

# STALKING – DESIRE, IMPULSE, OBSESSION, COMPULSION, ADDICTION. BETWEEN PATHOLOGY AND POSTMODERN CULTURE

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## **Summary**

*The present paper takes up the problem of stalking, a phenomenon topical in law, psychology and sociology. Stalking is, among others, persecution, harassment. It is considered as aggression. From the offender's view point, it is analyzed as pathology of emotions, sentiments, and love; but also as dysfunctional dependence upon a person. The paper offers a broader, theoretical interpretation of stalker's behavior, referring to Bowlby's attachment theory and postmodern cultural conditions.*

**Meaning of the term.** Stalking, taken from the English hunting vocabulary, means following animals or creeping but in penal law, its nearest synonyms are persecution or persistent harassment (22). Most often stalking is defined as behavior/s characteristic for repeated threat (acts of violence, harassment) against public and private life of one or more persons. Stalking may occur not only in a family context but also among strangers (workplace, informal relations, acquaintance). It may result from complications of any relation, thus everybody can become a victim of stalking.

The term stalking denotes some kind of mental and physical violence expressed in harassing behavior, similar to molesting and controlling. The problem of stalking is a comparatively new phenomenon.

Harassment, so characteristic for stalking, takes place between acquaintances of various kinds. Stalkers direct their actions against legally protected personal freedom. They often publish intimate pictures of former partners, with addresses, office and private phone numbers. Such behaviors are objectively harmful for the victims as they disrupt their functioning within a given community (21).

In legal terms, stalking is described as behavior openly directed at the harassed person. According to Hołyst (19),

stalking is “purposeful, malicious, repeated persecution and molestation of another person, threatening her safety”.

Stalking today is particularly oppressive. It uses modern media that grant unlimited opportunities for open and anonymous attacks on its victims. Most often, stalking is conducted by making phone calls, text and electronic messages, containing threats and aggressive attitudes, to which victims react with negative emotions from fear and dread to embarrassment. Stalkers spread slander, lies, and gossips; they threaten, blackmail, make late night phone calls, put pictures, and comments on the Internet (20).

More and more often, people talk about cyber-stalking (cyber-harassment) by e-mail. On the Internet, stalkers can impersonate their victims on various forums and chats, spreading false, illegal, and harmful information about them. The Internet and mobile phones have become most useful for stalkers.

Stalking lacks an unambiguous definition. Differences result from the interest various disciplines take in the problem, especially psychologists, lawyers, criminologists, pedagogues, and sociologists. Of necessity, the problem of stalking relates to the stalker's personality, kinds of emotions, and victimological relations between the perpetrator and the victim. The latter perceives stalking as aggression and violence. In case of stalker, the problem is more difficult to explicitly assess. Analyzing stalker's motivation, his emotions and personality there appear some doubts whether their behaviors fit norm or pathology, especially so, that many of them belong to insufficiently controlled, obsessive, manic behavior, and contacts with victims point to dysfunctional dependence.

**Legal regulations in various countries.** US and Canada (the so-called ‘common law countries’) were the first to criminalize stalking in the nineties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after some tragic events in which some public figures fell prey to stalking (Madonna, Richard Schaeffer, Jodie Forster).

Though each US state made its own definition of stalking, and based their verdicts on precedence; still, all definitions contained three common elements. They are a

chain of unwanted behaviors violating someone's personal freedom, alleged or expressed menace, justified sense of menace the harassed person experiences (28).

In 1997, Great Britain introduced "Protection Against Harassment Act". According to this act, prosecution must prove a sequence of at least two disturbing, harassing deeds. The first part of the document enumerates a series of actions stalkers undertake to harass and torment another person. The act also demands that offenders must know or at least be aware of the consequences of his actions (15).

West European countries also criminalize stalking. Though sometimes the term 'stalking' is not used, behavioral characteristics are the same. Other countries enumerate such actions as following, sending unwanted correspondence, intruding, and making persistent phone calls. Others underline those characteristics of stalking as, worrying, tormenting, and threatening (18). They stress such repeated actions as intruding and pestering. It makes an important element of identifying stalking that the victim fears for life or health, her own or someone else's, or that the offender makes menacing comments against the victim (9).

The phenomenon of stalking, its escalation and serious menace to personal interactions also resulted in an amendment of June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011 to Polish Criminal Code that made stalking an offence (KK, Art. 190a §1, 2, 3, 4). Stalking is punished with the penalty up to 3-year imprisonment, in case of the victim's suicide up to 12-year imprisonment. Stalking is prosecuted on private charges.

Various specialists comment on stalking on the media, including psychologists and psychiatrists. A heated debate followed the case of a dentist harassed by her enamored, unhappy patient. He would not take her categorical 'no' and used to sit in her waiting room with a poster "I love Angelica K.", took her pictures when she was calling patients, wrote letters and stopped her in the street. The police advised the woman to meet him for coffee and explain the situation, or to accept him for "such love happens once in a lifetime". Then, the unwanted admirer was lurking behind trees, outside her house, on the bus, bothering and intruding on her neighbors. The police maintained that they are helpless until he harmed her (32).

Since the amendment to Polish Penal Code was introduced, the police received over 30 notifications in six weeks. The couples' decision to part constituted over 30% of these cases. Unrequited love makes the main reason of stalking. Those disappointed in love harass most frequently, in which case it is difficult to count on the police help (25). Though no avalanche of civil suits followed after June 6<sup>th</sup>, but it does not indicate that the bill was unnecessary. Quantity is not always most important. Penalizing stalking

should become a preventive measure. Before the amendment was introduced, harassed victims were unprotected. Besides, new regulations indicate that harassment stops being a family affair. Stalking creates a new type of offense that bears all traits of harassment and violence enumerated in Polish Penal Code.

Still, some researchers maintain that stalking should not be considered a legal problem but should be taken up by psychologists for assessing and solving. However, there are other opinions that such ambiguous behavior as stalking is perversion of criminal law (44).

**Intense emotions as the stalkers' motive.** In the majority of cases, stalkers' behavior is motivated by intense emotions, positive or negative, usually escalating, signaling obsession and impaired control. Stalking is often described as pathology of love. For centuries love has been a symptom expressed in various forms and fascinating people. Those in love talk about strange emotional impressions, fusion of pleasure and hatred, suffering with desire for revenge, ecstasy with disappointment. Often passionate love is related to negative emotions, such as jealousy, revenge, suspicion, mental tension, impaired criticism, depression, and anxiety.

Love symptoms, such as enfeeblement, lack of sleep and appetite, remind of several diseases. In the works of Ibn Sin, there is a chapter devoted to diagnosing and treating 'isha'. According to this famous Iranian doctor, when love occurs, rational thinking is utterly disturbed, thinking falls into delirium, and depression replaces humor (38).

John Lee, a Canadian sociologist, proposed the earliest 'love analysis' of the enamored pair, supplementing classical criticism with a series of constructive interviews. From the data gathered, he singled out six forms of love, romantic, friendly, playful, disinterested, practical, and manic (42). Very often psychiatrists discern similarities between love and mania. Jealousy, obsession, and emotional dependence are typical manifestations of unfulfilled love. Such elements of morbid love can be perceived in stalkers' behavior.

The claim that love is closely related to madness and the former leads to the latter appears in psychiatry, especially in forensic practice. Among others, stalking gained publicity due to psychiatric assessments. Robert Bardo, Rebecca Schäffer's obsessed fan, was trying to approach her for three years, get to the film set, but was chased away by her bodyguards. However, the star was not informed about the incidents, and had no idea what her fan looked like. Finally, he called on her only to kill her when she opened the door (19).

**Stalkers behavior assessed as morbid by psychia-**

**trists.** Brad Pitt's obsessed fan, Athena Rolando broke into the actor's house, put on his clothes and fell asleep in his bed. Before she sent him letters and followed him. She was sent for compulsory therapy and given restraining order of 100 meters (14).

John Hinckley, Jodie Foster's constant follower, was a typical stalker. His obsession started since he saw her in a Martin Scorsese film 'The taxi driver' (1976). He tried to catch her attention by sending letters, dropping poems at her doorstep, and making phone calls. He was planning to hijack an airplane, and even commit suicide in her presence. Finally, he decided to kill president of the US. In 1981, he tried to shoot President Ronald Regan. In result, he was declared insane and sent to a mental institution (24).

Escalation of the stalker's activities may end in killing the victim. In Poland, Agnieszka Kotlarczyk, Miss Poland, and Miss International of 1991, was murdered after five years of J.L.'s persistent harassing. This bank clerk's obsession began when he saw her on the catwalk (11).

**Stalking as addiction.** Sometimes, the research conducted by criminologists discerns similarities between stalking and addiction. The only way to get rid of the obsession (mania) is to abstain from all contacts with the desired object. Each instance of yielding, answering a letter, only intensifies the stalker's behavior. Similarly, sending another person (i.e. stalker's friend) to explain that he should stop harassing will be taken and interpreted that the object of desire cannot make a decision, yet (19).

Psychologists agree with the above. Analyzing stalking from the stalker's position, they treat stalking as *emotional and sentimental dependence* upon a person. It qualifies as psychological dependence, which is defined as the strong emotional need to feel pleasure or relief from suffering, fear or stress that often develop in connection with addictive use of some substances, such as drugs (45).

As addiction, stalking is emotional and sentimental. Every stalker may be convinced about his justified and proper behavior, which he treats as a set of positive emotions and feeling, as care, and not as psychopathology. His victim justly interprets it as aggression.

**Stalking as personality disorder.** Personality disorders are defined as a model of experience or behavior typical for a given person, which significantly differ from social and cultural patterns. Manifestations of such behavior show within the sphere of cognitive, sentimental, interpersonal impact and impulse- controlling experiences.

In personality classification, personality disorders (DSM IV, ICD 10) have been simplified into the following groups; a) paranoid personality disorders, schizophrenic, schizotypal; b) manifestations of personality as exaggera-

ted emotionally or unforeseeable (personality disorders of a-social, borderline, histrionic or narcissistic character); c) personality disorders of evasive, addictive and compulsive – obsessive character.

In particular, these are negative emotional experiences that disorganize behavior. One of them is fear of rejection. Identification and intensification with such personality disorders characterizes individuals diagnosed as borderline or narcissistic personality (25%), and less frequently other personality disorders. Such experiences exceptionally influence their functioning. Even insignificant intensification of these, a word, sentence, or gesture, radically changes their lives. They behave as if they have become aware of abandonment or rejection, or that something radically changed in their mutual relations. They describe it as an emotional tsunami that cancelled out their lives so far. From that moment, their values, goals, and former feelings stop to exist. Such persons cannot part without revealing group dominant behavior, aiming at showing power and strength (43).

The need to verify the conviction concerning unjust and harmful rejection dominates offender – victim relations in motivating their behavior. The next stage consists of proving eternal love and convincing the other person of the absence of deceitful intentions. Indeed, those persons experience devastating emotions and manifest them in volatile manner, dramatizing and exaggerating several aspects of their lives and their feelings. They transfer their expectations on others and seem to be victims, while they are often persecutors. Within minutes, they can entirely change their behavior.

In particular, narcissistic personality disorders seem representative for this group of offenders. Peculiar manner of self-perception, unreal picture of oneself, excessive self-importance, and idealization of one's ego, as well as certain self-admiration, all they make building personal relations difficult. Such individual reveals deep egoism, of which he is not fully aware, but the consequence of which is a growing sense of rejection, suffering, social discomfort, or significant difficulties in emotional relations (43).

Both narcissistic and borderline personality disorders feel strong need to love, maintain that they do not get enough of it, fear rejection and abandonment. They are certain nobody can love as they do. Their identities rest on a feeling of being a victim or participant of extraordinary experiences. They concentrate on themselves and their suffering from which nobody can release them. They are convinced on their exceptional and beneficial role that only they can help and change for better the life of the person they love. Finally, the nucleus of their motivation rests on fear of re-

jection, anger, undervaluation, hatred, and reactive or auto-aggression. They all drive them to offending (23, 33).

The aggression shown aims at controlling the person to make potential rejection impossible, and gain a sense of security. Most often, even minimal 'sentimental deficiencies' can trigger off painful experiences and concretize in aggressive activities. As a rule, conflict, rejection, petty frustration may result in attacking the loved person if only to have her in close proximity. Stalkers are afraid of rejection (17).

Not all stalkers show psychotic or deep personality disorders. Their behaviors, marked with negative emotions and aggression, inadequate to its context, relate to their abnormal personality traits or incomplete socialization and instrumental treatment of their environment (29). In stalker-victim relations, the parties are usually acquainted. It may be incidental and superficial, but also an authentic relation on sentimental and sexual basis. The victim perceives stalking as aggression or violence that the offender may be unaware, or even consider his behavior as normal (31).

In stalking, the most serious danger is connected with moving from indirect contacts (phone calls, text messages, e-mail, unwanted gifts) to direct contacts (physical closeness, visiting the victim's workplace, aggression, losing control over one's behavior).

**Stalking versus attachment theory.** To explain the etiology of stalkers' behavior that bears traces of harassment, aggression and violence, psychologists refer to the assumptions of Bowlby's theory (6). They concentrate on early childhood relations between parents and children to discern the etiology of behavioral disorders (8, 10, 13). This conception integrates the approaches of theoretical, developmental, and cognitive psychology, etiology, and evolutionary biology.

Attachment theory analyses and explains dependencies that occur in early childhood between an individual, his main caregiver, and further cognitive, emotional, and social development, and later functioning in life.

Attachment is defined as emotional relation that a person strikes with oneself and another person, which connects them in time and space (1). The most important parent-child relations are defined as attachment that is a long lasting, emotional bond with a given person (35).

Bowlby (6) maintains that from the moment of birth, man possesses attachment behavioral system, which, securing his survival, has adaptive function. It activates every time when the individual loses sense of security and feels mounting threat, in close relation with the main caregiver and his environment.

In childhood, attachment system activates in observable

escalation of the sequence of behavioral reactions toward the caregiver, determined as attachment behaviors. They aim at restoring emotional balance, which is secured by the closeness of the significant person called attachment figure. Sense of security is restored when the parent (caregiver) emotionally responds to the needs signaled by the child in an adequate and coherent manner.

Experiences the child stores in early childhood in relations with the attachment figure determine the quality of cognitive-affective representations developing in the mind, called internal working models of attachment. In early interactions with the caregiver, internalized experiences (positive or negative) become prototypical for the individual's subsequent interpersonal relations.

Internal operational models remain unchanged throughout individual life span (13, 27, 35). Yet, within development process, new cognitive-affective and emotional experiences transform set models, thus changing adaptation processes. Individual differences determine the quality of attachment model (10).

Describing his theory, Bowlby (6) unequivocally maintains that attachment system associates with individual tendency to exploit one's environment. On the one hand, exploitation leads to undertaking several new, physical and social experiences, on the other, it creates menace, if the caregiver is absent or distanced, and his positive representation missing from the child's mind.

Similarly, to cognitive patterns, internal working models of attachment determine the ways of building relations with others, including the relations between 'pairs'. These models develop in early childhood, based on the experiences acquired and repeated interactions with caregivers, thus conditioning the formation of cognitive structures.

Attachment theory is evolutionary and concerning the whole life cycle. As its basic element, the theory recognizes emotional bond between the child and caregiver as determining his subsequent development. The quality and characteristics of such bond influence further bonds and behaviors, which the individual reveals toward himself and the external world.

The hypothesis stating that our relations in 'pairs' are responsible for a given kind of attachment significantly influenced recent psychological research. Consequently, it was expected that the same kinds of parent-child attachment could be perceived in relations between two individuals.

Psychological research partly confirmed and extended the above hypothesis, singling out three kinds of attachment (1); a) stable; b) evasive; c) ambivalent. There is another kind of attachment, d) disorganized, disoriented, and a c/d type, evasive-ambivalent (10).

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Type 'd' is most interesting for our discussion. Disorganized individuals perceive themselves incoherent, and their self-esteem is unstable. They perceive external reality as menace. They consider themselves unable to face up to constant threats coming from the environment. In-pair relations concentrate on emotions revealed in a manner chaotic and difficult to understand, which reflects their own convictions of being unloved that in consequence leads to constant anxiety and excessive vigilance.

Though Bowlby's attachment theory explains several aspects of functioning of the individuals victimized in the family, still, many problems remain unsolved. Morton's and Broane's (30) meta-analysis concludes that, so far, the research on dependencies between attachment models in parent - child relation and instances of violence had a general perspective, with no regard for varied forms of violence; especially maltreatment and sexual abuse or early acts of violence. The earlier the acts of violence the more susceptible the child to develop fear-induced states (5).

Other aspects of attachment styles are linked with the sex of the maltreating person (father, mother) and the child's sex (7). Fear induced attachment style is more frequent for boys than for girls, Boys are more sensitive and prone to develop developmental psychopathologies.

Dependencies require further and more detailed empirical analysis that would explain mechanisms of transferring childhood - experienced violence upon close and distant interactions in childhood and also in adulthood. It would also help determine the type of marital violence that has the most negative impact on the development of the child's internal working models of attachment, and is most often transmitted on the relations with the child and environment. The reluctance to reveal traumatic experiences on part of the child and his family hampers further research, even if protection from potential caregiver's revenge is guaranteed.

Assessing Bowlby's theory today, it can be said that it helps understand some emotional disorders derived from traumatic childhood experiences, which, in turn, may be expressed in socially deviant behaviors, such as stalking.

**Postmodern psychology and its role in explaining stalkers' behaviors.** Nowadays, besides psychiatrists, psychologists, and sexologists, other groups become interested (and they are not patients) in psychopathology. In our postmodern reality, otherness and psychopathology have been inspiring literature, film, even philosophy. Literature offers descriptions of some disorders (i.e. the once-famous film *One flew over the cuckoo's nest*), and the patients' personalities, which are more valid than medical case histories.

The common usage of such terms as deviant, misfit, and recently stalker, relate to customs and take social norms as the point of reference. Psychological terms employed are connected with personality (usually abnormal) or behaviors divergent from norms of conduct or appearance.

Polish psychiatrist, Antoni Kępiński left several texts considered transgressing traditional horizons of psychiatry and embracing moral problems. They were problems of ethical nature concerning the boundaries and guarantees of individual identity, the right to otherness in highly organized postmodern societies. Up to a point, his writings opposed manipulative and technicalist attitudes toward individuals, also including those used to administer punishment, medical treatment, resocialization, and readaptation. It means that some representatives of humanistic psychiatry accept that schizophrenics are free not to undergo compulsory treatment, free to decide whether to take it or not regardless of considerable adaptive difficulties (41).

Boundaries of freedom of those staying outside 'traditional norms' have been largely extended, owing to granting meaning to subjectively experienced needs, goals, and lately, realization of sexual identity. The interest in individual identity of deviants, recently stalkers, is in focus due to their increased activities, in which the elements of criminology and psychopathology mix with legal problems. Their behavior becomes socially oppressive. Besides, such 'events' make news; they sell well just as any brutal offence or encroachment on celebrities' intimacy does. Such 'reports' help kindle particular interest (36).

Most often, in case of personality disorders (deviants, outsiders), their biographies show unresolved emotional problems that have been left untackled. They hate themselves, escape from themselves, and want to be free, though they have not resolved their identity problems. Stalkers have similar problems, described as narcissistic, disorganized, disoriented, and withdrawal – ambivalent personalities.

It is very difficult to define all forms of deviation, outsiderism, including stalkers (individuals who did not manage to adapt to their environment, who do not fit into conventional society, in result of personal choice or rejection). Therefore, in literary narratives writers write in their name or directly about themselves, which helps understand those figures, their problems and complicated relations with their environment.

It must be remembered that the figure of a deviant or outsider, even with serious mental disorders, locates itself on the borderline between pathology and norm due to imprecise social and medical criteria. Because of this, every deviant, outsider, stalker can have his own (and indeed,

has) psychopathology. There are problems similar to those of mental patients, identity problems, loss of cognitive and emotional control over oneself, also difficulties in keeping intransgressible borders between subjective and objective, which characterizes stalkers' emotions. It remains doubtful whether legal intervention is always necessary. Much rather, there should be extensive psychological help, which relates to proven and stable psychological theories that are adequate with the appropriate /dominating discourse in our world.

**Postmodern individual identity.** In psychology, postmodern and communitarian concepts result from more general reflections on human functioning in the modern world, in contrast with earlier psychological approaches that were closely linked with psychological research concentrating on selected psychological phenomena (26).

Modern philosophy underlines the predominance of quality of life over life itself, which, according to psychologists, results in common drive for pleasure, and ultimately in shaping postmodern man. Postmodern man has a tendency, a habit even, to turn to positive experiences, to collecting experiences, as Zygmunt Bauman picturesquely puts it (3). Postmodern personality transgresses all definitions, being open and vigilant, ready for quick change. All resources are treated as commodity, human relations as business transactions that are maintained as long as profitable.

For postmodern man maximizing effective management of time dominates. Postmodern man has no time for non-profit activities, constantly short of time, which does not mean lack of free time but of slow time (12). Acceleration determines postmodernity, which, in turn, marginalizes traditional culture. It is best described in the words of a Russian, one of many colorful characters from Olga Tokarczuk's novel "Bieguni":

"Sway, move, move [...] only then you will flee him. The one who rules the world has not power over movement, and does not know that our bodies are sacred when moving, only then you will flee him, when you move" (40).

Modern 'runners' are the people in a rush, cut from the past and the future, trying to obscure themselves. Someone who looks for liberation in speed, movement, and forgetfulness, considers slowing down threatening. Speed allows to piece together dispersed elements of life experiences in abundance, in the world that is 'too much'. Absence, imperceptibility of excess makes one think about lack, which causes panic and state of menace. Abundance and the cultural imperative of 'to have', which contains the idea of quick satisfying of all needs, generate human activities.

The needs of which we were unaware a moment before, become much desirable now. How can we listen to our ne-

eds when it turns out that the world knows more about them than we do? How to realistically assess our abilities since we hear they are unlimited and everybody can (or would like to) satisfy them all? What counts now is immediacy and speed with which our needs are satisfied; waiting for them becomes extravagance. A boundary between natural and fabricated or artificially triggered becomes blurred in overpowering abundance (3, 4).

**'People chameleons'.** 'People chameleons' is a metaphor aptly illustrating postmodern man. The nucleus of his psyche is the ability to orient himself fast and readiness for change, to begin once again, change the repertoire of behavior, preferences or attitudes. It is not only possible but also desired as evidence of mental health.

Sense of identity is built upon the abundance of positive emotions, which replace invariable opinions concerning what is important. The questions how to lead a good life has been reformulated into how to be successful, free from stress, to experience only positive emotions, feel accepted, and how to acquire commonly desired goods. According to psychoanalysis or humanist psychology, such collectors of experiences do not suffer for the same reasons as other individuals. Postmodern man manages regardless of his socializing past; he transgresses the boundaries set by environment and experience (37).

Behavioral concept points to the essential role of reinforcements, which operated in the past, for the future choices of an individual. On the contrary, postmodern concept stresses the notion of future experiences. Postmodern man is a gambler functioning in the world in which the rules change during one game, so everybody can change his value system and motivation.

Such a man, of many life stories, whose life does not make a coherent whole, can operate as a collection of stories, in which the main actor, though he remains the same, significantly changes all the time. The principle of absolute autonomy of an individual to choose good life and the right of equal access to commodities becomes a central motive to act. It implies such a vision of human psyche in which all stability and attachment become irrational, giving way to programmed non-attachment to people and things. However, all failures, especially rejection, trigger off behaviors marked with sense of injustice, claimative or overtly exploitative, showing egoism, unstable self-assessment, lowered sense of value, which demands constant confirmation.

Psychologists also speak about the phenomenon of the so called 'empty I'. This is the personality uninterested in building stable identity, defining oneself as somebody with defined needs, values, and aspirations, firmly placed within

the network of social relations (34). Postmodern men are not obliged to stick to their previous 'incarnation', thus they have no difficulty in changing convictions, dropping friends or partners.

The suffering they inflict on others is not, or even should not give pricks of conscience; individuals with disorders have it, as stalkers. The choice of one's own concept of life, expecting positive emotions that fulfill their criteria of acceptance and attachment, originates from their egoistic and subjective reasons with considerable lack of empathy. Seriously disrupting other people's functioning, stalkers threaten, harass, and become aggressive, with notable lack of sympathy and concentrating on their own emotions. The information and texts sent confirm the need to fulfill their subjective anticipations. The ease and anonymity of transmissions facilitate escalation of communication, which make the victims' lives a misery. Within the seemingly varied and tolerant postmodern culture, with a variety of life styles, mobility and openness, stalkers, because of personality disorders, remain more in the worlds of their own desires and illusions than in the world of real opportunities.

Stable traditional cultures, based on canonical and tested values and traditions, have been replaced by postmodern relativism, distancing from the absolute and unlimited freedom. Consumption cult, called 'a new religion' becomes coercive. Postindustrial societies operate within a system that forces obsessions concerning consuming endless experiences and emotions, peculiar body care, ideal corporeality, which leads to anxieties connected with the body (16).

Patterns of current reality shows standardize a set of attitudes or perception of the identity that follows the logic of consumption. Reality shows assume immaturity or incompetence of the viewing public, telling them to believe in inadequate social reality. 'Programming' people is to change them for 'better' and fuller participation in social life, which means promoting and shaping their consumer attitudes or schematized behaviors. Topics, structures, and contents of these communiqués shape personal identities. These constructs are infantile, yet, paradoxically, creative-imitative at the same time, thus making a conglomeration of mutually excluding values (2).

#### SUMMING UP

Traditional and modern psychological concepts offer various explanations for the questions concerning freedom, moral responsibility, reasons for limiting one's choices, and attitudes toward others.

Variety of concepts, especially those concerning freedom and responsibility, originates from various philosophi-

cal and cultural models. They reflect the Zeitgeist, especially the need for personality models and realization of subjectively important needs, also showing societal anxieties.

Delusive postmodern assumptions maintain that we may successfully abstain from tradition in which we were brought up, and consciously choose a personal way of development, preserving full autonomy and discarding all social rules (39).

Torn from tradition and his social group, postmodern man concentrates on collecting positive emotions and impressions. He is unhappy and probably unhealthy, judging from the number of depression cases, aggressive and auto-aggressive behavior, lack of sense of attachment and rejection.

Perhaps postmodern life style does not reflect the essence of humanity but shows its limitations, immaturity, disorders, and aberrations coming from freely accepting the role of a collector of impressions.

The man, who instrumentally treats others, explores other people's emotions; a tourist who has no place to call his own, cannot count on acceptance and attachment of others but on their dismissal. He must reject or revise his value system and accept the assertions shared by individuals and groups into which he was born, and is to function. He must learn to give; otherwise, he is going to demand feelings and acceptance harassing his loved ones and his environment.

Neither health nor mental wellbeing depends only on the number of positive reinforcements and positive balance of pleasures and troubles that we encounter in life. Health and mental wellbeing do not depend on the number of roles we have to play in life. Health and mental wellbeing depend on the conviction that our existence makes sense as a coherent whole, the sense coming from a single direction in actions and choices, also in the stability of one's moral convictions.

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*TYKOJIMAS – GEISMAS, IMPULSAS, OBSESJA, KOMPULSIJA, JUNKIMAS*

*TARP PATOLOGIJOS IR POSTMODERNINĖS KULTŪROS*

*Raktažodžiai: tykojimas, priekabiavimas, agresija, prisirišimo teorija, postmodernistinė kultūra*

*Santrauka*

*Pranešimas skirtas tykojimo problemai – aktualiam teisės, psichologijos ir sociologijos fenomenui. Tykojimas yra viena iš persekiojimo, priekabiavimo rūšių. Jis laikomas agresija. Nusikaltėlio atžvilgiu jis priskiriamas emocijų, jausmų, meilės patologijai, taip pat difunkcinei priklauomybei nuo asmens. Pranešime tykotojo elgesys interpretuojamas plačiau, teoriškai, remiantis Bowlby'o prisirišimo samprata ir postmodernistinės kultūros kontekstu.*

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