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FROTTEURISTIC DISORDER

Frotteuristic Disorder involves the recurrent touching and rubbing up against a nonconsenting person for the purpose of sexual arousal and gratification, a behavior known as frottage. No cases of the disorder have ever been reported in females. The most commonly practiced form of frotteurism is rubbing the individual's genitals against the victim's thighs or buttocks. A common alternative is to rub the individual's hands over the victim's genitals or breasts. Typically, the individual selects a crowded place that has a wide selection of victims (e.g., subway, sports event, elevator, shopping mall). In such a setting, the initial rubbing of the woman may not be immediately noticed; the victim usually does not protest because she is not absolutely sure what has happened. Most people who engage in frottage usually fantasize that they have an exclusive and caring relationship with their victims during the moment of contact. However, once contact is made and broken, the person engaging in frotteurism realizes that escape is important to avoid apprehension.

UNDERGROUND SEX

Chad Hughes was age 45 when he was referred for psychiatric consultation by his New York City parole officer following his second arrest for rubbing up against a woman in the subway. According to Mr. Hughes, he had a "good" sexual relationship with his wife of 15 years when he began, 10 years ago, to touch women in the subway. A typical episode would begin with his decision to go into the subway to

rub up against a woman, usually in her 20s. He would select the woman as he walked into the subway station, move in behind her on the subway platform, and wait for the train to arrive at the station. He would be wearing plastic wrap around his penis so as not to stain his pants after ejaculating while rubbing up against his victim. As riders moved onto the train, he would follow the woman he had selected. When the doors closed, he would begin to push his penis up against her buttocks, fantasizing that they were having intercourse in a normal noncoercive manner. In about half of the episodes, he would ejaculate and then go on to work. If he failed to ejaculate, he would either give up for that day or change trains and select another victim. According to Mr. Hughes, he felt guilty immediately after each episode but would soon find himself ruminating about and anticipating the next encounter. He estimated that he has done this about twice a week for the last 10 years, which would mean that he has rubbed up against approximately 1,000 women. During the interview, Mr. Hughes expressed extreme guilt about his behavior and often cried when talking about fears that his wife or employer would find out about his second arrest. However, he had apparently never thought about how his victims felt about what he did to them. His personal history did not indicate any obvious mental problems other than being rather inept and unassertive socially, especially with women.

Discussion of "Underground Sex"

Mr. Hughes has both engaged in frotteuristic behavior with unsuspecting victims and is markedly distressed by his behavior, thus qualifying for the DSM-5 diagnosis of Frotteuristic Disorder (DSM-5, p. 691). Mr. Hughes' behavior is typical in that he chooses a crowded place that offers a wide variety of victims who likely were not even aware of what was happening to them. This probably explains why Mr. Hughes has only been arrested twice.