

I p c e

NEWSLETTER

Number E 29, January 2011

Ipce is a forum for people who are engaged in scholarly 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.

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Introduction

Here you are: Ipce's Electronic Newsletter # 29, dated January 2011. This is quite late for the report of the Ipce Meeting 2010 held in June 2010. I have earlier told you about problems with my eyes - and more - and the resulting fact of being quite quickly tired. Excuse me.

This is the one but last electronic Ipce Newsletter. There will follow # E30 with the last collection of 'absurdities' and an overview over all 29 Newsletters here before. A (paper) Newsletter was a good medium in the era before the Internet, but now it is an outdated form of communication. For the same reason, the Documentation Lists have been stopped, because nowadays it is quite easy to find documents on the Internet. However, it is still possible to ask for documents mentioned in earlier lists.

The Newsletter and I myself will stop in 2011. My growing age and my diminishing health give me no other choice.

The Ipce Meeting 2010 has appointed two committees: a Steering Committee and an Editorial Team. The first will lead Ipce, the latter will maintain and expand Ipce's website.

The test website 'Ipce Two' I have spoken about is now on line as < www.ipce.info > or < www.ipce.org >. The former website (Statements, Newsletters and the Libraries 1, 2 & 3) fully integrated into the new website. New files appear in a new Library 4, which has its own kind of registry. I still have a pile of files to place - I send them to an internal section meant for the Editorial Team to format and publish them.

In this Newsletter, you will find a short statement, an article about a book about Michael Jackson, than the Report of the Ipce Meeting, followed by five articles.

- First, about a playwright about 'an offender';
- second, about the sex offenders registry in the USA - mentioning hundreds of teenagers who have had consensual sexual contacts;
- third, about the credibility of testimonies of young children.
- Fourth, what is specific in the sexuality of (young) children? It is not the same as adult sexuality. One can better speak about 'sensuality'.

- Fifth and last: a kind of Statement. The first statement in this Newsletter is quite short; this is a longer article which content would be accepted by all or most Ipce members. Important is to distinguish between (pedophile) *feelings* and (pedosexual) *acts*. The first can never be a crime; people who have those feelings (attraction), do not converse them in acts, do not deserve to be approached as criminals, sick minds, dangerous demons or worse.

The latter is more or less the message Ipce has proclaimed since its start in 1989, 22 years ago.

For a while, still your secretary & webmaster,
Frans

Statement Summing it up

By Gerald Moonen

The sin element in the problematic sex laws is the issue of consensuality not in its sexual aspect. **Sex, gender, age** are all God made/given, **power** and **violence** are man made, a base inferior old-fashioned method of the past, taking this into consideration it is obvious that consensuality or non-consensuality are the issue, not the sex, the gender or the age.

Please let there be laws that take this attitude into consideration and leave that which is of God in peace.

In Memoriam Michael Jackson

Tom O'Carroll

Two summaries from "Michael Jackson's Dangerous Liasons", by Carl Toms, Madator Publ., 2010

Crimes against rhyme

If Michael's adult 'effeminate' behaviour were an indication of this long-term developmental pattern, one would expect to find that as a little boy he had been something of a 'sissy'. Yet this is not what we find.

As a boy Michael was a lively little rascal, not at all 'girlishly' coy or timid. He was a prankster, wickedly keen on practical jokes, and the only one, in a house full of older boys, with the nerve to stand up to his father.

Even in adult life he was 'boyish' in most ways - unlike the super-feminine La Toya, whose living space is so neat, tidy and utterly perfect that visitors are hardly allowed to walk on the carpets, Michael just slung his clothes on the floor and was happy to live in a casual dump of a bedroom.

What could be more blockish? Whereas she was always likely to have a fit of the vapours at the mere thought of feeding Michael's smelly animals, he took a decidedly unsqueamish interest in brain surgery as a young man: he once went to the trouble of wangling invitations to highly unorthodox private attendance at operations, seeing at close quarters some nifty knife work and cortical convolutions that would make supposedly tougher guys turn to jelly.

And Michael's aggressive, raunchy, crotch-grabbing stage performances were scarcely the stuff of Barbara Cartland novels: they suggested nothing feminine whatever. Even the anti-macho, anti-violence theme of the song "Beat It" puts the message across in a tough way, validating retreat as a smart stratagem for the cool, survival-minded dude. For the psychology to work, for 'street cred' to be maintained, any hint of wimpishness has to be rubbed out like a mafia hit.

Michael's off-stage retreat behind a mask of make-up and seeming femininity is best explained not as a deep indicator of developing gayness so much as a different kind of stratagem, an opportunistic response to the need for a different kind of credibility.

It is no accident that it was in adolescence that Michael began to withdraw, developing the serious, shy, strange character which by his own admission came to set him apart from 'normal' folk.

It all began mundanely enough with a bad case of acne which revealed him as perhaps inherently a more sensitive type than his brother Marlon (not that 'sensitive' equates with feminine, but it is a teasing hint in that direction).

Add to this his inhibitions with girls arising from taking to heart a religious faith that opposes pre-marital sex, and we already have the makings not only of serious hang-ups, but also of problems for Michael in how to present himself to the public. If, to top all else, he was coming to find himself drawn exclusively towards young boys, the tensions would have been desperate. No 'solution' would have been apparent: there was none.

We would instead expect to find him clutching at straws, coming up with drastic and bizarre survival measures. Poor Michael must have felt all the time as precariously positioned as James Bond suspended over a pool full of piranha fish, having to resort to amazing gadgets to get him out of trouble.

It was a scenario in which every Wacko Jacko story eventually became just such a gadget. Rick Sky spoke of hiding behind a "shield" of wackiness, which comes to much the same thing. One such device Michael hit upon was to hint at being gay, through an increasingly feminine appearance and manner.

This stood to achieve three things.

✧ Firstly,

it would explain away his lack of romantic involvement with women and take off some of the pressure to 'perform' with glamorous females coming his way on the showbiz circuit.

At the same time, because it was only a hint, millions of girl fans would discount it as untrue, each of them preferring to cherish him as the dreamboat they would eventually marry.

✧ Secondly,

it would throw the newshounds off the scent: better to have his lack of girlfriends plausibly explained away by seeming to be an effeminate, man-hunting gay, than to risk the suspicion of something far worse in the public estimation.

✧ Thirdly

- the most subtle and difficult point, but also the most revealing - to hint at gayness was for Michael to emphasise aspects of his personality that were coming to be absolutely genuine in his development as a human being. He was gradually, from within, coming to be gentle, softly spoken and 'feminine'. The sensitivity may well always have been there.

His mother would certainly have known about that. But the entirely new factor as he grew up arose from his own reflections on life, especially his own: he was struggling towards an awkward accommodation with the world, towards a 'feel' for people and a viable way of relating to them, a struggle arising directly out of the extreme oddness of his situation.

As he passed through his teen years, witnessing with revulsion his brothers' coarse imitation of his equally coarse father's behaviour towards women, he was coming to be aware that his own sexual feelings were taking him in a different direction, towards young boys.

Unable to express this in the simple, relaxed, animal fashion of ordinary sex at its best and worst, he began to romanticise and sentimentalise his feelings, using an unconscious survival tactic of frustrated young would-be lovers everywhere. He wrote poetry.

He started thinking about the beauty of nature, the innocence of children. His mind took him towards the magical and the mystical, towards Peter Pan and a fairy land of the imagination - a land which soon found him being associated with 'fairies' of a different kind. Yet how 'naturally' such thinking must have come to a young man who had lived in a fantasy world all his life, a showbiz world in which dressing up and wearing make-up were second nature not an unacceptable oddity.

The gentle, soft-spoken Michael emerging from adolescence was thus a

real figure, not just a public relations creation. The 'nice' thoughts and feelings he expressed were truly coming from within, thoughts and feelings based on maiden aunt sensibilities that steered him clear of unwanted grown-up sex.

Just how 'all my own work' his 'nice' poetry is, for instance, can be judged by its quality. It is not just any old sentimental rubbish. It is plainly so dreadful it cannot possibly have been written for him by the talented ghost writers behind Hollywood stars' 'autobiographies'.

Skilful scribes can be persuaded to do dubious things for the right money, but conning verse bad enough to ruin their reputation as writers is unlikely to be among them.

Take, for instance, "When babies smile", a fairly typical piece from the collection of poems and reflections Michael published as "Dancing the Dream". The last verse runs as follows:

Kingdoms topple, lose their class
 Civilisations crumble, ages pass
 Turbulent tempests ravage the seas
 Violent killings, despite our pleas
 But dewdrops sparkle when children play
 Tyrants cry, there's nothing to slay
 Fairies dance and goblins sing
 All are crowned, all are king
 In the garden we frolic awhile
 Those are moments when babies smile.

Kingdoms topple, lose their class, boy can he write a verse that's crass!
 The point here is not to criticise Michael's poetry, even though his crime against rhyme deserves a prison sentence more than anything he may have done with boys.

Not that most of us are in a position to cast the first stone. Our youthful mental couplings of William McGonagall and Patience Strong have begotten millions of equally ugly little bastards of verse. The difference in Michael's case is that he was able to publish, so his work was not left in decent obscurity. Nor did anyone apparently dare advise him he is no Byron or Wordsworth, or have the temerity to interfere editorially in any way. As detectives in search of 'the real Michael', we should be delighted to stumble across such telling evidence for the existence of this illusive entity. Could it be that all is not necessarily chimerical and mere illusion?

Crotch-grabbing

One wonders if Ms Smith has ever heard of Elvis "the pelvis" Presley, and whether she would interpret his raunchy, crotch-focused movements as a

case of arrested sexual development, and if not, why not. Or Mick Jagger's, or those of a hundred other pop stars.

Her analysis, is unfortunately typical of those given to uncritical dependence on Freudian concepts: on inspection it turns out really to tell us nothing we cannot more reliably infer from other evidence. This is not to say she is wrong, only that the evidence from Freud is weak.

La Toya Jackson's view is scarcely less open to objection and has been emphatically denied by Michael. Nonetheless it is interesting, plausible, and deserves an airing so that we can keep in mind the complexity of the situation.

Reducing a life to one set of all-explanatory psychodynamics really will not do: if there is one buzz word of current psychological thinking that is more than just an empty slogan, it is the idea that life problems and situations tend to be 'multi-factorial'.

La Toya claims to have been phoned by Michael at the time of her first Playboy pictures. She reported that her brother said he liked the pictures, and then went on to offer an explanation as to why she would choose to do something so controversial, citing her need to "get back" at their parents and the Jehovah's Witnesses.

"I know," La Toya claims he said, "because that's why I wrote 'Bad'. And that's why I wiggle the way I do and grab myself in that video and 'The Way You Make Me Feel'. It's to get back at Joseph and the religion, and to tell them I can do what I want."

Robin Hunt, in the Daily Telegraph had an appealingly simple and persuasive explanation of Michael's crotch-rubbing which suggests market forces call the tune in the pop world.

The teen market, so important to Michael, has always been predicated on the notion that "your mother wouldn't like it", he wrote. Sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll are a traditional triple act. Youngsters want something "shocking".

Michael's crotch-grabbing was no odder than Madonna's sexual antics or Take That's on-stage trouser-dropping. The sting of this explanation, however, and the key to its linkage with a deeper one, was in the tail:

"Michael Jackson does not simulate sex on stage but, as his a-sexual star began to wane in the early nineties, he introduced a raunchiness to his act: rubbing his crotch in time to the beat, a gesture copied by eight-year-olds worldwide."

The raunchiness in fact began earlier, but why split pubic hairs? The important thing is that pre-pubertal pre-teens were indeed copying

Michael, in a way that could only be highly gratifying to a paedophilic pop star.

In developing this particular “infantile” act, crotch-grabbing, Michael was not merely expressing his own 'arrested', masturbatory sexual development, but also encouraging and validating similar self-expression by children themselves. By the time children are five or six years old they have usually taken on board the socially required standards of modesty demanded by their parents and other adults. They are no longer the shameless exhibitionists of Freud’s observing. Instead their sexual feelings find more secret expression in the pre-pubertal years he (wrongly) thought were generally a time of sexual “latency”.

Michael’s subversive gesture offered the heady possibility of returning children’s infantile freedom to them, of giving them the chance to enjoy and celebrate their sexuality rather than hiding or repressing it.

“Never give up your bliss” was the message Michael allegedly gave Jordan Chandler in private; it was a message he gave every child in public. It was, to be sure, a coded message, and its deciphering would not necessarily be straightforward. Children’s sexuality, like that of grown-ups, is a social construct, but unpredictably, chaotically emergent in any individual.

The inchoate 'meaning' of Michael’s gesture in terms of sexual activity and social significance was, so to speak, up for grabs. It was a truly seminal act, fertile in serving to generate a juvenile symbolic discourse of sexuality, through which children themselves might be enabled to recognise and acknowledge their desires. Freed to touch their bodies in naughty places, and to think about the implications, they would inevitably begin to negotiate the significance of it all, with themselves and others – including their peers, and perhaps a friendly grown-up or two. Possibly even, for a few lucky ones, with Michael himself.

Report of the Ipce Meeting 2010

The meeting was held in a small city just on the Dutch coast, on June 25 & 27 2010.

First round

From the Netherlands ...

... it was reported that the Martijn Association has several problems, which began with a court case in 2007. The Association was sued because one of its forum members posted an official photograph of a Dutch princesses on their internet forum, without permission from the royal family. The Association received a conditional sentence and was required to pay the costs of the lawsuit.

In 2010, a man accused of child molestation claimed - as part of a bizarre legal defence - that the Martijn Association provided assistance with finding a victim. The man is not a member of the Association and was apparently not known to the organisation's members, yet the Association is (as of July 2010) still under investigation. A lawyer involved with the case has even called for the organisation to be 'forbidden', even though the only 'evidence' originates from the dubious defence of a desperate defendant.

A woman named Yvonne maintains a small vigilant organisation which is dedicated to posting sensationalist articles about 'pedophiles'. She obsessively follows the Martijn Forum and frequently posts screenshots to her website. Some of the information is misrepresented, possibly with the intention of causing legal trouble for the Association. Another vigilante, Ireen, is avoiding the spotlight. She continues to stalk specific people and has even contacted employers with the intention of causing unemployment for people who are attracted to children.

A long-running forum, *boylover.net*, has been closed by authorities, without evidence that the website was used for illegal purposes. Shortly thereafter, twelve people in the Netherlands and in Belgium had police raids, including people who live completely in accordance with the laws. The raids against *boylover.net* were brought about by questionable claims made by a co-opted former member, which has led to the embarrassing situation of raids against a completely legal website, followed by the arrests of numerous innocent people.

Koinos Magazine, a magazine focused on adolescent boys, still exists. In the future, the magazine will be published as a PDF document, due to the decreasing interest in print publications. The editors are also considering a modernised design.

The *forum pedofilie.nl* is doing well. Parents and teenagers drop their questions and there is no abusive language at all.

Recent national elections in the Netherlands resulted in a great gain for the intolerant and authoritarian PVV. The leader (and only member) of the PVV once called for the PNVD, at the time an official political party known unofficially as the 'pedopartij' (paedophile party), to be banned. The PNVD recently disbanded, as they were unable to gain the public declarations of support which are required for a party to participate in the Dutch national elections.

B4U-Act

B4U-Act - Living in Trust and Dignity is a Maryland, USA based, non-profit organization with funding from Baltimore Mental Health Services. The group tries to build bridges between mental health workers and minor attracted people. Members of the group participated in the

discussions during an APA Congress held to discuss the new version of the DSM.

The trend in the APA is to also see hebephilia, attraction to pubescent and adolescent youth, as a mental distortion.

The group has observed that discussion in mental health circles is quite one-sided, because much of the information about minor-attracted people is derived from studies of convicted sex offenders. B4U-Act encourages professionals to listen to minor-attracted people and organizes meetings between those people and mental health professionals. The USA is harsh for nearly every minority group; sting operations are a normal procedure.

Newgon.com

Newgon.com is a relatively new group and website. It hosts a collection of activist and informational resources for the acceptance of intergenerational and youthful love. This site is also home to a community of bloggers and cyber activists who share such aims.

From Finland

Finland is a small country with only 5 million inhabitants. The state has a quite severe Ministry of Justice, and a population that is usually loyal to the laws and with a strong common sense. A small group manages a forum about attraction to minors, not in order to convert people, but to inform and build bridges.

A film

A guest of the meeting told about his intention to produce a film; a love story about a 'forbidden love'. The script is ready; a producer is found; a main actor is also found; and a financial advisor has been hired. The progress of this project is encouraging.

Discussion

What constitutes *wise activism*? Centralized or decentralized? The latter seems the better form. Accept disagreement. Small groups work best. Do not try to convince people, but give information in qualitative good media. Work step by step. Cooperate; know who does what; divide the work to do.

In memoriam: Michael Jackson

Just one year ago, Michael Jackson died, so we had a short *in memoriam*. A presentation about the book "Michael Jackson's Dangerous Liaisons" by Carl Thoms is presented here as an article in this Newsletter.

In the meantime, shortly after the book was published, frenzied discussions began on Amazon and on internet forums about MJ. The book argued that MJ's and his liaisons had a pedophilic character, which led to online protests by his fans and even his relatives. Those fans perceive Michael as a saint or an angel; sleeping with boys, but surely without any erotic feelings. The same fans campaign against 'pedophiles', some blogs even forbid that word and kick people with another view from their forum.

Supposedly, the publisher will withdraw the book from publication, or will stop reprinting it. Prices rose sharply as a result of that announcement.

In the course of these discussions, bloggers, thus the public, discovered and advertised the fact that 'Carl Toms' actually is a pen name for Tom O'Carroll. The bloggers portrayed him as a pervert, a distorted and dangerous man who, that is clear, isn't it, never can tell any truth.

Maybe someone will find a way to maintain the distribution of the book. The more the fans react, the more readers it will attract. The book is unique because of its unique approach.

Ipce decides about Ipce

1. The meeting accepts the reports of the secretary, the webmaster and the treasurer, and thus the policy behind it.
2. The meeting re-installs the 'New-Members Committee' and appoints a new 'Conflict & Emergency Committee'.
3. The meeting appoints a 'Steering Committee' for Ipce.
4. The meeting installs an 'Editorial Team' with the task to provide new files for the website. In this team, there is one technician, two moderators (who accept or reject the proposed files), and several posters of files. Guidelines for the editorial team will be written, discussed and laid down.
5. The meeting appoints for the IMO Forum: an owner, three admins/moderators, a technician and a standby admin./moderator.
6. The meeting accepts the testing of a new version of its website, including the former website with its Statements, Newsletters, Documentation, Magazine and three libraries - and a 'Library 4', which works separately and is more automated, and which can be managed by a team. A new home page is still needed. The meeting asks the technician to start the new website as soon as this is possible.
7. The meeting decides to stop Ipce's Newsletter after # 30, and to immediately stop the Documentation Service by now. There are still a few subscribers to the paper version of the Newsletter. There will be a new

way to announce new files. The Documentation Service is stopped because nowadays it is quite easy to find documents on the Internet. An archive of the documents will be saved.

8. The meeting re-appoints Frans as the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Webmaster/moderator for the next - and last - year.

9. The members of Ipce's internal forum IMO are asked to discuss

- ✳️ The possibility of merging of the IMO Forum with an internal section of the new website,
- ✳️ the possibility of merging the meetings of Ipce, Newgon and others, and
- ✳️ the decision structure of Ipce: should the attendants of the Meeting continue to hold the most power, or are other structures preferable? Currently, decisions are made only by members with time and money to travel, or by members living nearby the place of the Meeting decide; maybe other ways are better.

10. A decision about the dates and the place of the next Ipce Meeting has not yet been made.

Discussion about aims and strategy

Questions

- ✳️ How to have influence? Otherwise: how to survive?
- ✳️ Why have so much groups and organizations disappeared or diminished? Why some survived?
- ✳️ There are several main themes: sexual reform, youth rights, emancipation, politics, science, help & mentorship, chat, arts, ...
- ✳️ There are different styles of activism: provoking the public, helping each other, offering knowledge, offering discussion, creating arts ...
- ✳️ There are also different styles of leadership and organization (soloists, active young men, wise old men ...)
- ✳️ Which are the choices if Ipce?
- ✳️ Which are advisable for other (or new) organizations?

Introduction - by Frans

Some groups have had great problems, or have even disappeared, due to irresponsible behaviour by leaders - or even just members. Thus, moderation is always needed.

Other groups have suffered or failed due to internal discord, usually between 'the radicals' and 'the moderates'.

Groups that survived do have moderators, a 'core of wise men/women', not just youngest members. They practiced leadership; they were bridges.

Groups that have survived have perseverance, sometimes practiced by a small core committee or a single person.

Groups which have survived have not provoked the public; they give counterbalance, but in a balanced way. They have informed the public in a broad way, or have not chosen 'the public' as their target group; they have chosen only specific people as scientists or mental health workers.

'Surviving' is not the same as 'having influence', which in turn not is the same as 'having good influence'.

Ipce has chosen to inform the public on a scholarly level with balanced texts only.

During the many years in which I was the secretary of Ipce, I always have tried to be a moderator, a wise man, a bridge, and to carry on. Actually, there was and is a 'Conflict & Emergency Team', but there have been neither conflicts nor emergencies. Within the IMO Forum, and during the meetings, I have met several 'wise (old) man/women' as the core of Ipce. Thus, let's try to continue this.

Discussion

Survival was also possible thanks to meetings in person, just as we have now. People participating in internet forums usually give only nick names; some web forums have grown greatly, but are yet not working as an organization, only as a meeting point. Great and small organizations have their own dynamics, power and weakness.

Remarkable is that the great forums give many complaints but few inspiration; small groups give more inspiration. It is just the way Ipce works. Ipce aims to reach a scholarly level.

This sparked a discussion. One member argued that by only communicating on an academic level, we do not reach the general public, as the general public does not understand us. "No problem", said another, "the witch hunters do not read the long Ipce articles, so they do not hunt us. For me, it is not a problem that we do not reach the public. Real influence does not come from the public, but from the philosophers, scientists - and some journalists who are able to 'translate'."

The media reports only negative stories, however. They often ignore research with findings which contradict the hysteria about pedophilia.

That leaves the public with a quite one-sided view. But converting them to accept more nuances will not work even.

Possible means to reach the public include films (see here above), songs, paintings, arts, videos, TV shows, playwrights (see next article). Unfortunately, we lack experience and ability to produce such media. We have also observed that sites as YouTube and the Amazone Forum refuse pro-pedophilia contributions. Thus, one should not choose this angle and should not use the 'p' word. Better angles are the civil rights of parents and children, freedom to express oneself, combating hysterical fear for friendly adults. Use arguments, not slogans.

Looking back on the meeting

Attendants were content with the meeting. The location and the accommodation was nice, be it a bit too small for us.

The combination with the IBLD was good. Members expressed a desire to invite more guests, to broaden the meeting and the themes. Internal matters can be discussed on the internal forum. An extra day will be fruitful for the meeting.

Members are content that Ipce now has a Steering Committee that can lead the discussions on the internal forum and that can take decisions. If decisions are well prepared in small groups or on the internal forum, the meeting will be able to decide more quickly and to work more effectively. By doing so, there is less time needed for decisions, and so more time left for exchange ideas and meeting each other in person.

Articles

1. Play tackles child sexual abuse - "Love Jerry"

Maiken Scott, whyy.org/cms/news, June 16th, 2010

When it comes to sex offenders targeting children, the phrase "lock them up and throw away the key" sums up how many people feel. A play now running in Philadelphia takes a different tack: It delves into the family life and feelings of one pedophile. The play has stirred some controversy, as Maiken Scott reports from WHYY's Behavioral Health desk.

We think of them as the scary man in the park, the stranger offering candy, the terrifying face on a sex offender registry. But who are pedophiles, really?

Chris Kirchner from the Philadelphia Children's Alliance [

<http://www.philachildrensalliance.org/>] says the answer is often much closer to home. Kirchner:

"Almost all of the cases, the largest percentage of cases that we see the child knows the alleged offender, and it's often a family member: a parent an uncle and aunt, it could be a sibling; about a quarter of cases that we see involve a juvenile offenders."

A new production called "Love Jerry" by the "Nice People Theater Company" takes audiences inside a family torn apart by child sexual abuse.

When Mike, his wife, Kate, and their 8 year old son Andy move in with Mike's brother Jerry, everybody seems happy. Jerry:

"A toast to my stupid brother, his gorgeous wife, and my beautiful nephew Andy, who looks just like me."

But the good vibe does not last.

Jerry, who is shy and isolated, was sexually abused by his uncle as a child, and is sexually attracted to children. He is ultimately caught abusing Andy. His brother Mike must now decide if he will try to help Jerry as he undergoes treatment.

Mike: "He is my brother, Kate: Andy is your son! He's got nobody else in his life."

Kate: "Yes, but you do, and if you stand by him, you'll be betraying us."

The play takes audiences uncomfortably close to the predator, inviting compassion while making clear that his acts are appalling. After reading the play, co-artistic director of the Nice People Theater Company, Miriam White, had mixed reactions.

White: "I think we were 75 percent excited and 25 percent terrified."

"Excited," says White about the play's depth and humanity, "but terrified of touching a taboo."

White and other staff say reactions have been mostly positive.

There's been criticism, including in an article in the Inquirer, that the play humanizes pedophiles too much, and asks audiences for sympathy were none is due.

Playwright Megan Gogerty says her intention in writing "Love Jerry" was not to make excuses for pedophiles, but rather to open up a conversation, and dispel dangerous myths.

Gogerty: "By not being honest and face the facts about this issue and who these people are, by painting them as monsters and boogie-men rather than flesh and blood people, it feeds into this cycle of denial that allows us to close our eyes to something that is uncomfortable, which in my view makes children less safe."

Dr. Barry Zakireh of the Joseph J. Peters Institute in Philadelphia treats pedophiles. He says another myth is that these sexual predators inevitably will offend again and again.

Zakireh: "The rates of recidivism are far lower than commonly believed or stated in the media, so I think there is a huge misconception about how often people with sexual offenses re-offend."

Zakireh says up to 25 percent of child sexual offenders commit abuse again. He also says that treatment, usually a mixture of individual and group therapy, is effective for the majority of offenders - especially in getting them to monitor and control their behaviors.

Family ties and social support are crucial for treatment to succeed, says Zakireh. But that's what many pedophiles lack - even before their offense.

Zakireh: "So once they are caught, I think you can imagine, they lose friends, they lose family, and in a very rapid way they lose all of the social support that they might have had even in a limited way, and that has a tremendous impact on them, negatively."

The title of the play, "Love Jerry," is meant as a question. Watching the play, you find yourself grappling with the choice faced by Jerry's brother Mike. Could feel compassion for a sex offender, or even provide support.

One Comment

Erica S. says: June 16, 2010

Kudos to WHYY for this thoughtful, well-researched story.

While I appreciate that this story focuses on the important and complicated issues of the play, I feel compelled to also mention the incredibly effective artistic merits of this production.

- ✦ The performances from the cast are nuanced, subtle, specific, honest and full of emotional depth and integrity.
- ✦ The set is evocative and supportive of the ideas in the play without ever slipping too far into metaphor.
- ✦ The lights and costumes are so intelligently and effectively integrated into the emotional journey of the piece, that you might not notice them until you are left wondering how you got quite so caught up in the story.

- ✳️ The orchestration is at turns spare and lush, always supportive of the emotional turning point, confession, or exploration happening in each song.
- ✳️ The direction is a brilliant mix of delicate emotional builds, and brave movement-based choices, all of which made me feel as an audience member that while it was going to be a bumpy emotional ride, I was in good hands with this artistic team.

Basically, this play is absolutely worth seeing if you are interested or invested in the subject matter as described above. It is equally worth seeing if you just want to experience an exceptional night at the theatre.

One thought: It will not serve you as an audience member to go into this piece looking for 'the voice of the playwright' or even, necessarily, the 'message of the play'. One of the strengths of the writing in the play is that each character is unflinchingly, unfailingly themselves - consistent in their own delusions, denials, self-doubt, and belief systems.

When Kate sings about her own "failings" as a mother for not stopping the abuse sooner, is the play saying she's a bad mother? Of course not. It's giving that character a space to express the (taboo) feelings that a mother might feel, but be afraid to express in that situation.

When "Clowny" (whose name and costume clearly reinforce that we are not meant to identify with him) reads a manifesto absolving himself of wrong doing, is the play "apologizing" for pedophiles? Obviously not. It's shining a light on a hidden and all-too real underworld in which sick people delude themselves into believing they are not hurting anyone. The play is a portrait of a family and a situation, complete with the flaws, confusions, delusions, questions, and tangled up loyalties present in this far too common scenario.

Likewise, when those in the play who have suffered abuse explore the complex and troubling feelings they felt for their abusers, the play is on no way 'blaming the victim' - it is instead pointing out that sexual abuse is not only a physical abuse, but an abuse of trust, of intimacy, and of innocence.

Though some reviewers have noted that the absence of a physical child on stage turns the child, his pain, and by extension all victims of abuse into an 'abstraction', I would heartily argue that we see plenty of victims in this play.

Mike and Jerry are that child, and all the various ways in which that pain can grow, harden, flourish, and consume. If the 'present absence' of the child turns him into an abstraction for anyone, it not for us as an audience. It is for Jerry who has turned the child into a representation of intimacy, desire, and conquest that the child is an abstraction rather than a person.

Finally (yikes - this comment got much longer than I'd planned!) I think that while all the attention focused on the issue of a support network as a key component of treatment and decreased recidivism for abusers is worth discussing, I ultimately feel that this is not Jerry's play. This story is Mike's - the brother who must answer the entreaty posed by the title. And his final decision of whether or not he can "Love Jerry" is not so much about Jerry's healing, but about Mike's own.

2. Shred Your Sex Offender Map

Oddly Enough, by Lenore Skenazy, June 25, 2010, Forbes.com

Recently I consulted my local Serial Killer Registry and found out I'm living next door to a guy who killed three lunchroom ladies when they refused to give him seconds on the chili!

Oh please. I'm kidding.

- ✳️ There's no registry of murderers out there.
- ✳️ There's no armed robber registry either.
- ✳️ Not even one for drunk drivers.

No, the only easily available registry for all Americans to consult is the Sex Offender Registry.

Because ex-sex offenders are so much scarier than murderers?

No, the reason there's now a sex offender registry in every state -- most of these lists dating back only to the 1990s -- is that sex offenders have become the focus of intense parental fear. Who could blame us moms and dads, when we hear about kiddie kidnappings 24/7 on the news? The problem is not with nervous parents. The problem is with the registries. Turns out, they're worse than useless.

They are making our kids LESS safe. How? Well, there are three big problems with the registry.

1. The first is ...

... that we have not decided, as a country, which crimes we really want to see registered. And so,

- ✳️ in five states, a man can end up on the registry for having sex with a prostitute.
- ✳️ In 13 states, it is a registerable offense to urinate in public, and
- ✳️ in 32 states, it's just as bad to be caught streaking.

Yes, streaking. That means that when we look at a little map of our neighborhood and it's covered with red "Sex Offender" dots, there's often no way of telling whether the guy down the block is a child rapist or a

jerk wearing a headband (and nothing else), bent on re-living the Carter years.

Seeing a bunch of dots is enough to make us lock our kids inside, where they get fat, bored and addicted to "Halo 3," because we think it's "Halo 3" outside. Goodbye, any sense of community! Which is ironic because community -- knowing and looking out for each other -- is exactly what makes neighborhoods safer.

2. These lists waste our cops' time.

Police are unable to concentrate on the very worst offenders when they have to keep track of ALL offenders, even the ones who once peed on a tree.

There are almost three quarters of a million people on the sex offender registries now. But according to a study done by the hardly soft-on-crime George Sex Offender Registration Review Board, only 5% of the 17,000 sex offenders in that state were "clearly dangerous" to children, and among them, only 100 could be classified as "predators".

So here's an idea, says Adam Thierer, president of the Progress & Freedom Foundation, a market-oriented think tank:

"Why not make a 'Scum of the Earth List'" featuring only the scummy 5% and let the other 95% go streaking on their merry way? Save time! Save money! And, oh yeah: Save lives!"

After all, maybe one of the reasons Jaycee Duggard was allegedly imprisoned for 18 years by a known sex offender was that an overburdened police force couldn't concentrate on creepy Phillip Garrido and the hut behind his house. They were too busy with the 100,000 other Californians on the registry.

3. This brings us to the third problem: The list keeps growing

Perhaps the gravest danger posed by the Sex Offender Registry is how very easily *your own child* could end up on it. Consider the case of Ricky.

Ricky was 16 when he met a girl named Amanda at a teen club. She said she was about his age. They hit it off, started dating and ended up having sex, twice. A while later, Amanda ran away from home. When she thought the better of it, she went to the police. They questioned her and found out about Ricky.

Amanda, as it turns out, was only 13. So when the police tracked down Ricky and he admitted they'd had sex, he was arrested. Though Amanda's parents did not want to press charges, the district attorney did. In the end, Ricky took a plea to avoid jail time. Now he is registered as a sex offender. *For life*. There are thousands and thousands of *teens* like him on

the list.

It is hard to get anything -- an education, housing, job, even a pew in church (because offenders are forbidden to step foot anywhere children congregate) -- when you're a registered offender.

An 18-year-old senior who has sex with his freshman girlfriend can end up on the list. A 19-year-old who sleeps with his underage sweetheart can end up there, too, even if they plan to get married. In a blink, boys go from normal, horny teens to official sex offenders on the registry -- a registry that sounds so helpful.

But is all screwed up.

✳️ Lenore Skenazy is a public speaker and founder of the book, blog and movement, Free-Range Kids.

3. 5 yr olds & the truth

Study into false sexual abuse stories

Alan Samson | Posted in False Allegations, July 4, 2010

Ground-breaking New Zealand research indicating that many children fabricate stories of sexual abuse when questioned by adults is currently before an international forum in Paris.

The Law Society-funded research, by mainstream Hamilton psychologist Jane Rawls, received publicity when she presented her findings to the society's conference in Dunedin.

She told how a team of lawyers, police and psychologists got an unpleasant surprise when they assessed a study group of 30 five-year-olds: seven of them reported they had been sexually abused.

But, in spite of this, a near-absolute trust in the child persists among many abuse workers, and men in particular still get convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of children.

All 30 had been in the care of one man. The seven told of incidents of genital touching, the man putting his hands under their upper clothing, of him touching their bottoms, and of him making them touch his.

The revelations were a particularly unpleasant surprise because the team assessing the children knew there had been *no* sexual abuse. The children had invented every supposed incident. Every moment the man -

a research assistant - had spent with the children had been videoed.

The children had been taking part in what was intended as a routine study into the nature of children's disclosures under questioning.

Dr Rawls completed her masters degree in psychology and post-graduate diploma in clinical psychology at Waikato University, and a doctorate in developmental and child psychology (in the area of children's testimony) at the University of Kansas in the United States. She has a private practice as a child and clinical psychologist in Hamilton, and serves as a specialist report writer for the Family Court and consulting expert witness in the High Court.

Dr Rawls says she was amazed at what the study showed.

And the results could easily have been worse. Depending on the way questions were asked, the children's total accuracy of recall about a variety of situations at their first set of interviews ranged from 13 per cent to nil.

For some of the children, these errors seemed relatively harmless, including "climbing ladders, going to other rooms, having other children present, wearing elaborate costumes and tickling with feathers".

What was especially frightening was that errors appeared to evolve over time with repeated interviews and, for many, were first reported when diagrams of body parts were used.

The belief that children don't lie - or get it wrong - when making allegations of sexual abuse has been shaken internationally by several much-publicised examples of wrongful arrest and imprisonment.

False abuse allegations

But, in spite of this, a near-absolute trust in the child persists among many abuse workers, and men in particular still get convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of children.

This is despite growing calls for evidential confirmation to be mandatory before claims are believed.

The trust-the-child theory holds that children don't lie to get someone into trouble, only to get out of trouble. And that on the rare occasions they do make false allegations, the real truth will come out during interviewing procedures.

The research by Dr Rawls, finding that responses to questions are often wrong and that many invent stories of inappropriate touching, has further thrown in doubt the wisdom of acting on child claims without corroborative evidence.

The research, reported at this year's Law Society conference and the subject of seminars in Hamilton and Auckland, has been criticised by the Children and Young Persons' Service (CYPS) for its methodology and lack of "rigour".

But Dr Rawls, in Europe on the eve of presenting her research to a NATO conference in Paris, insists that her methodology was well thought through. She says she is willing to have her work critically evaluated "by those with a thorough understanding and experience in research methodologies". Dr Rawls points out she was not trying to replicate or assess CYPS procedures: the research results, she says, were "an unhappy surprise" to herself and her research assistants.

Interview questions were either closed ("Did he touch you on the . . ."), open ("What happened?") or a mixture of the two forms of questions. The ones who got it most wrong, the study found, were the children who were asked closed questions.

The children participated in a series of four videotaped and observed sessions in which a male adult - a research assistant called Trevor - played a dressing-up game with the child.

The sessions involved small amounts of "appropriate" touching when items such as hats and jewellery were put on or taken off each other, and sometimes required the child to keep secret an additional minor (benign) event.

A body parts' diagram, similar to those used in evidential interviews, was introduced into the second interview as a prop to make the children's reporting easier for them.

When children were interviewed for the first time about the initial dress-up session,

- ✳ open questions resulted in an average accuracy of 32 per cent correct, compared with
- ✳ the mixed questions (20 per cent) and
- ✳ closed questions (9 per cent).

Questions about the last dress-up produced accuracy levels for

- ✳ open questions of 13 per cent,
- ✳ mixed 4 per cent, and
- ✳ closed 0 per cent.

According to Dr Rawls, the results with closed questions were of particular concern because errors "seemed to evolve" over time with repeated interviews.

And, for many, they were first reported when body parts' diagrams were used in the second interviews.

Nearly one-quarter of the total sample (24 per cent) reported inappropriate adult-child touching, though there had been *none*.

- ✳️ Three reported genital touching, two of these also referring to touching under their upper clothes.
- ✳️ Two more children reported that the adult either touched their bottom or they touched the adult's bottom, while
- ✳️ two others reported mutual touching under clothing.

The accuracy of children's diagram markings to illustrate touching was also found to be substantially inaccurate.

When "secrets" were programmed for each child, none volunteered to tell them.

But when specifically asked about them,

- ✳️ 23 per cent always declined to "disclose",
- ✳️ 27 per cent sometimes described them accurately and sometimes didn't "disclose",
- ✳️ 20 per cent consistently provided accurate accounts,
- ✳️ 10 per cent gave some true and some false accounts, and
- ✳️ 3 per cent, either no account or a false one.

Seventeen per cent described fictional unprogrammed events that included inappropriate touching and said they were the "secrets".

Dr Rawls also found that only 40 per cent of the five-year-old sample could, after varying degrees of exposure to examples, provide an acceptable definition of truth, lies and promises.

Mary Dawson, managing psychologist at South Auckland's CYPS specialist services, has responded by saying that artificial interviewing departs from accepted interviewing procedures.

Questioning children about a non-threatening series of "dressing-up games", she said, was very different from interviewing for clarification of statements already made which had been assessed as strongly indicating the possibility of abuse.

The purpose of the evidential interview, she said, was to clarify abuse details: generalisation from experimental findings involving recall of non-threatening events "cannot be safely applied to children's recall of traumatic events".

The responses Dr Rawls gleaned from the use of body diagrams illustrated "the danger of a non-trained interviewer failing to follow proper guidelines", Dr Dawson said. It was "of grave concern" that Dr Rawls did not specify exactly what type of questions or their exact wording were used in her research.

Of further concern, she said, was that Dr Rawls did not appear to have consulted expert knowledge of the service's evidential interviewers when

setting up her research.

Nor had she checked with the service whether any of the child subjects had been known for any previous concerns relating to the possibility of sexual-abuse victimisation.

Speaking from Athens, Dr Rawls defended her research credentials. Every effort had been made to meet obvious ethical requirements, she said.

"I have been, and continue to be, interested in the effects of interview questioning on the accuracy of children's answers, regardless of the subject or focus of the interview, and have been trained in interviewing as a clinical psychologist, have researched in this area since 1990, and have evaluated videotaped evidential interviews as part of my work.

"The Family and High Courts in New Zealand have accepted this expertise even though I have not attended any of the evidential training workshops run by CYPS.

"This research did not aim to assess evidential interviewing procedures. If, however, my research is of some use to them then that would be a welcome and positive outcome, especially as there has been no other research that I know of that has produced data on the effects of body parts' diagrams on children's reports."

Dr Rawls also questioned why Dr Dawson, who had attended one of her seminars, had not raised her concerns earlier.

"My intention is not to work against the efforts of CYPS interviewers because I, like them, am concerned about child welfare. I fear that message is getting lost."

4. Gail Hawkes: The sensual child

Written by Andrew Shaw, gaynewsnetwork.com.au, 19 July 2010

Gail Hawkes is senior lecturer in sociology at the University of New England, NSW, and she's coming to Melbourne to hold a forum about a topic that always manages to raise an eyebrow: child sexuality. She spoke with Andrew Shaw.

Gail, how do people react when you tell them you research child sexuality?

It's never neutral. I'd say it's more likely to be the case that there's a slight intake of breath. Others say very faintly, "Oh that's interesting". Or they might say 'I can't stand the way girls are dressed these days.' It's not

a neutral reaction, it's either discomfort or people have an opinion. Very rarely people will say, 'What an interesting topic, why do you do that?'

What does the subtitle of your forum, *theorising the sexual child in modernity* mean?

We were first interested in questions like young women's sexuality and why does child sexuality cause such anxiety among people, the idea of a sexual child being a sign, really, of [the child's] corruption. We decided that we didn't know who had said what in the past about the sexual child so we looked back to the mid-eighteenth century to see how various people thought and spoke about the sexual child, whether or not it was recognised to be sexual; whether it was harmful or normal or natural. We wanted to find a theory of the sexual child that went beyond that knee-jerk reaction that it's wrong or it's a sign of corruption.

What did you find?

We found that concerns about the child's body, rather than its sexuality, began in the 18th century, more or less in parallel with the way children came to be distinguished from adults socially. Before the 18th century they were much more likely to be viewed as small adults, they're dressed like small adults, they're exposed to the same type of experiences. There was no world of children, I suppose.

Gradually there was recognition by philosophers of the time that children were actually these extraordinary little creatures who could be trained to learn certain things. They were seen as a blank slate if you like and what they did and who taught them and what they were allowed to do was really important in terms of their becoming proper adults.

In the 19th century the child touching itself came to be seen as the most dangerous thing; the treatment of child masturbation was the major message in the 19th century. The child's body was seen as something that could be easily corrupted - and through the body, the mind.

We have an age of consent in Victoria of 16 years. What does that 'line' represent?

It is an arbitrary line based on age, and we tend to think of age as this fixed, immutable progression point, especially in childhood; that you get to a certain age and you automatically become something else. Now we know that the body's physical development has changed in a relatively short time, in my lifetime - the onset of menstruation has dropped by a couple of years. I guess the age of consent is about the mental development and the extent to which the young person is deemed to be capable of reasonable thought.

Isn't there a balance of power in a sexual relationship that a child cannot understand?

Some of those concerns are completely justifiable if they involve an imbalance of power or coercion between adult and child. In this book we haven't addressed the issue of child sex abuse or coercive sexual interchange between adult and child. What we were more interested in were what aspects of the sexual child were distinguishable from our adult definition of sexuality, which is a completely contested term anyway. We should be saying "sexualities".

What we wanted to look at was the evidence they found for a specific sort of childhood sexual sensibility, if you like. So the children themselves are aware of their bodies as things that would give them pleasure and they're also aware of a level of emotional engagement with other children and sometimes with adults that in a broader sense could be understood to be part of sexuality, but it's the sort of affective side, the emotion side.

Why do you describe attitudes to sex and childhood as a 'present day panic'?

It's more of a knee-jerk reaction, that there is something fundamentally wrong about a child - an underage child - in some way constructing itself or experiencing itself as having a sexual sensibility, being aware of its sensuality.

You're not suggesting that a child's sexuality is on a par with an adult's?

No, not at all. That's why I made the point about 'sexuality' being a complex term that's quite difficult to define. There's a whole range of things that come under 'sexuality' - there's gender, bodies, fantasies, it goes on and on. That's why we use the term sexual sensibility, because to me that encompasses the whole person.

The gay men have in the past been lumped in with paedophiles by some. Have you come across any of those associations?

Yes, but because it's not politically correct to make those sorts of direct associations any more I think people continue to make them in their minds. Some people will associate homosexuality with paedophilia, the people who have never thought about it and have inbuilt prejudices. We've had gay and straight males say to us, just as well you're both women because we couldn't do this [research].

The thing that's often said about [very young girls dressing sexually] is that if you dress a girl like an older girl it's going to attract paedophiles, when in fact the very thing that those who desire young children want is for those children to look like young children, not like adults.

5. Paedophilia is Not a Crime

<http://mwillet.org/mind/paedophilia.htm> - 24 July 2010

Paedophilia (in America *pedophilia*) is a sexual orientation, a predilection, a pattern of *thought*. It is not a *behaviour*, *thoughts cannot*, in a decent free society, *be crimes*. Therefore paedophilia cannot be considered a crime.

The media all too often these days use the word *paedophilia* to mean *serial rape and murder of children*. This is an abuse of language that seems designed specifically to render understanding impossible. A man who has sexually abused children on two occasions is described as a dangerous man, who might graduate to become a *paedophile*. That is ridiculous. If you mean *child killer* use the words. They are quite simple and clear. *Paedophile* means *lover of children* like *anglophile* means *lover of things English*. It does not mean *child killer*.

There are people who are not sexually attracted to adults of either sex but are sexually attracted to children. These people are paedophiles. This is what paedophilia is, the sexual attraction towards children.

Just as many Christian churches draw a distinction between people with homosexual *tendencies* and those who indulge in homosexual *activity*, we should be quite clear that there is a fundamental difference between being sexually attracted by thoughts of children and chopping up children and burying the bodies.

The criminal law does not punish people for *wanting* to have more money, but it does have sanctions against people who *act* on that desire in ways which infringe the rights of others. The same is true of paedophilia. Being sexually attracted to children is not a crime, it can't be, thoughts alone cannot be criminal.

Children can be sexually abused by people who are *not* paedophiles, people who are not largely or exclusively sexually attracted to children. There are many people who are situational abusers, who abuse children when the situation arises.

These are the really dangerous people because they can have quite normal sex lives, they don't obsess about children, they don't show any clues. They could be your husband, son, brother, mother, wife, or you. A situational abuser is somebody who is inclined to take advantage of opportunities to sexually abuse children *without* paedophilia being their prime sexual orientation.

It can be helpful to consider homosexuality as a model to help understand the spectrum of child sexual attraction and activity.

- ✳️ We all know about straight-forward homosexuals who are only sexually interested in members of their own sex and who follow these urges through into behaviour.
- ✳️ We also know about men who can live perfectly normal lives who indulge in a bit of sex with men on the side, some of these men do not identify themselves as gay, they are just men who have sex with men.
- ✳️ In addition we know of people who are sexually attracted exclusively to members of their own sex but who remain voluntarily celibate.
- ✳️ There are even men who are not in the slightest bit homosexual by inclination who will use sexual violence against men as a power trip.

All of those patterns can be mirrored with regard to sexual activity and attraction toward children.

Homosexual activity that is consensual does not have any victim and is rightly regarded by most civilized countries as being of no concern of the state, the community or the criminal law. However this is where the model breaks down.

Children are not able to give fully informed consent to sexual activity. Any relationship between an adult and a child is so fundamentally unequal that we judge that no child can make certain commitments such as marriage, consent to sex or opening a Mastercard account.

Also children have growth and a huge potential for regret built into their circumstances. While adults can and do choose to do things that they will regret we recognize that the capacity to do things that may be regretted bitterly later is so high in children that the law needs to protect them from their own naivety.

The law should protect children from getting tattoos, from signing up for the French Foreign Legion, from selling a kidney, from watching a horror film that might give them nightmares and from consenting to sex.

Children grow up, childhood is a temporary state, protecting them from the negative consequences of their own actions is legitimate in a way it is not in regard to women, the lower orders or 'the lesser races'. This is not going to change, the liberal tide is not going to sweep on and emancipate children and give them all the rights and lack of protection as adults. If you are a child and you feel hard done by just wait, adulthood comes along.

There are people who have paedophile desires and they will never be allowed free legitimate expression.

- ✳️ How can it possibly help anybody to make these people into pariahs who dare not voice the nature of their predicament?
- ✳️ How can it be sensible to have people who have not abused children condemned as if they were incapable of not acting on their urges?

It doesn't make any sense at all.

My job involves me handling money on behalf of the company I work for who have structured my remuneration package on the basis that I have a desire to have more money.

✳️ How can they possibly allow somebody with my kind of urges near their money?

Simple. People recognize that an *inclination* does not result in inevitable *behaviour*.

✳️ Heterosexual people do not fling themselves on the first person of the opposite sex.

✳️ You can employ swimming instructors who drink water,

✳️ barmen who like the odd beer,

✳️ cooks who eat food and

✳️ bankers who like to take money home.

✳️ And you can live next door to somebody who is sexually attracted to children.

Is a *francophile* a dangerous criminal madman who has an unquenchable desire and irresistible urge to rape and murder French people? Is *francophilia* a universally recognized crime? Of course not. And yet somehow *paedophilia* has come to mean instead of a love of all things childlike an uncontrollable desire to murder children for sexual kicks.

Whenever the media goes out of their way not to understand, to make understanding and empathy unthinkable and treasonous then the mob has been set up to be used as a weapon. The hysteria whipped up against paedophiles is exactly analogous to the hysteria generated in Nazi Germany about Jews.

A kernel of truth gets reinforced with layer after layer of lie, far more heat than light is generated, people are encouraged to work themselves up into a fury of righteous indignation and to avoid any form of analytical thinking, any form of empathy with the target only with the victim.

Victims of child murderers (*incorrectly* labeled as *paedophiles*) are portrayed as angels, paragons of virtue, classic examples of innocence and opportunity, every one of them destined for greatness, every single one of them the sole light and brightness in the lives of their families and communities.

✳️ Why should anybody in the plutocrat-owned media want to whip up hysteria and channel the frustration of the lower classes towards scapegoats?

✳️ What could they possibly hope to gain by doing that?

It is always in the interests of *the rich right wing politicians* and their media interests to channel the frustrations of the mob against scapegoats rather than allow them the possibility of recognizing their true interests or their potential power.

Mobs exist to attack vulnerable minorities such as witches, communist sympathizers, drug dealers, criminals, treehuggers and television producers who allow swearing or nudity. That is what they are for.

Those mobs are 'good mobs'. For plutocrats. They act as lightning conductors, sucking down the people's surplus frustrations and sending them safely to earth. If you look around the city you will see lightning rods prominent on churches, factories and palaces.

The gutter press and in America the right wing talk shows exist to channel the concerns and the interests of the lower classes towards safe targets well clear of the interests of the rich people and corporations who support them. When has Rush Limbaugh ever attacked somebody who is truly powerful and used the power of his rabble-rousing to achieve something for the common man?

✳️What could possibly be safer as the target for The Two Minutes Hate than child murderers?

✳️What kind of a martyr stands up for the rights of child murderers?

The wonderful thing about child killers as a lightning conductor is that they never wear out. Even if you haven't got a fresh one to galvanize the mob you can trot out an old one. In Britain the press have been getting mileage out of the Moors Murders for over forty years. I suppose that the media in Belgium might eventually be able to break that record. What's it worth? Sweet Fanny Adams.

Children are not protected by ever more extreme reactions to the idea of adults having sex with children or by ever more draconian and stupid laws.

In Britain you can marry and engage in any form of sexual activity you fancy if you are over the age of sixteen but to possess *a photograph* of a seventeen year old naked makes you a danger to society who should be imprisoned and made to sign the sex offenders register for life.

That is simply absurd. But at least it isn't as absurd as the case in America where the *average* age of first intercourse is nearly *four whole years below* the age which is considered by many states to be the minimum to avoid an automatic charge of rape regardless of mutual consent.

Having this ridiculous over-protective attitude to children and complete refusal to understand or empathize with those who feel attracted to the idea of sex with children is dangerous. It is like our crazy attitude to body shape, if we set our standards so high many will fail to achieve them and stop trying to.

Paedophiles (real paedophiles, that is people who are sexually attracted largely or exclusively to children) will stop asking for understanding, support and help in avoiding acting out their inappropriate urges if we offer them nothing but revulsion, scorn and threats of violence and will

instead retreat into cliques where they can obtain affirmation for their deviant ideas in exactly the same way as anorexics have set up their own pro-ana (anorexia) websites.

We should be clear about this, children may not always be damaged by sex with adults but any fair-minded person should be able to see that precocious sexual activity with adults is as likely to be a positive life-affirming experience as getting hooked on heroin or dropping out of school at the age of nine. No child has ever grown up into a psychopath because they weren't properly screwed as a child. Not even Ann Coulter.

Is the lack of reports from normal well-adjusted women that sex with an adult when they were a child did not harm them evidence that such experiences are always harmful?

Perhaps it is evidence that our society doesn't want to hear such a tale, even if it is an uncomfortable truth, and that such women have nothing to gain (and their 'good reputation' to lose) from revealing a story without an ending that allows them to be called a victim.

No paedophile can have a proper loving relationship with a child because of the fundamental asymmetry, while the child could spend the rest of her life with the adult, the adult cannot make that same commitment because of the nature of their sexuality.

There can be no circumstances in which sex between an adult and a child could be considered appropriate. That is not to say that an adult cannot fall in love with a child and wait, but that is a long-shot, only a possibility if the adult concerned is young.

We also have to consider what a child special enough to be worth waiting several years for would see in any adult who would wait for them to grow up. Having paedophilic tendencies doesn't make you a great artist or prophet any more than being left handed makes you Leonardo da Vinci or being gay makes you Michelangelo.

Paedophilia is not a crime but it does present problems. As a society we should have the strength to accept that some people simply do have urges we (and probably they) would rather they didn't have. But simply getting very annoyed, unreasonable and violent isn't going to help anybody. Being violently bigoted didn't stop people having homosexual urges either. No problem is ever solved by a refusal to understand it as if that alone would make it go away.