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CIP & Dewey Section

To: Melissa Parent, Chair
Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee

Cc: Members of the Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee
Caroline Saccucci, Chief, U.S. Programs, Law, and Literature Division

From: Kathryn Becker, Editor in Residence
Dewey Decimal Classification
OCLC, Inc.

Re: Transvestism and cross dressing

Relocations

From	To	Topic
[306.778]	306.777	Cross dressing as sexual practice
[306.778]	391.68	Cross dressing

In EPC 144-S79.1 Drag, we observed that drag, cross dressing, and transvestism are separate ideas often conflated as one. Due to our continued understanding of language and defined ideas, we realized that cross dressing and transvestism needed to be separated and discussed in a new exhibit.

Problem

Transvestism is currently located in 306.778 underneath the 306.77 Sexual and related practices hierarchy. Other topics in this hierarchy are pornography, masturbation, group sex, oral sex, sadism, masochism, and fetishism. There are two notes at 306.778: “class here cross dressing,” and “class female impersonation, male impersonation in 792.028.” The terms “transvestism” and “transvestite” are also considered dated and derogatory, and the more updated preferred terms are “cross dressing” and “cross dressers.” It is important to note that these terms are not variant terms for transvestism, but are replacements.

The DDC does not treat transvestism and cross dressing as completely synonymous, but also does not address the relationship between the two topics.

Terms defined

Transvestism at the most basic level is the wearing of clothes of the opposite sex, i.e., cross dressing. However, both the DSM—5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) and ICD—11 (International Classification of Diseases) have split transvestism further into either a “fetishistic transvestism” when the main purpose is sexual arousal, or as (ICD-11) part of a “dual role transvestism” which is without sexual purpose but serves as a tool to relieve anxiety or as (DSM-5) part of gender dysphoria (Anupama, 2016).

“Transvestic disorder” is when the behavior of cross dressing causes significant distress for the individual. Most people that cross dress do not have transvestic disorder (Brown, 2023).

Current coverage

306.778 Transvestism has been used for works on fetishistic transvestism, dual role, and other forms of cross dressing. Examining WorldCat for literary warrant for works found in 306.778 in the last 10 years and using a small sample, I found 35 pieces that would be better classified elsewhere such as biography (9), entertainment (11), gender identity (8), or had aspects of cultural taboos such as working women in the Victorian age or religious rituals (3). I also looked at WC/BIB via ESS with a much larger sample size finding a similar spread percentage wise with the most recent works focusing on gender identity, drag, or other non-sexual cross dressing topics.

The topics that would be classified as dual role would be better classified under the main topics that they are covering, such as gender identity, biographies, or espionage for example. Again, looking at the literary warrant for cross dressing in the last 10 years without concern for its assigned DDC number, 91 works were found, with the majority (52) being graphic novels/manga, and only 9 non-fiction works about cross dressing specifically as a part of gender identity or sexual orientation, and the majority of these were autobiographies.

Proposed actions

My first proposed action is to relocate cross dressing to a created division number under 391.6 Personal appearance, 391.68 Cross dressing. This will also require notes: “class here interdisciplinary works on cross dressing” and “class cross dressing for a specific purpose with that purpose, e.g., drag 792.72”.

Secondly, we will also relocate sexual cross dressing to 306.777 Fetishism with a note of “including cross dressing as a sexual practice” and a “class interdisciplinary works on cross dressing 391.68” note.

The first two proposed actions will result in the deprecation of 306.778 Transvestism.

My third proposed action is to change the term “transvestism” to “cross dressing as sexual practice,” as the former term is considered outdated and derogatory according to both Homosaurus and Wikipedia, which both give “cross dressing” as the preferred term. “Transvestism” will remain in the index as a non-preferred term, with a “see also” note

for cross dressing, which does not show in the printed version.

In the following schedule 306.77 is given for context. The class-elsewhere note pointing to 792.72 for drag is contingent on approval of the changes proposed in EPC 144-S79.1.

References

Anupama, M et al. "Transvestism as a Symptom: A Case Series." *Indian journal of psychological medicine* vol. 38,1 (2016): 78-80. doi:10.4103/0253-7176.175131
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4782454/>

Brown, George R. "Transvestic Disorder - Psychiatric Disorders." *Merck Manuals Professional Edition*, Merck Manuals, 18 Apr. 2023,
<https://www.merckmanuals.com/professional/psychiatric-disorders/paraphilic-disorders/transvestic-disorder>

- .77 Sexual and related practices
- Standard subdivisions are added for sexual and related practices together, for sexual practices alone
- Including sodomy
- For sexual practices viewed as medical disorders, see 616.8583*
- See also 364.153 for sex crimes*
- .777 Fetishism
- Including cross dressing as sexual practice
- Class interdisciplinary works on cross dressing in 391.68
- .6 **Personal appearance**
- For hairstyles, see 391.5*
- .68 Cross dressing
- Class here interdisciplinary works on cross dressing
- Class cross dressing for a specific purpose with the purpose, e.g., drag 792.72

C

P Cross dressing	391.68
P customs	391.68
P sexual practices	306.777

F

Fetishism	
sexual practices	306.777
I_a Fetishism (Sexual behavior)	306.777

T

E Transvestism	391.68
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