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2018 ATSA Conference | Thursday October 18 | 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

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Heavy Petting: A Forensic Expert's Guide to Bestiality

Brian Holoyda, MD, MPH, MBA
St. Louis University
Renee Sorrentino, MD
Harvard Medical School
Susan Hatters Friedman, MD
Case Western Reserve University
Detective John Allgire
Whatcom County Sheriff's Office
Carl Wigren, MD
Wigren Forensic, PLLC
Sara Moore, MA, PsyD
Institute for Sexual Wellness

Human-animal intercourse, or bestiality, has occurred since earliest recorded human history. Some ancient cultures were permissive of such behavior, most commonly in the setting of religious practice. On the other hand, many early civilizations punished individuals accused of having sex with animals. Over time, the majority of nations around the world have established legislation to punish individuals deemed to have engaged in bestiality. Various legal grounds for punishing acts of bestiality exist, including moral or religious proscriptions, treating animals as property, and considerations of animal rights.

Though many nations and states have severe sentences for violations of anti-bestiality law, the scientific community knows relatively little about the people who have sex with animals. Alfred Kinsey's original research indicated that human-animal sexual contact was a relatively common phenomenon, at least among farm-raised boys. More recent research has identified various types of individuals who have sex with animals, including self-identified "zoophiles" who report being sexually attracted to or having relationships with their pets, as well as incarcerated sexual offenders who report histories of bestiality in addition to other forms of animal cruelty. Case reports describe individuals with autism spectrum disorder who engage in sexual acts with animals, possibly as a component of restricted or atypical interests. Lastly, some individuals have sex with animals for secondary gain, such as financial compensation from pornography or sex shows.

Despite research providing an incomplete understanding of bestiality, there have been multiple efforts to categorize those who have sex with animals. In terms of psychiatric nosology, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition* classifies "zoophilic disorder" under the diagnosis of "other specified paraphilic disorder," which requires that an individual's sexual interest in animals cause distress or impairment or

BETTER TOGETHER

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result in harm or risk of harm to self or others. Notably, the diagnosis may fail to capture all individuals who engage in sex with animals, depending on whether or not a clinician determines that bestiality incurs a risk of harm to others. Other classification schemes exist based on the type of sexual behavior in which the individual engages or the offender's motivation.

In 2005, the Washington Enumclaw horse sex case brought bestiality into the public eye. A 2007 movie, *Zoo*, described the life and death of Kenneth Pinyan, an American man whose anal intercourse with a horse led to the perforation of his colon. Subsequent to Mr. Pinyan's death, Washington passed its own anti-bestiality bill. Though somewhat rare, law enforcement agencies do investigate reports of animal cruelty that involve bestiality. For example, in 2015 investigators identified two adult males who engaged in sexual intercourse with a mini-mare on a farm in Whatcom County, Washington. Utilizing an online forum for individuals interested in bestiality, the detectives were able to obtain evidence incriminating the two defendants. Further analysis of the forum revealed ties to the original Enumclaw animal sex farm, as well as another case in which a man was running a dog brothel in Sumas, Washington.

Poorly understood and in need of further research, bestiality remains a taboo topic in much of the world. Despite the lack of scientific evidence, societies and law enforcement agencies have developed – and in some cases been forced to develop – legislation and investigative techniques to identify and to punish individuals who have sex with animals. Further research will spur improved scientific and legal understanding and help to guide legal bodies in their management of offenders.

Learning Goals:

- To describe the history of bestiality in various cultures over time, as well as the development of legislation to prosecute the behavior.
- To review the scientific literature on individuals who engage in bestiality and provide practical recommendations for psychiatric and medical evaluation and treatment.
- To discuss review the Enumclaw horse sex case from a forensic pathologist's perspective and describe current practices and examples of the forensic investigation of such cases.

Brian Holoyda, MD, MPH, MBA completed his undergraduate, medical, and public health education at Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois. He completed general psychiatry residency, forensic psychiatry fellowship, and business school at UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento, California. He is an Assistant Professor of psychiatry in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience at St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri. He has various clinical roles, including providing outpatient and acute psychiatric care at the St. Louis County Jail. Dr. Holoyda conducts many types of forensic psychiatric evaluations, including sexual violence risk assessments and sexually violent predator evaluations. Dr.

BETTER TOGETHER

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Holoyda's research interests include rare paraphilic disorders, sexually violent predator laws, and group behavior.

Renee Sorrentino, MD is the medical director at the Institute for Sexual Wellness and Assistant Professor at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Sorrentino is a Board Certified Forensic Psychiatrist with expertise in the evaluation and treatment of individuals with paraphilias. Dr. Sorrentino received her medical degree from Boston University School of Medicine and completed a residency in adult psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital and McLean Hospital. Following her residency, Dr. Sorrentino completed a forensic psychiatry fellowship at Case Western Reserve University. Dr. Sorrentino's practice is devoted to the treatment and evaluation of paraphilias and sexual offenders as well as the hormonal treatment of paraphilias.

Susan Hatters Friedman, MD is a perinatal and forensic psychiatrist. She completed medical school at Case Western Reserve University, where she also completed her psychiatry residency, forensic psychiatry fellowship, and training in research and maternal mental health, prior to joining the faculty. She is currently Associate Professor of Psychological Medicine at the University of Auckland School of Medicine, and Consultant Psychiatrist at Mason Clinic, Regional Forensic Services and remains affiliated with Case Western Reserve University. Dr. Friedman has served as vice-President of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL), and as Chair of the Law and Psychiatry committee at the Group for Advancement of Psychiatry (GAP). In 2010, she received the AAPL award for the best teacher in a forensic psychiatry fellowship. She has published more than 100 articles and book chapters. Her research has primarily focused on the interface of women's mental health and forensic psychiatry, including notably child murder by mothers.

Detective John Allgire has worked with the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office since 2001. Prior to being promoted to detectives he worked on patrol and in Crime Scene Investigation (CSI). In the detectives division he currently specializes in Computer and Mobile Forensics and Major Crimes. He received his BA in Psychology from Western Washington University prior to working in Law Enforcement.

Carl Wigren, MD received his medical degree from the University of Washington in 2001. He completed specialty training in Anatomic Pathology at the University of Washington and two years of subspecialty training in Forensic Pathology at the King County Medical Examiner's Office in Seattle, Washington, and the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office in Fort Worth, Texas. He served as the Associate Medical Examiner for Snohomish County in Everett, Washington for two years. Dr. Wigren is a licensed physician and board-certified in Anatomic Pathology and Forensic Pathology by the American Board of Pathology. As an avid scientist and former educator, he places high value on continuing medical education. To that end, he frequently attends conferences, and actively seeks out training that will continue to expand his knowledge and enhance his skills.

BETTER TOGETHER

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Sara Moore, MA, PsyD completed a Masters of Arts in Counseling and Forensic Psychology in 2010 and her Doctorate in Clinical Psychology in 2016 from William James College. During her doctoral studies, she examined the countertransferential reactions therapists experienced working with their male sexual offending patients. Sara has spent eight years working with sexual offenders and has presented at statewide conferences in both Massachusetts and New York as well as various international conferences.