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Erotic Target Location Errors: An Underappreciated Paraphilic Dimension

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Based on studies of heterosexual male fetishists, transvestites, and transsexuals, Blanchard (1991) proposed the existence of a hitherto unrecognized paraphilic dimension, erotic target location errors (ETLEs), involving the erroneous location of erotic targets in the environment. ETLEs can involve preferential attention to a peripheral or inessential part of an erotic target, manifesting as fetishism, or mislocation of an erotic target in one's own body, manifesting as the desire to impersonate or become a facsimile of the erotic target (e.g., transvestism or transsexualism). Despite its potential clinical and heuristic value, the concept that ETLEs define a paraphilic dimension is underappreciated. This review summarizes the studies leading to the concept of ETLEs and describes how ETLEs are believed to manifest in men whose preferred erotic targets are women, children, men, amputees, plush animals, and real animals. This review also describes ETLEs in women; discusses possible etiologies of ETLEs; considers the implications of the ETLE concept for psychoanalytic theories of transvestism and male-to-female transsexualism, as well as for the forthcoming revision of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition; suggests reasons why the concept of ETLEs has been underappreciated; and describes what might result if the concept were more widely appreciated.

Although the unusual erotic interests called *paraphilias* have been the subject of considerable attention by clinicians and researchers, a generally accepted classification scheme for paraphilic sexual interests has remained elusive. Attempts to classify the paraphilias have typically emphasized two principal dimensions: unusual erotic target preferences and unusual sexual activity preferences (Freund, Seto, & Kuban, 1996). For example, in the most recent edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th ed., text rev. [DSM-IV-TR]; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2000), the paraphilias are conceptualized in terms of either unusual objects of attraction (i.e., preferential attraction to children, nonconsenting persons, or inanimate objects vs. consenting adults) or unusual sexual activity preferences (i.e., attraction to experiencing the suffering or humiliation of oneself or one's partner vs. more conventional sexual activities).

In the early 1990s, Blanchard (1991; Freund & Blanchard, 1993) suggested the existence of yet another significant dimension of paraphilic sexuality: *erotic*

target location errors (ETLEs), which involve the erroneous location of preferred erotic targets in the environment. Blanchard (1991) proposed that some persons with paraphilias erroneously direct their erotic interest toward peripheral or inessential parts of their preferred erotic targets (e.g., the clothing, hair, or feet of a target), which manifests as fetishism. Other persons with paraphilias erroneously locate their preferred targets in their own bodies, rather than in another person: They either desire to impersonate their preferred targets or desire to turn their bodies into facsimiles of those targets. ETLEs of the latter type manifest as transvestic fetishism, as one paraphilic variety of male-to-female (MtF) transsexualism, and as lesser known analogues of these two conditions. Freund and Blanchard (1993) coined the term *erotic target identity inversion* to describe ETLEs in which persons erroneously locate their preferred erotic targets in their own bodies and want to either impersonate or become facsimiles of those targets.

Blanchard's (1991; Freund and Blanchard, 1993) formulation, despite its potential clinical and heuristic value, has gone largely unnoticed and unappreciated. Recent searches of the *Medline* and *PsycINFO* databases, using the term "erotic target location error(s)" yielded only two articles: Freund and Blanchard's (1993) article and my extension of the ETLE concept to amputation-related phenomena (Lawrence, 2006).

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Table 1. *Presentations of Uncomplicated Attraction and Erotic Target Location Errors in Men*

Erotic Target	Uncomplicated Attraction to Target	Fetishistic Attraction to Clothing or an Inessential Part of Target ^d	Attraction to Temporarily Impersonating Target ^{a,b}	Attraction to Changing One's Body Into Target or a Facsimile of Target ^{a,b}
Women	Gynephilia	Heterosexual fetishism	Transvestism	Anatomic autogynephilia ^c
Children	Pedophilia	Pedophilic fetishism	Pedovestism ^d	Anatomic autopedophilia ^d
Men	Androphilia	Homosexual fetishism	Homeovestism ^e	Anatomic autoandrophilia ^d
Amputees	Acrotomophilia	Stump fetishism	Pretending	Apotemnophilia
Plush animals	Plushophilia	Plushophilia ^f	Fursuitism	Anatomic autoplushophilia ^d
Animals (real)	Zoophilia	Not described?	Some fursuitism?	Anatomic autozoophilia?

Note. This table is modified from Lawrence (2006).

^aAn erotic target location error.

^bAn erotic target identity inversion.

^cAutogynephilic transsexualism, the associated clinical entity, would be an equally appropriate term.

^dDescribed by Freund and Blanchard (1993), although they did not use this term.

^eDescribed by Zavitzianos (1972, 1977).

^fErotic target is inanimate and, *ipso facto*, can be considered a fetish.

In this review, I advocate for wider appreciation of this paraphilic dimension, by discussing the following topics:

- How do the paraphilias that Freund and Blanchard (1993) called ETLEs manifest in men who are sexually attracted to women, and how prevalent are they?
- What is the basis for theorizing that these paraphilias define a single paraphilic dimension?
- What forms do ETLEs take in men who are sexually attracted to erotic targets other than women, or to women with unusual characteristics?
- What is known about the prevalence and manifestations of ETLEs in women?
- What theories have been proposed concerning the etiology of ETLEs?
- What are the implications of the ETLE concept for psychoanalytic theories of transvestism and MtF transsexualism?
- What are the implications of the ETLE concept for the forthcoming revision of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed. [DSM-V]; APA, 2008)?
- Why have ETLEs been underappreciated?
- What might result if ETLEs became more widely appreciated?

Because paraphilias have been observed to occur almost exclusively in men and only rarely in women (G. G. Abel & Osborn, 1992; APA, 2000), most of the attention in this review is on ETLEs in men.

Before proceeding, I should briefly address the contemporary appropriateness of the word *error* in Freund and Blanchard's (1993) term, *erotic target location error*. Some readers may believe that the word *error*, used to describe uncommon patterns of sexual attraction, is inappropriately judgmental or moralistic and is incompatible with the objectivity that should

characterize the scientific study of sexuality. I believe, however, that the word *error*, as used by Blanchard (1991), is both appropriate and conceptually useful.

The ETLE concept assumes—correctly, I believe—that a person's erotic orientation nearly always involves an identifiable type of preferred erotic target, known or inferred, that is external to the self and that generally involves either other people or entities that are similar to people (e.g., animals). The ETLE concept further assumes that, as a result of some putative mental dysfunction, a person can metaphorically “miss” his known or inferred erotic target, mistakenly directing his erotic interest toward an inessential or peripheral part of the target, or toward creating a facsimile of the target in his own person. Consequently, the word *error* reflects an objective assessment, not a subjective or moralistic one. The ETLE concept makes no assumption about the correctness or moral acceptability of a person's preferred erotic target: As we shall see, ETLEs can involve conventional and morally unproblematic erotic targets (e.g., opposite-sex adults), unconventional and morally unacceptable erotic targets (e.g., prepubescent children), and erotic targets that are intermediate in their conventionality and moral valence. Implicit in the ETLE concept, however, is the assumption that ETLEs reflect putative mental dysfunctions that interfere with accurate erotic target location. Consequently, euphemistic alternatives, such as *erotic target location variant*, fail to capture the implication of mental dysfunction that is inherent in the ETLE concept. Consequently, in the interests of accuracy, as well as maintaining a consistent terminology, I employ Freund and Blanchard's (1993) original term, *erotic target location error*.

ETLEs in Men Who Are Sexually Attracted to Women

Blanchard (1991) proposed that three specific paraphilias constituted errors of erotic target location in men who are gynephilic (i.e., whose erotic target is

women, or women's bodies). These paraphilias are listed in the first row of Table 1. Two of these paraphilias, fetishism and transvestism (also called transvestic fetishism), are widely recognized and are listed in both the *DSM-IV-TR* and the *International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10)*; World Health Organization [WHO], 1992). The third of these paraphilias, *anatomic autogynephilia*, is less widely recognized; it is the unusual sexual interest that is thought to underlie one type of MtF transsexualism.

These paraphilic sexual interests compete with, and occasionally completely overshadow, sexual interest in adult female sexual partners (Blanchard, 1992). Physiological studies suggest, however, that these paraphilic interests are not always more sexually arousing than the bodies of female partners, and are sometimes less so (Freund et al., 1996).

Fetishism

The *ICD-10* (WHO, 1992) describes fetishism as:

Reliance on some non-living object as a stimulus for sexual arousal and sexual gratification. Many fetishes are extensions of the human body, such as articles of clothing or footwear. Other common examples are characterized by some particular texture such as rubber, plastic or leather. Fetish objects vary in their importance to the individual. In some cases they simply serve to enhance sexual excitement achieved in ordinary ways (e.g., having the partner wear a particular garment). (p. 366)

Unlike the definition of fetishism in the *DSM-IV-TR*, the *ICD-10* definition does not require the presence of clinically significant distress or impairment in functioning. Like its *DSM-IV-TR* counterpart, however, the *ICD-10* definition specifies that fetish objects are necessarily inanimate, which excludes preferential attraction to specific parts of the body, an erotic interest called *partialism* (APA, 2000). Nevertheless, many authors consider nongenital body parts to be fetishes (Mason, 1997), and I adopt this more inclusive definition.

The developmental history of fetishism is incompletely understood. Freud (1927/1961) suggested that fetishism develops in response to castration anxiety during the oedipal phase of development, which typically begins at about age 5 or 6. More recently, psychoanalytically inclined theorists (e.g., Bak, 1953; Greenacre, 1968, 1979) have argued that fetishism typically develops in early childhood, prior to the oedipal period. Chalkley and Powell (1983) reported that the youngest of the 48 fetishistic patients they studied was age 12. Gosselin (1979) found that most rubber fetishists were aware of their paraphilic interest before puberty: Their mean age of awareness was 10, and about one fourth were aware of their interest by age 5. McConaghy (1993) observed that for many fetishists, strong pleasurable feelings toward the fetish object develop in

childhood, with these feelings "becoming sexually arousing at puberty" (p. 320).

Krafft-Ebing (1903/1965) proposed that the fetishistic objects and interests of heterosexual men could be divided into three main categories: (a) parts of the female body; (b) articles of female attire; and (c) "special materials" such as fur, velvet, and silk. Recent surveys of fetishistic interests, conducted among mostly heterosexual men, suggest that Krafft-Ebing's categories remain relevant, although rubber and leather have now become the most popular "special materials." Chalkley and Powell (1983), in a study of 47 men (most of whom were gynephilic) and 1 woman with sexual fetishism, found that the most frequent fetish categories, which were not mutually exclusive, involved clothing (58%), rubber items (23%), footwear (15%), and body parts (15%). Junginger (1997) observed that the most frequent categories of fetish objects mentioned in Internet alternative sex forums were underwear, rubber objects, body parts (especially feet), outer clothing, and leather objects (especially shoes and boots). In a more recent survey of fetish-related Internet groups and topics, Scrolli, Ghirlanda, Enquist, Zattoni, and Jannini (2007) reported that the most common fetishes involved body parts (especially feet) and objects associated with the body (especially underwear and shoes). Money (1986) noted that the materials that typically become the focus of fetishistic interest often bear a visual, tactile, or olfactory resemblance to human skin or hair (see also Freud, 1927/1961). These observations are consistent with Blanchard's (1991) idea that most fetish objects reflect a general erotic orientation toward the human body, but involve a misdirection of erotic interest toward body features that are peripheral (e.g., hair or feet) or inessential (e.g., clothing).

Persons who display fetishism for items of clothing typically are aroused by having these items worn by persons of their preferred sex. Beyond this, fetishistic persons often treat their fetish objects in the same ways that nonfetishistic persons would treat human sexual partners: They seek close physical contact with them (e.g., they wear them, or lie on or beneath them), gaze at them, fondle them, rub against them, suck on them, insert them into body cavities, cut them, and burn them (Chalkley & Powell, 1983; Epstein, 1969; Junginger, 1997). Activities that involve damaging the fetish object may be analogous to acts of sexual sadism directed toward human partners. McConaghy (1993) concluded that, "The caring and protective—or destructive—behaviors shown by some subjects in regard to the fetish suggests that they feel toward it as if it were a living object" (p. 320).

Gosselin and Wilson (1980) and Greenacre (1968) considered fetishism to be the prototypical paraphilia, in part because of its high prevalence in the general population. In studies of groups of men with paraphilic interests, using the Wilson Sex Questionnaire (WSQ; G.

Wilson, 1978), Gosselin and Wilson (1980) found that 18% of their *control* group of 50 men reported engaging in fetish-related fantasies or activities (i.e., “being excited by material or clothing [e.g., rubber, leather, underwear]”) with an intensity score at least two standard deviations above the participant’s mean score for the 39 other WSQ items. In a survey of 94 men, Crépault and Couture (1980) observed that 15% had “often” engaged in erotic fantasies involving a “scene when you are with a woman wearing exciting clothing and accessories” during heterosexual activity. Person, Terestman, Myers, Goldberg, and Salvadori (1989) found, in a survey of more than 100 college men, that 7% reported recent sexual experience involving “dressing with erotic garments.” In a replication study involving 54 college men, Hsu et al. (1994) observed that 15% reported recent sexual experience involving “dressing with erotic garments” and 37% reported lifetime sexual experience involving this activity.

Fetishism is often found in association with other paraphilias, reflecting the recognized tendency of the paraphilias to cluster or co-occur. G. G. Abel and Osborn (1992) reported the co-occurrence of 21 paraphilic diagnoses in a group of 859 persons with paraphilias seen in a forensic or treatment context; among 12 persons whose primary (most arousing) paraphilia was fetishism, the most frequent secondary paraphilias were pedophilia (5 cases, 42%), sexual masochism (4 cases, 33%), and transvestism (4 cases, 33%). There were also four other primary paraphilias in which 20% or more of involved persons reported fetishism as a secondary paraphilia: zoophilia (33% with fetishism), obscene phone calling (25%), pedophilia (22%), and transvestism (20%). Gosselin and Wilson (1980) observed a substantial overlap of paraphilic interests among members of organized groups for fetishists, transvestites, and sado-masochists: 64% of fetishists were also sado-masochists and 59% were also transvestites.

Transvestism

Used in its broad sense, the term *transvestism* denotes cross-dressing for any purpose. In its more specific sense, it denotes cross-dressing that is, or at one time was, associated with sexual arousal, and is synonymous with *transvestic fetishism* (*DSM-IV-TR*), *fetishistic transvestism* (*ICD-10*), and male heterosexual erotic cross-dressing (Stoller, 1971). I use *transvestism* in this second, more specific, sense. The *ICD-10* describes fetishistic transvestism as “The wearing of clothes of the opposite sex principally to obtain sexual excitement and to create the appearance of a person of the opposite sex” (WHO, 1992, p. 366). This definition, unlike that of the *DSM-IV-TR*, does not require the presence of clinically significant distress or functional impairment. In the *DSM-IV-TR*, transvestic fetishism is limited to heterosexual males, a convention that is widely accepted.

Transvestism typically develops well before puberty. Stoller (1985) and Zucker and Blanchard (1997) provided case reports of boys younger than age 3 who expressed a desire to wear cross-sex clothing and who experienced penile erections when they did so. Doorn, Poortinga, and Verschoor (1994), in a survey of 36 men with transvestism, found that 8 (22%) reported cross-dressing before age 7, and only 10 (28%) reported an onset after age 12. Schott (1995) observed that, among 85 transvestic men, 50% reported cross-dressing before age 7 and nearly all (97%) reported doing so before age 13. Docter and Prince (1997), in survey of 1,032 heterosexual cross-dressers, found that 66% reported cross-dressing before age 10. Prepubertal cross-dressing is not always explicitly erotic: Ovesey and Person (1976) noted that cross-dressing is sexually arousing from the beginning in some cases, but in other cases it is initially associated primarily with a sense of well-being and only later becomes sexualized.

It can be difficult to distinguish between transvestism and fetishism for items of female clothing, particularly in the case of fetishists who prefer to wear the fetish items. Docter (1988) argued that the desire to cross-dress fully was the crucial feature that distinguished transvestites from fetishists for female clothing: He noted that, although transvestism usually begins with single items of female clothing, often undergarments or stockings, there is almost always progression to complete cross-dressing when circumstances permit. This idea is consistent with the *ICD-10* definition, which emphasizes that transvestism involves not just sexual excitement, but an attempt “to create the appearance of a person of the opposite sex” (WHO, 1992, p. 366). Docter and Prince (1997) found that 93% of their transvestite informants preferred to cross-dress completely when possible. Buhrich (1978) reported that all 33 of the transvestites he surveyed owned at least one complete female outfit. Moreover, cross-dressing by transvestites is usually accompanied by the fantasy of being a woman (Buhrich & McConaghy, 1977b); this fantasy may be more central to the phenomenon of transvestism than female clothing *per se*. S. B. Levine (1993) observed that “Cross-dressing reflects a deep, abiding wish to be a female. . . . I cannot ever recall speaking to or hearing about an adult cross-dresser who did not have a fantasy of himself as a female” (pp. 134–135).

Several researchers have examined the prevalence of transvestism, cross-gender sexual fantasies, and sexual arousal to images of cross-dressing among men; the results of these studies are summarized in Table 2. Although many of the studies listed have methodological limitations, taken together they suggest that roughly 2% to 3% of men have engaged in erotic cross-dressing at least occasionally, and perhaps twice that many have experienced sexual arousal with cross-gender fantasy.

Transvestism, like fetishism, is often associated with other paraphilias, again reflecting the recognized

Table 2. *Prevalence in Men of Sexual Cross-Dressing, Cross-Gender Fantasy, and Arousal to Images of Cross-Dressing*

Study	Prevalence (%)	Sexual Behavior, Fantasy, or Arousal	Population
Långström and Zucker (2005)	2.8	Ever experience sexual arousal with cross-dressing	Swedish national probability sample
Spira, Bajos, and the ACSF Group (1994)	4.0	Often feel as though of the opposite gender in fantasies	French national probability sample
Spira et al. (1994)	13.0	Often feel as though of the opposite gender in fantasies	French probability sample, ages 18 to 19
Hsu et al. (1994)	5.7	Ever dress in clothes of the opposite gender	U.S. college students
Hsu et al. (1994)	18.5	Ever fantasize being of the opposite gender	U.S. college students
Janus and Janus (1993)	6.0	Ever engage in cross-dressing	U.S. adult unpaid volunteers
Fedora et al. (1992)	3.0	Phallometric response to photos of transvestism	U.S. adult paid volunteers
Person, Terestman, Myers, Goldberg, and Salvadori (1989)	1.0	In last 3 months, dress in clothes of the opposite sex	U.S. college students
Person et al. (1989)	13.0	In last 3 months, fantasize being of the opposite gender	U.S. college students
McConaghy (1982)	10.9	Ever obtain sexual arousal from cross-dressing	New Zealand medical students
Gosselin and Wilson (1980)	2.0	Frequent fantasies or acts of transvestism	U.K. adult unpaid volunteers
Goldstein and Kant (1973)	8.6	Ever fantasize being dressed in clothes of other gender	U.S. adult paid volunteers

tendency of the paraphilias to co-occur. In a national probability survey of Swedish men, Långström and Zucker (2005) found that men who reported a history of sexual arousal with cross-dressing were significantly more likely to also report sexual arousal with exhibitionism, voyeurism, and sadomasochism than men who did not: 17% of men who had been sexually aroused by cross-dressing also had been aroused by exposing their genitals to a stranger, 33% had been aroused by spying on others engaged in sexual activity, and 14% had been aroused by using pain sexually. Gosselin and Wilson (1980) observed that, among members of a social group for transvestites, 59% had fetishistic interests and 39% were also interested in sadomasochism. Schott (1995) found that 78% of the 85 transvestic men he surveyed reported a history consistent with fetishism, in that “certain items of feminine clothing had a sexually-arousing attraction to them as children” (p. 316). Steiner, Sanders, and Langevin (1985) obtained sex histories from 18 transvestites: 6 (33%) reported voyeurism, 5 (28%) reported frotteurism (sexually rubbing against a nonconsenting person), 4 (22%) reported toucherism (sexually touching a nonconsenting person), 3 (17%) reported exhibitionism, and 2 (11%) reported sexual contact with prepubescent girls. G. G. Abel and Osborn (1992), in their study of coexisting paraphilias, observed that among 20 persons whose primary paraphilia was transvestism, the most frequent secondary paraphilias were sexual masochism (7 cases, 35%), fetishism (4 cases, 20%), and exhibitionism (3 cases, 15%). There were also four other primary paraphilias for which 15% or more of involved persons reported transvestism as a secondary paraphilia: zoophilia (33% with concurrent transvestism), fetishism (33%), obscene phone calling (25%), and sexual masochism (15%). Beigel and Feldman (1963) examined 93 works of transvestite erotic fiction and found a high prevalence of sadomasochistic themes, including 33 (35%) in which a male protagonist was coerced into cross-dressing by a powerful woman.

Although transvestism is considered a paraphilia in both the *ICD-10* and *DSM-IV-TR* and cross-dressing by transvestites is almost always associated with a past or current history of sexual arousal (Benjamin, 1966; Blanchard, Racansky, & Steiner, 1986), some gynephilic male cross-dressers contend that eroticism is not fundamental to their desire to wear women’s clothing. Instead, they assert that cross-dressing is primarily a way of expressing the feminine side of their personalities or identities (e.g., Bruce, 1967; see also Bloom, 2002) and that the sexual arousal they sometimes experience in association with cross-dressing is often unintended or unwanted (Blanchard & Clemmensen, 1988; Buhrich, 1978).

The relative importance of identity and eroticism in explaining the development of paraphilias that involve erotic target identity inversion has been a source of ongoing controversy. Freund and Blanchard’s (1993) concept of erotic target identity inversion, and much of the empirical research that underlies it, understands erotic desire to be the primary driving or motivating force behind paraphilic wishes and behaviors; identity inversion is understood as developing secondarily, as an outgrowth of erotic desire (see Lawrence, 2006, 2007a). Some transvestites, some MtF transsexuals, and many psychoanalytic theorists who have studied these individuals (e.g., Arlow, 1986; Kaplan, 1991; Ovesey & Person, 1976; Person & Ovesey, 1974a, 1974b, 1978, 1983) believe that disturbances of gender identity are the primary driving force behind the paraphilias that involve erotic target identity inversions, and perhaps most paraphilias. This implies that the associated erotic desires and behaviors develop secondarily, as an outgrowth of the primary disturbance of gender identity. In other words, “gender [identity] precedes sexuality in development and organizes sexuality, not the reverse” (Person & Ovesey, 1983, p. 221). Similar unresolved questions concerning the respective contributions of identity and eroticism arise in relation to the development of

some types of MtF transsexualism and other paraphilias that involve erotic target identity inversion.

Anatomic Autogynephilia

Anatomic autogynephilia is the paraphilic sexual interest that some clinicians and researchers believe underlies one type of MtF transsexualism (Bailey, 2003; Blanchard, 1989b, 1991; Lawrence, 2004, 2007a; Zucker & Blanchard, 1997). Before considering this paraphilia in detail, it is helpful to briefly review the typology of MtF transsexualism.

Clinicians and researchers have observed for decades that there exist two distinctly different types of men who experience profound discomfort with their anatomic sex (*gender dysphoria*) and who request sex reassignment (Blanchard, 1988; Buhrich & McConaghy, 1978; Freund, Steiner, & Chan, 1982; E. M. Levine, Gruenewald, & Shaiova, 1976; Money & Gaskin, 1970–1971; Smith, van Goozen, Kuiper, & Cohen-Kettenis, 2005). One of these types, which is the less prevalent in most Western countries (Blanchard & Sheridan, 1992; Green & Young, 2001; Lawrence, 2003, 2008), consists of men who are usually called *homosexual* MtF transsexuals. These MtF transsexuals are invariably overtly feminine as children, tend to be very feminine as adults, are exclusively sexually attracted to men (i.e., they are homosexual relative to anatomic sex) and rarely, if ever, experience sexual arousal with cross-dressing or cross-gender fantasy (Blanchard, 1985, 1988, 1989b; Blanchard, Clemmensen, & Steiner, 1987; Whitam, 1987, 1997). One can think of homosexual MtF transsexuals as the most feminine of gay men, persons who are so naturally feminine that it is easier and more satisfying for them to live in the world as women than as men.

The other MtF transsexual type, which is the more prevalent in Western countries, consists of men who are usually called *nonhomosexual* MtF transsexuals. These MtF transsexuals are almost never overtly feminine during childhood and usually are not especially feminine as adults. They are never exclusively sexually attracted to men: Their primary sexual attraction is to women, but they may choose women, women and men, or persons of neither sex as sexual partners. Most nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals acknowledge some history of sexual arousal with cross-dressing or cross-gender fantasy: Blanchard (1985) found that 46 (73%) of 63 nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals reported such arousal; Lawrence (2005) observed an even higher figure, 178 (89%) of 199 nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals. Phallometric data demonstrate that sexual arousal to cross-dressing and cross-gender fantasy occurs even in transvestites and nonhomosexual gender dysphoric men who deny such arousal (Blanchard et al., 1986), suggesting that such arousal is probably almost universal in nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals, albeit not universally acknowledged.

Blanchard (1989a) proposed that sexual arousal to cross-gender fantasies, experienced by nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals and by transvestites, constituted a paraphilic sexual interest that he called *autogynephilia*, meaning “love of oneself as a woman.” He formally defined autogynephilia as “a male’s propensity to be sexually aroused by the thought of himself as a female” (Blanchard, 1989b, p. 616). Because autogynephilia is so prevalent in nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals, they are sometimes simply referred to as “autogynephilic transsexuals” (Blanchard, 1989b). Blanchard (1993b, 1993c) argued that nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals seek sex reassignment primarily because they are sexually aroused by the idea of having women’s bodies and want to actualize their autogynephilic fantasies by becoming women (or, more accurately, facsimiles of women). This argument can be seen as a logical extension of the idea that transvestites cross-dress primarily because they are sexually aroused by the idea of wearing women’s clothing and impersonating women and want to actualize their fantasies by cross-dressing.

Blanchard (1991) further hypothesized that “autogynephilia is a misdirected form of heterosexual impulse” (p. 241) and, as such, constitutes an ETLE in which men erroneously locate their preferred erotic target, women, in their own bodies. Lawrence (2007a) paraphrased Blanchard’s (1991) hypothesis by suggesting that autogynephilic transsexuals are heterosexual men who want to “become what they love” (p. 515).

Autogynephilic men may envy and desire to experience almost any aspect of women’s embodiment or behavior. They may be aroused by the fantasy or reality of having a female body or aspects of such a body (*anatomic autogynephilia*); breast feeding, menstruating, or being pregnant (*physiologic autogynephilia*; see Buhrich & McConaghy, 1977c); engaging in behavior thought to be typical of women (*behavioral autogynephilia*; e.g., going to a beauty salon or engaging in sexual activity with a man); or wearing women’s clothing (*transvestic autogynephilia*). Following Blanchard (1991), I use the term *anatomic autogynephilia* to describe the paraphilic sexual interest of men who are aroused by the idea of turning their bodies into facsimiles of the women’s bodies; Freund and Blanchard (1993) simply called this *autogynephilia*. The more specific usage emphasizes the conceptual distinction between men with autogynephilic transsexualism, whose intense anatomic autogynephilia leads them to seek sex reassignment (Blanchard, 1993c), and men with transvestic fetishism, who in some cases experience only the transvestic variety of autogynephilia and are content simply to cross-dress (Docter & Prince, 1997). In reality, the distinction between the various types of autogynephilia is somewhat arbitrary. Moreover, as discussed later, it is useful to think of autogynephilic transsexualism and transvestism as points on a continuum of symptomatology, rather than as discrete categories.

Nonhomosexual or autogynephilic MtF transsexualism is much less prevalent than transvestism, if hormonal or surgical sex reassignment is used as a diagnostic criterion. The most reliable prevalence estimates for MtF transsexualism come from northern Europe. In Belgium, about 1 in 12,900 adult men has undergone MtF sex reassignment surgery (De Cuypere et al., 2007); in the Netherlands, the figure is similar, about 1 in 11,900 (Bakker, van Kesteren, Gooren, & Bezemer, 1993). In Scotland, about 1 in 12,800 adult men has either been treated with cross-sex hormones or has undergone sex reassignment surgery (P. Wilson, Sharp, & Carr, 1999), and about 1 in 7,400 has been diagnosed with gender dysphoria. About one half of MtF transsexuals in Belgium and The Netherlands are nonhomosexual (De Cuypere, Jannes, & Rubens, 1995; Doorn et al., 1994; Lawrence, 2008; Smith et al., 2005); in the United Kingdom, three fourths or more are nonhomosexual (Green & Young, 2001; Muirhead-Allwood, Royle, & Young, 1999).

Because anatomic autogynephilia is conceptualized as a paraphilia and is thought to underlie nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism, one would expect to find an elevated prevalence of co-occurring paraphilias, in addition to other varieties of autogynephilia, among nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals. This expectation appears to be the case: Sadomasochistic fantasies and behaviors, for example, are common in nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals. Bolin (1988) observed that, in a group of 12 MtF transsexual informants, nearly all of whom were nonhomosexual, 9 (75%) admitted to sadomasochistic fantasies and 8 (66%) had “actual experience with bondage and discipline” (p. 169). Walworth (1997) reported that, in a group of 52 MtF transsexual informants, about 88% of whom were apparently nonhomosexual, 5 (10%) admitted to having lied to their therapists about their sadomasochistic practices or fantasies; the number who engaged in such practices or fantasies but did not lie about them was not reported. Other paraphilias occur less commonly in nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals. Hoenic and Kenna (1974) noted a history of sexual fetishism, “usually directed toward objects of clothing of the opposite gender” (p. 279) but distinct from transvestism, in 7 (13%) of 54 MtF transsexuals surveyed; roughly three fourths of the total sample appear to have been nonhomosexual. Freund and Watson (1993) reported paraphilias of the courtship-disorder type (voyeurism, exhibitionism, and frotteurism) in 3 (4%) of 69 nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals studied.

As with transvestism, the theory that one form of MtF transsexualism is an erotic target identity inversion—a paraphilic phenomenon that reflects eroticism primarily and identity only secondarily—is not universally accepted. Some MtF transsexuals are bitterly opposed to this formulation (Lawrence, 2004), although others consider it both accurate and validating (Lawrence, 1999a, 1999b).

Do Fetishism, Transvestism, and Anatomic Autogynephilia Define a Paraphilic Dimension?

It is apparent that fetishism, transvestism, and anatomic autogynephilia (and its clinical manifestation, autogynephilic transsexualism) can all be thought of as reflecting the erroneous location of erotic targets in the environment. It is less apparent that these three erotic interests define a single paraphilic dimension, as Blanchard (1991) theorized. Other clinicians, however, have independently concluded that these three phenomena exist on a continuum or spectrum of symptomatology, although they may not regard all of these phenomena as paraphilic. Still stronger support for Blanchard’s (1991) formulation comes from empirical studies demonstrating that fetishism and transvestism are closely related conditions, as are transvestism and nonhomosexual (autogynephilic) MtF transsexualism.

Clinical Conceptualization of Fetishism, Transvestism, and Transsexualism as a Continuum

Several clinicians have independently proposed that fetishism, transvestism, and MtF transsexualism represent a continuum or spectrum of pathology, although they have sometimes differed in the precise types of fetishism and transsexualism that they see as participating in this spectrum and have not always considered nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism to be a paraphilic condition. Examples of such clinicians include Arndt (1991), Benjamin (1966), Christie Brown (1983), Docter (1988), S. B. Levine (1993), and Person and Ovesey (1978).

Benjamin (1966), the first physician to write extensively about transsexualism, created a Sex Orientation Scale (SOS) to describe the “six different types of the transvestism-transsexualism syndrome” (p. 38) he had observed in men. He cautioned, however, that the “six types are not and never can be sharply separated” (p. 39) and that many persons fell between categories. On one extreme of Benjamin’s SOS were “pseudo-transvestites,” who used female clothing fetishistically and who corresponded to what some other authors would simply call “fetishists” (e.g., Docter, 1988). On the other side of the SOS were “high-intensity true transsexuals,” who were not fetishistic. Transvestites and lower-intensity transsexuals occupied middle positions on the SOS. Benjamin understood the relation between sexual orientation and the transvestism-transsexualism spectrum differently than do most contemporary theorists, stating that the sexual orientation of fetishistic pseudo-transvestites could range from exclusively gynephilic to exclusively androphilic, whereas high-intensity “true” transsexuals were always exclusively androphilic, albeit perhaps having been married and having fathered children. Consequently, mapping Benjamin’s SOS onto Blanchard’s (1991) continuum of fetishism, transvestism, and autogynephilic

transsexualism is not straightforward. Nevertheless, it seems clear that Benjamin thought in terms of a spectrum of symptomatology, involving fetishistic men who were not genuinely transvestic at one extreme, and MtF transsexuals at the other extreme, with transvestites between these.

Docter (1988) proposed a five-category system to describe the spectrum of cross-dressing behavior in gynephilic men. His scale began with fetishism for female attire at one extreme and progressed through fetishistic transvestism, marginal transvestism (i.e., existing at the margin of transsexualism), and transgenderism, ending with “secondary transsexualism (transvestite type)” at the other extreme. The last of these categories closely resembles what Blanchard (1991) called autogynephilic transsexualism. Docter observed, moreover, that progression from one category to another was not unusual; he “urge[d] that transvestism be viewed as a multistage, progressive phenomenon” (p. 19).

Person and Ovesey (1978), arguably the best-known psychoanalytic theorists to have addressed transvestism and transsexualism, hypothesized that these conditions were related to unresolved separation anxiety during early childhood development. Unlike Blanchard, Person and Ovesey conceived of fetishism, transvestism, and transsexualism as primary disorders of gender identity that could become secondarily sexualized, rather than as sexual disorders with secondary implications for gender identity. Nevertheless, they reached a conclusion very similar to Blanchard’s (1991) concerning the existence of a continuum of symptomatology:

Transvestism, while it may be described as a totally distinct clinical entity, exists on a continuum with fetishism on the one hand, and transsexualism on the other. . . . Such a continuum, particularly the transvestic-transsexual continuum[,] is easy to document and has been pointed out by many investigators. (Person & Ovesey, 1978, p. 309)

Empirical Studies of the Relation of Fetishism and Transvestism

The substantial co-occurrence of fetishism and transvestic fetishism found by G. G. Abel and Osborn (1992) and Gosselin and Wilson (1980), ranging from 20% to 59% comorbidity, suggests that the two conditions are closely related. Moreover, Blanchard (1991) observed a 55% co-occurrence of fetishism and transvestism in a group of 210 nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals who acknowledged anatomic autogynephilia.

Two studies conducted by Freund et al. (1996) provide still more convincing evidence of a close relation. In one study, Freund et al. (1996) compared the strength of fetishistic interest among 30 male fetishists, 74 transvestites, 78 male sex offenders against women, and 43 gynephilic male volunteers, using a self-report measure, the Fetishism scale of the Gender Identity and Erotic Preference in Males test battery (see Freund & Blanchard, 1998). The authors excluded transvestites

who reported gender dysphoria, believing that “markedly gender-dysphoric biological males try to impress the professional observer as being psychologically female and not having other reasons for donning female attire” (Freund et al., 1996, p. 688). Freund et al. (1996) found that the fetishists and the transvestites displayed significantly greater fetishistic interest than men in the other groups, but that there was no difference in strength of fetishistic interest between the fetishists and the transvestites.

In a second study, Freund et al. (1996) used phallogometry to measure sexual arousal to photographs depicting male and female genitalia, feet, shoes, and undergarments, in 16 fetishists, 21 transvestites, 19 gynephilic male controls, and 9 androphilic (sexually attracted to men) male controls. The transvestites were divided into two groups, based on their responses to a modified version of the Feminine Gender Identity Scale for Males (see Freund & Blanchard, 1998): one group whose members displayed more gender-atypical interests and behaviors during childhood and another group whose members displayed less childhood gender-atypicality. Although all of the transvestites denied gender dysphoria, the more gender-atypical group might theoretically be more similar to gender-dysphoric transvestites and to nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals, who often report some gender-atypical interests and behaviors in childhood (Buhrich & McConaghy, 1977a, 1985; Doorn et al., 1994). For each participant, the phallogometric response to the most arousing fetish object was compared to the response to either female or male genitalia, depending on the participant’s sexual orientation. Not surprisingly, the fetishists displayed the greatest fetishistic response relative to the genital stimulus. In order of diminishing fetishistic response, the remaining groups were the more gender-typical transvestites, the less gender-typical transvestites, the gynephilic male controls, and the androphilic male controls. The responses of the fetishists and the two transvestite groups were not significantly different, however. The fetishists and the more gender-typical transvestites displayed significantly greater fetishistic response than both control groups; the more gender-atypical transvestites displayed greater fetishistic response than both control groups, but the difference was statistically significant relative only to the androphilic control group. Freund et al. (1996) concluded from these observations that “transvestites are in fact fetishistic, and . . . are difficult to distinguish from fetishists proper” (p. 687).

Empirical Studies of the Relation of Transvestism and Nonhomosexual MtF Transsexualism

The essential feature of transvestism is sexual arousal with cross-dressing, whereas the essential feature of autogynephilic or nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism is the desire to acquire a female body or elements of such

a body. The close relation of these two conditions is demonstrated by the observations that (a) nearly all nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals have a history of sexual arousal with cross-dressing, and (b) a sizeable minority of men who identify as transvestites and who do not live full-time as women display a desire to feminize their bodies hormonally or surgically.

Most nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals have a history of sexual arousal with cross-dressing. As previously noted, Blanchard (1985) found that 46 (73%) of 63 nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals reported such a history. A subsequent study of 210 nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals who acknowledged anatomic autogynephilia yielded an even higher figure, 90% reporting sexual arousal to cross-dressing (Blanchard, 1991).

It is also not unusual for men who identify as transvestites and who do not live as women to want to feminize their bodies. In a survey of 385 cross-dressing men, most of whom were recruited from an organization for heterosexual cross-dressers, Bullough and Bullough (1997) found that 25% of participants had used feminizing hormones in the past or currently, although only 11% were living full-time as women. In another survey of 1,032 cross-dressing men, most of whom identified as heterosexual and none of whom lived full-time as women, Docter and Prince (1997) found that 4% were currently using feminizing hormones, another 5% had used hormones in the past, and a further 43% would like to use hormones. The desire of these cross-dressing men to feminize their bodies, without necessarily undergoing sex reassignment surgery or living full-time as women—a phenomenon that Blanchard (1993a, 1993b) called *partial autogynephilia*—demonstrates that a spectrum of anatomic autogynephilia exists among transvestites and nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals.

ETLEs in Men Sexually Attracted to Erotic Targets Other than Women or to Women with Unusual Characteristics

In their 1993 article, Freund and Blanchard extended the concept of ETLEs, presenting evidence that analogues of transvestism and anatomic autogynephilia existed in men who were preferentially sexually attracted to children (pedophiles) and noting that an analogue of transvestism also existed in homosexual men (androphiles). Lawrence (2006) further extended the concept of ETLEs to men who were preferentially sexually attracted to amputees (*acrotomophiles*; Money, 1986) and who also wanted to impersonate or become amputees (*apotemnophiles*; Taylor & Money, 1976). There is evidence that ETLEs also occur in men who are sexually attracted to plush animals and who desire to impersonate or become such animals, a phenomenon that was described by Freund and Blanchard (1993), but that has received little subsequent attention. Finally, it has

been suggested that ETLEs may occur in men who are sexually attracted to real animals (zoophiles).

ETLEs in Men Sexually Attracted to Children (Pedophiles)

Freund and Blanchard (1993) provided brief case reports describing the analogues of heterosexual fetishism, transvestism, and anatomic autogynephilia that occur in pedophilic men; these paraphilias are listed in the second row of Table 1. Lawrence (2006) suggested that the analogues of transvestism and autogynephilia found among pedophiles be called *pedovestism* and *autopedophilia*; these terms are used in Table 1. There are no reliable estimates of either the prevalence of pedophilia or the prevalence of ETLEs among pedophiles.

Pedophilic fetishism. Freund and Blanchard (1993) offered five brief clinical descriptions of pedophilic men who were sexually aroused by children's clothing or diapers, but who neither reported nor displayed evidence of erotic target identity inversion (i.e., they did not identify with children or imagine themselves to be children). Men with this pedophilic variety of fetishism have an ETLE, in that their preferred erotic target is children, but they mislocate that target and instead display a strong erotic interest in children's clothing.

Freund and Blanchard (1993) stressed the importance of distinguishing between pedophilic fetishism that occurs in pedophiles—a genuine ETLE—and the superficially similar phenomenon of fetishism for children's clothing that occurs in persons who are sexually oriented toward adults. The latter paraphilia does not, by definition, constitute an ETLE, but is usually a manifestation of sexual masochism and is commonly found in association with other paraphilias as well. Freund and Blanchard presented one case report of fetishism for children's clothing in a gynephilic man who did not imagine himself to be a child (Case 3, p. 561).

Pedovestism. Freund and Blanchard (1993) also presented four brief case reports of pedophilic men who experienced sexual arousal when they wore children's clothing (or replicas of such clothing) or diapers and also who imagined themselves to be children while doing so (i.e., they experienced erotic target identity inversion). In cases like these, analogous to transvestism in gynephilic men, the preferred erotic target is erroneously located in oneself, rather than in an actual child.

Complicating Freund and Blanchard's (1993) formulation are reports of men who experience sexual arousal while wearing children's clothing and who imagine themselves to be children while doing so, but whose underlying sexual orientation is *not* pedophilic, and who therefore cannot be understood as having an erotic

target identity inversion. Freund and Blanchard (1993) described one such patient (Case 1, p. 561); others have been described by Henkin (1997, Case A) and Pate and Gabbard (2003). Possibly, these cases reflect a misrepresentation of sexual orientation, similar to that believed to occur in MtF transsexuals who describe a history of autogynephilic sexual arousal but who claim to be exclusively androphilic (Blanchard, 1985; Lawrence, 2005). Alternatively, some cases of sexual arousal to wearing children's clothing and fantasizing oneself to be a child may not reflect ETLEs, but some other paraphilic phenomenon, such as sexual masochism.

Anatomic autopedophilia. Some pedophilic men experience sexual arousal to the idea of being children, but have *not* been reported to dress in children's clothing. In Table 1, this paraphilic interest is described as *anatomic* autopedophilia to distinguish it from the *pedovestitic* autopedophilia that putatively underlies pedovestism. In reality, the autopedophilia experienced by such men might not necessarily be exclusively anatomic, but plausibly might include behavioral or physiological components as well; most of the relevant case reports are too brief to allow any firm conclusions. Because it is difficult, if not impossible, for an adult to turn his body into a plausible facsimile of a child's body, anatomic autopedophilia is likely to be expressed principally in fantasy and enacted only partially, if at all. Consequently, anatomic autopedophilia that is not accompanied by pedovestism is not likely to be detected unless it is asked about specifically.

Freund and Blanchard (1993) described a pedophilic man who sought to have the foreskin of his penis reconstructed to approximate the appearance of an uncircumcised child; they interpreted this as an instance of anatomic autopedophilia, although they did not use this term. They described another pedophilic man who imagined himself to be a child, but who did not dress in children's clothing; Henkin (1997) described a man with similar characteristics (Case B) whose underlying sexual orientation appeared to be pedophilic, despite his being described as a gay man.

Because none of the aforementioned reports provide detailed descriptions of autopedophilic fantasies or enactments, I searched for English-language narratives and case reports concerning men with pedophilia in an attempt to find such descriptions. Detailed narratives and case reports concerning pedophiles, as opposed to nonpedophilic offenders against children, are not common. Only 13 such accounts were located: 10 presented by G. Wilson and Cox (1983), 1 in Howitt (1995), 1 by O'Carroll (1982), and 1 by Silva (1990). One of these reports described an apparent instance of partial anatomic autopedophilia, and another described detailed autopedophilic sexual fantasies that were not specifically anatomic.

G. Wilson and Cox (1983) presented the case of "Adam," an "active and 'successful' paedophile"

(p. 73), who described the physical characteristics he found attractive and unattractive in boys:

Body hair is disliked and once a boy reaches puberty and starts to grow body hair sex is no longer of great interest, although the relationship will continue. . . . Referring again to body hair, Adam said that he finds it "obnoxious and horrible." Even the contemplation of it "is pretty grim." He has had drugs in the past that have stopped hair growing on his body and it is only recently that it has begun to grow again, which he does not find appealing. (pp. 74-75)

The clear implication is that Adam wanted his body to resemble the bodies of the boys to whom he was attracted and that he took medications to achieve this appearance.

Howitt (1995) presented an extended autobiographical narrative by "Graham," a pedophile who imagined himself to be a child while engaging in sexual activity with boys and with adults of both sexes. The following excerpt from Graham's narrative is revealing:

My fantasy was that I wanted to be the boy. . . . I've done this with older children that I've abused throughout my whole life. They've never really existed. I've become the child in the fantasy. . . . When I'm abusing an actual child the fantasy is that I don't exist any more as the abuser, I'm the child who's being abused. . . . When I'm with adults I've got to imagine, I've got to become the child, but when there's an actual child there it's a lot easier to project yourself onto the child. . . . It wouldn't work [without the fantasy]. Even when I'm having sex with women, I've had two women in my life who I've lived with. I've got my wife and I've got kids of my own. Even when I'm having sex with her, she's nothing to do with it, I'm nothing to do with it—the whole thing's projecting back to the fantasy—me being a little boy and being abused. So it doesn't matter what sexual act I'm in, whether it's a group with men or one man on his own or a child on their own or a woman. . . . it's revolving round the same fantasy. . . . I've never had any other fantasies. There's never been any real other strong fantasy in my life. (pp. 4, 6)

ETLEs in Men Sexually Attracted to Men (Androphiles)

Freund and Blanchard (1993) suggested that, in principle, "the population of homosexual men should contain its own analogues of fetishism, transvestism, and autogynaeophilia" (p. 562), while cautioning that the homosexual analogue of autogynophilia would probably be "subtle and difficult to detect" (p. 562). There is limited evidence that such analogues do exist; they are displayed in the third row of Table 1.

Male homosexual fetishism. There has been little systematic study of fetishism in gay men. Ten (21%) of the 47 male fetishists described by Chalkley and Powell

(1983) were homosexual, which suggests a possible overrepresentation of gay men among male fetishists, given that gay men constitute only about 3% of the male population (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994). Gosselin and Wilson (1980), however, observed that there was no significant difference between the male leather and rubber fetishists they studied and male control group members in frequency of homosexual activities, which would argue against an overrepresentation of gay men among male fetishists.

Weinberg, Williams, and Calhan (1994) surveyed 262 gay male foot fetishists. About 60% reported a high degree of sexual arousal to men's feet; 51% reported a high degree of sexual arousal to men's boots, and 49% to men's shoes. Over 50% of respondents said that their foot fetish was the main focus of their masturbation; another 30% reported that it was a major focus. About 29% found it highly arousing to wear footwear that belonged to another man, but Weinberg et al. provided no information concerning how often this activity was accompanied by fantasies of being the other man, which would indicate the gay male analogue of transvestic fetishism. Consistent with the tendency of paraphilic sexual interests to co-occur, two thirds of the respondents in the Weinberg et al. survey reported an interest in sadomasochism, especially involving dominance and submission.

Homeovestism. Zavitzianos (1972) was apparently the first to recognize the homosexual male analogue of transvestic fetishism, a phenomenon that he called *homeovestism*. He described a 20-year-old gay man, whom he called a homeovestite, as follows:

He remembered that around puberty he saw two young athletes wearing jock-straps and got the impression that the jock-straps covered very large penises. After that, he tried to masturbate wearing a jock-strap himself and looking at himself in the mirror. This made it easier for him to have an erection. . . . The jock-strap hid his penis, which he felt was small, and helped him imagine that it was a very large one. (p. 474)

This masturbation practice resembles that engaged in by some transvestites, who masturbate while wearing women's clothes, looking in a mirror, and imagining themselves to be women.

Subsequently, Zavitzianos (1977) summarized two previous case reports concerning young homosexual men who wore clothing which resembled that belonging to other men, or which actually belonged to other men, during masturbation, and who seemed to identify with these other men while doing so. One case report was by Bak (1953); Zavitzianos (1977) provided a concise summary:

At the age of 14, at the onset of puberty, his four-year-old brother left home to volunteer in an elegant

regiment of Hussars. . . . He who had always admired his brother fell in love with a boy who had the same first name as his brother and in addition wore boots (to hide a crippled foot). An overt homosexual relation developed with this boy. He also started masturbation in front of a mirror, wearing boots and clothes made of gabardine material which was used for riding-britches. (p. 490)

Zavitzianos (1977) also summarized a similar case report by Boulanger:

At the age of 18, he had his first homosexual experience. It was with an army man and consisted of reciprocal masturbation. . . . The mutual masturbation with an army man restored his self-confidence. . . . During Easter vacation, which he spent in the Italian Alps, he sneaked into a dormitory of *bersaglieri* [sharpshooters] who were staying at the same inn, put on one of the uniforms and masturbated. He wanted to look at himself in the mirror but he could not find one. One day he told his analyst: "When I masturbate with an army man it is as if I wanted to be the other." . . . On another occasion he masturbated while wearing the military uniform of a cousin. [His] wish was to "be the other." (p. 491)

In this last example, identification with the man whose clothing is worn is explicit.

Anatomic autoandrophilia. Dickey and Stephens (1995) used the term *autoandrophilia* to describe sexual arousal to the thought or image of being male, as might theoretically be experienced by some female-to-male (FtM) transsexuals; theirs is the earliest use of the term I have found. Lawrence (2006) proposed that some cases of bodybuilding by gay men might represent an attempt by these men to turn their bodies into replicas of the bodies they admired in other men and might be accompanied by sexual arousal. This phenomenon, if it exists, would be difficult to differentiate from the desire to simply make one's body more attractive to potential male partners.

In a case report, Lawrence (in press) described an androphilic man who appeared to experience anatomic autoandrophilia. The informant had been an obese child who was believed to have delayed puberty. He received testosterone injections in an attempt to initiate pubertal development. The injections were associated with the onset of significant gynecomastia and worsening obesity, which made the informant feel effeminate and unattractive. The injections were also associated with increased sexual feelings, which in effect revealed to the informant his sexual orientation. Lawrence (in press) described this as follows:

I'm feeling sexual urges, which I never felt before in my life. Getting erections. But the erections and sexual urges were not for girls, they were toward the boys. Wanting

to wear the body of the boys. Wanting to be like the boys. Wanting to be masculine like the boys. . . . And when I think of being like the other boys, and I look at their bodies and want to wear their body, . . . I'm getting an erection! And then, I'm getting nocturnal emissions, . . . whenever I would dream of wanting to be like the other boys and wearing the body of the other. . . . The sexual response is to wanting to encompass the macho body, the masculine body, to wear that body, to have that body. That gives me the erection, that gives me the arousal; that's the fantasy.

This case report plausibly represents an instance of anatomic autoandrophilia in an androphilic man. Perhaps circumstances like those experienced by this informant, which create a profound dissatisfaction with one's existing male embodiment, are necessary to make visible the otherwise subtle phenomenon of anatomic autoandrophilia in men.

ETLEs in Men Attracted to Amputees

Some men display a preferential attraction to amputees as sexual partners, a paraphilic sexual interest that Money (1986) called *acrotomophilia*. Persons with this sexual interest sometimes refer to themselves as *devotees*. Two other amputation-related phenomena are closely associated with acrotomophilia: pretending to be an amputee, and wanting to become an amputee. Acrotomophilia, pretending to be an amputee and wanting to become an amputee display substantial co-occurrence; Bruno (1997) suggested that they might simply be variants of one underlying condition.

Persons who enjoy pretending to be amputees sometimes bind or conceal a limb or use assistive devices such as crutches or wheelchairs to impersonate amputees. No special term has been coined to describe this behavior: In both professional and lay publications, it is simply called *pretending*, and its practitioners, *pretenders*. Pretending is often associated with sexual arousal, and this is usually implicit when the term is used.

The desire to become an amputee is usually considered to be a paraphilia, called *apotemnophilia* (Money, Jobaris, & Furth, 1977; Taylor & Money, 1976). Recently, a few clinicians (e.g., First, 2005; Furth & Smith, 2000) have suggested that the desire to become an amputee is primarily a disorder of identity, as transsexualism is often believed to be. Most persons who want to become amputees have engaged in pretending and most are also sexually attracted to amputees; some of them acknowledge that their desire to undergo amputation is, or once was, an erotic phenomenon.

Lawrence (2006) proposed that pretending and apotemnophilia constituted ETLEs—erotic target identity inversions specifically—in persons whose preferred erotic targets were amputees (i.e., who were acrotomophiles). Pretending would be the analogue of transvestism and apotemnophilia would be the analogue

of anatomic autogynephilia. Another putative ETLE, amputation-related fetishism, has also been described in persons with acrotomophilia. These relations are summarized in the fourth row of Table 1. Note that apotemnophilia is unusual among erotic target identity inversions, in that persons who experience it can potentially become *genuine* exemplars of their preferred erotic target population, not mere facsimiles.

Amputation-related fetishism (stump fetishism). Many persons who are attracted to amputees express a particular erotic interest in the amputation stump (Taylor & Money, 1976). Everaerd (1983), for example, quoted an acrotomophilic informant as saying, "In the area of sex, the seeing and touching of a leg stump gives me an enormous kick" (p. 289). This phenomenon has not been extensively discussed in case reports, however, perhaps because it is seen as being so closely related to the underlying sexual interest in amputees. It plausibly might represent an ETLE in some cases, however.

Pretending. Two large studies conducted in men with acrotomophilia reveal a substantial co-occurrence of pretending, along with fantasies of becoming an amputee. A 1976 survey by Ampix, a company that sold stories about and photos of amputees to interested persons, included 194 men who considered themselves devotees (Dixon, 1983; Riddle, 1989). Over 52% of the men had pretended to be an amputee, sometimes publicly, and 70% had fantasized becoming an amputee. Nattress (1996) surveyed 50 male devotees, most of whom he recruited at social gatherings for female amputees and their male admirers: Roughly one half of his informants had pretended to be an amputee, and 22% agreed that they would like to be an amputee. Lawrence (2006) also reviewed seven case reports describing men who pretended to be amputees: Six of the men displayed acrotomophilia, 5 experienced sexual arousal with pretending, and 3 wanted to become amputees.

Apotemnophilia. Using semistructured telephone interviews, First (2005) conducted a large study of persons who wanted to undergo amputation or who had successfully done so. Of his 52 participants, 48 (92%) were men. Forty-eight participants (92%) had pretended to be an amputee and 45 (87%) acknowledged sexual attraction to amputees; the gender distribution of these persons was not reported. Fifteen (29%) participants reported other paraphilic sexual interests.

A large number of First's (2005) participants reported gender identity disturbances as well as a desire for limb amputation, suggesting possible co-occurring erotic target identity inversion: 8 participants reported transvestic fetishism; 10 reported they had sometimes wished to be the opposite sex or felt that they were in the body of the

wrong sex; 7 had crossed-dressed, in addition to the 8 who cross-dressed in connection with transvestic fetishism; 6 had considered undergoing sex reassignment and 1 had actually undergone sex reassignment. Because most of the men in First's study were gynephilic, the co-occurrence of erotic target identity inversions is not unexpected: A man whose preferred erotic target was a female amputee and who experienced an erotic target identity inversion involving that erotic target might want to impersonate or become an amputee, might want to impersonate or become a woman, or might want both of these things. This formulation accounts for the increased prevalence of cross-dressing and gender identity problems in men with apotemnophilia (Lawrence, 2006).

Like some MtF transsexuals, some persons who want limb amputations feel that their desire for physical transformation has little to do with sexuality but is primarily about their identity (Furth & Smith, 2000), although they may in some cases acknowledge associated sexual arousal. Some persons who desire limb amputations have suggested that their condition should be called *amputee identity disorder* (Furth & Smith, 2000) or *body integrity identity disorder* (Body integrity identity disorder, n.d.; see also First, 2005).

ETLEs in Men Attracted to Plush Animals

Freund and Blanchard (1993) described a male patient who was attracted to anthropomorphic plush animals, who masturbated using them, and who developed the fantasy of becoming a plush animal himself. Freund and Blanchard (1993) believed that this man experienced an erotic target identity inversion with respect to his putative erotic target, plush animals. With the exception of this report, I have not found descriptions in the professional literature of persons with a preferential attraction to plush animals, much less of persons with such an attraction who also attempted to impersonate, or wanted to turn their bodies into facsimiles of, plush animals. Consequently, any hypotheses about ETLEs and erotic target identity inversion in such individuals should be regarded as tentative.

Nevertheless, descriptions of persons who display sexual attraction to plush animals, engage in sexual behavior while impersonating such animals, or both, are not difficult to find in books (Gates, 2000) and print and online magazines (J. Abel, 2007; Gurley, 2001; Hill, 2000; O'Connor, 2001). Such persons have also been depicted in a popular television program (Weiss & Mylod, 2007).

An erotic interest in plush animals has been called *plushophilia* (Hill, 2000). In principle, this term would also describe a fetishistic interest in this erotic target, because plush animals are inanimate and ipso facto can be considered fetishes. Many plush animals, however, are representations of anthropomorphic animal

characters in animated cartoons (Gurley, 2001; Hill, 2000); these animal cartoon characters typically display human-like speech, movement, and personality traits. Consequently, the real erotic target in plushophilia might sometimes represent the anthropomorphic animated cartoon character, rather than the plush animal—or perhaps an amalgamation of both.

Some persons with plushophilia—and some persons who apparently do not experience this paraphilia—at times wear anthropomorphic animal costumes called *fursuits* (Gurley, 2001). The practice of wearing fursuits to impersonate animal characters is called *fursuiting*; an erotic interest in doing so could appropriately be called *fursuitism*. Similarly, the desire to change one's body into a facsimile of a plush animal could appropriately be called *autoplushophilia*. These phenomena and the hypothesized relations between them are summarized in the fifth row of Table 1.

Just as cross-dressing by men does not always have an erotic motive, fursuiting by men is not always an erotic practice (WikiFur, n.d.). Nevertheless, some men openly acknowledge the erotic component of their interest in plush animals and in fursuiting; these persons sometimes humorously refer to themselves as *furverts* (Gurley, 2001). Formal study will be necessary to clarify the nature, prevalence, and interrelations of plushophilia, fursuitism, and autoplushophilia among furverts and to document the nature and extent of any co-occurring paraphilias.

ETLEs in Men Attracted to Real Animals

On theoretical grounds, one would predict that ETLEs should also exist in men whose principal sexual attraction is to real animals (zoophiles); the forms these might take are summarized in the sixth row of Table 1. Only limited evidence supports the existence of ETLEs in zoophiles, however. I have not found descriptions of fetishism for items associated with animals or animals' body parts in either the professional or the non-professional literature; the rarity with which animals ordinarily wear clothing may be a limiting factor here.

There is little question that more than a few male zoophiles experience feelings of identity with the animals to which they are attracted; in some cases, this might indicate the existence of an erotic target identity inversion. Miletski (2002), in a study involving 82 male zoophiles, found that 17 (20%) reported that it was “completely or mostly true” that they began having sex with animals because they “identified with the animal of [their] gender” (p. 124) and another 17 (20%) reported that this was “somewhat” true. Erotic target identity inversion related to *women* as erotic targets was certainly not unusual among Miletski's male zoophiles: 15 (18%) had engaged in cross-dressing as a sexual activity, and 2 (2%) reported sexual fantasies consistent with nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism. It is

plausible that some of Miletski's cross-dressing or transsexual male informants also experienced erotic target identity inversion related to animals as erotic targets; but one would expect these individuals to identify with animals of the *other* gender, whereas Miletski only asked about identification with animals of the same gender. Williams and Weinberg (2003) surveyed 114 zoophilic men and reported that some informants believed they had characteristics like those of animals or felt like they were animals. Beetz (2004) proposed that some zoophiles experience *species dysphoria*—a sense that they are or should be animals and that they are “wrongly embodied” in their human form—similar to the gender dysphoria experienced by transsexuals. A few first-person descriptions of species dysphoria can be found on the Internet (e.g., Gurley, 2001; Therianthropy, 2007). Species dysphoria in zoophilic men can be understood as an outgrowth of autozoophilia, just as gender dysphoria in gynephilic men can be understood as an outgrowth of autogynophilia.

The extent to which some zoophiles might attempt to impersonate or turn their bodies into facsimiles of real animals is unknown. The nonprofessional literature suggests that some cases in which fursuits are worn for erotic purposes (i.e., fursuitism) reflect attraction to real animals and an erotic desire to impersonate real animals (Gates, 2000). There are also a few recognized instances of men—not necessarily zoophiles—who have undergone extreme body modifications to make their bodies resemble the bodies of animals. Perhaps the best known of these is Dennis Avner (2007; Casavant, 2005), a man who identifies as a tiger:

He has had all his teeth removed and replaced with tiger-like dentures and fangs. He has had his lip split to resemble the mouth of a cat. He has six stainless-steel mounts implanted on his forehead and 18 piercings above his lip to which he can attach whiskers. He has had nose and brow implants, and silicone cheek, chin and lip injections. The tips of his ears are pointed. And he has so many tattoos they almost cover his body. (Casavant, 2005, para. 11)

Because Avner is not known to be a zoophile, his extensive body modifications should not be assumed to represent an outgrowth of autozoophilia. However, Avner's extensive body modifications provide an example of what an attempt to actualize autozoophilia and reduce feelings of species dysphoria might look like.

ETLEs in Women

With the exception of sexual masochism, paraphilias have rarely been described in women (G. G. Abel & Osborn, 1992; APA, 2000), and this is true of ETLEs specifically. Fedoroff, Fishell, and Fedoroff (1999) described 14 female patients with paraphilias, one of

the largest case series involving women; none appeared to have an ETLE. The 48 fetishists described by Chalkley and Powell (1983) included only one woman, a lesbian with a fetish for breasts, not for an inanimate object. There are only a few individual case reports of fetishism in women (e.g., Raphling, 1989; Zavitzianos, 1982). Reports of transvestic fetishism in women are also uncommon; Stoller (1982) described three cases, which included a summary of a 1930 case report by Gutheil. Dickey and Stephens (1995), apparently the first authors to use the term *autoandrophilia*, found no evidence of this paraphilia in the two androphilic FtM transsexuals they described, nor did Chivers and Bailey (2000), who also recognized the term, among the 39 androphilic FtM transsexuals they surveyed. Coleman, Bockting, and Gooren (1993), who studied 9 androphilic FtM transsexuals, noted that “only one of our subjects confided any sort of fetishism in his history of cross-dressing” (p. 48). Some FtM transsexuals, however, claim that they experience autoandrophilia (e.g., Kaldera, n.d.) and suggest that it is not rare. Money (1990) described a woman who acknowledged acrotomophilia, engaged in pretending, and sought limb amputation; First's (2005) study of 52 persons who sought amputations included 4 (8%) women.

Possible Etiologies of ETLEs

The etiology of ETLEs is unknown. This is not surprising, given that the etiologies of most patterns of sexual attraction are poorly understood. Fetishism and transvestism, the two most prevalent ETLEs, have been the subject of most case reports, investigations, and theories that are relevant to understanding the etiology of ETLEs. Data concerning the neuroanatomic correlates of MtF transsexualism may also be etiologically relevant. A common weakness of theories addressing the etiology of ETLEs is lack of specificity: The proposed etiological factor may be associated with some cases of ETLEs, but is it also associated with other types of paraphilias or with nonparaphilic outcomes.

Possible Biological Factors

A number of case reports have documented the co-occurrence of transvestism, fetishism, or both, with temporal lobe epilepsy, head injury sustained early in life (perinatally or postnatally), or both (for summaries, see Freund, 1985, and Zucker & Blanchard, 1997). One classic case report by Mitchell, Falconer, and Hill (1954), for example, described a man with temporal lobe seizures, fetishism for safety pins, and episodic transvestism, whose fetishistic symptoms were relieved by temporal lobectomy. It is unclear, however, whether any association between head injury or temporal lobe epilepsy and ETLEs is more than coincidental, given

that head injuries in childhood, and adult fetishism and transvestism, are not rare phenomena. An hypothesized link between head injury or temporal lobe epilepsy and ETLEs would also appear to lack specificity: Kolářský, Freund, Machek, and Polák (1967), for example, studied 86 patients with epilepsy and found an association between head injuries before age 18 months and paraphilias in adulthood, but they observed many different types of paraphilias in their informants (e.g., voyeurism and exhibitionism, pedophilia, frotteurism, and sadomasochism, as well as fetishism). Two recent studies have demonstrated that head injury in childhood is a risk factor for pedophilia (Blanchard et al., 2002; Blanchard et al., 2003). These observations suggest that any association between head injury or temporal lobe epilepsy and paraphilic phenomena is likely to be a general one, rather than specific to ETLEs.

A number of case reports describe familial co-occurrence of transvestism, male nonhomosexual gender dysphoria, and nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism (familial co-occurrence, of course, does not necessarily imply a purely biological etiology). Freund (1985) summarized four such reports, involving co-occurrence of these conditions in brothers or in fathers and sons. Green (2000) described six cases, involving a pair of male twins with nonhomosexual transsexualism, two sets of brothers with nonhomosexual transsexualism, and three father-son pairs with either transvestism or nonhomosexual gender dysphoria. Green argued that the rarity of both transvestism and MtF transsexualism made the chance co-occurrence of these conditions improbable; but transvestism, as we have seen, is really not rare.

Two important studies from the Netherlands Institute for Neurosciences, conducted postmortem in six MtF transsexuals, documented a sex-reversed pattern of size (Zhou, Hofman, Gooren, & Swaab, 1995) and neuron number (Kruijver et al., 2000) in the central portion of the bed nucleus of the stria terminalis (BSTc), a sexually dimorphic hypothalamic nucleus. Three of the transsexuals were described as sexually oriented toward women, two as oriented toward men, and one as oriented toward both women and men, which led the authors to conclude that their findings were independent of sexual orientation. However, an earlier publication (Swaab, Gooren, & Hofman, 1992) described the first of the supposedly male-oriented transsexuals as having been married to a woman and having been exclusively oriented toward women in the final years of life. Moreover, the first of the ostensibly male-oriented transsexuals began cross-gender hormone therapy at age 42 and the second at age 35—both later than average for homosexual MtF transsexuals (Blanchard et al., 1987; Smith et al., 2005). It appears, then, that at least five of the MtF transsexuals studied, and perhaps all six, were nonhomosexual. This raises the possibility that sex-reversed size and cell number in the BSTc may be

a neuroanatomic marker for nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism, or for its associated erotic orientation, autogynephilia, rather than for MtF transsexualism generally (see Lawrence, 2007b). In a study using magnetic resonance imaging, Schlitz et al. (2007) documented reductions in BST size in a small group of pedophilic offenders; noting the earlier findings by Zhou et al. (1995), Schlitz et al. proposed that reduced BST size “may . . . be a feature of sexual abnormalities in general” (p. 744), rather than indicative of a particular type of paraphilic interest. It is important to remember that the Zhou et al. and Kruijver et al. findings have never been replicated and that they might plausibly reflect the effects of cross-sex hormone therapy (see Hulshoff Pol et al., 2006), rather than a neuroanatomical feature that was present prior to treatment.

Psychosocial Factors

Several psychoanalytic theories of ETLEs have been proposed. As previously noted, Freud (1927/1961) believed that fetishism arose during the oedipal period, about age 5 or 6, as a defense against castration anxiety. He hypothesized that “the fetish is a [symbolic] substitute for the woman’s (the mother’s) penis that the little boy once believed in . . . and does not want to give up” (pp. 152–153). Denial of the mother’s castration would supposedly relieve the boy’s anxiety about the possibility that he, too, might be castrated. Freud conceded, however, that this explanation lacked specificity:

Probably no male human being is spared the fright of castration at the sight of a female genital. Why some people . . . fend it off by creating a fetish, [but] the great majority surmount it, we are frankly not able to explain. (p. 154)

During the last 60 years, psychoanalytic theories of ETLEs have generally emphasized the importance of earlier, preoedipal experiences with parents or other caregivers. Most contemporary psychoanalytic theories propose that either anxiety over separation from parental figures or parental overinvolvement is involved in the etiology of ETLEs. Person and Ovesey (1974a, 1974b, 1978, 1983; see also Ovesey & Person, 1976) are perhaps the most influential psychoanalytic theorists who have written about transvestism and MtF transsexualism. They believed that both these conditions—and fetishism, too—resulted from “unresolved separation anxiety during the separation-individuation phase of infantile development” (Person & Ovesey, 1974a, p. 4). According to their theory, MtF transsexuals attempt to deal with unresolved separation anxiety by actualizing the “reparative fantasy of symbiotic fusion with the mother” (Person & Ovesey, 1974a, p. 5). In transvestism, they theorized, the “female clothes represent the mother as a transitional object” (Person & Ovesey,

1974a, p. 5) and protect the transvestite against anxiety, as well as being used sexually. Fetishism was, in their view, etiologically similar to transvestism, but reflected more successful, if still imperfect, separation and individuation, in that no symbiotic fusion with the mother need be explicitly enacted. The plausibility of Person and Ovesey's etiologic theory is discussed in a later section of this article.

Other contemporary psychoanalytic theorists have proposed somewhat different explanations of MtF transsexualism. Stoller (1968) suggested that excessive physical closeness with the mother, rather than anxiety about separation from her, was the essential etiological factor in MtF transsexualism, combined with the absence of a father capable of intervening to prevent his son's feminization. Moberly (1986) also implicated the absence of the father, or some equivalent male figure, in the etiology of MtF transsexualism: She believed that such an absence precluded normal attachment-based same-sex identification and led to "defensive detachment" and "radical same-sex disidentification" (p. 206). The chief difficulty with Stoller's (1968) and Moberly's theories is their lack of specificity: Many boys grow up with absent fathers, and extreme physical closeness between mothers and their infant sons is probably not uncommon, but MtF transsexualism is rare. Stoller (1968) also attributed transvestism to a disordered mother-son relationship: He explained that transvestism results when mothers or other female caregivers express their supposed hatred of men and masculinity by cross-dressing their sons. Person and Ovesey (1978) contended, however, that cross-dressing was almost always initiated by the child, not by the parent. Zucker (Zucker & Blanchard, 1997) stated that he had never encountered a case of transvestism that involved involuntary cross-dressing.

Some behavioristic theorists (e.g., Junginger, 1997; McGuire, Carlisle, & Young, 1965) have proposed learning-theory models of fetishism. They suggested that classical conditioning, involving the pairing of an inanimate object with the experience of sexual stimulation, is responsible for the initiation of fetishism, whereas operant conditioning, in which approach to and interaction with the fetish object is positively reinforced through masturbation and orgasm, is responsible for maintenance of the fetishistic response. A similar explanation might account for many cases of transvestism. Rachman (1966) and Rachman and Hodgson (1968) demonstrated that fetishism for women's boots can be conditioned in a laboratory setting, lending some plausibility to the behaviorist view. McConaghy (1993) doubted, however, that learning-theory explanations involving reinforcement through orgasm could account for the prepubertal onset of many cases of fetishism and transvestism. G. Wilson (1987) argued that behaviorist explanations of fetishism lacked specificity, in that they could not explain why some men who experienced the pairing of potential

fetish objects with sexual stimulation—presumably not an uncommon occurrence—developed fetishism, whereas other men did not.

LaTorre (1980) conducted an elegant experiment demonstrating that perceived rejection by potential human sex partners may increase fetishistic preferences among heterosexual men. In his study, 30 male participants viewed photos of women and stated which women they would most like to date; one half of the men, randomly selected, were told that the women they had selected had expressed an interest in dating them, whereas the remaining men were told that their interest had not been reciprocated. This same procedure was then repeated, so that each man received either two supposed expressions of mutual interest or two supposed rejections. Finally, both groups of men, along with a control group, were asked to rate photos of women, women's feet and legs, and women's lingerie and panties, on scales of pleasantness, sexual arousal, and acceptance. Men who had experienced rejection rated photos of women less positively than did the other men; they also rated photos of women less positively than photos of women's legs and panties, whereas the other groups rated these photos similarly. The observed differences in ratings, although statistically significant, were, however, small; the ratings given by the rejected men do not necessarily indicate the presence of clinical fetishism. G. Wilson (1987) noted that LaTorre's findings were consistent with the observation that fetishists tend to be less sexually experienced, less extroverted, and perhaps less socially confident than nonparaphilic men (Chalkley & Powell, 1983; Gosselin & Wilson, 1980). It is not clear, however, whether sexual inexperience, introversion, and lack of social confidence predispose some men to fetishism, or whether fetishistically inclined men tend to acquire less sexual experience and to experience reduced interest in, and confidence around, other people.

Implications of the ETLE Concept for Psychoanalytic Theories of Transvestism and Nonhomosexual MtF Transsexualism

Despite widespread agreement that transvestism and nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism are closely related conditions, both the *ICD-10* and the *DSM-IV-TR* consider transvestism to be a sexual disorder, but MtF transsexualism to be a disorder of gender identity. This seeming inconsistency probably reflects, at least in part, the ideas of several influential psychoanalytic theorists from the late 1960s and early 1970s, especially Person and Ovesey (1974a, 1974b), who considered both transvestism and MtF transsexualism to be disorders of gender identity primarily and sexual disorders only secondarily. Because the erotic elements of transvestism are so obvious, it is probably difficult for most clinicians

to understand transvestism as anything other than a sexual disorder, but the idea that MtF transsexualism is primarily a disorder of identity is superficially plausible and has been widely accepted by clinicians and the general public.

As previously noted, Person and Ovesey (1974a, 1974b) believed that transvestism and MtF transsexualism reflected attempts to manage unresolved separation anxiety, first experienced during infancy, by means of the “reparative fantasy of symbiotic fusion with the mother” (1974a, p. 5). If transvestism and nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism were the only known erotic target identity inversions, it might be difficult to decide whether they were better understood as primary disorders of sexuality with secondary implications for gender identity, or as primary disorders of gender identity with secondary sexual manifestations. Given the existence of other types of erotic target identity inversions, however, the gender identity theory proposed by Person and Ovesey (1974a, 1974b) seems less tenable. If a MtF transsexual who undergoes sex reassignment surgery actualizes his fantasy of symbiotic fusion with the mother, does an apotemnophile who undergoes amputation of a limb actualize his fantasy of symbiotic fusion with some unspecified amputee caregiver from early childhood? Do autoandrophilic enactments represent the actualization of fantasies of symbiotic fusion with the father? Does autopedophilic ideation reflect the comforting fantasy of symbiotic fusion with another child? These ideas seem implausible, if perhaps not entirely beyond the ability of psychoanalytic theory to explain. In my opinion, the existence of paraphilic erotic target identity inversions analogous to MtF transsexualism that cannot reasonably be understood as reflecting attempts to deal with unresolved anxiety involving separation from the type of person or entity that the paraphilic person seeks to resemble or become, constitutes a major challenge to the dominant psychoanalytic theory of MtF transsexualism and transvestism.

Implications of the ETLE Concept for the *DSM-V*

As this article goes to press, the APA’s *DSM* is undergoing revision, a process that is expected to produce a new edition, the *DSM-V*, in 2012 (APA, 2008). Accordingly, I briefly address the implications of the ETLE concept for the *DSM-V*. I believe that the *DSM-V* should make explicit reference to the ETLE concept and to the clinical insights the concept has generated; this would make the *DSM-V* both a more useful clinical tool and a better educational resource. I will discuss three specific recommendations for the *DSM-V*:

1. The general description of the paraphilias should set forth a dimensional classification system for paraphilias that includes ETLEs as an independent paraphilic dimension.
2. The existing diagnosis of transvestic fetishism should be replaced by the broader and more conceptually useful diagnosis of autogynephilia.
3. The text discussion of the diagnostic features of gender identity disorder (GID), or GID’s replacement diagnosis in the *DSM-V*, should emphasize the importance of autogynephilia in accounting for the key symptoms of GID in nonhomosexual men.

The *DSM-V* should set forth and describe a dimensional classification system for the paraphilias as part of the general discussion that precedes the description of specific paraphilias. Ideally the listed dimensions would include (a) unusual erotic target preferences (e.g., pedophilia), (b) unusual sexual activity preferences (e.g., exhibitionism), and (c) ETLEs (e.g., fetishism). Such a dimensional classification system would increase the conceptual clarity of the term *paraphilia* and would constitute a significant improvement over the current *DSM-IV-TR* classification scheme, which includes only “1) nonhuman objects, 2) the suffering or humiliation of oneself or one’s partner, or 3) children or other nonconsenting persons” (APA, 2000, p. 566), categories that are disappointingly ad hoc. However, because the term *ETLEs* defines a paraphilic dimension and not a specific clinical entity, it would not be appropriate for *ETLEs* to become a named paraphilia in the *DSM-V*, even if individually described clinical subtypes, such as fetishism and autogynephilia, were specified. Instead, fetishism should be retained as a named paraphilia and transvestic fetishism should be replaced by the more comprehensive diagnosis of autogynephilia. Other ETLEs appear to have a very low prevalence and should continue to be categorized under “paraphilia not otherwise specified.”

Autogynephilia should replace transvestic fetishism as a named paraphilia in the *DSM-V*. The term *autogynephilia* first appeared in the *DSM* in 2000, when it was mentioned in the *DSM-IV-TR* as a feature of most cases of transvestic fetishism and some forms of GID. As a named paraphilia, autogynephilia could easily be described using diagnostic criteria similar to those employed for existing named paraphilias in the *DSM-IV-TR*. For example, diagnostic criteria might include the following:

1. Over a period of at least 6 months, in a nonhomosexual male, recurrent, intense, sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviors in which the thought or image of being female is sexually exciting to the person.
2. The fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviors cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other areas of functioning.

The specifier “with gender dysphoria,” currently applicable to transvestic fetishism, should be retained as a

specifier for autogynephilia as well. Autogynephilia is a superordinate paraphilic category that subsumes both fetishistic cross-dressing and related paraphilic manifestations that do not involve female clothing per se; as such, it could and logically should replace transvestic fetishism as a named paraphilia in the *DSM-V*. Admittedly, transvestic fetishism (or transvestism) has been a named paraphilia in the *DSM* since 1980, and a similar diagnosis, *fetishistic transvestism*, appears in the *ICD-10* (WHO, 1992); these observations might argue for retention of transvestic fetishism in the interest of continuity (see APA, 2000, p. xxviii). On the other hand, it is impossible for clinicians to adequately understand fetishistic cross-dressing and the most prevalent form of MtF transsexualism without understanding the concept of autogynephilia. Making autogynephilia a named paraphilia would emphasize its conceptual importance and would promote wider appreciation of its significance.

Finally, the initial text discussion of the diagnostic features of GID, or whatever diagnosis replaces GID, should emphasize that, in nearly all cases, the key symptoms of GID in nonhomosexual men can be understood as manifestations or direct outgrowths of autogynephilia, a paraphilia of the ETLE type. In the *DSM-IV-TR*, autogynephilia is described as an “associated feature” of GID in nonhomosexual men, along with anxiety, depression, and personality disorders (APA, 2000). This is like describing elevated blood sugar as an “associated feature” of diabetes: It treats an essential element of the disorder as merely an associated phenomenon. Emphasizing that autogynephilia lies at the core of nearly all cases of GID in nonhomosexual men would make it clear to clinicians that GID in nonhomosexual men is best understood as a paraphilic phenomenon and that fetishistic transvestism and nonhomosexual MtF transsexualism can be understood as different manifestations of the same underlying dysfunction. This implies that nonhomosexual men diagnosed with GID, or whatever diagnosis replaces GID in the *DSM-V*, would nearly always receive the diagnosis of autogynephilia as well.

Why Have ETLEs Been Underappreciated?

After being introduced by Blanchard in 1991, the concept of ETLEs has received little attention, although the best known manifestations of ETLEs, fetishism and transvestism, are among the most prevalent paraphilias. There are several reasons, I believe, for this underappreciation. One reason is that some ETLEs are subtle and consequently may go unrecognized. The manifestations of ETLEs that have been observed in gay men, for example, with the possible exception of fetishism for shoes or other items of clothing, are difficult to distinguish from the ordinary male behavior that is seen in gay and straight men. Often the paraphilic nature of

behavior associated with ETLEs will become apparent only if clinicians have a high degree of suspicion and ask probing questions.

Moreover, many erotic target identity inversions are difficult or impossible to actualize and may exist only in fantasy. Most men are able to act out their paraphilic fantasies, at least in principle, even if doing so sometimes creates serious negative consequences for them. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, for a man to turn his body into a plausible facsimile of a child’s body: That can only occur in fantasy, or in very limited ways. Consequently, many ETLEs involving erotic target identity inversion are likely to remain invisible, unless patients are carefully questioned about their erotic fantasies.

Finally, ETLEs involving erotic target identity inversions can superficially appear to be “disorders of identity” primarily, and erotic phenomena only secondarily, if at all. Many persons with putative erotic target identity inversions tend to emphasize the identity-related aspects of their feelings and deemphasize the erotic aspects (Docter, 1988; Docter & Prince, 1997; Furth & Smith, 2000; Lawrence, 2004). Transvestites and nonhomosexual MtF transsexuals, for example, often prefer to focus on their identities as women as the reason for their behavior and downplay any past or current sexual arousal in association with cross-gender behavior or fantasy (Lawrence, 1999a, 1999b, 2004). This is also true of persons who desire limb amputation (First, 2005). Emphasizing identity is socially more acceptable than emphasizing eroticism; it may also represent what these individuals genuinely feel to be most personally salient (Lawrence, 2007a).

What Might Result If ETLEs Became More Widely Appreciated?

In my opinion, wider recognition of the concept of ETLEs might lead to several desirable results. For one thing, clinicians and researchers might become sensitized to the existence of erotic target identity inversion: When they encounter persons, especially men, who express a powerful desire to impersonate, or transform their bodies to more closely resemble someone or something unexpected or unusual, they might entertain the hypothesis that they are observing the expression of a paraphilic sexual interest, complicated by erotic target identity inversion.

If ETLEs were more widely understood, the unchangeable nature of the desires associated with erotic target identity inversions might also become better understood and accepted. At least in men, paraphilic sexual orientations, like normophilic sexual orientations, appear to be immutable in adulthood (Pillard & Bailey, 1995; Swaab, 2007). If persons with erotic target identity inversions, such as autogynephilic

transsexualism or apotemnophilia, understood that the desires associated with these conditions are as unchangeable as the desires associated with other sexual orientations, they might concentrate on finding creative adaptations to their feelings, rather than trying in vain to change them.

Moreover, if ETLEs were more widely appreciated, medical and surgical treatment might also be offered more readily to persons with erotic target identity inversions. Clinical experience with the most prevalent severe erotic target identity inversion, autogynephilic transsexualism, demonstrates that medications that lower testosterone levels and decrease sexual desire seem to reduce emotional distress in affected persons (Cohen-Kettenis & Gooren, 1992; Lawrence, 2004; Leavitt, Berger, Hoepfner, & Northrop, 1980). Perhaps testosterone-lowering medications might also benefit men with other types of erotic target identity inversions, such as apotemnophilia (Lawrence, 2006). Moreover, surgical treatment of autogynephilic transsexualism is associated with very high levels of subjective satisfaction and negligible regrets (Lawrence, 2003; Muirhead-Allwood et al., 1999). Perhaps surgical treatment of persons with other types of erotic target identity inversions, such as apotemnophilia (Bayne & Levy, 2005; Furth & Smith, 2000; Lawrence, 2006) might be equally successful.

Finally, wider appreciation of ETLEs might allow persons with erotic target identity inversion who cannot deny the erotic element of their desires to achieve greater self-acceptance. The popular models of MtF transsexualism, and body integrity identity disorder in the case of persons who want limb amputations, privilege narratives of identity over narratives of sexuality. This may leave persons who cannot ignore the erotic component of their desires feeling confused, ashamed, and alienated from the community of persons with similar desires (see Lawrence, 1999a, 1999b). More widespread understanding that these identity disorders can be thought of as erotic target identity inversions might lead to more inclusive models of these conditions, resulting in less shame, greater self-acceptance, and increased feelings of community for persons who experience them.

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