TWO CASES OF FETISHISM

AKIO HORI
Kyowa Hospital, Hyuga, Japan

TATSUO AKIMOTO
Department of Neuropsychiatry, Kurume University, School of Medicine, Kurume, Japan

(Received for publication March 15, 1973)

Two cases of male fetishism were interviewed and the process of appearance of perversion and its development were disclosed.

The object of fetishism is women's panties in the first example and women's rubber swimming cap in the second example. The generation mechanism of fetishism in both cases seems to be rooted in the background of homosexualism.

Though they are both rooted in homosexualism, the first case seems to be caused by the castration anxiety toward authoritative father.

While in the second case, the homosexual tendency seems to be derived from the narcissism in the boyhood of a beautiful boy as well as the sensual caress of a cousin.

The two cases were not given medical treatment for a special reason.

The taxonomy of Sexual Perversions provides a class called Sexual Fetishism. The terminology was invented by A. Binet and was followed by Krafft-Ebing and others.

Definition of fetishism varies widely according to the school. Some people interpret it in a broad sense while others in a strict sense. In the field of sex-pathology we usually take the definition given by H. Elis who defines it as “a perverted act in the erotic world to obtain sexual satisfaction not by the fascination of the opposite sex itself but by touching or caressing the object of sexual interest worn by the opposite sex such as handkerchief, apron, underwears and shoes.

The authors will report two cases of fetishism, of which one is a case of panties fetishism which we usually hear about in the street as “lascivious” and the other, which the authors believe to be rather rarely heard of, is a fetishism of rubber swimming cap.

Case No.1 Panties fetishism

Male, age 26, office worker.

Life-history—Born in a local city of population about 50,000. The patient’s father was an elementary school teacher and was extremely stern. Three brethren who were all boys always lived timidly. He says, he had no experience of happy family life.

His mother was only a tender woman, illiterate and uneducated. She doted on her sons in the absence of their father, but when she saw the father beat sons she had nothing to do but to be silent with tears in her eyes.

The father was tyrant also to his
wife. Though he used polite words, he always resorted to violence, being enraged at a trifle. The patient had never seen the conjugal peacefulness in this couple.

The patient who was the youngest among the brothers has nothing to remember except that he always feared his father and hid himself from him after returning from the school.

Though his father had no particular trait of vicious drinker, he always enraged at a trifle, saying it was against his educational policy which was derived from the "family custom" of a "knight". For example, he maintained that paper slide-picture show was for "merchant" and not a thing to be seen by the children of an educator or a "knight". Once the patient A broke the rule and was seeing the show hiding himself among his friends, when unfortunately he was caught in the act by his father. The father beat him in his back and buttocks with bamboo sword and dashed cold water over his head. Fortunately, a school teacher who was visiting his home saw this and took him to a neighbor to hide him. But for this, he would have fainted, he says. This time also his mother was only weeping in the kitchen without knowing what to do.

A recollects those days as follows.

"Strangely enough, however, I began to massage my father's shoulder whom I feared so much. The motive was not clear, but perhaps I was childishly wishing to curry favor with my father. What was more, I seemed to feel sex when I was massaging my father's waist.

At one time when I was in the 3rd year of an elementary school, I played "doctor and patient" with a neighbor's daughter B who was three years younger than I. Her sex organ was a marvel to me and I felt a mysterious wonder at her panties with strange color and form".

Massaging of his father's shoulder seems to be associated with the experience of massaging the shoulder of a third year boy C, a senior member of the baseball club, when A was in the first grade. When A was ordered by C to massage his shoulder and put his hands on his shoulder, he felt sex. In the end he came to love C, and during his three years of high school life when he masturbated he always fancied the scene in which he led C to ejaculation by massaging C's sex-organ who was then in university.

Soon he entered the economics department of a private university in Tokyo. He wanted to do onanism to a junior boy, but he was timid and felt shame, so he never did it in reality.

Meanwhile, unknowingly, the above fantasy of homosexual onanism turned to the imagination in which he himself was a woman and was in a passive situation to be played upon by man. At that time he happened to see panties of a girl of his boarding hung on the side of the passage to the lavatory, and took it quite unconsciously and brought it to his room. Since then he began to use it in masturbation. But when he first took it, he did not intend to use it for onanism. It happened irresistibly, in a sense like an automatic doll. After that he only once stole panties of a woman in the neighborhood when he was in university.

After graduating from the university, he found a job at a private store in his home town. But he could not get rid of the habit and continued to take chance to steal from drying places in the residential quarter, though he
felt danger. At last he was caught in the act. Fortunately, however, the sufferer was an acquaintance of his and he was not brought to the police.

A wanted to avail himself of this chance to remedy his singular habit and came to ask medical treatment.

His father who retired under the age limit said all his sons were "failure", and there was nothing of friendly intimacy between father and sons. At the occasion of this affair, his father never appeared before the sufferer to apologize. And when he discovered later that his mother went to ask for pardon to the sufferer hiding herself from her husband, he became furious and abused her.

Former diseases... Nothing particular to note.

Hereditary factors... Hereditary psychopathic diseases are denied. But the patient's first brother age 34 is unmarried yet. The second brother age 32 is also unmarried and has a trait of vicious drinker.

Physical observation... leptosome. Nothing particular to note.

Psychiatric observation... At the time, Rorschach test showed highly depressive trait. There was a fear of suicide and the patient seemed to need hospitalization. Thereafter, the patient rapidly regained tranquility, but was slightly depressive.

Characteristically he was of retiring disposition and mostly unsociable. In the office, however, he was active and worked well, tasted alcohol to some extent and was deemed an earnest youth.

Sexual life... In his high school years he had no particular thought about his being normal or abnormal. But as he learned about homosexualism in university, he diagnosed himself as having an abnormal sexual impulse of homosexualism and began to suffer so much that at one time his school work slowed down.

At that time there was still the red light district and he went there to try his masculine ability. But he was afraid of catching venereal disease and fled home on his way. He has had no experience of intercourse with the opposite sex.

At present panties are more easy to approach and are more suited to his liking than his own sex, and he is collecting them though he feels danger in it, he says.

He explains his panties collection as follows. Since he was deemed an earnest youth in his office he thought it would be safer to steal in the neighborhood rather than to go a long way because no one in the neighborhood would suspect him. So he stole from the same apartment. As was expected the dwellers of the apartment began to suspect a 16 year old mentally retarded boy in the same town, and he could stand outside of the trouble.

"When I see panties within my reach", he explains, "I feel dizzy. And in most cases I control myself because of danger. But this time I seemed to have been possessed by an evil spirit, and while it was still light I reached out my hand at my acquaintance's".

It is not that he is uninterested in other articles such as slip and corset, but he says panties are best because they are soft and come tight.

At one time he thought he had better buy new one rather than take risks, and went to the neighboring town to buy. But he says new one doesn't match his skin.

When he knew in newspaper and weeklies about those who collected several hundreds, he marveled at their courage and at the same time felt so much ease at the knowledge of existence of those having the same tendency.

If he steals panties he puts them...
HORI AND AKIMOTO

on without fail. Used panties have
smears. We asked him, "Aren't they
filthy?", and he replied, "Yes, they are
filthy, but I put on those smeared,
used panties. At first I think them
filthy and feel my whole body shrink
at the thought. But after I have put
them on I feel myself wretched who
am clad in such a filthy thing. And I
begin to imagine myself in such a
wretched state". "I am a poor man. My
waist is clad in woman's panties. Now
I have changed to a woman. I am a
woman and am being raped by a sturdy
man. In the meantime I become so ex-
cited that I begin to masturbate. After
masturbation I feel so refreshed and
become so clear headed. So when I have
to go into a difficult negotiation I
adjust my physical condition by mastur-
bation".

If he cannot get what he desires,
he feels dizzy and quiets himself by
masturbating with the articles which
he has stolen before.

After the incident he threw away
all of his collection of nearly forty
panties. (He spent a whole day to burn
them on a beach.)

"From now on" he says, "I will lead
a proper sexual life without relying on
such thing. But I can no more live in
my home town, so I have decided to go
to Tokyo. I wanted to receive your
treatment, but I think it is up to my
mind whether I can correct my ill habit
or not".

Four months later he left the town
for Tokyo. Just before going to Tokyo
he visited the authors. He showed in-
omnia, anxiety, palpitation and a
symptom of anxiety neurosis.

He seemed to feel shame at "pan-
ties" rather than a self-reproach toward
the fact of stealing.

Case No. 2 Rubber swimming cap
fetishism
Male, age 29, office
worker, married.

Life-history ...... The patient A was
born in a residential section in a wes-
tern part of Tokyo. His father was a
high-ranking official and his mother a
graduate of a women's college. He was
the only son in an intellectual family.
Parents doted on him and spoiled him
very much. Since he was a beautiful
boy, those around him always indulged
him. Particularly a cousin B who was
ten years older than he and was her-
self an only daughter showed special
tenderness toward him. But there was
something peculiar in her tenderness
which was awfully sensual, he recol-
lects. When she took him to see cinema.
for example, she held him on her lap
from the beginning to the end, even
though there were vacant seats around.

When she brought him to her own
house, she went into bath with him
and put him to sleep embracing him
in the bed. At one time when he was
in the first or second year of an ele-
mentary school they went to sea bath-
ing. At this occasion unexpectedly
cousin B took off her swimming cap
and put it on A, and said, "It suits you
very well. It's charming. Leave it
alone". The cap was too big and un-
comfortable for a child's small head,
though he had long hair then. However,
it had a smell of the cousin, and the
soft and elastic feeling of the rubber
was nice him. Since then she took
chance to put on him a swimming cap,
and later she came to embrace and kiss
him on his forehead and chin after
putting the cap on him. Finally she
was kissing him in reality.

It was unbearably pleasant to be
petted and kissed. But his childish mind
felt that it was a "secret not to be
disclosed to any other person". So he
kept it secret even to his family. "This relation seemed to have continued till I left the elementary school", he says, "but I don't exactly remember how long. I cannot even remember the time when B married".

It was in the war time that he entered a middle school. He was then mobilized to a factory in Yokohama. Here he came to love a school girl C who was also mobilized to the same factory. At that time not a few of his friends were in a kind of "love affairs". They sent love letters and met girls in the backyard of a station or under the girder bridge, hiding themselves from the eyes of the teachers and attached officers. But A only looked at C from far helplessly. She was the most beautiful among the school girls and many boys made eyes at her, but no one got her.

One day in the spring of 1945 when the whole city of Tokyo was in great confusion under the continued air-raid and forced evacuation, he went to the house of cousin B to help pack for the evacuation. At that time B had been married and was living in a local city. But her room was kept just as it was in her childhood, perhaps because of her mother's consideration.

He went into the room and absent-mindedly seated himself on a chair which he remembered, when unexpectedly he was reminded of the "swimming cap". He hurried to search for it in the package, taking care not to be noticed, and finally succeeded in finding it.

It was wrapped in a large sheet of colored paper and was sealed over by a new sheet of newspaper in a casual manner. Several years had passed since the time of the affair, but it was brand-new. "The excitement I felt when I gripped it I will never forget for my life", he said.

After having found the swimming cap he left the house in a hurry on a pretext and returned to the factory in Yokohama. In secret he gripped it, pressed it against his cheek, smelled it and wore it and masturbated.

It was his first experience. The habit continued till the end of the war and seemed gradually to have transformed into a perverted sexual life.

After the war he entered the commercial science department of a private university, and found employment in a private company. He married in 1954 and is the father of a child now.

Hereditary factors ...... Psychopathic diseases and neurotic diseases are denied.

Physical observation ...... leptosome, white skined and really handsome. The penis is wrapped, a little constricted in the middle and has a big fore-half.

Psychiatric observation ...... Seemed to have no selfish inclination usually seen in an only son. Introversive, literary youth with a rich stock of topics. Rorschach test showed colorful reaction, suggestive of a high intellect and rich sentiment.

Sexual life ...... Till the end of the war he continued to masturbate using that one swimming cap. While he was ordered to stay at home because of insufficiency in materials, the factory was air-raided and was destroyed to ashes. The mobilization was dissolved and he saw the girl C no more.

"I had never thought that I would masturbate with swimming cap or that I would get such a habit", he added in a thoughtful manner. "When I left the dormitory of the factory, I just wanted to help my aunt pack for the evacuation. May be I had in my mind some secret desire to receive entreatment if possible, but no more than that. When I reached my aunt's house, I felt myself choking at the intense atmosphere of confusion in which people were preparing for the evacuation. I seemed to
have sought refuge in my cousin's room in order to escape from the atmosphere which was menacingly urgent. There I found the room in appearance as of old and became sentimental. The above is a true story. I can clearly remember it as a scene in the confusion and destruction of the time nearing the defeat.

Then suddenly the image of the said rubber swimming cap rose to my consciousness. When I thought myself as going to die in the fight for metropolitan defense, I longed to have a souvenir of the opposite sex. I searched for the cap furiously as if driven, just for the sake of reminiscence. I never thought it would be connected to the lively and in a sense blasphemous experience of onanism. On my way back to the dormitory, scared by the information coming out of radio that enemy planes were nearing. I never thought I would masturbate with the cap. I only had a sentiment almost like a prayer that I might recall the image of my dearest cousin to my heart's content.

However, when I returned to the dormitory and was caressing the white swimming cap, that demonic thought flashed. In fact, I denied it first. But it urged me to do the act, rebuked my hesitant person and finally forced me into the blasphemous act. For several days since, I suffered under the consciousness of guilt against my cousin but caressed the souvenir", he explained the psychology in realistic manner.

"As I began to masturbate with the swimming cap, the image of the school girl C faded away rapidly and I could get rid of the heavy feeling of agony for which I spent sleepless nights. I remember I felt a strange sensation of relief".

"When in the summer of 1947 I found in Chiba City some old rubber swimming caps which seemed to be of pre-war period, I felt as if I met my old sweetheart and my whole body became electrified. I bought all of them giving out all the money I had. I remember my hands trembled when I received the article".

Later, in around 1951 vinyl swimming caps began to appear in the market. But they didn't have that tight feeling around the head. An decently (1966) we see German swimming caps in the street. But their flower decorations are annoying to him. He likes best the plain olden type with chin strap.

Since he married in 1954, he discarded most of the swimming caps he had bought which numbered about fifty. But he keeps a few favorite ones in his office desk and brings them home to use on such occasions as when his wife returns to her parent's home. Even thereafter, when he happens to see swimming caps of novel color and form he cannot help buying them. "This is my sweetheart", he says in earnest, "I shall never quit this 'amour' of mine."

His masturbation proceeds as follows. He wears one of his favorite swimming caps and lies down in nude. He also puts a favorite one on his penis. Here he imagines himself to be transformed into a woman. He massages himself, fancying a beautiful woman to his liking which he has seen in a tramcar. He has never put the cap on his wife. He calls his wife a "yellow stool" and assures that the masturbation is several times more pleasant than the intercourse with his wife.

He acknowledges himself his abnormal sexuality as well as lecherous personality. He has suffered so much for his habit and visited mental hospitals. But he could not indeed disclose the fact and complained of insomnia, so that he was diagnosed as insomniac
though he was a deep sleeper, he explained in a bitter smile.

He shows no interest in other rubber products. He excuses himself in blush, "It is in the sense of self-scorn that I say my wife is a yellow stool. I am very sorry for her."

**DISCUSSION**

The word Fetishism is said to have derived from the Latin origin of Facio⁴, meaning primarily a person or object endowed with magic power. Thus it has become a word to mean a charm or a talisman. In the terminology of sex-psychology it is used to signify a part of body or an object having a sexual charm.

Fetishism is also translated as articulated lewdness. In the ancient Japanese literature Bukonempyo⁶, there is a case of hair fetishism told as an act of a ghost.

As to the generation mechanism of fetishism we have no established theory. Binee explains it by the Law of Association⁷ and the school of psycho-analysis finds a problem in "regression into early stage of sexual development" or in "symbolic association of thinking". Some authors even propose a simple conditioned reflex¹. Here we will attempt to make a psycho-analytical interpretation.

Let us consider the Case No. 1. The origin of this case was a "stealing" and the fact that the object of stealing was panties had almost caused it to develop into a social problem. The act, however, should be regarded as an abnormal conduct due to sexual perversion rather than as stealing.

This case of fetishism seems to be rooted in the ground of homosexualism. Where, then, should we find the origin of the homosexualism?

As is the case with many instances of homosexualism, the presence of father plays an important role in the present case. A's father seems to have been of abnormally severe character rather than educationally strict. He appears to have been monomaniac or close to an explosive psychopathic personality. In school education also, he was such a severe militarist that after the war he was almost listed among the purges from the public office, which was a rare case among elementary school teachers. The tendency was more evident at home. He became furious with his wife at such triviality as that the tea she served to a visitor was not hot enough or that the fire in the brazier was too heated. And he beat and kicked her in the presence of visitors. Such an act of violence was an everyday occurrence in his home. He always inflicted heavy bodily punishment on his children for minor mischiefs on the reason that theirs was a conduct unbecoming to the sons of a knight.

Therefore, the father was nothing but the object of fear for A and he always read his father's face and timidly evaded him. There seems to have been no identification of the father as an ideal. It is only natural that he was attacked by an intense castration anxiety. It seems that he overcame the anxiety to be castrated by his father, the castrator, by abandoning his masculinity and by entirely subjugating himself to his father, that is, by taking the passive stand of a female. His endeavor to obtain affection by taking a passive position is seen in his miserable effort to massage his father's shoulder and waist, which his brothers dared not do. It is also connected to his passive attitude toward the newly appeared authority—his senior in the baseball club—,... and further develops
into a homosexual thinking after entering the university.

His fetishistic tendency was originated in the experience at the boarding house. But his interest toward panties had already germinated in his childhood when he played doctor and patient with a little girl C of his neighbor. In playing doctor and patient other boys tried willingly to take off girl's panties. But A preferred to cover the part that had a different shape from his. He felt something mysterious in the fact that the panties covering the secret part, different from his, was a black drawer with rubber string strapping the thigh. He says that he felt "grateful" when his finger touched the rubber part cutting into the thigh. From the above, we see that there was a significant stagnation of libido in the present case.

From the above it is easily understood that as the libido which developed as A entered his adolescence has finally reached the crucial period of orientation as what Reich calls the "specific fixation point of the libido" they take women's body part into their own body image. In the same way, as P. Schilder maintains, they take the clothes which is the extension of the body... panties in the present case... into the body image. The fact that he puts on panties at the time of onanism may easily be understood as a symbolic expression of his castration. Thus, being a woman himself, the patient masturbates fancying that he is being raped by a man and gets into sleep in a "fresh mood".

He says he shuddered when putting panties. Fetishists invariably experience this kind of feeling when they touch the fetish object, This may be a kind of emotional storm.

He once came to the authors for medical treatment but went to Tokyo, giving the reason that "it is up to his determination whether he can stop the bad habit or not".

Before going to Tokyo he led abstinent life without masturbation, having no panties to touch to console himself. But in his first month of abstinence he began to feel dim headed in the daytime and insomnia appeared and developed gradually. Anxiety, agony in the breast and palpitation were added. Just before going to Tokyo he was in a state of anxiety neurosis. His favorite justification that "he is anxious because he has no job yet" is interesting in the light of the fact that the anxiety neurosis originated in the sexual inhibition.

In Case No.2 also the homosexual tendency seems to be discernible in its background. Homo sexualism in this case, however, is not rooted in the Oedipus complex as in Case No.1, but seems to have derived from the narcissism in the boyhood of a beautiful boy
and the sensual cares given by cous in B. There may have been a homosexual tendency also in B, for which she loved the beautiful boy A in place of a beautiful girl. She may have had a fetishistic tendency rarely seen in female.

In any event, in his adolescence where he should begin to approach the opposite sex, he was only "looking at the girls from far with helpless desire", while his friends positively approached girls. As to this repression against female he gives the reason that "he feared to be rejected by the girl and lose his face". There seems to be a narcissism in the back ground. Libido thus restrained began to regress and was fixated to the sexual experience of the past—swimming cap or souvenir which he happened to find in the evacuation package.

To cover the ears by putting the swimming cap on head as well as to cover the sex-organ with it is an act to symbolize castration. It is understandable that he can "transform to woman" by this means, as he himself explains.

He is a gentle husband toward his wife. Especially after having "amour" with swimming cap his self-reproach makes him all the more sympathetic toward her. He has never beaten her nor used a harsh word against her.

He once visited neuropsychiatric department as outpatient and was diagnosed to have insomnia. After that his distrust of psychiatrist has deepened to a contempt and determined himself that his habit cannot be an object of medical treatment.

Photograph 1 Part of the collection of rubber swimming caps of Case No. 2.
(In conclusion, the authors wish to express their gratitude to Prof. Inanaga for revision of the paper.)

REFERENCES