

# *UNCOMMON DESIRES*



*Hearts & Minds: The Failure of Sex Abuse Education*

*New Trends in Law Enforcement: Child Sex Stings*

*Sexual Attraction, Sexual Preference, & Pedophilia  
as a Sexual Identity*

*Number 3*

*Summer 1989*

## UNCOMMON DESIRES #3

### Table of Contents:

Cherubs in Distress: Girls and Propaganda.....	2
For a New Society: A Political Approach to Paedophilia.....	3
Police Blotter.....	5
School not kiddin' with wife, 13.....	7
Paedophilia: Focus on the Child.....	7
Mark Twain & Paul Gauguin, Girl-lovers.....	9
But what do the <i>girls</i> have to say?.....	10
Emily (poem by n.s. aristoff).....	11
Hearts and Minds: The Failure of Sex Abuse Education.....	11
On the train (poem by n.s. aristoff).....	13
Starlight Hotel (film review).....	13
New Trends in Law Enforcement: Child Porn/Sex Stings.....	14
Sexual Attraction, Sexual Preference, and Pedophilia as a Sexual Identity.....	20
Girl Power.....	23

*Photographs from postcards by Caroline Arber. Portfolio Gallery, London.*

UNCOMMON DESIRES is available by subscription from U.D., c/o n.s. aristoff, p.o. box 2377, new york, new york 10185 or from the North American Man/Boy Love Association, edit address San Francisco, CA 94102. In San Francisco, it is also available at Free Forum Books. Subscriptions are \$18.00 (Domestic and Canada, 1st Class Postage, 4 Issues) or \$25.00 (International Air, 4 Issues). Single issues are \$5.00 (U.S. and Canada) or \$7.00 (International). UD can only accept cash or, if no payee is designated, money orders and checks. (Checks are accepted for the U.S. only.)

UNCOMMON DESIRES is not a contact service, nor do we advertise or print any pictorial or written erotica. Any person asking about or soliciting pornographic or erotic materials, pictorial or written, will be dropped from the mailing list permanently.

Copyright 1989 by Passion Press.

### INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

While the exclusive attraction to pre-pubescent or pubescent children may be relatively rare in our culture, the erotic and affectional desires about which *Uncommon Desires* speaks are far from uncommon. Although rarely acknowledged, erotic and sexual feelings for underaged females are common among "straight"-identified men and women, as well as lesbians.

*Uncommon Desires* is the voice of an emerging politically-conscious girl-love underground. Like any oppressed group, we are drawn together by the need to express our feelings, share our perceptions and experiences and know we are not alone. We are also drawn together by our deep concern for the girls we love. Some of us are feminists and some are sympathetic to the work some feminists have done. Many of us believe that feminism holds radical implications for girl-lovers. All of us are well-aware of the indignities and abuse which girls suffer in our society because they are girls.

By "girl-love," we mean a loving and nurturing erotic/affectional (though not necessarily sexualized) attraction to girls and women under the age of 18, always mindful of the developmental needs and desires of the subjects of our attraction. Although in some states the "age of consent" may be as low as 14, we have chosen to include all minors under the age of 18 within our definition for three reasons: First, many researchers and theorists who study "paedophilia" and "child sexual abuse" consider relationships between "adults" and minors under the age of 18 to be inherently

coercive and abusive. Second, although the age of consent may be below 18, a man or woman having a sexualized relationship with a teenager may still be prosecuted under a variety of laws against corruption of morals, committing "acts against nature," or "endangering the welfare of a minor". Third, the federal government and nearly every state has established an "age of consent" of 18 for posing in suggestive or sexually-explicit photographs or films.

"Underground," of course, is a misleading word. There are those who will think that our "underground" is an active network of individuals creating and exchanging erotica and exploiting children. Our "underground" does none of this. We only raise political consciousness and prick the consciences of those who would bring harm to others.

By speaking out and claiming our feelings, we will begin to communicate with others the liberating nature of our struggle, for adults as well as for those whom our culture has decided to call "children". Sexual desires for underaged girls and women will never disappear. They are part of the diversity of human sexuality. The psychological mechanisms of repression and the social institutions of oppression will only continue to distort these desires. It is our hope to confront the former and liberate ourselves from the latter, and so transform the practice and perception of girl-love in the culture at large.

## *Cherubs in Distress: Girls and Propaganda* by Joel Featherstone

She was wearing a filmy white dress, standing in a field of daisies, and holding a flower. The wind was playing with her hair, blowing loose strands across her face. It was only a picture on a poster, but I must have gazed for two full minutes, enchanted.

Eventually, I tore my eyes away to read the accompanying text. It appeared to be promoting a public speaking event in support of the "Star Wars" Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), with no reference made to the photo.

In a television commercial several years ago, a little girl's voice explained the significance of drawings, supposedly her own, of enemy missiles bouncing harmlessly off a crayoned line in a sky with a smiley-faced sun. Not to be outdone, critics of Star Wars featured a little girl singing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" moments before the "little star" blasted her into loose atoms. What do these lovely children have to do with orbital laser platforms and particle beam satellites? One faction wants to protect little girls with SDI. The other wants to protect little girls from SDI. The positions differ, but the images of little girls in danger remain the same. Since boys, not girls, are sent into combat, only girls can be portrayed as having lives which must be preserved at all costs. Images of adorable little boys in danger are not used to promote military initiatives for the simple reason that, in just a few years, such boys will be expected to sacrifice their lives in combat.

These kinds of images are nothing new. During the 1964 presidential campaign, a commercial for Lyndon Johnson (who, paradoxically, ran as a peace candidate) showed a little girl in a sunny field of daisies plucking flower petals. Suddenly, a mushroom cloud engulfed the child and the field - a preview of a Barry Goldwater victory. Another Johnson commercial

depicted a little girl licking an ice cream cone while a geiger counter clicks louder and louder in the background. The voice-over warned viewers that Goldwater voted against the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. By implication, Goldwater posed a threat to little girls everywhere. (Johnson voters at least could assume that the child on the screen would live long enough to finish her ice cream cone.)

The exploitation of little girls in presidential campaigns and advertising as potential victims is still in fashion. A George Bush for President commercial displayed a pretty 7-year-old, while a voice-over asked, "Why would we ever want to go back to the way things were before she was born?" And, of course, there are the familiar ads for world poverty and hunger organizations: "You can help so-and-so. Or you can turn the page..." In these ads, most of them depicting females, sad-eyed waifs in rags look forlornly at the reader. In fact, one organization, Children, Inc., has never featured a male in its ads urging readers to sponsor a child overseas. Images of female cherubs in distress apparently cause more readers to reach for their checkbooks than images of male cherubs. This is no surprise in a culture such as

ours, which views females as less competent by nature and therefore in greater need of protection.

The child sex abuse crusade, like other political campaigns, also evokes images of little girls in imminent danger, in this case, sexual danger. Like wartime propaganda, the sexual danger posed to underage females is ubiquitous -- only a strong "defense" -- new laws, fewer rights, more police, -- can protect against the many threats posed to her safety. As in presidential campaigns, their images are exploited to garner sympathy and generate alarm. The sentimentalized view of girls as helpless and powerless only serves to perpetuate their "victimness". The view also denies who our friends really are -- spunky, brassy people who show little of the submissive and dependent nature which most adults envision for them.



*For a New Society: A Political Approach to Paedophilia*  
by Rutard Sigam

We should cease thinking in terms of categories -- heterophile, homophile, paedophile; or, to paraphrase Krishnamurti, we need to understand, rather than think, reason, and argue.

If we try to understand paedophilia, we will see that it is really nothing unusual. [1] The so-called "paedophile" is distinct from most other people who love children only in that he is more honest. He admits that for him loving children may encompass loving them in a sexual way. The majority hide or repress such desire in themselves, or refuse to acknowledge its reality for others. (Robert Stoller, for example, defines paedophilia as "the erotic form of hatred".)

Denial produces lies. One of these is that children are asexual or "innocent". Repression produces violence. The most obvious forms, here, are the physical punishment of children and aggression against adults who engage in sexual activity with children. [2] Rather than acknowledge their desires and integrate them into their lives, the majority of adults, out of unconscious or conscious fear, indulge in self-deception. One needn't look very far to see that this is so. The desire by a parent to possess his child, to smother him with love, is just one example of repressed paedophilic desires. [3] Indeed, if adults were not sexually attracted to children, then we would spend little time agonizing over the limits which society should tolerate on physical expressions of love for children.

The adult who has come to terms with his desire for children is well-situated to witness the active repression of sexual desire in others. He is even better situated to behold the sexual spontaneity of children. In this way, he may have access to a more accurate picture of child sexuality, particularly that of little girls who, in his presence, express their sexuality spontaneously, without fear of reprisal, put-down, or judgment. (The fact that this spontaneity may later be a source of profound guilt shows the sorry state of society.) Spontaneity, the key to human creativity and happiness, can only develop in an atmosphere of love, freedom, and acceptance, not repression and repugnance. By encouraging a child's spontaneity, the adult who has come to terms with his sexual desires for children may fulfill a very important and positive role in a child's sexual life. (This does not mean that the adult must act sexually with the child in order to encourage and celebrate her sexuality. Rather, it is because that adult has taken delight in witnessing her sexuality that she acts spontaneously in his presence.)

Those people who pretend that they are not erotically (not necessarily sexually) attracted to children are either

dishonest -- or they simply do not love children. Love is unity. The distinction between "pure" or "platonic" love and "sexual" love is an artificial creation of the worst sort of moralizing. He who loves will give himself to love with not just his head and heart, but with his body. And why should this be different with children? Children are born with bodies. He who loves children loves their bodies too. And the child who loves the adult loves that adult's body as well. Children who have not been instilled with feelings of guilt about sex and about their bodies have few difficulties expressing their love physically. It is nearly always adults for whom the physical expression of love of children is most problematic.

Do we need to say more about the most absurd drama Western man has ever put to stage -- a play which has shown without interruption for over 250 years (it was already found in Montaigne) -- that children are not sexual beings?

A look at the social existence of adults who love children emotionally and sexually may shed some light on society's oppression of child sexuality. The so-called "paedophile" behaves toward the child like any lover toward his beloved. There are some distinctions, however. Anyone who is interested in contact with children (excluding forcible sexual contact) will sooner or later be confronted with the child's parents. This is the locus of the confrontation between the adult who is sexually attracted to children and social mores (as internalized by the parents). The relationship of the adult to the parents of the subject of his affection may well play a decisive role in the adult's life, particularly where the parents take a dim view of the relationship. In comparison, the impact which this relationship might have where only adult partners are involved is of a different order entirely, for the parents of a child in a cross-generational relationship have behind them the force of law, as well as a long history conferring upon them ownership status over their children. (This comparison, of course, does not hold true in all times and places. Young adult love relationships are still commonly crushed by parents (or even siblings) who feel possessive of their "child".)

Many parents consider their children to be possessions in an almost literal sense -- living symbols of their sexual potency, social status, and power. Abuse of children within the family comes about in one of two ways: in families that wish for and are able to maintain the facade of potency, status, and power, parents often force their child to be subservient to this need, for example, by insisting that he or she live up to certain expectations or conform to certain codes of behavior. In families where the desired sense of potency, status, and power is lost (or never achieved in the first place), the child may become the brunt of parental frustration.

The patriarchal relational structure in which children are adult possessions permeates adult-child relationships in society. The relationship between student and teacher (who acts with legal authority "in loco parentis") is a prime example. This structure serves to control children so that his or her behavior is not perceived as damaging to adult expectations or as undermining adult authority. Such control effectively denies children an autonomous emotional and sexual life.

The idea that children should have such autonomy is scandalous to most adults and adults often react negatively toward any expression of child sexuality. They may do so for a variety of reasons: (1) they may be confused about (or dissatisfied with) their own sexuality; (2) they may have internalized the hate they felt when their own sexuality was crushed by insensitive adults; or (3) they may envy the child's experience of bodily pleasure which they themselves were denied. Consequently, the child's sexual companion, if that companion is an adult, will also become a target of hate and envy.

Does the public really need to be convinced that children are sexual beings? I think not. The public will not, as Socrates thought, do right merely by being shown in what manner they have done wrong. Society does not always act in ways that are most beneficial to its members. (There are too many competing interests.) Doing what is "right" and achieving a higher "good" is not a matter of knowledge or information, but of observation, understanding, and tolerance. Many adults who experience erotic attraction toward children hold onto the belief that they must begin their struggle by informing the public about child sexuality. From there, it is hoped, society will gain a tolerance of child sexuality, then a tolerance of cross-generational sexual relationships. This is a dream, a myth, or a mistake. The issues of child sexuality and paedophilia are not about the "right" or the "good," but about power, manipulation, and the perpetuation of a violent and structurally deficient social system.

For the reader who still has faith in the Socratic method, who wishes to begin with educating the public about child sexuality, hear this: the public is well-aware of it already. The reader need only turn his attention to those infamous prohibitions (which flourished in Victorian society and continue to flourish in new forms today). In the Victorian era it was "self-abuse," i.e. masturbation. Those who led the hysteria over masturbation and trumpeted the sexual innocence and purity of children also proved to be those most inventive in designing and promoting (to their own economic benefit) all manner of anti-masturbatory devices and techniques. [4] Devices and techniques against a non-existent sexuality? These hysteria-mongers advocated such abusive controls as tying children's hands to beds in order to prevent their fingers from wandering astray; attaching devices to penises which made it painful to get an erec-

tion; apply carbolic acid to girls' clitorises (or cutting it out completely) to exterminate the physical pleasure brought by sexual feelings and acts. [5] Why would any of this have been necessary if children were innocent and pure?

What is not longer accomplished through physical restraints or medical means may now be accomplished through word and deed. The child discovered masturbating in the bathroom is to be picked up and moved or handed a book to distract her; or lectured to about the danger of "indulging" herself too much; or directed, whenever she has such a feeling, to think instead about religious matters or engage in sport or hobby. (Numerous child care books, including that of Benjamin Spock, recommend such "solutions" to the child's "over-indulgence" or the parent's discomfort.) A child discovered in sexual play with another child may be subject to intensive cross-examination by social workers, policemen, and parents, who will make the child feel guilty and afraid about their sexual play. They may even be taken "into care," because a child engaged in sexual play is a child gone out of (social) control. We can no longer claim that, as a society, we are innocent about child sexuality when we have been so vigilant in oppressing it.

Our society's duplicity about child sexuality is not unlike its duplicity in other areas. The President who vows not to "negotiate with terrorists," yet tries to sell them weapons; the lawmaker who rails about "law and order," yet is contemptuous of the law himself; the police agent who is "tough on crime," but deals drugs on the side; the minister who preaches sacrifice and sexual purity, yet trysts with prostitutes and craves 13-year-old girls (or boys) -- what kind of messages do these send to our children?

That is why this play about child sexuality is ultimately madness. It is madness to prohibit something and at the same time deny its very existence. The only way out of this duplicity is understanding. People who are uncomfortable about child sexuality are uncomfortable about their own sexualities and sexual histories (and in some cases, their own repressed paedophilic desires). One can only begin to understand child sexuality and paedophilia by first confronting one's own sexuality. If one does so honestly, one is bound to find components which others might deem "sick," "perverse," "abnormal," or "disturbing". In these desires lay the personal motivation for the repression and oppression of sexuality. And what is done on the personal level, must be done on the political. A society which reacts with madness to expressions of child sexuality must come to grips with its own repressive and oppressive institutions.

The result of these few reflections? Adults who are sexually attracted to children should understand that it is futile to indulge in "scientific" explanations of (or

justification for) child sexuality; he should see that it affronts the dignity of children to waste words about the existence of their sexuality. It is equally unfruitful to engage in public education or advocacy about "paedophile rights" or the needs of so-called "paedophiles". People prefer blind obedience to religious strictures, moral dogma, and outright lies over change and enlightenment. People do not want to be informed about and do not want to be confronted with, or even reminded of, their own problems. What adults who love children, both emotionally and sexually, must do, in addition to organizing for their mutual support, consciousness-raising, and defining their own needs, is engage in beneficial work in the fields of child education, youth work, and all other areas in which children are involved. This work should be oriented toward the long-term goal of freeing children from authoritarianism whatever form that takes.

Adults who love children emotionally and sexually must also be aware that repression and aggression comes not only from individuals allied to conservative, religious-oriented, and moralistic ideologies, but from left-wing, "radical," and "feminist" ideologies as well. Such adults must be aware that they live in opposition to a society which generally met the rights and needs of children with incomprehension, ignorance, violence, oppression, and humiliation. He will sooner or later become involved, in one way or another, in reforming education or restructuring social, legal, and political mechanisms which have proved damaging to the freedom and dignity of children.

In the long run, politically-conscious paedophilic adults stand for a new society -- one in which all individuals are free to maintain a full emotional and sexual life, where relationships are based upon nurture, love, and mutual respect, without sexism, racism, and ageism. As sexuality is a mode of expression defined by society and culture, paedophilia can only be acceptable in a society whose structures are pleasure-oriented and sex-positive -- in fact, a society in which "paedophilia" ceases to exist as we know it.

Thus, we should proceed on a more general and interdisciplinary course and strive for real structural change in society, rather than focus too much upon the sexual aspect of paedophilic relationships which, after all, is only one aspect among many.

1 The sexual attraction of adults to near-pubertal children (especially of men to girls) is extremely common. "Paedophilia," as used in this article, means love and sexual attraction to prepubescent children of both sexes.

2 As to the physical punishment of children, see Dean M. Herman, "A Statutory Proposal to Prohibit the Infliction of Violence Upon Children, XIX Family Law Quarterly 1-53 (1985); concerning aggression and violence against

adults who are sexually attracted to children, see Edward Brongersma, "Aggression Against Pedophiles," 7 International Journal of Law and Psychiatry 79-87 (1984).

3 See, for example, Yates, Alayne, Sex without Shame. Encouraging the Child's Healthy Sexual Development. New York: Quill, 1982; and Kraemer, The Normal and Abnormal Love of Children, Kansas City: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, Inc., 1976.

4 Money, John. The Destroying Angel. Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1985.

5 *ibid.*

## **POLICE BLOTTER**

*Man sent to jail on charges of lewd behavior. (St. Petersburg Times, 1-13-89.)*

St. Petersburg. A 30-year-old St. Petersburg man was arrested Wednesday on two charges of lewd and lascivious behavior with a 12-year-old girl, according to reports at the Pinellas County Jail. Henry Juan was being held at the jail on \$50,000 bail. According to reports, Juan invited the girl to his house "during the afternoon hours on school days" and gave her cigarettes in return for sexual favors. The reports state that Juan fondled the girl.

*From the Stamford Advocate. 12-1-88.*

**Sex assault.** A Norwalk 18-year-old was charged with second-degree sexual assault Tuesday night in connection with his relationship with a 15-year-old girl, police said. Dennis Brown of 261 Ely Ave. was released on promise to appear Dec. 5 in state Superior Court in Norwalk, according to police.

*Man Charged With Rape. Wilmington, Delaware, December 20, 1988, p. B4.*

A 32-year-old Wilmington man has been charged with raping a 12-year-old girl while she was visiting him, city police said. Ronald A. Wilson, of the 500 block of N. Spruce St., was charged with two counts of unlawful sexual intercourse, police said.

The child told her stepmother that the incidents occurred while she was visiting Wilson in the summer of 1986 and that they continued through last summer, police said. The child was treated Saturday at Wilmington Hospital, police said.

*Six-year sentence. San Diego Union, February 11, 1989, p. 9.*

A Spring Valley man was sentenced Thursday to six years in state prison for molesting an 11-year-old neighborhood girl. Municipal Court Judge Robert J. Cooney imposed the sentence on Gerald "Jerry" Worsley, 42, an unemployed jet mechanic, who pleaded guilty Nov. 30 to one count of child molestation.

Worsley, once considered by neighbors as "a good friend," originally was charged with 14 counts involving four girls, ages 10 to 15, stemming from incidents that authorities said occurred between July 1 and August 31. Sheriff's officials who investigated the case said Worsley was known to have invited the girls to visit him on occasion, to spend the night with him and to use his swimming pool.

*Accused in fondling, man raises issue of when a girl has breasts. St. Petersburg Times [date unknown, Autumn 1988].*

Clearwater -- A Pinellas County defense attorney says his client isn't guilty of fondling a 10-year-old girl because she was too young to have breasts. Therefore, attorney Frank Louderback said he will ask Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Claire Luten to acquit his client of the fondling charge. If Christopher Lee Barnes is convicted, he could be sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Barnes, 37, of St. Petersburg, is scheduled to go to trial early next month on the charge that he handled and fondled the girl above the waist about a year ago. "The child's body was in a prepubescent state. Thus, she does not have a breast or breasts as that term is commonly and legally defined," Louderback said in a motion filed earlier

in the case. Although Luten refused to dismiss the charge based on that motion, Louderback said she will have to reconsider the issue during the trial. Asked about the matter Thursday, Luten said, "I don't know if the sexuality is in the mind of the actor or if it depends on the physical attributes of the victim. I don't know. It's a very puzzling question.

Assistant State Attorney Diane Bailey said she is not worried about Louderback's motion. "Let's just say I've done research in that area and I feel confident," she said. "He'll just have to present it at trial."

If Luten rules in his favor, Louderback said, the state attorney's office will have to be more selective when to prosecute some fondling cases. "It seems to me that the state wouldn't charge somebody if she was a 5-year-old girl or a 3-year-old girl," Louderback said. "So where do you draw the line? Is it a crime to fondle a 10-year-old boy and not a girl if they're anatomically the same?"

[Barnes later pled guilty to the fondling charge and received 90 days in the county prison and probation, with psychiatric and other requirements.

According to one attorney, under the laws of many states, the question is not the physical development of the child, but the sexual intent of the "fonder". There is no doubt but that fondling the breasts of a prepubescent girl can be a very erotic and pleasurable experience for both man and girl, if they are so inclined. The real crime is that our society has so stigmatized sex and eroticism that adults and children can only experience fear, paranoia, and guilt concerning even the most innocent physical pleasure. One may wonder how Barnes' "heinous" crime of "fondling" a 10-year-old's breasts could have come to the criminal courts, but one thing is certain: if the girl wasn't harmed by the "fondling," she certainly was harmed by what followed.

In 1983, in a case which resembles the Barnes case to some extent, a man was convicted under California's child molestation law for asking several boys to remove their shirts before being photographed. The Deputy District Attorney in the case, David Gunn said that although the defendant did not approach the boys sexually or fondle them, because he was sexually attracted to boys, "he violated the misdemeanor molestation law by asking them to pose shirtless." See "Shirtless photos lead to misdemeanor molestation conviction," Press-Enterprise, Riverside, CA, Feb. 17, 1983.]



edit picture

*School not kiddin' with wife, 13.*  
*(From N.Y. Daily News, April 21, 1987.)*

Covington, Ky. -- Rachel Partin is 13 and "a little girl" and must attend Conner Junior High, even though she is married and pregnant, Juvenile Court Judge Wilfred Schroder has ruled.

Rachel's husband, Richard, 18, learned that he is, in effect, his wife's legal guardian and responsible for seeing that she goes to school. He spent Easter weekend in jail because he didn't quite learn it fast enough.

Now Rachel is in jail, too -- serving 22 days in a juvenile detention center -- and can leave only to go to school. "In December, the baby's going to be born," Partin said. "And when it is, I'm not going to force her to go to school if she doesn't want to."

### *Paedophilia: Focus on the Child* *by Dr. Frits Bernard*

A middle-aged man comes into my consulting-room complaining of vague troubles. He is married, with three children, and works in an office. He enjoys a fine relationship with his wife. He had been feeling tense recently, and feels tired quickly. He scores high on a neuroticism test, and is at present psychologically unstable.

The cause is quickly diagnosed. Through a recent report in a newspaper about an arrest in a "morals case," he got very upset. As a small boy, he had enjoyed a long-lasting, very happy and intimate relationship with an older man. That had been an incomparably pleasant time for him. Until one day, when this man was arrested. He, then aged ten, was interrogated by the police. The older man was sentenced to one year's imprisonment, and the boy then had to remain with the thought: "I betrayed him." This guilt feeling was still present in his subconscious. It had been reinforced when he learned later that his older friend had died in prison.

This is a clear example of "secondary harm". The trauma-producing experience was not the relationship, but society's reaction to it. The primary consequences of the contacts were positive.

What is remarkable is that apparently nobody is really concerned about the fate of the children involved in the prosecution of sexual offenses. The children must

testify, their opinions not wanted, their needs and wishes are not taken into account. The attitudes held by those close to the child, and by society, can represent a real threat to the boy or girl. Therapy provided later is often difficult and lengthy.

Other such examples could be given, but this one is probably sufficient to make the problem clear.

All public attention is focused on the "act" and the "offender". The child does not receive a fair share of attention and is in this respect neglected and forgotten. Indeed, society adopts a particular attitude towards the "victim;" the child is stigmatized and thus victimized. People often feel sorry for the child, and sometimes also suspicious. They assume that the child suffered mental or moral harm, and often take an almost prurient interest in the child's situation. In such cases, however, the child does not want to be regarded with suspicion, pity, or prurient interest. Nor does the child wish to be socially isolated as "damaged goods". This can have a profoundly negative effect on the child's self-esteem. Under the pressure exerted by society, some children may even feel themselves to be accomplices in the criminal sense, regardless of what adults around them are saying about whose "fault" the incident was.

What the law is purportedly intended to protect, unfortunately, is discarded like a pawn in an adult game; the child is simply forgotten. It is not the intention to recommend here that the child involved with an adult should be taken care of by psychiatrists and social workers. That would already give the child the impression that something was wrong with her. Moreover, that solution is too little, too late. The proper objective,



edit picture



unfortunately distant, is to educate children about sex and love and allow for such feelings to develop spontaneously in the child.

Current educational efforts about sex and the danger of sex is inadequate to allow spontaneity. Rather, such efforts are likely to cause actual psychological damage. When children are bombarded by images of "child molesters" lurking everywhere -- parents, teachers, ministers, neighbors, strangers, uncles, coaches, etc., children may develop irrational fears of adults, particularly adult men, and become fixated upon sexual matters, always fearing a sexual assault. (This may result in general neurosis in developing social relationships or, paradoxically, may lead to unwanted sexual contact with an adult).

With the aim of eliminating misunderstandings, the Protestant Foundation for Family Planning in the Netherlands published a courageous pamphlet dealing with paedophilia in 1979 (second revised edition, 1981). The pamphlet, written by Dick de Groot, a sociologist and Director of the Foundation, was intended primarily for children, parents, and men and women with paedophilic inclinations. The pamphlet is further addressed to everybody who is concerned with this topic (including police, lawyers, consultants, etc.) and is suitable for distribution to children in primary schools to generate class discussions. The illustrated text reflected the most recent findings of sexual science concerning child sexuality and paedophilia and it may be considered a good example of how to bring together educational writing in sexualibus.

The following are short key passages from the text. After a clear introduction, there comes a description of what is meant by paedophilia:

Somebody who loves children. This literal meaning is really quite sufficient to explain what paedophile feelings are all about."

What sort of people are like that? People who love predominantly children can be found everywhere. They may be men or women, young or old, fat or thin, tall or short, nice or nasty.

What do paedophiles and children do together? Here, the various activities are explained, using the ordinary names; this indeed the most difficult part of this emotionally-laden topic. The things that the adult and his or her small friend do are in detail described. This is done quite deliberately, so that the reader is left with more than mere impression.

It is also possible that the sexual contact occurs through the use of force or threats. The adult can misuse his strength; he can coerce or trick the child into giving in to him. This is, however, not characteris-

tic of paedophile sexuality. Both heterosexual and homosexual contacts between adults can also involve coercion, force, and trickery. The difference, of course, is that children can be coerced or tricked more easily. (This is, incidentally, also true in matters other than sexuality.) Dealings with children always require care and reserve.

Following this section is a description of what children receive in paedophile relationships and what emotions they might experience (love, love-sickness, etc.). The chapter concludes with a description of children and sexuality in general.

A list of misunderstandings is given next (things that are not true). For example, "paedophiles are people who kill children."

In fact, this can no longer be called a misunderstanding, because it is much too serious an accusation. It very, very rarely happens that a paedophile commits a murder; and when it does happen, that is usually because he is afraid that his sexual activities will be discovered. Some crimes certainly occur because people are afraid of being punished. For example, a thief can become a murderer in this way, and so can a paedophile. However, this is very, very rare, and it starts from the fear of being caught and punished and has nothing to do with paedophilia as such.

The next section discusses the secondary harm caused by people discovering the paedophilic relationship -- parents, police, social workers. The booklet ends with a series of practical tips for parents and teachers. The teachers are advised "NEVER go in panic to the parents or to the police! This will do more harm than good."

The Protestant Foundation for Family-Planning is in favour of sexual law-reform. The most important aspect of the pamphlet is that it tries to remove anxiety and prevent children from becoming narrow-minded adults. This is the pamphlet's prophylactic function.

As long as society continues to make a problem out of sexuality, no solution to the "problem" of paedophilia will be forthcoming. As long as sexuality is viewed, consciously or unconsciously, as being harmful or dirty, and as long as adults cannot acknowledge that children have their own sexual and erotic life, and as long as children are denied their sexual and erotic feelings, problems with paedophilia and child sexuality will continue to plague society. When the sexuality of children is accepted as a reality -- and a positive one -- contacts between children and adults will no longer be considered negatively. Our attitude with regard to paedophilia may well provide the touchstone for the way in which we can and dare accept sexuality in general, and that of the child in particular. With the

acceptance of child sexuality as a fact, the label "paedophilia" will be invalid and irrelevant.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that a child who needs an intimate relationship with an adult is just as normal a child as one who does not seek such a relationship. Nature seems to have planned everything with a view to individuality, the outstanding characteristic of man. All adults are different. So are children.

## REFERENCES

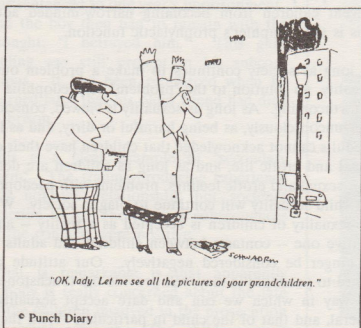
Bernard, F. "An Enquiry among a group of Pedophiles," *Journal of Sex Research*, 11:3, August 1975, pp. 242-255.

Bernard, F. "Paedophilia -- The Consequences for the Child," in *Love and Attraction*, Swansea, 1979.

Bernard, F. "The psychological consequences for the child," in *Children & Sex: New Findings, New Perspectives*, Constantine, L.L. and Martinson, F.M., Eds., Boston:: Little Brown, 1982.

Pedofiliic, GG-pamflet Nr. 4, The Hague, 1979, and second revised edition 1981 (Published by the Protestant Foundation for Family-Planning).

Editor's Postscript: Rather than take the saner route offered by the pamphlet discussed by Dr. Bernard, Dutch society has moved increasingly toward American-style hysteria over adult-child sexual contacts, sensationalizing especially mass, "satanic" abuse, incest, and child pornography. The pamphlet was not used in more than a few schools during the early 80s and it is certainly not being used today, particularly with the increased power given Dutch social workers in the sexual lives of children. Whether this situation will change is a matter for speculation.



**Mark Twain** (Nov. 30, 1935 - April 21, 1910). "In his later years, he became obsessed with little girls. His interest clearly bordered on the sexual. He formed his favorite little ladies into a club and called them *Angel Fish* separately (each was given an angelfish pin) and the Aquarium en masse. The average age for an *Angel Fish* was 13, and girls over 16 were rarely eligible. When one *Angel Fish* abandoned Twain for the company of young men, Twain was extremely jealous. His secretary wrote, "his first interest when he goes to a new place is to find little girls" and "off he goes with a flash when he sees a new pair of slim little legs appear, and if the little girl wears butterfly bows of ribbon on the back of her head, then his delirium is complete."

**Paul Gauguin**. In Tahiti in 1891, Gauguin found artistic inspiration and all the breasts he could fondle. At first he reveled in the local custom of welcoming a different native woman into his hut each night, but he soon learned that such promiscuity hindered his work. He longed for his own *vahine* ("woman"). He set out to find one, and at a neighboring village he was offered the hand of a noble native, barely into her teens, named Tehura. Gauguin was instantly attracted to her. Assured that she was entering the union willingly and that she was free from disease, Gauguin took her to his hut. After a week's trial marriage, she agreed to remain permanently. With Tehura by his side, frequently as his model, the artist turned out much work. Inspired one night by her fear of the *tupapau*, or evil spirit, he created *The Spirit of the Dead Is Watching*.

In 1893, he sailed for France, leaving a pregnant Tehura behind. In Paris he renewed his relationship with a former mistress, a simple, withdrawn seamstress named Juliette Huet. He also began an affair with a 13-year-old waif known as Anna the Javanese, who was half Indian, half Malay. Anna turned out to be disastrous for him. She kept him from his work and, when they went to Brittany, her unpopularity among the townspeople was immediately evident....

When Gauguin returned to Tahiti in 1895, he expected to resume housekeeping with Tehura. But she had meanwhile married an islander. Although she did visit the painter for about a week as a sort of hut-warming present, she was frightened by his syphilitic sores and went back to her husband. Gauguin had lost his mate, but many others filled the void. "My bed has been invaded every night by young hussies running wild," he complained at one point. "Yesterday I had three." Looking for a "serious woman for the house," he briefly settled down with a pretty 14-year-old named Pahura, but she was not as stimulating as Tehura. Still, he did a nude of her, *Arii Vahine* (The Noblewoman), which he considered "the best I have ever painted."

From Wallace, Irving, et al., *The Intimate Sex Lives of Famous People*, New York: Delacorte Press, 1981, p. 42.

**Hearing set in sex case. Portage rink manager held.**  
(Beacon Journal, Akron Ohio, 4-19-88).

A man identified by investigators as part-owner, manager and skating instructor at a roller rink near Kent remained in the Portage County Jail Monday on a charge of corrupting a minor, a 13-year-old Kent area girl.

Richard Stuart Wells II, 37, who is being held in lieu of a \$20,000 cash bond, faces a preliminary hearing Friday in Portage County Municipal Court on the third-degree felony charge, which is related to sexual contact with the girl at the rink in October, said Kent police detective Ron Holliday. Kent police assisted the Portage County sheriff's office in the investigation.

Wells "apparently has managed quite a few roller rinks in quite a few communities," said Portage County assistant prosecutor Robert A. Durst. "He has quite a reputation for being an accomplished skating instructor, and as such, he has numerous young people as students. There are allegations of problems in other communities."

Wells, who was arrested Friday, also is under investigation for problems involving minors at a roller rink in Maple Heights, according to police there. Wells is believed to have used no force or threat of force in the incident for which he is charged in Portage County. The charge relates to having sex with a person under age, investigators said.

Wells also may face additional charges for similar offenses against at least one other minor girl at the rink, Roller Express, on East Main Street in Franklin Township, police said.

**Man waives bond hearing in sexual exploitation case.**  
(Cleveland Plain Dealer, 6-25-88).

A paving contractor facing a charge of sexual exploitation of minors waived a bond hearing before a U.S. magistrate Thursday. As a result, Eundra Brooks, 48, of Thackeray Ave. will remain in jail until a federal grand jury acts on the case.

According to an affidavit by FBI agent Richard A. Wrenn, the plant manager of Guardian Photo, a film developing company in Slippery Rock, Pa., contacted the FBI on March 17 about a roll of film containing pictures of the breasts and genitals of a young girl.

Guardian said the film was deposited for developing at the Value City Department Store in Warrensville Heights under the name E. Brooks. Wrenn's affidavit said arrangements were made with the camera department at Value

City to contact the FBI when the photos were picked up. A woman friend of Brooks' got the photos March 24.

During questioning by agents, the woman said the pictures were of a 9-year-old girl, whose name and address she gave. The woman said that she had seen the child at Brooks' apartment from time to time over seven months and that Brooks referred to her as "my little friend". The girl's mother told the FBI that her daughter and two or three other children had been befriended by Brooks beginning at least in July 1987. She said Brooks bought books, shoes, ice cream and other gifts for the children. The woman said her daughter had spent numerous weekends with Brooks.

A search of Brooks' apartment on June 10 resulted in the seizure of seven additional lewd photographs of the 9-year-old, the FBI said. Brooks was arrested that day.

\* \* \* \*

**But what do the girls have to say?**

\* \* \* \*

**Uncommon Desires?**

In a severely flawed, albeit interesting study conducted by John Briere and Marsha Runtz, reported in *Child Abuse & Neglect*, Vol. 13, pp. 65-75, 1989, pp. 65-75, 21% of the 193 male undergraduate students admitted they were "sexually attracted to some small children". Only 9%, however, admitted having "fantasies about sex with a child" and only 5% admitted "masturbation during fantasies about sex with a child." Unfortunately, the study did not provide a copy of the questions asked.

Other shortcomings of the study: Briere is apparently interested more in supporting a moral/political stance than he is in investigating adult desires for sexual contact (or relationships!) with pre-pubescents. Thus, the study was loaded with untested assumptions, victimological prejudices and other nonsense (e.g. "...there exists a body of research on the social psychology of sexual aggression against adult women, the findings of which might be applicable to the study of pedophilia" or "[s]ubjects' masturbation to [adult] pornography might similarly relate to deviant sexual arousal, since pornographic materials frequently depict a dominant male and a submissive partner. Masturbation to such scenes may thus directly condition sexual arousal to dominance, as typically occurs in pedophilia...") Nice try, but none of the research on pornography or pedophilia justifies such conclusions. (continued on page 19)

Emily

I

*To her ivory white inner thighs I directed my gaze  
My intentions toward what was beneath  
the white-and-blue-geometric-shapes underwear:  
A delicate flower unfolding  
Her wistful smile engaging  
My urgency.*

II

*Giggling, she moved closer  
resting her head on my chest  
And as my arms enveloped her  
I breathed a deep sigh of desire  
down the back of her shirt.*

III

*"That lap's taken," she said to her sister,  
asserting her right to my territory.  
It is taken, I thought,  
with your innocence  
with your smoothness  
with your light.*

IV

*Her perfume: chocolate chip cookies.  
Her laugh: seductive, mischievous.  
Her power: my heart.*

copyright 1986 n.s. aristoff

### **Hearts And Minds: The Failure of Sex Abuse Education** by Joel Featherstone

It is a booming industry. Hundreds of coloring books, audiovisuals, puppet shows, and comics, scores of books, dozens of plays, and an estimated 400-500 curriculae (Plummer, 1986). Much creativity has gone into warning children, in ways that are often entertaining, and sometimes comprehensible, about the dangers of sexual contact with adults.

At the core of much of this "educational" effort is a concept known as "The Touch Continuum" (Anderson, 1986). The Touch Continuum attempts to teach children

to reorganize and define their perceptions of touch into categories of "good touch," "confusing touch," and "bad touch". It also teaches them to act in accordance with a specific "safety" program -- for example, to scream "NO!" when experiencing a "bad touch" and to run away. Since teaching anything about sex to prepubescents is controversial, the curriculae do not refer to genitals by their proper names. Euphemisms -- such as "your private zone" or "the area covered by a one-piece bathing suit" - abound.

Recent studies have attempted to measure just how well children exposed to abuse education absorb the material, as opposed merely to being entertained by it. According to some researchers, children, especially younger ones, tend not to retain the prevention concepts for any length of time (Plummer, 1984; Ray, 1984); and a considerable percentage do not absorb the concepts in the first place (Conte, et al.1987). The consensus in the literature is that the Touch Continuum is the most difficult prevention concept to teach (Robertson and Wilson-Walker, 1985). In an evaluation of a third grade class shown a slide show about "good" and "bad" touch, Ray and Dietzel (1985) report that the Touch Continuum confused the children and made little long-term impression on them.

Why do even the most intelligent children so often fail to absorb this message of badness and fear in association with all "sexual" touch from adults? It is certainly not due to an absence of victimological zeal. De Young (1988) argues that children's understanding of the Touch Continuum is essential

because of the nature of the sexually abusive [sic] act itself. It is accomplished gently and without significant threats to the well-being of the child, the sexual touch may feel good; if it done by a person the child loves, it may not be confusing at all.

De Young asserts that children under seven can never grasp the concept of uncoerced, pleasurable touch by someone they love and admire being "bad". She cites Piaget (1963), who calls this the "preoperational stage" of cognitive development. Children of this age judge behavior solely by its consequences rather than by the intention of the person judged. Hence, pleasurable touch with the child's consent by a loving adult is perceived as "good" even it involves the child's "private zone". No amount of education can solve this "dilemma," warns de Young, who admits having no other solution to offer. She doesn't explain why so many children over the age of seven are baffled by the Touch Continuum as well, such as Ray and Dietzel's (1985) third graders, or the children examined by Conte et al. (1985), which included children as old as 10. It doesn't seem to make sense at any age, preoperational or otherwise.

Despite extraordinary efforts to the contrary, there appears to be a persistent tendency for children to view child/adult sex in a manner more consistent with the views of the socially-conscious pedophiles than those of victimologists. Nearly every child will judge a coercive, undesired sexual touch as "bad" even if they haven't been trained to do so (Swan et al., 1985). But victimologists, pedophiles, and children already agree on this issue. The debate over child/adult sex revolves around voluntary, mutually desired relationships, which victimologists claim are categorically impossible. It is precisely in this area that the sex abuse education crusade continues to fail. Children are largely unmoved by warnings about the danger of pleasurable touches to which they believe they have consented, although consenting to and taking pleasure in such touches may result in severe guilt feelings. Those feelings, in fact, may be the source for the very psychological damage which the Touch Continuum curriculae seek to avoid.

Here lies the ultimate quandary of the child protection crusaders. Everything appears to be on their side. Public prejudice is on their side. All political parties are on their side (see NAMBLA 1985). The school boards are on their side (though there have been school boards and school board members who have questioned the wisdom of the curriculae). Feminists are generally allied with victimology on this issue, except perhaps those who define themselves as sex radicals (Anonymous, 1988; Califia, 1980; Camilla, 1984; Kelly, 1981; Millet, 1980; Rubin, 1981; Smith, 1986). The scientific community is currently supportive of the curriculae, but only out of sloppy thinking, ideological motivation, or fear of being labeled as "for" child abuse (Kilpatrick, 1987; LaFollette, 1988; Okami, 1988). The executive branch of the federal government and its cash grant dispensing and law enforcement agencies, members of Congress, and the courts support child protection crusaders and their curriculae as well. (The latter in particular have opened up huge gaps in the First Amendment through which to launch attacks at the most harmless pedophile publications and nudist magazines, while victimological journals publish crotch shots of pre-schoolers with impunity (cf. Ricci, 1988). By means of mandatory reporting laws, some state governments have even insured that anyone daring to do a research study of consenting children in ongoing intergenerational relationships must immediately report such relationships to the authorities under threat of imprisonment.

With so many advantages, what else could an anti-sex crusader need? Just one more thing: as De Young (1988) laments:

in cases of "gentle" molestation [sic] in which there is nonintrusive sexual contact, verbalizations expressing love and care, and no unsettling threats, children will

not perceive this type of touch as 'bad'. Further, they will not attribute badness to the offending [sic] person.... Without the ability to judge the touch as bad, the children then have no reason to say "no," to run away, and to tell someone.

Despite their lopsided advantages in all other areas, the one thing victimologists need most is the one thing which eludes them. They have failed to win the hearts and minds of the nation's children.

## Notes

Anderson, C. (1986). "A history of the Touch Continuum." [in] The Educator's Guide to Preventing Child Sexual Abuse, pp. 15-25, M. Nelson and K. Clark (Eds.), Network Publications, Santa Cruz, CA.

Andrews, L.B. (1986). "Are We Raising a Terrified Generation?" Parents Magazine, December, 1986, pp. 138-142, 228-232.

Anonymous. (1988). (Letter to the Editor). NAMBLA Bulletin, vol. 9, #5, June 1988, p. 15.

Borkin, J. and Frank, L. (1986). "Sexual Abuse Prevention for Preschoolers: A Pilot Program." Child Welfare, vol. LXV, #1, Jan.-Feb., 1986, pp. 75-82.

"Camilla" (1984). "Towards a Feminist Perspective for Boy Lovers." NAMBLA Journal #6, pp. 7-9.

Califia, P. (1980). "The Age of Consent: An Issue and Its Effect on the Gay Movement, Part Two." The Advocate, #304, October 30, 1980.

Conte, J.R., Rosen, C., Saperstein, L., and Shermack, R. (1985). "An Evaluation of a Program to Prevent the Sexual Victimization of Children." Child Abuse & Neglect, vol. 9, #3, pp. 319-328.

De Young, M. (1988). "The Good Touch / Bad Touch Dilemma." Child Welfare, vol. LXVII, #1, Jan.-Feb., 1988, pp. 60-68.

Fryer, G.E., Kraizer, S.K., and Miyoshi, T. (1987). "Measuring Actual Reduction of Risk to Child Abuse: A New Approach." Child Abuse & Neglect, vol. 11, #2, pp. 173-9.

Kilpatrick, A.C. (1987). "Childhood Sexual Experiences: Problems and Issues in Studying Long-Range Effects." Journal of Sex Research, vol. 23, #2, pp. 173-196.

LaFollette, P. I. (1988). "Problems of Definition and Meaning in Victimological Literature on Sexual Conduct Between Adults and Children." Paper presented at the 31st Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex, San Francisco, CA, Nov. 10-13, 1988.

Millet, K. (1980). Interview with Kate Millet by Mark Blasius, Semiotext(e), Special Intervention Series #2, Summer 1980.

NAMBLA (1985). A Witchhunt Foiled: The FBI vs. NAMBLA. North American Man/Boy Love Association, P.O. Box 174, Middtown Station, NY, NY 10018.

Okami, P. (1988). "Child Sexual Abuse: A Critical Evaluation of New Perspectives." Paper presented at the 31st Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex, San Francisco, CA, Nov. 10-13, 1988.

Piaget, J. (1963). The Moral Judgment of the Child. The Free Press, NY, 1963.

Plummer, C. (1984). "Preventing Sexual Abuse: What In-School Programs Teach Children." [in] The Educator's Guide to Preventing Child Sexual Abuse, M. Nelson and K. Clark (eds.) pp. 1-5, Network Publications, Santa Cruz, CA.

Ray, J. (1984). "Evaluation of the Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Project," Paper presented at the Second National Conference for Family Violence Researcher, August 1984, Durham, NH.

Ray, J. and Dietzel, M. (1985). "Teaching Child Sexual Abuse Prevention." School Social Work Journal, vol. 9, #2, Spring, pp. 100-108.

Ricci, L.R. (1988). "Medical Forensic Photography of the Sexually Abused Child." Child Abuse & Neglect, vol. 12, pp. 305-310.

Robertson, K.E. and Wilson-Walker, J.A. (1985). "A Program for Preventing Sexual Abuse of Children." American Journal of Maternal/Child Nursing, vol. 10, #2, March/April, pp. 100-102.

Rubin, G. (1981). "Sexual Politics, The New Right, and The Sexual Fringe," [in] The Age Taboo, Daniel Tsang (ed.), Alyson Publications, Boston.

Smith, A.M. (1986). "Sex and Violence and Censorship." Body Politic, August, 1986, pp. 22-24.

Swan, H.L., Press, A.N., and Briggs, S.L. (1985). "Child Sexual Abuse Prevention: Does It Work?" Child Welfare, vol. LXIV, #4, July-Aug., pp. 395-405.

### *On the train*

*Delight me with the pleasures of your body!  
Mine is an interest easily piqued.*

*Lift your sweatshirt over your head  
and I catch a glimpse of your budding breast  
through the side of your sleeveless shirt.*

*Turn around and I notice your curving waist,  
your still round little-girl behind.*

*Brush by me and I breathe the perfume of your body,  
feel a few whiffs of your silky hair.*

*Desire rises within me as my eyes touch upon your tender  
graces,  
undressing you and drawing you close.*

*In another time (or perhaps another place),  
we might know each other.*

*But here, at this moment,  
it is your gaze which completes me.*

copyright 1989 n.s. arisoff

*Starlight Hotel. "On a highway of hidden dangers,  
they find the love, the cunning, and the courage to be  
free."*

*Starlight Hotel* is pure enchantment, a perfect blending of cast, setting, and story that brings to mind the visual impact of *Days of Heaven*. It's one of the finest New Zealand films to date, yet it could just as easily have been set in the American Midwest during the Depression. It's such a familiar tale -- the plight of a pretty young runaway of 12 and a man in his late 20s on the lam -- that you're surprised to realize how deeply you have become involved in it. It's amazing how much suspense writer Grant Hinden-Miller (in adapting his own novel) and director Sam Pillsbury generate over this man's fate and its consequences for his young companion. The filmmakers shrewdly avoid conventional exposition so that we may learn about these two as they come to know each other. In the midst of an endless and splendid vista of field, mountain and cloudy sky, Kate (Greer Robson) and Patrick (Peter Phelps) cross paths. In time we learn that Kate, miserable living in a remote village with an aunt and uncle, wants to make her way to Wellington where her widowed father lives. Gradually, as Patrick develops a sense of responsibility for Kate and a trust in her, he confides in her. As they make their way across the country, circa 1930-31, we discover a nation in the grip of widespread poverty. Harsh laws and conservative views reign; the World War I veteran has been forgotten as he was in America at the time, but the occasional kind gesture, mainly from the poor, help Kate and Patrick along their perilous journey. (*Starlight Hotel* is Patrick's slang for sleeping out under the stars.) Robson (the young child in *Smash Palace*) and Phelps (*The Lighthorseman*) could not seem more engaging and natural and their friendship is developed with the utmost delicacy. There is no question that Patrick comes to love her as deeply as she loves him, yet he respects her like a sister. Cinematographer Warrick Atewell (a name to remember) brings to the film's comparatively few urban sequences the same sweep as those set in expanses of unspoiled land, its awesome beauty a poignant contrast to the hardships Kate and Patrick encounter everywhere. Morton Wilson and Andrew Hagen's warm score complements the varied shadings in both the film's images and its people. *Starlight Hotel* (rated PG) is one of those pictures that sneaks up on you unannounced and steals your heart.

--Kevin Thomas, Los Angeles Times

## *New Trends in Law Enforcement: Child Porn/Sex Stings*

by *Lawrence A. Stanley, Esq.*  
(Reprinted with permission.)

A child porn/sex sting operation run by a task force comprised of agents from the U.S. Customs Service, the Postal Inspection Service, the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, and the New Jersey State Police has netted six arrests in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Ohio. The operation, in which police officers placed suggestive advertisements in sexually-oriented publications, was purportedly aimed at "child pornographers" and "child molesters". The police officers, working through a post office box, posed as collectors of child pornography or fathers offering their young daughters for sexual liaisons. After corresponding with the suspects, police officers set up personal meetings during which the arrests took place.

William Smith, 41, of Philadelphia, was arrested on March 10, when he met with Officer Dennis Guzy of the Philadelphia Sex Crimes Unit in a park. Smith purportedly had answered one of the ads, writing that he possessed some child pornography and wished to trade for new material. Acting undercover, Guzy offered to trade materials with him.

Guzy tape-recorded his meeting with Smith, during which the two exchanged child pornography, while U.S. Customs agents made a videotape of the transaction from a surveillance van nearby. After the transaction took place, Smith was arrested by a team of federal and state officers. According to police officials, a subsequent search of Guzy's home turned up 13 handguns, a small quantity of marijuana and a set of scales. No pornography was reported to have been seized from Guzy's home.

Another suspect, the Rev. John McVay, 53, of Abington, was arrested on February 28th at his home after he

failed to meet with Guzy in downtown Philadelphia. McVay, a Presbyterian minister not currently assigned to any church, had answered the ad and exchanged letters with Guzy through the post office box, purportedly requesting to have sex with the officer's daughters, who Guzy wrote were ages 9 and 12.

Others arrested in the Pennsylvania sting were Irving P. Stout, 30, of Monmouth Junction, N.J., William Ritterson, 48, of Edison, N.J., Arthur Simpson, 45, of Niles, Ohio, and Curtis James, 33, of Somerdale, N.J.

The Pennsylvania sting operation is not the first of its type, but part of a new trend in sting operations in which federal, state, and local law enforcement officers have posed as sexy divorcees with children (as well as the children themselves), fathers having incestuous relations with their children, collectors of child pornography, and procurers of children.

If the aim of law enforcement officials is to prevent or detect child abuse (rather than merely persecute individuals who might fantasize about having sex with minors), then these sting operations are vastly misdirected. Those who engage in correspondence with undercover officers are generally isolated, pose little danger to anyone but themselves, and are surely in need of psychological support. Rather than provide that psychological support, undercover officers subject these individuals to a technique called "mirroring," in which the officers actively attempt to disinhibit and psychologically destabilize their "target" by prompting them, creating a false sense of reality and, finally, inducing them to commit a crime.

What we actually do know about child abuse (including sexual child abuse) is that most of it occurs in the home, that those who commit it are usually closely related to the child and tend not to be exclusively or even preferentially sexually attracted to children, and that the crime is situational in nature.

From a law enforcement standpoint, the reality of child abuse presents enormous obstacles to social control. Faced with the difficulties posed in detecting, prosecuting, or preventing real child abuse, it is easier for public officials -- not to mention politically expedient in gaining publicity, grant monies and promotions -- to target a relatively insignificant population than it is for them to "do something" substantive and effective about child abuse.

In addition to unethically inducing their targets to commit crimes (even if those "crimes" are manufactured by undercover agents) through disinhibition techniques, law enforcement officials who run these sting operations exacerbate, rather than alleviate, social ills. Without question, such operations create the spectre of an "underground" of "child pornographers" and "child molesters" in the public mind -- a spectre that requires both enormous public resources and extreme police vigilance to combat. Not only does this result in a tremendous waste of public monies, but it fosters an unnecessary and harmful social paranoia regarding sexuality (particularly expressions of child sexuality). It also directly results in increased pressure for a reduction in constitutional rights for suspects and defendants. Moreover, there are undoubtedly individuals (who may or may not be "pedophiles") who, not realizing they are looking at sting operations, use the existence of the government publications and advertisements to justify their own abusive activities. Instead of attempting to assess the real social costs and ramifications of these sting operations, law enforcement officials mistakenly rely upon indictment and conviction statistics to justify themselves.

As for the claim that the stings were aimed at "child pornographers," this is simply ridiculous. "Child pornographers" are a figment of law enforcement's imagination. There are, of course, people who photograph child-

ren and some of them even photograph children nude (parents also do this), displaying their genitals, or engaged in sexual activity. But such individuals are very rarely even familiar with each other (let alone organized). They don't publish magazines or send pictures to magazines which do publish for the simple reason that there are NO magazines anywhere known or sold which publish pictures of children displaying their genitals or engaging in sexual activity.

In order to appreciate fully the unethical (and sleazy) methods of law enforcement officials and the types of absurd cases developed by the Child Exploitation Task Forces in investigating "child pornography" and "child molestation," one need only look to the evidence.

Below are excerpts from three letters sent to a suspect in a child sex sting operation run by United States Postal Inspector Calvin Comfort. The three letters were among dozens sent by Comfort to the defendant over a period of approximately 1-1/2 years. In the first two letters excerpted here, Comfort is posing as a mother of two young girls (a sexy divorcee named Jolene Edwards) and in the third, Comfort is posing as one of the daughters (with authentic "child-like" handwriting and "misspellings"). An examination of the correspondence reveals a clear pattern of efforts by federal officials to destabilize the defendant psychologically by giving him the sense that what he desired, deep in his fantasy life, was socially acceptable and real and by titillating him beyond his wildest fantasies.

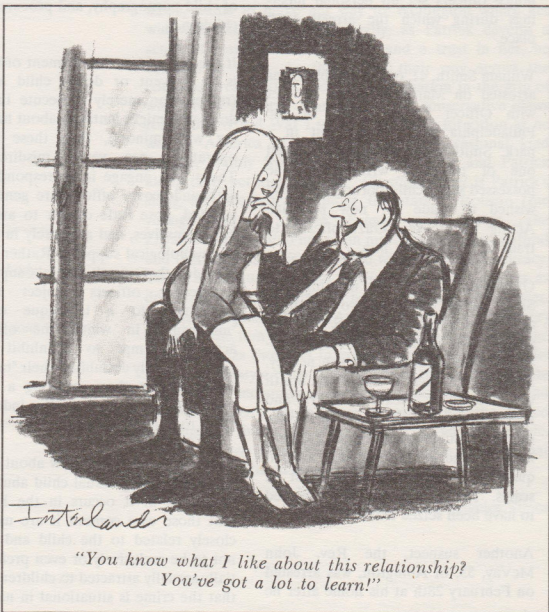
(12-3-86) "Dear Jim: It was so nice for us to hear from you! The postcards from seaworld were beautiful. The kids loved them. I just love your picture and Kim and Heather and I are VERY openminded. Its very important they learn about sex from someone who is caring and knowledgeable -- and its really best if they hear from both a man's and a woman's viewpoint. Send us pictures just like

you said in your letter. By the way, I am very discrete and have told the kids that "Uncle Jim" is our little secret and never to tell anyone else.... I read and re-read your story of your first time. Wow! Sure was exciting. Marcia sounded like a very nice person to have a "first" with. My first was when I was 13, I was playing in a trechouse with some boys about the same age. Bill showed his secret collection of Playboys and suggested we pretend to be creating the scenes in the magazine. I still laugh about how awkward we all were. I read your "first" story to Kim and Heather and they reacted wonderfully, asking all kinds of questions. I'll work on getting some pictures to you of us. Can't wait to get your next letter!"

(2-6-87) "Dear Jim: Heather has taken quite a liking to you. She asks me every day if we got mail from her

special "Uncle Jim". Heather and I loved your pictures. Our filmmaking on our vide camera has gotten pretty explicit. Heather isn't camera shy. We all laugh at the types [sic] of Heather posing and playing with the other girl naked [sic].... Loved your picture -- your sexy descriptions -- and your special ability to understand kids. Write soon, Jolene.

(Undated) "Hi, unkle Jim! Hope you had a good Christmas. Mom got a video camera and she filmed -- I mean Kim filmed, cause her arm still can't be move too much. There's stuff of me and mom running naked and cuddling in bed and stuff. Mom read your letter and showed me the pictures. I sleep with one of you holding your pants down under my pillow every night! Mom said you were very smart about stuff. You said you put your cock into a girl's pussy.





edit picture

How do you feel? Mom said it would make you feel tingly and reel good. Would it feel good for a girl too? Have you ever put your cock into a young girl like me? Did you like it? Mom said you could tell me more about the cum you would shoot out. Does a lot come out. Is it true girls can lick it? Kimberly and I are both blonde. She has just a little bit of hair on her pussy -- I don't have none yet but mom said it will come.... I know if I was ever with you, I would ask you questions and touch you all over and have you show me the stuff you wrote about. What would you want me to do if I got to stay with you? Hope you write real soon. Your friend, Heather.'

The defendant in the above case (whose name for the purposes of this piece is "John Doe") was chosen for investigation after he answered an advertisement (purportedly from a young divorcee) in a sexually-oriented tabloid published by the United States government. Doe never exchanged child pornography with anyone. Nor is there any record (or even substantial allegations) that Doe engaged in sex with a minor. The following are excerpts from two depositions prior to trial -- the first, of Calvin Comfort, and the second, of a local law enforce-

ment officer assigned to investigate the case.

Deposition of Comfort:

Q. *As a matter of fact, through this whole investigation, you never found Mr. Doe sending and receiving or in possession of any child pornography?*

A. Yes, sir.

Q. *Yes, sir. That's true?*

A. Yes, sir, that's true.

Q. *Now, after he was arrested and there was a search warrant, did you present the materials that were seized to any federal prosecutors?*

A. No, sir.

Q. *Why not?*

A. There was no evidence of trafficking in child pornography.

Q. *Are you empowered to make that determination yourself?*

A. Enough to determine whether or not there may be children involved in visual depictions, yes, sir.

Q. *Well, you continued on this case from back in 1986, clear up until April or May of 1988, right?*

A. Yes, sir.

Q. *Okay, and you continuously kept sending him things on the pretext that you were Jolene and you and your daughters wanted to see something a little hotter and wanted to see some action between young ladies and older men.*

A. Just generally of child pornographic natures to see if he had it and was predisposed to having it.

Q. *Engaged in sex acts?*

A. With children.

Q. *For well over a year you continued this correspondence and you never got anything, right?*

A. Correct, sir.

Q. *At what point do you quit an investigation like that when you've repeatedly attempted to see if he's going to send anything that qualifies as [child] pornography and he doesn't do it over a long period of time? Isn't there some kind of limit where you say this guy isn't going to send me any [child] pornography?*

A. There is ultimately a limit, yes, sir.

Q. *Well, at that point at this second meeting, were you still interested in child pornography?*

A. We would always be interested in child pornography, if he bought it.

Q. *Well, I was under the impression that after the first meeting, you sort of gave up on him producing any child pornography, was I wrong?*

A. No -- yes, sir, you were wrong.

Q. *In addition to finding some pornography, was there any other*

reason why this meeting was set up?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What was that?

A. His stated desire to produce child pornography with a minor.

Q. Anything besides child pornography?

A. That was child pornography and child abuse.

Q. Child abuse in what sense?

A. Having sex with a minor.

Q. Well, he couldn't have sex with either Kim or Heather Edwards because they didn't exist, right?

A. Correct, sir.

Q. Are there any limitations on what you can do in writing to or conferring with or conversing with a suspect?

A. The guidelines we had were that mirroring technique, and I would say that would tend to put a limit.

Q. In what respect?

A. If an individual had no interest in child pornography, we would not attempt to implant and continue the investigation.

Q. There wasn't any kind of a time limit on it or the number of incidents where you attempted to see if he would send you -- in fact, you asked him to send you what he considered pornography, and he doesn't do it, there wasn't any limit on how long you continued to do this?

A. No, sir.

Q. And the mirroring was an ongoing thing, then, so you would get him to one point, and then you try to get him to go a little further and a little further, isn't that the way your correspondence went with him?

A. Not exactly, sir.

Q. How would you term it then?

A. It was more reflecting everything that he wanted, and then we would also ask related questions.

Deposition of Local Law Enforcement Officer

Q. And exactly what happened back in February of '87?

A. I believe, to the best of my recollection, because I know I had a phone call -- I either talked with Cal Comfort on the phone or received a letter from him. I believe I received a letter first and then talked to him on the phone, concerning some information that he had about a person he was investigating in the Cedar Falls area.

Q. And was that defendant, John Doe?

A. That's correct.

Q. Okay. What was the gist of either the conversation on the telephone or the letter?

A. The gist of it was that Inspector Comfort was having correspondence with Mr. Doe. And through the correspondence he was concerned that Mr. Doe may have had sexual contact with a neighborhood girl. And he felt that, according to the letter at least, that there was enough -- you know, he was concerned enough that he felt that our police department should look into it. So we did.

Q. Okay. What was the substance of the conversation that you had with Mrs. Smith [Doe's next door neighbor]?

A. Well, the first conversation I had with her was on the phone. It was about the concerns. Gave her some details of the information that we had at the time. And asked to have a meeting with her. Actually, I believe

I asked to talk to her daughter. She was a little reluctant to have me talk with her daughter, but stated that she would talk to her daughter herself about this.

Q. How old was the daughter?

A. I want to say right now, or right at that time I think she was in high school. Like a sophomore or a junior. The exact age, just anywhere from 15 to 17 years old.

Q. Okay. And that would have been in the spring of '87?

A. That would have been in the spring of '87.

Q. And that's her age at the time?

A. Yeah, from what I recall.

Q. Okay. What did the mother tell you the daughter told her?

A. That she had just limited contact with Mr. Doe. That she on occasion, since they were neighbors, would see him out in the yard and waved at him. And remembered one instance where her and her friend were laying out in the back yard in bikinis and that they noticed that Mr. Doe was watching them [sic]. And they were a little self-conscious about it.

Q. Okay. So apparently there was no evidence of any contact of a sexual nature or anything close to it?

A. No.

Q. Okay. What did you do then after you discovered that?

A. I know that another one of our investigators talked with some other neighbors in the immediate area of Mr. Doe's residence.

Q. Okay. As a result of all this investigative work, did you ever uncover any evidence of illicit contact between Mr. Doe and any underage girls?

A. No, sir, not at this time.

\*\*\*

Q. Okay. In all of this monitoring and keeping an eye on his activities, did you ever find any instances where he had any contacts with any minor girls?

A. No, I did not.

Q. Okay. And how long did this type of investigation continue then?

A. Up until the date of his arrest.

Doe was arrested in February of 1988 when he went to a hotel room, purportedly to meet and have sex with "Jolene" and her two daughters, "Kim" and "Heather". There were, of course, no children at the scene, only a team of arresting officers from federal and state law enforcement agencies. "Kim" and "Heather" were fictions of the imaginations of Calvin Comfort and Heidi Marie Mathern, the officer who ultimately impersonated "Jolene". Doe was charged with four counts of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, specifically, "commanding, entreating, or otherwise attempting to persuade another, to-wit, Heidi Marie Mathern a/k/a Jolene Edwards, to commit sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, with the intent that such act be done;" and "employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing a child, to-wit: Heather Edwards [and, in a separate count, "Kim Edwards"], to engage in a prohibited sexual act knowing, or having reason to know, or intending that the act may be photographed, filmed, or otherwise preserved in a negative or slide, or other print or visual medium."

The Doe case and those like it constitute attempts by the state to regulate taboo sexual desires directly -- that is, to prosecute and persecute individuals not for committing taboo sexual acts, but for entertaining taboo sexual fantasies. It comes as no surprise that this new form of regulation is aimed specifically at adults who fantasize about or desire to engage in sex with

minors.

The rise of the so-called "pedophile" to public consciousness has coincided both with an increasingly public sexualization which "beckons" to children as well as adults and with the decline of the family and concomitant rise of the peer group as the primary locus of sexual socialization. [1] The rise of the "pedophile" to public consciousness has also coincided with the general failure of social institutions either (a) to prevent unwanted sexual advances toward children from adults or (b) to acknowledge the sexuality of children. With respect to the former, since most unwanted sexual advances occur within the family and authoritarian power structures, a confrontation with this issue would result in an indictment of those very institutions called upon to uphold morality: i.e., family, church, and state. An acknowledgement of childhood sexuality would require sexual rights for children -- not "protection from," but empowerment to act. The sexual empowerment of children, however, threatens those institutions whose purpose it is to frustrate sexual desire and "channel individuals toward particular visions of sexual happiness, often closely linked to the purchase of consumer products." [2]

Within this maelstrom, the adult who harbors desires or fantasies of sexual activities is a convenient target. As Sylvere Lotringer has observed,

We're touching here one of the thresholds of our culture, possibly the very last, where our society has stored away whatever is left of its old values. [Forbidden sexual] fantasies are our last refuge. If they were to fail us, we wouldn't know anymore where, and for whom, to ground our morality. [3]

Although actual sex offenders against children are few in number, all "deviates" are generally perceived as potential criminals, more frightening than actual muggers and murderers whose motives -- need, greed, or passion -- everyone can at least

understand or identify with. In a world where individual motivations are explained away before they are even (or ever) experienced, deviates remain tauntingly inscrutable. Like Richard Hambleton's threatening silhouettes painted in dark corners [and abandoned doorways] of Manhattan, the shadowy figure of the pervert keeps hovering around the fringes of society, haunting its deepest dreams, the object of an unavowable fascination which episodically erupts into violent hysteria and revulsion. [4]

During the late 70s and throughout the 80s, "information" regarding child sexuality and adult sexual attraction to children has proliferated at an astonishing rate. The popular press and mass media have been literally inundated with articles and stories -- most of them written to horrify and titillate -- about child pornography, adult-child sexual contacts, child-child sexual contacts, pedophilia, and incest. Such stories are often based on confusing and conflicting claims about sexuality, popular prejudice and folk myths, prosecutorial posturing, and fear regarding sexuality. Clinical and criminological writings about these subjects share (and are sometimes responsible for) the confusions, misrepresentations, and distortions found in the popular press and often function merely to serve particular political and sexual ideologies rather than to further human understanding.

The result is a web of propaganda, the "very ubiquity [of which] serves to conceal its pervasiveness and its danger as an obstacle to clear thinking and the preservation of democratic freedoms." [5] As propaganda creates confusion, powerlessness, and cynicism, it makes acceptable an expansion of police power.

Following the propaganda regarding "protecting children," "dangerous" sexualities, and the imperatives for social control, come child pornography and child sex sting operations. Where pitifully little child pornography has

been uncovered in over 10 years of active and intensive investigative and prosecutorial activity, public authorities created their own industry, reproducing and marketing pre-existing and child pornography. [6] When the hysteria failed to yield enough child victims, police and social workers created victims through cross-examination and "good touch-bad touch" type curriculae. [7] And when adult sexual fantasies about children persisted and adult-child sexual contacts continued to occur, law enforcement officials embarked on a course, as in the Doe case, designed to create fear and paranoia about desires themselves.

Because we are unable, and indeed, unwilling, to negotiate our way through the propaganda and come to grips with the underlying issues which confront Western culture, we tolerate the "deviate's" less than human treatment. It is in this intolerance that the crisis in contemporary culture resides: in protecting ourselves from "him," we erect our own prison walls.

Following the twisted logic of law enforcement in porn/sex sting operations, young male and female police officers might be expected, in the future, to pretend to be minors looking for sexual relationships (or tricks) and arrest their quarry on charges of "attempted sexual exploitation" of minors. Or police might simply establish civilian youth squads to solicit adults, randomly testing the "integrity" of adults to refrain from sexual activity with minors. [8] (Keep in mind that "minors" are those under the age of 18.) In the eyes of the most cynical of public authorities, the appreciation which the youths would develop for undercover work and social rules governing sex would surely outweigh any possible harmful effects on their morals or sensibilities. One may also expect to see an increase in "proactive" police work to prevent sexual liaisons between adults and minors. In some communities, undercover officers already patrol public places, video arcades and other places where minors gather in order to investigate any

adults who might approach minors. Little consideration is given to the privacy rights of minors. Typically, automobile license and background checks are done without the suspect's knowledge. In some instances, however, the "suspect" or the minors may be questioned directly. And such police activity need not necessarily stop with cross-generational contacts or desires. It may be applied to any "deviant" activity deemed worthy of suppression by the state or particular sectors of society.

In the final analysis, propaganda and state terror will achieve a significant loss of freedom, but it will fail to regulate sexual desires for precisely the same reason that other institutions have failed: sexuality cannot be rationalized. It responds to controls unpredictable and in contradictory ways. Until we begin to deconstruct -- and then reconstruct -- sexual meanings and understand sexual motivations, until we acknowledge the sexuality of children, and until we come face to face with the hidden sexual desires and agendas of our culture, we will continue to plunge headlong toward a new totalitarianism, cleverly disguised as democracy.

#### NOTES

[1] D'Emilio, John, & Estelle Freedman. Intimate Matters. A History of Sexuality in America. New York: Harper & Row, 1988, p. 342.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

[3] Lotringer, Sylvere. Overexposed. Treating Sexual Perversion in America. New York: Pantheon Books, 1988, p. 18.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Stout, Frederic. "Propaganda and Postmodernism," Propaganda Review, Number 3, 1988, p. 1.

[6] Stanley, Lawrence, "The Child Porn Myth," The Cardozo Arts &

Entertainment Law Journal, Vol. 7, #2, 1989.

[7] The McMartin Preschool case is only one glaring example of finding victims where none exist. In a videotape made by child protection investigators, Dr. Astrid Heger, a pediatrician, can be seen badgering a McMartin girl who repeatedly denied being molested: "I don't want to hear any more no's," Heger told the girl. "No, no, Detective Dog and we are going to figure this out. Every little boy and girl in the whole school got touched like that...and some of them were hurt. And some were afraid to tell. Nathan, Debbie, "False Evidence, How Bad Science Fueled the Hysteria Over Child Abuse," L.A. Weekly, April 7-13, 1989, p. 15.

[8] The notion of "random integrity testing" as a modern form of law enforcement is explored by MIT Professor Gary T. Marx in "Who Really Gets Stung? Some Issues Raised by the New Police Undercover Work," Crime & Delinquency, January 1982, pp. 165-193.

*(continued from page 10)*

Underlying the study were such assumptions as "pornography is violence against women" (a favorite of the anti-porn crowd of which Briere is a part) and a conflation of violations of social rules ("breaking the law") with actual violence and aggression. Thus, the study may well both contribute to the hysteria over pedophilia ("child sexual abuse is on the rise") and hinder our understanding of human sexuality.

{Submitted Anonymously}

*Sexual Attraction, Sexual Preference, and Pedophilia as a Sexual Identity.* by Jay O'Hailey & n.s. aristoff

For all the thousands of books and articles that have been written on the subject of sexuality, it is amazing how little of importance is actually known about sexual attraction, preference and identity. Much is hypothesized or speculated, but we have little or no concrete knowledge regarding the origins of sexual attraction and sexual preference. At the risk of further contributing to the body of untested hypotheses and speculations and drawing from evolutionary biology, social psychology and cross-cultural anthropology, I will entertain certain arguments which have heretofore not been considered and pose certain questions which have not been asked.

Sex researcher John Money, among others, has hypothesized that basic sexual orientation is fixed by early adolescence by virtue of a mechanism somewhat analogous to imprinting. According to the theory, which is based on the assumption that sexual orientation is acquired sometime in childhood, this "imprinting" mechanism is triggered by sexual experiences during a critical period of development. Unfortunately for the theory, neither the mechanism, the critical period, nor the requirements of the experiences have ever been pinpointed precisely. Certain correlations have, of course, been made between early experiences and adult sexual orientation, but none of these correlations have been adequately tested on a statistical or other scientific basis.

Simply stated, the assumption that sexual orientation is acquired has not been demonstrated. While some people recall childhood sexual attractions and experiences that appear to reflect their adult orientation, others recall attractions and experiences which differed considerably. When specific cases are considered, experiences are merely rationalized to fit the theory, rather than considered in their full complexity.

Some data seem to implicate genetic predisposition and prenatal hormonal environment in sexual orientation. For example, clinical data suggest that basic sexual preference can be highly resistant to change in adulthood, even where the particular adult in question desires to change. It would appear from this that mechanism of acquisition is thus more powerful than simple learning. Observations of non-human primates indicate that sexual experience in preadolescence is necessary for the development of functional adult sexuality. However, while human preadolescents will often engage in sexual behavior when given the opportunity, it does not appear necessary to human sexual functioning in adulthood. Indeed, many humans who have had little or no early sexual experiences are still able to function sexually as adults.

In the case of sexual fetishes, it frequently appears to be possible to trace their origin to specific childhood incidents (or a single incident) involving, for example, being given enemas or being caned. While there may be a strong correlation, one needs to ask: why a fetish at all? Many people have similar experiences without turning them into fetishes. The specific object may simply be a manifestation of a basic orientation or predisposition towards fetishes in general, the origin of which is still left unexplained. The bottom line is that we simply don't know.

**The Problems of Labeling and Definition.** Labels and definitions are necessary for unambiguous communication, but they may also obstruct understanding and clear thinking. Human beings are drawn to partitioning the incomprehensible complexity of the natural world into simple, easily understood categories. Unfortunately, no matter how artificial the boundaries or heterogeneous the classes, they take on an aura of reality, and become the reality of those who use them. Our perceptions and interpretations are restricted and distorted by the categories we use to sort and think about what we see and feel. This seems particularly true of certain formalized schools of thought, such as academic and clinical disciplines, which often become so abstracted as to appear to lose all contact with reality.

Particularly in the area of what is known as "sexual science," labeling presents problems: "sexual," "child," "pedophilia," and "incest" are largely artificial categories, their boundaries shifting across cultures and through time. The concepts might not even exist in any recognizable form in another place or time.

The incest taboo, for instance, has been touted by many western anthropologists and psychologists as the one truly universal human taboo. The well known exceptions among the ancient Egyptians, Hawaiians, Incas, and so forth are simply held to be the exceptions that prove the rule. It is true that virtually all cultures stigmatize sex or marriage, or both, between certain classes of kin. But beyond that, all bets are off. The variations between cultures in terms of who are defined as forbidden kin, what sexual acts are prohibited and when, and the degree of taboo, judged by the relative severity of sanctions, vary so widely that no meaningful operational definitions can be formed that hold true universally.

The concepts of "child" and "childhood," in the sense used in contemporary western society, are historically recent inventions, products of the 250 years. The idea of childhood as a distinct, qualitatively different, period of life is primarily a Western concept. The category "pre-adolescence" may be less ethnocentric (insofar as it is based on biology), but the acquisition of secondary sexual characteristics is only one of the many developmental

transitions -- physical, intellectual, and social -- in the course of life. There is no reason why it should be accorded greater significance in general than first orgasm, loss of baby teeth, attainment of full growth, attainment of peak intelligence, acquisition of linguistic fluency, marriage, or birth of first child. In our culture, puberty is seen as a highly significant milestone in terms of sexuality. This may be simply because pre-pubertal children are perceived as asexual while the combination of intellectual development and the hormone rush at puberty makes sexual interest and expression far more difficult to suppress and ignore.

The concept "sexuality" is equally subjective and ethnocentric. Western culture defines what is "sexual" very broadly, particularly during the late 20th century when sex has become a matter of public discourse. One can, for example, be charged with sexual assault for a casual touch of someone's buttocks. Some researchers have even labeled as "incest" suggestive sexual comments made by a family member. In some cultures, what is "sexual" seems to be limited to intercourse between sexually mature individuals. While this conclusion may have to do with how well a particular anthropologist communicated and understood the culture in question, it is also likely that many cultures simply lack a comparable term or concept. Definitions of the "sexual" are necessary in order to recognize violations of taboos, e.g., sex between forbidden categories of people or prohibitions against particular acts. In the absence of taboos, cultures have little reason or basis for distinguishing boundaries between grooming, affection, sensuality, play, eroticism, and sexuality.

That certain activities which Western society deems "sexual" are probably not deemed so by other cultures may be inferred from what is permitted in those other cultures without apparently violating taboos. Parental fondling of children's genitals is so nearly universal among pre-industrial cultures that anthropologists are more likely to note its absence than its presence as, for example, among the Danai. In some cultures, children engage in sex play, including intercourse, with siblings and other near relatives with little or no restriction. In still other cultures, unmarried girls may engage in intercourse with uncles or cousins, and may even be expected to do so, though they are prohibited from marrying them by the incest taboo. It is sometimes the grandparents' duty to give practical instruction in sexual techniques to their grandchildren prior to marriage.

Taboos may also be more closely tied to social intercourse than sexual. Taboos prohibiting certain categories of kin from speaking to one another or eating from the same pot have been noted in various cultures. Thus, it is, cross-culturally speaking, highly problematic to define precisely what is meant by "sexual" -- one can probably only compare, contrast, and analogize -- and hold up the

experiences of other cultures in order better to understand the limitations of our own.

In Western culture, the category "sexual" is more or less defined to include what actually or potentially "turns one on" (i.e., causes physiological neuro-genital arousal) or what is conventionally thought to do so. What "turns on" people in other cultures may even be an impossible question to pose, as the culture may lack both the concept and the construction of reality that it supports. It is not even clear that asking such a question in our culture will yield reliable results: ask the average heterosexual male in our culture if he is aroused by photographs of naked little girls and he will deny it. He is speaking the truth as he knows it, but clinical studies of response show that "normal" heterosexual men do become "aroused," at least on a physiologically basis, to such photographs. He is likely to be somewhat less aroused than he is by nudes of nubile females, but significantly more so than by photographs of naked little boys or landscapes.

We cannot, of course, solve the problem of identifying what is "sexual" in our culture by simply observing physiological responses. Erections in the male may occur spontaneously or be caused, for example, by a full bladder, urethral infections, or certain drugs, and our concept of the "sexual" generally does not include these. Nobody knows what is going on in the mind or body of an infant with an erection. Some sociologists, notably symbolic interactionists, have argued that what children experience is not sexual because they lack the cognitive development and adult symbolic meanings necessary to perceive their experience in sexual terms. Although there may be some validity to their claim insofar as children are, by definition, not adults, it ultimately begs the question: precisely what is the six-year-old who engages in intercourse and experiences orgasm doing if not engaging in sexual activity?

Because it is difficult to arrive at a precise meaning of what is "sexual," it is also difficult to make clear labels such as "heterosexual," "homosexual," and "pedophile". In its strict clinical definition as set forth in DSM-III, the "pedophile" is an individual whose primary or exclusive sexual attraction (whether in practice or in masturbation) is to prepubertal children. As "scientific" usages blend with cultural symbols and political ideology, however, the "pedophile" is more likely to be considered any person who engages in or who has fantasized about sexual activity with minors, even post-pubertal ones. In popular usage, the "pedophile" is a "pervert" or "deviant" in that he violates (i.e. perverts) social rules regarding "sexuality" by his mere existence. (The "pedophile" is extremely rarely "she," despite the significant number of men reporting sexual contact with adult women as little boys and despite ample evidence among women of sexual attraction to and arousal by children.)

edit picture

DSM-III aside, law enforcement reports, diagnoses, and clinical studies vary greatly in their definitions of "pedophilia". By way of illustration, all, some or none of the following individuals may be considered "pedophiles," depending upon one's definition: a man exclusively dependent on fantasies of children in order to achieve sexual arousal during masturbation or intercourse with an adult partner, but who desires no actual contact with children; a man who labels himself a "pedophile" and intentionally seeks out sexual contact with children when traveling in the third world, but whose primary source of sexual arousal and outlet is with his wife; a man who consciously recognizes his love of children and lack of interest in adults, who spends most of his time with children, who is physiologically aroused by the contact, but who does not recognize his arousal as sexual; a man who prefers adult partners but engages in sex with a prepubescent child because she is willing and the idea of doing something taboo turns him on at the time; a man who engages in sex with and is primarily attracted to post-pubescent, but underage, teenage girls; a father who finds himself strongly aroused by his young daughter and her friends, feels extremely guilty about it, forces himself not to think about it, and distances himself from them to avoid embarrassment; another father who often gets an erection when his daughter cuddles with him, but thinks it's natural and doesn't worry about it, having no strong desire to engage in explicitly sexual acts with her.

Thus, unless one restricts oneself to the limited definition DSM-III, it is difficult to speak meaningfully about who is

or is not a "pedophile". (It is even troublesome to speak about "pedophilia" using such a restricted definition: a diagnosis of "pedophilia" depends upon a cooperative patient or circumstantial evidence which may or may not be reliable indicators.) On the other hand, one can (and should) continue to speak about sexual contact with children, sexual arousal by children, sexual attraction to children, and integration of the psychological and social ramifications of sexual attraction into one's self concept, provided of course that one makes clear what one means by the words "sexual" and "children".

**Sexual arousal and sexual attraction.** Contacts between children and adults that produce physiological arousal in one or both parties is so common as to reasonably be considered universal. *Sexual* arousal, however, may be another matter entirely. "Normal" heterosexual males who are physiologically aroused, to some extent, by nude photos of female children may, in fact, be unaroused sexually. The fact that many have reported their lack of sexual arousal, even while manifesting some physiological response, supports this contention. It would seem unlikely that all such men, who had led apparently "normal" heterosexual lives and were never known to exhibit sexual attraction to or to engage in sexual activity with little girls were simply denying their sexual attraction. It may also be the case that the separation of physiological from sexual arousal is a particularly Westernized solution, albeit a successful one, based on the necessity to fit cultural expectations.

Attraction is a tapestry of cues to arousal that develops

out of a complex interaction of biological predispositions, individual experience, and cultural images, definitions, expectations, and taboos. Biological predispositions can influence attraction to children in a number of ways. Children's survival (and thus perpetuation of the species and of individual genetic lines) depends heavily on the nurturing and protection of adults. Differential survival has favored the development of a variety of predispositions in both children and adults that promote survival of the young. Perhaps the strongest is the nurturing or "mothering" instinct which occurs in varying degrees in both males and females. Adults derive pleasure from nurturing children and children, in turn, have a variety of methods including smiling, crying, and being affectionate for eliciting nurturing behavior from adults. The pleasure of nurturing, especially the affectionate physical contact involved, can easily become associated with sexual arousal. Sexual attraction would also promote bonding and trigger nurturing and protecting behavior on the part of adults. Sexual attraction to children may thus be biologically adaptive and may have been selected for in the process of evolution.

Children's erotic playfulness and seductiveness may be a complementary behavior, eliciting adult attraction and thus securing the related survival benefits. (Sexual attraction to members of one's own sex would have similar adaptive advantages, promoting bonding, cooperation, and mutual protection). Variations in the strengths of these tendencies may be caused by genetic recombination, resulting in exaggerated attraction them in some individuals and a reduction in others. Theoretically, these variations are both biologically acceptable and self-limiting.

The "pedophile" identity. Integrating one's sexual identity and sexual arousal pattern into one's self-concept is a normal and uneventful part of human development unless one's pattern is highly stigmatized or deviates strongly from cultural norms. Stigmatization may increase the apparent significance of the sexual in relation to other aspects of one's life and personality. For example, sexual orientation probably plays a much less significant role in overall self-concept among adult-oriented heterosexuals in our culture than it is among pedophiles and homosexuals. It seems unlikely that the typical male spends much time thinking about or questioning his heterosexuality. Adopting a stigmatized label as part of one's identity also tends to center one's attention on the associated elements of preference in relation to other aspects of one's sexual arousal pattern.

As argued above, sexual attraction to children, arousal by children, and interaction with children are common human behaviors, however they happen to be labeled. Pedophilia as a label and as an identity is a recent addition to our culture. Being sexually aroused by children is quite very different from adopting an identity based on such arousal.

The anonymous author of "My Secret Life" picked up pre-adolescent girls on London streets and other Victorian gentlemen patronized child brothels without giving much thought to the significance of their particular "leech" (the term used by them to describe a usually fleeting or periodic desire) or adopting a "pedophile" identity.

**Nature and nurture.** Individual experience and cultural factors shape, limit, emphasize, suppress, and augment biological predispositions. The variations in adult sexual attraction are highly complex, but ordinary learning and classical conditioning combined with biological predisposition should be able to account for all of the variation. Hypotheses involving "critical periods" and analogs to imprinting are unnecessary if one accepts the possibility of biological predispositions. In fact, critical periods and imprinting analogs themselves must involve some kind of a biologically-mediated mechanism.

## Girl power

BERLIN, West Germany -- Fifteen young women between the ages of 14 and 21 have been editing a magazine for girls called *The Little Witch* (*Die kleine Hexe*). According to a translation in the most recent issue of *Connections* of a 1984 article in the West German *Emma*, the editors of *The Little Witch* say they began their magazine because "[W]e were simply fed up with having to justify why we wanted to talk and to write about girl-specific issues in mixed school groups and papers.... We spontaneously decided to form a girls-only group at our school." After a year of meeting, they came up with the idea of producing a magazine - as a way to present their issue publicly and to reach other young women in West Berlin.

The group wrote articles about sexual harassment by teachers and fellow students, violence against women, masturbation and birth control. They solicited ads and articles and organized the distribution of the paper in front of eight different schools. Then, according to the editors, "The magazine hit like a bomb. In the subway, people talked about it. At school everybody talked about it. Parents ran amok. Girls had dared to put out their own paper. They had written openly about their own sexuality. At special meetings, parents deliberated about how to prohibit our publication. Anonymous callers threatened our ad clients.... We were a smashing success.

*The Little Witch* went on to attract 20 new girls from other schools and in 1982 won first prize in a youth magazine contest. The group also produced a film called *Girls' Power* ("We simply borrowed a Super-8 camera and wrote one page of the script at a time. Then we started filming.") The film consists of a dramatization of the meeting of a girl group in which problems of young women are discussed, interspersed with scenes illustrating the problems in real life. The film won a national student film festival award.

The girls say they hope their story "will inspire other girls to resist. For our own future we wish to gain much more girls' power."

Reprinted with permission from *Gay Community News*, Jan. 8-14, 1989, p. 2.