

interest) Richard Willis (well played by Chris Messina who also played opposite Amy Adams in the movie *Julie and Julia* in 2009), who was brought in from Kansas to investigate the murders. This relationship is fraught with power plays, insecurity on Camille's part, and her unresolved trauma.

The small-town mentality, the apparent psychological issues on the part of both Camille and Amma, Adora's constant thwarting of the investigations, and the multitude of interpersonal relationships in the town create escalating tension and suspense while the characters try to figure out who murdered the young girls.

Adora's own upbringing is characterized as being isolative and lacking in affection. This lack of pro-social modeling may have contributed to her dysfunctional relationships with her own children. Adora was incapable of engaging in a normal manner with her children and therefore resorted to aberrant means to feel, and to appear, connected with them. She achieved this by evoking symptoms of physical illness in her daughters through poisoning. This allowed her to take on a nurturing role for her children who, by way of physical illness, became completely dependent on her. At the same time, she projected an image of a caring mother in unfortunate circumstances, garnering sympathy and admiration from others. The ultimate expression of this came in Marian's eventual death and the public outpouring of sympathy engendered. That Camille was born out of wedlock threatened Adora's public persona; this, coupled with Camille's resistance of Adora's dubious care, contributed to the lack of affection between them.

While Munchausen syndrome by proxy (MBP) is the name most commonly associated with this condition, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, calls it factitious disorder imposed on another. This is a rare condition in which an individual deliberately falsifies physical or psychological symptoms, or induces injury or disease in another person, and presents that person to others as ill or injured. This commonly involves suffocation, poisoning with medications, or falsifying laboratory results.<sup>1</sup> Most often, the individual is the primary caregiver for the victim, typically their mother.<sup>2</sup> MBP can be motivated by a broad range of psychological needs, including a need to form a relationship with the treating physician or for attention. Etiological factors contributing to the development of MBP in later life are thought to include maternal rejection and lack of attention in infancy.<sup>1</sup>

Recognition of MBP is challenging, and victims of this abuse are often not identified in a timely manner.<sup>1</sup> This problem is illustrated in *Sharp Objects*, when Camille approaches a pediatric nurse, Beverly Van Lumm, who had cared for Marian. Beverly had penned a report outlining her concerns about Marian and Camille's welfare, noting that Marian showed symptoms after spending time alone with Adora, and that Adora did not display affection unless Marian was sick and crying. Beverly's concerns were disregarded as a "childless, jealous nurse's pettiness" (p 229) by the medical patriarchy, and no action was taken, with catastrophic consequences.

*Sharp Objects* is cleverly titled, tying into themes including Camille's self-injurious behavior and the murders of the young girls. The psychological themes explored in both the book and the HBO series will likely be of interest to many forensic psychiatrists.

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## Sexual Offending: Predisposing Antecedents, Assessments and Management

Edited by Amy Phenix and Harry Hoberman. New York: Springer Science and Business Media, 2016. 885 pp. \$149.00.

*Sexual Offending: Predisposing Antecedents, Assessments, and Management* is a three-part compendium

that is optimally utilized as a reference for forensic evaluators who work with sex offenders. Psychiatrists in this line of work are tasked with understanding and forming evidence-based opinions related to a diverse and complex group of individuals labeled as sex offenders. This text reviews, in striking detail, the various structured and clinical assessment and treatment methodologies that are currently available to practitioners working with this population.

Forensic evaluators are commonly confronted with the following questions when conducting forensic evaluations of sex offenders. What factors are contributing to their behavior? What is their risk of re-offending? How do we effectively treat the offender? This book is presented in three parts, with each section addressing one of these questions.

Part One, "Disorders and Types of Sexual Offending," provides an overview of the morphology and demographics of sex offenders and sex crimes. It exhaustively reviews the literature summarizing research findings, professional opinions, and legal holdings. This first part offers context to the work and provides a foundation for Parts Two and Three. A particularly thought-provoking chapter written by one of the book's co-editors, Harry Hoberman, is titled "Personality and Sexual Offending; Non-Sexual Motivators and Disinhibition in Context." This chapter reads like a philosophic text and documents with nuance the nature of personality and character structure and the variety of traits that affect an individual's decision-making. It stands out in this book as a long-form essay that looks at this particular topic through a novel lens.

Part Two, "Assessment and Risk Appraisal of Sexual Offenders," thoroughly reviews psychometric measures. For forensic psychiatrists with less experience administering psychological tests, this section may be difficult to metabolize. While there is an effort to describe the various tests, the chapters in this section are likely best utilized by forensic psychologists, particularly those who have greater experience with the administration of psychological tests and measures. That said, there are several sections in Part Two that provide guidance on evaluative strategies and the use of tools such as penile plethysmography and polygraph, which may be quite useful to forensic psychiatrists. These reviews are remarkably complete, often including the legal case history that influences the use of these evaluations in court. There are also several chapters on risk assessment and man-

agement that review the research supporting the use of several actuarial risk assessment instruments, such as the Static-99 and the Sex Offender Risk Appraisal Guide.

Part Three, "Management and Public Policy Issues Regarding Sexual Offenders," is arguably the most relevant to forensic psychiatry. Part Three gives guidance to the forensic evaluator when answering the question about recommendations for treatment. The chapter "Pharmacotherapy for Sex Offenders," written by a psychiatrist, Dr. Mohan Nair, reviews the evidence base for various pharmacologic interventions and provides guidance regarding the use of anti-androgen medications. There are also well-researched chapters on surgical castration and civil commitment that may be compelling to forensic psychiatrists. Two chapters written by attorneys on the differing legal perspectives on sexual offenders provide a glimpse into the thought process behind the opposing portrayals of sexual offenders. These chapters also offer practical guidance, from an attorney's perspective, on how to avoid pitfalls in forensic work with sexual offenders and how to adequately prepare for testimony. In addition, these two chapters offer a useful review of the landmark legal decisions that have shaped the practice of forensic assessments of sexual offenders.

On the whole, the organization of the text could be improved. The chapters did not always flow from one to the next in a logical manner, and there were some chapters in the middle of the various parts that would have been helpful as an introduction. Further, although comprehensive, the text could have been more succinct and clear at times. While reading, I had the feeling that inclusiveness was valued, sometimes at the expense of clarity and cohesion. Finally, the index at the end of the book is not particularly comprehensive, and it was difficult to use the index to quickly reference the chapters and sections of particular interest to me.

In conclusion, this book describes and quantifies the various facets of the evaluation, interpretation, and management of the sexual offender. It provides a comprehensive and balanced approach to the assessment of sexual offenders, with a particular emphasis on psychometric tools. Sexual offenders and sexual offending arise from a diverse group of influences, both biologic and environmental. This text effectively describes the heterogeneity of the taxonomy of

sexual offending and positions itself as an essential resource for forensic evaluators.

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## Review of Showtime's *The Affair*

Created and executive produced by Sarah Treem and Hagai Levi, Directed by Jeffrey Reiner and others.  
Network name: Showtime. First episode of four seasons aired October 12, 2014.

Despite the title, Showtime's *The Affair* is more about telling a story from different viewpoints than dramatizing an affair. *The Affair* portrays various themes encountered by both forensic and clinical psychiatrists, including grief, trauma, relationship struggles, self-injurious and self-defeating behaviors, and alcohol and drug addiction. Interactions with the law and the criminal and family court system occur across the seasons, including homicides and child custody disputes.

*The Affair* tells the story of Noah, a restless, disenchanted English teacher, writer, husband, and father of four, who takes his family away from their Brooklyn brownstone to the Hamptons town of Montauk, New York, for the summer, so that he can write his novel. Before arriving at his in-laws' beach house, Noah, his wife Helen, and their children stop at the Lobster Roll restaurant. Alison, a Montauk local, works as a waitress there. We later learn that Alison is also a nurse and is married to Cole, another Montauk local whose family is prominent in the town as they operate several businesses, not all of which are legal. Cole, although brooding, is fiercely in love with Alison. The viewer learns that, prior to the start of the series, Alison and Cole lost their young son due to secondary drowning. Alison blames herself for not recognizing this rare condition and not having taken him to the hospital. Social class issues abound. Narcissistic Noah has a midlife crisis, while Alison mourns her drowned son. The two embark on an affair.

Noah and Alison's tumultuous love story affects everyone around them. Alison is escaping her grief,

her financial problems, and her past. Noah relies on Alison to feel good about himself when he is feeling inadequate regarding his status as a husband, father, and writer.

Their stories are told from memory while being questioned after a vehicular homicide. Scottie, Cole's brother, was the victim of the vehicular homicide, and the ongoing investigation of Scottie's death is a central component of the first two seasons. As a further example of the intertwined lives that populate the series, Noah's teenage daughter, Whitney, previously had a fling with Scottie. Each episode is divided into two parts, telling the same story from Noah's perspective and then from Alison's point of view. In the second season, Helen's and Cole's points of view are added. In each episode, the subjective nature of recall is apparent.

The Rashomon Effect is the anthropological term for the narrative device used in *The Affair*. Each character's unique perspective reveals their own subjective truth, but none is the objective truth. *Rashomon* was a 1950 Japanese film that won a prize at the Venice Film Festival and an Academy Award.<sup>1</sup> The film told the story of a samurai's death and a sexual encounter from the perspectives of various people. The narratives are subjective but based on each narrator's own interests. Each story is plausible. Anderson<sup>1</sup> noted that the Rashomon Effect particularly occurs when there are different perspectives, a lack of evidence of which is more likely, and pressure for closure to answer the puzzle or question (e.g., a legal case). All three of these elements are present in *The Affair*.

In the first scene at the Lobster Roll, Noah's youngest daughter chokes on her food. In Noah's version of events, he saves her by performing the Heimlich maneuver while Alison and others witness the event. In Alison's version of her first encounter with Noah, she is the one who saves Noah's daughter. Sometimes the two characters' memories are in line, but other times they conflict slightly to significantly. At first one is not sure who the more credible historian is. However, it gradually dawns on the viewer that neither character's story can be fully trusted, rather that both are likely telling the truth as they believe it. The show illustrates beautifully the inaccuracy of recall for past events, especially when the events are emotionally charged. And the viewer recognizes that neither character is lying because they