

REVIEW ARTICLE

Necrophilia: A Complex Intersection of Crime and Psychological Disorder**Chatterjee P.**HOD, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law,
ICFAI University, Raipur, India & Research Fellow at Tashkent State University of Law, Uzbekistan.**Abstract:**

Necrophilia, the act of engaging in sexual activity with a dead body, represents a disturbing and rare form of paraphilia. This research paper explores the historical origins, psychological aspects, and legal dimensions of necrophilia, focusing on its classification into different classes based on intent and actions. Through the analysis of numerous case studies from various regions, the motivations behind such acts are examined, ranging from psychological disorders to revenge and sadism. The paper emphasises the need for specialised diagnosis and treatment, as necrophilia can manifest in different ways, from accidental tactile arousal during medical dissections to deliberate mutilation of corpses. Distinguishing between necrophilia as a psychological issue and as a criminal act is crucial, necessitating the involvement of both criminological and psychological expertise in handling such cases. To ascertain whether necrophilia should be considered a crime or a psychological disorder, the paper investigates the context of each incident, including the victim's cause of death and any prior sexual assaults. It calls for increased public awareness to facilitate early detection and appropriate treatment, preventing the escalation of these disturbing behaviours. The distinction between criminal necrophilia and paraphilic necrophilia is essential in determining suitable punishment and ensuring that those with psychological disorders receive medical care and rehabilitation to address their aberrant urges. In conclusion, this research forms the groundwork for comprehensive legal provisions and psychological support systems to address the complex intersection of necrophilia as a crime and as a mental health issue.

Keywords: Paraphilia; Necrophilia; Rape; Necrophagia.**Introduction:**

Paraphilia: Recently one necrophilia case has been reported from Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh,¹ India where a construction supervisor murdered a lady and after that he raped her. In a statement given by him to the police, he said that he had been stalking her before executing his plan. He managed to enter the premises of the victim where he raped her by giving her death threats then smashed her skull with a blunt object after her death, he repeatedly raped her, and then he runs away from the crime scene with her ornaments.

Sexual crimes are not new to the world. It's a common crime that is happening worldwide. One of the common forms of sexual crime is rape. According to the dictionary meaning rape is an "unlawful sexual activity and usually sexual intercourse carried out forcibly or under threat of injury against a person's will or with a person who is beneath a certain age or incapable of valid consent because of mental illness, mental deficiency, intoxication, unconsciousness, or deception."² Rape is generally committed with an alive person without taking her consent or sometimes the consent is there but it's not free. It is considered to be a heinous crime against women. It is pertinent here to mention that there are many instances where sexual intercourse is done

with a dead body. Now the question which generally arises here is whether sexual intercourse with a dead person amounts to Rape. Whether it will be considered to be a crime if a person does sexual intercourse with a dead person? Coming to the first question there are numerous cases reported worldwide where a person has done sexual intercourse with a dead person. It's not normal for a person to do sexual intercourse with a dead person rather it's a psychological disorder namely Paraphilias, "where a person has abnormal sexual behaviors or impulses characterized by intense sexual fantasies and urges that keep coming back. The urges and behaviors may involve unusual objects, activities, or situations that are not usually considered sexually arousing by others". A person with paraphilia nature is known as "kinky" or "perverted".³ It's tough to define paraphilia because of its nature. But a common definition that is accepted by all is given by DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) which states that "recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviors generally involving i) non-human objects, ii) the suffering or humiliation of oneself or one's partner, or iii) children or other non-consenting persons that occur over a period of at least 6 months."⁴ Worldwide 8 types of paraphilia disorder are reported which are as follows⁴ -

1. Paedophilia- Sexual preference for prepubescent children.
2. Exhibitionism- Exposing one's genitals to an unsuspecting person or performing sexual acts that can be watched by others.
3. Voyeurism- Urges to observe an unsuspecting person who is naked, undressing or engaging in sexual activities, or in activities deemed to be of a private nature.

Corresponding Author

Dr. Pyali Chatterjee
Email : pyali.chatterjee@gmail.com
Mobile No. : +91 7489371981

Article History

DOR : 21.09.2022 DOA : 05.08.2023

4. Frotteurism- Touching or rubbing against a non consenting person.
5. Fetishism - Use of inanimate objects to gain sexual excitement.
6. Sexual Masochism- Wanting to be humiliated, beaten, bound, or otherwise made to suffer for sexual pleasure.
7. Sexual Sadism- In which pain or humiliation of a person is sexually pleasing.
8. Transvestic Disorder- Arousal from clothing associated with members of the opposite sex.

There is one more category of paraphilia which is known as other Specified Paraphilic Disorders which includes a variety of paraphilic behaviors such as partialism; zoophilia; necrophilia; klismaphilia; coprophilia; urophilia; infantilism; telephone scatologia.

Necrophilia falls under the category of other specified paraphilic disorders. Even WHO has given Necrophilia a different code i.e., F65.8 under The International Classification of Diseases (ICD)-10 Classification of Mental and Behavioural Disorders.⁵

Necrophilia: Necrophilia is an act where a person gets sexual pleasure by doing sex with a corpse. It's a bizarre kind of activity in itself where a person does sex with a corpse and many times it has been found that the corpse was under putrefied conditions. The term Necrophilia is taken from the Greek words 'nekros' which means corpse and 'philia' means love.⁶ The term necrophilia was first used by the Belgian psychiatrist Joseph Guislain (1797-1860). In many cases it has been observed that necrophilia is even associated with other forms of paraphilias for example sadism, cannibalism, vampirism (the practice of drinking blood from a person or animal), necrophagia (eating the flesh of the dead), necropedophilia (sexual attraction to the corpses of children) and necrozoophilia (sexual attraction to the corpses of or killing of animals also known as necro bestiality).⁶ One interesting fact relating to necrophilia is that this kind of disorder has been found mostly in men in comparison to women.

In some mythological stories, necrophilia has been narrated. One such story is related to the Egyptian Goddess Isis who conceived her son Horus by using the dismembered part of her consort Osiris (he was murdered) as a dildo.⁶ The story of Dimoetes is also famous in Greek mythology.⁷ According to legend, Dimoetes married Euopis, the daughter of his brother Troezen. It was he who informed Troezen about his daughter Euopis's affairs with her brother and her sleeping with him. The girl hanged herself in shame and fear, but before her death, she has given terrible curses to the man who was responsible for her demise. Sometime after this incident, a body of a very beautiful woman was found near the surface of the seashore by Dimoetes brought by sea waves. He started to sleep with her because of the powerful desire for her which took hold of him. But that does not last long as the body started to decay. He built a huge burial mound for her and after that, he killed himself near her tomb as his desire did not slacken.

In almost every period of society, necrophilia cases were reported.⁶ Another interesting fact relating to necrophilia is that sometimes it has been found that a person commits necrophilia

when he lost his loved one. One can take the example of Judaen, King Herod the Great⁶ (circa 74 to 4 B.C). Among his all wives, he loved his second wife Mariamne most, whom he executed for adultery charges. But even after her death, he kept her body preserved in for 7 years to have intercourse with her.

Most necrophilia has been committed by a mortician or grave digger. A necrophiliac person prefers to work in the morgue or as a grave digger to satisfy their lust for corpses. In the past, there were many reported cases where the accused were sent to a mental institution for treatment and in some, they were imprisoned depending upon the nature of the cases.

One of the famous necrophilia cases of the 19th century was of Victor Antoine Ardisson⁶ and he was also known by the name "Vampire of Mui" because he used to drink blood from the corpse. He was a grave digger and a necrophiliac. At the age of 19, Victor Ardisson started to work as a grave digger. According to the confession made by him after his arrest he accepted that he loves the cadaver of women, he used to talk with them and even he feels hurt when they don't respond to him. Even he kept the head of 13 years old girl whom he stole from the graveyard near his bedside and used that skull for oral sex. Because of his crimes, he was sentenced to spend the rest of his life in a psychiatric hospital at Pierrefau-du-Var. Victor Ardisson died on March 9, 1944, at Provence-Alps-Cote d'Azur, aged 71.

One of the most famous cases of necrophilia is related to the corpse of Eva Peron, wife of Argentine President Juan Peron.⁸ Eva died at the age of 33 in July 1952 due to cervical cancer. The new regime was afraid of Eva's body as the rebel may steal it, thus it was decided to make the body disappear. It was after 20 years of her disappearance that her body finally reacted to her husband who returned from exile in 1973 and then became president of Argentina. According to many documents available related to the disappearance of the dead body of Eva Peron, it is said that the military person Colonel Carlos Eugenio de Moori Koenig was charged for the disappearance of Eva's body, and it was he who committed necrophilia with Eva's body along with his one staff Major Arancibia.⁹

The "Rape of Nanking of 1937"¹⁰ was also very famous where the Japanese soldiers raped many Chinese women and murdered them after being raped, then forced Chinese men to do sex with the dead women. One Chinese man was reportedly murdered because he refused to do necrophilia with a corpse of a woman in the snow. The rape of Nanking is one of the most horrifying events in the history of war where an actual number of death cases is not yet known.

Serial Killer John Christie of Britain¹ is another case of necrophilia that is important to discuss here. John was famous among his school friends by nicknames like "Can't-Do-It-Christie" because of his sexual inadequacies encounter with his school girlfriend and maybe this was the reason behind his misogyny, according to the psychologist which led him to murder eight women between 1943 to 1953 at his residence 10 Rillington Place in Notting Hill, London. Even it was said by the others that his wife used to tease him about his attacks of impotence and neighbors also used to gossip regarding the same that she is

staying with him because of her fear. Christie after killing the woman used to keep the dead body close to him which is a common characteristic of necrophiliacs.

Nithari case of India where Surinder Koli¹² was charged with serial murder and rape of women and children in Nithari, India. Forensic experts while conducting psychoanalysis on Koli found that he was a necrophiliac, and was also suffering from necrophagia, where a person eats human flesh. Koli has made a voluntary confession of his crime before the Metropolitan Magistrate, New Delhi. He was sentenced to death by CBI Court in May 2022. Another case from Palghar, India was reported where a person confessed to the killing of a woman out of animosity and then he does sex with her dead body. Even in post-mortem also it was confirmed that the body of the victim was sexually assaulted after her death.¹³

Now from the above discussion, it is clear that it's not normal for a person to do sex with a dead person/corpse, and also, it's not normal for a person to eat human flesh. Though it's common in Aghoris¹⁴ who are the worshipper of Lord Shiva in India. One of the strangest things about Aghori's life is that they engage in physical relations with corpses during Sadhana. In this regard, the Aghoris say that this is also the way to worship Shiva and Shakti. According to them, if they immerse themselves in the worship of Shiva even while having a physical relationship, it is believed that they have reached the highest level of their spiritual practice. Aghoris also eat half burnt human flesh and they use a human skull as a container for storing and eating food.

Now the question which arises here is whether Necrophilia is a psychological issue or it should be considered to be a crime as there are many cases where it raises the doubt that a person who has done necrophilia should be treated as a criminal or a psychological patient.

Necrophilia as A Crime Versus Necrophilia as A Psychological Issue: As we have discussed above necrophilia means when a person does sex with a corpse. There are cases where a person feels a strong desire to have sex with his loved one even after her death as we have discussed above in the cases of Judaeon King Herod the Great⁶ (circa 74 to 4 B.C). Even there are cases where by looking at the dead body person has a strong desire for sex with it just like love at first sight like Dimoetes case.

There are also cases where a person only wants to do sex with a corpse-like in Victor Antoine Ardisson's⁶ case. They simply had a strong crush on sex with a corpse. They don't feel comfortable having sex with alive women. There is another case of Kohli, who murdered others for the satisfaction of his sexual lust and necrophiliac tendencies.

From the above discussion, it can be said that sex with a dead person is common in every necrophilia but there are many dissimilarities in terms of the reason behind such an act which the author has identified from the various case studies, which are following-

1. In some necrophilia cases, the person feels a strong desire only for a particular corpse.
2. In some cases, they only had feelings for their lost loved one

even after death.

3. Some people had sexual feelings only for corpses and, in some cases, they eat some part of the dead body like breasts or sometimes the whole body, etc.
4. Sometimes they murder the victim first so that she won't be able to disclose to others about the inability of the accused to perform sex with a woman due to his impotency and then they commit sexual intercourse with them.
5. Even cases are there where they raped the victim first and then they murdered the victim and after that again they committed sexual intercourse with it.
6. In some cases, a person purposely killed a victim out of revenge and then does sex with them.
7. Some accused stalked a victim to get a suitable time to commit rape on her and then they murdered her after the rape so that she won't be able to disclose it to others and then again, they commit sexual intercourse with her after her death.¹⁵
8. Lastly, morticians and gravediggers were prone to necrophilia.

Now from the above points, it can be summed up that necrophilia can be a crime according to the situation and it can be a psychological issue, especially in cases where a person has a desire to do sex only with the dead person and for that, they don't murder like the case of Victor Antoine Ardisson. For necrophilia what the researcher has found from her study is that there are 1) different situations (background before the act or during the act), 2) victims in necrophilia cases and 3) also the means rea of accused varies

Table 1. Subclause of necrophilia.

Subclause	Description
A. Class I (role player)	Asks a living partner to act dead at the time of intercourse.
B. Class II (romantic necrophile)	Preserves the dead body of a spouse, mummifies it, and sleeps with it.
C. Class III (necrophilic fantasizer)	Visits cemeteries and masturbates in the presence of the dead.
D. Class IV (tactile necrophile)	Touches sexual parts of a dead body to get stimulation. Medical students getting an erection while dissecting cadavers also fall into this class.
E. Class V (fetishistic necrophile)	Preserves a part of a dead body (e.g., a breast) and wears it like a talisman or in a pocket.
F. Class VI (necromutilomaniac)	Mutilates the dead body and masturbates over it.
G. Class VII (opportunistic necrophile)	Performs intercourse with a dead body opportunistically. Commonly includes Morgue attendants and funeral workers with easy access to bodies.
H. Class VIII (regular necrophile)	Digs up dead bodies from graveyards and performs intercourse.
I. Class IX (homicidal necrophile)	Murders to perform necrophilia.
J. Class X (exclusive necrophile)	Can only perform intercourse with the dead and not the living.

from case to case. Based on the studies done by many experts, necrophilia has been classified under 10 subclauses¹⁶ -

Class IX from the above classification is the person who after committing murder (which is a crime itself) does sexual

intercourse with the victim's body. These are the person who can do sex with both alive and dead people. On the other hand, Class X persons can't perform sex with a live person. They need a dead body to do sex. Other classes except for Class I and Class II are different because in class I the person is not dead but the offender pretended the lady to be dead for doing sexual intercourse with her and in Class II it's his loved one whom he does not want to lose at any cost even after her death. Class II offenders are having psychological issues where the person is sexually so connected with the dead person that it becomes unbearable for him to lose his lady love which is against the order of nature because after death a person has a legal right to decent burial.¹⁷ Class I and II offenders commit necrophilia only with his known one, the only difference between them is that in class I the lady is alive, and in Class II the lady is dead. But in other Classes from III to X corpses of the women are unknown. In Class III to Class VIII necrophiliac, the act is committed with the corpse of another person, where he does wrong to the dead person and his family.¹⁷ Now it's again a question of Law that whether a person who does sex with a dead person can be charged with rape. Because as per Indian law, rape can be done with only an alive person, because in cases of rape consent is an important factor and a dead body cannot give any consent. Here in India, we had only section 297 of the Indian Penal Code, 1872 which deals with the offenses of dead bodies. According to this section "Whoever, with the intention of wounding the feelings of any person, or of insulting the religion of any person, or with the knowledge that the feelings of any person are likely to be wounded, or that the religion of any person is likely to be insulted thereby, commits any trespass in any place of worship or on any place of the sepulcher, or any place set apart from the performance of funeral rites or as a depository for the remains of the dead, or offers any indignity to any human corpse, or causes disturbance to any persons assembled for the performance of funeral ceremonies, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both".¹⁸ Necrophilia is not defined under the Indian penal Code nor it is considered to be a separate crime even though we had several cases reported of necrophilia in which the famous case being the Nithari case of 2006. One can find the provision of Necrophilia in the US state of Georgia,¹⁹ which considered it a separate crime under GA Code § 16-6-7 (2020)-

- a. A person commits the offense of necrophilia when he performs any sexual act with a dead human body involving the sex organs of the one and the mouth, anus, penis, or vagina of the other.
- b. A person convicted of the offense of necrophilia shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than ten years.

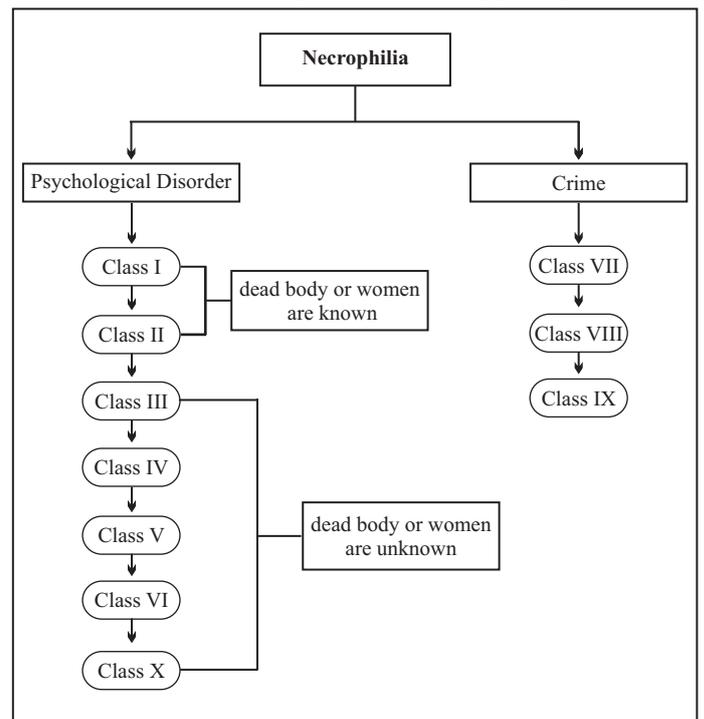
Now regarding this also what the author will like to discuss is that for Class IX offenders of necrophilia, punishment should be given because for satisfying their sexual lust they are committing two crimes, first murder and then necrophilia. Indeed, homicidal behavior, including Lust murder and necrophilia, can be influenced by various factors, such as abnormal psychological attitudes. Some of these factors include sexual jealousy, a desire

to punish for perceived infidelity, substance abuse, depression, erectile dysfunction, educational background, mental health issues during childhood and sadistic attitudes. When these factors reach extreme levels, they may culminate in violent acts and deviant behaviors, such as Lust murder and necrophilia. Understanding and addressing these underlying psychological aspects are crucial in comprehending and dealing with such heinous crimes.²⁰ In some cases, it can be the rape of a victim, murder, and then necrophilia like the Azamgarh case of Uttar Pradesh.²¹ Offenders belonging to these classes are a threat to society if they roam freely even if they are put behind a bar, they might harm the other cell mates for satisfying their lust. Coming to Class IV categories this necrophiliac person does not kill anyone rather they get sexual satisfaction from mutilating an already dead body. Even they don't do sexual intercourse with a dead body like in other Classes. Their erotic pleasure comes primarily from mutilating an already dead body and then masturbating simultaneously. They also need medical assistance for such a bizarre act. Class VII categories should be given punishment depending upon the nature of the cases.

Class VII and IX should get the punishment by law. But other Classes should be given psychological treatment as their act is not natural and it's a bizarre act. They cannot be cured simply by putting them behind a bar.

Certainly, based on the above discussion, we can categorize necrophilia subclass (See table-1) into two aspects: as a crime and as a psychological disorder. As we know that necrophilia involves engaging in sexual activities with dead bodies, which is considered illegal and unethical in most jurisdictions. Psychologically, it is classified as a paraphilic disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5).

Table 2. Classification of necrophilia as crime and psychological disorder.



Here's a flowchart to represent the categorization of necrophilia on the basis of the above discussion :

According to the discussion above, it can be said that necrophilia can be a crime as well as a psychological issue. As per the discussion above to ascertain a necrophilia case whether it's a crime or a psychological issue, the help of an expert from the criminology and psychological department should be taken. These cases are different in comparison to other offenses. Thus, both these two different departments should work to deal with such cases. Every necrophiliac cases are different. One cannot judge a person as a criminal just because of the act. They have to judge according to their practice of necrophiliac acts and their psychological conditions. Just take an example of the medical students who upon touching the corpse during dissection get an erection (Class IV). He might don't know about his tactile necrophiliac conditions. Rather one can call it an accidental act where the person himself is not aware of this medical condition. As such he only needs medical help and assistance. A timely diagnosis of these psychological issues will help to control such behavior further. If it remains undiagnosed then the result might end in more serious psychological issues as well as their actions will be wrong against society as well.

There is another point to be discussed here is that in some instances, individuals with sadistic tendencies exhibit extreme behavior known as Lust murder, which involves a frenzied desire to commit violent acts, including murder. This disturbing aspect should also be considered when examining cases of necrophilia.²²

Another important point to highlight here after discussing the above is that to consider a necrophiliac case as a crime first it is important to check/find out whether the 1) person has murdered the victim or not, 2) whether the death of the victim was natural or unnatural, 3) Sexual intercourse/forceful sexual intercourse was done with the victim before or after her death or sign of any other kind of sexual assault with her, 4) Cause of death or similarity of death pattern from any previous cases which is most common in serial killings cases will be helpful to bifurcate a case of necrophilia as crime and a paraphilia. If a crime is committed for the commission of another crime, then it will not only be a double wrong but it will be against the rule of the society and in no way, such can be excused. But when the person is already dead due to any other reason and then the necrophiliac person by getting an opportunity does the necrophiliac act or mutilate her body because of his necrophiliac conditions or eats the part of the body or gets ejaculation after touching the dead body then it can't be that serious offense like the above. Though it is also wrong and against nature. But this person needs proper medical care, they need psychological treatment. There is a need for psychological rehab centers for their proper treatment so that they can overcome their bizarre habits.

Conclusion and Suggestion:

WHO has defined necrophilia, but more research and identification of the victim are required particularly to check when a necrophilia act should be considered to be a crime and when it can be a psychological issue. All cases of necrophilia should be dealt with carefully because of their complicated

nature. Awareness among the public is required so that it can be diagnosed early for better treatment and for the avoidance of it getting worse. Punishment can make a person sin-free but punishment can't cure mental illness. Mental or psychological issues can be cured through treatment only. It's a medical issue as well as issues related to crime and criminology where victims in most of the cases are unknown to the perpetrator. Different legal provisions are needed to punish the wrongdoer of this crime. Indeed, a dead body does not give consent but it does not mean that for satisfying lust one can kill someone, and then they will commit sexual intercourse with her. Even though the victim is dead but the act should be considered to be rape and accordingly it should be punished. There is a very minute difference between psychological cases of necrophilia and the criminal cases of it. If a necrophilia person for his needs kills someone then it's a crime, but if someone is using the dead body by digging it from the grave or by using the dead body available in the morgue then in such case they should not be treated as a core criminal but they should get the psychological treatment rather. Once they become normal then punishment can be given to them. But putting him directly behind the bar will not help them to become normal. Thus, All Necrophilia are Paraphilia but all Paraphilias are not Necrophilia Cases.

Funding Support: Nil

Conflicts of Interest: Nil

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