

*Ipce*

# NEWSLETTER

Number E 7, December 1999

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*Ipce is a forum for people who are engaged in academic discussion about the understanding and emancipation of mutual relationships between children or adolescents and adults.*

*In this context, these relationships are intended to be viewed from an unbiased, non-judgmental perspective and in relation to the human rights of both the young and adult partners.*

*Ipce meets once every one or two years in a different country, publishes a newsletter and a web site, co-ordinates the (electronic) exchange of texts and keeps an archive of specific written publications.*

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the 7<sup>th</sup> electronic edition of the Ipce newsletter. Welcome also to the new Ipce members. Since Ipce has had a web site, several new members have joined. Ipce now has 55 members in 16 countries. Ipce connects people who want to be engaged in academic discussion about the understanding and emancipation of mutual relationships between children or adolescents, boys or girls, and adults, male or female.

It's just before the new century and millennium now, half a year after the former Newsletter, E6. You will see that I wrote two articles concerning the controversy about the Meta-Analysis of the *Rind et al.* team. This was far more work than I had foreseen. From several lists and sites, I have gathered many comments. The printed version was a big file full of documents. In the first article of this newsletter, I try to give answers to the *arguments* of the critics.

In the last issue of the IPCE Newsletter, I told readers about the criticism and controversy surrounding the RBT Meta-analysis in chronological order. My summary of the controversy ended with the condemnation of the RBT meta-analysis by the U.S. Congress. Then for some time, we did not hear or read much about any further controversy, but on November 6, Philip Tromovitch made a presentation to the joint Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality (SSSS) and the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists (AASECT). Philip presented a more or less 'defense' brief for the RBT team.

Personally, I regret that Philip Tromovitch spent about half of his time at that conference and in the accompanying paper mentioning the opponents of the Meta-analysis and giving a summary of the political ideas and beliefs of these persons and their supposed motives. The second half of his defense contains the scientific reply to the critics of the Meta-analysis.

My fear is that the first half of the paper causes some readers to become less receptive to the second half of the paper. If my fears are valid, that's a pity, because it should *only* be the *scientific* arguments that count in such a venue. For me, it does not matter whether an opponent has right-wing ideas about homosexuality, or what ever; only the scientific arguments have weight in the scientific forum. Even if it should be the Pope himself who believes that the sun rotates around the earth, I should ask the Pope for his arguments, and then I should have a look only at his data, not at his other political or religious beliefs. These don't matter to the case and its defense. Thus, I have written my current article for the IPCE newsletter with my focus on the scientific arguments only."

In the second article, I try to explain the statistics used in the Meta-Analysis. This article also required far more time than I had foreseen.

The article of D.J. West is long, also, but it gives a view on the problem of the sexual abuse (or non-abuse) of boys (and girls) with many nuances. He wrote the article as a guest writer for the *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. In the next article Frederikson gives a critical view of the literature and research about sex abuse, which is more or less along the lines of what the *Rind et al.* team wrote about the same issue. The next author gives strategic considerations by reviewing David Haperlin's book about Foucault. Anyone who wants to be an active participant in the *discourse* in society has to think about the rules of this discourse and about who sets and maintains these rules – and why they do so. The words of a teenager are the core of the concluding article: Sam Manzie speaks to the Court about his former lover in words of truth.

As usual, a list of available documents is put at the end of the Newsletter. It is a long list. The readers of the electronic version of the Newsletter will see colored links to the *new articles* that were added to the library of the Ipce web site.

The very last item of the documentation service list is a remarkable one. It is the judgement of the Court of Appeal of New Zealand in a case concerning the confiscation of an 'objectionable' book (one of the *Acolyte Readers*) and some photographs. Just like the Canadian Court, the judgement is that the freedom of speech and thinking, as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, is a higher law than the law on censorship. Gerald has won this case after five years of proceedings.

Let us keep our hopes alive for an *honest* discussion in the next century about what concerns us here, a discussion without right-wing colored emotional exclamations to the public, but a discussion about *facts and arguments* instead.

Your Secretary,  
**Frans**

### **The Turning Point**

*Recently, I realized from talks with other girl-lovers, that at least some of them seem to have a story comparable to my own. A few years ago now, I realized that I had sexual feelings towards little girls. I did not regard myself as a pedophile at that time, it was just one aspect of my sexual feelings, but it was there. It was only 1 to 1 1/2 years ago that I found that there was more. It was not only about lust, it was about love. I wasn't just sexually attracted to them, but emotionally too. And that was the time that I also came out to myself, and said 'Yes, I am a pedophile'. And the strange thing was - the sexual feelings did not get stronger because of that, rather, they got less. As if the emotional feelings had been hiding as sexual ones before that.*

*And now I have found that that is not a unique story. There are more pedophiles, or at least girl-lovers, that have a similar turning point. One friend told me that he had been a (big) child porn collector until one day he came to realize that that was contrary to what he felt and believed in. He threw it all away, and came to a completely different, in some sense purer, way of experiencing his own girl-love. Someone else told me that he was 'only months away from being a child molester' when he realized things went wrong. And changed himself.*

*It made me think - maybe this shows a deeper truth. Maybe the difference between girl-lovers and boy-lovers on the one side, and child molesters on the other is not as large as we believe (and hope) it to be, maybe it is not more than one time of choosing. Of allowing your emotional feelings for children in, and realizing that you might need to push away the sexual feelings to do so.*

*If that is true, then one of the best ways of saving children from being abused by pedophiles would be to help those pedophiles to make that choice, take that step. And who could do so better than those who have already taken that step? The pedophiles who have found that there are more ways than just the sexual ones to enjoy children - ways that are not just harmless, but even beneficial.*

*The present climate does not make this easy. Any method pedophiles will choose to come together, is actively repressed by a fearful society, which sees these not as a way of helping pedophiles to live within the law, but as an aid in breaking it. Also, the fear and paranoia that society has created around child-adult contacts, makes it harder and harder for pedophiles to enjoy their orientation in a harmless way. Which might force some of them to choose between abuse and depression – neither of which is a good choice to take, whether looked at from the perspective of the child or that from the pedophile himself. The media give daily examples of pedophiles who chose the wrong path, but rarely if ever show that there is*

*a right path to follow too. This too makes it hard for a pedophile to make the right choice, or even to realize that it exists.*

*All in all, society acts towards the pedophile like a non-understanding parent. The pedophile is told repeatedly that certain things that he wants are forbidden, and threatened with ever more severe punishments if he still does them. But at the same time, he is not shown an alternative way. So for the pedophile, it seems that there are only two options - breaking the law and the codes of society, or denying his feelings. Neither choice is very attractive. Any third way is hidden, denied and/or forbidden by society. If they were purposely trying to change pedophiles into mental cases, they could not have chosen a better way to do so.*

André

## Science and Morality or The Rind et al. Controversy

The counter arguments replied  
By Dr. Frans Gieles

### Introduction

In the last Newsletter, I told about the controversy concerning the Meta-Analysis of Rind et al. in chronological order. In this article, we will take a look at the counter arguments against the Meta-Analysis.

For an honest scientific debate, one has to put counter arguments in the form of *a question*, not in the form of a *proposition*. Most of the opponents have spoken in propositions, mostly with strong emotional loading and much rhetoric. In this article, I translate these propositions into *questions* and supply answers.

The sources of the answers were several Ipce members and several others. Thanks to everyone who sent messages to the various lists and sites. From this mass of printed messages, I could write a book, but I prefer to write an article and to get to the point.

### I Methodological questions

#### Question 1: Can a study be valid if there is no hypothesis?

Paul Fink, M.D., a former president of the American Psychiatric Association, said in reference to the study - "I am at a loss to understand even the premise of this work ... Scientific inquiry proceeds from real-world observations, which are then used to formulate hypotheses. The apparent hypothesis motivating this research - that child sexual abuse is not nearly as harmful as we think - cannot be justified by any interpretation of the literature."

#### Answer 1: A study can be scientifically valid without a hypothesis.

Studies that test a hypothesis are one kind of research, there are other forms. A study can also have a *question*, like "how much harm does child sexual abuse do, and what do the collected data so far suggest"? Or, if you insist on a hypothesis, what about "a meta-analysis of all well-designed studies conducted will yield insight into the quantity of harm done"?

There are also exploratory studies done and ones with practical consequences. The opportunity to do a meta-analysis arises only after there has been a great deal of research on a question.

Meta-analyses are just a statistical way of determining whether there is converging evidence for a particular outcome. No single study ever answers a question conclusively. Science advances through replication and converging evidence from multiple studies of the same phenomena. Unless studies are done exactly the same as previous studies, there must be some way of resolving differences and making comparisons across them. That is what the statistical procedures involved in meta-analysis attempt to do. A meta-analysis is a less biased way of combining results across studies and figuring out what they say collectively, than previous methods are, because it applies a rule that is independent of the author's assumptions and hopes for the outcome. A meta-analysis does rely on real-world observations because it is based entirely on studies that do so.

Because the statistical techniques exist in the field independent of the researcher and what is being studied, they are less likely to be the source of bias. People get distracted by such ideas as "there are lies, damned lies, and statistics" into believing that anyone can lie with statistics. That is only so when the audience is ignorant of how statistics work. There are correct and incorrect uses of statistics and these can be independently verified by readers (and by the original peer reviewers).

**Question 2: Can a valid study rely on self-reports?**

Opponents have said that the meta-analysis does not report about *facts* because of the use of self-reports that only tell what the students have *said* instead of what really has happened.

**Answer 2: All original studies use self-reports.**

The use of self-reports is a wide spread and accepted practice in all social sciences. Self-reports have been used in all the studies that the meta-analysis reviewed. None of the opponents criticised the reviewed studies as long as the self-reports spoke about many harms and problems as a result of the CSA (child sexual abuse). They have ignored reports that were positive about the CSA experience. In the meta-analyses, however, these positive reports are mentioned. Just because the opponents do not like positive reports, they oppose the use of self-reports. The opponents, who always believed the negative self-reports, ignore the voice of the students who reported neutral or positive effects. In the self-reported reaction data, 156 women (11% of 1421) reported positive reactions, 256 (18%) neutral reactions; 224 men (37% of 606) reported positive reactions, 176 (29%) neutral reactions (Table 7). The opponents do not believe these 812 people; they only believe the 1223 people who reported negative reactions.

**Question 3: Is a sample of students representative of the general population?**

The authors pretend to speak about the population in general, but they have only analysed self-reports by students, who are only a part of the general population.

**Answer 3: Research has shown that the student samples are representative.**

The opponents have always believed that the conclusions of studies with a clinical or legal sample were representative for the population in general, as long as the conclusions were in terms of many harms caused by CSA. It is clear that clinical and legal samples are not representative of the population in general.

The main findings in the college sample meta-analysis were identical to the main findings of a previous study (Rind & Tromovitch, 1997) based on national probability samples. Thus on empirical grounds, it appears that the college sample findings are representative.

**Question 4: Weren't the students too young to experience the negative effects?**

Students, so said the opponents, are too young to experience in full the negative effects of CSA. Their youth gives them some resistance; they will experience the negative effects later on when they are married.

**Answer 4: Research data show that this is not true.**

Opponents who use this argument clearly did not read the meta-analysis. The authors say on page 27 of the meta-analysis: "A possible shortcoming of focusing on the college population is that college students may be too young for symptoms to have appeared, or they may be better able to cope with CSA stresses than persons in other populations (Jumper, 1995). However, younger and older adults did not differ in CSA-adjustment relations in Neumann et al.'s (1996) meta-analysis. Furthermore, mean effect sizes from college samples, as reported by Jumper, were similar to those from national samples (*Rind & Tromovitch, 1997*), nonclinical samples (Neumann et al., 1996), and community samples (Jumper, 1995, after corrections). Therefore, the argument that college students are better able to cope and thus present fewer adverse reactions than people in other nonclinical populations lacks empirical support." See also page 42 of the meta-analysis. For the note and the references, see the meta-analysis.

**Question 5: Aren't the definitions of CSA so broad that there is an over-inclusion of mild experiences, for example, non-contact types of CSA?**

For example, the FRC wrote: ". . .the authors loaded their analysis with data involving primarily mild adult-child interactions involving little or no physical contact. . .from which one would expect to find less permanent harm."

**Answer 5: The authors did not make the definitions broad, the original studies did.**

No "loading" has taken place because Rind et al. were very clear that they used every college study of CSA that is known to exist in the English language. When one takes everything, one, by definition, cannot have loaded more of one thing than another. One might also make the point that societal definitions of "sexual abuse" are now so broad that they fail to differentiate among gradations anyway; certainly social conservatives, such as those at FRC, have rarely pursued such subtleties before.

Rind et al. had no choice but to include all the studies in their meta-analysis, even with all their divergent definitions of CSA. If they hadn't, they would have been accused of selectivity. Instead, they're accused of over-inclusion. One has to wonder, though, where all the right-wing critics were when the earlier studies, with their sometimes over-broad definitions of CSA, came out. Why did these critics not complain back then? It is more than a little hypocritical for the right-wing to claim - as they always used to - that *all* forms of CSA are very harmful, and only now turn around and accuse others of wrongfully making the same assumption.

As far as I know, there are no studies that only use severe definitions of CSA. Thus, a meta-analysis can not be done for lack of studies to use as data.

Nevertheless, let's have a look at page 30 and table 1 of the meta-analysis. Let's look at the differences between those studies that had only contact sex, and those that had some non-contact experiences as well. Note that these categories are overlapping; for example, some of the people who experienced exhibitionism may have also experienced intercourse, and vice-versa. Sixteen of the available 76 samples were exclusively contact sex; the remaining 58 were varying combinations of contact and non-contact. Someone has calculated the median effect sizes for both groups: .135 for contact, .10 for combination; certainly not a dramatic difference.

**Question 6: Aren't some quite old studies with mild outcomes dominating the whole meta-analysis?**

The FRC says in a press release, May 20 1999, as Laura Schlesinger had said before based on a letter from Dr. Fink: "Of the 59 studies included in the analysis, 60% of the data are drawn from one single study done over 40 years ago,"

**Answer 6: No. The Landis study is not used in the primary analysis**

The authors noted that their main findings, which evaluated lingering symptoms, did not use the disputed data at all in any of the correlation effect size analyses because Landis didn't give any correlational data. The authors added that omitting the Landis data altogether would not significantly change the other results.

By the way, the 1,496 cases in the Landis study are 4% of the total of 35,703, not 60%. Only in table 8, the self-reported effects p 37), Landis' cases are 746 of the 1191, that's 62%. In table 7, Landis' 676 cases are 33% of the total of 2017 cases. But who says that Landis' cases are 60% *of the total meta-analysis*, takes a *pars pro toto* or simply tells a lie.

The main average effect size calculation was based on a sample size of 15,912 participants. The 676 students in Landis' sample *would have* amounted to only 4.2% of that *if* Landis had done a correlation in his study, which he didn't. Furthermore, the results of this analysis ( $r = .10$  for females and  $r = .07$  for males, very weak correlations) are identical to results obtained from a separate meta-analysis using national probability samples, all of which are relatively recent.

Out of 59 studies, only 3 were done before 1984 (Landis, 1956; Finkelhor, 1979; and one from 1981). Only 7 were done before 1987, that's 52 studies from 1987 or later.

Out of eight different sets of statistical analyses performed, each involving numerous calculations, the primary calculation in which Landis' numbers were used was in the self-reported reactions table (table 7). Ironically, if Landis' data are removed and the figures recalculated, boys' reactions average 50% positive, up from 37%. Girls' reactions without Landis' data give an average of 15.5% positive, up from 11%. These calculations include weighting for sample size, in keeping with proper method.

**Question 7: Doesn't using so many unpublished studies bias the analysis?**

The FRC says: "twenty-three of the 'usable studies' were 'unpublished'."

**Answer 7: No, an unpublished study is not a bad study just because it is unpublished.**

The vast majority of the unpublished studies are doctoral theses. Including these in meta-analyses is standard practice. The other two unpublished studies were Master's theses. It should be

pointed out that Rind et al. have found that there is a slight bias in favor of publishing studies that find harm; they are more likely to be published than studies which find less or no harm.

By the way, the original claims that "CSA" was harmful to boys irrespective of how they felt about it, promulgated especially by David Finkelhor, John Briere, and their respective collaborators, relied heavily upon unpublished dissertations and a range of other unpublished studies.

The authors say in their November-6th talk (p. 9): "The unpublished data we included came almost entirely from doctoral dissertations, which, as most academics know, are generally well supervised by a group of Ph.D.s from design, through data collection, to presentation. Even more importantly, in our review we actually compared the CSA-symptom association in the unpublished and published studies a fact that has been completely ignored by our critics. The mean associations were both small (unpublished data  $r = .08$ ; published data  $r = .11$ ) and were not statistically significantly different, and certainly not different in a practical sense. In short, the unpublished and the published data were "telling the same story.

**Question 8: Does the meta-analysis need a review by statistical experts?**

Most of the opponents said the meta-analysis was flawed or was garbage and full of biases.

**Answer 8: No, this has already been done.**

Ray Fowler, Ph. D., writes at May 25, representing the APA: "Because the article has attracted so much attention, we have carefully reviewed the process by which it was approved for publication and the soundness of the methodology and analysis. This study passed the journal's rigorous peer review process and has, since the controversy, been reviewed again by an expert in statistical analysis who affirmed that it meets current standards and that the methodology, which is widely used by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to develop guidelines, is sound."

Unless these words, APA asked the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of science) perform another independent review of the Meta-Analysis. This Committee stated that " We see no reason to second-guess the process of peer review used by the APA journal in its decision to publish" and went on to say that "we saw no clear evidence of improper application of methodology or other questionable practices on the part of the article's authors."

## II The central issue of consent

**Question 9: Isn't this whole study biased by the false premise of consent?**

The FRC wrote on May 20: "In an ethical and legal perspective, consent means informed consent which implies a certain level of knowledge and life experience. [...] That is why the authors' premise and the basis for the conclusions in their study, that the children in the studies "consented" or were "willing" participants in adult-child sex must be rejected, and why this study should be rejected as "junk science." Whatever the children's perceptions were, we know, [...] that the children were not capable of legally, ethically, morally, mentally, or emotionally consenting to sex with anybody, much less an adult. Thus, what we are left with is a study that should never have seen the light of day, much less publication in a professional journal."

**Answer 9a: No, the central concept is 'harm' and the central question is: 'to what extent?'**

The idea that children can consent to sex with adults is not a premise of this study. "Our study was based on the premise that there was a need to review research on the effects of, and reactions to, CSA experiences in college populations." (The authors in their statement of May 12.) If the reviewed studies have made distinctions between wanted and unwanted sexual experiences, a meta-analysis can make the same distinctions. Several studies did so, thus the meta-analysis did. Several authors before Rind et al. have accepted that their participants told them that their experiences were wanted in a certain percentage of the cases. A scientist has to accept this as a matter of fact. The fact is: 'the participants told me...'. As the authors said it: "In the research we reviewed on the effects of CSA, 'consent' has meant the victim's own perception of his or her level of participation - from being forced to willingness - because this is known to affect a victim's reaction to the experience. Given that our study is a review of dozens of other studies, many of which explicitly examined how victim's own perceptions of their level of participation affect outcomes, it was appropriate for us to examine this factor as well." Thus, 'consent' was not a premise, nor a central concept, but one of the factors that could vary the participant's perception of the CSA event.

If one rejects the possibility of willingness, one should reject every study that finds a difference between willing and unwilling experiences. But if consent to sex - informed or not - is impossible for children to give to adults, one has to then wonder why it makes such a dramatic difference in outcomes. Though a self-perceived level of consent may be of no interest to FRC, the meta-analysis demonstrates that the self-perceived level of consent makes a huge difference to actual children.

The FRC statement cited above, "Whatever the children's perceptions were, we know that the children were not capable..." is quite clear. What children say and feel is not important because FRC knows better.

If the children say they were harmed, they must be believed. NAMBLA has to accept the facts. But if they say they were not, they must still be believed. FRC has to also accept the facts. Otherwise, the children are just being used.

**Answer 9b: Consent is a scientifically valid and useful construct.**

In the words of the authors in their November-6th paper (p 13.): " In Webster's 3rd New International Dictionary, the first definition of consent is: "compliance or approval especially of what is done or proposed by another." This definition can be termed "simple consent," of which children and adolescents are certainly capable; in fact, ethical guidelines for research with adolescents and children typically require researchers to obtain the agreement or assent of the participant. The second definition is: "capable, deliberate, and voluntary agreement to or concurrence in some act or purpose implying physical and mental power and free action." This second definition is "informed consent," which the law takes into account and which is also the typical ethical and social definition. Thus, the term "consent" clearly does not always or inevitably imply informed consent. More important from a scientific view is the value of simple consent in discriminating reactions or outcomes. If simple consent discriminates, then it is scientifically valid for use in research, irrespective of moral or ethical objections.

Many studies in our review distinguished between consenting and forced acts. We merely compiled the relevant data and examined the value of consent as a predictor of outcomes. It had utility, it did discriminate, and it was therefore scientifically valid to use as a construct. The studies we reviewed generally defined CSA either as a child or adolescent's sexual experience that was unwanted regardless of partner's age, or as wanted or unwanted experiences with someone older typically, at least 5 years older. We merely contrasted study effects from these two groups to examine the value of "consent" as a predictor of outcomes. This analysis clearly demonstrated the utility of distinguishing unwanted from wanted (i.e., consenting) experiences in terms of predicting outcome."

**Answer 9c: Consent is widely accepted as being possible for adolescents.**

In their November-6th statement, the authors say (p. 14): " It should also be made clear that when Congress, the Leadership Council, the Family Research Council, or even the APA is talking about "children" in the context of sexual relations with adults, they are not using biological definitions of childhood, but instead are referring to minors under the age of consent, which is generally from 16 to 18 in the U.S. Thus, they are talking not only about prepubescent children, but also adolescents. It is thus informative to review what the APA has had to say in the past about adolescents' ability to provide informed consent in a different context. In an October, 1989 amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court, the APA argued, based on a review of the developmental literature, that pregnant girls do not need parental consent to obtain abortions, because they are capable, in an informed consent sense, to decide for themselves. They wrote:

'Psychological theory and research about cognitive, social and moral development strongly supports the conclusion that most adolescents are competent to make informed decisions about important life situations. . . . In fact, by middle adolescence (age 14-15) young people develop abilities similar to adults in reasoning about moral dilemmas, understanding social rules and laws, and reasoning about interpersonal relationships and interpersonal problems. . . . By middle adolescence most young people develop an adult-like identity and understanding of self. . . . Thus, by age 14 most adolescents have developed adult-like intellectual and social capacities including specific abilities outlined in the law as necessary for understanding treatment alternatives, considering risks and benefits, and giving legally competent consent. . . . [Additionally,] there are some 11-to-13-year-olds who possess adult-like capabilities in these areas.'

In view of these conclusions, which are based on the developmental literature, it seems inconsistent to reject even simple consent as a moderating variable in a rigorously peer-reviewed article, given that many of the CSA episodes analyzed involved adolescents. In short, the scientific data demonstrate the utility of consent, in the sense of simple consent or willingness, as a moderating



variable. Thus, simple consent is a valid scientific construct for predicting and understanding the outcomes associated with CSA experiences."

### III The debate about the conclusions

#### **Question 10: How did the authors reach other conclusions than their peers did?**

Several opponents have said that the Rind et al. conclusions were too different from the professional literature to give them any credibility. 'One-Voice/ACAA', an alliance of adult survivors of sexual abuse, wrote: "Given the fact that hundreds of studies reveal the serious and long-term consequences of CSA, it is irresponsible to claim that sexual abuse rarely results in harm."

#### **Answer 10: There were no peers.**

The college data had never been systematically reviewed before. Therefore it is not accurate to conclude - as some of its critics imply - that Rind et al. came to different conclusions from other researchers; it is simply that no other researchers have ever done what Rind et al. have done. Prior to now, there has been no systematic attempt to compare the various college studies with one another in a meaningful way. Therefore Rind et al. cannot be said to have peers who disagree with them; in fact, they have no peers at all; they are pioneers.

One-Voice/ACAA speaks of "hundreds of studies" without the title of a single study: *which studies?* The Rind et al. team has reviewed *all* studies they could find.

#### **Question 11: Is it right to describe a moral crime in neutral terms?**

The authors suggest that researchers should choose more neutral terms for 'child sexual abuse' because 'abuse' implies harm and there is not always harm. With neutral terms, the real harm can get the attention it needs. Opponents, however, suggest that using neutral terms implies condoning immoral acts.

#### **Answer 11: Using neutral terms is correct in research.**

The authors said in their May-12 statement: "This suggestion was directed to scientific research definitions only, not social or legal ones. The research concern is that although all such sexual contacts may meet legal and social definitions of abuse, the data suggested that such broad definitions may fail to account for how the content of the experience affects psychological outcomes, and that failures to draw distinctions among categories of CSA may compromise the ability to predict effects of these experiences. In other words, all abuse is not equally harmful and suggesting that it is trivializes the most serious abuse.

"We state in the paper that defining CSA based on moral and legal criteria is appropriate for legal restrictions, but may be invalid in scientific inquiry. The term "adult-child sex" already occurs frequently in the child abuse literature, used interchangeably with "child sex abuse." Our paper suggests only that these terms be used more selectively in psychological research - not in media discussions or in legislative discussions."

#### **Question 12: Aren't the conclusions bad news?**

Opponents suggest that, if NABMLA exclaims "Good news!", it is in fact bad news because pedophiles might feel free to 'molest our children'.

#### **Answer 12: If there is less harm than supposed, it's good news.**

The conclusion that there is less harm than has always been supposed and that children are more resilient than was thought, is a message of hope. The Rind study is nothing more than another confirmation that children are resilient. There are many studies showing that a percentage of children are able to endure horrific experiences in childhood and yet go on to lead normal healthy lives without apparent damage. People accept such a conclusion when the experiences concern things like deaths of parent or siblings, car accidents, fires, war, or natural disasters. They seem unwilling to accept the same result showing up in this particular circumstance.

Carol Tavris wrote in the L.A. Times (July 10): "Perhaps the researchers' most inflammatory finding, however, was that not all experiences of child-adult sexual contact have equally emotional consequences nor can they be lumped together as "abuse." Being molested at the age of 5 is not comparable to choosing to have sex at 15. Indeed, the researchers found that two-thirds of males who, as children or teenagers, had had sexual experiences with adults did not react negatively.

"Shouldn't this be good news? Shouldn't we be glad to know which experiences are in fact traumatic for children, and which are not upsetting to them? Shouldn't we be pleased to get more evidence of the heartening resilience of children? And "more" evidence it is, for abundant research now shows that most people, over time, cope successfully with adversity - even war. Many not only survive, but find meaning and strength in the experience, discovering psychological resources they did not know they had."

If there is harm – and there *is* harm in some cases – than it's better to know which cases are the most harmful. Those are the cases in which the child suffers from a bad *family environment*, which has far more influence than the sexual experiences. Well, *this* is 'bad news' for organizations that want to keep and protect 'Family Values'

The authors said in their May-12 statement: "In response to the suggestion that reporting that CSA may be less damaging than previously thought condones abuse, consider what psychologist John Currie wrote in the Atlanta Journal and Constitution (April 8): "To excoriate the APA for publishing the study is a bit like scolding the American Cancer Society for reporting that the long-term effects of a form of cancer are less catastrophic than had previously been thought." This analogy is not just hypothetical. In a study published earlier this year in the journal Pediatrics by R. Noll and colleagues reported in The New York Times, Jan. 19, 1999, (D 12 by Jane Brody), a comparison between nearly all children with cancer in the Cincinnati area and normal controls found that the cancer patients were as well adjusted socially, emotionally, and psychologically as the controls. The authors commented that their study was an improvement over previous research because it examined children in an everyday setting rather than a clinical one. A response to this study analogous to the criticism of our own would be to claim that the authors and the AMA are promoting cancer because it's less harmful psychologically than previously thought."

"In fact, if adverse childhood events are found to be less psychologically harmful than previously thought, or in some cases not measurably harmful at all, researchers have an ethical duty to report this. In the case of CSA, this finding has some positive implications: victims do not have to believe that they are "damaged goods" and will inevitably suffer personality disorders and other psychopathology, and clinicians may have solid grounds for providing reassurance and hope to those who have had such experiences. Ignoring such data may bring harm to those who have had such experiences by perpetuating feelings of being 'damaged.' "

Otherwise, in my personal opinion, the "good news!" cry of NAMBLA may not be interpreted as a green light for sexual acts with children; there is *less* harm than we had thought, but still there *is* harm in some cases.

## IV About the authors

### **Question 13: Aren't the authors biased by a hidden agenda to condone pedophilia?**

Since Laura Schlesinger has said it, many opponents followed her attack on the authors. Those who brought the message, the 'bad news', had to fear for their name, their job and life. The authors could have traveled all over the world to promote pedophilia, could have contact with Dutch pedophilia advocates. "The authors write that pedophilia is fine... as long [as] it is enjoyed", to give only one quote from Rep. Joseph R. Pitts, R-Pa, in a press release.

### **Answer 13: The authors did not use the word 'pedophilia' at all; they reviewed research done by others on the effects of CSA.**

R. Pitt could not give any quotation from the study that supports his remarkable reading (said Jonathan Rauch in National Journal Aug. 6).

The authors said in their May-12 statement: "[...] critics have implied that [our] conclusions condone sexual abuse. In fact, in our article, we clearly state that our review of the research literature does not condone CSA, and changes nothing with regard to moral or legal views of abuse. We wrote that "lack of harmfulness does not imply lack of wrongfulness," that moral and legal codes of society need not be (and often are not) based on findings of psychological harmfulness, and that "the findings of the current review do not imply that moral or legal definitions of or views on behavior, currently classified as CSA, should be abandoned or even altered" (p. 47).

If one does not like the conclusions, let one not attack the authors. One should not give non-existent 'quotations'. If one will be ethically and morally correct, one should follow the commandment 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor'.

Dr. Tana Dineen wrote in The Ottawa Citizen, May 11,: "There are two moral issues here. The one that Dr. Laura raises, I support. Pedophilia is wrong.

“The second issue is that of professional honesty. If psychologists truly do not know, are they not obliged to stop telling clients and the courts that child sexual abuse is inevitably harmful. [...] The question is: Are they going to admit their lack of knowledge or are they going to quietly cover-up their earlier errors?”

Professional honesty is not only a right of the Rind team, but an ethical obligation for all professionals.

## V Science and morality

### **Question 14: What should be the role of science, politics and media in matters of morality?**

On July 12, the Congress of the USA condemned the meta-analysis in a vote of 355 to zero. To be precise, it especially “condemns and denounces all suggestions in the article ‘A Meta-Analytic Examination [etc...] that indicate that sexual relationships between adults and ‘willing’ children are less harmful than believed and might be positive for ‘willing’ children.”

What’s happening here?: politicians condemn and denounce the conclusions of scientific research on *moral* grounds, after a right wing campaign in the media. If everybody should act morally correct, what should be each one’s role and limits?

### **Answer 14: Science should give the facts and has the right and obligation to do this; the media has to inform the public correctly; politicians should honestly lead the process of decision making in moral matters.**

Science can tell us that it is healthy to eat meat; human beings can decide on moral grounds to not eat meat. Science can tell us that it is dangerous to drink alcohol; human beings can decide to permit each other to drink alcohol. Science can tell us that it is not dangerous to use cannabis in small portions now and then; human beings can, with draconian punishment, forbid each other to use or possess a tiny portion. Science can give the facts and has the right and the obligation to do this; human beings should hear and read these facts and should discuss honestly the moral consequences. Politicians have the obligation to lead this discussion and to take the decisions as far as necessary.

This discussion, about moral matters, is a different *kind* of discussion; it differs from the discussion about the facts in every aspect of the *discourse*. It’s another *kind of discourse*, as Haberman showed us. The U.S. Congress has interchanged both kinds of *discourses*.

If politicians with their power (supposedly without reading or understanding the study), decide to condemn and denounce the facts, found in careful scientific research, it’s the end of science, but also the end of a correct discussion about morality. Since most of the media did not read the article at all and gave non-existing ‘quotations’, the public is not well informed and cannot reasonably discuss the moral implications.

Everybody has to accept the conclusions from careful scientific research, until further research gives other conclusions. The FRC wrote: “If psychology finds no harm in something considered morally wrong, we believe they are *not looking carefully enough*.” This is the essence of what passes for respectful criticism of Rind et al. At least, it is not a personal attack. It *is*, however an attack on the very *idea* of science. Think what this means: Social scientists would be sent back to the drawing board, until their facts agree with popular prejudices.

Once upon a time, Galileo discovered some facts about the earth and the sun. The Pope refused to accept the facts and with all his power – the power of the Inquisition and the stake – he condemned the scientist. Some centuries afterwards, the Church accepted the facts and gave Galileo his due long after his death.

## **An explanation of the statistics used in the Meta-analysis**

By Dr Frans Gieles

### **Meta-analysis**

This is an *analysis of analyses*. The Rind et al. team did not add a new study of a new sample to the existing ones. Meta-analysis is a method to review the data and the results of existing studies. The method makes it possible to compare the data and the results of many other studies and to ‘add’ the data and the results together, so to speak. By this method, all samples together form a ‘new’ big sample. This is the strength of a meta-analysis. A statistical rule is: the greater the sample, the more the results can be trusted.

### **Correlation and effect size**

*Correlation* is the central concept in the study. Correlation is the association between two or more factors. A *factor* or a *moderator* is a force that may have some influence (e.g., intelligence can influence school results). A factor has to be measured by some method. The outcome of the measurement is a *variable* (e.g., an intelligence quotient).

If a researcher measures the I.Q. of a sample of children, the I.Q. figures will *vary* among the children. The result of the measurement will show the *variability* of the *sample*.

With some methods, one can estimate the variability of the *population* (e.g. all children of a given age in a given country). Then it's called *the population variance*.

*Analysis of variance* or ANOVA, like correlation, measures the association between two or more factors. Put another way, correlation and ANOVA measure how variability in one variable is related to variability in another variable.

The level of correlation is reflected in a *correlation coefficient*, noted as  $r$ , a figure between +1.00 (the longer it rains, the more water in a bin) and -1.00 (the more it rains, the lower the amount of children playing on the streets). The significance (credibility) of this figure depends on the size of the sample, thus on the amount of observations or participants. The more observations for a given value of  $r$ , the more significance. Therefore, the number of participants is usually given after the  $r$  with the letter  $n$  or  $N$ .

Note that the size of the association between two variables (i.e.,  $r$ ) is a different concept than *statistical significance*, which addresses the question of whether or not the two variables are really related to one another. For the meta-analysis,  $r$  is used as a measure of *effect size*.

In a meta-analysis, most of the correlation coefficients are given after a correction in which the size of the sample is included in the calculation. After doing so, a more *unbiased*  $r$  appears: the  $r_u$ . This figure reflects the best estimate of the level of the correlation *within the population*.

One useful property of  $r$  is that the figure  $r$  or  $r_u$  can be squared. This figure is named the '*coefficient of determination*' or '*percentage of variance accounted for*'. If some variable  $V_1$  predicts 50% of the variability in some variable  $V_2$ , then the coefficient of determination would be .50 (which corresponds to an  $r$  of about .7). Note, that  $0.9 \times 0.9 = 0.81$  and that  $0.4 \times 0.4 = 0.16$ . The squared figure  $r_u^2$  is lower than the  $r_u$ .

To interpret the *effect size*, the Rind team calls an  $r=.50$  large, .30 medium, and .10 small. Thus a coefficient of determination of 1% is small, 9% is medium, and 25% is large.

The main factor in the meta-analysis is the experience of CSA. This main factor is compared with many other factors, for example adjustment and many psychological factors. If there appeared to be a high percentage of variance between CSA and, say, adjustment, one supposes that the CSA experience had a (small, medium, or large) *effect* on the adjustment. If the degree of consent or the gender appears to have effect on the adjustment, than the degree of consent or the gender can be seen as a *moderator*.

Because the studies gave one effect size for each sample, the number of effect sizes is the same as the number of samples, mentioned in the tables as  $k$ .

### **Confidence interval**

As it has been said: the greater the sample, the more reliable is the correlation. To give a measure for the reliability, usually two figures are given; the one lower and the other higher than the computed correlation coefficient. Between these two figures, the correlation is reliable with a chance of 95% - or a chance of 2.5% that the correlation is lower than the lowest figure and 2.5% that it's higher than the highest figure.

Note that, if the first figure is below zero and the latter above zero, the correlation can be negative as well as positive. If both figures are above zero, we know (with a confidence of 95%) that there is a positive correlation between the given figures, but if one of the figures is zero or negative, we can't even say with sufficient confidence whether the correlation is negative or positive. This, to cite page 29 of the meta-analysis, "an interval not including zero indicated an effect size estimate was significant."

### **One- and two-tailed tests.**

If the researcher is quite sure that the correlation will be a positive one (as in the example of the wet streets and the rain), he tests only at the positive side of the possible correlation coefficients. This is a *one-tailed test*. If the researcher is not sure of how two variables are related, or if he wants to know the size of the correlation rather than just its existence or non-existence, he should test at both ends of the possible correlation coefficients: he does a *two-tailed test*.

### **Symptom-level correlation**

This is the correlation between several *symptoms* (for example, depression) and the CSA factor, as it appeared in all samples in which these symptoms are measured. The CSA factor usually has two *levels*: with or without CSA experience. In other studies, more levels are used, e.g. contact CSA, non-contact CSA, no CSA. The 'without-group' is the control group. If, say, 50% of the CSA group had depressive symptoms and also 50% of the control group had depressive symptoms, the effect size of CSA will be zero. If 100% of the CSA group had these symptoms and 0% of the control group, the correlation and the effect size would be 1.00.

### **Sample-level correlation**

This correlation reflects the overall association between CSA and those types of adjustment measured in the several samples, corrected for the sample size. If a study measured four symptoms in one sample, these four symptom-level effect sizes in the study are averaged into one sample-level effect size in the meta-analysis.

### **Homogeneity**

A meta-analysis combines the data from several studies about the same subject. *Homogeneity* measures the differences or similarities between the several studies. If several studies reach nearly the same conclusion, one can combine the data with reasonable confidence. If the studies differ greatly in their outcomes, one should be more cautious about combining the data. The statistical measure of homogeneity between the outcomes of the studies has been given in the tables as *H*.

This *H* is calculated by a test, named "Chi-square" that compares the differences between groups of data. The more groups of data, the higher the Chi square will be. The statistical way of saying this is " $df$  (degrees of freedom) =  $k$  (number of choices or groups) - 1". To know the significance of the chi-square, one has to look at a table. Usually, the significance is mentioned as an (\*) in the tables. An asterisk means that the groups of data were different, a non-significant *H* suggests that there was a great deal of homogeneity amongst the several studies. The asterisk is explained in the tables as " $p < .05$  in chi-square test." This means that the chance that such great differences between homologous data would occur is smaller than 5%. To reach homogeneity, the authors removed the most extreme effect sizes, irrespective of whether they were extremely high or extremely low, until homogeneity was reached – if possible. Otherwise, the studies could not be compared with one another with confidence.

### **The outliers**

Suppose that five studies resulted in the following effect sizes: 0.14, 0.17, 0.23, 0.25 and 0.27. The mean effect size (neglecting the sample size in this example) is 0.21. Now suppose a sixth study resulted in an effect size of 0.70. Then, the mean will be 0.29. The one high effect size will raise the mean and the sixth study would have great influence on the results. It is better to expel this sixth study from the meta-analysis since it seems to be an aberration. These kinds of studies are called "outliers".

Factually, three studies were outliers: two studies with very high positive effect sizes (having many incest cases in the samples) and one with a negative effect size. "Positive" should be read as: "the more CSA, the more *problems with* adjustment – see page 31 of the meta-analysis.

### **Weighted means**

If one has a set of effect sizes, one can compute the mean effect size. It is better to include the size of the sample in the computation. Doing so, the larger samples have more influence on the mean than the smaller samples. This mean is called a *weighted mean*.

### **Fisher's-Z transformations**

A correlation coefficient  $r$  or  $r_u$  is not an interval measure: i.e. the distance between  $r = 0.1$  to  $r = 0.2$  is not the same as the distance from  $r = 0.8$  to  $r = 0.9$ . A transformation to Fisher's Z gives each correlation coefficient a figure that better reflects its position in the collection of all coefficients when performing meta-analyses. It makes it possible to use the correlation coefficient and the sample size in a calculation of the weighted mean. This weighted mean can then be transformed back into a correlation coefficient.

BTW, the  $r_u^2$  or % of variance is an interval measure.

### **Standard Deviation or SD**

The *standard deviation* is a figure, mostly between – 2.0 and 2.0, that shows the position of each of the data in the total collection of data. Data with a SD of 0.0 are the mean data. About half of the data have positions between SD – 0.1 and 0.1. Data with positions like – 1.9 or 1.9 are at the extremes of the data collection.

### ***Multiple regression analysis and (semi) partial correlation***

This is a method to compare several ('multiple') factors and to compute the strength of the influence of each of them on another factor. This kind of analysis is better than the 'simple correlation' between only two variables.

Take for example the learning process at school. We can suppose that several factors have influence: the intelligence of the children, the method of teaching, the size of the classes and the personality of the teacher. If you have enough data, you can take the data of the children of the same teacher, the same intelligence and the same class size but with a different method of teaching. Then you '*regress*' all factors except one. So you can see if the method of teaching has any influence by computing the correlation between that one factor and the regressed other factors. This correlation is called a *partial correlation*. With the regression of fewer other factors, it's called a *semi partial correlation*. By making many of these comparisons, you're doing *multiple analysis* to compute the strength of each factor. Remember that in the meta-analysis, the factor 'family environment' and 'CSA experience' *together* had influence on the adjustment, but that 'family environment' appeared to have 10 times more influence than the factor "CSA experience".

## **Boys and Sexual Abuse: An English Opinion**

By: D.J. West, in: Archives of Sexual Behavior, 12/1998

### INTRODUCTION

The upsurge of public anxiety about threats to children from sexual predators began with concern for the safety of girls. Influenced by feminist protest against the perceived tendency of males to dominate and exploit females, research on child sexual abuse at first concentrated on victimization of girls by fathers, stepfathers, or other males in the family circle. Research on the sexual abuse of boys developed later (Hunter, 1990). Awareness that women also may offend with minors, especially boys, came later still (Elliott, 1993). In view of the popular stereotype of priestly pederasts chasing after choir boys and the many newspaper reports of scoutmasters and the like "interfering" with boys under their care, the initial lack of professional interest seems odd, but probably reflects a tradition that boys should be able to look after themselves.

The experience of child care professionals is generally limited to incidents serious enough to lead to a complaint to police or social services. The impression gained from such cases is that any kind of sexual incident involving a child is likely to cause great and lasting harm (Wyre and Tare, 1995). The emotive terms adopted in professional discourse - abuse, perpetrator, victim survivor - have reinforced this idea and introduced a tone of moral revulsion alien to scientific inquiry. The highlighting by the media of horrendous cases of sexually motivated abductions and killings of children has spread the notion that all sexual interest in children is likely to be violent and life-threatening. The result has been an unprecedented public outcry against pedophiles and the introduction of extra penal measures. In Belgium, following the discovery in 1996 of the bodies of gifts who had been kidnapped, imprisoned and left to die by the murderous pedophile Dutroux, a quarter of a million protesters marched through the capital demanding reform of police and judicial practice.

In the United Kingdom, following similar legislative moves in the United States, the Sex Offenders Act 1997 requires everyone, male or female, who is convicted or cautioned for one of a schedule of sexual offenses, including any involving a minor, to register with the police and report where they are living. Police have authority to reveal the whereabouts of registered offenders to school heads, potential employers, and others in the community, including, when considered necessary, immediate neighbors. No other types of criminal, not even drug dealers or armed robbers, have been thought to require such measures. The provisions have to be enforced without discrimination and apply to offenders as young as 10 years. The Guardian (25 Oct. 1997) reported that a boy of 14 had been included following a conviction for misconduct with two even younger boys. The Sex Offenders Act 1993 lowered to 10 years the age at which a boy can be charged with rape. Had the four boys ages 10 and 11 tried at the Old Bailey for rape and then for indecent assault been found guilty, they too would have been placed on the register (Guardian, 17 Feb. 1998). In January 1998, when seven

men were convicted for group sex activities with each other (which is illegal for male homosexuals) one of them was found to have been 6 months under the age of 18 at the time. Although he protested he was a willing participant, not a victim, those who had had contact with him were placed on the register on grounds of pedophilia (Guardian, 23 Jan. 1998).

Young girls can also be offenders. On 26th Oct 1997 the Observer reported that two girls ages 14 and 11 had been cautioned for repeated sexual assaults on a boy of 6 for whom they were baby sitting. The boy's parents, enraged that the girls had escaped a trial, were threatening a private prosecution. At least one academic has argued that pursuing charges against children for sexual assaults on other children is often ineffectual and damaging to the children involved and to their families (Soothill, 1997).

The Home Office has estimated that if the 1997 Act had applied retrospectively some 125,000 men in the community would have had to be registered as sex offenders (Marshall, 1997). They will not be entirely immune, however, for the Crime and Disorder Act, 1998, which is now in force, allows for anyone who has at any time been cautioned or convicted for a sexual offense whose behavior attracts suspicion or disapproval to be made subject to an order restricting their movements and activities for a minimum of 5 years. The orders are to be instigated by police or local authorities "for the purpose of protecting the public" and include the same requirements as for those on the sex offender register.

Given the climate of opinion and the ease with which newspapers learn when a pedophile is released from prison, it is unsurprising to hear of pedophiles and their families injured by vigilantes, hounded out of their homes by neighbors, or driven from town to town by protesters. The government has been obliged to issue guidelines to discourage housing authorities from routinely refusing to accommodate sex offenders.

Coinciding with this media-fed moral panic, attention has extended to the sexual abuse of boys. In Belgium, the Dutroux scandal was swiftly followed by press allegations of pedophile activity with boys made against the Deputy Prime Minister and other politicians who were known to be homosexuals (Reekie, 1997). Belief in the dire consequences of any kind of sexual involvement with older persons now attaches to children of both sexes. Indeed, male victims have featured prominently in a spate of recent legal cases in which adults have claimed compensation for lasting psychological damage allegedly caused by sexual abuse experienced many years previously, usually when at a residential school or children's home or at the hands of now aging parents. Churches have had to pay out large sums to settle claims against their priests by men alleging they were sexually abused as boys (Jenkins, 1996).

It is putting reputation at risk to suggest that the catch-all terms "sex abuse" and "pedophile crime" are being used for relatively trivial as well as very serious offenses. Nevertheless, there has always been tension between the findings of retrospective surveys of adult populations, which suggest a casual sexual encounter with an older person during childhood is too common an occurrence to be routinely and seriously damaging and, in contrast, the experience of clinicians that incidents of child sexual abuse provoke posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), adult sexual maladjustment, and psychiatric illness. In the case of boys, the conflict of evidence is particularly acute. The majority of perpetrators being male, clinicians observe that boys experience particular distress through the arousal of anxiety about their sexual orientation, but men from nonclinical samples, when questioned about their sexual past, often recall homosexual approaches when they were young which they dismiss as inconsequential.

Claims that intergenerational sexual contact, provided it is consensual, gentle, and loving, is not harmful, is supported by a certain amount of research (Constantine and Martinson, 1981; Geraci, 1997). Protagonists of this view - often referred to as the pedophile lobby - have from time to time formed organizations, such as the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), to promote tolerance of consensual sex below the legally permitted age. These organizations, from whatever country they originate, seem more concerned with men "loving" boys than with the commoner phenomenon of men attracted to small girls (O'Carroll, 1980; Brongersma, 1986, p. 105). The classical Greek tradition, in which young males were held to benefit from having an older male lover and mentor, is cited repeatedly (Dover, 1978). Although heterosexual pedophiles, when in a situation to express their ideas freely (Li et al., 1993), put forward similar arguments to justify their actions, they

have been less inclined to propagandize. Academic reports favoring the conclusion that some consensual pedophile relationships are relatively innocuous also tend to concentrate on intermale affairs (Baurmann, 1983, cited in Brongersma, 1990, p. 17; Bernard, 1985).

The aim of this paper is to review the nature and significance of sexual incidents between boys and older persons.

#### PREVALENCE ESTIMATES FOR MALES AND FEMALES

Questioning adults about their recollections of sexual incidents with older people during their childhood has produced wildly differing statistical estimates (Peters et al., 1986). Much depends on what is meant by childhood and by the kind of incidents counted. Some authorities take childhood to mean before puberty, or before 14; others regard as children anyone below the legal age for consensual sex, which can be anything up to 16 or 18 years. The very different meaning of a sexual experience to a child of 7 and a lusty adolescent becomes obscured. Some surveys ask about actual genital contact or touching with clearly sexual intent, others extend the questions to include noncontact experiences such as exposure to pornography, adult sexual exhibitionism, seductive posturing, or verbal indecency. Estimates of the prevalence of child sexual abuse histories are usually halved if noncontact cases are excluded (Nash and West, 1985). A minority of inquiries limit their questions to sexual behavior that was unwanted, assaultative, or perceived as overintrusive; others include behavior that was not felt abusive at the time. Most surveys specify a minimum age gap between the child and the older perpetrator, but this usually allows for misbehavior of older juveniles with children younger than themselves to be included. Some surveys are so overinclusive as to suggest that it is a minority who are free from abuse (Russell, 1984, p. 185).

There are other problems with retrospective research. What people are prepared to reveal is affected by how they are approached. A confidential exchange with an understanding interviewer can yield more than a postal questionnaire or an impersonal interview conducted on market research lines. What people can remember depends on the passage of time and whether they attach significance to an event. Findings from small samples that are convenient for research, such as psychology classes, may be untypical and misleading. In large-scale surveys that aim to recruit a nationally representative sample, substantial numbers of subjects may fail to respond to a questionnaire or decline to be interviewed. Those who do respond may include a misleadingly high proportion of individuals who reply because they have something they want to discuss.

In a meta-analysis of North American surveys, Gorey and Leslie (1997) estimated that about half the variability in prevalence estimates between surveys was due to differences in operational definitions of abuse and differences in response rates. They concluded that an apparent increase in child sexual abuse found in more recent surveys was likely due to a decrease in response rates rather than a real change in behavior. After excluding noncontact incidents and adjusting for the effects of response rates and varying operational definitions they estimated that the aggregate prevalence of histories of childhood sexual abuse was 16.8% among females and 7.9% among males. This is somewhat higher than was found in a nationally representative British sample questioned by the M.O.R.I. (Market Opinion Research International) organization, when 12% of females and 8% of males acknowledged having had a sexual encounter with a mature individual when they themselves were under 16 years (Baker and Duncan, 1985).

Nearly all surveys show girls more likely to be affected than boys (Laumann et al., 1994). For example, among an English cohort of men born in 1953, by the time they were 40, 0.7% had acquired a conviction for a sexual offense involving someone under 16, usually a girl (0.6 vs. 0.1%) (Marshall, 1997). Among 15-year-old pupils in Finland, depending upon the definition of abuse, 6-8% of girls, but only 1-3% of boys, reported having had such experience (Sariola and Uutela, 1994). In a survey of an American student population, Wellman (1993) found the prevalence of early sexual abuse among males and females to be in a ratio of about 2:1. In an extensive Canadian national survey conducted by the Gallup Poll organization (Badgley, 1984, pp. 175-193), 23.5% of women reported having experienced unwanted sexual touching, nearly half (47.5%) of whom recalled the first such incident as having happened when they were under 16. In contrast, only 12.8% of males reported having experienced unwanted sexual touching and only 18.6% of these men said it had happened to them when they were under 16. In a British survey of males, using a sample from the electoral register, 20% of men recalled some sexual encounter with an older person when they were under 16 (West and



Woodhouse, 1990, p. 99). This compares with 42% of English women reporting having had some such experience while under 16 (Nash and West, 1985).

Men are said to be less confiding than women, so the prevalence figures for boys could be underestimates. Heterosexual men who think that to be targeted by a homosexual means being perceived as effeminate may not like to admit that it happened to them. Adolescent boys who have contacts with older females may not view this as abusive or mention it when questioned in later years, unless specifically asked about it. Among one sample of American college students (Fritz et al, 1981), the men were not very far behind the women in reporting childhood incidents, 7.7% of the women and 4.8% of the men saying they had been sexually molested by older persons when they were preadolescents. It is suggestive of unusually comprehensive reporting that, in this survey, a majority of the molestations of males (60%) were by females.

Although incidents with older females are quite common, contacts between boys and older males are more frequent than might be expected given the relatively small minority of homosexual males in the community. Yet research suggests that the generality of homosexual men are, if anything, less likely to have pedophile interests than heterosexuals (Freund, 1981, p. 162; Howitt, 1995, pp. 4449; Newton, 1978). Contrary to popular belief, mature male homosexuals oriented towards adult sex seem less likely to "regress" in later years to child molestation than do heterosexual males (Groth and Birnbaum, 1978). Some of the pedophiles who molest prepubertal children are essentially attracted by smooth, hairless undeveloped bodies and target boys and girls somewhat indiscriminately. Homosexually oriented seekers after adolescent boys find many who are amenable and often achieve innumerable contacts. A few such men can swell the numbers of male "victims."

Because the prevalence figures yielded by retrospective surveys are so much a function of how abuse and childhood are defined, the precise statistics are of less interest than the fact that even the most conservative estimates show that sexual encounters with adults feature in the lives of a great many children and young persons (Li et al., 1993, p. 148). More females than males report experiences and describe more ongoing experiences at younger ages, but the number of boys involved is still considerable, especially when contacts with women are taken fully into account.

#### FEMININE DISTRESS

The retrospective accounts of abused men and women differ. Women more often describe distress at the time as well as long-term adverse effects. They tend to report even trivial-seeming incidents with considerable negative emotion. For example, Wellman (1993) found that male students took minor incidents less seriously than women students who, even when they had had no such experiences themselves, were convinced that early sexual encounters must be harmful. Meta-analysis of published surveys of nonclinical samples (Bauserman and Rind, 1997; Rind and Tromovitch, 1997) have shown that, among nonclinical female samples, there is usually a substantial majority who report negative short-term reactions, whereas a majority in most male samples report positive or neutral short-term reactions. Complaints of long-term deleterious effects are also made much more often by females. Girls have different kinds of experiences from boys as well as perceiving sexual incidents in a different light. Incidents with girls tend to start early and are more often incestuous (Baker and Duncan, 1985).

If the severity of sexual abuse of girls is to be judged by the degree of violence employed, or whether sexual penetration occurs, then the majority of incidents are at the less severe end of the spectrum. Since its findings have proved broadly consistent with more modern research, it is worth looking back on the classic survey of American women by Kinsey et al. (1953, pp. 116-122). They were questioned about sexual encounters when they were under 14 with males who were at least 5 years older than themselves and not less than 15 years of age. Of the 4441 in the sample, 24% recalled at least one encounter. Of these women, 80% had experienced only one incident. Verbal or exhibitionistic approaches without physical contact accounted for 62% of the reported incidents. Only 3% involved coitus and only one of the 4441 women reported a serious injury incurred as a result of sexual assault. Nevertheless, 80% had been emotionally upset or frightened by their experiences. The authors concluded with what would nowadays be an extremely politically incorrect comment: "It is difficult to understand why a child, except for its cultural conditioning, should be disturbed at having its genitalia touched" (p. 121).

In the British sample of women studied by Nash and West (1985) about a fifth reported sexual encounters involving physical contact with an adult at least 5 years older than themselves when they were under 16. Most consisted of bodily caressing and genital fondling; only 2% of respondents reported sexual intercourse. However, in spite of most intrusions being limited, the great majority of women reported having reacted at the time with fear, confusion, anger, or shame; neutral reactions of curiosity or amusement were each mentioned by only 14% of the abused women. This is a typical result.

In the sexological literature there is comparatively little discussion of the possibility that girls' sexual encounters with adults can be other than harmful (Okami, 1991) or that many girls below the legal age of consent are nevertheless sexually mature and active. Some years ago I participated in a television discussion on the legal age of consent led by Kilroy Silk, a former politician specializing in penal affairs. Included in the studio audience were some nubile girls, close to 16 years of age, who complained bitterly that their boyfriends had been arrested for having sex with them. It can be argued, of course, that the exploitation of young girls' readiness for sex is an abuse because, when they are older, they may come to regret their earlier behavior.

A small minority of adult women, however, do consider as unproblematic childhood experiences which the majority would regard with horror. Nelson (1981), using a sample recruited by advertisement, found a surprising number of women with teenage incestuous experiences which they regarded as positive. The publication of a biography that revealed the artist Eric Gill's erotic interest in pubescent girls, including his own daughters, prompted one of them to comment to a newspaper reporter: "I don't think it harmed me at all. . . . We were all very fond of my father. . . . We were old enough to say if we didn't want to go along with him" (Billen, 1992).

#### MASCULINE INDIFFERENCE

A majority of the childhood sexual experiences recalled by nonclinical samples of adult men are, like those recalled by women, of the less severe variety, that is nonviolent, nonpenetrative, and often limited to propositioning without actual physical contact. Far fewer men than women assert that such experiences have had any significant effect.

Children's reactions are influenced by adult attitudes to sex. Men are said to put greater value on physical pleasure, women to be more concerned with relationships (Baldwin and Baldwin, 1997). Males tend to be more permissive towards teenage sexual activity and to express less guilt and anxiety about sexual experience. Women are traditionally more conservative in sexual habits and sexual politics, more concerned about pornography and the protection of children from premature sexual relationships and hence to be more likely, as they grow up, to develop anxiety about any premature experiences they may have had themselves.

Although gender differences may be decreasing in modern Western cultures, it is still true that boys tend to be sexually less inhibited and more adventurous than girls. The prominence of male genitalia and male erections encourages masturbation from an early age. Competitive sexual displays, sexual horseplay, and experiments in mutual masturbation are more common between boys, but these do not generally signify romantic crushes or presage a homosexual orientation. Sexual initiatives from adult males are perceived as having more serious intent and are apt to provoke anger at the time, but not usually the sustained anxiety than occurs among girls.

Vaginal penetration, the physical imprint of lost virginity and the risk of pregnancy are consequences peculiar to the female. Pubertal boys can experience the pleasure of heterosexual intercourse without incurring these complications. Even the risk of acquiring HIV from intercourse is less for the heterosexual male. Far from feeling victimized by having been seduced into vaginal intercourse with an adult, boys may feel a sense of accomplishment. Girls who have been seduced, even if they were compliant at the time, when they later acquire conventional attitudes, may look back on the event with shame and guilt or with anger against the perpetrator. It has been suggested that boys' attitudes grow in the opposite direction as they absorb a macho image and want to portray themselves as ever eager for and in control of sexual situations. Among the male student sample that was included in the West and Woodhouse (1990) survey, 45 recalled a boyhood encounter with a man, compared with 34 who had had an experience with a woman. The heterosexual encounters mostly occurred when the boys were pubertal or postpubertal and the respondents generally

remembered them as enjoyable. One respondent commented on an episode of mutual masturbation with a woman of 30 when he was 15: "It made me more confident about sex in general."

That boys are often aware of the interest in them displayed by homosexual pedophiles, without being greatly concerned about it, was brought home to me by a legal case against a master at a boys' boarding school who was discovered to have behaved indecently with a pupil. Subsequent police inquiries revealed that many of the boys had known of and talked among themselves about the teacher's peculiarities. Some had actually been groped by him on occasion, but until the affair became a public scandal they had looked upon the behavior as a joke and had not thought to report it.

Self-assertion, both verbal and physical, features in the culture of masculinity and in the upbringing of boys. Boys may therefore be better equipped to reject unwanted sexual invitations. Wellman (1993) noted that roughly equal numbers of men and women reported having experienced as children sexual approaches that did not lead to actual contact, but women described more incidents of physical interference. This supports the notion that boys are less submissive and better able to avoid escalation into unwanted intimacy.

From a surprisingly early age boys seem able to recognize when there is a sexual meaning to tentative approaches from adult men and, in most cases, to make clear they do not welcome such attentions. In the British survey by West and Woodhouse (1993) most of the incidents recalled were approaches, propositioning or touching by men encountered in public places or during routine activities by such people as teachers and sports supervisors. The usual reaction was to rebuff the approach and avoid further intimacy. Such incidents were recalled as having at the time aroused curiosity, mild annoyance, or uneasiness and having been talked about among friends of their own age, but rarely revealed to parents or other adults. The reaction of a boy of 11, obliged to share a bed with a friend's father, who fondled him during the night, was typical: "I mean it was a nuisance that I was being kept awake. Other than that it was slightly embarrassing" (p. 53).

Only a minority of this sample admitted having been compliant. One respondent, a heterosexual married man, recalled a period at age 13 when he was one of a group of boys who were taken on outings in a van by a man who engaged them in secretive masturbatory games, which they enjoyed in the spirit of shared sexual experimentation (p. 50). Eventually, parental suspicions brought the outings to an end. The nature of the situation and the characteristics of the initiator can greatly influence a boy's reaction. Another respondent (p. 71) described how, when a boy of 13, he had enjoyed an occasion when a young man approached him and a companion while they were bathing in a river and induced him to participate in mutual masturbation. However, a year later, when an old man seated close to him on a bus fingered his thigh he thought the behavior disgusting and the experience horrible.

Psychoanalysts and others who have recorded the reminiscences of men who identify themselves as exclusively homosexual find that most of them remember erotic interests and fantasies, directed towards their own sex, having developed before puberty and before any overt contacts had been experienced. Some homosexually inclined boys strive to avoid early contacts through awareness of the taboo or from fear of appearing unmasculine (Friedman, 1988, p. 195), but others say they not only enjoyed boyhood encounters with older males but deliberately encouraged or initiated them. This was certainly true among a sample of male homosexuals interviewed as part of the West-Woodhouse survey.

Potentially traumatic anal penetration, although more frequently experienced by boys, is not the most common pedophile sexual activity. Erickson et al. (1988) compared what was done with boys and girls under 14 according to descriptions supplied by known child molesters, men who might be expected to be at the more severe end of the scale of severity of offending. Fondling was much the most frequent activity with both boys and girls, followed by actual or attempted vaginal intercourse in the case of girls. With boys, fellatio was more common than invasive anal sex. Anal penetration can cause severe pain and result in tears and bleeding when forcefully performed on an inexperienced subject without preliminary lubrication and gradual dilatation. The physical sign of chronic anal dilatation may result from repeated, brutal, coercive penetration, but often it indicates that probably there has been a longstanding compliant relationship with the boy. The risk of potentially lethal HIV infection from unprotected anal sex, imposed by taking advantage of a boy's compliance and possible ignorance, is a particularly wicked act.

Given the massive publicity about pedophilia, children today are alerted to the possibility of adults taking a sexual interest in them. Indeed, teachers' unions have been concerned at the increasing number of unjustified and damaging allegations of sexual impropriety made against male teachers by disaffected pupils. In many sexual incidents with older persons outside the home boys are effectively masters of the situation. They can and do avoid contacts they do not want. Their potential for reporting a pedophile assault is a powerful means of control. On occasion, boys collaborate in nonthreatening homosexual situations out of curiosity, wish to please, or genuine erotic interest. The risk-taking sexual aggressor, who uses threat or force to secure a boy's compliance, is a relative rarity. When the wide variety of sexual interchanges between boys is appreciated, it becomes easier to accept the conclusion of Bauserman and Rind (1997), from their survey of findings from nonclinical samples, that the majority of such incidents are "evaluated by males as neutral or positive."

### THE AGE FACTOR

Discussion so far has been largely based on the recollections of adults of incidents when they were old enough to have identified the behavior as sexual and to have remembered what happened. Adolescents and preadolescents have a degree of understanding and self-determination in matters of sex. Younger children's ideas about sex may be vague, but they know when activities are necessarily secret and therefore forbidden. Babies and infants, however, can be manipulated at a time when they have no concept of what is happening to them and are unable to speak to others about it or to remember it in later years. From the recipient's standpoint there are great physical similarities between adult attention to their ano-genital hygiene, innocent cuddles and tickles, and behaviors motivated by adult erotic interest. It is not necessarily the case that sexual stimulation is always more traumatic the younger the child.

Traditionalists adhere with moral fervor to the view that it is essential to shield children from premature sexual knowledge, sexual exploration, or observation of adult sexuality. It used to be supposed that children are asexual until puberty, or that in postinfancy they pass through an asexual latency period. Empirical evidence shows these impressions to have been derived from adults' reluctance to accept children's sexuality and children's secretiveness in the face of adult disapproval.

Kinsey (Kinsey et al., 1948, p. 176) has been posthumously attacked for citing evidence, allegedly improperly obtained, that very young boys, some under a year old, can respond to masturbation with erections and apparent orgasm. Such observations lend credibility to anecdotes about nursemaids pacifying infants by sexual stroking. Anthropological observers of permissive societies, before their cultures were affected by Western influences, report masturbation and copulatory practices carried out freely by very young children and also, in some cases, adults participating openly in the sexual stimulation of infants and young children (Ford and Beach, 1952, p. 188). Even in modern Western society, at least in relatively uninhibited cultures like Norway, infants left to their own devices, but observed unobtrusively by kindergarten teachers, are seen to engage in much spontaneous sexual behavior, including "bodily exploration, genital manipulation and coital training" (Gundersen et al., 1981).

The relevance of these observations to child sexual abuse is twofold. First, claims made by many offenders that some young children seem to enjoy sexual stimulation by an adult gain plausibility. Second, with the possible exception of the promotion of precocious sexual interest and responsiveness, the adverse effects of noninvasive sexual manipulation by an adult appear to be connected with the psychological meaning rather than the physical nature of the behavior. However, absence of physical damage, and the fact that some primitive societies have viewed these behaviors as unproblematic, is irrelevant to the potential psychological harm when a culture defines sexual contacts between adults and children as horrendous crime.

### CRIMINOGENIC EFFECTS

Men accused of sex offenses against children often report having been sexually abused themselves when they were young (Groth, 1979). Self-exculpatory recollections are difficult to verify, but they are produced both by clerics, who are socially conformist except in their sexuality, as well as by the more socially deviant offenders (Haywood et al., 1996). Clinicians and psychodynamic theorists are seriously concerned that sexual molestation of boys may cause them to become molesters themselves. Molested girls are not thought to carry the same risk, though it has been suggested that

when they become mothers they may fail to protect their children from sexual abuse or may display lack of parenting ability in other respects (Banyard, 1997).

Wisdom and Ames (1994) have published an important prospective study of a cohort of children that included a substantial number with validated child sexual or physical abuse histories, together with matched non-abused controls. They were followed up and their subsequent arrest histories analyzed. The majority of abused boys did not become offenders, but there was a significant statistical association between either early sexual or physical maltreatment and subsequent offending, both sexual and nonsexual. Sexual abuse was specifically linked with running away from home as a juvenile and with subsequent prostitution, but it was not significantly more often associated with the generality of sex offending in adulthood than was a history of physical abuse or neglect. Physical abuse, but not sexual abuse, was significantly linked with adult crimes of sexual violence.

These results are consistent with other evidence that maltreated children are at risk of becoming adult offenders and that violently mistreated children are at particular risk of becoming violent offenders, but they yielded no evidence for the supposed unique link between early sexual molestation and becoming a molester. It seems likely that any genuine link between early abuse and later crime is mostly caused by exposure to the conglomeration of traumatic influences, including family pathology and criminal justice intervention, that so often accompany it.

#### WHY BOYS CAN BE HARMED BY PEDOPHILES

The notion that sexual attention from women does not harm boys is widely held and has influenced penal decisions. In 1997, a married woman who had become enamored of a boy of 14 absconded with him to Florida, where she was arrested and sent back to England to be prosecuted in a blaze of publicity. Had the couple's gender been reversed, the older partner would undoubtedly have been imprisoned, but a High Court judge, noting that the boy appeared to have suffered no long-term harm and did not consider himself abused, put the woman on probation (Guardian, 5 Dec. 1997). Of course, the fact that many who have experienced sexual contact with or approaches from adults when they were boys claim to have been unaffected in no way detracts from clinical evidence that sometimes serious, lasting, and occasionally devastating effects may follow (King, 1997; Watkins and Bentovim, 1992).

The cases seen in clinical or counseling situations may be self-selected and untypical, but they highlight the psychological trauma some young victims experience (Mendel, 1995). In an investigation of a sample of men who had contacted the British counseling organization "Survivors" about sexual assaults, a majority had been assaulted when they were under 16 years of age. Most of the men reporting early sexual abuse had been subjected to anal penetration, nearly all by an older male who was known to them, most often a family member. Very few had had contact with police or helping agencies at the time. Unlike those assaulted as adults, the great majority who had been abused as boys had not become insecure about their heterosexual orientation, yet, after an average lapse of 17 years, they still felt the need to unburden themselves.

Social deprivation, family conflict, and poor parenting are responsible for a statistical, but not necessarily causal, link between early sexual abuse and later maladjustment. Mullen et al. (1993) studied a large sample of women in New Zealand, selected at random from the electoral rolls of Dunedin. Some form of unwanted sexual confrontation with an older person while they were under 16 was reported by 32% of the women, nearly all of whom recalled their experiences as unpleasant and distressing. The abused women and a control group with no memory of abuse were interviewed about their personal history and given tests to determine their current psychological adjustment. There was a very significant association between having been reared in a dysfunctional family with inadequate care and protection and exposure to physical abuse or to sexual abuse. There was also a significant association between sex abuse history and adult problems of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and eating disorders. However, these problems were heavily concentrated among women from adverse backgrounds. Save for a minority who had been subjected to sexual penetration, those from stable backgrounds showed no significant excess of adult problems despite an abuse history. The authors concluded that it was when sexual irregularities were part of a matrix of adverse factors that long-term problems were likely to ensue. A male population might well have given a similar result, particularly in view of evidence that sexually abused boys more often come from poorer and physically abusive families (Finkelhor, 1984, p. 150).

Children of neglectful parents, lacking protective supervision, may find comfort in attention from outsiders. The psychiatrist Yates (1979) described the precocious and abusive sexual lives of children in the Chicago slums, where erotic play in the hallways of tenements was "a substitute for toys." Many of the young male street prostitutes in London studied by West and deVilliers (1993) described exploitative sexual contacts with adults when they were children, but nearly all had come from disturbed backgrounds or rejecting families which had rendered them vulnerable. Poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and a homosexual orientation were the reasons they gave for their entry into the sex trade; none of them suggested that early sexual abuse was responsible.

Sexual problems can be mistakenly attributed to sexual abuse. In a sample of married men attending a clinic for sexual disorders, a diagnosis of current sexual dysfunction was unrelated to the presence or absence of a history of early sexual abuse, but was significantly associated with current unemployment (Sarwer et al., 1997).

Okami (1991), in his survey of positive reactions to sexual incidents, found few respondents commenting positively on sexual approaches from family members. Incestuous situations may occur in families of low social standards, where there is much violence and drunken misconduct and where the children are exposed to numerous damaging influences, but even where this is not the case the sexual involvement of children within the family is indicative of unhappy situations. Sexual molestation by family members, especially parents, is unsettling to children, not only because the inappropriate sexual behavior is unwanted, but because of the aura of guilt and secrecy surrounding the activity and the insecurity caused by becoming caught up in the emotional conflicts of adults which threaten the breakup of the home. Although boys are quantitatively at lesser risk than girls from abuse in their own homes, the abuses they may suffer include maternal seductions as well as molestation by fathers, stepfathers, and older siblings or family visitors of either sex.

It seems that, unlike girls, boys are rarely disturbed by sexual improprieties short of physical contact. In one survey of psychological adjustment among men students (after controlling for the intervening variable of dysfunctional parental style, which so often confuses the picture) it was found that a history of noncontact abuse appeared to have no effect, but a history of contact abuse did have some association with later psychological malaise (Collings, 1995).

Terrifying threats or serious violence of any kind are calculated to induce PTSD in anyone, but particularly in children and particularly where genital pain and injury is involved. Small children can be so subdued by the overwhelming power of an adult aggressor that they can do no other than comply, although, like the adult victim of forcible rape, they may be in reality petrified with fear of what may happen to them. Domestic settings, in which the child feels trapped, are the most likely venues for repeated physical and sexual brutality. Violent assaults by outsiders are much rarer, if only because opportunities for perpetrating these atrocities with impunity are limited, since the child will report what happened and describe the offender. Offenders who kill their child victims to avoid detection, or who engage in such violently sadistic practices that the victim dies, often have severe, antisocial personality disorders which render their sexual interest in minors lethal. Though rare, they attract massive publicity. Four men were sentenced in 1989 to a total of 62 years of imprisonment for the manslaughter of a 14-year-old London boy prostitute, Jason Swift, who was smothered in the course of violent sexual activity. Still in the news 8 years later, one of them, following release, was so hounded that police had to take him into expensive protective custody (Guardian, 7 Nov. 1997). Even when he was later put under security in a mental hospital, local protesters demanded his removal.

Many women victims of rape experience victimization a second time when they find themselves blamed for letting it happen, or when they are subjected through the criminal justice system to hostile cross-examinations in court (Holmstrom and Burgess, 1978, p. 236). The trauma can be even worse when the victim is a child. Measures have been taken to protect children from the worst excesses of courtroom drama, but the English Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate has criticized the frequent failures to identify child witnesses who need the protection of screens or video links when giving evidence. Boys are particularly liable to condemnation from family and ridicule from peers if they are suspected of having collaborated with a homosexual. Repeated interrogations by police and social workers, the long wait for cases to be heard and the feeling of responsibility for the imprisonment of someone who may have been a friend, are inevitably stressful. Charges may be bitterly contested by offenders desperate to avoid conviction as a pedophile. In the absence of witnesses to what

happened, proof of guilt is difficult and offenders may be acquitted, leaving the child under suspicion of lying and exposed to retaliation if the accused was a member of the family.

## CONTROL POLICIES

The protection of children and young people from serious sexual abuse is not helped by failure to control and/or treat known offenders who are genuinely dangerous. However, when the incidents in question are more like breaches of moral rules than true assaults and have caused no obvious damage, there is questionable justification for invoking legal processes that may be detrimental to the supposed victim. A balance has to be struck somewhere between unnecessary and harmful overreaction and dangerous underreaction.

Scientific evidence fails to support some of the assumptions underlying the present severe penal policies. Social workers in the U.K. are under a professional obligation, and in the U.S. under a statutory requirement, to report suspects to the police. Informal methods of resolution are out of favor because of the assumed seriousness of any sexual incident involving a child and the presumption that, if the offender is not apprehended and incarcerated, offenses will continue indefinitely. These views, which are prevalent among professionals, are held in extreme form by large sections of the public who, judging by recent television programs, want to see all pedophiles given life imprisonment, if not executed. Consequently, the pursuit of offenders through the courts tends to be given priority over the interests or wishes of child victims.

Systematic follow-up research has generally found relatively low reconviction rates among child molesters, 5% over 15 years, 19% after 24 years in one English survey (Gibbens et al., 1981) or 13% over 4 to 5 years in a meta-analysis of 61 published surveys (Hanson and Bussiere, 1995, as cited in Grubin and Wingate, 1996). In an English cohort of men born in 1953, of those convicted of a sexual offense before the age of 40, 10% had a further sexual conviction within 5 years (Marshall, 1997). Reconviction rates have become lower in England in recent years. Among prisoners released in 1987, 6.5% of those with a past or current conviction for a sex offense were reconvicted for a subsequent sex offense during the ensuing 4 years, only a fraction of the percentage of reconvictions of property offenders (Marshall, 1994). Men who offend against children in their own family are reconvicted less often than offenders against unrelated children (Tracey et al, 1983). The most persistent recidivists are found among men who are fixated on hunting boys or young men for sex. The law is likely to change, but convictions and reconvictions in the U.K. have been augmented by the criminalization of sexual contacts with young men even if they are willing participants and over the age when sex with girls is legal.

In reality, risk of reoffending among child molesters is extremely variable. A heterosexual man who has fathered children, shown no interest in minors until relations with his wife deteriorated and a daughter was coming to sexual maturity, who is devastated when an improper relationship is exposed, is in a different league from a single male who has never been sexually aroused by adults and has organized his life and his work around gaining access to young boys or girls. Child molesters are by no means all pedophiles with a lifelong and exclusive sexual attraction to children; some are individuals who make use of children only when they are frustrated, drunk, or their potency is failing. Sociopaths indulge whatever sexual impulses please them without regard for moral rules or the welfare of others.

Many children who have been the subject of nonviolent sexual incidents could be spared the stress of a protracted penal process if appropriate action, by way of treatment and supervision, could be taken without resort to the criminal justice process. This can be done in the Netherlands through the "confidential doctor," a state official who receives reports from complainants or concerned observers, assesses the situation, directs those suspected of offenses to helping agencies, reporting them to prosecution authorities only if they fail to cooperate. The system enables cases to be identified and dealt with that would otherwise never be reported, but it can operate only if alternatives to public exposure, criminal conviction, and imprisonment can be seen to be efficacious.

Alternatives to a strictly punitive response appear more constructive and more humane, but conclusive scientific proof that "treatment works" is virtually unattainable. Due to the impossibility of matching treated and untreated offenders on all relevant factors, allocation needs to be strictly random to produce clear evidence, but in practice this is extremely difficult to arrange, as well as being ethically dubious. Because of relatively low reconviction rates, to obtain an adequate statistical

comparison samples have to be of adequate size and followed up for long periods. Methodological purity is rarely if ever achieved, but indications of treatment successes, derived from an apparent cessation of offending and measurable improvements in attitude, lifestyle, and social circumstances, have been reported from a variety of projects (Marshall and Pithers, 1994). In the U.K., treatment usually consists of group therapy using cognitive behavioral methods and is more often done under the aegis of the prison or probation services (see Grubin and Thornton, 1994, concerning treatment in prison) than by psychiatrists and psychologists within the overstretched National Health Service. A Home Office

sponsored survey of community-based treatment projects for child molesters concluded that only long-term treatment produced beneficial change in the more deviant (i.e., the fixated and recidivist) offenders, but that even short-term intervention helped the less deviant (Beech et al., 1996). Unfortunately, most community projects in England are small-scale, not well researched, lacking in appropriate expertise, and without adequate follow-up or satisfactory criteria for evaluation.

Adequate provision of treatment could revolutionize the approach to serious sexual abuse of boys and girls. Treatment within the prison system has to battle against the distrustful and antitherapeutic culture of prison inmates, the rapid increase in the prison population, which reduces the resources directed to specialist programs, and the essentially punitive ethos of prison regimes. The need is for specialist treatment centers with a multidisciplinary and well-trained staff capable of assessing offenders and devising care and treatment plans directed to their very varied needs. Some offenders would have to be treated under conditions of security, but this need not be within the prison system.

In principle, the English legal system provides for these possibilities. Courts have wide discretion in sentencing and before coming to a decision can call for social and psychiatric assessments and reports. Treatment requirements can be attached to probation orders to ensure compliance. Those sufficiently disturbed to be dealt with under the Mental Health Act can be compulsorily detained in hospital. Unfortunately, because facilities are scarce or inadequate, because many psychiatrists are reluctant to undertake responsibility for sex offenders and the community is so hostile to anyone with a pedophile label being out of prison, the legal provisions are underused and the potential benefits of a more discriminating and active approach remain untested. Meanwhile, a man whose only offense has been to engage in mutually desired sexual acts with another who happens to be a little below the legal age of consent has to be treated as a pedophile and risks being dealt with in the same way as predatory and aggressive offenders who ensnare and attack small boys.

## CONCLUSION

The problems caused by sexual incidents between men and boys could be handled more effectively and humanely if the moral outrage encouraged by the media were reduced. Genuine victims would be better protected if penal responses were more discriminating, recognizing gender differences and limiting draconian measures to manifestly harmful or dangerous behavior. In place of a blanket requirement to involve the police and criminal justice procedures, informal control for suitable cases, through social and therapeutic services, should be supported.

The law setting a relatively high "age of consent" for males, enforced regardless of circumstances, is unnecessary. The fact that the specified age varies so much between different jurisdictions highlights its dubious basis. Children are, in any case, protected from unwanted molestation by laws against indecent assault. Most people feel that really young children are incapable of valid consent, but this could be recognized by a presumption of absence of consent, unless proved otherwise, in the case of children under (say) 13 years old. Thirteen is already enshrined in English law on "unlawful sexual intercourse" (the equivalent of American "statutory rape"), which provides for long imprisonment if the girl is under that age. Further protection, such as already exists in some European countries, could be introduced to forbid sexual contacts with older children by adults in positions of trust, such as their parents, teachers, doctors, or employers. More important, however, than any readjustment of criminal law, is the need for better informed public opinion and recognition of the need to shield abused children from "secondary victimization."

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## **Pedophilia, Science, and Self-deception**

A Criticism of Sex Abuse Research  
By Arne Frederiksen (af@danpedo.to)

There is a growing trend to put pedophiles into therapy, in order to prevent them from committing sexual offences. The therapists have a hard time because it is impossible to change somebody's pedophile orientation, or any other sexual orientation for that matter. When interviewing a pedophile who has committed a sexual offence, the therapist often hears a story about a child who enjoyed the sexual affair and participated actively and with enthusiasm. Refusing to believe that this is possible, the therapist may conclude that the pedophile suffers from cognitive distortion. The basis for this claim is the assumption that the therapist's cognition is right and the patient's cognition is wrong. This is indeed a very presumptuous claim when the issue is an event of which the patient has first hand experience, while the therapist has only second hand knowledge thereof. To the great despair of the therapists, they found that at least a quarter of non-pedophiles endorsed the same cognitive distortions (1).

The diagnosis of cognitive distortion is seen more and more often in the clinical literature (1). Wondering how pedophiles can come up with such beliefs, some psychologists and sociologists have started to analyze the literature produced by pedophile organizations (2). Typically, though, they have ignored the scientific literature that pedophile organizations refer to for supporting their positions. In fact, the claim that some child/adult sexual contacts are benign or even beneficial, is supported by such a wealth of scientific studies that it cannot be discounted (3).

Many psychologists have wondered why some children don't complain when sexually 'abused'. Denying the obvious explanation, that some children actually like being 'abused', the psychologists have come to the conclusion that the perpetrators master some very tricky seductive techniques. In order to uncover these techniques, one group of researchers have analyzed what they believe is a unique piece of evidence: a perpetrator's seduction letter (4). This letter was found in the pocket of a boy who had been in contact with a pedophile man. In an article, the researchers analyze this letter as a skillful and cunning seduction letter. But this letter, which is published in the article, appears to be nothing but the ramblings of a deeply frustrated pederast. After reading the letter, I can assure the researchers that this letter is sure to scare the hell out of any boy. The entire logic of the research breaks down when it is revealed that the so-

called perpetrator was completely unsuccessful. The evidence indicates that this 'perpetrator' probably has never successfully seduced any child in his entire lifetime. The researchers are so obsessed with sexual abuse that they even speculate that the perpetrator's wife may be a victim of sexual abuse, even though they have never met her and have absolutely no evidence to support this claim. It is stated in the article that: "the victim unconvincingly denied any sexual activity with the perpetrator." Given the apparent obsession with sexual abuse in the researchers, one may wonder what the boy could possibly have said that would have convinced them that he was not sexually abused! Writing an article about sexual abuse where there is none, is obviously not science, but it has nevertheless been published in a scientific journal called *Child Abuse & Neglect* - a preferred outlet for publication of sex abuse research.

The poor logic is found again and again in sex abuse research. One pioneering research project studied children abused in 'child sex rings' in order to document the psychological harm caused by such abuse (5). Typical of such research is the over-dramatizing language. The term 'child sex ring' was used whenever more than two persons were involved in illegal sexual activity, in order to give the impression of organized crime, and such sex rings were called 'potentially sadistic', without any evidence of sadism. 49 boys and 17 girls abused in 'sex rings' were interviewed in connection with counseling or therapy. Any psychological problems that these children came up with were included in the statistics as symptoms of sexual abuse. The list of symptoms was over-inclusive: Whether the children were 'over-religious' or 'not religious' it was blamed on the sex abuse. Even symptoms that were present prior to the abuse, were included in the statistics. The authors have previously warned that the dramatic events of disclosure and police investigation can be more harmful than the abuse itself (6). Nevertheless they include symptoms that have appeared only after disclosure as effects of the abuse. Despite being bombarded with leading questions, some of the children maintained that they enjoyed the 'abuse' and that they had not been harmed. These children were given the diagnosis 'identification with the exploiter', which was taken as a proof that they were severely psychologically disturbed. The circular argument is blatant here: If the children say that it was bad, then it is concluded

that it was bad -- if they say that it was good, then it is concluded that it was even worse, because it is supposed to be bad, so the children must be severely disturbed when they say that it was good. Nothing the children could possibly have said would have changed the performed conclusion that sexual abuse is harmful.

This kind of research has started what is now known as the sex abuse industry: a conglomeration of psychologists, social workers, and child protection organizations that mutually reinforce each other in the belief that sexual abuse is pervasive and extremely harmful. Many psychologists

have made a successful career out of telling everybody how harmful sexual abuse is, and child protection organizations have found that this cause is more profitable collecting money for than other dangers to children. The popular mass media have been more than willing to convey the agenda of the sex abuse industry because it is titillating and emotionally touching, while the messages of more moderate scientists are dull and unexciting. The press thereby has helped recruit more members to the sex abuse industry -- people who might never have been interested in doing research or therapy, were it not for this highly emotionally touching issue.

The sex abuse industry has produced thousands of articles and books since the early 1980's. The very amount of research projects is in itself an indication that something has gone completely frenzy. There may be scientific reasons for repeating research that has already been done. These

reasons are:

- \* testing if results are reproducible
- \* testing if there are differences between geographic regions, between social classes, etc.
- \* improving methodology

These purposes require that results are comparable, i.e., that they use standardized definitions and standardized psychological measures of harm. However, the many researchers have never found a commonly agreed definition for any of the concepts: child, sexual, or abuse -- let alone child sexual abuse. In fact, this is a moral rather than a scientific construct. Few of the research projects are using standardized measures of harm, they fail to make the comparisons with previously published articles that the abovementioned purposes would imply, and there is little or no focus on improving methodology. Therefore, there is every reason to suspect that many of the research projects are inspired by emotional, moral, political, or religious motives, rather than by a scientific need.

While some improvement in methodology can be observed, most research projects are still seriously flawed (7). The most common flaws are:

- \* Emotional language. Words like abuse, exploitation, perpetrator, victim, and survivor are common.
- \* Failure to refer to studies that disagree. Most studies refer only to studies that agree on the same conclusion.
- \* Leading questions. Subjects are asked questions in a way that implies that sex is bad or harmful.
- \* Structural limitations. Studies may be structured so that there is no room for reporting positive sexual experiences.
- \* All symptoms blamed on sexual abuse. Even symptoms that appeared prior to the sexual abuse or only appeared after disclosure are ascribed to the sexual abuse. The psychological effects of disclosure, police investigation, etc., are not discussed.
- \* Sample not representative. Many studies are carried out on psychiatric patients who, of course, will show psychiatric symptoms, whether sexually abused or not.
- \* Missing control group. Many studies fail to compare with non-abused persons.
- \* Pooling together dissimilar events. Many studies use a very broad definition of sexual abuse, including very dissimilar events. This tends to exaggerate the harmful effects of the less severe forms of abuse, and at the same time dilute the effects of the most severe forms of abuse.
- \* Failing to isolate significant parameters. Certain parameters are known to have a large effect on the psychological outcome of a sexual encounter. These include the use of force, the sex of the child, and whether the child is related to the perpetrator. Failure to isolate these parameters tend to muddle the results.

- \* Failure to control for confounding variables. Many of the sexually abused children investigated are also victims of broken families, physical abuse, and neglect. Ascribing all psychological symptoms to the sexual abuse, rather than to the other problems experienced by the child, is of course very dubious. In fact, it has been shown that most of the observed symptoms can better be explained by the family background than by the sexual abuse, and in most studies the effects of sexual abuse fails to be significant when family background is controlled for (8,17).

The common belief that child sexual abuse is everywhere and extremely harmful, has led to many grotesque efforts to uncover the hidden abuse, and many false accusations. In 1983 in California, a psychotic mother noticed that her three-year old son's anal area was reddened and she became obsessed with the thought that he had been sodomized by a teacher at the McMartin preschool. The boy denied this, but after repeated questioning, the boy said that the teacher took his temperature. Convinced that the 'thermometer' was indeed a penis, the mother called the police. The police sent letters to two hundred families whose children currently or previously attended the preschool. All children initially denied being abused, but after repeated questioning by parents, therapists and police under a considerable pressure to disclose sexual abuse, many of the children told stories that became more and more grotesque. They told about animals being tortured and slaughtered and children being kidnapped, abused and mutilated in graveyards, hot air balloons, helicopters, and dungeons under the preschool. As the accusations spread during 1984, seven men and women were imprisoned, including an old wheelchair-bound grandma, and seven preschools were closed. Police and parents were digging for several years without finding any dungeons. No children had ever been missing, there were no adult witnesses, and no physical evidence of anything unusual. Rather than disbelieving these increasingly bizarre stories, the psychologists came up with the idea that the children had been abused by a satanic cult. It took seven years and many expensive trials before all charges were finally dismissed for lack of evidence (9).

This story is far from unique. Similar events have popped up all over the modern World, from Norway to New Zealand (9,10,11). In 1987 in the little Dutch town of Oude Pekela, a little boy had got bruises on his anus by playing in a forest. The local physicians, Mr. and Mrs. Jonker, who were very interested in incest, suspected that the boy had been sexually abused. They sent out letters to all parents telling them to ask their children if they had been sexually abused. This had the same effect as in California. After repeated questioning and a considerable pressure to disclose abuse, 75 children produced bizarre stories about being abducted by a group of men dressed up as clowns, being drugged, kept under water, smeared with faeces, and many other bizarre forms of abuse. However, no children had been missing at any time, no adult had seen any clowns or anything else unusual, there was no physical evidence and no suspects (11). The police have stopped the investigation, but the Jonkers are still convinced that the children have been abused by Satanists, and have written several articles about it (12). Despite the lack of evidence, their reports about the symptoms of ritual abuse have been accepted by the scientific journal *Child Abuse & Neglect* (13). No comparison was made with non-abused children. According to their articles, only 87% of the parents were certain that their children had been abused, and in only 48% of the cases had the police felt that the children were certainly involved. How can such loosely founded articles be accepted by a scientific journal?

It has been suggested that the myth of satanic sex abuse is in fact a projection of repressed pedophile feelings. Sexual attraction between children and adults is a universal phenomenon, and the myth of the satanic sex cult is a way of denying the pedophile feelings that exist in those who believe in the myth (14).

In this raving wave of hysteria over sexual abuse, overzealous therapists keep finding new methods to uncover the hidden abuse, which they believe is pervasive. Whenever a diagnostic method is found to be defective, they invent a new one with the inevitable result that innocent people are accused. Thousands of innocent people have gone to jail on false charges of sexual abuse. In Cleveland in England, more than a hundred children were forcefully removed from their parents before it was revealed that the incest charges were based on a defective diagnostic technique. In the meantime, several families had been divorced, and two of the falsely accused fathers had committed suicide (15).

While the writings of the sex abuse industry is very voluminous and conspicuous, there is a growing body of literature with a different opinion (7,16). Three psychologists have researched the sex abuse research and made a synthesis of the results (17). Rejecting those investigations that used highly unrepresentative samples (e.g., psychiatric patients) they found that the results were far less alarming than what is commonly believed. Their conclusions were:

- \* Only a fraction of child sexual abuse cases are associated with harm.
- \* Harm, when it occurs, is typically not intense.
- \* Boys and girls have very different experiences. Boys rarely experience harmful events.
- \* Conclusions about a causal link between child sexual abuse and later psychological maladjustment are not reliable because the psychological symptoms are most often caused by other factors, such as family environment.

The most harmful events are the ones associated with violence or where the child has no escape (i.e., incest). Voluntary sexual contacts do not cause harm. It is worth noting, that these conclusions are based on investigations that were made with the intention of finding harm. If these investigations are biased, it would be in the direction of exaggerating the harm.

While the articles that exaggerate the dangers of sexual abuse are often published in journals that seem to be quite uncritical, the abovementioned research articles that finds harm to be smaller than previously believed have been published in the most prestigious journals with very strict reviewing standards (17). While the sex abuse industry produces an excessive number of books and articles, they can hardly be said to represent a majority opinion among scientists. Mainstream sexological handbooks and encyclopedias present a far more relaxed view on child/adult sex (18), as does many books in other disciplines such as history, anthropology, and human biology (19).

### **Conclusion**

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\* Therapists often claim that pedophiles suffer from cognitive distortion when they tell about children that enjoy sex. The accusation of cognitive distortion turns out to be a boomerang: There is far more delusion and self-deception in the sex abuse industry than among pedophiles.

\* Much of the sex abuse research is of very poor quality, and often directly misleading. This research is connected with the general hysteria and panic over child sexual abuse.

\* Voluntary sexual relations between children and adults do not cause any psychological harm other than the problems associated with discovery and intervention.

\* The draconian laws and drastic measures that have been implemented to fight sexual abuse are misdirected and should be relieved. In stead, the effort should be directed against the far more damaging physical abuse and neglect of children, and in particular its social causes.

\* This should not be taken as a carte blanche to commit sexual offences. There are still very good reasons to obey the law and to protect children from the stigma of engaging in acts that are illegal and despised.

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## Strategic Considerations: Foucault and Man/Boy Love

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*This essay was originally written as a book review for the Nambula Bulletin*

### Saint = Foucault, by David Halperin.

For some time, I have been questioning what strategy I need to follow as a politically active man/boy lover. *Saint = Foucault* has brought me closer to this goal. It is difficult to categorize this book. At some times it reads as Halperin's tribute to Foucault (hence the title). At others it is a historical interpretation of how Foucault has influenced the modern gay movement. At still other times it is an apology for some of Foucault's most controversial views. Many consider the book a foundation for the study of queer theory, because Halperin's work focuses on the application of Foucault's philosophy to homophobia and homosexuality. Foucault's own focus was on the more general ideas of oppression and power, however. His ideas are surprisingly applicable to the situation boylovers face.

An example of Foucault's insight, as expressed by Halperin:

*'Modern forms of governmentality actually require citizens to be free, so that citizens can assume from the state the burden of some of its former regulatory functions and impose on themselves--of their own accord--rule of conduct and mechanisms of control.... Liberal power does not simply prohibit; it does not directly terrorize. It normalizes, "responsibilizes," and disciplines. The state*



*no longer needs to frighten or coerce subjects into proper behavior: it can safely leave them to make their own choices in the allegedly sacrosanct private sphere of personal freedom which they now inhabit, because within that sphere they freely and spontaneously police both their own conduct and the conduct of others...'*

This excerpt makes clear why NAMBLA struggles even if the police take little interest in us. The media, with the help of individual vigilantes, use the freedoms of liberal society (the same freedoms we use to expound on our positions) to propagate deceptions and distortions about us. We pose a threat to liberal society, not the government. And it is the liberal society that works against us.

Halperin's work also warns activists about engaging detractors in debates about the untruthfulness of their contentions. Our detractors lie about us. These lies often involve contradictory arguments. As we "shoot down" one argument, another stands ready to replace it. Several years ago, many therapists insisted that "children never lie about sex." If children claimed that they had sexual contact with an adult, the children were presumed to be telling the truth. But the claim that "children never lie about sex" didn't mean that if a child denied sexual contact had occurred, the adults under suspicion would be cleared. These children, therapists explained, were too traumatized to acknowledge the sexual contact - and that trauma proved that the adults (who children refused to accuse) were guilty as well. Under this reasoning, of course, anyone accused is guilty, a Catch-22 that too few made any effort to expose or explore. Many innocent people went to prison. In another example, Society convinced itself that children were ignorant of sexual matters, and thus knowledge about sexuality had to have come from adult sexual interaction. A number of well-publicized trials involving day care centers eventually convinced many of the error of that idea. Some advocates of limited rights for children argued that kids (especially teenagers) need the freedom to explore their sexuality, but only with peers. They must be protected from adult participation. Lately we are exposed to news stories of the molester that *is* a child, and in need of incarceration. Their arguments change faster than they can be discredited! In another example, experts in the field of penology label boy lovers as incorrigible. We must be put into treatment centers (indefinitely) because we continue to be a threat to society through out our lives. They also have the audacity to claim to appeals courts that such treatment is seriously applied, and has a real chance of success. Successful treatment will result in the prisoners' release. How can one be incorrigible and yet be successfully treated?

In each example cited above the arguments contradict each other or completely flip-flop as those in control of the discussion see the need. How can there be a rational debate on these terms? Foucault teaches that disproving the arguments of our detractors is a game that can never be won. Those in control by definition have control of the rules of the discourse. They arbitrarily decide what is logical or right to them at any point in the argument. By participating we are only distracted from our goals. As Halperin writes:

*'The reason it is pointless to refute the lies of homophobia is not that they are difficult or impossible to refute - on the contrary, taken one at a time they are easily falsifiable ...but that refuting them does nothing to impair the strategic functioning of discourses that operate precisely by deploying a series of mutually contradictory premises in such a way that any one of them can be substituted for any other, as different circumstances may require, without changing the final outcome of the argument.... Stop playing long enough to stand back from the game, to look at all its rules in their totality, and to examine our entire strategic situation... analyze discourses in terms of their overall strategies.'*

Foucault wrote his *History of Sexuality* not from the perspective of science, but by looking at how the world perceived and discussed sexuality. He recognized that the scientific method was not being applied to human sexuality because social pressures short-circuit the application of true science to the field. Psychology and psychiatry, to give just two examples, are not based on the scientific method. To begin a discourse on pederasty or pedophilia on the basis of these academic subjects is doomed to failure. Evidence to support our views will simply be discounted by nonscientific means. For example, a recent meta-analysis published in a journal of the American Psychological Association (APA) suggested that not all adult/child sexual encounters were detrimental to the children involved. Political pressure resulted in an APA statement repudiating the conclusions of the research. As this quote from a letter from the APA to a Congressman:

*'Clearly, the article included opinions of the authors that are inconsistent with APA's stated and deeply held positions on child welfare and protection issues. It is the position of the Association that*

*sexual activity between children and adults should never be considered or labeled as harmless or acceptable.'*

The APA also announced that that in the future they would consider the social impact as well as the scientific validity of the research they considered for publication. When it appears that the oppressed might win a round, the rules are suddenly changed.

Why does society do this? By marginalizing men and boys involved in sexual relationships, society can perpetually deflect criticisms of its own views and behaviors. For example, the gay male community's history and eroticism is intertwined with that of pederasty. Yet they are quick to oppress its overt expression because by doing so they can deflect attacks on themselves. Most feminists are adamant in their condemnation of man/boy love. But their (often-insightful) views on the power of patriarchy should not result in the condemnation of every relationship in which men participate. We can better explain the phenomenon of a pubescent boy turning to an older male for an intimate friend without resorting to the assumption of the dominance of patriarchy. Their adamant condemnations of a phenomenon that doesn't include females invites further scrutiny. Foucault's emphasis on following the flow of power in a society suggests the following alternative view.

The family is a dense locus of power implemented almost entirely by the parents. Parental control assures that children are brought up in the parents' image. Parents fear that their kids will be exposed to alternative ideas before their offspring have thoroughly absorbed parental values. The gay or lesbian teenager, for example, is a nightmare of many parents. A worse nightmare is growing up as a gay or lesbian child in a homophobic family. Society does almost nothing to assist those kids. To do so would violate 'parental rights'. Children's emotional dependence on parents and their values is a tool too powerful to give up. Many homosexuals are never able to break away from that dependence, and live their lives in a self-loathing closet. These constraints on children are not limited to sexuality. Religious beliefs and sectarian identification are other areas where parents demand *de facto* control of their children's lives. Society has agreed that its members can do almost anything one wants with one's own children. To implement this agreement, it is necessary that they have complete control over who has access to their children. It is not the sexual abuse of the pederast they fear, it is the affection, and that affection's ability to liberate the child from the emotional dependence on the parents. Because family life is one of only a very few areas where women have some degree of control over others, women can be especially jealous of that control. The threat to their position is real, but is their position as self-appointed guardians of youthful males simply matriarchy replacing patriarchy? Women have no more right to restrict the sexuality of youth than men have to demand it. Pederasts are not universally condemned because of their success at manipulating the strings of patriarchy. Pederasts are condemned for violating a border between youth and adult which only parents are allowed to cross.

Halperin reminds us of the use of camp and satire as tools against our oppressors. He quotes Foucault: "power's success is in proportion to its ability to hide its own mechanisms." He gives a wonderful example of a *Newsweek* cover story on "Lesbians," with typical newsmagazine subtitles on the cover: "coming out strong" and "what are the limits of tolerance?" Halperin then supplies a satirical response from "*The San Francisco Bay Times* entitled: *Dykeweek* with a cover story entitled "Heterosexuals, what are the limits of tolerance." *The Bay Times* then goes on, Halperin explains:

*'to foreground the role-playing, gender polarization, and power asymmetries that are both fundamental and essential to heterosexual relationships - and that heterosexuals take far more seriously than do even the most butch and fem lesbians (insofar as heterosexuals tend to see them not as role-playing, gender polarization, and power asymmetries but as the natural facts of life).*

Just to expose deceptions is not enough. Using humor and camp diffuses the vitriol and hate they mix into the discourse and engages the questioning mind.

Foucault did not provide a formula for a perfect world, or even a recipe to liberate an oppressed group. His emphasis was not on liberation but on resistance. An important aspect of this resistance is not to acknowledge that other people can understand us better than we understand ourselves. The only experts we should recognize on the subject of man/boy love are the men and boys in loving relationships. Any broader acceptance (such as a favorable article in an APA journal) just leaves us vulnerable to the (inevitable) later denunciations. If anyone (professional or layman) wants to truly understand man/boy love, our position must be that they have to ask *us*. We will not participate in debates with our detractors, because those discourses are already set up to facilitate our defeat.

NAMBLA activists learned this after repeated appearances on such television shows as *Donahue* and *Geraldo*. To paraphrase *Queer Nation*: We're here. We're pedophiles. Get used to it.

Foucault's idea of resistance is not simple friction, burning away the energy of our detractors. Let me paraphrase Halperin (substituting pederasty for homosexuality):

*'The aim is not to produce a supposedly kinder, gentler, more objective, less tendentious form of expertise about pederasty, to be licensed presumably by non-ped-identified authorities or by men and boys accredited by straight institutions; it is not to reconstitute man/boy love as a real object to be studied and understood, definitively if sympathetically, by those in a legitimate position to know. The aim, rather, is to treat man/boy love as a position from which one can know, to treat it as a legitimate condition of knowledge. Man/boy love... is not something to be got right, but an eccentric positionality to be exploited and explored: a potentially privileged site for the criticism and analysis of cultural discourses.'*

We must have the audacity to use our positive experiences to challenge our oppressors. We resist because it gives us the perspective and experiences to glean unique insights into the larger culture. These insights are then used as leverage to increase our ability to resist. *Avoiding illegal activity doesn't protect our movement, but emasculates it.* Personal experience of a loving relationship with a boy or man debunks all of their theoretical objections. It also raises questions about why the objections were raised in the first place.

Foucault was ready to embrace many different and novel forms of sexual relationships, such as sadomasochism and fisting. He was interested in relationships outside the egalitarian ideals that dominate much of today's gay and feminist culture. Foucault did not see S/M as a form of subjugation, because both participants enter into the relationship voluntarily, and because there are implicit and explicit rules that are understood by all parties. Foucault saw human society as burdened with a paucity of sexual and social modes of interactions. He saw no reason to limit sexual expression to those who were social equals. It was in this part of *Saint = Foucault* that Halperin was apologetic. He recognized how uncomfortable many of today's homosexuals and feminists would be with this view. *Saint = Foucault* says little about the politics of man/boy love. But in the explanation of Foucault's views of power and consent in sadomasochism we see a vision broad enough to embrace man/boy love.

Sexuality in straight society is so moribund with tradition, convention, and law that man/boy love detractors have never experienced alternative relationships such as man/boy love. The depth of feelings, especially *trust*, that is required for a man and boy to share sexuality is not understood by them. Tradition and convention strictly govern their erotic relationships and their relationships with children. Any deviation from their standards (such as a man and boy sharing a blow job) is labeled as a violation of *trust*. The mutual and voluntary sharing of sexuality is an *act* of trust. They see a violation because they trust *conventions*, and not each other. They expect us to do the same. They are a very boring, stale people whose ideas on intimacy deserve to be toppled.

## Sam Manzie speaks the truth

### Comment

It seems positive and surprising to see Sam Manzie speak out so favorably about his "molester" -- we've been wanting to see the boys speak out for a long time...

Too bad it is so easily neutralized by Sam's father saying "the guy still has a grip on my son's mind...." So the father gets the Cyber Angels on his side, and Sam gets put down as a 'victim' again.... But it sure is nice that Sam is strong enough to speak out the way he did... too bad he can't be supported more.

Simmons sounds like he could be an important activist if he survives his sentence and if he can avoid doing 'stupid' things like plying the Internet again... He's been burned by the system, and now wants to fight for the same things many of us are fighting for -- 'to fight on behalf of "gay teens" and to fight "aggressive investigations." ' Remember what Lt. Thorne said 17 years ago: "We have to crack the boy, and it's not an easy thing to do." Things have not changed that much since then, apparently.

### News item: Pedophile gets 5 years despite plea from victim

November 13, 1999 , By JOHN CURRAN The Associated Press

FREEHOLD -- A pedophile who admitted molesting teenage killer Sam Manzie was sentenced to five years in prison Friday, despite a courtroom mercy plea by the victim.

In his first public statement about his relationship with Stephen P. Simmons, Manzie called Simmons a good role model and said he has fond memories of their time together. But prosecutors and the teen's parents said Simmons was an evil, manipulative child molester who wielded a Svengali-like influence over Manzie after meeting and befriending him through an Internet chat room when Manzie was 14.

Manzie, 17, of Jackson Township in Ocean County, is serving a 70-year prison term for the 1997 killing of Eddie Werner, 11. Simmons, 45, of Holbrook, N.Y., had pleaded guilty to criminal sexual contact and child endangerment this year. He could be out of prison in about four months under the sentence handed down Friday by Superior Court Judge Michael Farren. The sentence calls for a 2 1/2-year parole ineligibility. But Simmons has already served more than two years while awaiting trial. "The sad fact is that it won't be too long before he's out of prison again," said Edward P. Werner, the dead boy's father. "He's going to intrude on other people's lives. He's going to destroy children. He's going to wreak havoc on another family."

A disturbed loner with a history of abusing animals and small children, Manzie lured Werner into his home as the boy sold PTA merchandise door to door. Manzie attempted to have sex with him before strangling him with the cord of an alarm clock. Manzie's parents say the relationship with Simmons and Manzie's cooperation in a police sting aimed at gathering evidence against Simmons helped push him over the brink in the days before the killing. Manzie originally cooperated with investigators, but later destroyed the equipment they had placed in his bedroom to tape-record his telephone conversations with Simmons.

That turned out to be only the first time Manzie undercut the prosecution of his molester. He refused to testify against Simmons at trial and was held in contempt. His defiance hampered the prosecution's case against Simmons because Manzie was the only eyewitness for many of the alleged crimes. As a result, seven of the nine charges against Simmons were thrown out at trial.

On Friday, Manzie walked into the courtroom escorted by a half-dozen sheriff's deputies, nodding slightly to Simmons before he sat in the jury box, about 5 feet from Simmons. When it was his turn to speak, the gaunt, handcuffed teenager stood up and pulled out a written statement, reading aloud from it as his parents and Werner's father looked on from the hushed gallery.

"Steve, you got what you wanted, but I also got what I wanted," he said. He called Simmons "a positive adult role model who encouraged me to stay in school, get counseling, and mend my relationship with my parents." By the time police began investigating his affair with Simmons in 1997, Manzie said, it was already over. He agreed to cooperate because authorities threatened to prosecute him if he didn't, he said, but he later had a change of heart because he felt bad about turning on Simmons to spare himself. "I decided to make it up to Mr. Simmons by getting myself in trouble," he said. He destroyed the equipment and called Simmons to warn him of the investigation, he said. He also encouraged Simmons to leave New York State, to avoid prosecution. "I don't know why he didn't," Manzie said. Finally, he asked Farren to go easy on Simmons. "Your honor, in sentencing Mr. Simmons, please keep in mind that he never was violent toward me. Your honor, please keep in mind that he never forced me to do what I didn't want to do. Your honor, please keep in mind that I never regretted the relationship," Manzie said.

Although he balked at granting Simmons leniency -- he gave him the maximum penalty -- Farren agreed to overturn a six-month contempt-of-court sentence he had given Manzie for refusing to testify.

Soon after Manzie's address, Simmons got the chance to talk. He called the chain of events leading up to the Werner killing "a one-in-a-million happening." He admitted committing a crime and said that if he had not met Manzie, Werner never would have died. "If I could sacrifice my life to bring back Eddie Werner, I would do so. I am not an evil person," Simmons said. Simmons also pledged to stay in touch with Manzie when Simmons gets out of prison, to fight on behalf of "gay teens" and to fight "aggressive investigations."

The statements outraged Manzie's parents and Werner's father. "He did a good job in grooming his prey," Nicholas Manzie said. "He still has control over his mind." Said Werner: "It made me physically ill to hear that pile of filth utter my son's name."

Simmons won't be out immediately. He will become eligible for parole in four months, but Manzie's parents and Werner vowed to block it if possible. In the meantime, authorities in Suffolk County, N.Y., may prosecute Simmons on sex charges stemming from his admission that he had sexual relations with Manzie at Simmons' house.

Nicholas Manzie, who has recently become friendly with talk radio host and Guardian Angels founder Curtis Sliwa, said he recently joined the Cyber Angels, an arm of Sliwa's group that tries to

protect children from cyber stalkers like Simmons. "His [Simmons'] playground is the Internet. And he'll be in that playground again. I'm committed to becoming an expert in that playground. When Mr. Simmons goes on line and communicates with a child, that child may be me," Nicholas Manzie said.  
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99-100b		8pp	Intime Beziehungen zwischen Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen; gibt es Kriterien für enen guten Kontakt? & Intimate relationships between young people and adults; are there criteria for a positive experience? durch/by Frank van Ree in Koinos 24, winter 1999
99-101		15pp	Predicting Relapse: A Meta-Analysis of Sexual Offender Recidivism Studies, by R. Karl Hanson & Monique T. Bussière, Department of the Solicitor General of Canada; in: Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology 1998, Vol. 66, No. 2, pp 348-362.
99-102b	@	3pp	About Recidivism; a meta-analysis, reviewed by Frans Gieles; in: Ipce newsletter E6, July 1999 (about 99-101)
99-103	@	68pp 309 kB	Canadian Court Ruling (Sharpe case), June 2, 1999
99-104	@	many	Canadian Court Ruling (Sharpe case), Febr 1, 1999
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99-108	@	2pp 26 kB	Review of: The Culture of Fear; Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things: The Internet, Child Abduction, Baby-Killing Mothers, Mutant Microbes, Plane Crashes, Road Rage, etc.", by Barry Glassner.
99-109	@	38kB	Sexuality, Violence and Psychological After-Effects, A Longitudinal Study of Cases of Sexual Assault which were Reported to the Police, by Michael C. Baumann, English-language summary on pages 523-33 of <i>Sexualität, Gewalt und psychische Folgen: Eine Längsschnittuntersuchung bei Opfern sexueller Gewalt un sexuellen Norm-verletzungen anhand von angezeigten Sexualkontakten (Wiesbaden, Bundeskriminalamt Forschungsreihe Nr. 15, 1983).</i>
99-110a	@	81kB	Body pleasure and the origins of violence, by James W. Prescott, in: The Bulletin of The Atomic Scientists, November 1975, pp. 10-20.
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99-111	@	32pp 487kB	A Meta-Analytic Examination of Assumed Properties of Child Sexual Abuse Using College Samples, by Bruce Rind, Philip Tromovitch & Robert Bauserman, in: <i>Psychological Bulletin</i> , 1998, Vol. 124, No. 1, 22-53
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99-146	@	2pp	Opinion; comment on 99-145; author & source unknown, August 1999. 'The courts are not keen to trust parents to smack their children - but those same courts will feel free to convict a child as a sex criminal'
99-147	@	1p	British men fear to touch children, 25th July 1999, source & author unknown. "LOOK AT the picture on the right. What do you see? If you are French, Spanish, German or Italian, you see a family man who likes children and sport. If you are British, you see a paedophile."
99-148	@	1p	British men wary of hugging kids because of pedophilia fears, July 27th 1999; author & source unknown. "British men have distorted or negative views about family life because of their obsession with child abuse, according to a study of the lifestyles and attitudes of men across Europe."
99-149	@	1p	Top scientific body finds no reason to fault Rind report, November 17th 1999. "[...]the nation's largest scientific organization refused to examine the work, saying it has "grave concerns" over "politicization" of the study's conclusions."
99-150	@	2pp	Must we ban children from kissing granny? 2nd August 1999, author & source unknown. "CHILDREN must not be made to kiss adults goodbye – even their grandparents - because it might make them vulnerable to paedophiles, parents are being told by the NSPCC.
99-151	@	1p	Scouts facing crisis over leaders' stigma, 25th July 1999. "Fear of being misjudged and branded a paedophile has been suggested as a main reason for the lack of volunteers.
99-152	@	2pp	Sex crimes 'most likely' from 14 year-old boys, July 99. "Sex criminals are more likely to be discovered among 14-year-old boys than males of any other age, Government figures have shown today.
99-153	@	5pp	Articles about the overprotection of children in the UK: a. 'Stranger danger' warning to young - draws criticism. " CHILDREN as young as two should be taught the rudiments of personal safety and advised never to talk to strangers, a children's charity will say today. b. Paranoid parents 'denying children freedom to play, 3rd August 1999. "CHILDREN are being denied the opportunities for play enjoyed by previous generations because of their parents' paranoia, research will confirm this week. c. Comment in the Sunday Times. {..} " Had I been a man, she'd have called the police. Nowadays, the only unpaid adult interested in our children is expected to be a paedophile."
99-154	@	4pp	Man faces prison for nude photos, November 12th 1999, USA. - Although girlfriend, 17, consented, student broke minor law. - Prosecuting Innocence.

			Two articles about the case.
99-155	@	2pp	Psychiatrist's License Suspended Over Satanic Ruse, USA, October 8th 1999. Convinced Woman She Was High Priestess in Flesh-Eating Cult.
99-156	@	1p	Youth Violence Down, Study Finds; 4th August 1999 "The amount of violence committed by teenagers – both in and out of school -- has declined significantly since the early 1990s, according to a study ..." "More than a third of ninth graders have had sexual intercourse, according to the Centers."
99-157	@	21pp 70 kB	Jugment of the Court of Appel of New Zealand CA42/99 dd 17 December 1999. "This appeal concerns the relationship between freedom of expression and censorship of objectionable publications." The freedom of expression allowed in the Bill of Rights was judged to be a higher law than the law on censorship of objectionable materials (an Acolythe Reader book and soms photographs).