completion do you get twice the effect
- What about if you add time in the community without reoffending?

- There is no reason why they shouldn't stack
- Mundt's Calculator can be used to explore some combinations here
- Let's take some combinations that are close to the Redemption Threshold after treatment, but don't quite make it, does 5-years offense-free get them there?
  - Static-99R = 0; Moderate PreTx Dyn; Average Change
  - Static-99R = 1; Low PreTx Dyn; Average Change
  - Static-99R = 1; Moderate PreTx Dyn; Low Change
- We can explore this because we have 5 and 10 yr rates for the same cases and with a little arithmetic can work out what the risk in the second five years is if the person did not recidivate in the first five years

# 5 Year Sexual Recidivism Rates

Static-99R	PreTxDyn	Change	First 5 Yrs	After 5 yrs Offense-Free
0	Moderate	Average	2.9%	<b>1.9%</b>
1	Low	Average	2.4%	<b>1.6%</b>
1	Moderate	Large Change	2.2%	<b>1.4%</b>

- So, these effects do stack – you can add one to another for a larger combined effect
- Remembering that about 40% of known sex offenders can reach the redemption threshold based on one of these factors we can very conservatively suggest that by combining
  - Aging
  - 5 years time free
  - Good Treatment Response
- A majority of known sexual offenders can eventually reach the redemption threshold