

**Report of June Meeting
Royal Society
Southern Highlands Branch**

**Speaker: Dr Stephen H. Allnutt, Clinical Director, NSW
Community Forensic Mental health Services**

Topic: Deviant Sexual Behaviour
**In psychiatric terms, derives from conditions known as the
Paraphilias.**

The Branch held its June meeting at 6.30pm on Thursday 18th June in the Drama Theatre, Frensham School, Mittagong.

Dr Stephen Allnutt presented a fascinating lecture on the nature of paraphilias. He described paraphilias as conditions characterized by intense recurrent sexually arousing fantasies, urges and behaviours. Such behaviours may involve non-human objects, they can cause actual suffering or humiliation to oneself or others, and may cause the involvement of non-consenting individuals. The pattern of these behaviours is generally demonstrated over periods longer than six months and commonly results in clinically significant impairment in social and/or occupational functioning.

Dr Allnutt explained how the behavioural manifestations of such behaviours fall into two easily recognizable categories. The first category can be described as “hands off” and includes behaviours such as fetishism–“fetish”, voyeurism–“peeper”, exhibitionism–“flasher” and telephone scatologia–“heavy breather”. The “hands on” examples include such behaviours as frotteurism–“groper”, rape, sadism/masochism–“humiliating/mutilating” and necrophilia. Other behavioural manifestations include zoophilia (animals), urophilia (“golden shower”), coprophilia (faeces) and autoerotic asphyxia.

It was pointed out by Dr Allnutt that the law deals with sexually offensive behaviours using terms such as:

- Objectionable material
- Offensive behaviour
- Sexual Assault
- Rape
- Grievous bodily harm
- Wounding with intent
- Mutilation
- Necrophilia
- Bestiality

Interesting data was provided by Dr Allnutt on the matter of sexual assault against adults, the majority of whose victims are female. The perpetrators of the assaults demonstrated multiple motivations, such as being fantasy driven (a paraphilia), sadistic, hostile, aggressive and impulsive/opportunistic. Others were motivated by a group culture and on some occasions by disinhibition/intoxication.

In addition, the characteristics of the perpetrators were examined in a longitudinal study, with some surprising findings. Perpetrators were found to constitute a heterogeneous group with no particular constellation of characteristics. From the longitudinal study of 561 males with a history of sexual assault, where the participants were guaranteed confidentiality, the following points were noted: 40% had one year of college education, 60% were employed, 50% were living with a woman, all ethnic groups were represented and 53% had at least one paraphilia prior to the age of 18 years. It was also noted that by adulthood, the average number of offences was 380.2, and that 20% had targeted both sexes. It was also recorded that 26% had engaged in both “hands on” and “hands off” paraphilias and that 23.3% of paedophiles had offended both inside and outside the family. The majority of participants had more than one paraphilia and 52% had experienced the onset of this behaviour in adolescence.

In discussing the relationship between homosexuality and paedophilia, Dr Allnut stated that there was no increased prevalence in homosexuals vs heterosexuals, and that homosexual paedophiles generally have little interest in relationships with either male or female adults. He also made it clear that there was no evidence that a boy victim later showed any predisposition to homosexuality.

Dr Allnutt drew the attention of the audience to the following myths:

- A child who is sexually abused becomes an offender.
- Sex offenders can be “cured”.
- People with paraphilias like their problem.
- Paedophiles hate children and are cruel to them.
- Partners know what is going on.
- Minor offending means low risk.
- Homosexuals are paedophiles.

At the conclusion of the lecture, Dr Allnutt was asked numerous questions by the audience. The vote of thanks was given by Anne Wood.