

A thin line lies between fantasy and reality in people with psychopathic traits

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New research indicates that people with psychopathic traits have a preference for nonromantic sexual fantasies with anonymous and uncommitted partners. The study's investigators noted that psychopathic sexual behavior is likely due to a preference for sexual activity outside a loving, committed relationship rather than only an inability to form such relationships.

Individuals with deviant sexual preferences and normal levels of empathy, kindness, and self-control have many strategies for satisfying their needs, including negotiation, compromise, and restraint; however, individuals with high levels of [psychopathic traits](#) might turn to sexually aggressive strategies to attain gratification.

"Most people have sexual fantasies, and that's quite healthy and normal. People with [higher levels](#) of psychopathic traits, however, are more likely to report having actually engaged in those fantasized behaviors, especially when the behaviors weren't within the context of established romantic relationships," said Dr. Beth Visser, lead author of the *Journal of Personality* study.

More information: Visser, B. A., DeBow, V., Pozzebon, J. A., Bogaert, A. F. and Book, A. (2014), Psychopathic Sexuality: The Thin Line Between Fantasy and Reality. *Journal of Personality*. [DOI: 10.1111/jopy.12110](#)

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