

Is 'sex addiction' a real disorder — or an excuse?

Another week, another sex addict. Or so it seems.

In the most recent case of a celebrity claiming '[sex addiction](#)' in explaining their questionable behavior, actor James Franco has paid \$2.2 million to settle a 2019 lawsuit brought by two women who attended his acting school. The suit claims that Franco duped the women into filming explicit sex scenes. He admitted having sex with his students and [claims to have been in recovery from sex addiction since 2016](#).

The case raises the question of the status of 'sex [addiction](#)' as a psychological category. Let's explore.

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There are two key diagnostic manuals used by mental health professionals to make clinical decisions about the labels ascribed to patient presentations regarding [sexual](#) behavior.

The American [Psychiatric](#) Association's [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual](#) (DSM), now in its fifth edition, used to refer to "distress about a pattern of repeated sexual conquests or other forms of nonparaphilic sexual addiction, involving a succession of people who exist only as things to be used," but this was removed in 2000.

There were [calls to include hypersexual behavior](#) as a diagnostic category in the most recent edition, but these were eventually rejected due to a lack of evidence for producing reliable indicating criteria.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)