



# Paraphilias

## Psychology 311 Abnormal Psychology

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### Overview

- Are a group of disorders involving
  - Sexual attraction to unusual objects
  - Sexual activities that are unusual in nature
- Includes
  - Fantasies
  - Urges
  - Behaviors
  - Must last 6 months
  - Must cause significant distress or impairment
- Anyone can have occasional unusual fantasy
- Must be 6 months and stressful to be considered a disorder

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### Issues Regarding the Category

- Considerable debate
  - Many people with paraphilias are not distressed or impaired
- Example
  - Person who has repeated sex with young children and is not distressed or impaired cannot be diagnosed as having pedophilia according to DSM criteria
- Difficult to ascertain how many people have the disorder
  - Greatly underreported
  - More males than females

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### Many Disorders

- Fetishism
- Transvestic Fetishism
- Pedophilia and Incest
- Voyeurism
- Exhibitionism
- Frotteurism
- Sexual Sadism/Masochism

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### Fetishism

- Usually occurs in males
- Requires an innate object for sexual arousal
- Recurrent and intense sexual urges to nonliving object
- Presence of object is strongly preferred or even necessary for arousal

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### Many types of Items

- Underpants
  - Most common item
- Feet
- Shoes
- Sheer Stockings
- Rubber Products
- Raincoats
- Gloves
- Toilet Articles
- Furs

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### Issues

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- May play with items in private or ask a mate to participate with them
  - Have been known to commit burglary week after week to add to their hoard
  - Attraction has a compulsive quality
  - Is involuntary and irresistible

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### Degree of Erotic Focalization

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- Example heterosexual
  - Men like high heels and jeans
  - Man with a boot fetish must see or touch a boot to be aroused, and arousal is overwhelming
- Usually begins in adolescence and have other disorders
  - Pedophilia
  - Sadism
  - Masochism

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### Transvestic Fetishism

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- Usually a man sexually aroused by dressing in a woman's clothes
  - Still regards self as a man
- Usually begins as partial-cross-dressing in childhood
- Heterosexuals always males
  - Tend to be masculine in
    - Appearance
    - Demeanor
    - Sexual Preference
- Many are married, with family, dress in secret

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### Transvestic Fetishism

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- Criteria for distress and disability do not fit this disorder at all
- Is typically connected with masochism

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### Pedophilia

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- Adults who derive sexual gratification through physical/sexual contact with prepuberty children unrelated to them
- Research does not support the DSM's prepuberty child
  - Some victimize any children under the legal age of consent
- More frequent in men than women
- Often connected to mood, anxiety disorders and substance abuse
- Person can be heterosexual or homosexual

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### Related issues

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- Internet plays a big role
  - Acquire child pornography and contact potential victims
- Governments and organizations play a role too
  - Netherlands
    - 12 Years old is age of consent
  - NAMBLA and similar organizations

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### North American Man-Boy Love Association

- Contends all people should be able to engage in consensual sexual relationships
- Oppose sexual laws merely based on age
- Condemns all coercive or non-consensual acts, sexual or otherwise, between people of any age.
  
- Problem, many people use NAMBLA to develop contacts
  
- Also has a Women's Group as well
- Women's Auxiliary of NAMBLA
  - For Women and Girls

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### Incest

- Listed as a subtype of Pedophilia
- Sexual relations between close relatives for whom marriage is forbidden
- Is a universal taboo
  - Except for Egyptian Pharaohs
  - Did not want contamination of royal blood from outsiders
  - Taboo is important
    - Would provide two recessive genes and increase birth defects

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### Sociologically

- Is typically patriarchal
  - Parents tend to neglect and be emotionally distant
  - Mother is absent or disabled
- ½ of all child molestations are committed by adolescent males
  - Were typically abused
  - Have poor social skills
  - Neglectful family life
  - Substance abuse issues

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### Recent Studies

- Survey of 796 college students
  - 19% of women abused
  - 8.6% of men abused
- State laws
  - States that pass legislation requiring reporting of molestation by teachers, health care workers, etc.
    - Confirmed cases increased 50-500%

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### Voyeurism

- Involves a marked preference for obtaining sexual gratification by watching others in a state of undress or having sexual relations
- Minimal if any contact between voyeur and the victim
- Most go undetected by law
- Usually begins in adolescence
- Fear contact with others
  - Have minimal social skills

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### Denmark Study

- 1960's
- All restrictions on pornography were lifted
- Result – lower rates of peeping

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### Exhibitionism

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- Obtain sexual gratification by exposing genitals to an unwilling stranger
  - Sometimes a child
- Usually begins in adolescence
- More common in men
- Usually arrested for indecent exposure
- Are usually immature
- Over ½ are married
  - Have poor sexual relations with their spouse

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### Behaviors

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- Have a desire to shock or embarrass the observer
- Want to avoid contact with the victim
- Urge is overwhelming to expose
  - Is triggered by restlessness, anxiety, and sexual arousal
    - Classic negative reinforcement paradigm
  - Is compulsive
    - Oblivious to social and legal ramifications

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### During exposure

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- Have headaches, palpitations, sense of unreality (derealization)
- Afterwards they flee trembling and in remorse

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### Frotteurism

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- Sexually oriented touching with unsuspecting persons
- Typically occur in crowded places
  - Busses, subways, sidewalks
- Typically starts in adolescence
- Occurs with other paraphilias
  
- Not studied much

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### Sexual Sadism / Masochism

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- Sadism
  - Obtain or increases sexual gratification by inflicting pain or psychological suffering (humiliation) on another
- Masochism
  - Receive pain or suffering for gratification

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### Background

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- Is found in both heterosexuals and homosexuals
- Surveys find 20-30% of S&M clubs are females
- Most are comfortable with their lives
- Alcoholism is common among sadists
- Most have above average income and educational status

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### Etiology

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- Starts in early adulthood
- Stories are created
  - Mischievous child is disciplined by the principal
  - A slave is sold to a powerful sultan
  - Have themes of submission and domination
- Extreme serial killers
  - Tie up victims
  - Mutilate
  - Store corpses

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### Models for Paraphilias

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- Many Models
  - Psychodynamic
  - Behavioral and Cognitive
  - Biological

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### Psychodynamic Perspective

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- Is defensive in nature
- Guarding ego from dealing with repressed fears and memories
- Castration anxiety
  - Exhibitionists reaffirm their masculinity

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### Behavioral and Cognitive Perspective

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- Some contend all paraphilias are classically conditioned
  - May masturbate to a picture of a naked women in black boots
  - Through repetition black boots become arousing
- Operant conditioning
  - Negative reinforcement
    - When you perform some behavior to remove anxiety, stress, etc. – is very reinforcing
  - Escape from aversive conditions

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### Cognitive Distortions

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- Women undressing with blinds up want to be seen
- Others
  - She deserved it
  - She was dressed in black
  - She said no but her body said yes

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### Biological Perspectives

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- Contends male hormones may play a role
- Find that comparisons between individuals with paraphilias and “normals” are inconclusive

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### Therapies

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- Most paraphilias are illegal
  - Most people who are caught are imprisoned
  - Treatment outcomes vary from 30-90%
  - Problem – poor research designs
    - Ethical dilemmas for using control groups

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### Treatment compliance

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- Is low
  - Blame the child for being seductive
  - Believe they can control themselves
  - Don't believe they have a problem
- Psychoanalytic Support
  - It is a character problem, no treatment can help

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### Behavioral treatments

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- Basically use conditioning approaches
  - Aversion therapy
    - Shock a boot fetish
    - May not eliminate the attraction but gives more control over overt behavior
  - Social skills training

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### Cognitive Treatments

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- Challenge the distortions
  - Example
    - Client - The girl was too young to be harmed
    - Therapist – The younger the girl, the worse the harm
- Train in empathy toward others

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### Biological Treatments

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- Europe – Use castration
  - Has ethical dilemmas
  - Not used now
- Today
  - Drugs
    - Lower testosterone levels
    - Reduce frequency of erections
    - Inhibit sexual arousal
  - Physical problems
    - Diabetes
    - Infertility
  - Are side effects ethical???

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### Sociological Approaches

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- Megan's law
  - Occurred when a second grader in New Jersey was kidnapped and brutally murdered
    - Perpetrator was a twice convicted child molester.
- Result
  - Police can publicize whereabouts of offenders
  - Permits citizens to use police computers to see who is living in the neighborhood
- Civil Rights issues

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### Conclusions

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- Many types
- Difficult to treat
- Treatment success is not good
  
- Citizens try to protect themselves
  - Don't care about the individuals with the problem
- Need better research and treatment models