

**ADULTS CHARGED WITH SEXUAL OFFENCES
AGAINST CHILDREN –
A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.**

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INTRODUCTION.

This paper attempts to review some of the relevant literature in this field up to the end of 1968. Although Karpman reviewed the literature fairly comprehensively up to 1961 in his book, "The Sexual Offender and His Offences", much of the significant material in this field has been published since then.

This paper also attempts to correlate some of the widely divergent views in the literature and to indicate the difficulties involved in attempting to carry out scientific studies on such an emotionally charged subject. The stereotype of a cruel or decadent pervert seducing a young innocent child is not only found in the phantasies of the general public and the press but also in the literature, as will be seen below.

Only the material available in English or in translation has been reviewed.

ATTITUDES.

Mohr *et al.* (1967) indicate the position clearly when they say that the scientific study of adults charged with sexual offences against children has always been clouded by public abhorrence, resentment and fear.

Hyatt Williams (1964), although he is writing about the rarest form of major sexual crime, namely sexual murder, explains this as follows:

... the reason why our attitudes to sexual crime is an ambivalent one is because it evokes an echo, albeit a grotesquely distorted one, from the infantile depths of the unconscious mind of everyone, so that our judgement of the situation tends to be blurred and biased. Most people hold extreme views ...

The early writers on the subject were quite vehement in their denunciation of the act. Krafft-Ebing (1939), described by Iwan Bloch as the "true founder of modern sexual pathology", stated that

a common feature of these crimes, committed on persons that really still belong more or less to childhood, is that they are unmanly, knavish and often silly. It is a fact that such acts, excepting pathological cases, like those of imbeciles, paretics, and senile demented, are almost exclusively committed by young men who lack courage or have no faith in their virility; or by rouses who have, to some extent, lost their power. It is psychologically incomprehensible that an adult of full virility and mentally sound should indulge in sexual abuses with children.

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He goes on to say that:

The finer feelings of man revolt at the thought of counting the monsters among the physically normal members of human society. The only presumption is that these individuals have suffered shipwreck in the sphere of morality and potency.

Even Freud (1949) stated that pedophilia is the perversion of the person "who is cowardly or has become impotent".

Mohr (1967) makes the point that even by using the terms 'offender' and 'victim' we have already expressed our social and legal attitudes to the pedophilic act.

Until recently pedophilia had received relatively scant attention in the psychiatric literature, in spite of its frequency and significance. Mohr (1962) points out that:

in the area of sexual deviation as such, with the exception of homosexuality there is an inverse ratio of the importance of the deviations and the amount of literature available . . . The comparative lack of knowledge is further intensified by insufficient organization and differentiation which leads to apparently contradictory conceptions.

Mohr (1962) also referred to some of the standard psychiatric texts and found that Mayer-Gross, Slater and Roth (1960) and Henderson and Gillespie (1950) made no specific reference to pedophilia, although Mayer-Gross *et al.* noted homosexual and heterosexual acts with children in old age. Noyes and Kolb (1958) saw pedophilia as a variant of homosexuality, apparently ignoring the heterosexual pedophilias. The two-volume American Handbook of Psychiatry (1959) devoted half a page to the subject. There is no mention of pedophilia in Stekel's two volume work, "Sexual Aberrations" (1930). Ellis and Abarbanel's thousand page "Encyclopaedia of Sexual Behaviour" (1961) attempts to deal with the subject in a third of a column. Havelock Ellis's six-volume work, "Studies in the Psychology of Sex" (1910) gives pedophilia a one-word mention as part of a classification.

The most recent general textbook on psychiatry, the 1,600 page "Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry" (1967), devotes a column and a half to the subject of pedophilia without adding anything new to our understanding of it.

For the purpose of brevity, certain topics will not be discussed in this paper at any length, even though they are related to the main topic. They include exhibitionism, incest and homosexuality. Treatment of offenders is not discussed here as it is dealt with elsewhere in the symposium.

DEFINITION.

Karpman (1962), reviewing the literature on pedophilia, quotes the following definitions. "Pedophilia is an abnormally accentuated fondness for children" (Hadley, 1926). "Pedophilia implies an erotic craving for a child of the same or different sex on the part of the adult, which is distinctly asocial only

when it attains overt proportions” (Cassity, 1927). “Pedophilia is gratification from sexual intimacies with children; this includes exposure of genitals, manipulation of the child or penetration, partial or complete” (Apfelberg et al., 1944). “Pedophilia is sexual attraction to children or immature girls” (East, 1946).

Friedman defines pedophilia as the “term applied to sexual activity, involving a sexually immature object. A pedophile may be homosexual, heterosexual, or both in his choice of objects, and, theoretically, his activity can take almost any of the forms characteristic of heterosexual or homosexual activity with an adult partner.”

Allen (1962) avoids the word pedophilia but uses instead the term ‘infantosexuality’, defining it as “the use of an immature person as a sexual object.”

Revitch and Weiss (1962) defines pedophilia as “an adult’s sexual attraction to physically immature children of the same or opposite sex.”

Schoor (1966) uses the phrase “child molester”, as does Gorham (1966), apparently in accordance with the California Penal Code.

Gebhard *et al.* (1965) have devised a classification of sex offenders which involves a number of well-defined sub-categories. They retain the term ‘pedophile’ for one specific sub-category only. This will be discussed later. They also use the word ‘adultophile.’

Masters (1962) prefers “to retain the earlier homosexual flavour of the term pedophilia, defining it as a sex perversion in which male children arouse erotic impulses in male adults.” He uses the term ‘nymphophilia’ to describe heterosexual pedophilia.

CULTURAL FACTORS

The difficulty of defining a sexual offence has been well outlined by Gebhard *et al.* (1965), who attempt legal, cultural and psychiatric definitions and find them all lacking. They end up with the following definition:

A sex offence is an overt act committed by a person for his immediate gratification which (1) is contrary to the prevailing sexual mores of the society in which he lives, and/or is legally punishable, and (2) results in his being legally convicted.

They define a sex offender as “a person legally convicted as the result of an overt act, committed by him for his own immediate sexual gratification, which is contrary to the prevailing sexual mores of the society in which he lives and/or is legally punishable.”

Masters (1962) points out that “the degree of pervertedness depends in large measure upon the physical and psychological maturity of the child” and he quotes Nabokov’s “Lolita” to the effect that “Dante fell madly in love with his

Beatrice when she was nine . . . And when Petrarch fell madly in love with his Laureen she was a fair-haired nymph of twelve . . ." Masters also adds that Helen was ten when she was carried off by Theseus. Juliet was only twelve or thirteen when she was bedded by Romeo.

Guyon (1949), quoted by Masters, states that "the French penal code of 1808 reserved punishment for cases of sexual violence; the law of April 28, 1832, fixed the age of consent at eleven years, and it was only in 1863 that this limit was raised to thirteen. England, true to ancient Christian usage, until 1929 retained the marriage age at twelve for girls and fourteen for boys. The law of the Koran authorized the marriage of girls at nine and of boys at twelve." With regard to homosexual pedophilia, Mohammed promised that young boys "forever in their bloom" would wait upon the faithful in Paradise.

TYPES OF OFFENCES

These vary from simple exposure with or without masturbation to kissing or touching the body of the victim, fellatio cunnilingus, rubbing the genitals against the child's body or persuading the child to play with the offender's genitals, usually in the form of masturbation.

According to Revitch and Weiss (1962) actual coital relations with penetration are uncommon, and rape and rape-murder are extremely rare. They support this by reference to Guttmacher (1951), whom they quote as follows: "Fortunately child murders are rare. Because each case is given nationwide press coverage and because of the great emotional impact of these horrible outrages they seem to be much more frequent than they are."

PSYCHOPATHOLOGY.

Excluding those cases that occur under the influence of one of the organic brain syndromes (acute or chronic), or in the course of a psychosis such as schizophrenia, or as a result of mental deficiency, and acknowledging the fact that the psychopathology is going to vary widely according to the particular pedophilic act, some general observations can nonetheless be made.

Freud (1922) made the important observation that all children are polymorphously perverse, i.e. that all the so-called perversions can be seen in the normal behaviour of children. Children disregard the barrier of species ("the arrogance with which man separates himself from the animals only dawns on him at a later period"); they show no disgust for their own excreta, they transgress the incest barrier in that a child's initial sexual drives and curiosity are directed to his nearest relations; they attach no particular importance to the difference between the sexes; and they derive sexual pleasure from parts of their bodies other than their genital organs.

Fenichel (1946) sums this up neatly as follows: "Since the aims of perverse sexuality are identical with those of infantile sexuality, the possibility for every human being to become perverse under certain circumstances is rooted in the fact that he was once a child."

All children perform sexual experiments with other children and all children play sexual games with other children. One of the child's initial sexual orientations is towards other children as sexual objects. Hirschfield (1944) states that pedophilic acts are actually sexual games of children.

As children grow up and advance to sexual maturity and adult heterosexuality, they handle their earlier sexual drives with conscious and unconscious controls, some more successful than others. Repression of pedophilic impulses may lead to a fear or lack of understanding of children (Fenichel, 1946). With the more intelligent, sublimation may occur in the form of social welfare activities or educational activities (B.M.J., 1966). The celibate, Lewis Carroll, is frequently quoted as an example of a sublimated pedophile with his interest in photographing little girls in the nude and his abhorrence of little boys.

The pedophile may be aware of his impulses but have sufficient personality strength to consciously control them.

Looking at the psychopathology developmentally, it seems that, broadly speaking, two main processes occur.

In the first, the individual fails, for some reason, to attain sexual maturity and he remains psychosexually immature. Such individuals suffer more than other offenders against children from feelings of inferiority and shyness with women (Gebhard et al., 1965), their shyness and timidity extending even to prostitutes or other available sexual objects. They are often impotent or partially so and anxious about this (Karpman, 1962). There is fixation of their psychosexual development at some early stage and a lack of sexual maturation.

In the second, the individual often reaches heterosexual maturity, albeit an unsatisfactory and unstable maturity, and then, under stress, especially sociosexual deprivation (Gebhard et al., 1965), or because of his inability to maintain adult sexual relationships over a long period of time, he regresses to infantile sexual objects. In this group marital discord and social disorganisation are common (Mohr, 1962).

Unresolved Oedipal conflicts are common (Shoor, 1966), the mature female representing the mother figure or incestuous object, and the anxiety aroused by the mature female representing castration anxiety. Hammer (1957) carried out a series of psychological tests on 34 heterosexual pedophiles and 15 homosexual pedophiles in Sing Sing prison and demonstrated clearly that these offenders had tremendous castration anxiety and feelings of "phallic inadequacy".

Shoor (1966) found that, with adolescent sex offenders against young children, disturbed family constellations were common, the mother tending to be dominant and overprotective and the parent with whom the adolescent identified, while the father was generally passive and indifferent, exercising little

authority in the family. Typically, both parents in Shoor's study were defensive and evasive and expressed little or no remorse or concern for the victim. Shoor was impressed, as Johnson and Szurek (1954) were, by the "unwitting parental participation in the youngster's delinquency."

Abrahamsen (1950) has suggested that the man who attacks a young woman may be seeking revenge on the mother who rejected him. According to Hartman (1965) and Cassity (1927), sadistic attacks upon a child may represent sadistic rage towards the mother figure.

Another important factor, stressed by Fenichel (1946) is identification, the love for the child being based on a narcissistic object choice. "Unconsciously the patients are narcissistically in love with themselves as children; they treat their child objects either in the same way as they would have liked to be treated or in the completely opposite manner." According to Allen (1962), this is more common in homosexual perversions, the pedophile seeking a child like his phantasied self, i.e. a beautiful child. Allen also points out that in loving the child the pedophile is identifying himself with his mother as well.

AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH.

An unusual approach to the problem has been made by Tuteur (1963). Quoting Rickles (1950), he states that, in primitive societies, sexual organs remained uncovered and were a source of pride, as they still are in children and in some adult phantasies of paradise. The early pagans developed phallic cults, even Yahweh, the god of the ancient Hebrews, being considered as a phallic deity by Rickles. Circumcision is seen as a sacrifice to pacify the revengeful deity, part of the phallus being thus shared with the gods, like any other sacrifice.

Clothes, when they came to be worn, served two purposes — concealment and display (Sigerist, 1945; Fryer, 1965). Concealing certain parts of the body served to draw attention to them. The cod-pieces worn by men in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are good, if extreme, examples of this. In the sixteenth century the pouch was so padded as to suggest a permanent erection. Holbein's cartoon for his portrait of Henry VIII points this up clearly (Fryer, 1965).

On the basis of this anthropological progression from innocent nudity to purposeful concealment of the genital organs, Tuteur develops the theory that exhibitionism, pedophilia and bestiality are phylogenetically regressive forms of behaviour. Exhibitionism is seen as being the least regressive and bestiality the most regressive form of behaviour.

Just how Tuteur makes the mental leap from phylogenesis to ontogenesis is not clear, unless his reference to phylogenetic development is meant to be analogical only.

CLASSIFICATION.

A number of factors must be taken into account when attempting to classify sexual offenders against children.

1. Age of the child.

The chronological age of the child offended against can never be an accurate parameter of the nature of the offence as it makes no allowance for the extreme variability in physical and emotional maturity within each age group. Nonetheless it is the point at which most classifications start.

Revitch and Weiss (1962) classified victims of sexual offences into age groups as follows: 3 to 11 years represented the pre-pubertal group, 12 to 15 years represented the pre-adolescent and adolescent group, 16 to 24 years represented the young adult group.

Allen (1962) gives no specific age limits but divides victims into adults, youths and boys.

Mohr (1962) suggests that as "social, legal and clinical definitions of a child may vary widely . . . the logical break-off point would be the onset of puberty" at the age of 14.

Gebhard et al. (1965) delineated three categories – children, aged 11 and below; minors, aged 12 to 15; and adults, aged 16 and over. They separated out the "minors" category as they found that offenders in this category were distinctive in a number of ways. "Though our original assumption that they were a mixture of pedophiles who raised their age ceiling, and adultophiles who lowered their age floor, was proved essentially correct, we also discovered that these men were often unlike their brothers who set for themselves less elastic age limits."

2. Sex of the child.

It must be remembered that girls generally reach psychosexual and psychosocial maturity at an earlier age than boys.

Studies concerning the sex percentage ratios of offences vary. Mulcock (1954) found that out of 314 child victims of sexual assault between the ages of 4 and 17 years, 73 were girls and 241 were boys.

Brancale et al. (1954) tabulated the first 1206 sex offenders seen at the New Jersey Diagnostic Center and found that heterosexual acts comprised 80.7% and homosexual acts, 19.3%.

Gebhard et al. (1965) indicate that some offenders offend against both boys and girls with little discrimination, but some are exclusively heterosexual and a smaller number exclusively homosexual.

Mohr (1962) disagrees with this and states that "in the great majority of cases, the object is fixed, either a male or a female child." In Mohr's study, only about 10% of offenders engaged with both sexes and Mohr considered them to be the most regressed and most pathological group. In this study, also, heterosexual and homosexual pedophiles were in roughly equal proportions.

3. Consensual or forced.

This is an important distinction, as it separates out two differing though overlapping classes of offenders.

The use of force is uncommon and when it does occur it is predominantly in heterosexual attacks. The vast majority of aggressors use only enough force or threat to achieve the sexual contact desired. Gebhard et al. (1965) could find no cases in their study "in which violence was clearly the predominant goal", although the literature contains numerous individual studies, of which the worst recorded is probably the case of the French nobleman, Gilles de Ray, who tortured and murdered an estimated 800 children (Revitch and Weiss, 1964).

Some children are deliberately provocative and seductive towards adults. Gibbens and Prince (1963) showed, in their study of sexually assaulted children, that "two-thirds had been sufficiently willing participants to co-operate in assaults more than once or by more than one assailant."

Rogers and Weiss (1953) studied 59 girls and 15 boy victims under 15 years of age and found that "the degree of their participation ranged from simple compliance with the offender's wishes to actual solicitation of his sexual advances. These victims were classified as participating victims, while those victims who appeared not to have participated were called accidental victims. The participating victims were of the lower socio-economic level, emotionally deprived, and had a stronger need for approval."

Karpman, quoting the Michigan report of 1951, indicates that 72% of the victims were known to the offender.

Weiss et al. (1955), in a study of 73 girl victims, found that 62 were assaulted by neighbours, family friends or family members. Only 11 were assaulted by unknown assailants.

Gorham (1966) states that "generally the 'stranger' commits only one in three crimes of molestation and that where the offence is committed in a private dwelling, the latter is usually the victim's own house, the home of a neighbour or trusted friend." Discussing the local situation in San Diego, California, he reports that "in one particular year, 75% of the cases involved children 12 years or under, 95% of which were girls, and 65% of which were assaulted by relatives or neighbours, rather than by strangers." He goes on to say that "These are reported assaults. Knowledgeable, though unofficial estimates are that only 20 to 50 per cent of all molestations are ever reported, the point being that the incidence of incestuous molestation is phenomenally high, with only a small portion of the cases ever brought to justice. Though the stranger will always pose problems of prevention and enforcement, the greatest danger would seem to be

in an area where prevention and enforcement are least possible from a community point of view; in the home and neighbourhood of the deviate – where he or she is known and trusted, perhaps looked up to as a leader in the community's public life."

Mohr (1962) states that "many children are psychologically and socially predisposed to such acts and some are openly seductive" and he supports this statement by reference to the studies of Rasmussen (1934), Bender and Blau (1937) and Rogers and Weiss (1954).

Karpman (1962) quotes various authors indicating that children with attractive personalities and concomitant behaviour difficulties are frequently involved with pedophiles and he feels that quite often the child victim is "a victim in the legal sense only."

4. Age of the offender.

Mulcock (1954) found that out of 100 offenders, 39 to 50 years was the most dangerous age for homosexual offences, and 33 to 44 years for heterosexual offences.

Mohr (1962), plotting the age distribution of 55 pedophilic follow-up cases, discovered a certain trimodal distribution which was quite unlike that of other deviations, such as homosexuality and exhibitionism. He confirmed this distribution in other samples and came to the conclusion that there were three main groups of pedophiles, "one culminating in adolescence, another one in the mid-to-late thirties, and the classical old age one which usually dominates the descriptions of pedophilia, although it appears less frequently than the other two." He elaborates this view in a paper with Turner (1967) where he discusses the three groups in more detail as follows:

"(a) The Adolescent Pedophile. This group actually represents the end of a developmental stage which most other boys have completed between ages seven to eleven. We can therefore speak of a retardation of psycho-sexual development and can generally observe a pattern of immaturity which also extends to other areas of behaviour. Because of this, adolescent pedophiles are not attracted by age equals and even in phantasy have usually not progressed to genital sexual desires.

"(b) The Middle-aged Pedophile. Most of this group are or have been married, and usually show severe marital and social maladjustment. The pedophilic impulse in this case is more a sign of regression, a withdrawal from an adult life that has become too difficult. Quasi-incestuous strivings also play a role but one has to differentiate between pedophilic behaviour within the family and actual incest. Even in homosexual pedophilia in this group a quasi-paternal attitude is often present and involves teachers, youth-group leaders and others with a genuine concern for children.

"(c) The Senescent Pedophile. This group is generally characterised by loneliness and social isolation. With the exception of the chronic

pedophiles, most senescent pedophiles have led an impeccable life and the sexual contact evolves out of a situation in which a particular child is the only one the man can emotionally relate to. The act usually occurs within a play situation in which, through physical contact, erotic desires break through."

Revitch and Weiss (1962) classify the adult offender group into young adults (16 – 24), adults who have passed the average age for marriage (25 – 52) and the older adults (53 – 76) who have passed their climacteric. They showed that "older men have a predilection for physically immature children while the adolescents and emotionally immature young adults are usually involved with children from 12 to 15 years old."

5. Sex of the offender.

This need only be mentioned briefly. Most of the studies are confined to male offenders. Gebhard et al. (1965) explain this as follows: "Women are rarely charged with, and still more rarely convicted of, sex offences other than prostitution."

Revitch and Weiss (1962) could not find any cases of female pedophiles in their records.

6. Social status of the offender.

According to Mulcock (1954) work or profession have little relationship to the offence, the "white collar workers being nearly equal to the trade or manual occupations. Manual workers formed 36%, school teachers 21%, priests and parsons 14%, youth leaders and scoutmasters 14%, miscellaneous trades 9%, welfare workers and miscellaneous professions 6%."

Married men comprised 32%, divorced or separated men 8%, and single men 60% of all offenders, in Mulcock's study.

GEBHARD'S CLASSIFICATION.

Gebhard, Gagnon, Pomeroy and Christenson, some of whom were Kinsey's original co-workers, of the Institute for Sex Research, Inc., of Indiana University, published in 1965 a 900 page study on 1,356 white males convicted of sex offences. They looked at three independent variables: "(1) whether the offences involved a member of the same or opposite sex, (2) whether the sexual activity was consented to (consensual) or whether force or threat was involved, and (3) whether the object of the offense was a child, minor or adult." They combined these three variables to form 12 types of sex offences, which they then reduced to 9 because the use of force was rare in homosexual activity. Of these groups, six concern us here.

1. **Heterosexual, consensual, with a child.** Eight varieties of offenders are distinguished under this heading.

(a) "Pedophiles". These are the commonest group and have the longest records. They do not consciously prefer children but simply find them acceptable. Most relationships are transitory and non-affectionate. Some degree of sociosexual deprivation is common at the time of the offence.

(b) **The Sociosexually Underdeveloped.** These constitute roughly 10%. They are mostly under 30 and have had little in the way of satisfactory heterosexual experiences with older women.

(c) **Amoral Delinquents.** These correspond to the sociopathic group of personality disturbances – antisocial reaction, of the American Psychiatric Association classification (1952). Typically a one-time impulsive act. Uncommon.

(d) **Mental Defectives.** This is the second largest group.

(e) **Situational Cases.** Here the offender acts out under stress, usually on a single occasion only.

(f) **Psychotics.** Uncommon.

(g) **Drunks.** In a small number of offenders the pedophilic act is associated with heavy intoxication. A small proportion of this group are chronic alcoholics.

(h) **Senile Deteriorates.** This group corresponds to the chronic brain syndrome group in the A.P.A. classification (1952). One of the stereotypes of the child molester is that of the senile man who interferes with children in his own second childhood. This is, however, an uncommon presentation, the group comprising only a small percentage of the total number of offenders. Krafft-Ebing (1936) stated that intellectual deterioration in old people was frequently preceded by a period of increased sexual desire. This has not been supported by other authors.

According to Karpman (1962) this group is increasing in size due to increasing longevity.

Apfelberg et al. (1944) suggest that when pedophilia occurs late in life it can be regarded as regression to a homosexual phase. This is a doubtful claim.

2. **Heterosexual, consensual, with a minor (12 to 15 years of age).**

The majority of the girl victims in this group are sexually mature (pubic hair, breasts developed, menstruation, etc.)

About a fifth of the offenders in this group can be categorised as above (i.e. pedophiles, mental defectives, senile deteriorates and drunks). Psychotics and the sociosexually underdeveloped are rare offenders.

The remainder of the offenders can be divided into two groups: subcultural offenders and near-peer offenders.

(a) **Subcultural offenders.** These belong to a subculture where any female past menarche, or even a well-developed prepubescent female is regarded as a suitable sexual object. They correspond to the sociopathic personality disturbance – dyssocial type, of the A.P.A. classification.

(b) **Near-peer offenders.** These are males who are in a closely related age-group to their victims and the sexual relationship is “psychologically and socially appropriate though illegal”. They “scarcely merit the emotionally charged label of sex offenders.”

3. **Heterosexual aggressors vs. children**

This is the most criminal and recidivistic of all the groups. Three factors seem to be combined here – alcoholism or heavy sporadic drinking, mental pathology or defect, and very low socioeconomic status. “About all that one can do is to differentiate three varieties:

(a) Persons with mental defects and/or pathology (but rarely with psychoses) who are also alcoholics or at least sporadic heavy drinkers. The majority of aggressors vs. children fall into this category.

(b) Pedophiles, such as discussed under offenders vs. children, except that the latter did not use force. There are few of these, but probably more could be recognised were it not for the fact that they are obscured by alcoholic and psychotic features.

(c) A residual category chiefly of unclassified cases plus a few offenders vs. children who got a little too rough.”

4. **Heterosexual aggressors vs. minors**

There are two main varieties of offenders in this category:

(a) **The amoral delinquent.** These are irresponsible young men with little super-ego and poor ego controls, low frustration tolerance and impulsive acting out of their aggressive and sexual drives. Many of these are delinquents with a record of serious offences, violence and recidivism.

(b) This is a group that is closest to the subcultural offender, but it also shows some elements of the amoral delinquent.

5. **Homosexual offenders vs. children**

This was only a small group but the same sub-groups were found as with heterosexual offenders vs. children.

The pedophiles were the commonest group and comprised over 50% of cases. The great majority of pedophiles were predominantly homosexual. A few

were attracted to both sexes and a small percentage were polymorphic individuals. Some of the reasons put forward for child preference were that adult partners might have their own ideas, might be too dominant, or might make unpleasant demands; that the prepubescent boy is feminine to the extent that he lacks such male attributes as body hair, deep voice and developed musculature; and that the prepubescent boy is more sexually responsive, spontaneous and unreserved.

The mental defectives and drunks comprised about 10% each. The situational stress reactions were the next commonest variety, and the remaining few classifiable cases comprised three amoral delinquents and one psychotic.

6. Homosexual offenders vs. minors

The majority of these comprised two main groups, with a small remainder forming a mixed group.

(a) Predominantly homosexual men who had retreated from adult homosexual competition and turned to boys. There appear to be a number of factors involved in this, not the least of which are altruistic, predominantly unconscious, factors. Many of the offenders in this group have had very unpleasant relationships with their own fathers, and they seem to take on young boys not only as sexual objects but also as son-surrogates.

This is reminiscent of the attitude that prevailed in ancient Greece.¹ The term *paederasty*, now confined to sodomy committed against a boy, originally came from *pais*, a young man and *eran*, to love. *Paederasty* in ancient Greece was not indiscriminate, but was in fact regulated by law. Minors were protected, and sodomy with sexually immature youths was severely punished (Licht, 1932). Solon (c.635-560 B.C.), himself a homosexual, issued important laws for the regulation of *paederasty*. The Cretans were, according to Timaeus, the first Greeks who were fond of boys, and according to Aristotle, the love of boys in Crete was regulated by the State in order to prevent over-population.

(b) Ordinary homosexuals who, in certain situations of unusual stress or deprivation, turn to partners younger than they would usually choose.

(c) Of the remainder, about 10% comprise the drunken variety, and a further small percentage the mental defectives, senile deteriorates, amoral delinquents, etc.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Although little has yet been done in the field of preventive detection of potential pedophiles, an interesting glimpse of future developments in this field can be found in two papers.

The first is by Freund (1965). He used a modification of the penis plethysmograph test of sexual interest on twenty suspected pedophiles and twenty control subjects. His results, though not conclusive, were sufficiently promising for him to conclude his paper with the hope that "in the future such a tool will permit a precise and valid analysis of sexual reaction patterns."

The second paper is by Vanasek et al. (1968). They compared a sample of 143 persons on probation and parole who had a history of child molesting with a sample of 215 pedophiles selected from a large state hospital. They were compared on the basis of a semantic differential type rating scale which, it was hoped, would provide support for the clinical appraisal of the patient and possibly suggest any potential for treatment. On factor analysis, different numbers of factors did emerge with each group, but the patterns of factor-loading varied. In their conclusion the authors interpreted the results as follows :

“The factors derived from the ratings of pedophiles in the community reflected their need to present good stereotypes and acceptable facades. The factors derived from the analysis of patients in an institution seemed to be related to reactions to individual and group therapy treatment.”

DISCUSSION

Some of the main points that arise out of the above are as follows:

(1) When discussing sexual offences against children, the problem of definition is particularly difficult. Few writers agree about the terminology to be used. The chronological age of the child is a poor criterion. It cannot be a precise measure of what constitutes an offence and what does not, but, nonetheless, it is the criterion upon which most laws are based in this field. It fails to take into account the extreme variability in physical and emotional maturity within each age group. It also fails to take into account cultural factors and, as Masters indicates, unless these are given due consideration, any study becomes meaningless. The question of where one draws the age line is, to a large extent, an arbitrary one. Most authorities would agree that it should be an offence to have intercourse with a 3 or 4 year old girl. It is doubtful whether they would all be in agreement about a 12 or 13 year old girl, especially a well-developed one; especially, also, in those cultures where child brides are accepted as being part of the cultural norm.

(2) The general public's attitude, if such a concept can be said to exist, is marked by mistaken preconceptions and unconscious phantasies. The emphasis has always been upon the person performing the act, with little attention being paid to the child upon whom the act is performed. Krafft-Ebing's comment, quoted earlier, probably sums up the public's attitude fairly well. Yet there are repeated studies, from several different countries, which indicate that in up to two-thirds of cases, the child willingly participates, even to the extent of soliciting the sexual advances. Karpman's comment is very relevant here, when he states that often the child "victim" is a "victim in the legal sense only."

Aggression, or the use of violence or force, is frequently linked automatically with sexual acts upon children and yet Gebhard et al. could find no cases in their study in which violence was clearly the predominant goal. When violence did occur it was mostly incidental and connected with alcoholism, mental pathology or very low socio-economic status.

(3) If one could bring together all the information concerning adults who commit sexual acts upon children from the above studies, they would appear to fall into several main groupings.

The first two groups are cultural deviations only and should probably be excluded from a study of offences against children.

The first group comprises the vast majority of sexual acts committed upon adolescents and pre-adolescents by other adolescents and adults, especially those cases where the person upon whom the act is committed, is physically mature.

The second group to be excluded is the sub-cultural group where such behaviour is normal within the particular subculture but abnormal outside it. If a clash occurs here, it will occur at the sub-cultural interface, not within the sub-cultural system itself.

Having excluded these two groups, there are, broadly speaking, three main groups left. None of these are considered to be mutually exclusive.

The first group consists of those people with a recognisable psychiatric illness or episode — the mental defectives, people under the influence of alcohol or drugs, psychotic patients, the senile patients suffering from varying degrees of dementia, and the situational stress reactions.

The second group consists of those people who have progressed to adult heterosexuality, and, even though it is an unsatisfactory adjustment, they cope, using various conscious and unconscious controls, until faced with marital or social maladjustment or some form of sociosexual deprivation. Then they regress, and one aspect of their regressive behaviour finds its outlet in children. They form transitory, non-affectionate relationships with children and correspond to Gebhard's "pedophile" group and include Mohr and Turner's "middle-aged pedophiles."

The third and final group is a small group of offenders who have never really progressed to satisfactory adult heterosexuality but have remained fixated at an earlier stage. These correspond to Gebhard's "sociosexually underdeveloped" group.

(4) In conclusion, what stands out clearly from comparison of the various studies in this field, is that any attempted classification must invariably be inadequate and there is the danger that if categories exist patients will be squeezed into them, if only for statistical purposes.

A sexual act committed with a child must be looked at as a symptom rather than a disease entity. It is important to understand the many processes that contributed to the final act rather than to be overwhelmed by consideration of the act itself. If offenders, and the term offenders is used hesitantly, are to be treated in any meaningful way we must understand as much about the individual offender's psychopathology as we possibly can. The emphasis must be on what led up to the act, not on the act itself.

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