

by Diane Dimond
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Penn State's Next Battle: More Sandusky Accusers Come Forward

Three new accusers reportedly date Jerry Sandusky's abuse back to the '70s. Diane Dimond on why more victims are sure to emerge—and how cops can tell if they're just cashing in.

It comes as absolutely no surprise to anyone that three more men have reportedly surfaced to accuse Jerry Sandusky of abusing them when they were children in the '70s and '80s. If their stories are true, these men represent the earliest known cases against the former Penn State coach, who would have been in his 20s at the time.

Former Penn State University assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky, center, leaves the Centre County Courthouse after being found guilty of multiple charges of child sexual abuse in Bellefonte, Penn.

Sandusky joined the Penn State's football coaching staff in 1969. He started his Second Mile charity in 1977; because he had such ready access to children for so many years, mental-health experts who work with survivors of childhood abuse predict this latest trio of alleged victims may be just the tip of the iceberg. They warn authorities to gird themselves for the possibility that many more men could surface.

"It makes sense to me that they would come forward now," Dr. Eileen Treacy of New York's Lehman College told The Daily Beast, "because they feel validated [by the guilty verdicts]." As a 30-year-veteran working in the child development and sexual abuse fields, Treacy said it's not unusual for childhood victims—especially males—to keep the pedophile's secret for many years. Some go an entire lifetime never telling anyone.

There is keen skepticism, however, that following the highly publicized and graphically reported Sandusky trial, there could be what experts call "Polly Parroting" of abuse stories told by those whose goal is to cash in on any Penn State financial settlement. Dr. Treacy says she shares in that worry.

(Under Pennsylvania's statute of limitations law, anyone over 30 is "statute barred" from filing a civil suit stemming from childhood sexual abuse. Anyone claiming victimization back in the '70s or '80s would only benefit financially if Penn State includes them in any settlement.)

"My job is to be impartial," Treacy said. "There are certain dynamics and clues that we have to determine whether an old story is legit or not." What psychologists and trained therapists look for are unique facts that give a story its authenticity.

"If you see someone Polly Parroting, you can tell," Treacy explained. "You are looking for idiosyncratic details and that tends to be sensory. [Legitimate accusers] remember specific sights, sounds, smells or something tactical." These memories—the color of a bedspread, markings on the attacker's body or the sound of a nearby train whistle—can then be verified by law enforcement.

During the Sandusky criminal trial, for example, victim No. 5 remembered exactly how many shower heads were in the Penn State locker room. Two other witnesses described in uncomfortable detail the scratchy feel of Sandusky's chest hair against their naked, soapy bodies. One young man admitted to this day he is "repulsed by

chest hair.”

“No word yet from Penn State. None.”

All of the accusers remembered the feel of Sandusky’s big hand on their left knee as he drove them in his car. Although making no public statements, the Penn State board of trustees apparently continues to grapple with the architecture of a compensation program to respond to both proven and alleged victims. Mindful that the prosecution once filed court papers referring to victims No.’s 11 to 19—and remembering that as the jury deliberated, Sandusky’s adopted son, Matt, accused his father of molesting him too—the Penn State board surely realizes there are many costly civil suits on the horizon.

Well, my phone is on and the receptionist is here from 8:30 to 5:30,” attorney [Tom Kline](#), the representative of victim No. 5, said with a sigh. “They know my email address. But no word yet from Penn state. None.” Kline says he’s sure his phone is working because he’s heard from, “a number of other individuals seeking representation” in the Sandusky matter.

Some survivors’ attorneys, who did not want to be quoted by name, believe Penn State will announce some sort of compensation program before Sandusky is sentenced in September.

In the meantime, the slow drip of bad news for Penn State continues like Chinese water torture. NCAA President Mark Emmert says the university still faces the harshest sanction possible—imposition of the so-called death penalty on its \$50 million football program. “Nothing is off the table,” Emmert said during an interview on PBS.

And, something better be decided soon about whether to allow the bronze statue of fired head football coach Joe Paterno, who according to the results of an independent investigation released last week, was negligent in reporting allegations against Sandusky, to remain on campus. On Tuesday, a small plane flying over the campus carried an ominous banner that read, “Take the statue down or we will.” It’s unclear who was behind the stunt.

“I fear that statue may come down Saddam Hussein–style,” attorney Kline said.