

## FEATURES OF THE MANIFESTATION OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION

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**Annotation.** *Sexuality does not permeate our experience so far as S. Freud supposed, but hardly anyone would deny that it is nevertheless an important part of our lives. In its turn, sexual orientation, which is related to what kind of sex is physically attractive to you, and which sexual partners you may wish to have, is an important part of self-concept and sense of identity of most people. Just as we form our views on who we are according to our ethical, religious and philosophical convictions, vocation and life goals, we determine who we are in our sexuality.*

**Keywords:** *sexual orientation, sexual deviations, paraphilia, homophobia, homosexuality.*

### Introduction.

Defining sexual identity and its accompanying relationships can be tricky for anyone who lives in such a diverse society as the United States, where views on gender attributes and behaviour are different and are still in a state of transition. This has a certain compensation for most adolescents and young adults, who have at least one aspect of sexual identity, which seems durable and can serve as a point of support: “I’m a woman and men like me” or “I am a man and women like me.” In turn, this leads to a significant acceptance and support from family and peers. However, for a small but significant minority that discovered their complete or partial sexual orientation towards people of the same sex, sexual identity formation often goes through extraordinary difficulties.

The realisation that you are sexually and romantically attracted to the people of the same sex, i.e., you are potentially gay or, to some extent, bisexual, often comes with the feeling of your “otherness,” an intense process of doubt in yourself and an internal struggle for agreeing this aspect of self with your whole identity as a personality. In addition, as it is noted by many authors, when openly acknowledging their sexual identity, gays, lesbians and bisexuals face various negative reactions of the dominant heterosexual majority, which could harm their psychological development.

### Main text.

This deeply rooted homophobia is not a true phobia, and it might be better to call it sexual prejudice, but this term is still used both in everyday speech, and in professional journals, as well as quite an unfortunate definition of “homosexual.”

Homophobia refers to a set of extremely negative attitudes that may include unfounded fear and unfounded and strong hatred, disgust, anger towards other people only due to their sexual attraction to the people of the same sex. Family, peers and society in general often display sheer contempt for people who openly show this orientation, avoid them or condemn them for immorality, and discriminate against them. For example, a mass survey of gays, lesbians and bisexuals revealed that approximately one in four of men and one in five of women faced with offenses or harassment on the grounds of intolerance during the year before the survey.

For instance, they include such aggressive actions as verbal and physical abuse, stalking, throwing objects or spitting at them, trying to push or hit. The media regularly tell us about increasingly violent cases of abuse, including beatings and killings.

Obviously, we should not assume that all or even most heterosexuals are infected with homophobia. The degree of its prevalence remains unknown. Moreover, we should not assume that homophobia and other forms of sexual prejudice and discrimination strictly relate to such limited segment of the heterosexual population as under- or uneducated people.

Other authors noted that although in recent years, textbooks on psychology and sociology do not define homosexuality as a disorder; in many cases it is done implicitly, through the manner of discussing the issue. For the population as a whole, there is only one typical factor connected with sexual prejudices: it is likely that heterosexual men have more negative attitudes towards people sexually oriented at the people of the same sex than heterosexual women, especially when it comes to gays.

*This is how it influences the development of adolescents and young people.*

One of the problems is that adolescents with different sexual orientation hide it from everyone except for few close friends or partners. They may intend to report it later, in early adulthood in college or in the city environment. During this period, they also face with negative attitudes and rejection, but they evidently find a friendly support among the peers experiencing the same problems, as well as among many heterosexuals without homophobia. Undoubtedly, some of them open only to the closest friends and not to the public. This is most likely if they choose to work in such areas where many employees are openly homophobic.

*Causes of homosexuality.* We had better answer honestly: we do not know them, except for the fact that sexual orientation in general is a complex result of the interaction of heredity and environment. Theorists are divided into supporters of the role of biology and supporters of the influence of social learning in the development of homosexual orientation; every position has its evidence, but most of it is not exhaustive. The further statement is that “except for some obvious biological abnormalities caused by cross-gender structural abnormalities, we cannot clearly separate the influence of biological and psychological factors on differences in behaviour, constituting sexual orientation.” Other researchers have repeated this observation and emphasised that it is much more important to understand the meaning of belonging to a homosexual minority than to understand the origins of homosexuality.

Sexual deviation is any form of deviation from the norm in sexual behaviour, regardless of its manifestations and nature, intensity, and etiological factors. It includes sexual abuse in terms of deviation from social and medical norms.

Sexual disharmony is a particular state between the sexual norm and sexual pathology.

Thus, there are the following types of sexual disorders from the psychological point of view.

Sexual deviations or paraphilias are psychosexual disorders characterised by

sexual arousal directed at objects and situations that are not part of the standard model of sexual arousal and activity and that can in varying degrees disrupt the ability of mutual emotionally intense sexual activity. This notion simply emphasises that the deviation (para-) is what attracts the individual (philia). It covers a number of variations of sexual behaviour, which is currently at variance with accepted social norms and standards of sexual behaviour to the degree sufficient to consider them as “deviant.”

The American Psychiatric Association DSM gives several types of paraphilia:

- a) using non-human objects to cause arousal;
- b) sexual activity characterised by the true or imitated suffering or humiliation;
- c) repeated sexual activity with non-consenting persons.

Features of paraphilia can be seen in normal sexuality. It is safe to speak about the paraphilia only when such activity appears in the focus of sexual satisfaction, replacing direct sexual behaviour with a consenting adult partner.

### **Conclusions.**

Causes of paraphilia are more psychogenic than biological, therefore greatly dependent on the paradigm adopted in psychopathology. For instance, within psychoanalytic paradigm, these disorders are seen as a consequence of disruption of psychosexual development in early childhood; in the behaviourist paradigm, they are regarded as maladaptive sexual behaviour, learnt through the conditional-reflexive way; within the humanistic paradigm, they are most probably a private component of a unique, albeit distorted, world of subjective perception of each individual.