

# Masochism term essay sample



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The term masochism is derived from an Austrian writer and journalist named Von Sacher-Masoch who lived from 1836 - 1895. In 1886, a German neurologist and psychiatrist Richard von Kraft-Ebing invented this term based on Sacher-Masoch sexual personalities. Kraft-Ebing first used this word in his book *Psychopathia Sexualis* (Wikipedia). Masochism in psychiatry definition means the condition in which sexual gratification depends on suffering physical pain or humiliation (Dictionary). This term closely relates to Sacher-Masoch, a man throughout his lifetime desires pain for sexual stimulation and satisfaction. Leopold von Sacher-Masoch was born in 1836 at Lemberg in Galicia. As a child, he grew up in the midst of bloody warfare of the revolution of Prague. These ruthless and cruelty images of war strongly affected his imagination on the sexual side. Sacher-Masoch at a young age developed an attraction to cruel images and loved to gaze at pictures of executions. At the age of 10, he witnessed a scene that left an undying impress on his imagination. He was playing hide-and-seek with his sister when he saw his female relative engaging in sexual conducts with her servant.

This act then got interrupted when the woman's husband marched in the room. Instead of the husband being violent about the act, the woman abruptly stroked the husband with a powerful blow in the face with her fist that he fell back streaming with blood. Witnessing this gave Leopold a strange feeling of pleasure, and in a way, he wished the pain had gotten inflicted on him too (Newschool). Leopold's family moved to Graz in southern Austria when he was 12. There, he got his doctorate degree in law and became a history professor. His first publication was *The Rebellion in Ghent*

under Charles V. When he turned 25, Leopold found interest in literature. Though behind the image of a young educated professional, there hid a person full of primitive emotions. In his subconscious mind were the images of cruelty women he came to recognize from his childhood. As well, he felt sexual impulses toward these merciless women (Sorel 146-150). Leopold first relationship where he got to act out his abnormal sexual crave was with a mistress named Anna von Kottowitz. His second mistress was with the witty Fanny Pistor.

This relationship was the most unusual of all since Pistor did not mind to comply with Leopold demands, and at one point in the relationship, they even obliged to a contract in which makes him her slave for six months. In being a slave for the baroness Pistor, the lady must wear furs as often as possible and would punish and deceive him in the cruelest way. During this time he wrote his best-known book called *Venus in Furs* in 1869 where he detailed exposition of his sexual philosophy. This book made him notorious and popular to gossipers due to the outrageous contents (Sorel 146-150). After the relationship with Pistor ended, Leopold met his first wife in Graz in 1873. Aurora von Rumelin was a down to earth woman, but the marriage did not last since he found it to be unexciting. Rumelin did not want to act out with Leopold's fantasies or deceive him in the way that he wanted her to. In 1883, Sacher-Masoch and his second wife, Hulda Meister, settled in a village in Lindheim, Germany. There, he continued to write and at one time was being honored for his excellent literary works. As he aged, his health began to deteriorate; he spent the last years of his life under psychiatric care.

The official year of his death was uncertain. According to official reports, he died in Lindheim in 1895, but there was a claim that he died in an asylum in Mannheim in 1905 (Wikipedia). As was mentioned, psychiatrist Richard Freiherr von Kraft-Ebing invented this term. In his book, he explained the importance of this term. He recognized that Sacher-Masoch was not the only one that acquired this sexual behavior, but there are people out there that experience the same. Krafft-Ebing commended Leopold for his writing and acknowledged that because of his sexual feelings that induced him to be a fine writer. Details of Masoch's private life were obscure until Aurora von Rümelin's memoirs, *Meine Lebensbeichte*, were published in Berlin in 1906. With this book giving great details about Leopold behaviors, psychiatrist can observe more into this symptoms, while also help people with similar behaviors to relate.