

# An Enquiry among a Group of Pedophiles

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## Abstract

Seventy-three members of the Working Group of Pedophilia, meeting in the framework of Dutch Association for Sexual Reform responded to a questionnaire enquiring about their ages, family status, education, occupation, job satisfaction, first awareness of their sexual predelection and similar questions. The replies, though necessarily skimming only the surface, contradicted in several respects the popular ideas about pedophiles and gave information about several other issues pertinent to pedophilia.

In 1971, a working group for pedophilia was set up by a number of scientists of different branches within the framework of the Dutch Association for Sexual Reform (NVSH). (For details see Dr. E. O. Born's *The integration of Pedophilia after 1959* (*Pedofiele integratie na 1959*, Utrecht, Storm, 1973). In 1972 a national working group came into being. It was given the status of Central Administration Committee for Pedophilia by the NVSH in 1973. This group has local extensions in some cities in the Netherlands and in Belgium. Its aims can be summarized as follows: social integration of pedophilia, and organization of direct assistance to pedophiles in difficulty.

The first international working conference of the Central Administration Committee for Pedophilia, on April 7th, 1973, offered a unique opportunity for an enquiry among the attending Dutch and Belgian pedophiles concerning various aspects of pedophilia itself, the composition of the group, how the group came into being, the achievement of its aim (social integration) and what motivated the members to appear more or less publicly as pedophiles.

The method applied was collective direct enquiry by means of a questionnaire.

## *The Questionnaire*

The questionnaire consisted of four parts, which roughly covered the following subjects:

A. Personal questions such as age, position in the family (oldest, youngest, etc.), civil status, education, social status and the degree of satisfaction therein.

B. Questions concerning the testee's pedophilia, e.g. first awareness of his sexual interests, first contacts, sex and age range that appeal most to him, place and frequency of the contacts.

C. Questions on substitutes, e.g. collecting 'pornographic' publications and articles.

D. Questions concerning conflicts with society, such as court sentences and psychiatric treatments, and the testee's self-acceptance.

The replies were of course anonymous. The answers were given by means of figures or by checking off an alternative answer, except for two questions where one or more words had to be written down. At the end of the questionnaire space was left for personal remarks, which were added by numerous testees.

The enquiry was carried out in the congress hall.

Oral instructions were given while the questionnaires were being filled out; the testees were allowed to ask questions during and after the enquiry.

Some testees wrote down remarks and additions at the end of the questionnaire, describing circumstances, relationships and revelations of a very personal character.

### *The Answers*

The questionnaire was filled in by a total of 73 testees, i.e. 19 heterophiles (members of the Administration Board and guests), 4 homophiles (interested guests), and 50 pedophiles (members of the working group). There were no females among the pedophiles.

Given below are the questions and the answers in the same order as they appeared on the questionnaire. Most of the charts speak for themselves; some will be commented upon. A general analysis of the results is provided at the end.

The elaboration of the results is entirely based upon the total number of pedophiles present on April 7th, 1973 (N = 50). The answers of 23 additional persons, who were not pedophiles were not taken into account.

#### *A. Personal questions*

Chart indicates what age groups the testees belong to. Almost 60 per cent of the members of the group are under 40; this raises serious doubts about the traditional image of the pedophile as a senile old man.

CHART 1

Question: How old are you?

Age	Percentage
0-20	4
21-30	33
31-40	22
41-50	25
51-60	12
61-70	4
71-80	0
Total	100

CHART 2

Question: In your family, are you the oldest child, or the youngest child, or in between, or are you the only child?

Group	Percentage
oldest	24
youngest	39
in between	29
only child	8
Total	100

CHART 3

Question: Are you married, divorced or unmarried?

Civil status	Percentage
married	8
divorced	2
unmarried	90
Total	100

CHART 4

Question: If you are married or divorced, do you have one or several children?

Group	Percentage
married, have child(ren)	4
married, no children	4
divorced, have child(ren)	0
divorced, no children	2
unmarried, no children	90
Total	100

CHART 5

Question: Which of the following educational institutions have you completed?

Group	Percentage
primary school	18
vocational training	12
advanced elementary education	16
high school	21
advanced vocational training	12
university	21
Total	100

This last chart shows that in comparison to the average level of education of the population of the Netherlands, the members of the working group are better educated. This does not mean, of course, that pedophiles on the whole have a higher intelligence quotient than heterophiles.

Question 6 was concerned with occupations the pedophiles have. The answers varied widely: office jobs, executive functions, manual labour, social occupations, technical and artistic professions, academic professions.

CHART 6

Question: Are you satisfied with your occupation or profession?

Group	Percentage
satisfied	50
not satisfied	22
no opinion	18
not answered	10
Total	100

This question concerning occupational satisfaction was included in the enquiry as a general indication of the testee's functioning in their work. Only 50% of our subjects indicate satisfaction with their work, 22% are not satisfied and 28% answered "no opinion" or did not answer at all.

*B. Questions concerning the testee's pedophilia*

CHART 7

Question: How old were you when you first became aware that you were a pedophile?

Age	Percentage
-10	8
10-20*	66
21-30	20
31-40	2
40-	0
not answered	*4
Total	100

\* 20% at the age of 15

12% at the age of 16

6% at the age of 17

10% at the age of 18

Most testees become conscious of their sexual interests in puberty, like heterophiles do.

CHART 8

Question: How old were you when you had your first really pedophile contact with a child?

Age	Percentage
-10	6
11-20	58
21-30	28
31-40	2
not answered	6
Total	100

CHART 9

Question: Do you keep your pedophilia a secret from your parents, your other relatives, your family?

Group	Percentage
Parents:	
secret	41
not secret	51
not answered	8
Total	100

Other relatives:	
secret	51
not secret	37
not answered	12
Total	100
Family:	
secret	2
not secret	2
not answered	96
Total	100

- The answers given can be classified as follows:
- a. Secrecy is not found necessary by 50%.
  - b. It has become known because of a trial (or through the police).
  - c. It has always been obvious.

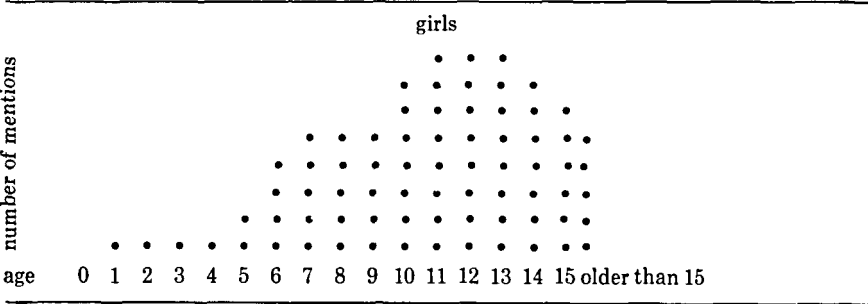
CHART 10

Question: What age groups are you generally most interested in?

Age preference	Percentages
praepuberty	39
up to 11	
puberty	44
12, 13, 14, or:	
puberty	55
12, 13, 14, 15	
post-puberty	6
older than 15	

CHART 11

Question: What age groups are you generally most interested in?



Note to charts 10 and 11: Those who indicated preference up to the age of fifteen and beyond, were in some cases also interested in younger children (6-7 year-olds).

CHART 12

Question: What is the minimum age of the children you are generally most interested in?

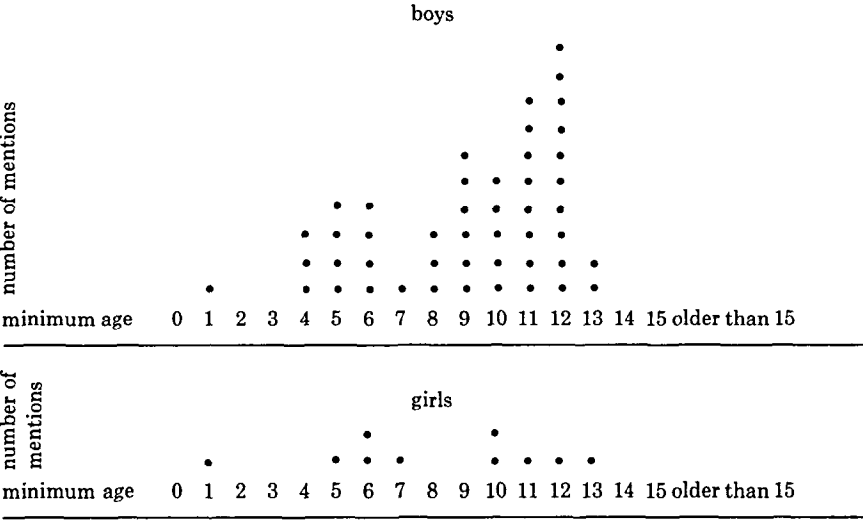


Chart 12 was set up accordingly to the 'minimum age', the ages where the testees' interests generally start. It shows that there is a peak at the age 5 to 6 for boys as well as for girls, and a smaller peak at the age of 11 to 12 for boys and of 10 for girls.

CHART 13

Question: Do you mainly like boys or mainly girls? Or have you no preference?

Group	Percentage
prefer boys	96
prefer girls	0
like both equally	4
Total	100

This enquiry does not confirm the thesis, often heard, that pedophiles are quite often and no doubt generally bisexual. Our results indicate a predominance of homophile interests.

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Question 14: With how many boys have you had and sexual contacts (sodomy)?

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The answers show that 42 percent of the testees have had anal contacts at least once. They are generally those testees who travel to countries where this form of intercourse is not as subject to taboos as it is here. When one compares the answers to this question and those to question 16, it appears that only a very small percentage of all contacts were anal. This conclusion corresponds with the results of another enquiry I have carried out (see Bibliography), which showed that masturbation and caressing are predominant in pedophile sexual contacts.

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Question 15: With how many girls have you had sexual intercourse (coition)?

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The number of vaginal sexual contacts (coition) with girls is even lower than that of anal contacts with boys.

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CHART 16

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Question: With how many children have you had sexual contacts? One, some, many? Can you approximately indicate the number? Yes, approximately, no.

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Number of children	Percentage
none	6
between 1 and 10 children	24
between 10 and 50 children	28
between 50 and 100 children	8
between 100 and 300 children	6
some	6
many	24
Total	100

Number of children	Percentage
0	6
1	2
2	0
3	6
4	2
5	2
6	4
7	0
8	2
9	2
10	4
15	8

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(continued)

20	10
25	6
50	4
70	2
75	4
100	2
175	2
200	2
300	2
some	6
many	24
Total	100

## CHART 17

Question: How many pedophile relationships do you have at this moment? Number of regular contacts; number of occasional contacts; no contacts.

Number of contacts	Percentage:	
	regular	occasional
none	34	46
1	30	6
2	10	14
3	14	4
4	0	4
5	0	0
6	0	0
7	0	0
8	0	0
9	2	0
not classified	4	2
not answered	6	24
Total	100	100

## CHART 18

Question: How many times per year do you travel abroad in order to have pedophile contacts? What countries do you go to?

Times per year	Percentage
never	45
once or several times	51
not answered	4
Total	100

Destination of 51%	Percentage
Mediterranean countries of Europe	40
North Africa	36
Western Europe	18
Far East	6
Total	100

### C. Questions concerning substitutes

From this section we hoped to draw conclusions as to whether those testees who have no pedophile contacts try to compensate for this by collecting pictorial substitutes. If we compare these questions to those asked about sexual contacts (Charts 17 and 18), there's no evidence of such a relationship:

CHART 19

Question: Do you collect films, photographs, drawings of entirely or partially naked children? Do you regularly make such films, photographs or drawings yourself for your own use?

Collection item	Percentage
Films:	
yes	22*
no	68
not answered	10
Total	100
Photographs:	
yes	74**
no	20
not answered	6
Total	100
Drawings:	
yes	40***
no	48
not answered	12
Total	100

(continued)

entirely naked	12
partially naked	4
entirely and partially naked	50
not answered	34
Total	100

\* of which 8% (also) make films themselves  
 \*\* of which 44% (also) make photographs themselves  
 \*\*\* of which 8% (also) make drawings themselves

CHART 20

Question: If you have no collection, what is the reason?

Answers:

- These are difficult to obtain in Belgium.
- Not very satisfactory.
- I feel no need for this (has regular contacts).
- Very rarely; unsatisfactory.
- Am not interested in paper matter.
- No. Not interested.
- Little interest.
- Fear of house-search by the police; avoid betraying the boy's confidence in me.

CHART 21

Question: Do you buy or borrow or exchange "pornographic" photo magazines? No, sometimes, regularly.

Acquisition	Percentage
regularly	26
sometimes	54
no	20
Total	100

CHART 22

Question: Have you ever read books about pedophilia?

	Percentage
Have read a book	96
Never read a book	4
Total	100

*D. Questions concerning conflicts with society*

CHART 23

Question: Have you ever been sentenced for pedophile contacts?

Group	Percentage
have been sentenced	54
have not been sentenced	46
Total	100

This important aspect will be studied in more detail in the conclusions at the end of this article.

About half of those who have been sentenced, have also had psychiatric treatment; of those who never have been sentenced, only about 20 percent have been under treatment. The treatments were probably imposed by the courts as part of their sentences, and were not started voluntarily.

CHART 24

Question: Have you ever had a psychiatric treatment?

Group	Percentage
have had treatment	38
have not had treatment	62
Total	100

The last question is of significance with regard to self-acceptance. The figures indicate that of our pedophilic subjects only 8 percent want to get rid of their pedophilic inclination. This does not mean, however, that all the others have reached real self-acceptance. It can also mean resignation, or negative adaptation.

CHART 25

Question: Would you—if that were possible—like to get rid of your pedophilia? Yes. No. Don't know.

Group	Percentage
want to get rid	8
don't want to get rid	90
don't know	2
Total	100

### *E. Summary of the main results of this enquiry*

The testees are generally young.

They were often the youngest of the children in the family (39%)

90% of them are not married.

8% are married in this group; half of them have children.

The average testee's level of education is higher than that of the average population in the Netherlands.

Their occupational satisfaction score is lower than that of the average Dutchman.

They become aware of their pedophilia at an early age.

The first pedophile contacts usually take place in the same period.

There is more openness (often involuntarily) towards the parents than towards other relatives.

Preference is highest for boys between 12 and 14 years. The peak of preference for girls is between 11 and 13.

For boys and girls there is also a peak for the ages 5 and 6. There's an almost exclusive preference for boys in this group (96%). The interest for girls comes second in practically all cases. Even though a large percentage (42) of the testees have had anal contacts, this represents only a small fraction of the total number of contacts. This is even more true for contacts with girls (coition). The majority of the testees had a pedophile relationship at the time of this enquiry. About half of the testees go abroad once or several times a year, mainly to Mediterranean countries. Those who have relationships as well as those who have not find a substitute in pictorial material, mostly photographs; films and drawings come second. The preference for photo magazines is about equal to that of photographs.

54% of the testees have been sentenced. 96% of the testees have read a book about the subject.

A large number of psychiatric treatments (38%) was probably not started voluntarily, but as a part of a sentence.

Very few want to get rid of their pedophilia.

### *F. Significance and function of the working group*

In the Netherlands, 0.7 cases of 'sexual crimes' per 1,000 inhabitants become known to the police. Considering that only a fraction of these cases are followed by a court sentence, but that 54 percent of our group state being former convicts, it is clear how exceptional the composition of

this group is. If the question concerning convictions had been put in a less restrictive way (e.g. by also referring to contacts with the police), the present percentage might have been higher.

Court action possibly constitutes an important motive for taking the step to membership of the working group, and especially for joining this working conference (to appear in public as a pedophile). Former convicts feel that 'it is known anyway'. They are driven into a corner; this is yet another frustration and brings them to join groups.

This view is confirmed by a second enquiry among pedophiles carried out in several European countries at the same time in the form of a postal enquiry. The questionnaires (with the same questions) have started to come back and up till now show a lower percentage of convicts.

The group that I have examined may be considered as a *pressure group*, meaning that this is an organized group trying to influence the authorities and public opinion in order to promote special interests. As all groups, this one also has a *core* and a *periphery*. The activities generate from the members of the core. Those belonging to the periphery generally seek protection within the group (remedy against loneliness, shifting off guilty feelings).

The large total number of pedophile contacts may indicate that society is probably much more tolerant towards this kind of relationships than one would think. This is also confirmed by the remarkable fact that, from the remarks added to the answers, it appears that there are parents who do not object to such relationships even if their own children are concerned.