

Bushfire Arson: A Review Of The Literature

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A Comparison of Psychopathology and Reoffending in Female and Male Convicted Firesetters

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Little is known about the psychopathological or criminal history characteristics of female firesetters, or how often women reoffend by firesetting. The current study is one of the few large-scale longitudinal investigations to compare key psychiatric and offending variables in female and male firesetters who are not incarcerated or known to be mentally disordered. In addition, the study aimed to identify the base rate of recidivism for female firesetters compared with males. The study compared all 143 female and 909 male firesetters convicted of arson and fire-related offenses between 2000 and 2009 in Victoria, Australia. The study employed a data linkage approach to compare the psychiatric and criminal histories of participants and reoffending in the sample. Firesetters of both sexes reoffended by firesetting at similar rates (males 5.1%, females 7.0%), and reoffenders shared many characteristics. Compared with male firesetters, female firesetters were found to be less criminally versatile, to have offended less overall, and were less likely to have violent offenses. Females were more often diagnosed with depression, substance misuse, and personality disorder than men. The findings indicate that female firesetters might be suitable for assessment approaches and treatment programs offered to men, but tailored to take account of the personality and psychopathological characteristics seen more often in this group.

Public Significance Statement

Female firesetters have higher rates of depression, substance misuse, and personality disorder than male firesetters, but were no more likely to reoffend with firesetting, and their prior offense profiles were not grossly dissimilar. Clinicians need to conduct gender-sensitive assessments, taking psychopathological factors into account.

Keywords: female offenders, firesetting, arson, reoffending, mental illness

Deliberate firesetting contributes to a huge economic and social burden (Home Office, 2007; Rollings, 2008) and, while it appears that the majority of firesetters are male, a significant proportion of deliberate firesetting is female perpetration (Gannon, 2010; non, 2010). Despite this, little is known about female-perpetrated firesetting, either the extent of the problem or the characteristics of females who set fires. Early academic depictions of firesetters described pathological firesetting as the exclusive domain of hysterical female adolescents (Barker, 1994; Geller, 1992; Lewis & Yarnell, 1951). However, it is clear from examination of the more recent research literature that, like most offenders, firesetters are predominantly male. Within the broader firesetting literature, there are definitional inconsistencies in how offenders are classified (arson vs. firesetting) and how recidivism is defined. These issues are compounded in the small literature on female-firesetters, which

is replete with contradictory findings and weak methodologies, including small sample sizes and the absence of comparison groups (Gannon, 2010). The current study seeks to develop this literature by describing the characteristics of the population of all females convicted of arson and fire-related offenses in Victoria, Australia between 2000 and 2009, comparing them with the same cohort of male arsonists on offending and psychiatric variables, and establishing the base rate of recidivism in the two groups. *Firesetting* is used to refer to the deliberate act of setting a fire, and may be unadjudicated, while the term *arson* is a legal term to describe a specific criminal act, which may vary across jurisdictions. The sample discussed in this paper includes individuals convicted of arson and other fire-related offenses. Therefore, we will use the broader term *firesetting* to describe all participants' behaviors.

Individual differences between male and female offenders have been well-documented in the wider offender literature. Generally, when compared with male counterparts, females have lower rates of perpetration of and conviction for violent offenses (de Vogel & Robbe, 2012; Linaker, 2000), stalking (Churcher & Nesca, 2013; Strand & McEwan, 2012), and sexual offending (Logan, 2008), as well as other offense types. While offender risk assessment instruments have been shown to be predictive of both male and female recidivism (Andrews et al., 2012; Devapriam, Lammata, Singh, Collasott, & Bhumik, 2007; Nicholls, Ogloff, & Douglas, 2004),

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The report considers the impacts of deliberately lit bushfires and looks at issues around prevention of bushfire arson and treatment of arson offenders. Online Credit Card Fraud against Small Businesses, Kate Charlton and Natalie Taylor, No. Bushfire Arson: A Review of the Literature, Matthew Willis. Bushfire arson: a review of the literature /? Matthew Willis. Author. Willis, Matthew, Other Authors. Australian Institute of Criminology; Australian Capital. Title: Bushfire arson: a review of the literature /; Contributor Names: Willis, Matthew ; Created / Published: Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. In reviewing previous studies of arson, Matthew Willis examines the motives and profiles of arsonists (particularly children and firefighters), the. Bushfire Arson by Matthew Willis, , available at Book Depository with free delivery Bushfire Arson: A Review of the Literature. Premier of NSW requested the Attorney General review the offences and penalties 22 Willis Bushfire Arson: A review of the Literature Pp 37, The offence of bushfire arson can be deliberate, but has evolved to entail those it is difficult to know exactly how much bushfire arson costs the Australian community, but arson of all .. Bushfire arson: a review of the literature. (Bushfire CrC. Fire Bugged. Bushfire arson now and beyond. Matthew Willis Bushfire CRC Ltd. carene-moto.com / topics / arson Arson . A review of the literature. P. Collins, Burn: The Epic Story of the Bushfire in Australia (; Melbourne: See M. Willis, Bushfire Arson: A Review of the Literature, Research and Public. Causal factors in New South Wales investigated bushfires. Part 1: deliberate fires . Bushfire Arson Bulletin No. Bushfire arson: a review of the literature. Milovanovic, S. () Online hate mail threat to arson case. The Age, 17 Willis, M. () Bushfire Arson: A Review of the Literature. Australian Institute of. While much of the existing literature focuses on structural arson, current This review highlights the current gaps in knowledge and shows that. This paper will attempt to review the significant literature on firesetting behavior in references to fire symbols such as Sun gods, the burning bush, fire rituals. Community fire safety at the urban/rural interface: the bushfire risk. Fire .. Willis M (). Bushfire arson: a review of the literature. Research. Community attitudes towards reporting bushfire arson to Crime Stoppers in missioned a full review of the global scientific literature on crime reporting and. Bushfire Arson: A Review Of The Literature by Matthew Willis ; Australian Institute of Criminology. Infopunt Veiligheid - Website Bushfire Arson the Beerburum.

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