

Brats

Playful vs Disrespectful

Some submissives like to act a little bit bratty to be playful with our Doms. For the most part it is all in fun with hopes for a little Funshiment!

But when does it go from playful fun fun to being disrespectful and spoiled behavior?

At what point does the Dominant either give actually hardcore punishment or decide they don't want to deal with that behavior and break off the dynamic?

Bratty behavior can be taken as topping from the bottom and most Dom's do not tolerate that. I admit I can be a playful brat at times. Sir enjoys that, but he has his limit. If I push that limit, he will either give me some very disliked punishment or he will safeword and we will have a very unpleasant talk not as Sir/baby but as Bill/Trish. I don't ever want to upset Him and when I do, I think I am harder on myself than He is on me.

If I have needs or wants that are not being met, I will ask Sir if we can talk as Bill/Trish and not Sir/baby. Then we will have an open conversation of what we both are thinking or feeling. (redgarter, n.d.)

Brats, SAMs and Break-mes

Posted by [MASTERMARC](#) on September 28, 2015

Brats are possibly something of a misunderstood species. They get a bad rap by many in the community who immediately associate the role with "petulant child". But is that really what a brat is?

We'd call a child a brat if they're misbehaving, but most submissives who identify as brats see it as a role that allows them to be playful. Many Dominants find a little cheekiness and teasing to be sexy, and they want their sub to be able to assert their personality. For them, a brat may be the perfect partner.

I've been subjected to years of snide, derisive comments about "topping from the bottom" and the dangers of being a "brat". When I was a teenager, new to the kink community, I accepted unquestioningly that these were bad, because everyone repeated it like a mantra. Now I'm in my thirties and I want a time machine so I can take a trip back and spit on some shiny fetish dress shoes. Play styles are just that: play styles. Maybe you don't like how I cut my hair, but that just means you shouldn't cut your hair that way. It doesn't mean my style is worse than yours. Different styles work well on different people or attract different people.

The line between cheekiness and disrespect is usually drawn at the point where the Dominant shows annoyance. When brattiness continues beyond that point it becomes defiance. This is where the confusion between what some people see as brattiness and what brats see as brattiness comes in. Most brats don't see their role as a defiant one and they identify that as a different role altogether – the Smart Assed Masochist (SAM) or Break-me.

The motivation of the SAM and Break-me are slightly different.

The SAM is angling to provoke punishment, because their preferred form of play is physical or emotional pain. They are masochists in need of Sadistic treatment, and the brat is a form of role-play to get what they want.

It's often consensually understood by both Dominant and submissive (or Sadist and masochist), and it anchors play in a context – "I am going to spank you because you showed disrespect".

The Break-me finds it hot to be forcefully dominated. They push back, resist the dominant, and need to be overcome... often with a physical struggle. Their role is the "reluctant partner", even if both parties know how the struggle is going to end.

WHEN BRAT BEHAVIOUR BECOMES A PROBLEM

No matter what role we identify with, we all like a certain amount of attention. There's a myth, usually by outsiders but occasionally by new Doms, that the Dom can just sit back and sink into the sensations of a sub serving his every need. We all know that's not the case.

Submissives crave the attention of their Doms, and they'll take on behaviors to get that attention. I'm applying sweeping generalities here, but every relationship I have ever known works on a symbiotic reflection of Dominant and submissive energies. The Dominant feeds on the submissive, and the submissive feeds on the Dominant.

If the dynamic isn't supplying the attention reward a submissive needs, it weakens the submissiveness, which in turn weakens the relationship. It would be a foolish Dom who took without giving and wondered later why the relationship "just wasn't working".

If the balance of the dynamic is out of alignment, or needs are not being met, sometimes submissives who do not identify as (playful, cheeky) brats may find themselves acting out, with bratty behavior. It's a call for attention. It's negative attention, but it's attention, nonetheless.

The reason this is problematic is that in the case of a Dom/brat relationship there is a consensual understanding about the behavior. It's an accepted part of the dynamic and doesn't cause problems. But, in a Dom/sub relationship, bratty behavior is a challenge to the established protocols. It pushes the boundaries and forces the Dom to make a decision on whether the behavior is something they will accept not just in that moment, but in the future. If it's not acceptable behavior, then it needs to be dealt with immediately.

DEALING WITH PROBLEMATIC BRATTINESS

Ignoring brattiness can sometimes work as a tool, but it opens up the possibility that the acting out will become entrenched behavior. It does remove the reward the sub is seeking (attention), and the behavior may stop, but if you let something go once then it's hard to draw the line when it happens a second or third or fourth time. At what point does it seriously change, and perhaps damage, the dynamic?

Punishment is often effectively a reward. The sub behaves badly and gets what they want. If the Dom is quick to think "oh, I've been a bit negligent of my sub's needs", punishment can, in some circumstances, be the right thing to do. It leads to play, it leads to a happy partner, it effectively deals with the behavior and it lays down a precedent that the behavior is out of line and has been noticed. Game on!

The danger in rewarding the behavior is that the behavior becomes learned or entrenched, but if you have a healthy relationship with good communication then you can deal with this as part of the play. Your sub isn't a child, and if you call them out on what they have done and perhaps admit your own role in not paying enough attention, then it doesn't need to be a problem.

But, if the behavior really is unacceptable, the best way to deal with it is to recognize that it is a symptom of a problem, rather than a problem in and of itself. The underlying reasons for the behavior need to be addressed. Brattiness in a submissive who's not normally bratty is a way of saying something is wrong with the relationship dynamic. It may be time to stop and communicate on a deeper level.

IDENTIFYING AS A BRAT

Some Doms love brats because they're playful, responsive, and mischievous. One taste does not fit all, and you should never let anyone tell you there's anything wrong with being who you are. Submissives aren't supposed to behave in a certain prescribed way and being a brat doesn't make you any less submissive. Relationships form between real people, and what keeps them together is so much bigger than "yes Sir, no Sir".

It took us a few years to figure out that play can be so much more dynamic, so much more incredible and fun, when we communicate, which is not topping from the bottom, but listening to what each other has to say about how we feel about certain kinds of play, how certain moments in a scene affect us, what we like to do and have done to us, etc. When he hears the things, I like and dislike and plans our play with those things in mind, our play improves leaps and bounds over when he just does whatever he wants regardless of how I feel about it.

Many Doms enjoy that:

- Brats are funny and unpredictable
- Brats are feisty. They're playing because they enjoy it, not because they've given up on life or have no thoughts of their own.
- People who top from the bottom are giving information. Doms are not mind readers. And, sometimes we like to hear good ideas too.
- Control is a skill. There's really no challenge in a relationship with someone who is totally pliant and predictable.
- Bratty partners are engaged. They're not quietly thinking about what they'll cook for dinner tomorrow while you're having your evil way.
- Brattiness is a form of rapport and camaraderie. In many D/s relationships, your partner is also your best friend. Even in non-serious play partners, many Doms like to play with people they are friends with. (MARC, 2015)

Works Cited

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