

## THE NEW RIGHT ATTACKS CHILDHOOD SEXUALITY: A CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE

Wilson, Alexander. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 8, Iss. 29, (Feb 14, 1981): 6.

The following is a talk given to the participants of a conference sponsored by the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) held in Boston on December 6, 1980. The speaker, Alexander Wilson, is a staff member of The Body Politic which is an English language Canadian gay publication.

I want to comment today on recent events and public discussion around the issue of pedophilia in Canada, and in particular how the issue has been used by the media and others as a sensational issue, as a tool to invite attacks on the gay community at large. I'm also going to go on to talk briefly about what strategies these events suggest to the gay and lesbian movement.

I'll begin with the year 1977. That's the year of what Pat Califia calls "The Great Kiddy Porn Panic" in the United States. It's also the year a lot of us in Canada sat up and took notice of the gathering strength of the New Right. It was the year Anita Bryant won victory in Dade County, and was invited to make a Canadian tour. It was the year of the Revere, Massachusetts scandal. It was the year, too, that those of us working at The Body Politic, felt the direct hand of the state.

The Body Politic was raided in late December 1977 by cops from the Morality Squad of the Toronto police and the Pornography Squad of the Provincial Police. After a three and a half hour search, they seized 12 shipping crates of material, including corporate records, stationery, subscription lists, lists of donors, chequebooks, distribution and advertising records, manuscripts for publication, and personal mail. Five days later, two criminal charges were laid, one for the possession of obscene material for the purposes of distribution. That was several copies of the gay sex manual Loving Man, which was available from a mail-order book service we used to have. The other charge: "Use of the mails for the purpose of transmitting anything that is obscene, indecent, immoral, or scurrilous." The matter in question was the December 1977 issue of The Body Politic and in particular an article entitled "Men Loving Boys Loving Men." It was an article that described, in what most of us have come to think of as an inadequate way, a number of relationships between men and young boys. Its understanding of these relationships was limited, for they were invariably defined on the terms of the adults with whom most of the interviews were conducted. In any case, few suspected that such a standard piece of sociological journalism would receive the notoriety it eventually did, not to mention such clumsy scrutiny at the hands of the arbiters of justice.

On the other hand, the spectre of so-called child molestation is a powerful one. In the summer of 1977, four months before the raid on The Body Politic, Emanuel Jaques, a 12-year old Portuguese shoeshine boy, was murdered by three men in Toronto's equivalent of the Combat Zone. It was alleged that they had forced him into posing nude for pictures, then raped him and then drowned him in a sink. The details of the murder, and of the murderers, are of little concern to us here, but what is of concern of course is what was made of the incident by the media, and the resultant distorted image that came to shape public opinion.

A murder that would likely have gone unnoticed by the media were the victim, as is usually the case, a girl, quickly became in their eyes a "homosexual murder," a "homosexual orgy-

murder," a "homosexual child sex and death rite," and so on. Editorials in the dailies pinned the responsibility on the permissive and perverse and decadent gay community. When The Body Politic later published an article that we hoped would at the very least provide some data, so that the discussion could move forward, a specific target became available. Claire Hoy, a columnist for the Toronto Sun, a daily tabloid whose programme is roughly that of the American National Enquirer or the British News of the World, wrote a number of articles with titles such as "Our Taxes Help Homosexuals Promote Abuse of Children" and "Kids, Not Rights, Their Craving." This seemed to be enough to get Tory Attorney General Roy McMurty - who, curiously enough, is Honourary Chairman of Toronto Big Brothers - to launch an investigation into the magazine. He ordered the raid by the Morality Squad - a veritable Green Berets whose counterparts in Manitoba recently had removed from all bookstores copies of the Joy of Gay Sex and the Joy of Lesbian Sex, after an alleged complaint from a woman who claims to have picked them up thinking they were the Joy of Cooking.

This harassment and intimidation - frequently posing as a crusade to save "children" from "abuse" - continues to the present day. In early 1978, Anita Bryant was asked to make a Canadian tour, by the Reverend Ken Campbell, a neo-Christian minister ordained in Tennessee. Campbell is the president of a charitable organization calling itself Renaissance Canada, a pro-life, pro-family, pro-God group with close ties to Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority. Campbell was a crown witness in The Body Politic trial. So was Claire, Hoy. In late 1978, Hoy and the Sun attacked the Ontario Arts Council for awarding The Body Politic an operating grant of \$1650 (little more than 1% of our budget). "It's a smutty publication," they wrote, "one that encourages the homosexual seduction and corruption of children."

After a long trial at which the Crown brought forward every right-wing bigot and crackpot psychiatrist they could lay hands on (some of them even cried on the stand, "for the sake of the children"), The Body Politic was acquitted. The Crown appealed the decision. I might point out that American law doesn't provide for appeal on the part of the prosecution. In any case, the Crown won the second round last winter: our acquittal was struck down and a retrial ordered. The Body Politic has since appealed that decision to the Supreme Court of Ontario - and we are still waiting for a court date to be set. If we win again this time, the Crown can keep trying to get us on up to the Supreme Court of Canada. Meanwhile, the cops still have most of the materials seized in the raid three years ago.

I ought to mention in passing that there persists in Anglo Canada, as there does in certain parts of the States, a tradition of prudery and intolerance. To enumerate a few examples in order to set these other things in context: A year or two ago, Hamilton, the fifth largest centre in Canada, nearly passed a bylaw requiring that all erotic literature - this apparently included parts of Shakespeare and Joyce - be sold in specially licensed "parlours," in opaque wrappers, on shelves at least four feet from the floor - so as not to contaminate our youth, you see. This past fall, a group of students at Bishop's University in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, burned all available copies of the students' handbook because it had listed and promoted the campus gay group. Renaissance Canada has for a number of years been campaigning - with some success - for the removal of *Catcher in the Rye* and other books from reading lists and libraries in rural areas of Ontario. The ruthless practices of the Ontario Film Censor Board are by now the laughing stock of most of the world. Scenes that contain more flesh or affection than they find savoury are simply hacked out of the film before it is released. In the past two years, Louis Malle's *Pretty Baby*, Bertolucci's *Luna*, and Volker Schlöndorff's *The Tin Drum*

have been banned in Ontario because they address childhood sexuality. This has effectively prevented their being distributed anywhere in Canada.

I should also mention that cops in Ontario and Quebec have been arresting people for street park cruising, and they've also arrested both owners and patrons of a number of bars and baths in Toronto and Montreal under federal "bawdy house" laws. Two men in Toronto have been charged under these laws for having sex with other men in their own homes.

But to come back to young people. Last summer, the Toronto Board of Education opened hearings on establishing a liaison committee with the gay community for the purpose of monitoring instances of discrimination against both students and staff on the basis of their sexual orientation; and, it was hoped, to begin discussions that would move toward our having some input in sex education curricula. Liaison committees already exist between the Board and the West Indian community, the women's movement, and so forth. There were a number of meetings, and submissions on the part of gay teachers and students and organizations were countered by apocalyptic denunciations on the part of Bible-toting mothers and fathers expertly organized by the right, who it seems have learned a few lessons from the corporate media's coverage of the schools issue in San Francisco. What a sad display of unfortunate ideas those meetings were. Here are a couple of sections of a brief from a group called Concerned Citizens of Toronto:

Heterosexuality is the biological given or norm and is the birthright of every child. It is the natural form of sexual expression and is the basis of Ultimate Truth or Reality. It can even be demonstrated at the level of subatomic particles, in the form of a negative/positive charge polarity. It is the Truth or Principle on which the whole of creation is based.

Homosexuality is a psychosexual disorder, including faulty perception and cognition. There is sufficient psychological and psychoanalytical data to substantiate this statement, despite the fact that sexual perverts and their supporters choose to deny or ignore the existence of this data. HOMOSEXUALS ARE MADE, NOT BORN. In relinquishing their birthright to procreate, homosexuals/lesbians are painfully aware of this. Consequently, their only objective in the schools is RECRUITMENT. Through the voice of The Body Politic and other homosexual publications, the perverts have also stated their intention to pursue the abolition of the law regarding age of consent for sexual activity. It is abundantly clear that PEDERASTY is the hand in the glove of RECRUITMENT, under the guise of "counselling."

This is my favourite part:

The deliberate attempt to confuse a child about his or her sexual identity is a violation of the child's birthright to growth to full humanness and is tantamount to child abuse.

Here's another submission to the Board - and one shudders to think that this comes from people entrusted to teach the young about their bodies:

It is intolerable that we are being forced to acknowledge and not to discriminate against deluded individuals who insist that the male rectum or defacating organ is a "vagina" and that the female vulva has a "penis" attached to it, with all the concomitant disturbances - physical, emotional, mental and social - that this deviation from truth entails. Worse still, we are being coerced into giving these deluded individuals special protection and special privileges and are even being coerced into allowing them to propagate their delusions amongst our children.

Perhaps needless to say, the liaison committee was scrapped. It was sabotaged from within by terrified liberal members of the Board. Those few trustees who did vote in favour of the committee were targeted by the right for defeat in the November municipal elections. Some of the Gang of Nine, as they came to be known, were in fact defeated, even in ordinarily progressive wards. These are the same tactics used against liberal and pro-abortion senators and congressmen in the recent US election. "Think About It," a flyer from an organization called Positive Parents warned, "These nine trustees voted to allow militant homosexuals and lesbians into your schools to seek recruits from among your children. Your children are the bait in this deadly game of gay power politics." Other groups, with names like the Moderate Majority, Parents Against Perverts, Renaissance Canada, the League Against Homosexuals, Right to Life, and the Ku Klux Klan canvassed for the defeat of progressive and reform candidates, ran candidates themselves, and distributed hundreds of thousands of flyers, pamphlets and tabloids. A so-called "Fact Sheet on Homosexuality" talks about our being promiscuous, spreading disease, and all but eating children. Here's a pamphlet we got under our door at home, entitled "Queers Do Not Produce: They Seduce":

It may be a good idea to have queers and their perversions declared a crime against nature, with stiff mandatory prison terms...If you are revolted and sickened by the very subject of queers and their perversions, if the thought of having your child or any child kidnapped, tortured, raped repeatedly and finally murdered by sexually depraved deviates that now prowl our schools, theatres, shopping malls, public parks, steambaths, public washrooms, and taverns, then you will support the League Against Homosexuals...REMEMBER, THE GAY RIGHTS MOVEMENT WANTS THE LEGAL RIGHT TO SEDUCE OUR CHILDREN! What are you going to do about it...will you help us, even if you yourself do not have children, think of us that do, and please, above all, think of the poor young children. Would you want them to be the "blood" of sexually deprived vampires...?? Anyway, several school trustees lost, Canada's first openly gay candidate for city alderman lost, city council shifted considerably to the right, and the recently-elected, progressive, principled and pro-gay mayor was turned out of office. Many of the groups I've mentioned have promised to continue their efforts in the next election.

Now, it seems to me that all of these recent events in Canada are interconnected. I think too that the struggles that are taking place around childhood sexuality, children's rights, and relations between adults and youth (and I mean all relations between adults and youth - social and economic as well as sexual) are occurring with greater frequency are more or less the same struggle. I'm always afraid that I'll leave the impression that these attacks on oppositional sexualities are restricted to some puritanical northland. But it's not only in Ontario that books are being banned: a lot of libraries here in the States are being pressured by the right to remove books from their shelves and from school curricula. Brave New World in North Carolina, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest in Ohio - to mention only two recent cases reported by the American Library Association. In some cases libraries are being asked to keep records of who checks out certain kinds of books. Just as in Toronto there's raised a great hue and cry when homosexuality and the schools are mentioned in the same breath, and the press is silenced on the issue of pedophilia, so the same things are happening elsewhere. The full power of the British state (and that's a considerable power under Margaret Thatcher) is being brought to bear on the Pedophile Information Exchange in London, which goes to court next month on charges of "conspiracy to corrupt the public morals." Those of you from Boston will recall the similar witchhunt here a couple of years ago, which has been splendidly documented in Mitzel's new book [The Boston Sex Scandal, Glad Day Books].

Lastly, it's very plain - to me at least - that these attacks are coming from the same kinds of places: from the state, first of all, and from any number of neo-conservative, neo-religious, and in some cases out and out neo-fascist organizations. And I think we can expect, in the years of the Reagan regime before us, that these organizations will further consolidate themselves, and gain yet further power.

Some struggles are plainly more important than others. Some things can be accommodated by the state. In Ontario, for example, the liberal establishment has vociferously called for the dismantling of the Film Censor Board - and in the meantime people are busy setting up private film societies that will, evidently, get round the law anyway. Too, things like book banning, and for that matter book burning, will probably meet with great opposition from the populace at large. There's also talk now in Ottawa about amending age of consent laws to create, what has been called, "free zones" - they're called "ladders" in Canada - that will allow young people to have sex with someone up to three years their senior. So, obviously, some of these things will change in the next few years.

Yet just as obviously, it seems to me, the disenfranchised status of youth is too central to the organization of this society for change to be allowed - for it would mean radical change. So it's on this issue - among others - that we part ways with both the liberals and, I'm sorry to say, with the mainstream gay movement, which seems unwilling to assume the responsibility to research, to debate, to educate on any number of marginal issues - pedophilia, pornography, prostitution, S&M, and so on. Witness the shameful complicity with the cops of Elaine Noble in the Revere case, or, until very recently, the silence of the gay press on many of these issues. To be fair, it should be said that the movement is retrenching on these issues in the face of not only attacks from the right, but a very profound economic crisis in Western society.

These bleak circumstances suggest certain strategies for pedophiles. Our first task has to be to reestablish a dialogue with the gay movement, and with the women's movement. We have a lot of educational and political work to do. Once that discussion begins - and I don't think that's happened yet - then gay men, lesbians, and feminists will have to choose sides - and one choice might be an alliance with the right on certain of these issues. But I think that that process of education, discussion, debate and so forth is going to take a long time. After all, it's taken the women's movement a hundred years to come to a position on female sexuality. Let's not forget that the limited debate that is taking place is taking place at a furious pace, in a very confrontational way; and more importantly, it's very much a defensive debate, one argued on the terms of a heterosexist society that is gagging us, denying us expression and the right to organize ourselves, and jailing us.

Secondly, we must ally when possible with other progressive forces in society, for the issues that concern us do not exist in isolation. If we're talking about the liberation of youth, then there are a whole lot of other changes to be made before that's possible.

Let me say one last thing about how to proceed in what is clearly a very difficult time. It's imperative that when we talk about intergenerational relations, that we always act in the best interests not of ourselves, as adults, but of young people. Demands for lowering or abolishing the age of consent, and all our demands, must always be made in conjunction with demands for jobs for youth, homes for runaways, adoption by gay parents, an end to police harassment of hustlers and street kids, sex education in schools, proper educational funding, self-defence

- in short, demands for autonomy. Only then will the debate be constructed in such a way that young people will themselves be able to enter into it.

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## SPEAKING OUT; THE NEW NORMALS

Collins, Bob. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 9, Iss. 4, (Aug 8, 1981): 5.

Reading GCN has been a great relief for me! I used to be so afraid of the Moral Majority and the New Right. But now, every week, I can read GCN and find new horrors that make the Right look tame. One week I read that David Thorstad, a "boy-love advocate," is banned from speaking in a small New York town; another week I find out that GCN is being removed from bookstore shelves because of an "offensive" cover; lesbian sado-masochists are censored and harassed; because of strong opposition a grassroots organization refuses support for boy-lovers, transvestites and transsexuals. This all sounds like the work of crazed right-wingers. In fact, this and more has been done by some lesbians and gay men -- what I call our "New Normals."

New Normals you scare me to death!

I'm not a boy lover, I'm not especially into S&M (lesbian or other), in fact, I think I'm a pretty regular guy. But you're making me nervous. If a few lesbians and gay men can get away with such vicious tactics against other queers, I fear the New Right -- who seem so much stronger and better organized -- will demolish us. So, Normals, if you can spare a few minutes from your quest for moral purity and respectability, I'd like to talk about one of your biggest worries, boy love, show you why you're so wrong about the whole question, and maybe convince you to stop censoring and slandering people you don't happen to agree with. O.K.?

## Boy Love Stinks. ... But So Do You

Although I'm sympathetic to many of the problems man-boy lovers face, I think you (boy-lovers) present a very idealized picture of man-boy love. Ancient Greeks, the passing on of wisdom, "a man and his boy" and all that. You sound too much like us sloganeers of gay-lib days. "Gay is Good." I think we've learned that gay isn't all good and nothing else is either. We might understand boy-love better if you tried to answer some of these questions:

What are common negative power relations between boys and older men? What role does economic power play? Do these power relations differ dramatically from other types of sexual relations?

Sexuality has been hidden, denied, mystified, exoticized and perversely molded by societies' needs and standards. Little is really known about it. I think we can say, though, that everyone -- from very young to very old -- is naturally sexual and sensual. However, I think we can also say that there isn't one standard form of sexual expression for all -- at all times, at all ages. Are there some forms of sexual expression more appropriate for young boys than others? What role does puberty play in sexuality? What might (or might not) be appropriate forms of sexual expression for pre-pubescent boys? Does sex among young boys differ from sex between young boys and older men? Under what circumstances is "boy-love" actually rape?

Instead of being the widely sexual beings we have the potential to be, we've been put (and put ourselves) into increasingly shrinking sexual categories. We are brought up to be "homosexual" or "heterosexual." As homosexuals, many of us become "leather queens," "bottoms" or "tops," "chicken queens," "dinge queens," etc. This boxiness makes us more isolated, seemingly foreign, highly specialized and limited sexual beings. It undercuts spontaneity and passion. By perpetuating these rigid boundaries of "good/bad" sexuality we support the categorization that has made us into perverts and others into normals. Isn't boy love advocacy, beyond mere defense, just more of the same narrowing and limiting desexualization process?

At times, you seem only to speak to the sexual needs of young boys, ignoring other types of needs. Boys need to learn how to survive and relate in the world, how to grow beyond woman-hating and woman-fear. Without a wider program for supporting young boys aren't you increasing a type of ghettoizing process where boys will only be able to relate in narrow circles, only among other faggots, etc.?

I think these are difficult questions with no immediate answers but unless they are discussed and resolved I'm worried that most boys will grow up forced into the same type of unsatisfying sexuality that most of us are shackled with.

Some boy lovers have raised problems and discussed them. Others -- a few lesbians and gay men against boy love -- have responded openly and fairly. All of this has been overshadowed, however, by you New Normals who aren't interested in hearing any of it. It's not normal to think a lot, is it, Normals?

First off, reading GCN you'd think boy lovers were a very small, sick, sneaky bunch of perverts dedicated to bringing young boys -- their prey -- to rack and ruin. Come on fellas, didn't lots of you have early sexual experiences with older men? And didn't you usually initiate them? Just because you're older now and more "established" in the gay scene, don't deny your past. And the women! Some of you act as if boy love wasn't even within the range of human emotions, as if boy lovers weren't even human -- just perverts. Look in the mirror.

Secondly, since when is the issue "boy-love" anyway? If some lesbians were more honest, less intimidated by their social upbringing and their reputations among peers we might come to see that the issue is cross-generational sexuality. I'm talking to you who lusted after your gym teacher or wanted the tenderness and assurance of an older woman when, as a young girl, you felt "queer," gawky and confused. I'm talking to you who, as an older woman now, desires/wants to caress and help a girl much younger than you. Maybe you're even doing "it" with one of them. I know you're there. Shall we name names? (Let's start with Sappho.) Lend your voices and experiences to untangle this mess.

It's probably true that man-boy love is sexually expressed more than woman-girl love. I hear some of you say, "Girl-love is only minimal and just another example of some woman's sexuality being forced into male dominated sexual patterns -- preservation of the young." Maybe that's true. But I'd be more inclined to ask instead, what it was about female development in this society that makes cross-generational sexuality and sexual expression such a taboo?

But I keep forgetting that you Normal women are getting to be just as bad as the Normal guys. Girl love? Taboo? They're not important to you now. You can't be bothered by

somebody else's hangups. You've got therapy for problems. You've got careers to think about. You've got private and consenting adult relationships and sensible friends.

Most disgusting are you hoity-toity women and you "good gay" fag symps who censor and malign in the name of "feminism." Is that what feminism has come to stand for? Are these new feminist tactics? I think there are some feminists out there who need to set some "sisters and brothers" straight. (Better do it soon, sisters, the New Normals will be censoring you next!)

Normals, you're cutting off organizational and legal support for young boys and men in trouble with the law. You're further limiting and confining the sexuality of young girls and women already psychically suffocated by this society. By supporting or broadening current child protection laws you might be making a sick alliance with the most vicious child-hating, sex-hating forces on the Right. You reinforce the whole concept of mean and punishing laws in this society. And you act against the better interest of those most stifled by our legal system. (Ask a lesbian mother who has lost her kids through the courts how she feels about the legal system and current "child protection" laws.) At the same time -- what hypocrites! -- you whine about the New Right, which uses exactly the same tactics, because they threaten your legal rights, your jobs, your relationships, your quest for normalcy!

Sex, Sex, Who's Got the Sex?

But the issue isn't just cross-generational sex. The same fights have been going on about other "perversions" -- lesbian S&M, public sex, pornography, promiscuity, non-monogamy, bars, baths, punk music, etc. The issue is SEX -- how we do it, whether we do it, who we do it with, where we do it, why we do it, whether it hurts or feels good, or hurts and feels good.

A common thread among the "perversions" is that they all glaringly expose the relationship of sex and power. They are public expressions of privatized taboo. They are all loaded with traps, I agree, but that is no reason to label them as bad, abnormal, sick. The obvious traps of "perversions" tend to obscure the hidden traps of "normalcy" which reflect the same problems of power. Our choices must not be limited to either "pro" or "con." It's not that simple. As a product of this society, sexual expression is at once mutated and bent to society's standards and needs, but, nevertheless a necessary aspect of our lives.

But you Normals have grown older and more subdued now. You've become interested in the "better things of life." Where once you might have put great faith in community, tenderness, new types of living and loving you've come (often after much sadness and resignation) to channel those desires into society's most common alternative -- normalcy. You seek an o.k. life through the good house and job routine with respectability and chilling sensibleness. For many of you the decision was made for reasons of gut survival. The early fantasies of "new community" were not matched by reality.

I'm getting older, too. Survival is very important to me. I share many of your aspirations. I've had a hard life and I want pleasure -- much pleasure. But I'm not planning to de-pervertize myself and shift all the perverseness on to others. It's got no style.

Heading to normalcy is heading away from passion and desire. Holding on to the little things, resigning ourselves to what's available, holds back changes that would make real differences in our lives. On the one hand, this conservatism is simply not satisfying. On the other hand, in



the light of a growing right-wing sex offensive, acceptance of current unsatisfying and repressive sexual relations and failure to imagine, propose and create a more passionate and fulfilling sexuality is suicidal. I don't see the answers but I know I'll never find them putting on new blinders over the blinders we've had put on us our whole lives.

There are solutions. The very fact of our existence today is the best example. It's much better for us now than before Stonewall and gay liberation days. It's better because we took a chance, we came out, we opened up to new ideas, we looked at things differently, we worked hard and we had courage. I'm asking for more of that.

Normals get off the backs of perverts. Listen to others; talk with your friends. Try to think long and avoid knee-jerk reactions. Question why you think the way you do. Relax. Do some experimenting. Perverts and those in between -- come down hard on censorship, demand fairness and honesty, beware of those who use feminism, religion, friendship, tradition or any other "holies" to squelch ideas. There are some who have done this. (The women's magazine "Heresies #12--Sex Issue" is a wonderful example.) Follow their lead.

I'm sure there are many of you who are afraid of open discussion about sex and power. I'm afraid, too, and I certainly sympathize -- but not that much. By clamping down on the discussion or pushing your normalcy rap crap you've hurt a lot of people. And I know the rap about women: "It is very difficult for women (especially lesbians) to speak publicly about sex and power because most women have been brutalized by current standards." Yes, I understand that problem but I've also noticed that many of you can sure talk your mouths off about everybody else's sexuality and in this present case many of you are doing the brutalizing.

I hope this has been helpful. I'm looking forward to reading more fun letters in GCN. I'd love to see more attacks on the Normals, some juicy, tender girl-love stories, a little more humor, a little less rigidity. Maybe once we've learned how to fight among ourselves a little better and learned how to treat each other with a little respect we'll be united enough to go after the Real Normals.

-- A feminist for an end to perversity and normalcy!

Vive la difference!

Thanks to M.S.

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#### SPEAKING OUT; MORE THOUGHTS ON BOY-LOVE

Brown, Elizabeth R. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 9, Iss. 8, (Sep 12, 1981): 5.

Because of my involvement in the area of sexual abuse of children, I was recently asked to participate in a discussion with David Thorstad on inter-generational sex sponsored by NAMBLA. Most of the usual questions were raised, if not always answered, and rather than repeat that part of the discussion here, I'd like to talk about some of the assumptions,

conscious and unconscious, we seem to make in talking about the subject, and perhaps raise some other issues as well.

I want to make my position clear: I am a victim/survivor of sexual abuse, the more direct as well as the indirect kind all women experience; I do not condone prostitution or adult and kiddie porn. I think it is degrading, objectifying, and in the case of heterosexual pornography, often encourages violence towards women. But I also know if/when censorship comes, GCN goes first; and the born-again Larry Flynt's Chester the Molester will be allowed to say five Hail Mary's and three Our Father's and be back on the newsstands in time to rape another child. I also will not defend child/adult sex by which I mean -- and I agree this is an arbitrary cutoff -- anyone under thirteen.

The connection between adult-adolescent sex and incest is inevitably made, particularly when the participants are of the same sex. In part this may be because the adult partners often talk in paternal terms, or are in some cases foster parents; or because the children seem too young to have lovers. But perhaps the main reason the analogy is made is because a heterosexual intergenerational couple is so accepted that to admit its similarity to a gay relationship would be threatening to heterosexual society. A 30 year old man going out with a 15 year old female is neither unusual, nor is he likely to be harassed, although in fact that relationship may be incredibly exploiting and unequal. (When I pointed out to a friend that a 17 year old male having sex with a 14 year old female -- your basic American high school romance -- is technically against age of consent laws, her response was, "Oh, that's not sex. That's exploration." That seems dishonest; the women I knew in high school weren't "exploring" and probably would have resented the term.) It's simply too close for comfort for straight society to say that 30 year old David going out with 14 year old Paul is the same as Joe taking out Susie. What it comes down to, ultimately, is the right to be gay.

An underlying issue is the right of adolescents to have sex. Perhaps fearful of the emotional and physical hurts, disasters and misjudgements that can and do result, or perhaps because our society is so uptight about sexuality in general, it doesn't want adolescents to have sex -- and does its best to pretend they don't. We have passed laws to force adolescents to tell us they have V.D., need birth control, or abortions. The alleged Family Protection Act would in fact protect the assault, rape and murder of the spouse or child.

Society barely believes in gay adolescents, let alone ones who have sex. Some people still believe homosexuality is "catching" or "taught," and by whom better than an adult? The general assumption is that no one is gay as a teenager, that one night when you're 21, a frog comes into the room, and if the good frog kisses you, you turn into the handsome prince or princess; but if the bad frog kisses you, you may be handsome -- but you're also queer.

To see one's child as a sexual being is understandably difficult for most parents. To see one's child as gay is also to be confronted with the child's sexuality, and once again, that brings up the right to be gay.

Now that consenting adult laws have been passed, homophobia is carried out on forms of sex not protected by laws. The 17 year old boy will not end up in jail; often the incestuous father does not end up in jail (because it's the daughter or mother's "fault!"); the child molester of a female will probably not end up in jail unless the child is murdered or viciously assaulted. In the recent doctors' rape case, the rape itself was often referred to as "non-violent." Whether these people should in fact go to jail is not the issue. Nor is the injustice implicit in punishing

more severely those who molest males, than those who molest females. The point is that women and gays are "acceptable" victims: we are talking about sexism, compulsory heterosexuality, and heterosexual justice vs. homosexual injustice.

The possibility of exploration raises several critical points. Most women have a hard time imagining a relationship with a man that is not unequal in one way or another. Men have power on their side simply because they are men. The burden is always on the adult lover not to abuse his/her authority. We have emotional, financial, and sexual power over children all because we are instant authority-figures, whether we want to be seen that way or not. An adolescent cedes many things to an adult, and may be less able to articulate his/her wishes because s/he is more eager to please than adults.

Some boy-lovers describe young people as something to shape, citing the Greek idea of taking a young, uncouth lad, and training him. That is coercion; a child is not clay. It's following the example of the worst authoritarian parent who sends his son to med school when the boy wants to paint in an attic, making the kid a jock, and a straight one at that, and in the bargain, turning him into a psychiatric case for years -- or the black sheep of the family, and a psychiatric case for years! To make someone into what you want them to be -- which is what patriarchal society has done to women all these years -- is indeed manipulation and abuse of power. It is also, I think, abuse of one's humanity.

A reverse argument is that the boy actually has the power. But if he's a runaway, living with someone who cares for him may be the best thing he's ever known. If the boy lives at home and goes to the police, he also knows he can be hassled, threatened, put in a foster home, and does not want to go through that. (What is more likely is that the boy will be used to convict the man, and then the boy allegedly being protected from this alleged danger will be left alone feeling guilty, miserable and scared. When sexual abuse does occur, the courts, police, and doctors have managed to make their mishandling of it almost worse than the abuse.) But there is also a taboo against talking about it. One of the most powerful threats to keep quiet is that everyone will think he's gay. Remember what it meant to be called queer as an adolescent, when you suspected you were one?

We live in a society in which power and strength, and thus exploitation, are considered virtues. Consider our obsession with it in relationships, particularly in intergenerational ones! Those virtues are far more dangerous than any temporary power held by any adult. We have to change these so-called values, stop exploiting ourselves and our world. We have to stop the pervasive exploitation by parents, schools and society as a whole, to give up the attitude that they are possessions. Our children are not our own. Anyone who works with child abuse of any kind soon finds out that for all our talk, we do not value children much. We beat them, rape them, kill them, neglect them, throw them away, and reject them. I hope the NAMBLA people I talked with are right; I hope, even, that those who take a more radical and to my mind harmful view of child-adult sex are right. In some ways we do not know; we have a lot of stories; we have a lot of information on females, but less on males. "Coming out" as a survivor of incest, rape or abuse is agonizing; the pressure to keep the secret is constant. We also have many variables: a child who comes from the streets may be so messed up by the time he gets to a lover, who knows where the damage was done? I personally would like to find three or four straight men in their 30s who were involved in such relationships and see what has happened to them. If the people I have talked with are wrong, we are creating another generation of rapists and child molesters, at worst; and at best, walking wounded, incapable and afraid of love.

There is one last thing. The power structure knows this is an incredibly divisive issue in our community. It also horrifies otherwise-sympathetic heterosexuals who have the image, to quote States of Desire again, "of the eight year old, face down in a pillow, tears streaming down his cheeks, being fucked." They know we might unite on other issues, but not on this, and so they have made it a gay issue. Whether we want it to be one or not is irrelevant.

We in the feminist and lesbian movements have to understand what it is to be a gay man a little better; you have to understand our lives a little better. Men have to understand what it is to be abused, to live with the ever-present threat of rape. Perhaps gay men, in this city where too many gay men have been murdered, understand this a little better. I think men have to understand, for all their protests that adult/adolescent same sex relationships cannot be compared to heterosexual adult/adolescent relationships because of the inherent sexism, that they are feeding into a lot of fears and memories in women's lives, that it is hard, if not impossible, to sort this out from the experiences we have had. But what is crucial is that we all, men and women, understand that boy-love is being used as a smoke-screen, that the issue is not intergenerational sex, but the right to be gay in the first place. It is being used to turn the straight community against us, to divide our community at a time when we need to be more united. We have to be able to say, Wait a minute. The issue is not Revere, NAMBLA, or wherever the next crack-down occurs. The issue is legalized queer-bashing, political and police harassment and injustice, and genocidal activity against gay and lesbian people. It is our freedom, and nothing less, that is being attacked. Lesbians in particular have got to understand what is happening to gay men, because if we do not, underdogs both as women and as lesbians, we will disappear without a trace. Once the "undesirables" are weeded out, and once the community itself weeds out its own "undesirables," it is that much easier for the rest to be weeded out. And by then, it will be too late for all of us.

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#### OUR SEXUALITY, OURSELVES: POWER AND EMPOWERMENT

Patton, Cindy. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 9, Iss. 17, (Nov 14, 1981): 1.

When I set out to write this review, I had no idea of the number of related issues that would appear along the way. I chose to discuss man/boy love because I felt it was an issue that was needlessly dividing people and because I believed the great interest in the subject grew out of a sincere desire to understand all of the ramifications of sexuality. I soon realized that we have no good vocabulary for discussing sexuality and that we want an answer, now. I found that I had to limit my discussion to what I saw as the important question for the gay and lesbian and feminist movements at this time -- sexuality and power. I personally feel that the differences between men's and women's sexuality, and lesbian/gay and hetero sexuality pose such important questions about socialization, repression, and power that relationships between men and girls should be treated separately. The purpose of this book and this review is to discuss the nature of man/boy love and how it fits into the current political climate.

The topic of man/boy love has come under scrutiny recently by feminists, pro-feminist leftist men, the christian right, politicized m/bl supporters, and the men and boys themselves. The images tossed around range from huge cocks descending viciously on unsuspecting adolescent anuses, to kindly bespectabled men cuddling tousled-haired boys in front of a tv (that's television). I'm tempted to say "and somewhere in between lies the truth." But that would be a further lie, and one which neatly duplicates the logic which has distorted the discussion of

sexuality for our whole lives. Sexual practices and feelings are not monolithic, diametrically opposed, or cast on a continuum. The meaning of particular acts becomes hopelessly obscured in the broader landscape of "sexuality," that black hole of our feelings, fantasies, and desires that we are only beginning to explore. The dynamic between individuals in a particular relationship is only part of a complex web of relationships; power exists relative to other powers, including social, historical, psychological, and physical power.

Unlike other discussions that have been cast into the political arena, we cannot escape the fact that discussing someone else's sexuality requires exposing some of our own. It is important to understand the restrictions and hurt we have put on ourselves by striving to define a "correct" sexuality and sexual practice that gets rid of the pain we have all experienced in this culture. It is essential to remember, as we embark on our pointy-headed discussions of sexuality, that we are talking about real human beings, right now. Wishing that we could be free from sexual expressions and attitudes that we inherited from our culture will not make our troublesome sexuality go away. We can legitimately discuss the quality of our relationships in order to combat the "isms" we have identified as wrong in our analysis. But we must keep foremost in our minds that our very sexuality has been shaped by the society we have taken it upon ourselves to criticize. We do not leave our political meetings and go to bed (or to the bushes, or johns, or wherever) to a world that is magically free from the dynamics of class, color, age, power, etc. Having discussed some of the problems of understanding sexuality, I want to focus on man/boy love. But because I believe this discussion is only a part of a larger, essential discussion of sexuality, I will return to these problems again.

The Age Taboo: Gay Male Sexuality, Power and Consent, represents an excellent collection of view-points. We hear from m/bl practitioners and apologists; feminists who range from perplexed, to critical, to opposed; socialist leftists who are trying to cast the whole issue into a materialistic context; and most importantly, the boys (and in one case an "anonymous militant young dyke"). What the collection lacks is a good feminist analysis that critically incorporates the radical new ideas of sexuality. Tsang also fails to adequately place the various arguments in the broader context of sexual politics. The book as a whole, while informative, is very somber and lifeless. The only time we get a sense of the joy of these relationships is in the interviews with the boys. It is a shame that all of the discussions of man/boy love are serious and project a sense that we are embarking on dangerous territory -- it becomes all too easy to overlook the simple fact that these men and boys are enjoying each other's company. We are provided with a body of material that explores man/boy love in a political context, which will, hopefully, move the debate past the level of vitriolic attack and blind defense, and on to a level where the real issues may be sorted out.

Included in this volume is a statement of philosophy from Youth Liberation in New York, who believe that "children should have the right to control their own bodies," and are "immediately suspicious of anyone who claims to protect children by restricting their rights (including their "right" to be a prostitute or to have sex with an adult)." They acknowledge an inherent potential for abuse in sexual relationships between adults and children, but offer that "the only effective way to avoid abuse is to educate adults to be sensitive to the needs and desires of children and lessen the general level of sexual repression in the society."

Members of the Gay Left Collective push this analysis further by examining the historical "category" called childhood. They suggest (along with many others who have written on the subject of childhood) that our notion of childhood innocence arises roughly in the 18th century and at the same time that the economic and social structure was intensifying the

definition of women as wives and mothers. Child labor laws and the mysterious and ever increasing "need" for extended years of education served to reinforce the power of the capitalist society that these phenomenon served and enhance the notion of childhood innocence and a-sexuality. Jamie Gough of the GLC concludes from this analysis that it is these social constructions of reality (i.e., the myths of innocence and the helplessness and a-sexualness of children) that oppress children, not adult/child relationships, per se.

The book examines consent primarily in terms of the age of consent laws, the extent to which they are differentially enforced (gay men are arrested for sex with boys far out of proportion to hetero men's arrests for sex with girls), and the malleability of the actual age of consent (in the Puritan America, the age of consent for girls was 10, there was no age of consent for boys). While changing the age of consent laws is probably essential for the ultimate liberation of children, focusing on this issue obscures the real issue of power.

A good, informed analysis of power in our relationships with each other and society is essential to any movement for social change. A lot of time and energy is spent discussing who has power over whom in sexual relationships with little attention to kinds of power and networks of power. Many of us assume that because men are bigger, richer, and more socially mobile than boys that they have power over them. This is an insult to the intelligence and ability of boys as well as a diversion from the fact that these men are often using their social power to liberate boys from oppressive homes that stifle their sexual expression. Time and again, men have expressed fondness and appreciation for the men who helped them express their gayness when they were boys and their only other frame of reference was their homophobic parents. Women, too, almost invariably point to a gym teacher, youth group leader, or older female relative upon whom they attached their lesbian fantasies, and, in some cases, with whom they actually developed sexual relationships. It is the power of gay adults to give support (and sometimes sex) to gay youths that gets the Moral Majority up in arms. To them, there is no difference between an avowed boy lover, and a gay teacher. While I do not want to deny that adults have social, psychological, and, in some cases, physical power (especially in the case of parents, whose beating of their children has only recently been considered assault), but, based on my discussions with a number of gay men, I do not think that boy lovers often abuse that power. The real abuse goes on in the family, an institution that some feminists who criticize boy lovers conveniently forget is intrinsically under attack in their own analysis.

In discussing man/boy love with several patient friends, one man related to me his experience as a boy. He was quite shaken (still) by the extent to which he had destroyed a man's life by "telling on him," and the guilt from this experience is the enduring emotion -- not the joy, or wonder, or excitement at discovering the nature of his sexuality. He had "told on" the man he was becoming involved with because the man had wanted more than the boy was ready to give. Frightened of confronting the man, and raised to obey adults, the boy spent weeks worrying, then finally told his parents. What became clear, and troubling, to me was not that the man had such a great potential for setting the schedule of intimacy with the boy, but the fact that the boy's only recourse was to turn to an even more authoritarian power -- his parents -- in order to sort out what he wanted to do. The boy had no power; the adults settled the whole situation. Power is a double-edged sword, it gives and takes with one swipe. But society, and the great weight of its mores, has far more power than any individual, especially any individual who is conducting his/her sexual life outside of the prescribed arena.

When we discuss power in any relationship, we must accept the reality that people always have differing levels of different kinds of power. Feminists have tended to accept the definitions of power as society gives them, i.e., any thing men have is powerful. Actually, there are many kinds of power that are not valued by society, and which we, therefore, tend not to think about or exercise. The myth of power is that some have "it" and everyone else is powerless. Society use that myth to keep us from fighting back. We need to challenge that myth by empowering people, creating alternatives that help them use the power they have -- women and kids can leave home, if we give them the support and somewhere to go; we can fight back against people who attack us on the street, if we will learn how to fight and organize safety patrols; people will leave unfair or unworkable relationships, if we give them social options and break-down the sanctity of "coupling."

On an individual level, to say that the man has the power over the boy, or the "top" has the power over the "bottom," or the upper class person has the power over the poor person, does not do justice to the positive sharing of power that is often a part of these relationships. In relationships where two people start out "equal," there is probably less of the learning and discovery of a whole different view of the world that takes place in relationships between people who are substantially different. Why should we think of man/boy lovers any differently?

It is clear (just because Freud said it, that doesn't make it a lie) that our sexuality begins developing early and has the potential to be expressed in an enormous number of forms. But it is society (as a cursory look at cross-cultural studies will show) that defines the meaning of sexual practice and streamlines sexual development to fit into boxes that support social needs. One might justifiably ask whether capitalist society represses adolescent sexuality precisely because it is this sexuality that is most likely to be diverse in its object and un-assuming about the "morality" of what they are doing. It is, then, by being told what we ought not to do that we finally arrive at the narrow space of what we should or can do. Adults that do anything else reap psychic penalties, or if caught, imprisonment.

Specific sexual practices serve different social functions -- butt-fucking, for example, serves as an initiation rite in some cultures; as a means of controlling prisoners in others (our own for example); and as mere sexual enjoyment in others. One must ask first, what group of people are we talking about, what do they do, and what does it mean for them? As I tried to write this article, I became aware of my own need to know what it is men and boys do together. I was troubled, because I dismiss that question as stupid when it is asked of me, as a lesbian. But at the same time, I felt that my ideas of what this type of relationship might consist of had come either from the straight press or from NAMBLA statements.

Finally, I just marched up to some people and proposed the question. What I got in reply is what I have also responded to the same question when it was directed at me -- lots of very different things. There are probably very few men who would even suggest anality to a boy; one man I spoke to said a boy would have to convince a man to engage in anal intercourse. Some men merely "wrestle" with boys and engage in little more affectionate expression of their sexual feelings than the average scoutmaster. (Indeed, the many same-sex institutions for adult/child relating deserve a hell of a lot more scrutiny than anyone has given them.) Much more common is cocksucking by the men (and this, when you actually read the court cases, is what most men are arrested for, though the media tries to put over very different images). But to analyze the particular acts does little more than break myths, and actually obscures the many other aspects of men's relationships with boys. In most cases, the men take

the boys out into society, to movies, plays, operas in some circles, and generally provide for them a caring relationship. Tom Reeves often discusses his relationships with lower class boys in Baltimore (with no analysis of class save a rather patronizing hint that these wonderful boys are free from cultural inhibitions about sex) but in a way that idealizes these relationships and makes them seem as unreal as those highly-touted, politically correct dyke monogamies.

Fortunately, others who are not so close to the subject of man/boy love have analyzed the political climate that is provoking the current attack on man/boy lovers.

Gayle Rubin has raised questions about giving the state power over sex when "the media and the police betray an incapacity to distinguish between rape and consent, lovers and mobsters, children of five and 'children' of seventeen." The evidence seems strong that the resurgent right (and quite possibly some of the tactically militant feminists who oppose pornography) has resulted in an attack on feminists and lesbians and gays, by way of sex and pornography laws. NOW has come out against "pederasty" and the National Lawyers' Guild has (in carefully worded language that is, I think, actually much more supportive than some have claimed) more or less absolved themselves of responsibility for defending man/boy lovers.

A great deal of debate has centered around how we as a movement (actually several movements -- socialist, gay, women's) are going to respond to the attack on man/boy lovers and the phantasmagoric "kiddie porn" industry. The lesbian and gay movements (and I hope the others will develop parallel analysis) cannot abandon people with non-"vanilla" sexual expressions. To the resurgent right, boy lovers are no different than the rest of us -- we all "recruit" -- and our crime is simply being queer. It is absolutely essential to be clear that when the state cracks down on kiddie porn, boy lovers, s/m folks, etc., that they are not attacking special brands of deviant sexuality -- they are attacking non-reproductive sex in toto. They are smart enough to know that they have to pick us off one at a time; we have to be smart enough to realize that homosexuality -- in a business suit, or not -- will never be respectable or acceptable to the vast majority of people as they live and think today.

When I started writing the review of this book, I imagined that I might write the statement on man/boy love to date (silly me!). Instead, I find myself wishing more information were available. If we are serious about understanding childhood and adult sexuality, we must talk to men and boys who love each other, honestly remember our own desires as children, and most importantly, talk to the kids. No one seems to want to go to them -- are we afraid of their warm, open sexuality? or are we still so ageist that we don't think they'll have anything important to say? We might also talk to the men who are in prison for sex with boys and find out about the punishment they suffer -- ridicule, rape, "protective" solitary confinement. Repressive society's views of "criminals" (ie., us) is never so clear as it is in prison.

The issues behind man/boy love are not, in the end, whether we will support them or not, but rather, can we stand to look closely at our own sexuality. We were once those same children, languishing in our queerness in families that did not want us to be sexual. Can we extend our analysis and demand a child's right to be free enough to make informed sexual decisions? Can we get over our own societally induced fear of childhood sexuality? We can make no radical changes in the terms of our adult sexuality until we can free children from the years of pressure to de-sexualize and straight-sexualize them, and this should be the turf for our debate. How we empower people will determine how we deal with power in our relationship to each other and society. Race, class, age, any difference will take on new meaning when the



people who have been powerless finally get power. Until then, things ain't gonna be easy, but we need so desperately to learn from each other, that at least we have to try.

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#### PEDOPHILE GROUP MEETS IN FRANCE

Thorstad, David. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 9, Iss. 24, (Jan 9, 1982): 7.

Some 50 persons attended a two-day conference organized by the Groupe de Recherche pour une Enfance Differente (GRED - the Research Group for an Alternate Childhood) held here on November 28 and 29, the first such gathering of French pedophiles.

The conference was held in the Paris headquarters of the Comite d'Urgence Anti-Repression Homosexuelle (CUARH - Ad Hoc Committee against Gay Repression). The CUARH, to which GRED belongs, recently adopted a position in favor of abolishing all laws against consensual sex, including age of consent laws.

Topics addressed by the conference included attitudes of the left toward pedophilia, child sexuality, the international scope of the pedophile movement and its relation to the gay liberation movement. With the exception of a small number of lesbian pedophiles, who expressed alienation from the feminist movement, all the participants were men. Most were homosexual pedophiles.

The conference decided to launch a regular magazine, the first issue of which was just off the press, and consolidated GRED's structure" by regions. It also heard analyses of the children's liberation and pedophile struggles from representatives of the pedophile and man/boy love movements in Belgium, Holland, England and the United States.

The participants agreed to develop a closer collaboration among pedophile groups, particularly within the International Gay Association.

During the weekend, a public rally was held featuring statements of support from a woman representing the leftist labor union the Confederation General du Travail; a gay doctor; a lawyer who has represented boy-lovers; the writers Gabriel Matzneff and Rene Scherer; the Dutch sexual freedom advocate Dr. Fritz Bernard; and representatives of the British Paedophile Information Exchange and the North American Man/Boy Love Association.

Letter can be sent to GRED c/o SEP, 1 rue Keller, 75011 Paris, France.

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#### COMMUNITY VOICES

Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 9, Iss. 26, (Jan 23, 1982): 4.

children or youth

Dear GCN,

I am writing in response to the letter from Juana Maria Paz (Jan. 2-9, '81). I appreciate her letter, and I appreciate many of the things she wrote. However, she makes some assumptions

that I am not sure are entirely valid. At the same time she raises some questions that demand answers, and I, too, would like to see them answered.

Ms. Paz writes about child/adult relations, and perhaps she intended to ignore youth/adult relations, but I am not sure. I am thinking about NAMBLA, which apparently has brought on the controversy in the first place. In the phrase "boy love" the word "boy" is ambivalent. We speak of a ten-year-old boy and also of a sixteen-year-old boy. But the ten-year-old is a child, whereas the sixteen-year-old is a youth. I wonder therefore whether all who write about "boy love" are writing about the same thing? I think not, and perhaps careful distinctions in language would make some difference in other people's reactions.

I am not sure that it is valid to assume that adults who seek relationships with children or youths do so because they have become frustrated with other adults. My limited contact with "boy" lovers would seem to indicate that they were never attracted to other adults for love or sex. Nor am I sure that it is a valid assumption that an adult male will necessarily penetrate a "boy" either anally or orally.

At the same time I acknowledge that a number of gay males from the Caribbean have told me that they were initiated into anal sex, when they were 10-12 years old, by older brothers or cousins. One friend from the Dominican Republic told me that when he was 16 he used to have anal sex with a boy who was 8 or 10 years old at the time they began. Also, some years ago I became acquainted with two men in Spain (one 25, the other mid-thirties) who sought anal sex with boys 10-12 years old. Through them I learned that many such young boys were thus available for liaisons with men throughout Spain. In this respect, an American friend told me that when he lived in Spain, mothers of young boys who had formed liaisons with men would go to interview the men to be sure their sons were being adequately compensated financially as well as to be sure that their sons would be treated kindly. I do not understand the sexual preference of adults for children or for very young youths, though when it comes to youths I understand that some can be more precocious at 13 or 14 than many are at 18.

I, too, would like to hear what the children/youths have to say about child/adult or youth/adult relationships. But how can they tell us? Do any children read GCN? If so, can they write to the editor? I am thinking about the pathetic letters published in GCN recently from a 16-year-old youth and his homophobic father. I would like to see more calm and sensible discussion of this highly controversial subject. Like Ms. Paz, I can listen better with an open mind when the hysteria is absent.

Sincerely,

Glenn L. Sitzman

Clarion, PA

the positive side

Dear GCN,

I am writing this after having just read your December 26, 1981 issue. In the Community Voices section was a letter written by Richard Steinman which referred to the Body Politic and an article called "Men Loving Boys/Boys Loving Men."

Mr. Steinman seems to feel that TBP should never have published that article. I wonder how he would feel if the same reaction was given to an article on homosexuality. As for myself, I'm glad that TBP did publish this article, as it brought out some issues which needed being brought out.

At the time TBP published "Men Loving Boys/ Boys Loving Men," I was in senior high school and had very little knowledge about pedophilia or homosexuality. I heard about the controversy over it and managed to get a hold of a copy. Which is probably one of the best things I ever did, since I helped me deal with my own feelings of attractions towards a friend whose age was five years different from my own.

It also let me know that there were other people "out there" who felt like I did, or rather had feelings like mine.

I personally do not recall the article being sexually exciting or arousing "to the point of masturbation and orgasm." Perhaps if I had an over-active imagination, I may have. Anyways, I feel that "Men Loving Boys/Boys Loving Men" was very informative, tried to show the positive side of the subject (something a lot of people seem to be afraid to consider or deal with), and brought an issue out in the open which needed to be in the open. In fact, I would even be glad to see the article or parts of it reprinted in GCN.

I believe in discussion about pedophilia and the age of consent. One question that's always baffled me is why is there such a range of ages of consent across the nation? From ten to 21, I believe. Also, from the reading and studying of sexology I've done it appears that more and more professional sexologists are finding nothing harmful in sex between boys and men. They are finding that the harm comes in when the police or other (especially homophobics) become involved or aware of it.

Personally, it saddens me when I read about things like the case of Jacques Duque (GCN, Vol. 9, No. 23) in France, where even the prosecution could not find any force, coercion or profit for Duque involved.

What do you call a boy who likes older men? Whatever it is, that is what I was in high school. Even now I enjoy being with older men.

A Brother

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#### NAMBLA HOLDS CONFERENCE IN PHILADELPHIA

Killinger, Marc. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 10, Iss. 14, (Oct 23, 1982): 3.

PHILADELPHIA -- The North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) held its sixth membership conference during the weekend of October 9 amidst bitter controversy its presence had engendered in the local lesbian and gay community (see accompanying article).

The conference was attended by 65 out of a total of 650 members and by 15 observers from throughout the United States and Canada. Much of its energy was focused on internal reorganization and the setting of priorities, but there were also major discussions on youth

liberation and ageism in the organization, age of consent and attendance at a NAMBLA-sponsored forum on sexual freedom Sunday evening.

Although little time was devoted to the subject in general except regarding how to restructure the organization, it was clear that the increased police surveillance and legal harassment of boy lovers was on the minds of many at the conference. While it was announced at the beginning of the conference that three NAMBLA members who had been under threat of prosecution or arrested for relations with minors were now free, the estimate by one member of at least 5,000 men in jail for similar offenses was generally agreed upon. NAMBLA came under concentrated attack beginning last July and several steering committee members are now in jail. Outgoing spokesperson and founder Tom Reeves said he felt that "the FBI had set out to destroy NAMBLA in the same way they set out to destroy the Black Panthers and the Socialist Workers Party. It's the same issue."

The conference, held in Philadelphia's Center City at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center, was under surveillance Sunday afternoon by men taking pictures and using what appeared to be a listening device. One of the same men was seen passing the center as the conference ended on Sunday. Reeves said early in the conference that it would be "an introspective one which would concentrate on what internal structure would be best in light of the FBI harassment."

Shortly after the opening announcement, NAMBLA held its first closed executive session ever to iron out undisclosed financial and other conflicts.

Most of the Sunday plenary session was devoted to discussing proposals for restructuring the organization. In the end a new steering committee and set of new officers were elected rather than any radical new structure, and some restrictions on the officers' ability to make decisions without consulting the membership were passed. Newly elected spokesperson Floyd Conaway said after the conference that NAMBLA "had made a lot of progress in renewing our spirit and democratic process." He said that the geographic distribution of steering committee membership was significantly broadened and that newer people had risen to leadership positions in the organization.

In addition, the 20-member steering committee worked on Monday to implement a plan for topic-oriented working groups to address a variety of areas decided on during the conference. The most popular topics included:

- 1) Supporting each other, sharing information and reaching out to isolated individuals.
- 2) Financial planning and security.
- 3) Developing a vision of what NAMBLA has to offer society.

A resolution was passed that reaffirmed the goals and purpose of NAMBLA. According to the constitution, these include "building a support network for men and boys involved in any mutually consensual relationship, educating the public on the benevolent nature of man/boy love, cooperating with the lesbian, gay and other movements for sexual liberation and supporting the liberation of persons of all ages from sexual prejudice and oppression."

No additional resolution regarding age of consent laws was brought before the plenary on Sunday after Saturday's small-group discussion process resulted in virtual consensus on keeping the organization's position unchanged. Some members had come to the conference hoping to get the organization to adopt some minimal age of consent at puberty mostly for practical and strategic reasons, since more people can accept sex between teenagers and men than between boys and men. Others wanted NAMBLA to endorse pedophilia more strongly. There was general agreement, however, with the position David Thorstad spoke for in a conference discussion paper: "NAMBLA would not be subject to less oppression from the state if only it would join the con game of 'Pick an Age of Consent.' We should support any lowering of existing ages of consent ... but we should always point out the limitations and the injustice of it for those under the age ... The entire concept is based on property rights, not protection, and it is NAMBLA's position that the children should not be the private property of anyone ... It would dilute our message, which is that the state stay out of consensual sex."

Reeves added in an interview that the NAMBLA position is basically a sexual freedom position. "We affirm that sex is good, in and of itself," he said, "as long as there is no coercion or violence of any kind, and no psychological manipulation either, or misuse of authority; all those are wrong. But they have nothing to do with sex. Those things can be done in any field of life; you can do it sexually, you can do it in terms of learning, in teaching, you can do it in terms of being a policeman ... As far as sex in and of itself, we believe it is good, healthy, natural for everybody ... The issue of consent is real but to make the issue of consent a sexual debate is what's wrong."

Reeves said that NAMBLA has emphasized that most of its members relate to teenagers rather than young boys and hence that it does not call itself a pedophile organization, but takes a "radical position" on sexual freedom, including the rights of pedophiles.

Two of the three teenaged members of the outgoing steering committee spoke on a panel about youth liberation and ageism in NAMBLA. One young man detailed the goals of youth liberation in general, including the problems of "over structuralization" of young people's lives and the need to reform schooling and to free youths from parental power. Both discussed concrete ways that NAMBLA could be more open to young people's points of view.

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#### PAEDOPHILIA; A RADICAL CRITIQUE

Califia, Pat. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 10, Iss. 35, (Mar 26, 1983): 1.

Paedophilia: The Radical Case by Tom O'Carroll Alyson Publications P.O. Box 2783, Boston, MA 02208 1982, 284 pp., \$8.95.

Paedophilia: The Radical Case was first published in Great Britain by Peter Owen, Ltd., in a prohibitively expensive, hardbound edition. Its appearance in paperback (with a new foreword by Hubert Kennedy and a new afterword by Dan Franklin) from America's Alyson Publications makes the book much more accessible.

Pedophilia is probably the most controversial facet of human sexual behavior. Even folks who can discuss transsexuality or sadomasochism with some degree of equanimity find themselves sputtering with rage at the very thought of an adult "molesting" (always

"molesting," never "having sex with" or "giving pleasure to") a child. Given this atmosphere of hysteria and bigotry, O'Carroll is to be complimented for producing a calm and reasonable book.

I doubt that this work will have much impact on those who are deeply prejudiced against cross-generational sex. After all, the true bigot is uneducable. However, if you believe that you ought to study any political issue (even pedophilia) before you adopt a position on it, I do not see how you can fail to be moved and possibly even radicalized by Paedophilia.

This is because O'Carroll has wisely aimed his book at movement people - an audience with a conscience and a commitment to social change. I think most of us become politically active out of desperation, because it is impossible for us to live happily within the "normal" range of choices, and because there seems to be no other way to improve the quality of our lives. I don't see how anyone who became radicalized by their own personal misery could fail to empathize with O'Carroll as he describes his coming out as a pedophile, his work in the fledgling Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE), and his subsequent imprisonment for "conspiring to corrupt the public morals" - and, by extension, with his cause. Despite hostility and contempt, physical violence, the loss of his job, stigma, and even loss of his physical freedom, O'Carroll has managed to achieve self-acceptance, even self-love. It is an inspiring story, and an excellent antidote to self-pity.

Paedophilia is, however, not really an autobiography, but a polemic. The book does get bogged down from time to time in dry argument. More narrative material about the lives of sexually active young people and their adult partners would have made it more readable. However, it may be that including more personal, sexually explicit material would have endangered O'Carroll's friends and acquaintances, or even gotten the book banned for obscenity. And he does include more detailed information about the content of cross-generational sex than most non-pedophile readers will be prepared to cope with.

The strength of the book is O'Carroll's willingness to confront several of the most sensitive and difficult issues surrounding pedophilia. For example, even though relationships between adults and adolescents are the most common and most easily defended type of cross-generational sex, O'Carroll does not restrict himself to arguing for decriminalization of sex between adults and older teenagers. Instead, he argues that the child's willingness to have a sexual experience is the criterion for whether or not that experience is acceptable - not the age of the child. He summarizes the little bit of sex research which is available on the sexuality of prepubescent children. These data indicate that even very young children are capable of experiencing orgasm. The author also has some interesting research findings about the type of sex that usually goes on between a pedophile and a consenting child. (Sex is usually restricted to fondling, not penetration, and the focus is on giving the child pleasure, not on the adult's orgasm.) O'Carroll also deals extensively with the objection that children may be capable of having sex, but that doesn't mean they need or want it.

And he has the courage to describe cross-generational relationships which are less than ideal. This may upset some readers, but his point is well taken. No relationship is perfect, and most of us have a higher standard for interactions between adults and young people than other types of encounters. For example, before most people can accept a child's consent to engage in sex as valid, the child has to be fully informed about the meaning of the sex act and all of the possible negative consequences. Very few sexual affairs between adults could meet this criterion.

However, there are other equally critical issues which O'Carroll chooses to ignore. He says on page 11, "...incestuous paedophilia would appear to be serious in view of the questions incest raises about power in family relationships; the issue of power is considered in the context of paedophilia generally, but I feel that a chapter on incest would be more of a 'must' in a book on the strengths and weaknesses of 'the family' than one in paedophilia per se."

This begs the question. Paedophilia and incest are overlapping issues. The incest taboo has a very strong influence on how people feel about other types of sex between adults and young people. Perhaps O'Carroll chose to sidestep this area because it would have involved him in a radical critique of the nuclear family, and such a critique would probably have made the book even more controversial. I think this was a mistake. It is difficult to understand why paedophilia upsets people so much without understanding the role that sexual repression plays in keeping the power structure of the nuclear family intact. How can society liberate children without drastic alterations in family life?

It would be interesting to have O'Carroll's comments on this, particularly since there are widely differing positions on the traditional family within the movement to liberate adult/youth sex. Some pedophiles tend to romanticize the family since it is one situation where adults are allowed a high level of intimacy with children. The newsletter of the Childhood Sensuality Circle (CSC) has published several articles which suggest that if you added incest to the nuclear family, you could "cure" sexual problems like homosexuality and sadomasochism, and prevent nuclear war as well. CSC rarely challenges the subordinate role of women in the family. By his silence, O'Carroll seems to be giving his consent to a conservative politic on the family.

He also ducks the question about whether there are basic differences between heterosexual and homosexual cross-generational relationships. He is supportive of both, and throughout the book he uses the pronoun "she" to refer to a child, unless he is discussing a specific man/boy relationship. However, almost all of the relationships he describes are between men and boys, not men and girls. This is really a book about man/boy love, not paedophilia in general. And he seems to have met only male pedophiles. Female pedophiles are rare, but they are not nonexistent. O'Carroll, like most gay male pedophiles, theorizes that women sublimate their sexual interest in young people by having children. This is intellectual laziness. Women have a genital sexuality, and dressing your baby up is not the same thing as having a sexual experience with a minor. Sadly, women in general are pretty invisible in this book. O'Carroll uses the generic term "feminists" whenever he lists the enemies of paedophilia, but he doesn't seem to have much information about the sex debates within feminism and the variety of positions that feminists have taken on this and other controversial sexual issues. He isn't anti-feminist; he just hasn't done his homework.

There's another area where he hasn't done his homework, and that's sadomasochism. The only book he'd read about S/M is Robert Stoller's *Perversion: The Erotic Form of Hatred*. This is a silly pseudoscientific work that contributes about as much to sexology as Krafft-Ebing and Florence Rush. O'Carroll repeatedly uses the term "sadomasochistic" as an epithet and compares this type of sex unfavorably to the "gentle, loving" sex which takes place between adults and children. He assumes that S/M people feel hostility toward one another, that S/M is the result of childhood trauma (his favorite example is parents beating children), and that S/M porn is violent and can encourage people to become sexually violent. This is annoying and weakens O'Carroll's credibility.

My most serious criticism of Paedophilia is that it is not radical enough. O'Carroll does not challenge the right of the state to regulate sexuality. This is most clear in his chapter "Towards More Sensible Laws," in which he presents the PIE's recommendations for reforming Great Britain's age of consent laws. O'Carroll says, "I want to suggest immediate, pragmatic steps that can safely be taken in the United Kingdom as it is (and, with modification, in other western societies), not as I would wish it to be... I want to show that what we in PIE have to say is not just a lot of indulgent theory that would never work except in impossible conditions of an ideal society, but that we have our feet firmly planted on the ground." (p. 106)

PIE proposes abolishing age of consent laws. O'Carroll says this is consistent with PIE's belief that there should be a "general freedom, upheld by the law, for individuals to engage in any sexual activities that they freely choose." (p. 111) [However, PIE also accepts that "it should be an offence to indulge in any sexual activity or display where it can be observed by others and cause them annoyance." (p. 111) Apparently a critique of laws against public sex is not within the scope of this book or PIE.]

Rather than an arbitrary age of consent, PIE proposes creating age groups, with the right of the law to intervene diminishing as the children within each group become older. Below the age of 4, PIE assumes that even though children may enjoy sex, they cannot express their consent; therefore, sexual contact with them will be forbidden. This is inconsistent with O'Carroll's position that any sex which is not offensive, unwelcome or painful to the child is good. I wonder why, if parents can feed and clothe their children without permission, they necessarily need the blessing of the state to masturbate them at night while reading them a bedtime story.

In age groups above 4, sex between young people and adults would be permitted. However, the child, a parent or other concerned adult could bring a complaint if they felt that sexual activity with a particular adult was undesirable. This complaint would be handled civilly, not criminally (unless a child complained that he or she had been forced or coerced), by a court which could issue an injunction against the adult seeking further contact with the child, if the relationship was found to be not in the child's best interest.

This proposal is certainly better than our present system, where minors are simply presumed to have no ability to give any consent to engage in sex, and their adult partners can receive long prison terms for behavior that is neither violent nor harmful. However, it leaves power over the child's sexuality in the hands of adults who can bring a complaint against a pedophile, which is no little threat, even if no prison sentence can result. It also leaves the final decision about whether or not the relationship is good for the child up to the courts.

PIE's proposals are radical only because the majority will adamantly reject them. Surely this is not how most pedophiles want their sexuality to be treated by the state. It is absolutely essential to lobby for reform of the sex laws. But it is next to impossible to liberalize such laws, and once a sex law is on the books, it tends to stay there for decades, if not centuries. Given this harsh political reality, it is a mistake to begin a lobbying effort with a compromised agenda. The gay movement has worked to decriminalize sodomy, not to make it possible for outraged heterosexuals to bring a civil complaint against "offensive" or "blatant" homosexuals. No sexual minority should lobby to create a state bureaucracy with the power to intervene in consensual behavior.



To balance that out, O'Carroll's treatment of the issue of "kiddy porn" is a delight. He points out that making this material illegal creates conditions under which child models for pornography are terribly and cruelly exploited. He demythologizes the entire topic by candidly describing what type of material is actually available and what role it plays in his sexuality. He suggests that all sexually explicit material be decriminalized, and that the government fund "artists working in the field of erotica, including child erotica, thus encouraging the emergence of really first-rate noncommercial material." (p. 202) This material should deliberately be priced to undercut the market for material produced only to make a profit, without regard for the feelings of the models or the consumers. He also suggests that in a legitimate sex industry, child workers (like other models) could be protected by laws which would insure they receive a minimum wage and decent working conditions.

Paedophilia: The Radical Case is an honest, well-written, accessible book that provides not food, but a feast, for thought. I hope it reaches the wide audience it deserves.

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## YOUTH LIBERATION

Doherty, Will. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 11, Iss. 26, (Jan 21, 1984): 5.

The North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) adopted unanimously a "Resolution on the Liberation of Children and Youth" last month in Boston's Arlington St. Church at the seventh conference of the organization.

The resolution resulted from a proposal of a NAMBLA member (known as "J. Pedo") and the work of an informal committee composed primarily of participants in the panel on the liberation of youth and children. "J. Pedo" suggested that the resolution draw inspiration from the platform of Ann Arbor Youth Liberation written in the early 70s. Bill Andriette, who appeared in GCN (See GCN Vol. 11, No. 3) when Telluride House, a Cornell dormitory which provides free room and board to exceptional students, withdrew their residence invitation to him because he was a member of NAMBLA, scrawled the first draft of the preamble on some rather scruffy-looking scraps of paper. Mark McHarry synthesized the remainder of the resolution from three sources. Then, the committee debated the fine points of the resolution at a hastily-convened "resolution convention" between inquiries from overworked waiters and bites of lukewarm french toast at Cafe Calypso here in Boston.

Strange that an organization that comprises the most dangerous child molesters known to the mass media should approve unanimously such a document. Here is the introductory paragraph of the youth liberation resolution:

Young people in our society are denied nearly all the human rights adults possess, and are presumed to be irrational and incapable. The policy of protection toward children growing out of this philosophy assumes that parents or their state-appointed substitutes can only relate to children from the standpoint of benevolent domination. Children are subject to abuse as a result of this hierarchical relationship. Their humanity is demeaned and their growth stunted. Since children possess rights because they are human beings, and since these rights are being denied largely for the convenience and economic advantage of adults, NAMBLA subscribes to the following resolution to empower young people..."

The resolution continues by highlighting specific aspects of youth and child liberation including: self-determination, equal civil rights, alternate home environments, self-education, "the right to be free from corporal punishment," economic power, responsive design (respect for size and a need for "safe space"), the right to information, and end to racism and sexism, and sexual self-determination.

Ironically, the individuals who condemn consensual cross-generational relationships because they allegedly harm children often support forced schooling and corporal punishment of youth, as well as the incarceration of hundreds of youths under laws which do not pertain to adults. Ironical also that a congressional subcommittee report of 1978 could point out that:

The expansion of constitutional liberties achieved through judicial action in the 1960's and 1970's did not stop with the rights of adults. Children were held protected to some degree by the Constitution as well."

Their meaning is clear. Not until the last 20 years did children gain partial protection under the constitution, and even today, as with women, people of color, lesbians, gays, and other persecuted groups, we cannot believe that "all men [people] are created equal" (that is, of course, if they were created at all).

No doubt, career-hungry "justice" officials and hypocritical media mongers will continue to spout their anti-sex propaganda and their hysterically negative portrayal of NAMBLA and, more generally, of those who participate in cross-generational sensuality. But I hope the more reasonable critics will modulate the tone of their comments and consider the matter of child and youth sexuality, as well as consensual cross-generational sexuality, with an open mind.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Even within our own community, we face unreasoned condemnation, as the following excerpt from a New York City News (a New York gay paper) article by Grant Duay III demonstrates. Under the heading "Man/Boy Hate," one paragraph reads:

A key to understanding NAMBLA came at the start of Saturday afternoon's session when Bill Andirette, on behalf of the steering committee, presented to Bob Rhodes a golden plaque honoring his five years' service to NAMBLA. Rhodes stated that it was founder Tom Reeves who recruited him and that 'if I hadn't been doing this I'd probably be organizing and running science fiction conventions.' That there is really no difference between NAMBLA and a bizarre sci-fi fantasy nightmare was completely confirmed later during a youth liberation panel.

Duay proves by inspection that there is no difference between his writing and the shabbiest yellow journalism.

Duay also comments that "NAMBLA has the gall to beg the gay community for support" and cites the "FBI/NAMBLA tango" as "a perverse symbiotic relationship" between cross-generational lovers and the FBI. On the front page of the same issue of this illustrious publication, the editors kindly reprint "by permission of Gay Community News" an "artist's conception of [a] boylover," i.e. an illustration of a man squeezing a boy with one fist and shoving another into his mouth, which GCN used along with Mark McHarry's review of *The Man They Called A Monster*.

Many gay people favor compulsory schooling and conscription. We often ignore the plight of the youth dominated by parents in the home and banned from the bars, in many areas the only meeting place of our community. Yes, NAMBLA and the movement for child and youth liberation does have the "gall" to demand support from the lesbian and gay community. For we, as cross-generational lovers and youth liberationists are inseparable from it.

Youth liberationists must consciously merge with the other movements for liberation, and vice versa, before anyone can unlink the chains of power and consent which bind the people of our society to our collective oppression.

Thanks to Lisa Orlando, Mark McHarry and Ann Arbor Youth Liberation for help with this piece. A list of reading on the topic of youth and child liberation follows:

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Farson, Richard. *Birthrights*. NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1974. Goodman, Paul. *Growing Up Absurd*. NY: Vintage Books of Random House. 1956.

Holt, John. *Escape from Childhood*. Holt Associates, Inc. (729 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02116) 1981.

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Tsang, Daniel (ed). *The Age Taboo: Gay Male Sexuality, Power and Consent*. Boston: Alyson Publications. 1981.

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*Resolution on the Liberation of Children and Youth*. North American Man-Boy Love Association. Available from: NAMBLA, PO Box 174, Midtown Station, NY, NY 10018.

*Young and Powerful*. Issue 1. Rational Island Publishers. [719 2nd Ave. No., Seattle, WA, 98109.] 1978.

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MINNEAPOLIS FORUM RAISES HACKLES, ISSUES; BOYLOVE CONTROVERSY  
Peck, Claude. *Gay Community News*; Boston Vol. 11, Iss. 50, (Jul 7, 1984): 3.

David Thorstad of the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) spoke here on June 21 amidst an unusually large amount of media attention, controversy, and debate.

The recent arrest here of Children's Theatre Company artistic director John Clark Donahue on charges of sexual contact with boy students contributed to the intense local interest in Thorstad's appearance at a "Forum on Pedophilia," co-sponsored by A Brother's Touch Bookstore and the Minnesota Gay Defense Fund. Several shouting matches and scuffles broke out at the forum, but no injuries were reported.

Organizers of the forum had trouble reserving a room in which to hold the event. Early publicity said it would be at a neighborhood park shelter, but the shelter reneged at the last minute and the location was switched to a local church. The church, after allegedly receiving a telephone bomb threat, informed organizers on the day of the forum that it couldn't be held there.

A meeting room at the Hennepin County Government Center was hastily booked. Despite this confusion over the venue of the forum, a dozen people were there with picket signs before it began. One sign said, "NAMBLA promotes kiddie porn." A small group of lesbians handed out leaflets critical of NAMBLA.

Inside the packed meeting room, Christian demonstrators clutching Bibles walked up and down the aisles trying to convince audience members to repent for their sins. Gays in the audience responded with cat calls and jeers. A local writer named Paul Emond shouted: "I was in the closet for thirty years thanks to people like you. Now shut up!"

Once the forum got "underway, Thorstad outlined NAMBLA's position on intergenerational sexual relations. He attempted to dispel stereotypes concerning the issue. Thorstad's chief points were that man/boy love is most often "sensual, and mutually rewarding," that boys almost never press charges or issue complaints against older boyfriends, and that man/boy lovers are social scapegoats.

Thorstad claimed that man/boy love is distinct from rape or sexual abuse. He blasted straight society for its erotophobia, homophobia, and harassment of boys rumored to have had sexual relations with older men.

Thorstad made numerous references to the John Clark Donahue case. He claimed that it was typical of boy love cases in other parts of the country. The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension assembled its case against Donahue not as the result of complaints from boys, but rather after individual boys had been intensively interrogated and possibly threatened about their involvement with the charismatic theatre director and teacher.

Claiming that "boylovers have always played a very important part in the gay liberation movement," Thorstad chastised those in the gay movement who distance themselves from the controversial issue. He said such people are often unwilling to admit that they know people having satisfactory relationships despite substantial age differences.

Using explicit language, Thorstad described typical sexual encounters between gay men and gay boys, saying that such sex generally takes the form of cuddling, fellatio (mostly performed on the younger person by the "older man), and, only rarely, anal intercourse.

In conclusion, Thorstad termed the Donahue arrest "a shame," and called for abolition of vice squads and an end to state interference in consensual sexual activities of all kinds. He urged people to join NAMBLA.

Carl Chrisman, a leader of local consciousness-raising groups for gay men, also spoke. He addressed the problems faced by young gay people, saying, "all gay children are abused" either physically or psychologically. He talked about murderer John Wayne Gacy to show how society can twist a gay boy into a murdering adult.

A Twin Cities therapist and gay man, Phil Oxman, voiced his opposition to man/boy love. He based his view on clients he has counselled who have been negatively affected by early exposure to sex with adults. Oxman rebutted Thorstad, and received a round of applause from a group of lesbians, when he said that "man/boy love is not a gay liberation issue."

A lengthy question and answer period followed the prepared speeches. Many gay men in the audience emotionally revealed their own stories of childhood sex and coming out. A number of others were critical of psychology and psychologists, claiming they had no right to prescribe what is right for gay people since they were part of a profession that has historically mistreated gay men and lesbians. At one point near the end of the forum, a woman denounced the crowd as "a bunch of cocksucking faggots," and fled the room.

Media coverage, both print and broadcast, was extensive in the Twin Cities. Preliminary reports from people in the gay community indicated the coverage was for the most part balanced and dispassionate.

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#### SPEAKING OUT; AGAINST CENSORSHIP

Tsang, Daniel. Gay Community News; Boston Vol. 12, Iss. 17, (Nov 10, 1984): 5.

My name is Daniel Tsang, and I am speaking in my personal capacity. I am coordinator of the American Library Association's Task Force on Alternatives in Print. I am also the editor and contributor to *The Age Taboo*, a book of essays, pro and con, on sex between men and teenaged boys, published by Alyson Publications in 1981. I am also a freelance writer.

I wish to speak against censorship. For if this committee does propose new legislation to ban books and pamphlets that advocate, describe or discuss sex between adults and minors, then that would be censorship, pure and simple. It would be unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court's *Ferber* decision covers child pornography; what we are discussing here is not pornography. The pamphlet *How to Have Sex with Kids* is not obscene, regardless of what District Attorney Ed Rendell stated yesterday. It is not pornography. It is a sex guide aimed at a group of people the American people views with disgust. Pedophiles, or those sexually attracted to young people, are hated in this society. They are even viewed in a worse light than murderers. Is that sane? Violence is worse than sex. A person who murders a child is viewed less harshly than one who has sex with one. Even where there is mutual consent, affection, caring, and love.

Freud noted many years ago that children are sexual beings. They do have rights, especially over their own body. I agree with Sen. Greenleaf who said Saturday on a TV program that children should be taught to say no to adults - on certain things. Why only certain things? Why shouldn't children have also the right to say no to compulsory education, church going, or going to bed early? Why are we so paranoid over sexuality, that we want them to say no to sex, but not to other things that they have to endure?

Since I support youth liberation, I believe they have a right, not only to say no, but also to say yes - when they really want to have sex. Part of the problem with this whole issue is confusion over what we mean by the term "children." When pedophilia is discussed, many of us get the idea young kids are involved. But in Kensington this past week, the "children" involved were all in their teens, apparently known street hustlers. These so-called "victims" apparently solicited the adults, instead of the other way round.

In my own book I tried to present the views, not only of adults, but also those of the teenagers themselves. Here there is an interview with a 15-year-old boy who speaks about "loving men." Before you pass any legislation, shouldn't you hear from some young people? Teenage sex is endemic. Look at the prevalence of teen pregnancies. I have never heard of a man or teen being arrested because he made a teenage girl pregnant within a consensual relationship. But if a man has sex with a teenage boy, you can be sure he will be charged with a felony, as many were last week in Kensington.

Sex is going to go on regardless of whether or not you ban this pamphlet. Young teens know what feels good, and they will get it on, regardless of what you or the Moral Majority legislate. Child abuse, unfortunately, is also going to continue, unless we can all work together to wipe it out, especially within the nuclear family. One aspect of child abuse often ignored is what happens to young teens who discover they are lesbian or gay. They are excluded from their peers, and disowned by their parents in all too many cases. Many are even thrown out onto the streets, where for the boys hustling is the only way to survive. Indeed, often the only people who will take them in are boy lovers, men attracted to boys.

In America, boy lovers are despised and called "pedophiles" or "child molesters." But let us look at how another western democracy handles this issue. In Holland, a gay youth thrown out of his home is actually placed with a boy lover, because the state considers the boy lover to be a person who would really care for this youngster. And although the age of consent is 16, like Pennsylvania's, the courts there are reluctant to punish consensual sex with a minor below that age; in any case, prison terms are rare and where applied, relatively brief, because the goal is rehabilitation, not punishment.

Holland is also the source for a growing body of scientific literature about the experiences of teenage boys in relationships with men. They share one conclusion: the absence of negative consequences for the boys engaged in consensual relationships with men. (See Theo Sandfort, *The Sexual Aspects of Pedophile Relations*, Amsterdam: Spartacus, 1982.) This stands in sharp contrast to so-called "expert" opinion in the U.S., which is often biased to support law enforcement theories. Much of what passes for research in the States is shoddy and unscientific, funded because of the political imperative of the moment.

Ann Burgess, whose testimony you heard today, has a longitudinal study that purports to prove the existence of child porn "rings." It is funded by our taxpayer monies. Yet we all know that rings are often a creation of police and the press, a convenient way for reporters to

describe people - who don't even know each other - who happen to be arrested on the same day, as in Kensington last week. Burgess in her writing and in her testimony last month before Sen. Specter's Senate subcommittee claims there are even sex rings composed of a single individual. And what does she call these rings? "Solo rings"! That is one absurd and outrageous example of what our tax monies are supporting, and what is used by law enforcement agencies and vice squads to justify their existence.

Censorship has a long and torrid history in this country - sex and radical thought the taboo subjects - but it has been some time since the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that written material cannot be banned. If you do ban this pamphlet, or other non-pornographic material similar to it, you would be violating our constitutional protections of free speech and press. For the United States to remain a democracy, all points of view, however repugnant, must be allowed a forum.

If you begin censoring this book, where will it end? What is next? A new sex education book is entitled *A Young Man's Guide to Sex*, just published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. It is written for teenagers by a Dr. Jay Gale. It has chapters entitled: "Touching Others: Sex and Relationships," "Sexual Intercourse - the First Few Times," and "As Sexual Relationships Continue." Since sex with teens is illegal, would you want to ban this book too for inciting a crime?

Another book also has similarities to the pamphlet under scrutiny. It has a chapter called "Where are all the boys?" It tells you: "Almost anyplace. Wander around shopping centers, tennis courts, theater lobbies, hangouts, beaches, zoos, and bookstores - and you'll probably find boys similarly wandering around." The book came out in 1969, called *How to Get a Teen-age Boy & What to Do with Him When You Get Him*." The paperback edition was published by Avon Books in a run of 250,000 copies. Should we ban that too?

A few years back the press rallied behind the editors of the *Progressive* magazine, which was trying to print an article on how to build a hydrogen bomb. Eventually, another publication, the *Madison Press Connection*, published the suppressed text. As far as I know, no one went ahead to build such a bomb after reading that article.

Aren't we being a bit too hysterical about this \$1.70 pamphlet that sold ten copies in Philadelphia? How many more copies are now circulating because of Joan Specter?

A half century ago, the Nazis raided Berlin's Institute of Sexual Science and burned its collection, starting Hitler's campaign to rid the Third Reich of undesirable literature. We haven't begun to burn books here in Philadelphia, in 1984, but we're getting awfully close to it.

For once, why don't you do something that's right, and not what is politically expedient? Why don't you stand up for the First Amendment? That is how you can really protect us, our children, and future generations.

Thank you for hearing me speak.

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OUR BELOVED GAY/LESBIAN MOVEMENT AT A CROSSROADS

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During the same two weeks that we beheld the most comprehensive summitry the 20th century International Gay and Lesbian Movement has so far achieved -- the all-inclusive Stonewall 25 celebrations -- we also witnessed a fracturing of our movement's middle class underpinnings, a rift which may unravel, if not tear apart, much of what we've gained in this century. The attempt by Gays and Lesbians to expel NAMBLA (the North American Man/Boy Love Association) from the Stonewall March and the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) prompts my comments. My commitment to Gay and Lesbian self-determination makes me ask, "Who is setting the agenda?"

During the days leading up to the march, a dissenting group called the "Spirit of Stonewall," held a press conference at the Stonewall Inn. We called upon the organizers of Stonewall 25 to reexamine the liberating principles of the celebration's namesake, the Rebellion of 1969, and reminded them that the original Stonewall uprising was a cry for full sexual freedom as a part of the struggle for social justice. At that press conference, I made the following comments:

I'm here today as a survivor as well as founder of the first ongoing Gay liberation group in the United States: the Mattachine Society, formed in Los Angeles in 1950. I'm here because things we discovered about ourselves, and the first principles we developed between 1950 and 1953, are now -- forty years later -- being trashed by Queers who don't know their own history. We decided from the beginning that having been almost obliterated for so many centuries, we wouldn't censor or exclude each other. If people self-identify themselves to me as Gay or Lesbian, I accept them as Brothers and Sisters with love. When we decided to rejoin the social and political mainstream, we were determined to integrate on our own terms, as we saw ourselves and with our own set of values. Otherwise, we would not integrate at all. And finally, we no longer permitted any heteros -- nationally or internationally, individually or collectively -- to tell us who we were, or of whom our groups should or should not consist. If necessary, we would assert the prior rights of collective self-definition and self-determination. We Queers would decide such matters among ourselves! Those statements, developed 42 years ago, still hold.

### Personal History

I am not a member of NAMBLA, nor would it ever have been my inclination to be one. Like most working class boys and most farm boys in those pre-WWII years, I went to work in the summer of my 14th year. This was still customary in the 1920s and 1930s, as it had been for my father in the 1870s and 1880s. Working as a man, as I was at 14 in the summer of 1926, I did what my peers did: I went to town with them on Saturday nights to speakeasies and cat-houses. Did I go in the cat-house? Yeah -- once -- yecchhhhhh. The rest of the summer I'd get a bit of a head on from the Speakeasy's Special (whatever it was, and it was better not to ask) and scuffle around with the guys in front of the Cribs. On the way home, one of the guys who had noticed I hadn't gone in with the rest of them, gave me what turned out to be a "pat" lecture on not letting those murfadites (a 19th and early 20th century lower-class street word for hermaphrodites) get near me or get me drunk. My Wobbler worker buddies taught me to wham anybody who bothered me hard and fast in the crotch with my knee or my elbow.

There is a reason for telling all this. The guys had been educating me for the last two summers in the basic principles of Marxism. They found out I was bright, so they figured I'd



make a good labor organizer when I got out of school. When I left at the end of summer, they carefully instructed me how to shag a tramp steamer in 'Frisco going south, lending me an old union card so I could work my passage as a deck hand. That year, when I was 14 -- big, lean, tanned, and toughened by heavy manual labor -- I easily passed for 18 or 19. I was the perfect "jailbait!" One of my fellow workers was a 25 year old experienced seaman of many colors named Matt. In the course of that short haul, he provided me not only with my first glorious love-affair but also golden talismanic gifts that have strengthened and guided me all my life! I've never forgotten his gruff but tender warmth nor his self-affirming, simple but gleaming vision. So, having experienced intergenerational love (Matt didn't know I was 14), I know the enormous values and gifts (and heart-rending but healable griefs) it can bring.

Which is Worse: Jesse Helms or Our Achilles Heels?

Jesse Helms, champion of Christian family values and our most intractable foe, is far shrewder than the self-appointed leaders of the Gay and Lesbian movement. Family value hawks like Helms can easily exploit our movement's own Achilles' heels: two glaring dichotomies we remain unwilling to face. First, we must acknowledge the vast differences in visions and values held by Gay men and Lesbians. Second, we must, as a movement, address the needs of our Gay/Lesbian youth whose experience of puberty, instead of providing a joyous self-realization and affirmational discovery, plunges them into a snake pit of self-loathing. And the adults of the Gay/Lesbian movement, lah-dih-dah, resist doing anything about it.

Helms has fought for years to remove the US from the UN by any means necessary; and he has fought to destroy the American Gay/Lesbian movement. In January of 1994, it looked like he'd be able to bean both birds with one shot by playing two, up to now, unrelated aims against one another.

Enter ILGA into the United Nations

In the summer of 1993, the International Gay/Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), headquartered in San Francisco, after years of lobbying, won a "non-governmental consultative status" for ILGA at the United Nations. IGLHRC would serve as ILGA's "action secretariat." Enter Jesse Helms! Helms managed to pass through the US Senate (99-0) the following resolution:

Contributions to International Organizations shall be reduced by the amount of \$118,835,000 for each fiscal year, 1994 and 1995, and for each year thereafter, unless the President has certified ... that no United Nations Agency or United Nations Affiliated Agency grant any official status, accreditation, or recognition to any organization which promotes, condones, or seeks the legalization of pedophilia, or which includes as a subsidiary or member of any such organization.

Helms didn't mention NAMBLA, but his meaning was quite clear. Likewise, he didn't name the European homosexual organizations (who have functioned as intergenerational groups since the turn of the century) who were also targeted. Of course, IGLHRC buckled at the first bark and demanded that Stonewall 25 expel NAMBLA from its ranks. The ensuing debate over this issue generated screaming and hollering all over the US, until June 30 when ILGA convened in NYC with an agenda to expel NAMBLA from its ranks.

That whole hearing had been rigged in advance. When some of us "anti-exclusionists" (a more accurate term than "pro-NAMBLA-ites") argued that Helms' remarks were aimed at European groups as well as American ones, ILGA responded by saying, "he has no jurisdiction over Europeans." In so saying, they exposed themselves as middle class assimilationists with no knowledge of how ruling-class politics play out in "smoke-filled back rooms." Such irresponsible naivete was unforgivable in our International Gay and Lesbian Brothers and Sisters. They were ignoring that the feckless, toothless caricature of a world parliament -- the UN -- needed American money in order to keep going and would do anything to get our moolah!

Even though NAMBLA had been one of ILGA's longest standing member organizations, ILGA voted NAMBLA's expulsion. When a NAMBLA youth delegate from Minnesota called for a Youth Caucus from the floor -- a youth caucus includes ages 13 to 22 -- it turned out that the youngest ILGA youth delegate was 24. Selling NAMBLA down the river was a short-sighted solution and it obscured the real issue of including and addressing the needs of our Gay and Lesbian youth. By appeasing Jesse Helms, the adults of ILGA said to the Gay/Lesbian youth of the world, "Fuck off! We've got more important things to do."

### Intergenerational Exchanges

The Saturday before the Stonewall March, at the Irving Plaza Theater, young Gay and Lesbian folks, alternately furious or exuberant, in countless fascinating exchanges between audience and speaker, asked us elders what became of "sex" in the sexual liberation crusades being trumpeted for the last two and one half decades. Forty and fifty year olds squirmed. I stepped in to talk about the sexual climate of the Dark Ages. I told those too young to remember how, up to the 60s, even only what you said or mimed -- even merely suggestive sexual language -- could lead to time in state prison. Those who came of age in the more lenient 70s need to know this history. I suggested that the newer generation of Queers would like to relate to our Radical Faerie perspective: that our beautiful and lovely sexuality is the Gateway to Spirit! The movement leaders of today don't understand that the continuing call for Gay liberation is not merely a call for our political liberation; it should remain a call for our liberation as sexual people.

### "Forward into the 'Real' World" -- On Whose Terms?

On the following Wednesday and Thursday, during the ILGA Conference, it was horrible to have to watch the International Lesbian Delegates screaming "child molesters" and "monsters," joining their so-called feminist Gay Brothers in shoving and pummeling at those of us, not even necessarily NAMBLA members, who were against exclusion -- particularly exclusion dictated by hetero hate-mongering politicians. It was heartbreaking for me to watch these people revert to ugly hetero-imitative behavior; heartbreaking for me to watch my beloved Minority crumbling from within, all from lack of a developed Gay-conscious principle!

At the beginning of this last and fateful "closed" plenary, Lisa Power, a former ILGA Secretary-General, described the early ILGA as "a ghetto solidarity group." She then explained that ILGA is changing. "We are now becoming a human rights movement and we are now a more effective organization." In urging the members to support the expulsions she said, "This is not a great day or a happy day for any of us, but we either go back into the ghetto or forward into the real world."

She does not say that "we will go forward as self-affirming, self-loving Queers into the real world." We are invited instead to assimilate into the dominant culture, reverting as usual to wearing the old hetero, escapist "human being" mask; a white, middle class one, natch! Well, ILGA Sister, you don't speak for me or for millions of my Gay Brothers and Sisters worldwide! The Village in Manhattan (east or west), West Hollywood in LA, or South of Market in San Francisco -- ghettos? They are neighborhoods, certainly, in which some of us live and thrive, and into which all of us occasionally need to withdraw: to lick our wounds, to comfort one another, to be comforted and to be spiritually restored. Then, refreshed and renewed in commitment, we are ready once again to take our places in the larger sphere. Our havens, ghettos? We are hardly so boxed in, either politically or socially, that we can't get out if we choose. That brave and pioneering "Camp Sister Spirit" in Mississippi, Sally Gearhart's "Wanderground" in northern California, and our several Radical Faerie sanctuaries in Tennessee, New York, Vermont, Wisconsin, Arkansas, Texas, Arizona, and Oregon are not ghettos. We'll thank you to be a little more respectful of other peoples' new horizons!

Forty-two years ago, my Mattachine Brothers and I saw, and my Radical Faerie Brothers still see, our work as taking place in the real world, with our own people, on our own Gay-conscious terms, and within our own Gay-conscious value-systems. We are the proud descendants of generations of gender outlaws, Brothers and Sisters who have successfully demonstrated in their tribal societies for thousands of years. In each era, then and now, 3rd gender people, self-affirming, self-loving, proud and Queer, have served our many societies in life-enhancing, spirit-enhancing ways.

In the US, in the last decade, we have successfully applied our queer perspectives to political innovations. With the help of almost no one in the hetero establishment, and with little access to medical resources, we have taken care of our own in the AIDS holocaust. We have set an example, politically, for multi-cultural communities, helping them to side-step the cul-de-sacs obscured by obsolete democratic patterns. Groups of 3rd gender men and women have shown new political entities of multiethnic people non judgmental ways of functioning, through the process of loving, sharing consensus.

### NAMBLA Was Never the Issue

NAMBLA was never the issue. The constitutional right of Gay and Lesbian groups to first class citizenship, of Gay and Lesbian individuals to practice political and spiritual self-determination was. It still is!

In the face of Jesse Helms' filthy-minded sneak attack, ILGA fell right into the Senator's lap. The resulting repercussions could unravel the movement. And appeasing the oppressor only teaches him a dangerous lesson: that he can win. Thirty days later, Helms let the other shoe drop. He amended an education bill on its way through the Senate by denying federal funds to any public school district that teaches homosexuality is a positive lifestyle alternative through class work, textbooks, or counseling. This language is so broad that even Project 10, a nationally known counseling program for Gay high school students, would be a key target of the ban. How misguided ILGA seems in retrospect. ILGA swore that with the corpse of NAMBLA in his lap, Helms would be satisfied and do nothing more. Yet now he blithely banishes a socially beneficial youth counseling program with a 63-36 vote of approval from his fellow senators. C'est la vie!

In a time like this, the Gay and Lesbian movement should pull together and present an immovable phalanx to all attackers. Religious fundamentalism, based as it is upon the cleverly disguised sexual control of peoples' lives, is designed to spread hysteria. The Radical Rights' stampeding of state and federal political agencies during this time of confusion was fully predictable. During this period of economic uncertainty, when our standard of living -- formerly based upon a larger share of global largesse than we're entitled to -- has begun to fall, political and economic hysteria is on the rise. As members of the middle class try to hang on to the perks and privileges of their fading good life, they rush, as always before, to "cast their cares upon God." In so doing, they fall right into the traps set for them by Buchanan, Robertson and Limbaugh, those fundamentalist running dogs who present a new (and particularly American) face of neo-Fascism!

### Sexual Coercion and Gay/Lesbian Kids

There is one way we can slap our hetero-parent community to its senses and re-unite ourselves at the same time. At the Spirit of Stonewall press conference I said, "Insofar as child molestation is concerned, the most common, yet unrecognized, form is the sexual coercion of Gay and Lesbian youth into heterosexual identities and behaviors. This is practiced daily by the whole national and international hetero community -- parents, families, teachers, preachers, doctors, lawyers, and Indian Chiefs, not to overlook US Senators and the pooh-bah news media. This outrageous coercion of Gay kids into heterosexual identities and behaviors is not only sexually abusive, it is a spiritually devastating rape because the child, unknowingly, is led into self-loathing at the same time!"

For this gigantic criminal trespass -- against not only today's youth, but all of us since childhood, from the Queers my age, 82, down through all the generations of Queers now reading this page, to the Gay kids still being bedeviled by heterosexual coercion -- we, the international Gay and Lesbian People, should unite to sue the whole guilty hetero community for compensation! And, while we're at it, we should request our first class citizenship as well. Now that the statute of limitations concerning child molestation has been nullified, this could be the class action suit of the century!

Why not get cracking on this idea? Talk to your local ACLU. Think of the street theater we can devise -- Glee into Rage into Laughter into Fury -- at the snap of a limp wrist! And fun, too, as only we self-loving, self-affirming Queers know how to do it!

We can serve notice that once again in this dear land, we are here, as were the "strange brotherhoods" and sisterhoods of tribes past, before the pale-faced plunderers and marauders came. We are here, in our true dimension, with our Gay-conscious visions and values intact, with our split-level talents and four dimensional insights at the ready, our eyes alight with laughter, prepared to resume our community places and our collective responsibilities.

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