PARAPHILIAS AND SEXUAL VARIANTS
**Unconventional in Context**

**Defining Components of Unconventional**

**Cultural Context**
- Normal is always rooted in a cultural context
- Flashing breasts during Marti Gras
- Flashing breasts in the Cañada College cafeteria

**Statistical Approach**
- Few people engage in the behavior

**Sociological Approach**
- Behavior is unconventional if it is not customary within a society

**Psychological/Medical Approach**
- Paraphilias are ‘disorders’ with diagnostic criteria
- Disorders are labeled in the DSM-IV
- Sexual activity is problematic if it results in:
  - Distress
  - Guilt
  - Impedes normal functioning
A Critical Distinction

Paraphilias vs. Sexual Variants

**Paraphilias**
- A person’s sexual arousal and gratification depends almost exclusively on engaging in or fantasizing about the behavior

**Sexual Variant**
- Unusual behaviors that are engaged in for variety and not as one’s preferred manner of becoming sexual aroused.
Characteristics of Paraphilias

Characteristics

Facts and Figures

• Most people with paraphilias have 2-3 types of behaviors

• Paraphilias tend to cluster

• 20 males to 1 female

• Develop fantasies by 12-13
Definition

• A love map is a cognitive representation that carries a person's erotic fantasies and their corresponding practices

Development

• Children develop a lovemap through sexual rehearsal play
• Normal development = heterosexual

Abnormal Development (Paraphilia Lovemap)

• Prohibition of sexual activity

Characteristics

• May fully unfold during puberty
• Stable throughout life
• Fantasies are not socially contagious: a person will not develop a foot fetish from watching a movie, unless he/she already has a foot-fetish lovemap
The Phases of Courtship
Freund & Watson, 1990
1. Finding – locate partner
2. Affiliative – getting to know
3. Tactile – physical contact
4. Copulatory – sexual intercourse

4 Types
• Voyeurism, Exhibitionism, Telephone Scatologia, Frotteurism

Overview

Basic Idea
• Paraphilias develop out of a distortion or omission of a phase
• Typically men crave immediacy:
• Arousal → Orgasm
Voyeurism

**Definition**
- Repeatedly seeking sexual arousal by observing nude individuals without their knowledge or consent

**Characteristics**
- Typically begins at or before age 15
- Men: low self-esteem, shyness, poor social skills, feelings of inadequacy
- Most never interact with their victims

**Why?? Elements of Eroticism**
- Risk of discovery
- Feeling of control
Exhibitionism

Definition
• Exposing genitals to unsuspecting and unwilling strangers to get sexual gratification

Characteristics
• Begins in mid teens/20s
• Almost exclusively men
• 93% have another paraphilia
• Low-self esteem, fear rejection, problems with close relationships

Characteristics
• No clear link between exhibitionism and rape/violent sexual assaults

Why??? Elements of Eroticism
• Erotic turn-on is directed at the victim’s shock/disgust
**Definition**
- Sexual arousal is achieved primarily by making obscene phone calls

**Incidence**
- 1 million obscene calls reported/yr
- 50% of women report having received an obscene call at least once
- 6-14% of men report giving a call at least once

**Characteristics**
- Low self-esteem/problems with sexual relationships

**Why??? Elements of Eroticism**
- Sense of control
- Victim’s disgust/fear/shock

**Types**
- **Shock**: Immediately obscene
- **Seducer**: Reasonable explanation up front, gradually becomes obscene
- **Trickster**: Uses the guise of legitimacy (survey)
Frotteurism

**Definition**
- Sexual arousal is achieved primarily by rubbing one’s genitals against others in public places

**Characteristics**
- Seeks out crowded places – subway/busses
- Not interested in establishing a relationship with their victims

**Why??? Elements of Eroticism**
- Arousal disorders?
Other Paraphilias

Transvestism

**Definition**

- Sexual arousal is achieved primarily by dressing as a member of the opposite sex

**Facts and Figures**

- 1-2% of adult males
- 8.5 years average age of starting (Bullough & Bullough, 1997)
- 32% began cross-dressing before age 6
Characteristics

- Differs from transgender, cross-dressing, and drag
- How?
- Motivation to dress as the opposite sex is to achieve *sexual arousal*

Characteristics

- May masturbate while wearing clothes
- May use cross-dressing instance to masturbate later
- May use cross-dressing to achieve physiological arousal for the purpose of intercourse with their partner
Transvestism

Characteristics

• For many, transvestism is viewed as a problem to overcome

• 93% of transvestites reported being afraid of being caught (Bullough & Bullough, 1997)

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What did you fear would happen if you were caught cross-dressing? (Bullough & Bullough, 1997)
Other Paraphilias

Transvestism

Why?? Elements of Eroticism

• Feeling of relief/naturalness

• Feeling of being attractive/sensuality (enjoy the feeling of the clothes on their body)

• Arousal from site of women’s clothes on own body

• Some have fantasies of being a woman
Other Paraphilias

Transvestism

**Feeling Like A Woman Within**

- Crave to present themselves as an attractive female
- Crave to feel feminine: pretty, desirable, submissive, delicate
Other Paraphilias

Transvestism and Sexual Orientation

A (Mostly) Heterosexual Phenomenon

• 67-75% Heterosexual
• 10% Bisexual
• 2.4% Homosexual
• 19% Sex not part of my life right now

Change of Orientation

• 87% Hetero while dressed as man
• 52% Hetero while dressed as woman
Fetishism
• Sexual arousal occurs primarily when using or fantasizing about an inanimate object

Categories And Types
• Form Fetish: The shape is important (high heels, feet, etc.)
• Media Fetish: Material is important (silk, leather, satin, etc.)
• Often collect objects, masturbate while handling objects, fail to achieve an erection without object
Fetishism

Causes

**Big Picture**

- Much is unknown about why people develop fetishes
- However, several theories have been proposed

**Operant Conditioning**

- Men become aroused in the presence of women’s panties
- Presence of woman’s panties becomes linked to arousal

**Compensation Model**

- Men deprived of normal social sexual contacts
- Men feel insecure about their masculinity and potency → fear rejection
- Mastery over inanimate object safeguards against potential rejection
Fetishism

Common Fetishes

The List

• Amputees
• Corsets
• Diaper
• Foot
• Food
• Glove
• Infantile
• Leather
• Rubber

• Boot
• Spandex
• Swim cap
• Tickling
Fetishism

Treatment

**Big Picture**

- Overall, known treatments offer marginal results
- Cognitive-behavioral and psychotherapy
- Anti-androgens (testosterone reducing drugs) → reduce overall sexual drive and fantasies
Partialism

A Cousin To Fetishism

**Definition**

- Strong and recurrent arousal to a specific part of the body
  - Breasts, butt, pecs, ankles, nape, feet, hands, etc.
- Most people have some degree of partialism, so when is this a problem?
- When it interferes with normal sexual functioning
A part time computer programmer and full-time mother comes home from the office early on Friday afternoon to share a video and a pizza with her 15 year old son, Lance. His bedroom seems unusually quiet on this afternoon. Absent is the din of his favorite Smashing Pumpkins CD. She saunters down the hallway while calling his name, pushes open his bedroom door, and then collapses on the floor in a flood of emotions launched by a graphic scene displayed in the room before her.

Lance’s lifeless, semi-nude, bluish-white body hangs by the neck from the closet rod. The floor is littered with pornographic magazines, a bottle of hand lotion, and several articles of women’s underclothing. Though he hangs from a bar that would only meet him at eye level, his knees are bent and his full weight hangs from the Disney necktie he wore to his eighth grade graduation. The knot cinched up to his larynx resembles the bow that one typically uses to ties one’s shoes. The first two fingers of his lifeless right hand still grip one bow of the knot.
Autoerotic Asphyxiation

Risky Business

What Is It?
• People deprive themselves of oxygen while masturbating in order to enhance orgasm

How Is It Done?
• Typically with a noose or slip-knot around the neck
• Pornography, women’s clothing, and other props typically present

Why Do People Do It?
• Lack of oxygen to the brain leads to “hypoxia”
  • Euphoric
  • Giddiness
  • Diminished sense of control
  • Light-headedness
  • Exhilaration
• No link between AEA and intentions of suicide
Autoerotic Asphyxiation

Risky Business

The Risks

• 500-1000 people die per year
• Heart attack
• Permanent brain damage
• People typically have a rescue mechanism
  • Citrus fruit
• However, people can become disorientated from the hypoxia and be unable to use safety mechanism
What’s The Difference?

• Fetishes are the attraction to a specific inanimate object or activity involving a specific inanimate object

• Kinks are the attraction to atypical and sometimes extreme sexual behaviors

Examples of Kinks

• Sadomasochism (S/M)
• Domination & Submission (D&S)
• Bondage, pain-play, whipping
• Daddy/boy play
• Water-sports
• Enemas
• Fisting
• Cutting
• Suspension
Sadomasochism

- Sadism: When a person repeatedly and intentionally inflicts pain on others in order to achieve sexual arousal
- Masochism: When a person receives sexual arousal primarily from having pain and/or humiliation inflicted on them

Domination and Submission

- Domination: Ruling over and controlling another individual (providing the humiliation)
- Submission: Obeying and yielding to another individual (being humiliated)
# S/M and D & S

## Who Does It?

### Two Groups
- **Sometimers:** People who enjoy S/M occasionally
- **Lifestylers:** People who prefer S/M as their primary means of sexual gratification

### Demographics: The Myth
- Common portrayal: people into S/M are psychologically deranged

### Demographics: Reality
- S/M community populated with highly educated, professionals
- Education is key: Many S/M scenarios require knowledge about physiology
- All religious backgrounds
- 2 males for every 1 female
- **Kinsey (1953):** 25% of men and women had an erotic response to biting
- **Janus & Janus (1993):** 16% of men and 12% of females believe pain and pleasure go together
The Credo: Safe, Sane, Consensual

“A D&S relationship takes place in a context of awareness. Its purpose may be emotional bonding, a way of achieving new levels of intimacy; it may be spiritual, seeking to transcend ego states. In the S/M D&S communities there is a rubric that goes “Safe, Sane, and Consensual.” In my observation, the people who are engaged consciously and volitionally in S/M and D&S relationships by and large adhere to this phrase.” –William A. Henkin

Safe

• AIDS awareness
• Protection of vital organs
• No meaningful/irreversible damage to body
• Safe words/safe gestures
• Contracts are negotiated before play begins
  • Couples will establish limits and boundaries (i.e., “You can bite and leave hickies all over my body except for my neck.”)
Sane

“Everything within an S/M exchange is done with the intent of producing physical or emotional pleasure. This is the basis for the whole scene and, simplistic as the statement might seem, it is the universal key.” – Larry Townsend

- The goal of S/M = pleasure for all those participating (master and slave)
- Abide by the limits established within the contract

Sane

“In all S/M play both parties – top and bottom – agree to what they’re doing, respect the other person for trusting enough to allow the play to happen, and revel in the fact that trust has been established. One of the main things I get out of topping someone is a fantastic thrill that the person has faith in me and enough trust to put her body in my hands. A very deep sense of love and closeness comes out of that.” – Robin Young
Consensual

“One of the things which distresses me immensely, as a high-school teacher in an inner-city school, are the number of young women who allow men to hit them, beat them up, get them pregnant, and leave them. It’s not D&S: It’s something far more horrifying than anything I would ever put up with. And yet if I came out in my classroom and said, “Yes, I do this,” they would think I was sick. To me, those girls are slaves, because they allow men to do these things and don’t question why. You have to be able to question why somebody is doing something, even if you’re submissive. If you lover or your master or you mistress is doing something to you that you feel is wrong, you question it.” – Victoria

Clear, informed, verbalized consent is the moral dividing line between brutality and S/M

Abuse within the S/M community is not tolerated

Abusive dominants will often face group criticism/ostracism
Big Picture Dynamics

• Dominants: Daddy, Master, Top

• Submissive: Boy, Slave, Bottom

• The submissive obeys the commands and surrenders control over his/her body and action to the dominant (i.e., if the dominant tells the submissive to kneel, the submissive must obey)

Common Activities

• Bondage/restraints/pinning down

• Why: Dominant is in control
Common Activities

- **Pain play:** Biting, slapping, whipping, punching, scratching
  - **Why:** Issuing and receiving pain exemplifies the power dynamics
- **Breath play:** Strangulation
  - **Why:** Dominant is in complete control of the submissive’s life
- **Water Sports:** Dominant will urinate on the submissive or make the submissive drink his/her urine
  - **Why:** Territorial behavior

Common Activities

- **Cutting:** Use a razor to make small incisions in a person’s skin
  - **Why:** Small cuts release endorphins, establishes trust, sight of blood may be erotic
- **Headtrips/Ordering:** Dominant will order the submissive to do behaviors
  - **Why:** exemplifies the power dynamics, if the submissive disobeys he/she will get punished
Trust and Bonding

“When I submit I have to trust somebody a lot more than I would ordinarily think of trusting someone and I show a lot more of myself. That’s very satisfying. It’s a sense of belonging, being at home, being comfortable.” – Rising Star

• S/M relationships establish a deep trust between 2 individuals

Trust and Bonding

The Bottom Is In Control

• The submissive surrenders his/her power, but also establishes the rules and boundaries: (“I will let you whip me, but I trust that you will not whip me to the point of leaving permanent scars.”)

• With strangulation, the submissive is trusting the dominant with his/her life

• The dominant must abide by the established rules
Power Dynamics
“A lot of people think S/M is about conquest: about domineering rather than domination. For me, that’s not what it’s about at all. When we begin to play there may be some resistance, because we’re not trained to gracefully surrender personal power. Submission is an alternate way of dealing with power, a way of exploring the nature of your own power, how to access it and choosing to turn it over or not. Choice is the key. S/M is a tool for surrender” –M. Cybelle

Power Dynamics
“My soul yearns to be able to let somebody else take control, to be able to not have to make the decisions, to not be concerned about what errors I’m going to make.” –Slave V.

Big Picture
• Submissive yields all power to dominant
• Dominant has power over submissive
Why The Submissive Yields Power

• Act of liberation (it’s extremely comforting to let someone else control your destiny)

• Realization of profound need (submissives crave the feeling of being controlled)

• Deep psychological bond/trust is formed with dominant (this bond may foster a very deep and profound love with the dominant)

• Realization of most forbidden sexual desires

Why The Submissive Yields Power

“I characterize my submissiveness mostly as a chance to let loose. After a day of making decisions, it is a chance to not be in control and to not always have to worry about everything: letting somebody else take over.”
Power Dynamics

Why The Dominant Seizes Power
“"The personal enjoyment I derive is, first, intellectual: I can figure out what the person needs. Then there’s aesthetic enjoyment: knowing how to do it. And there’s knowing the level of trust that’s given to me: It’s a tremendous trust.” –Cleo Dubois

“When I top somebody, I know I have them in control, and I get an erotic rush out of their erotic rushes. Knowing my partner is getting off on it is wonderful.” -Jean

Why The Dominant Seizes Power
• Exert absolute control over partner’s reality (holds the key to the partners pleasure and controls when the submissive will climax)
• Enjoy taking a strong, independent person and making them helpless (the sense of power over another person is extremely erotic)
• Enjoy pushing the submissive’s limits (Dominant may stretch the boundaries a little – i.e., whip the submissive one extra time…)