

Boy-Lovers and Their Influence on Boys: Distorted Research and Anecdotal Observations

Edward Brongersma, JD

Brongersma Foundation

SUMMARY. A wide experience with boy-lovers has convinced the author that one can often learn more about them from reading some excellent novels than from so-called scientific studies. All too often research is unreliable because (1) it assumes pedosexual activity is a positive indicator of pedophilia; (2) no distinction is drawn between pseudo-pedophiles and real pedophiles; (3) no difference is recognized between boys and girls as partners; and (4) it is highly distorted by bias. Representative samples for research cannot be drawn from members of boy-love organizations. The incidence of violence is very low in pedophile contacts with boys. The influence can be strong in lasting relationships; it can be either wholesome or unwholesome. Within a relationship, sex is usually only a secondary element, although it can be important in sexual instruction and education. The impact of the law, the hostility of parents and the problem of the partners' inequality are discussed.

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

The influence a man may have on a boy in a man/boy-relationship is a difficult subject to broach: empirical research is conspicu-

Dr. Edward Brongersma, a lawyer, was Principal Scientific Officer at the Criminological Institute of University of Utrecht, and for over 18 years was a Member of the Senate (Upper House of the Netherlands States General), where he was Chairman of the Permanent Committee for Justice. In 1979 he founded Brongersma Foundation for research into the sexuality of youth. Correspondence should be addressed to Dr. E. Brongersma, Tetterodeweg 1, 2051 EE Overveen, Netherlands.

ous by its virtual absence and theory has been highly distorted by social prejudice and the seeming inability of most investigators to make proper distinctions. Thus an outsider who wishes to gain some insight into what really happens in a sexually expressed relationship between a man and a boy has very little to go on. This paper, then, can pretend to do little more than clear the path of a few obstacles which will be faced in later scientific research; of necessity it must remain somewhat anecdotal.

The author himself has met over 500 boy-lovers of 17 different nationalities over the past 35 years. He met only a small minority of them in his official role as counsel for defense in criminal trials. In most cases the contact was on an informal, even footing in his own home or visiting them in their homes, which is certainly an advantage when one is trying to gain an accurate impression of a human phenomenon. Included among these boy-lovers were members of virtually all the professions, and also men who lived on a very modest social level. In addition, the author had the opportunity to interview 45 adolescents and young men and ask them questions about the intimate details of their sex lives. Most, during their childhood and teenage years, had had sexual contacts with adult men, either on a casual basis or within a more lasting relationship.

In all these meetings, conversations and interviews, including letters exchanged before and after, there was little that confirms the image developed in the scientific (or pseudo-scientific) literature on pedophilia. Most papers and books on the subject—the work of Pieterse (1982) and Sandfort (1982) are notable exceptions—seem to have been born in another world where laboratory and theory remain aloof from living reality. In this difficult area of human interaction, fiction writers, with their unique ability to identify with their characters, have often been more successful in giving us an accurate picture than the men of science. By reading books like those of Michael Davidson, Alan Edward, Isabelle Holland, Iris Murdoch, Fritz Peters, Jean-Michel Prigny, Christiane Rochefort, Angus Stewart and Gerald Tesch (listed in the references)—to mention only a few—the intelligent non-pedophile may get a better impression of what goes on, for good or evil, during intimate man/boy-relations than by studying a large number of academic treatises.

INADEQUATE RESEARCH

It is inherent in intimate human relations that both partners can exercise a profound influence upon each other. Where the status of the partners is very unequal, as in any relationship between an adult and a much younger person, people tend to attach special importance to the influence which the older, who is perceived as being the most powerful, has over the younger. To judge what might be the benefits or the dark sides of such a relationship it is essential to know more about "the" boy-lover. Is it true that he has special characteristics, and, if so, what are they?

Up until now, however, research has conspicuously failed to answer this question. It is important to understand why it failed and how it failed in order to discover why and how the public image of the boy-lover, and the influence he is supposed to have upon the boy, has become so amazingly distorted. I will first consider the errors which have been made in research and examine what effects they have had on how people judge the boy-lover's impact on his young friends.

FIRST SOURCE OF ERROR: SEXUAL ACTIVITY AS THE DECISIVE TEST

The first error is using sexual activity as the decisive indicator of sexual preference. It is the same error which permeated older studies of homosexuality. "Pedophiles" were sought among inmates in psychiatric hospitals and people sentenced by the courts. Everyone who had committed an "indecent assault" upon a minor was labelled "pedophile," just as in the past everyone who had had intercourse with a partner of his own sex was called "homosexual" (Bullough, 1979; Taylor, 1981; West, 1977). Implicit is the assumption that sexual behavior is always indicative of sexual desire: in other words, a pedophile act rather than the configuration of a man's erotic appetite defines him as a pedophile. Sexologically this is an untenable simplification.

There were periods in the past of our own cultural heritage, such as Greek antiquity (Buffière, 1980; Dover, 1978; Foucault, 1984; Patzer, 1982) and today in certain other cultures (Bleibtreu-Ehren-

berg, 1980; Cline, 1936; Herdt, 1981 & 1982) when it was or where it is considered normal for adult males to have sexual relations with boys. This shows that sexual attraction to youthful individuals of his own sex is present to a greater or lesser degree in every human male, and this makes it possible for every man to have sex with a handsome boy. As Geiser (1979), puts it, "Surprising as it may seem, otherwise normal adult males who work with young boys can often, quite inexplicably, find themselves becoming sexually aroused." We should "face the fact that quite normal men can be aroused sexually by young boys. That they are is not evidence of homosexuality, but may even be evidence of their humanness and sensitivity" (pp. 93-94).

As boys physically have certain things in common with women (the smooth skin, the red lips and rosy cheeks, the rounded forms, the brilliant hair), adult heterophile men, when no women or girls are available, will tend to find greater sexual satisfactions with a substitute boy than with a substitute man. The non-availability of females can be for either internal or external reasons. Externally: females are not to be found in certain social settings and institutions, and so we see predominantly heterophile men satisfying themselves from sheer necessity with boys on ships, on scientific expeditions into wilderness areas or in prisons, and then, once back home, resuming their contacts with females. Internally: some males because of personality peculiarities are abnormally unable to establish intimate contact with the adult partners they would prefer. They may turn to children because these are more easily approached and less exacting in the sexual area than an adult woman or man would be. Thus a man might have sexual contacts with a boy even though his ideal erotic mate would be an adult. We should best call such a man a pseudo-pedophile in order to distinguish him from real pedophiles, i.e., adults having a pronounced and conscious dominating sexual preference for boys and/or girls.

Sexual activity with a minor (pedosexuality) tells us little in itself about a man. Pedosexuality is hardly an infallible indicator of pedophilia, a term which should only be applied to persons for whom children are the most important elicitors of sexual arousal. Among true pedophiles, then, are individuals having frequent and extensive sexual relations with children, and others who for one reason or

another never touch a child and so avoid being labelled as a pedophile (Pieterse, 1982).

In their detailed investigation of a large number of male sexual delinquents incarcerated in American prisons, Gebhard et al., found very few pedophiles among those sentenced for offenses with children. Among 244 males found guilty of sexual activities with children under twelve, only two declared they really preferred a partner this young. Among 269 males found guilty of sexual activities with children from 12 to 15 years, only 17 declared they preferred a partner in this age bracket. Gebhard and his co-workers conclude that the problem "is not so much one of a predilection for youth as it is one of lack of discrimination against youth" (1965, p. 66, p. 681).

One could raise the objection that the study dealt with prisoners, and prisoners are subject to greater than normal temptations to give the "socially desirable answer." But considering the number of cases in which Gebhard's subjects admitted having committed other crimes which had gone undetected, or in which subjects not serving sentences for crimes against children admitted feeling sexual attraction to children, it seems unlikely that the pressures to give "socially desirable answers" distorted these remarkable figures enough to invalidate them.

The problem of the "socially desirable answer" was avoided by the sociologist Charles H. McCaghy (1967) whose sample consisted of 181 males convicted of "child molesting" in the state of Wisconsin. He categorized his subjects "measured by the range of interaction which adults had with children: the extent to which their life patterns were occupied by contacts with children"—that is, through occupational and leisure time activities, etc. By doing so he established substantial differences between those in the group where social contacts with children were frequent and enriching and those in other categories. The men who had many social contacts never used any form of coercion to obtain sex: a non-sexual relationship usually preceded the sexual activities which were usually restricted to active fondling of the genitals. These were the men whose lives were deeply interwoven with those of children: in other words, they were the pedophiles.

The important distinction between pedophiles and pseudo-pe-

dophiles was not made until a few decades ago, but today it is stressed by most researchers in the field: Albrecht (1964), Baurmann (1983), Bendig (1979), Crawford (1981), Fisch (1971), Freund (1981), Gagnon and Simon (1970), Gebhard (1965), Geiser (1979), Haeberle (1978), Hart de Ruyter (1976), Howells (1980), Kerscher (1978), McCaghy (1967), Möller (1983), Newton (1978), O'Carroll (1980), Pieterse (1982), Righton (1981), Rouweler-Wuts (1976), Sandfort (1980), Schillemans (1983), Schorsch (1973), Sengers (1970), Socarides (1954), Swanson (1968), West (1980), Wyss (1967), Yaffé (1981), Zeegers (1977). Groth (1978) makes a similar distinction but blurs the issue by defining those with a sexual preference for children as "fixated pedophiles" and pseudo-pedophiles as "regressed pedophiles."

TRYING TO AVOID THE ERROR: SAMPLES OF PEDOPHILES

An opportunity to carry out investigations using samples consisting entirely of true pedophiles seemed to arise in the early 1970s when pedophiles in various countries started to form pedophile organizations and come out into the open. Pioneer work was done by Dutch psychologist Frits Bernard who in 1973 distributed a printed questionnaire during an international symposium and continued to repeat this procedure at subsequent meetings. Rouweler-Wuts (1976) and Pieterse (1982) also distributed different kinds of questionnaire among members of Dutch pedophile work groups and their acquaintances. In England the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE) carried out a "Survey of Members," and in France Léonard des Sables made an enquiry among boy-loving members of Arcadie, a male homophile group (published 1976-1977). In Belgium the Centre de Recherche et d'Information sur l'Enfance et la Sexualité distributed in 1984 a questionnaire among 300 subscribers to its monthly magazine and a French gay weekly magazine, as well as their acquaintances. All the groups mentioned here, as well as the German DSAP and AKP, the Swiss SAP and the American NAMBLA, are made up, almost without exception, of male boy-lovers. Pieterse's sample was less one-sided, but even here 79% of her subjects were drawn to boys exclusively. It seems that women

are less interested in legalizing pedosexual contacts than men and therefore less inclined to join such groups.

But even for male boy-lovers these associations are not totally representative. People fighting against discrimination and for the abolition of laws directed against their activities are not average citizens. Moreover, the man who has a great deal to lose if his essential erotic tendencies are discovered will be reluctant to join such a group, and will be even less inclined to show up at its meetings. Fear of discovery, however, sharply diminishes after one's cover has disappeared upon police arrest. Studying the members of a pedophile association (a selection) having the courage to present themselves at a meeting (a selection of this selection), Bernard (1979) found—no wonder!—an extremely high percentage (54%) who had been convicted in a court of law.

In their introduction to their report on male sexuality, Pietropinto and Simenauer (1979) share the view of Alexander Pope that the proper study of man is man: he who wants to study mankind should go to common man, not just to psychiatric patients, to members of specific organizations or to people who write letters to him. Weinberg's statement (quoted in Levine, 1980) that public stigmatization makes it impossible to compose a representative sample of homophiles is even more applicable to pedophiles, living as they do under a far heavier burden of stigmatization. Taylor (1981) points out that one simply cannot generalize from a sample taken from a pedophile work group. The several research studies mentioned here may have taught us something about the membership of pedophile organizations but little about pedophiles.

SECOND SOURCE OF ERROR: MINGLING BOY-LOVERS AND GIRL-LOVERS

It wasn't just the impossibility of obtaining a really representative sample of boy-lovers which mitigated against the work of professional researchers: in most studies *everyone* who had sex with children was regarded as belonging to one homogeneous group in which no distinction was drawn between those mainly attracted to girls and those mainly attracted to boys.

The reactions of boys to sexual approach by an adult are strik-

ingly different from those of girls. Boys are less inclined than girls to talk to their parents about their sexual adventures with grown-ups (Landis, 1956; Rennert, 1965). Boys tend to take the initiative in such acts more often than girls (Churchill, 1967; Gebhard et al., 1965; Giese, 1964; Reiss, 1967; Wyss, 1967). They are less likely to reject advances by an adult and more likely to cooperate in any sexual acts which ensue (Gerbener, 1966). Boys are more receptive to advances made by strangers (Gebhard et al., 1965). They are more interested than girls in sexual activities and seem to be much more open to involving themselves sexually with an adult partner. Thus it is hardly coincidental that violence in sexual contacts between men and boys is quite exceptional, while it is a frequent occurrence in sexual acts between men and girls (Gebhard et al., 1965; Jersild, 1964; Landis, 1956; Rennert, 1965).

This may largely explain the findings of Baurmann (1983) who studied all 8058 cases which came to the attention of the police in the German state of Lower Saxony during 1969-1972 in which females below the age of 20 and males below the age of 14 were sexual "victims." Six to ten years after the event he made an additional follow-up study of a random selection of these victims. He found that while a number of the females had sustained a greater or lesser degree of injury, in not one single case injury could be detected in the males.

Conclusions based on studying sex between men and girls should never be applied to sex between men and boys. Research concerning pedophiles which mixes the two categories together is quite simply unacceptable.

THIRD SOURCE OF ERROR: BIAS

Many investigations are conspicuously distorted by researcher bias. In labelling the sexual activity "abuse," "offense," "indecent assault," "molestation" or "rape"; calling the adult partner "actor," "perpetrator," "delinquent," "offender," "criminal," "abuser" or "molester," and the child "victim," authors betray the fact that they are operating upon premises which have yet to be proven.

We might justly ask what is the reason for this absurd violation of

one of the first principles of scientific investigation: to remain objective. Herek (1984, p. 45) quotes Ferenczi, Marmor, Cory, MacDonald and Weinberg as authorities for "the often-advanced hypothesis that many people are hostile toward homosexuals because they fear their own unarticulated homoerotic impulses." The research of such sexologists as Stekel (1922), Gordon (1978), Geiser (1979), Schorsch (1973) and Freund (1981) led them to believe that sexual attraction to children is a universal phenomenon, and—as we have already observed—the existence of cultures where every adult man is supposed to have sex with boys (Ancient Greece, Siwa, Keraki, Big Namba, New Guinea) suggests that sexual attraction to boys is more or less present in every human male. But as this tendency collides so strongly with the standards of sexual morality which for centuries have dominated Western culture, it is of course, in most males energetically suppressed and denied. Utilizing the above hypothesis concerning homophobia, we might suggest that many people—quite apart from their concern over boys' mental and moral health—exhibit such violently emotional hostility toward boy-lovers because they fear their own unarticulated pedophile impulses.

In a number of countries (including many states in the USA) every sexual activity with a minor under the age of consent is, in the language of the law, "rape" because the minor is considered unable to give a legally valid consent. Blindly following such legal niceties of terminology hardly contributes to scientific knowledge. Moreover, a number of very important questions are evaded: (a) to what extent are these minors really unable to "give consent" and how does the validity of their consent differ with age? (b) is there a difference between a man who scrupulously limits himself to those intimate acts which the minor evidently enjoys and eagerly requests and the man who selfishly, even violently, pursues the satisfaction of his lusts upon an obviously unwilling minor?

ABSENCE OF VIOLENCE

While professional research has contributed little to our knowledge of boy-lovers, we have learned a bit more about their sexual relations with boys. First of all, as we have already seen, the use of

violence is exceptional. In the case of real sexual abuse it makes little difference to the victim, compelled to submit by violence, threats or abuse of authority, whether the offender is a pedophile or a pseudo-pedophile. But if violence is a common complaint in man-girl relations, it is much rarer with boys.

This can clearly be seen in court statistics. One should always keep in mind when examining these figures that they apply to only a minuscule sample of adult-minor sexual acts which take place day in, day out in our society. Brongersma (1971 and 1975) and des Sables (1977), using quite different methods of calculation, independently arrived at an identical estimate: one unlawful sexual act with a minor in three thousand is discovered, tried and results in a sentence: the rest are "dark numbers." Since instances in which violence takes place are more likely to lead to a complaint being lodged with the police and to detection, there will always be more violence among reported cases than in these which go undetected.

Gebhard et al., studying 888 male sexual offenders sentenced to prison terms (including 232 imprisoned for sexual contacts with boys 0-15 years of age), drew a distinction among heterosexual offenders between "aggressors" and non-violent men. Force and threat, however, proved to be "minimal in homosexual offenses and accordingly has not been made the basis for separate categories" (1976, p. 45, p. 272). Baurmann, studying cases of illegal sexual activities involving 8058 minors (including 877 boys under the age of 14), writes, "Boys rarely experience sexual violence" (1983, p. 157, p. 221). He suggests that the reason for this may be that boys approached sexually by a man tend to behave passively or even compliantly, while girls are much more inclined to reject such advances (1983, p. 322, p. 430). Wolters (1982) also stressed the fact that sexual aggression against boys is rare. The statistics upon which these conclusions are based do not differentiate between pseudo-pedophiles and pedophile actors, but on this point there is little need to differentiate, as it may be assumed that all sexual aggression is traumatizing and nefarious.

The argument put forward by some authors (for example Sonenschein, 1983) that a real pedophile never will use violence because he loves children is not valid. Individuals such as Haarmann (Lessing, 1925), Corrl (Gurwell, 1974; Olsen, 1974), Bartsch (Föster,

1984) and other sadistic torturers and mass murderers of boys were certainly pedophiles according to the definition adopted here, since they preferred sexual contacts with young males. The same can be said about some pedagogues advocating severe discipline in education: they are at least suspect.

The difference between pseudo-pedophiles and pedophiles becomes important when we consider their respective ways of approaching boys or reacting to sexual advances from boys. We have seen that it is impossible to claim that all cases of sexual violence and brutal treatment must be ascribed to pseudo-pedophiles, that pedophiles are always gentle and tactful. We can easily imagine instances of a boy being better off with a kind-hearted pseudo-pedophile than with a coarse and dominating pedophile. But on the whole there is more risk for him with a pseudo-pedophile who takes the boy only as a second-best solution for the satisfaction of sexual desires mainly directed toward women. Baurmann concluded from his research that "most pedophiles behave strikingly gently and tenderly with children: they try to establish a mutual relationship with them, to act like children when they are with them." And he quotes Schorsch: "The pedophile wants to introduce himself to the boy's world as an equal, a participant, to be as a boy is, to feel as boys feel. Thus with these pedophiles we will almost never find them using aggression. Aggressive activities are much more frequent in substitutive sexual contacts with children. The group of sexual delinquents (. . .) who abuse children for sexually substitutive activities seems to have little in common with the group of pedophiles and more in common with rapists" (1983, p. 304).

DIFFERENCE IN SEXUAL PRACTICES

In the context of the pedophile's desire "to be as a boy is, to feel as boys feel," it should be noted that the sexual contacts, especially with younger children, will mostly "resemble the sexual behaviour that goes on between children" (West 1977, p. 214). Intimacies with small boys are mainly limited to those activities which Mohr and Turner (1967) described as "pregenital sex play such as looking, showing, touching, kissing and fondling." After some time masturbation will be added to the pregenital play. There is almost

no question of the boy acting as insertee in oral or anal intercourse, unless, (1) he has grown bigger and older, (2) he has a longer lasting steady relationship with the man and (3) he insists on these practices himself. With a stranger, in casual meetings, a boy will rarely want to go so far and he habitually limits the play to touching of his naked body or being masturbated or fellated by the older partner (Baurmann, 1983; Gerbener, 1966; Ingram, 1979; Landis, 1956; McCaghy, 1971; Potrykus and Wöbcke, 1974; Righton, 1981).

This stresses the importance of differentiating between casual meetings and longer lasting relationships. It may be supposed that the casual meeting will be sought more by the pseudo-pedophile with his lesser interest in the boy as such, while steady relationships will be more congenial to pedophile boy-lovers.

Rouweler-Wuts (1976), approaching the phenomenon from the standpoint of a social worker, questioned 60 pedophiles. She quotes Plaut to make the point that the majority of girl-lovers have casual, passing contacts whereas boy-lovers work harder to achieve long lasting relationships. In a later investigation (N = 148) Pieterse (1982) found that half of her respondents expressed the desire for extended friendships, and where they succeeded the average duration was as long as 33 months. There are two factors which tend to work against longevity, however: (1) society's rejection of man-boy contacts makes a steady relationship more difficult and more dangerous than casual secret meetings with strangers; (2) since boyhood is a transitional phase of life, the erotic attraction fades away as adulthood is approached.

CASUAL CONTACTS

The impact upon the boy of a casual contact is, of course, different from the effect of a long lasting relationship. For a number of boys the casual meeting may be the kind best adapted to their stage of evolution. Hart de Ruyter (1976) writes that from a boy who, during the course of his adolescent development, has not yet attained a degree of self-assurance, we can expect little more than attempts at sexual intercourse and a direct discharge of impulses. He cites anthropological evidence that in many cultures which live

in closer harmony with nature a period of promiscuity precedes marriage. Kentler (1970), in his book on sexual pedagogy, makes a similar observation, adding that the casual, short-lived sexual liaisons prevalent among some groups of Western youth seem to him age-appropriate.

To demand that a boy make his first sexual contact a declaration of love is asking perfection of a beginner. For him it will rather be a matter of hygiene, of exercising a new bodily function, of getting rid of physical tension. It is a first step forward from masturbation.

Some boys emphatically do not want to move beyond the casual contact. An Austrian pedophile told me he once got to know a 14-year-old boy at a swimming pool in Vienna. They had sex on several occasions and slowly the man found himself falling in love with the boy. And so one day he invited him to the movies, to be followed by a good meal at a restaurant. But the boy flatly refused. "Oh, no. I don't want any of that. I come here to get fucked and nothing else!" Erskine Lane (1978) relates a most curious adventure in the same vein with a Guatemalan boy.

Where it is adapted to the boy's phase of development, the casual meeting may mostly pass by as an incident of little importance, a variation on the routine of masturbation. Thrusted without tact upon an unprepared boy, we might suppose it could shock him profoundly and permanently, but research concerning the lasting traumatic effects of sexual confrontations with adults does not support this hypothesis (Bender and Grugett, 1952 quoted by O'Carroll, 1980; Landis, 1956; Brunold, 1962; Lempp, 1968; Bernard, 1979; Corstjens, 1975; Ingram, 1977; Burton, 1968; Baurmann, 1983). On the other hand, in some cases the casual sexual meeting is remembered by the boy as a very positive experience, affirming his personal worth.

A Swedish man in his forties told me about an unforgettable incident which happened to him when he was eleven. One day during his summer holidays he met a man sunning himself on the side of a swimming pool. They began to play-wrestle with each other; both got erections which each could feel inside the other's trunks. "Wouldn't it be nice to do this completely naked?" the man asked. The boy enthusiastically agreed and eagerly accompanied the man to his home, where they continued their wrestling games, this time

on the man's bed and without their swimming suits. Suddenly the man hugged him very tightly in his arms, thrust with his hips, moaned with pleasure and sperm spurted out of his penis. "I can still remember," my informant told me thirty years later, "how I ran home skipping and singing, enormously proud and happy that my little body could elicit such a strong passion in a grown-up."

In their book of sexual information for adolescents, the New Zealand authors Felicity Tuohy and Michael Murphy (1976) quote the words of a boy who, at a birthday party for one of his teachers, got talking with a man who seemed to have an erotic interest in him. "He gave me his name and address and said, 'Ring me.' I rang him Sunday night and he told me to come in and meet him at his flat in town. I went in about eleven o'clock in the morning. We got into bed and he screwed me and then let me screw him. He was so good. He treated me so well and he was really good at screwing. It was an incredible thing for me because at home everyone was hostile to each other and at school I had no friends. Here was this guy showing me kindness and gentleness and it was an amazing experience. I went back Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and that was the last week of the school holidays. Then I went back to school and never saw him again" (p. 212).

Wilson (1982) talked with an adult Australian who, as a boy of fifteen, was taken for a drive by Clarence Osborne and masturbated by him. "I enjoyed talking to him and I enjoyed the sex as well. He's the only man I've ever had a relationship with before or since. As you know I am married now with two kids, but at times I still think back to when he did those things to me and get excited by the thought of it. All I know is that I wanted some sex then and I got it, even though before I could never have imagined myself having it off with another guy, let alone a man who was about thirty years older than myself" (pp. 39-40).

LASTING RELATIONSHIPS

Whatever the impact of such casual meetings upon the boy's developing sexuality and his self-image, it is only through a more lasting relationship that the "pedagogical eros" can come into play and so influence his character and behavior. It has long been recog-

nized that during those years when a boy's character is forming and he is developing a personal philosophy of life and his attitudes toward society and humanity, a close, warm friendship with one or more adults can be of great importance. If physical intimacy occurs as well the influence of that adult can be even greater, for it is just then that the boy's body and its capabilities are of paramount importance to him.

An educator interviewed by Sandfort (1984) said that boys of fourteen and fifteen are preoccupied with sex the whole day through. The same observation was made by an Austrian teacher (Archives of the Brongersma Foundation). The mystery with which our society cloaks sex leaves boys with many questions unanswered and important problems, some amounting to obsessions, unsolved (De Boer, 1978 & 1979; Hass, 1979; Sorensen, 1973). Kerscher (1977) attributes a high percentage of adolescent suicides to inadequate sexual information, or no information at all. While the popular press and professional literature ignites scandals around the theme of child victims supposedly sacrificed to the sexual lusts of men, we would do better to turn our attention to the enormous number of children who are more or less permanently traumatized by and sacrificed to sexophobia. Parents and teachers are often unable to discuss sex with children as a result of their own upbringing and many teachers are prohibited from doing so by law. In this connection, as Krist (1976) pointed out, shared intimacies with an adult, a shared delight in resolving fascinating physical tensions, initiation into a whole new level of existence—all become deeply significant to the boy. Here is a grown-up who is not only willing to discuss sexual problems with him and answer honestly all his questions but who also reveals and shares with him his own sexual desires. In giving confidence he evokes confidence.

The powerful influence which an adult may thus acquire is in itself neither good nor bad: it all depends upon what he does with it. Adults have a greater capacity than children for good as well as for evil (O'Carroll, 1980).

For evil: In the archives of the Brongersma Foundation there is a set of notebooks in which a 30-year-old man kept a careful record of shoplifting committed by him and his 13-year-old friend. In the man's mind these thefts solidified and proved the boy's affection,

their close alliance, their mutual love of adventure, their cleverness and courage. Thus he encouraged the boy in his share of the criminality. The total value of the goods stolen over the course of two years was substantial. When they were eventually caught the court, quite rightly, blamed the man for his role in recruiting the youngster into crime. Other instances of evil are men binding boys to them by providing them with drugs, spoiling them by excessive gifts or luxuries, keeping them from their work, isolating them from their peers.

For good: Rossman (1976) gives several examples of social workers achieving miracles with apparently incorrigible young delinquents—not by preaching to them but by sleeping with them. Affection demonstrated by sexual arousal upon contact with the boy's body, by obvious pleasure taken in giving pleasure to the boy, did far more good than years in reformatories. A French author with close contacts with gang adolescents in Paris, Jacques de Brethmas, wrote, "Show me the juvenile judges or pedagogues who have managed to disengage boys from criminal gangs, made them willingly throw away their stilettos, as have many men labelled 'molesters' and 'moral corruptors' by society!" (1980, p. 42).

There are judges who admit the truth in such assertions. Amsterdam juvenile judge Cnoop Koopmans openly advocated this form of social therapy in a public speech (1982). I personally know of cases brought before this man. In one, a boy who had been arrested several times for shoplifting, who had been a terror at home and a failure in school, suddenly turned over a new leaf, gave up crime, started getting good marks at school and became a national champion in his favorite sport. All of this occurred after a boy-lover had been asked officially to take care of him. Their friendship survived the termination of its erotic aspect and, with the boy now an adult, continues today.

Likewise, in Berlin a test program was instituted in which young delinquents were put under the supervision of boy-lovers. The results were totally successful, but unfortunately the fear of public reaction soon closed the program down (Schult, 1982).

The French poet Paul Verlaine told of his love for working-class boys, and this is a preference which is rather frequently encountered (Abraham, 1969; d'Arch Smith, 1970; Barrington, 1981; Oskamp,

1980; Tripp, 1975). If the man takes pleasure in sharing his enthusiasms with his young lover, the boy himself may develop interests in culture, science and technology, learn to appreciate good music and art and so receive a kind of supplemental education he never would have got at school or in his parental home.

IMPORTANCE OF SEX

Where a lasting relationship has been established between a man and a boy it would be wrong to assume it exists only for its sexual pleasures. The investigations of Rouweler-Wuts (1976) among adult pedophiles, of Sandfort (1979 & 1982) among boy-lovers and their boys, as well as documents in the Brongersma Foundation and my own experience, demonstrate that neither for the older nor for the younger partner is sex usually the most important aspect of their friendship. For some men and boys it is a very important element; for virtually none is it the *most* important. Among the pedophile subjects of Rouweler-Wuts ($N = 60$), 86% felt that friendship with a boy was more important than having sex with him, while only 11% thought sex more important; 73% had had friendships without wanting to introduce sex into them; 19% said, for them, this was impossible. Only 5% said they would definitely terminate a relationship if the boy refused further sexual contacts; 81% said they definitely would not, while 14% were uncertain (Rouweler-Wuts, 1979, pp. 94-95).

One of my correspondents put it this way: "If I had to choose between a steady friendship without any sex and casual sex with a beautiful boy I would not hesitate a second before choosing the former." Rouweler-Wuts described the meaning of the relationship as "fostering the character development of the child, accompanying the child on his way to adulthood, improving his social skills, his financial conditions and his physical development" (1976, p. 60).

BOY-LOVE EMANCIPATION

"Accompanying the child on his way to adulthood" assumes great importance during those years when he is liberating himself from parental authority. The inevitable misery which accompanies all emancipation processes arises from the tendency of the individ-

ual emancipating himself to try to rush things, while the authority from which he is breaking away is simultaneously putting on the brakes. This can lead to those continuous and bitter conflicts which characterize both the political emancipation of a colony and the social emancipation of an adolescent. Puberty rites and manhood initiation ceremonies in other civilizations may well serve to reduce or eliminate such conflicts.

In our culture the boy tries to lift the yoke of parental control and forge ahead with his own independence faster than his stage of maturation generally permits. He still needs protection and guidance but can no longer comfortably accept them from his father. He becomes unsure of himself. As Schlegel (1966) observes, he needs the help of someone else. He is looking, then, for an authority he can trust, but his striving for independence will only permit him to tolerate an authority of his own choice, to whom he submits of his own free will—an authority, moreover, which he can shake off the moment it becomes too much of a burden. At this point the loving pedophile may for some years fit the description, giving the boy a kind of companionship, a security and a protection which his peers cannot provide.

A 28-year-old Italian announced his marriage in a letter to the man with whom, as a 14- to 18-year-old boy, he had carried on a sexually expressed friendship: "I'm working hard at my job, and I think you must take a lot of credit for this. If now things are going well for me it is because of everything you taught me with so much patience and love. I'm so grateful to you, all day and all night; I'll never forget you!" (Archives of the Brongersma Foundation).

SEXUAL EDUCATION

In such a lasting relationship, affection, care and tenderness can flower and fuse together. A boy of seventeen whom I interviewed about his five-year relationship with a middle-age man said, "He taught me the meaning of love." This experience of integrating lust and love may keep the boy from developing our culture's infamous madonna/whore complex. In a Dutch broadcast about pedophilia a few years ago a 15-year-old boy told the following story. At thirteen he had begun to have sex with girls, and that to him meant a girl on her back, him climbing on top of her, shoving his penis in

her and thrusting it back and forth until he came. That was all. Then at a football game he met an attractive forty-year-old man. The boy accepted the man's invitation to accompany him home, well aware that the man was sexually interested in him but curious about what might take place. They had sex that afternoon, but the way it happened was a revelation to him. He had never experienced such tenderness, such concern for his feelings, so much respect, even reference. He finished his story by saying, "I'm really 100% heterosexual. After a couple of years of making love with this man I'll be too old for his tastes and then I'll certainly go back to girls again. But when that happens I'll treat them completely differently than I did before, when all I cared about was my own physical satisfaction. I've now learned that sex is so much better if you do it with love and consideration for the other person." In the event, things turned out exactly as he had foreseen. Just as in the case of the 17-year-old described above, he is now a happily married man—and neither have ever forgotten their former lovers, who have remained their close and trusted friends.

ATTITUDE OF PARENTS

Society seems determined to overlook these positive aspects. It makes it impossible for most men to build a steady relationship with a boy without putting themselves and their young friends at great risk. Sexual history tells us that laws never succeed in subduing the sexual impulse. As Wheeler (1967) correctly observes, "The history of legal control of sex conduct is largely one of failure" (p. 84). The laws may be unable to stop all sex between men and boys; their effect is rather to encourage the less risky casual anonymous contacts, which are usually pedagogically worthless and sometimes even objectionable, at the expense of closer relationships with their manifold opportunities.

Unless a boy's parents care little about his well-being, where he spends his time and with whom—in other words, neglect him—an undisturbed relationship, especially with a younger boy, can only proceed in deep secrecy, or with their consent.

A relationship outside the family, and certainly one involving sexual intimacies, is often perceived by parents as a challenge to their authority. In this they probably are wrong. Parents who look

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upon the man who loves their son (and is loved by him in return) not as a rival or competitor, not as a thief of their property, but as a partner in the boy's upbringing, someone to be welcomed into their home, will see, on the contrary, a strengthening of the ties which bind them to their son. The boy can relax without ambivalence in his affection for a father and mother who understand and approve of these deep feelings and desires of his. Parents actually retain more influence over their son if they are involved in this relationship, take their share of responsibility for what happens within it. They can then exercise some control over it and, when necessary, help or advise the boy, or even intervene when things go wrong (Möller, 1983).

A French father, speaking of his son's erotic friendship with an adult man, put it rather well: "You can tell right away the difference between a man who gives and a man who takes. All you have to do is look at the boy—because he is your child. You'll know immediately whether he is happy or is feeling on edge" (Hennig, 1979, p. 159).

The 40-year-old mother of a 12-year-old boy, Menno, was quoted in a widely-read Dutch weekly as saying, "I may seem to a lot of people like a degenerate mother, but I don't care; I'll keep on doing what I'm doing. Look, I don't urge him to do anything; I don't forbid anything; I leave it all up to the boy. This man, Kees, with whom my son has his relationship, was once in prison but I have trust in his friendship. So why should I break it up? I've known Kees for two years, now. After my divorce I had the feeling I was losing contact with Menno. He had become completely alienated from me. One day I told Kees this, and he said, 'Send the boy to me—I'll talk to him. He can spend the weekend with me.' I thought, well, now, that will be good for Menno, to have a change of scene. I hoped Kees would have a good influence on him. The first time Menno went for the day, then for a weekend—and the next weekend, too. (. . .) Well, since that day Menno has gone off nearly every weekend to Kees. I could see that a wonderful affection had grown up between them; it seemed perfectly normal that they spend a lot of time together. And then I noticed that Menno was becoming more and more open with me. He started to tell me things again. It was amazing how he changed. My oldest boy no-

ticed it, too. Menno had lost his trust in people, and he regained it through Kees. I haven't the faintest idea what goes on between them sexually. Quite frankly, I've never asked questions about it. But if something is happening, then I believe it is a great advantage for a boy to have someone like Kees to guide him. It seems to me like a sort of natural development. If it's based upon tenderness and friendship it can't be wrong, can it? I think it can be a great protection for a child. A security" (Berkel, 1978).

On the other hand, parents who react with hostility, or who the son imagines will react with hostility, may very well lose their control. As the boy grows older it becomes increasingly difficult to know everyone he has contact with. If he feels it is necessary to be secretive, his parents have no say in the matter at all and are thus unable to help him or intervene when there are tensions or troubles, as may arise in any intimate relationship.

Secrecy, often adopted out of necessity because of social hostility to this kind of relationship, is seen by some psychologists such as Burgess and Holmstrom (1975) as traumatizing; others like Bernard (1979) view it more positively. Perhaps this tells us more about these psychologists themselves than about the children. Open, talkative children who take great delight in relating all that happens to them (especially nice experiences) usually find secrecy difficult. Reserved, taciturn boys may find it easy. A secret can be nursed as something beautiful; the fact that "only he and I know about it" may actually increase a boy's self-esteem. On the other hand, the knowledge that the relationship is forbidden, the intimacies thought dirty and despicable, may give rise to all manner of guilt feelings. Moreover, having to maintain secrecy may necessitate systematic lying with all its concomitant risks of encouraging a bad habit.

THE DOMINANT PARTNER

While these latter risks could be ameliorated by parents showing more understanding, many people are convinced that undesirable consequences are inevitably linked with all man/boy relationships. The partners, they claim, are unequal: the boy is the weaker, less experienced one; he will thus be completely dominated by the physically and socially more powerful man.

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This objection is really only brought to bear because the sexual aspect of the relationship (wrongly, as we have already observed) is thought to be the only, or at least the most important, element in it. For no society objects to children being dominated by older individuals: parents, teachers, priests, etc. It is assumed that such adults have good intentions towards the children in all their dealings, will protect them and help them—at least until the contrary is established. Adult/child relationships are only suspect if it is supposed that sex is involved. Then and only then is adult domination supposed to be disastrous; the child's sexual freedom must be protected from the overpowering dominating pedophile.

Now, it is at this point that one must use a bit of psychological caution. In any relationship between human beings he who needs the relationship most has the least power and the greatest dependence upon the other. Thus in boy-love if the boy is the one who most strongly desires the sex the man will be the dominant partner in this area—he can grant sex or refuse it, but whenever sex takes place it will be in accordance with the boy's wishes and thus—as empirical research by Baurmann (1983) and Constantine (1981) have shown—it will not traumatize him. If, on the other hand (and as public opinion generally assumes), it is the man who most strongly desires the sex, then the boy will be the dominant partner in this aspect of their relationship.

A number of cases examined by Sandfort (1982) points in this direction. A heterosexual adult using the name of "Jack Ryan" wrote a fascinating article (1986) in which he told how from his 13th to his 18th year he had many sexual contacts with quite a large number of men. Even though many of them were well-to-do, socially prominent people, he always felt in these contacts that he was the more powerful, dominant party. During those same years he had legitimate (non-sexual) jobs in a supermarket and as a messenger boy, and *there* he did feel exploited, powerless and dominated by others. Thorstad wrote about man/boy sex, "The boys usually control these relationships. (. . .) They control what kind of sexual acts are performed, they control when the sex will take place, and they have just as much control as the man over when the relationship will end" (Thorstad, 1980, p. 21). My own information confirms this. With fine psychological insight, the ancient Greeks

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depicted Zeus as more afraid of irritating Ganymede than of antagonizing Hera.

The first true sexual relationship with a partner is a milestone on the road of a boy's emancipation. Most parents know this intuitively and so want to delay that moment. Other developmental advances are welcomed, but puberty generally is not. At least not in our culture: "primitives" are often more natural and human. Hanry (1977) wrote that he was often consulted by parents worried about their children showing sexual interests which they considered precocious, but never by parents worried by a lack of sexual interest, which he felt was much greater cause for concern.

A good sexual education should aim to ennoble and refine the sexual function in order to humanize it, just as good up-bringing should refine the functions of eating and drinking. But it is only possible to refine the sexual life of a boy if you are happy he has one. Here the boy-lover has an advantage. "For children, the proper way of learning something is through touch rather than hearing" (Schérer and Hocquenghem, 1976, p. 60).

When accused of corrupting boys, Nobel Prize winner André Gide exclaimed, "Corrupting youth? As if initiation to sexuality is corruption! Mostly it is exactly the opposite. People forget, or, better, they don't know, what accompanies the caresses, out of what feelings of trust, loyalty and noble competition such friendships originate and develop" (Last, 1966, p. 34).

It is certainly not by chance that so many "primitive" people make homosexual intercourse part of their initiation rites (Brongersma, 1987). Hanry (1977) believes that homosexuality poses many more problems to young people if they try to suppress it than if they experiment with it. Davidson (1962) saw this confirmed in the behavior of Southern Italian youth. Giese and Schmidt (1968) found heterosexual mobility and refinement in intercourse slightly higher among students with homosexual experience.

WHAT HAPPENS IN PEDOPHILE FRIENDSHIPS

Just as in a boy/girl love affair, sexual activities occupy a man and a boy for only a small part of the time they spend together (Hass, 1979; Righton, 1981). Case histories presented by Berkel

(1978), Ingram (1977), Pieterse (1982) and Sandfort (1982) illustrate this point vividly. Together man and boy go to movies, theater, museum exhibitions, the zoo, carnivals. They camp, swim, fish, sail, make bicycle and boat trips. At home they romp and rough-house together; there is backgammon, chess, music, television, woodworking, photography, reading, drawing, stamp collecting. And then there is homework. In short, they do what a boy likes to do; the man talks with him about personal and social problems; they do everything which might help him find the right solutions to the problems peculiar to his age and the particular situation in which he finds himself.

The real risk in boy-love relationships lies not in the sexual activities. From my own experience with boy-lovers and their young partners I would rather say that the greatest danger is of the man spoiling his friend with gifts (and later cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs) and being too permissive about the boy's aggressive and destructive impulses. An environment too permissive in this sense is pedagogically nefarious (Hart de Ruyter, 1976). The pedophile here can be compared with the over-generous uncle or the spoiling grandfather. Unwise indulgence can lead to character distortion, encouragement of the boy's greed, parental jealousy or the malevolent attentions of the people surrounding him.

The picture which all careful investigations has left us of man/boy relationships (Bernard, Ingram, Pieterse, Rouweler-Wuts, Sandfort, my own research) has little or nothing in common with the usual image the public has of it, and of the view of investigators approaching the phenomenon only from its criminal or psychopathic expressions. In their view the sexual element is not only over-stressed, it is the only aspect that is ever taken into account. One hardly need prove that society, as a result of its condemnation and punishment, renders the sexual element in man/boy relationships all the more problematic and more obsessive for the boy-lover.

Gabriel Matzneff, a French author who openly confessed his attraction to boys and girls under sixteen, once wrote (1974, p. 65, p. 109), 'I'm no pedagogue, but I do know that the youngsters with whom I had more lasting relationships came out of them happier, more free, more 'realized,' as the Indians say. To love a boy only

makes sense if this love will help him develop himself, fulfill himself, realize himself completely, to burst the gates of the family cage, to easily reject the false obligations society tries to impose upon him. Our love must not be vampire-like, egoistic love, burdening him with a yoke, oppressing, dominating, jealously controlling, suffocating—the love of the wolf for the lamb. No, this love should be fertilizing, liberating, life-bestowing, as the Byzantine liturgy affirms the Holy Spirit." (. . .) "What a pity it is that the boy-lover must mostly limit himself to secret, casual meetings which don't give him the opportunity to benefit the boy as much as he would like. To a boy growing up nothing is as beneficial and salutary as meeting an older person who loves him, who takes his hand and helps him to discover the beauty of Creation, to understand people and what they do, to acquire self-knowledge. If I were a father I wouldn't hesitate for a moment to entrust my 13-year-old son to one of these 'wicked strangers.'"

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