

# Uncommon Desires Newsletter



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## "Baby Breese," "Lolita: Back to School" and Other "Young Girl" Fantasies: What's So Uncommon About Underage Desires?

"The Lolita complex is one of the most common sexual fantasies of the heterosexual male. Many men fantasize about having sex with young girls -- which is taboo in today's society. But many wives and girlfriends gratify and fulfill their men's fantasies by dressing and acting like adolescent girls...wearing pigtails and bobby socks. It's a harmless fantasy carried out by two adults. And, as our own Lolita reports, she too enjoys playing a little girl with her boyfriend."

- caption on "Lolita: Back To School,"  
pictorial by Suze Randall, *Hustler*  
Magazine (October, 1979)

### Front Cover: Balthus.

A culture's sense of the erotic is a dialect, often exclusively parochial, as native to it as its sense of humor and its cooking. Sexuality being a biological imperative, we imagine that we comprehend Manet, Fragonard, and Watteau when their subjects are erotic; Goya, Rubens, and Rembrandt; Greek, Japanese, and Dogon erotic art. Each culture has its taboos, its lines drawn between decency and the obscene. These can be absurd, prudish, religious, bourgeois, legal demarcations. Because they are proscriptive, causes of anxiety, shame, and salacious humor, these cultural decisions about sexuality become richly symbolic.

The nearer an artist works to the erotic politics of his own culture, the more he gets its concerned attention. Gaughin's naked Polynesian girls, brown and remote, escape the scandal of Balthus's, although a Martian observer could not see the distinction.

- Guy Davenport, from *A Balthus Notebook* (Ecco Press, 1989).

Well, I don't know any "complex" and I don't know how many wives and girlfriends gratify "their men's" fantasies by dressing or acting like little girls -- I would suspect not many -- but I do know that porn magazines occasionally dress up their adult models with the tell-tale teddy bear, pigtails, saddle shoes, and even sometimes shave their vulvas in an attempt to cater to male fantasy. (Magazines with titles like *Young & Lonely*, *Baby Dolls*, *Little Loving Dolls*, *Young Girls* and *Tender Shavers* are devoted to such depictions.) One can go to any adult bookstore and see men, both young and old, browsing through magazines and video packaging, hoping to find an actual young face. (There are *very* few.) But what is going on here? Is *Hustler* right? Is sex with a pubescent or adolescent girl one of the most common sex fantasies of the heterosexual male?

The answer is a simple "yes". Talk to any psychologist or therapist. "Underage" desires are commonplace in the male population (and probably the female population), despite fifteen years of hysteria generated by anti-porn crusaders and twelve years of iron rule by the Reagan-Bush Justice Department. [It is extremely unlikely that Clinton could -- even if he wanted to -- clear the sex police out of the Justice Department, but we'll give him the benefit of the doubt for a few months, anyway.] Try as they might, these forces cannot eradicate such desires, any more than they can eradicate human biology.

Unfortunately, what they can do is make people

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*"Baby Breese" is over the age of eighteen.*

feel guilty and judgmental about themselves and the desires of others. Thus, these sexual bigots, who so fervently believe that sexuality can or should be re-constructed along "age-appropriate" lines, have had at least some cosmetic success.



A review of "adult" magazines and videos today reveals very little in the way of fantasies which explore desires for persons under the age of 18. Ever since the Meese Commission recommended a raise in the minimum age for participation in "pornography" from 18 to 21 and the Reagan-Bush Justice Department indicated its willingness to prosecute films of hard-core sex containing certain kinds of fantasies deemed to be undesirable (probably those desires which were most ardent for the censors themselves), there has been a drastic decline in materials which present the "Lolita" theme. In fact, in the video explosion of the late 80s, it can be said unqualifiedly that fantasies about sex with underage people are the only sexual fantasies which are vastly under-represented. They can be found, to some degree, in the magazines mentioned above or from companies offering videos described in illustrated advertisements (see p. 18) as "*Flat Top Fuckers* (Innocent Girls Seduced by Hot, Horny and hard Studs)" or "*Tiny Titties Tight Pussy* (Forbidden topics that cannot be described in this ad.)" However, even the films that explore such desires are extremely careful not to carry the fantasy too far. In one film, for instance, the actors, clearly in their late 20s or early 30s, turn to the camera and joke how silly it is that they're pretending to be teenagers when everyone can see perfectly well that they're adults.

Likewise for the mainstream magazines. *Penthouse* wouldn't dare run a pictorial like "Baby Breese" today. Neither would *Hustler* run another "Lolita" spread in which the model looked like she could actually be under the age of twenty. *Hustler* will still pose its models with stuffed animals, but the models look very uninnocent and are usually extremely made up. And the models in the porn pictorials like *Tender Shavers*, *Young Girls*, or *Little Loving Dolls* have, since the early 80s, looked increasingly older so that the obvious age of the models literally mocks the viewer's "age-inappropriate" desires. (Nothing could be worse for one who desires youthful beauty than to be confronted with a wholly plastic and thoroughly withered professionalism.) Whether out of fear or political-correctness, these very common, but age-inappropriate, desires are eschewed by the mainstream. Even still, men will eagerly buy any magazine or video which has the word "Lolita" on it and will still write away to any company offering magazines of shaved or small-breasted models, or "hard-to-find" magazines and videos. As *UDN* readers are well-aware, it is these men upon which the government preys in its sting operations.

A "straight" friend of mine and I recently spoke about our respective desires and he announced that any girl with pubic hair was "old enough" for him. He likes athletic bodies -- small-breasted and slim -- and there isn't a "paedophilic" bone in his body. I pointed out to him that there are 10-year-old girls who have pubic hair and breasts and 14-year-olds who have neither, which puts him in a "dangerous" position from the standpoint of fantasy, at least. He said it didn't matter either to his eyes or his groin, though he would have trouble relating socially to a 10- or a d even a 14-year-old. Obviously, not all men are attracted to women with small breasts or slim builds because they physically resemble young girls. And clearly, attraction to women with large breasts and voluptuous builds far from precludes a sexual attraction even to pre-pubescent girls. (Sexual attraction is much more complicated than a mere division of body types.)

"Baby Breese" was nineteen when she was photographed for *Penthouse's* January 1976 issue (According to *Penthouse*, she was born in February 1956). She could easily pass for twelve, just like her t-shirt suggests. The same goes for Suze Randall's "Lolita: Back to School" in *Hustler*. Both my "straight" friend and I find these young women desirable -- and unquestionably fuckable -- each for our own reasons. (I have a particular weakness for



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*"Lolita" (Back to School) is, according to Hustler, over the age of eighteen.*

teenage sluts, anyway.) So what is all this noise about age (and "paedophilia")? Isn't it time that men stop pretending and admitted their attraction to underage girls? These desires are positive -- the subject for celebration, not shame. The bluenoses and "PC" crowd often forget, in their efforts to control what everyone else thinks, that desire and fantasy are not tantamount to abusive behavior.

### **Brief Notes**

- *Changing attitudes?* In the December 10th, 1992, issue of the *British Journal of Photography*, critic David Lee writes that Sally Mann's *Immediate Family* "courageously ignores previous charges of exploiting her family and ... celebrate[s] familial nakedness tenderly and without cloying sentiment." But Lee goes still further, perhaps the first crack in the facade of British prudery regarding nude children as subjects of photographic depictions. [Ed.: Interestingly, the British are not particularly prudish -- in fact, much less so than Americans -- regarding films depicting nude children. This may be because films have discernable plots which generally justify the nudity, while (to many people) nudity in still images remains enigmatic.] In fact, Lee takes to task those who would denigrate Sally Mann, Robert Mapplethorpe and other serious artists who dare to depict children in the nude. He speaks from experience: "I've taken scores of pictures this year of my daughter naked. My favorite is one in which she stands to attention on the beach, arms squeezed against her side, lips

squeezed together. A thin strip of blue, the sea, runs across the top of her head. In its softness, innocence and flawlessness, her body, which I love to touch, is, oddly, the personification of my affection for her." If more parents would admit to what are, after all, normal feelings which adults have for children they love (even if they're not biological parents), and if more would admit to photographing their children naked (the practice is ubiquitous), the thought of photograph of a naked child might not cause so much hysteria.

Come, little cottage girl, you seem  
To want my cup of tea  
And will you take a little cream  
Now tell the truth to me

She had a rustic, woodland grin  
Her cheek was soft as silk  
And she replied, "Sir, please put in  
A little drop of milk."

-- Barry Pain

- *Child porn law struck down*: On December 16th, 1992, the United States Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit (covering California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado and Hawaii) struck down the federal child pornography law, 18 U.S.C. §2252, et seq. as facially overbroad and thus unconstitutionally fatal. That means there is technically no federal child porn law in the 9th Circuit. Federal obscenity and state child pornography laws, of course, still apply, although California attorneys have noted that the California statute is even more vulnerable to claims of constitutional overbreadth because it criminalizes mere nudity. Although the 9th Circuit has previously upheld the constitutionality of the federal child porn law in *U.S. v. Dost*, *U.S. v. Wiegand*, and *U.S. v. Arvin* (and notes that the phrase "lascivious exhibition of the genitals" is not unconstitutionally vague), the 9th Circuit finally acted in a case in which the government argued that the defendant was guilty, even if he didn't know that the model depicted in films he was distributing -- Traci Lords -- was underage. *UDN* has not yet seen the decision, but will report it as soon as it's available.

- *In New Zealand, UDN is no Forbidden Flower*: In August of 1992, a customer of Ophelia Editions in New Zealand was sent *UDN 5*, together with a copy of Nancy Friday's *Forbidden Flowers*. Both were seized for referral to the "Indecent Publications Tribunal" on August 12th. After the customer objected to the seizure, he received the following reply from the Regional Comptroller of New Zealand Customs: "I refer to your Notice of Dispute of Forfeiture regarding two publications seized on 12 August 1992. I am advised by my Head Office that, given previous decisions of the Indecent Publication Tribunal, it has been decided not to refer UNCOMMON DESIRES NEWSLETTER NUMBER 5 to the Tribunal, and this publication is hereby returned to you. The other publication, FORBIDDEN FLOWERS, has been referred to the Tribunal for classification." *Forbidden Flowers* was first published in the United States in 1975 and has been selling since then throughout the world -- including New Zealand, according to its publisher, Simon & Schuster -- without any problem. Perhaps New Zealand Customs will read this issue of *UDN* and realize its error?

- *A sucker born every minute?* The latest issue of *Video Magazine* contains an advertisement offering what appears to be illegal depictions of minors -- i.e. child pornography -- from *Dean Ryder*, who is acting as a front for the federal thought police. *Video Magazine* would be wise to find out what they are advertising, since merely advertising "child pornography" is illegal under federal law. As for the government, what can you say about public servants who spend a significant amount of their work day looking at, selling, "investigating", and writing about child pornography, except: Get a life!



## *Madonna's Sends Positive Messages about "Sex" for Restrictive Times*

In the 80s, *Madonna* did for girls what Elvis did for boys. She legitimized girls' sexuality. She made it okay to be a "slut". She made it possible for girls to dress up and play *empowered* seductresses -- not mere objects, but sexual subjects who could write their own scripts. *Madonna-as-idol* was (and is) so threatening precisely because her sexuality is not that of the victim. After *Madonna*, many girls found that sex wasn't something that "just happened," but was something to be pursued and enjoyed.

A close friend of mine, who just turned fourteen, is one of *Madonna's* progeny (not literally, of course). Since before puberty, she has been very physical with her affection, very sure

of the pleasure she wanted and sought, and just as sure of what she didn't want. On several occasions when she was nine, she asked me to buy her the porn magazines she saw in the neighborhood candy store. She wanted as much information about sex as I could possibly provide her. Her favorite record was "Lucky Star". With me, as with all the men and boys in her life, she understood the power of Eros and where she stood (and would continue to stand) in the scheme of that power: on top. And she has actively and lustily pursued boys (and sometimes older teenagers). She recently told me that she was interested in "fucking" (her word) a guy in his 30s, but she wouldn't do this in the U.S. because of the "age of consent" laws. Even so, the "boyfriend" to whom she lost her virginity was in his second year of college.

### *My Little Dominatrix*

The day I met her, she was wearing a button which read: "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but whips and chains excite me." She was eight then. When she was ten, she bought herself a pair of handcuffs -- saved up for weeks from the money she made selling cookies to the tenants in her building. She handcuffed her sister, her mother, but then she turned to me. She handcuffed me to her bed and left the room, only to return and announce that she had "lost" the key. Another time, she asked me to tie her up to see if she could escape. I tied her to my bed in the most vulnerable of positions and she finally understood the implications of her game. She giggled. Then she had her try at tying me to the bed. She liked to tell people that I was her slave. She was my little dominatrix. One afternoon, she demanded that I pretend to be a criminal to her cop. She handcuffed me with my hands behind my back and frisked me freely. (She knew it wasn't a weapon that was hidden in my pocket.) She pushed me around playfully as we walked to her apartment, alternating between hurling insults and giggling. A passerby smiled at me with an understanding face -- understanding nothing.

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While *Madonna's* influence among little girls has dwindled over the past few years, those girls who were her fans at the beginning of her career are now well into puberty, if not older teenagers. For these girls, her original fans, *Madonna* has a stronger message. Enjoy your fantasies. Practice safe sex to live. Love (with a capital "L") is not an absolute requirement for sex, but a matter of choice. Sex is a matter of responsibility. Many of *Madonna's*

fans will be denied much of her message -- the lyrics of her new LP, with the exception of the single, "Erotica," don't really do it -- unless their parents or older friends are hip enough to buy them Madonna's new book, the sexually explicit *Sex*.

Warner Books' publication of *Sex* was unquestionably an act of courage, but most opposition has been swept away anyway by the sheer enormity of the venture. The first print-run is 800,000 copies. While it may be trendy to criticize the book (as many critics have done), to criticize it is to miss the point. It's not "Art," nor is it meant to be. It is "Fantasy" writ large, and should be enjoyed as such. Of course, we have no evidence that these are *actually* Madonna's fantasies, but

even this misses the point. When one enters the world of fantasy, one suspends one's disbelief. If some readers don't like some of the fantasies, too bad. No one has been hurt.

*Sex* comes in a mylar wrapper, with a metal cover and spiral binding. Inside are Madonna's fantasies (she says *nothing* in the book is true) and those fantasies, she proclaims are good. She imagines sex in suggestive pictures with men (Vanilla Ice, Big Daddy Kane, and various straight and gay men), women (from Isabella Rosselini and Naomi Campbell to a pair of lesbian skinheads), and, naturally, herself.

Madonna's fantasies even extend to "the young". "Sex with the young," she writes,

can be fun if you're in the mood.... It can be really arousing. One of the best experiences I ever had was with a teenage boy. I think he was a virgin. He hardly had any pubic hair.... He lived in my building and he used to come over to my apartment all the time.... Then one day his parents kicked him out of his apartment and he wanted to know if he could spend the night at my house. I told him he could but I only had one

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*Madonna as "little girl" (from Vanity Fair)*



bed. So we both got in it and I couldn't sleep, so I had sex with him and it was really awesome because he was so young and in wonderment of it all.... He wasn't very big. He was just a baby. See, I'm not a size queen.

She also fantasizes her first masturbation:

When I was a child I used to sit on the toilet backward and wait for the burning sensation between my legs to go away. I did not understand that if only my finger had found its way to my pussy the aching would have subsided.... That the wetness of my underpants had nothing to do with my mother overdressing me. But as a child I did not have the words to ask, so I stayed on fire and burning, tormented and yearning, until that glorious day when finger found flesh and with legs spread open and back arched, honey poured from my 14-year-old gash and I wept.

Naturally, the bluenoses and moral crusaders would like to keep *Sex* out of the hands of children and teenagers and adults alike. Many liberals would like to see a more politically-correct Madonna, one who would censure, not encourage, desires for sm sex or sex with minors. The message of pleasure is not one which is easily heard today. As for my 14-year-old friend, she finds *Sex* interesting and exciting, although she doesn't share all of the same fantasies as Madonna, and *Sex*, for her, is still nothing like the real thing.

### ***The Photography of Sally Mann: Which is More Disturbing, Her Work or Her Detractors?***

Now surpassing Jock Sturges in media attention in the United States, is Sally Mann, whose photographs of her children is the subject of a controversial book, entitled *Immediate Family*, as well as an even more controversial traveling exhibition of the same name which began in October at Philadelphia's ICA. Not surprisingly, the controversies center around the nude depictions of the Mann children -- her two daughters, Virginia and Jessie, and her son, Emmett -- as well as their ability to consent to the publication of their images.

In an attempt to assuage some of the concerns which have been expressed over her work, Ms. Mann and her children have, to some degree, become public figures. The Manns are clearly protective of their children and concerned with their welfare. Last year, when Ms. Mann decided not to publish her family pictures because she feared it would have an adverse impact on her children, the family went into a state of uproar. It wasn't only her decision, her children told her. As a result, the Manns sent Emmett and Jessie (Virginia was considered still too young) to a psychiatrist to be sure they understood the implications of publication. What the psychiatrist found were two healthy, well-adjusted children, who were comfortable with their nudity and "certainly recognized the consequences [of publication] that were negative as well as positive."

*Immediate Family* has the feel of a family album, a fact which is not surprising, considering that the images included were chosen by family consensus. (Ms. Mann points out that the children were most concerned not with their nudity, but whether they would look like nerds, dweebs, or jerks to their friends.) Of course, *Immediate Family* is no ordinary family album. There are no images, here, of the Mann children doing their homework, jumping

in the creek, playing sports, or participating in family gatherings or school events, although there is one of them reading the funnies. There are no images of hideously frozen faces saying "cheese" which can be found in most family albums. While many of the images may portray "ordinary things every mother has seen - a wet bed, a bloody nose, candy cigarettes," as Ms. Mann writes in her introduction, *Immediate Family* is not a collection of mere snapshots of family life. Rather, the book is a collection of narrative works in which Ms. Mann has engaged her family in a grand and extended game of "dress-up". Unlike the childhood game of dress-up, however, Ms. Mann's game is concerned with the "big" issues of love, sickness, death, vulnerability, innocence, self-awareness, and sexuality, as well as a myriad of childhood concerns.

Needless to say, there is nothing even remotely lascivious to be found in Ms. Mann's work. Ms. Mann portrays her children's nudity in a matter-of-fact manner, as the posing, posturing, and playing of children who know little guilt or shame about their bodies or their sensuality. Rather than attempt to play down, hide, or excuse the nudity and eroticism with an obvious sex-political agenda, Ms. Mann gives it full expression, accenting it with a humid, Southern rural atmosphere and celebrating it with a rebellious perversity. The drawback, here, is that she appears to avoid any serious criticism of traditional gender roles as enacted by her children. The children are generally depicted as very gendered -- her daughters playfully posing in "feminine" roles and her son always posturing as aloof and "macho". Few, if any, of her images challenge these roles.

Of course, Ms. Mann's work is not only concerned with her children's nudity. Rather, it is through nudity that she explores their vulnerability and her own fears and feelings about them, both rational and irrational. "[T]he more I look at the life of the children," Mann has said, "the more enigmatic and fraught with danger and loss their lives become. That's what taking any picture is about."

It is unfortunate, then, that Ms. Mann's detractors are only able to see sultry and provocative looks, seductive gestures, and paedo-erotic desires in this complex and compelling work. In his *New York Times Magazine* feature article, "The Disturbing Photography of Sally Mann," Richard B. Woodward feeds irrational paedophobic fears by asking whether Ms. Mann has "knowingly put [her children] at risk by releasing these pictures into a world where pedophilia exists?" -- conjuring up an image of perverts descending upon Lexington, Virginia like a scene out of *Night of the Living Dead*. Woodward also finds Ms. Mann culpable for attempting to exploit her children by portraying them as sexually knowledgeable beyond their years. This is a charge which is levelled at Ms. Mann repeatedly by critics, but it is rather the critics themselves who have imposed this reading upon the photographs. So fearful are they of sexual desires for children (whether in themselves or others), that they are neither able to enjoy the sensual visual pleasure of the nude child nor understand the complexity of Ms. Mann's images.

Woodward, for instance, is so disturbed by the nudity and sensuality of Ms. Mann's children that he reduces a large proportion of Ms. Mann's photographs to contrived dramas hinting at sexual and physical abuse. Of "The New Mothers, 1989," which depicts Ms. Mann's daughters in a dress-up scene, Woodward writes:

By posing Jessie with a candy cigarette and Virginia in Lolita glasses for the picture entitled "The New Mothers," Mann gives them props whose dark associations they can't



begin to understand. Rather than preserving their innocence, the photographs seem to accelerate their maturity by relying on the knowingness of the viewer.

In case the reader was confused, the photograph depicts Jessie and Virginia playing dress-up. Yes, there is no question but that the girls don't understand *all* the implications of their game which might be imagined by an adult viewer. (From the child's standpoint, such implications simply do not exist.) However, Woodward's reading of the image is simplistic. "Dress-up" is a game about the formation of gender identity, not about sexual knowledge, innocence, and abuse. Here, the candy cigarette and "lolita" sunglasses no more signal erotic danger than the dolls and baby carriage. Rather than conjuring up seduction and abuse, "The New Mothers" depicts the development of gender identity in her daughters: those attitudes and postures which they "try on" in childhood and may (or may not) play on the stage of adulthood. Jessie's facial expression tells us that this is serious business, not mere child's play. The point, here, is that when girls play dress-up, they often rehearse prescribed roles -- primarily domestic ones. It is not the sexual safety of Ms. Mann's daughters which really concern us in this image, but the gendered horizons which threaten to limit them.

Woodward also overstates the "Lolita" association with the sunglasses. Perhaps Ms. Mann has used the sunglasses merely to lend Virginia a false sophistication (like Jessie's candy cigarette) -- precisely the desired effect for dress-up. Or perhaps she intended nothing specific. The sunglasses are quite popular among children today, as they were popular prior to Kubrick's film of Nabokov's novel. (It is safe to say that many of the parents who purchase these sunglasses for their children never saw Stanley Kubrick's film and do not make any associations of seductiveness.) Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.

In Woodward's reading of "Jessie Bites, 1985" we see the fear of abuse writ large. In that photograph, Jessie is in "warpaint" and wearing a malevolent look on her face. Her arm is hooked though a woman's (her mother's) and bite marks are visible on the woman's arm, the implication being that Jessie has caused them. (They are actually Ms. Mann's self-inflicted bites.) Woodward writes:

...the look of unrepentant anger on Jessie's war-painted face expresses a very real frustration at an adult arm that both supports and holds her down.

A careful look at the photograph reveals an adult arm which neither supports the child *nor* holds her down. Child's and mother's arms are actually gently intertwined: there is no tension, no flexing of muscles which might point to a struggle. In fact, Jessie's index finger absently grazes her hip and, except for her facial expression, her body shows little distress. There are bites, but there are no reprisals which are visible. There is an adult arm, slightly extended, perhaps in an attempt at truce or accommodation, but not as a threat of power and certainly not in any attempt to hold Jessie down. The photograph is deferential to Jessie's rage at the same time it pokes fun at it: it is a petty and impermanent rage of childhood -- a rage not at abuse, but simply at not getting one's own way -- presented as an act of war.

Like Woodward, Philadelphia Inquirer critic Edward J. Sozanski finds "sultriness" in Ms. Mann's depictions of her children. When Sozanski views Ms. Mann's work, he is unable to respond to the sensuality of Ms. Mann's children in any way other than trying on sexual desires for them, whether they are his own or imagined as someone else. "Crabbing at



Pawleys, 1989" shows Jessie (about age 7) leaning, very still, against a railing, looking intently at the camera, while a blur of crabbing activity surrounds her, but Sozanski sees a sexual drama: a "nubile young Jessie romancing the camera as if her companions didn't exist." It is interesting that Sozanski has used (or tried on?) the word "nubile" -- which means of marriageable age, particularly with regard to physical development -- to describe a skinny little girl without even the slightest hint of pubescence in her body. And when the sexual grace of a near-pubescent girl is present, Sozanski can only imagine its darkest expression, as in the breathtaking "Hayhook, 1989", although Sozanski also admits that it is "a paean to grace and adolescent beauty." (Of course, the body depicted is not adolescent at all, but *pre-pubescent*. As in "Crabbing at Pawley's," Sozanski has accelerated the model's physical development in accordance with his own expectations.)

Unfortunately, Ms. Mann is not a very effective advocate in defending her work against charges of sexualizing her children. She often seems naive about how to present her iconoclastic side -- the side that uses a nipple buzzer for her front door, admires her father's raunchy and funny sculptures, and enjoys winding up her audience (for example, with "The Terrible Picture, 1989"). When Ms. Mann says that she "prefers 'sensual' to 'erotic'" in discussing her photographs and then declares that "childhood sexuality is an oxymoron," she usually forgets to explain that "sensual" implies distance, while "erotic" implies invitation. She knows perfectly well that children are sexual, but to that statement may attach the possibility of considering them as sexual partners. Thus, when she uses the word 'sensual,' she is merely eliminating that possibility. For Ms. Mann, there is nothing inherently dangerous about, or wrong with, examining and appreciating her children's nakedness and then presenting it to the world. Nor should there be. Woodward understands this even while he continually raises the phantom of paedophilia and, by implication, charges Mann with (at the very least) unwittingly "pandering" to those who experience sexual desires for children. Like the anti-pornography activists of the feminist and religious right, Woodward and Sozanski cannot view sensual or erotic images of children without ultimately reducing them to unspeakable testaments of desire for and invocations to have sex with children. "Our" feelings are okay, so the reasoning goes, we're just worried about "them". It is this viewpoint against which Ms. Mann rebels, although she is unable, through words, to convince anybody that the fears of the anti-porn crowd aren't justified. Indeed, Ms. Mann even repeats these fears herself on occasion.

That the furor over Ms. Mann's work has focused on this issue of "paedophilia" demonstrates how little the subject is understood. Paedophilia is not some distant land where feelings about children are foreign and strange, although both psychology and popular myth have displaced onto the "paedophile" all manner of forbidden feelings and anxieties connected with children and sexuality. Perhaps the fear that Ms. Mann's work inspires in her critics is a fear that she will unleash what they believe to be uncontrollable desires (in themselves or others). After all, such desires are not experienced only by some statistically rare "others", and the lines between "sensual" and "sexual" feelings, and between love and desire, were never so clear to everyone in the first place. This is especially true in a culture where family nudity and bathing have accumulated tawdry sexual connotations and the sexual misuse of children within the family is commonplace.

If there is anything subversive about Mann's work, it is that it stubbornly resists the demands of contemporary sexual ideology which requires that with every image eschew ambiguity and humor and take sides, emotionally and symbolically, with whatever is the

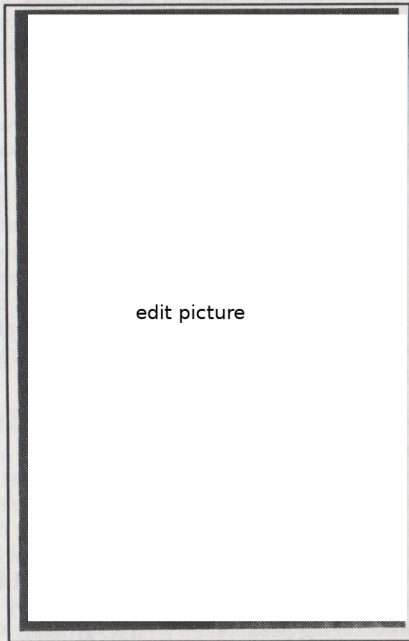


latest fashion in the "normal" and "politically-correct". When Mann invokes "dangerous" thoughts, she is not inviting adult desire, but criticizing conventional morality's silence on the subject of child eroticism.

### *From Innocence to Hell. by Sally Clarisson.*

I used to fancy older men. Now I am 48, I tend to go for prodigals -- chaps of 19 who have wandered far from home to explore and test their strength against the world, at least against Glasgow. After the first 48 hours of ecstasy we always seem to reach the stage of "Aren't you a bit old?" and one asked me recently: "What was it like in the 50s?" "The 50s we're ruined for me by my mother who wouldn't allow me to hang around on street corners with the teddy boys," I told him.

I remained self content for a few days with this brilliant new excuse for having failed to enjoy my teeny bopper years with the blame placed firmly on my mother and then an unexpected thing happened. Out of the piles and piles of accumulated belongings one has at my age, emerged this photograph of me aged somewhere around eleven. (See photo at right.) The accusation of my mother came back to me and I immediately thought "would I let that sweet young thing hang around the street corners with teddy boys? I doubted that I would. Sorry, mother, I'm sure you were doing what you thought best (mind you, I still wish she'd let me go!).



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The innocence on my face in that photograph is overwhelming. Such innocence I had forgotten. It's gone. It's no longer even in the children of today. But it's there in the old photos, even in the faces of young women in vintage porn. There's no doubt that the films were made long ago. Faces with innocence that could never be recreated, not even by the best makeup artist or acting ability.

At what stage did our innocence depart? Was it before children were able to watch TV all the time? Before their opinions were respected? Before their fantasies had been flattened by the fact that every inch of the globe has now been trampled, documented and squabbled over? No wonder so much deep and pure longing goes towards innocence nowadays. We no longer find innocence on the face of the bride at the church, on the teenager who walks aimlessly around the shops. Everyone looks jaded and hard. Of course, being a rarity in itself does not make it precious. Neither is it to be valued for exploitative reasons. Rather, in my mind, its value lies in the freshness and purity which is extremely infectious. Naive

enthusiasm helps to clear the cobwebs away.

Innocence need not mean stupidity. Our old paintings by the masters show us the faces of the grand and clever pioneers of our past history and those faces are both innocent and wise. Through these two qualities the lords and ladies seem to have reached a kind of contentment, which is also lacking from the modern adult face. I don't know which lines and angles make a face which looks innocent, wise and content. I would have to examine the features for hours and hours, perhaps even years. Do the plastic surgeons who repair faces, I wonder, know the answers?

If innocence has left our Western world, surely it must still be there in third world countries, and in which case, wouldn't people from the West be venturing into the third world countries to find it? Men do flock to the Philippines for sex, where they enjoy the *ingenuousness* of the girls there but not innocence. It is only when you venture far from the commercial centres in any land that you stumble across people who still possess that rare gift. They are a dying breed.

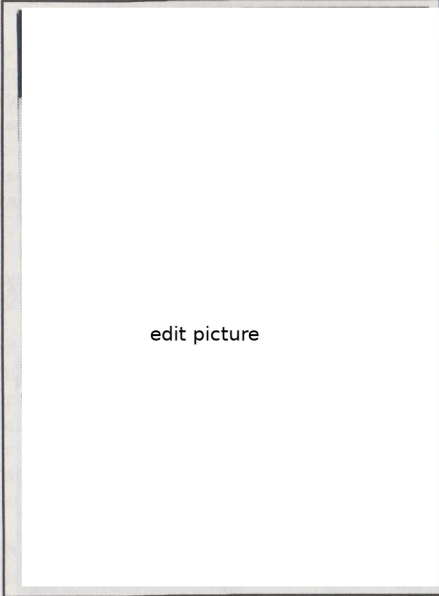
I am not promoting paedophilia, but I always feel that I should dash to the defence of paedophiles who are so mercilessly attacked by the rest of society. It's so obvious that people over-react on the subject because it touches a raw nerve. The philosopher Thoreau said "People can only be shocked if they have an electric affinity for that which shocks them". One fact about the present day attitude to paedophilia always bothers me. If it's so evil to fancy children, why do magazines like *Vogue* use girls of 13 and 14 for their covers? Placing children on the cover, dressed and made-up to look like women is telling the women who look at the picture that their ideal face is long-past possible. It is telling the world that the most desirable women are in their early teens. These girls get time off school to follow their careers as models, and all this is condoned by parents and schools alike.

A book came out about paedophilia in the U.K. some ten years ago. Tom O'Carroll was asked to contribute. Tom was the founder of a self-help group called PIE and he had gone to prison for two years as a result, and lost his job lecturing at the Open University. He thought it was folly to be interviewed so instead, he decided to interview me. I'm not quite sure why he chose me, except that he knew that I did not condemn non-raping paedophiles as criminals, and maybe I had told him that I remembered wanting sex when I was a child. As the day of the interview drew closer, I suddenly got panicky. Perhaps I was a freak child, and nobody else felt sexy until they were grown up? In which case, I would be encouraging paedophiles with no grounds. I decided I should ask around, and I grabbed the opportunity at a party. I asked all the women at the party whether they remembered feeling sexy as children.

Of course, the answer was overwhelmingly yes. Not only did every woman there remember strong sexual urges, some had enjoyed sex and some had even had sex with adults. Only one woman recounted a bad sexual experience, and she said that she had gotten over it. So I did my interview without a conscience. The book was eventually published, but I don't know what happened to it. It was unfashionable and got buried.

Not long ago, Secker and Warburg, a well-established publisher in London commissioned a book on the subject, written by an investigative journalist, Tim Tate, who did a TV





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programme several years ago, pouncing on paedophiles in their homes and shop sellers supposedly selling kiddy porn, making it look Evil. He came to see me during his research for the book and wouldn't listen to a good word being said about childhood sexuality and whenever I made a positive statement, he referred to men trying to bugger babies of a few months old. "Had I seen pictures like that?" he'd ask. "No, I'd rather not," I replied.\* "That's like looking at photos of a car accident or a war mutilation. There is a difference, you know." He didn't want to know. Obviously the editors at Secker and Warburg didn't want to know either.

Rape is rape and love is love.

Is it because we have lost our beautiful innocence that we have gained another innocence -- a kind of cold ignorance, an inability to remember what love is? Are

we so hard now that everything that happens to us sexually becomes suspect: the appreciation of an innocent look on a face is paedophilia (unless it's in a Bond Street art gallery, in which case it can pass as art)? Where is humankind heading for?

\*[Ed.: Neither have researchers and cops who are familiar with the long defunct child porn "industry".]

*Excerpt from "Kelly"*

*by Kevin Saunders*

...After a breakfast cooked on an open fire, and some straightening up, we went for a hike collecting blueberries. Later, as I had promised, we headed down to a small, secluded pond at the bottom of the wooded ridge. I brought some towels and shampoo along so that we could bathe. Lying on a towel in the bright noonday sun drying my naked body, I became entranced as she emerged from the water, sparkling in that same connective sunshine. Kelly stood still, momentarily perched at the edge of the green pond; at her feet, delicate flowers danced on chains of water ivy that seemed to want to trail up her slender limbs as urgent as my every sense did. Don't move, I thought. Bougouereau would want to paint you naked this way....

At that moment, she was the essence of her species: the way she held her almost bony limbs, fragile, careless and unsure, growth seeming to tug at them; the manner in which her loose, long neck, resting on supple spine, supported hair and face with such ease and grace; and, when the light was right and the child-eye open, how the myriad electricities which exuded from her every pose and movement vibrated, even while her adult eye sought to

freeze, in that timeless instant, the child or the woman so that one or the other could be fixed upon an impossible mental structure.

With the next natural movement – she turned towards me, legs slightly parted, head bent forward, eyes and fingers searching for soggy remnants of white petals stuck to her lower belly and thighs – her unmistakably erotic beauty again asserted itself. Somewhere in that innocent juxtaposition of angle and attitude resided an indescribable magic. (If she seemed unconscious of it all, it was because she was composed and permanent in the flow of her time.) And with her plain-as-day-presence, she offered and demanded a love which was futile to resist.

From my supine position, I couldn't see directly, but surely the pond must have reflected the quiet appreciation of my nymphet as she witnessed two blue dragonflies mounting on a lily pad and then taking wing together on the thick air of that hot, August afternoon. She looked back at me slyly. Did I see it, too? I smiled lazily, then closed my eyes and faded in the heat of the sun.

Suddenly, I was startled by the feel of cold drops on my belly and opened my eyes, squinting. An angel stood over me, her legs astride, the sun giving a warm, golden glow to her delicious pubescent's body. She shook more droplets of chilly water from her wet hair, laughing at her mischievousness and my shocked reaction.

"Heey!" I exclaimed. "And I was having such a wonderful dream."

"Were you dreaming of me?" she asked suggestively, putting one foot on my chest, in feigned (or was it



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real?) dominance, her face muscles tightened in a look of "meanness".

"Actually, I was dreaming of this gorgeous little brunette back at camp...," I teased, but before I could finish, she pounced on me. In one swift drop, she was now seated on my sternum, her feet holding down my arms while she shook her head more. "It's raining!" she shouted.

She slid forward and with the tip of my tongue, I tasted a droplet of green pond still clinging to a silky hair on the inside of her sleek little thigh....

### ***More State "Child Porn" Laws.***

Readers are urged to refer to *UDN #7* for a discussion of how state and federal laws intersect. The laws of Massachusetts and Ohio will be discussed in *UDN #10*. Federal law prohibits the creation, production, receipt, sale, and possession -- in fact, any handling at all -- of depictions of minors under the age of 18 engaged in "actual or simulated sexually explicit conduct," meaning: intercourse, oral-anal, oral-genital contact, sadistic or masochistic abuse, bestiality, or "lascivious exhibitions of the genitals or pubic area of any person." All state laws prohibit sexual conduct involving minors.

**Nebraska Criminal Code.** An "erotic nudity" state, Nebraska prohibits displays of "the human male or female genitals or pubic area, the human female breasts, or the developing breast area of the human female child, for the purpose of real or simulated overt sexual gratification or sexual stimulation of one or more of the persons involved."

**Nevada Criminal Code.** NV law tracks the federal statute.

**New Hampshire Criminal Code.** NH legislators wanted to be sure that no one would get away with anything, so not only is "human masturbation" prohibited, but also "the touching of the actor's or other person's sexual organs." Obviously, legislators thought they found a loophole in the federal law, which prohibits only "masturbation". In all other respects, NH law follows the federal.

**New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice.** NJ prohibits "nudity, if depicted for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any person who may view such depiction."

**New Mexico Criminal Code.** NM law tracks the federal statute.

**New York Penal Law.** Federal law was, in fact, modeled after New York's statute. In *New York v. Ferber*, Ferber, a Manhattan porn dealer sold an undercover cop films of boys engaged in masturbation. Ferber was indicted under two different provisions of New York law aimed at depictions of minors: one required that the depiction be "obscene" (applying the tri-partite *Miller* test); the other required only that the minor be engaged in "sexual conduct," which includes masturbation and "lewd exhibition of the genitals." Interestingly, the Manhattan jury found the films *not* to be "obscene" -- a fact which led some observers to note that Manhattan has no community standards to be violated. The law was then overturned by New York's highest court, the NY Court of Appeals, on the basis that the

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*These advertisements from the January 1993 issue of Hustler have also appeared in other men's magazines. Addresses have been omitted for reproduction here.*

failure to require "obscenity" rendered the New York statute fatally overbroad under the First Amendment. The Supreme Court, however, overturned the New York court's finding, and held that "child pornography" may be banned without having to be found to be "obscene," also upholding New York's ban on "lewd exhibition[s] of the genitals". Despite the draconian sweep of Ferber decision, various Justices (including Justice White in his majority opinion) entertained the possibility that artistic, cultural, and scientific intent and content might still be factors to be taken into account on a case-by-case basis.

**North Carolina Criminal Law.** One commits the crime of "sexually explicit nudity" in North Carolina, if one depicts a minor showing the "uncovered, or less than opaquely covered, human genitals, pubic area, or buttocks, or the nipple or any portion of the areola of the human female breast; or covered human male genitals in a discernibly turgid state. One commits the crime of "sexual exploitation of a minor" if one produces, transports, or sells material depicting minors engaged in "sexual activity," which includes masturbation, intercourse, touching, oral sex, and depictions of the excretory functions, but not nudity or exhibitions of genitals. The latter are subject to the test of whether they are "obscene" according to NC community standards and devoid of serious artistic, literary (etc.) value.

**North Dakota Criminal Code.** North Dakota follows federal law.

**Oklahoma Criminal Code.** OK prohibits any "exhibition of the uncovered genitals having the purpose of sexual stimulation of the viewer...."

**Oregon Criminal Code.** OR follows federal law.

**Pennsylvania Criminal Code, Title 18, Section 6312 Sexual abuse of children.** Essentially the same law as New Jersey.

**Rhode Island Criminal Code.** "Any person...which shall in any manner or under any pretense, sell, distribute, let out or otherwise permit any child under eighteen (18) years of age to be used in any book, magazine [or other publication] in a setting which taken as a



whole suggests to the average person that such child *has engaged in, or is about to engage in* any sexual act, which shall include but not be limited to sodomy, oral copulation, sexual intercourse, masturbation or bestiality..." will be sent to jail. RI would probably flog them, if they could. In this instance, *UDN* advocates its RI readers to violate RI law with impunity by going to their nearest video store and purchasing as many Hollywood and major release foreign films which might technically violate this obviously unconstitutional provision (start with *Fast Times At Ridgemont High, Pretty Baby, Beau Pere, The Beguiled, Erendira, The Wrong Move* and *My Life As A Dog*) and turn yourself in. *UDN* will ensure your legal representation, exclusive of court and travel costs for the lawyers of *our* choice. If you are busted for anything other than Hollywood or major release films, you're on your own.

**South Carolina Criminal Code.** SC follows federal law.

**South Dakota Criminal Code.** SD is essentially the same as NJ and PA.

**Tennessee Criminal Code.** TN follows federal law.

**Texas Criminal Code.** TX follows federal law.

**Utah Criminal Code.** Under UT law, "nude or partially nude" means "any state of dress or undress in which the human genitals, pubic region, buttocks, or the female breast, at a point below the top of the areola, is less than completely and opaquely covered." Any person who "knowingly produces, distributes, possesses...material...depicting a nude or partially nude minor for the purpose of sexual arousal of any person or any person's engagement in sexual conduct with the minor" is not only a creep in the eyes of the Mormon Church, but will also go to jail under UT law.

**Vermont Criminal Code.** VT follows federal law.

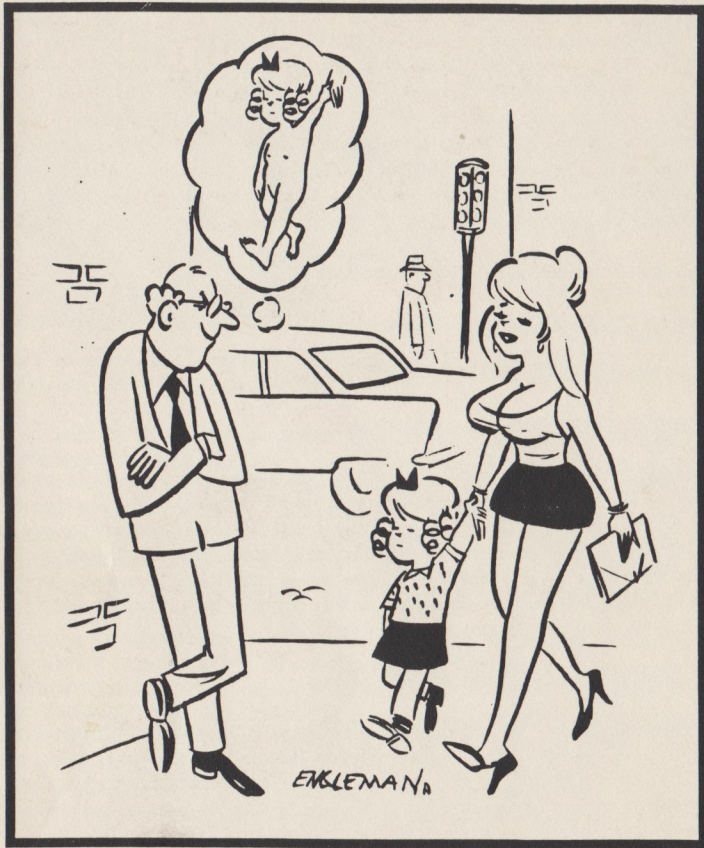
**Virginia Criminal Code.** VA criminalizes depictions of "nudity," which means a state of undress so as to expose the human male or female genitals, pubic area or buttocks with less than a full opaque covering, or the showing of the female breast with less than a fully opaque covering of any portion thereof below the top of the nipple, or the depiction of covered or uncovered male genitals in a discernably turgid state." (Is that the 51st state?)

**Washington Criminal Code.** In addition to sexual conduct, WA prohibits "exhibitions of the genitals or unclothed pubic or rectal areas of any minor, or the unclothed breast of a female minor, for the purpose of sexual stimulation of the viewer."

**West Virginia Criminal Code.** WV prohibits depictions of sexual conduct, as well as exhibitions of "the genitals, pubic or rectal areas of any person in a sexual context."

**Wisconsin Criminal Code.** WI follows federal law.

**Wyoming Criminal Code.** Wyoming criminalizes depictions of sexual conduct, as well as "patently offensive representations or descriptions of...lewd exhibitions of the genitals." No tests or interpretations of the latter provisions have been reported.



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