

An Internet Study of Men Sexually Attracted to Children: Sexual Attraction Patterns

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To our knowledge, this is the first large study of the attractions of child-attracted men recruited in any manner other than their being charged with legal offenses. We recruited 1,189 men from websites for adults attracted to children. Men in our sample were highly attracted to children, and they were much less attracted to adults, especially to adult men. However, men varied with respect to which combination of gender and age they found most attractive. Men in our sample were especially attracted to pubescent boys and prepubescent girls. Their self-reported attraction patterns closely tracked the age/gender gradient of sexual arousal established in prior research. Consistent with the gradient, men most attracted to prepubescent children were especially likely to have bisexual attractions to children. Pedohebephilia—attraction to sexually immature children—is best considered a collection of related if distinct sexual orientations, which vary in the particular combination of gender and sexual maturity that elicits greatest sexual attraction. Finally, our study reveals the potential power and efficiency of studying highly cooperative child-attracted men recruited via the Internet.

General Scientific Summary

This study assessed the attraction patterns of men sexually attracted to children with respect to specific combinations of age and gender. Notably, this sample consisted of men recruited via Internet sources, in contrast to most prior research, which recruited men via the legal system. In general, men's attraction patterns were quite similar to those from legal samples, with much stronger attraction to children than to adults.

Keywords: pedophilia, hebephilia, ephebophilia, sexual arousal, sexual orientation, bisexuality

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Understanding men who are sexually attracted to children is important for social, clinical, and scientific reasons. Such men are at increased risk for sexually molesting children, although the proportion that acts on their feelings is unknown. Even those determined not to molest children are apt to experience extreme social intolerance and shame about their feelings. Furthermore, if they have low sexual attraction to adults, they face a life of sexual nonfulfillment. It is possible that addressing these social and clinical issues among men attracted to children could both improve the men's lives and reduce the likelihood of their sexual offending. Scientifically, understanding the origins, development, and expression of sexual attraction to children will increase understanding of all sexual preferences.

It is more difficult to study sexual attraction to children than other erotic preferences, because such attraction is usually hidden. Even for men who have been accused or convicted of relevant sexual offenses (e.g., consumption of child pornography or sexual abuse of children), valid self-report cannot be assumed. It is often not in men's legal interests to be forthcoming about attraction to children.

The most systematic research of such preferences, conducted at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH; formerly the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry) in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, has relied on criminal samples. Researchers there have assessed genital arousal patterns of a large number of men, most referred for assessment subsequent to criminal accusations of sexual offending. The assessment battery stimuli included nude photographs of males and females varying in stage of sexual maturity.¹ A man viewing the nude images heard audio narratives of sexual interactions involving himself and the individual depicted in each slide. In

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¹ Photographs were taken of consenting adults and their children recruited at a nudist organization in Canada by renowned sex researcher Kurt Freund during a time when such photographs were not illegal. The stimuli remain legal in Canada for the purposes of studying or assessing sex offenders.

addition to genital arousal patterns, researchers at the CAMH have analyzed both self-report data from the minority of offenders who provided them and patterns of sexual offending (i.e., victims' ages and genders). The general construct validity of using these different approaches has been amply supported (e.g., Blanchard, 2010; Blanchard, Klassen, Dickey, Kuban, & Blak, 2001; Freund, 1991; Freund & Blanchard, 1989) and has led to important insights. These include a taxonomy of sexual interest in children and a theory explaining men's capacity for sexual interest in persons of different age/gender categories.

Taxonomy of Sexual Interest in Children

Although currently the psychiatric nomenclature recognizes only *pedophilia*, or sexual interest in prepubescent children, phalometric research has supported recognition of a distinct, though related, preference: *hebephilia*, or sexual interest in pubescent children (Blanchard et al., 2009, 2012). In particular, some men have especially strong genital responses to erotic stimuli depicting pubescents.

Ephebophilia represents sexual interest in adolescents, and *teleiophilia* sexual interest in adults. Aside from age preferences, most men have gender preferences as well. Thus, the terms *heterosexual*, *homosexual*, and *bisexual* may precede any of the age preference categories.

The aforementioned age preferences vary with respect to the desired level of sexual maturity in another person. The typical age ranges and physical maturity (Tanner score, a scale of physical development of the body, from childhood to adulthood) associated with the four preferences are provided in Table 1. Relatedly, we use the term *children* broadly to mean individuals with Tanner scores 1–3, typically those of ages 14 years or younger. We use the term *adults* to mean individuals with Tanner scores of 5, typically those of ages 17 and older. *Adolescents* are individuals typically aged 15–16 with Tanner scores of 4 or 5.

Pedophilia and hebephilia are the sexual preferences that have been studied most among sex offenders against children. In contrast, teleiophilia is typical, adult-focused sexual orientation. The least studied preference is ephebophilia. This partly reflects the lack of ephebophilic stimuli in the phalometric assessment battery used by the CAMH that has produced most of the data on sex offenders against those below the age of consent.

The Hebephilia Controversy

Although the concept of, and evidence for, hebephilic preference is well known among researchers of child-attracted men, "hebephilic disorder" is not a permissible diagnosis in the *Diag-*

nostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed. [DSM-5]; American Psychiatric Association, 2013), nor was it in previous versions of the *DSM*. Only "pedophilic disorder" is included in the *DSM-5*. However, the *DSM-5* uses criteria for pedophilic disorder that are internally inconsistent: "recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviors involving sexual activity with a prepubescent child or children (generally age 13 years or younger)" (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, p. 697). Few children age 13 are still prepubescent; most are pubescent. Thus, men preferring children aged 13 (or for that matter 11 or 12) are typically hebephilic.

To make the *DSM-5* internally consistent, the *DSM-5* subworkgroup on the Paraphilias proposed including both pedophilia and hebephilia under the general term *pedohebephilic disorder*, with three subtypes: pedophilic, hebephilic, and pedohebephilic (the latter indicating equal attraction to prepubescent and pubescent children; Blanchard et al., 2009). The proposal was rejected, however (Blanchard, 2013). The most frequently expressed concern by the proposal's critics was that including hebephilic preference in the *DSM-5* would result in an unacceptably high number of false positive diagnoses. For example, Frances and First (2011) insisted that "attraction to pubescent individuals is common and within the range of normality" (p. 84). Frances and First also criticized the research base for hebephilia: "Most of the few available studies have been performed by a single research group on a sample of convenience (consisting mostly of offenders without a proper control group of nonoffenders)" (p. 83).

The first criticism, that extending the *DSM-5* to include hebephilic preferences would open a floodgate of diagnosis, appears to reflect several misunderstandings (Blanchard, 2009; Cantor, 2012). The idea that men are frequently attracted to pubescent children may confuse the stages of pubescence and (postpubescent) adolescence. Most men are capable of strong attraction to adolescents aged 15–16, who are on the verge of sexual maturity. Although men predominantly attracted to adults do experience some sexual arousal to pubescent children, this arousal is substantially less, on average, compared with their arousal to adults (Lykins et al., 2010). Furthermore, the diagnosis of hebephilic disorder would not be made simply because there is *any* arousal or attraction to pubescent children; it would require that *predominant* arousal or attraction is to pubescents.

Frances and First's (2011) second criticism, about the limitations of current data supporting a diagnosis of hebephilic disorder, is more apt. In particular, virtually all relevant data have been gathered from criminal samples, and these may be unrepresentative in important respects.

Despite the American Psychiatric Association's rejection of the proposal to extend the diagnostic nomenclature explicitly to include hebephilic phenomena, we use the term *pedohebephilia* to refer to the preference for either prepubescent children or pubescent children, or preferential attraction to both prepubescent and pubescent children. We believe that this term more accurately describes the preferences of men strongly attracted to prepubescent or pubescent children (or to both) than the term pedophilia does, because the latter refers to a preference for prepubescent children only. We also use the alternative term *child-attracted men* throughout the article, and we mean that term to be synonymous with *pedohebephilic men*.

Table 1
Four Age Preference Categories With Typical Preferred Ages and Degrees of Preferred Sexual Maturity of Sexual Targets

Age preference	Typical preferred ages (years)	Preferred sexual maturity (Tanner score)
Pedophilia	≤10	1
Hebephilia	11–14	2–3
Ephebophilia	15–16	4–5
Teleiophilia	≥17	5

The Age/Gender Gradient of Sexual Arousal

Some men are sexually attracted to more than one category of person. For example, it is common for men attracted to prepubescent children also to be attracted to pubescent children. In addition, phallometric studies of sex offenders have shown that approximately half of sex offenders against children have their highest genital arousal scores to adult stimuli (Blanchard et al., 2001). This suggests that teleiophilic preference is at least sometimes compatible with sexual attraction to children (Lykins et al., 2010).

Phallometric studies have clarified how men's preference categories overlap. Based on such data, Blanchard et al. (2012) proposed the model represented in Figure 1, which they called a "stimulus generalization gradient" and we call the *age/gender gradient*. This model proposes that there is a unidimensional continuum of physical similarity, with respect to characteristics that elicit male sexual arousal. Categories closer to each other are more similar and more likely to elicit sexual arousal in the same man. More distant categories are less similar and less likely to elicit sexual arousal in him. For example, the model suggests that men most sexually aroused by pubescent girls should produce higher arousal to prepubescent girls than to prepubescent boys, on average. This is because prepubescent girls are adjacent to pubescent girls on the unidimensional continuum; prepubescent boys are two categories away. A slight complication to the model is that the distance between the adjacent categories of prepubescent boys and girls is somewhat greater than those separating adjacent categories within genders.

Results from the large CAMH database have supported the age/gender gradient (Blanchard et al., 2012). Averaged over many subjects, men's phallometric profiles conform to the age/gender gradient. Men's second most arousing category of person is generally adjacent to their most arousing category, as per the age/gender gradient in Figure 1. Distant categories are much less arousing.

Is Pedohebephilia a Sexual Orientation?

Conventionally, *sexual orientation* is understood as relative sexual attraction to adult men versus adult women. The age/gender gradient considers the conventional sexual orientations—heterosexual and homosexual teleiophilia—alongside other patterns of sexual interest that vary not only in the gender, but also in the age, of sexually preferred targets. Can these other patterns of sexual interest—heterosexual and homosexual pedophilia, hebephilia, and ephebophilia—also be considered sexual orientations?

This issue has been controversial. In the first print version of the *DSM-5*, the text explanation for "pedophilic disorder" included the assertion that it is a "sexual orientation" (American Psychiatric

Association, 2013, p. 698). Following criticism, the American Psychiatric Association claimed the term *sexual orientation* was an error and announced it would be changed to *sexual interest* in future editions (Herold & Connors, 2013). The criticism that motivated the American Psychiatric Association's announcement was not scientific but political, including for example, the assertion that the organization was intending to extend sexual orientation-based civil rights to pedophiles (see Bohon, 2013, for examples). Opposing the extension of the term *sexual orientation* to pedohebephilia for these reasons may be politically understandable, but it is not scientifically persuasive.

Scientifically, what would it mean for pedohebephilia to be a sexual orientation? Seto (2012) considered the question of whether pedophilia is a sexual orientation. His analysis emphasized three scientific criteria: early age of onset, consistent pattern of sexual and romantic behavior, and persistence across time. He concluded that pedophilia qualified as a sexual orientation, although available data were somewhat limited.

Bailey (2009) argued that for men, sexual orientation is a sexual arousal pattern characterized by strong arousal to one type of person and much weaker arousal to others. Based on research regarding sexual arousal patterns of men charged with sexual offending against children, he also endorsed the idea that pedophilia is a sexual orientation. Note that the age/gender gradient implies that arousal and attraction to categories other than one's most preferred will not generally be zero, particularly if they are adjacent to one's most preferred category.

Do Results Generalize to Nonforensic Samples?

Research reviewed so far has heavily depended on subjects who were men accused of sex crimes. This is especially true for phallometric studies of pedohebephilic men. Not all pedohebephilic men have been accused of committing sex crimes, and it is possible that many have never committed such crimes. Seto (2008) has noted that results may vary according to the way that men are recruited, in part because criminal and noncriminal samples may differ importantly. Thus, it is important to determine whether pedohebephilic men recruited in ways unrelated to legal accusations are similar to, or different from, those men studied to date.

Although recruiting pedohebephilic men in a representative manner is currently an unattainable goal, it is possible to recruit them in ways other than through the legal system. One way is via Internet sites devoted to persons (generally but not invariably men) sexually attracted to children. These sites allow individuals to discuss relevant issues anonymously. Such issues include aspects of their particular attraction (e.g., preferred age/gender of children), the harmfulness of child-adult sexual interactions, legal issues, and emotional support of others on the site. The sites do not



Figure 1. The age/gender gradient of men's sexual interest. Each circle represents a potential sexual target. The age/gender gradient predicts that the closer two circles are to each other, the more similar the sexual interest they will evoke in a man.

generally allow discussion of sexual activities with children or advocacy for illegal acts. (We are not referring here to sites on the so-called Dark Web, which may facilitate illegal acts against children; Greenberg, 2014.) Different sites vary in their members' attitudes regarding whether society is right to revile child-adult sex as much as it currently does. For example, *Virtuous Pedophiles* (n.d.) includes the following on its website: "We believe that sexual activity between adults and children is wrong" ("Q4 – We have no secret agenda," para. 1). Other sites tend to be silent on this issue, although members of some challenge the common assumption that child-adult sex is intrinsically harmful and wrong.

With respect to potential for research, key characteristics of these sites include their anonymity and their high level of activity. Men who frequent them are sufficiently confident that their confidentiality is secure that they participate by reading and sometimes posting messages about aspects of their sexual interest in children. Some sites are quite busy. For example, *Virtuous Pedophiles* has more than 1,000 members, and has recently averaged approximately 3,000 posts per month (N. Devin, personal communication, December 10, 2015). Another relevant site, *Heretic TOC*, has recently averaged 300–400 separate page hits per day (T. O'Carroll, personal communication, August 15, 2015). Thus, the sites provide an opportunity to assemble a large sample of child-attracted men potentially willing to provide information of interest to researchers, provided the risk to their confidentiality is minimal.

There are other advantages of nonforensic samples, besides confidentiality and their potential large size. Phallometric testing is the best approach for studying men who may want to deceive others about their sexual interests. But when men's self-reports are unlikely to be dishonest or otherwise inaccurate, it is much more efficient merely to ask them. Certainly, self-report measures are orders of magnitude less expensive to use compared with phallometric measures. Thus, if findings from self-report studies using nonforensic samples largely replicate past phallometric studies using forensic samples, this could lead to more rapid accumulation of relevant scientific knowledge. If findings using the two approaches are different in important ways, then further research will be required to understand why.

The Current Study

We recruited a large sample of men sexually attracted to children (defined as individuals aged 14 or younger) via Internet websites dedicated to adults (generally, men) with such attractions. We inquired about their level of sexual attraction to males and females of various ages and age groups, the ages when they recognized their unusual attractions, and their adjudicated convictions for child pornography or child sexual abuse offenses. Our goals included (a) characterizing the men in our sample using the self-report measures of important variables, such as their level of attraction to children of various age groups, and to adults; (b) comparing the age/gender self-report attraction gradients of our nonforensically ascertained participants with the age/gender phallometric gradients of past research using forensic participants; and (c) providing data relevant to important and controversial issues, such as whether hebephilia should be a diagnostic category in the *DSM* and whether pedohebephilia can be considered a sexual orientation.

Because our sample, like all samples of child-attracted men, is likely unrepresentative, our study is less capable of answering questions regarding point estimates (e.g., prevalences of homosexual and heterosexual hebephilia) than of examining associations between variables (e.g., attraction to adult men and attraction to prepubescent girls).

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited via unpaid advertisements initially placed on websites associated with two organizations for men sexually attracted to children: B4U-ACT and *Virtuous Pedophiles*. Both organizations caution men not to have sex with children and are in this way different from some other organizations or websites frequented by men attracted to children. Through dissemination, our survey also reached readers of other websites, including *Boy Chat*, *Girl Chat*, and unspecified private forums.

The advertisements sought men "sexually attracted to young persons," and provided a link to the anonymous online survey. Participants provided informed consent and proceeded to questions about aspects related to their sexual interest in children and also their adjudicated sexual offending against children. The results on their adjudicated sexual offending against children and potential correlates of such offending are reported in another study of ours (Bailey, Bernhard, & Hsu, 2016). Men were reassured that they would not be asked about illegal acts, except those known to legal authorities. They were also encouraged to forward the information to other relevant Internet sites. Note that different Internet sites tended to specialize in different interests, and thus different subpopulations of child-attracted men. For example, the site *Girl Chat* is concerned with attraction to girls, and the site *Boy Chat* with attraction to boys. The present study, including the recruitment method, questionnaire, and other aspects of the research design, was approved by an Institutional Review Board.

Measures

Sexual attraction ratings. Participants rated their sexual attraction to specific age/gender combinations on a scale from 0 (*no attraction*) to 10 (*maximum attraction*). Notably and unfortunately, only the scale endpoints had conceptual anchors. However, we did include some other variables that allowed us to investigate how the sample used the scale, to some degree. Furthermore, we address this limitation in the Discussion.

Men rated their degree of attraction separately to males and females for each year of age from 1 to 18. They also rated their degree of attraction separately to males and females for the following broader age groups: ages 10 or younger; ages 11–14, ages 15–16, and ages 17 and older. These ages were chosen to correspond to the four stages of sexual maturation (with associated preferences): prepubescence (pedophilia), pubescence (hebephilia), adolescence (ephebophilia), and adulthood (teleophilia), respectively.

Age of onset and recognition of sexual interest in children. Participants reported the ages at which they first noticed being sexually attracted to children (ages 14 and younger), first suspected their attraction to children was increased relative to that of

peers, and definitely realized this was so. This information was relevant to the issue of whether sexual attraction to children develops early, as would be expected for a sexual orientation.

Sexual experience with women. Participants provided the number of sexual/romantic relationships they had had with women. Those with experience also provided their sexual satisfaction with these relationships, and their erectile capacity within them. These questions allowed us to address, to some degree, the way that men used the attraction scale, because it provided various relevant criteria for association with numbers on the scale. Adult women were an especially useful target group for these assessments because they are legal sex partners (unlike children), and so there was no need to worry about legal complications for the participants or us. Furthermore, women are by far the most common sexual interest of men, and so we expected that our participants should have had ample opportunity to interact sexually with women.

Adjudicated sexual offenses involving children and child pornography. Participants reported whether they had ever been convicted (and separately, whether they had ever been arrested) for viewing child pornography or for having sexual contact with a child aged 14 or younger. For more information on these variables, see Bailey et al. (2016).

Exclusion Criteria

We excluded participants who did not indicate they consented to participate ($n = 10$), were female ($n = 66$), did not indicate they were at least 18 years of age ($n = 53$), or did not provide sufficient data regarding sexual attraction patterns ($n = 233$). Additionally, we excluded nine participants who failed to rate their attraction to children (i.e., prepubescent females, prepubescent males, pubescent females, or pubescent males) at least 5 on a scale from 0 (*no attraction*) to 10 (*maximum attraction*).

Statistical Analyses

Because we obtained a large sample, our statistical power was high and nearly all results were statistically significant with very low probabilities. To facilitate ease of reading, we have relegated

details of most statistical tests yielding highly significant (i.e., $p < .0001$) findings to Table 1 of the supplemental materials. All reported differences and associations are statistically highly significant unless otherwise noted.

Results

A total of 1,189 men met inclusion criteria and provided adequate data for analysis. The average age of the sample was 33.7 years ($SD = 13.2$). The most common referral sources included B4U-ACT (www.b4uact.org; $n = 334$), Boy Chat (www.boychat.org; $n = 144$), private forums for men attracted to boys ($n = 111$), Virtuous Pedophiles (www.virped.org; $n = 57$), Girl Chat (www.girlchat.org; $n = 49$) and private forums for men attracted to girls ($n = 47$); another 379 men did not specify where they heard about the study; and the remaining participants came from a variety of smaller referral sources. Men reporting that they had been convicted of either viewing child pornography or a sexual contact offense with a child aged 14 or younger comprised 12.2% (145/1189) of the sample. Thus, our sample had a high number of convictions for crimes against children, compared with men in general, but the large majority of the men had no convictions (see Bailey et al., 2016, for more information about the sexual offending data).

Average Attractiveness Ratings

Participants rated their degree of attraction to people from age 1 to 18 years, separately by target gender and years of age. Each rating ranged from 0 (*no attraction*) to 10 (*maximum attraction*). Figure 2 shows the average ratings for the sample. These results, describing the attraction pattern of the average subject, apply to few if any individuals. Nevertheless, they allow several interesting generalizations. First, attraction to infants was low. Second, attractiveness ratings to male and female targets were similar, on average. Third, for both male and female targets, the most attractive age, on average, was 12 years. Fourth, the drop off of attractiveness after age 12 was steeper for male than for female targets.

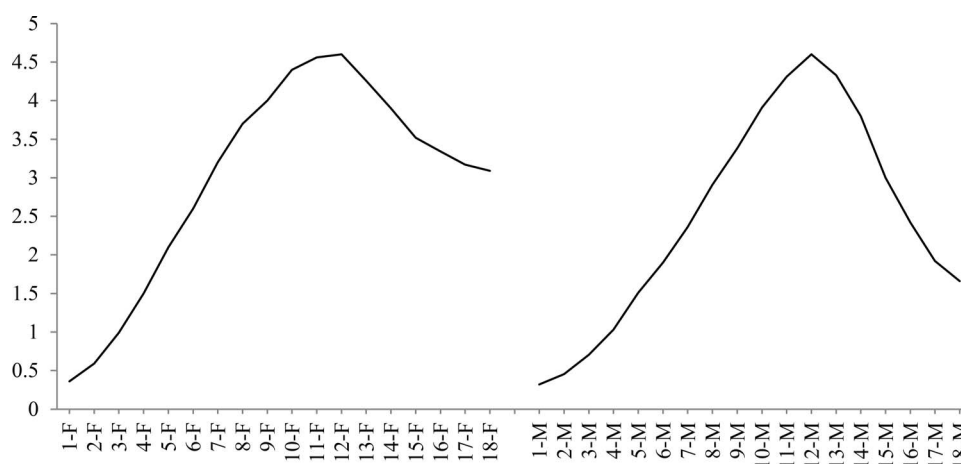


Figure 2. Mean attraction to female (F) and male (M) targets of specific ages from 1 to 18 across all men in the sample.

The fact that the peak mean attractiveness ratings were less than 5, on a scale from 0 to 10, suggests that the average scores hid variability among participants' age/gender preferences. To characterize participants' preferences in more detail, we examined their ratings of attraction to four general age ranges, separately for male and female targets: 10 and younger, 11–14, 15–16, and 17 and older.

Table 2 contains the frequencies of men with highest rated attraction to each general age range, separately by target gender. Note that many men (34%) rated more than one category highest. The most common preference, for pubescent males, was endorsed by 36.1% of participants. The least common preference was for adult males (5.4%), followed by adolescent males (8.0%).

Relative Attraction to Adults

Participants' ratings of their single most attractive type of child (boys or girls aged either 10 and younger or 11–14) averaged 9.49 ($SD = 1.19$). In contrast, they found adults much less attractive. Ratings of males and females at least 17 years old (whichever gender was rated higher) averaged only 4.27 ($SD = 3.69$).

Table 3 provides the mean attractiveness ratings of each preferred category of child and adult targets, separately for men with the eight different preferences: for males or females who are prepubescent, pubescent, adolescent, or adult. (Again, men with multiple preferences were counted in all relevant cells.) Men with pedophilic or hebephilic preferences (i.e., those most attracted to prepubescent or pubescent boys or girls), who comprised the large majority (90.2%) of the sample, strongly preferred children to adults. Among this group, the difference between attraction to children and attraction to adults ranged from 3.63 (for female-attracted hebephiles) to 7.03 (for male-attracted pedophiles).

For each age preference category except teleiophilia (characterized by highest attraction to adults), attraction to adults was lower for male-attracted than for female-attracted men. This difference in attraction to adults between male-attracted and female-attracted men ranged from 1.40 for pedophiles to 2.03 for hebephiles. Thus, in general the men in our sample were not only attracted to children; they were much less attracted to adults. This was especially true of men attracted to boys. Finally, in Table 3, we

included, for men of each preference category, their lowest attractiveness rating to targets of any category. These ratings were uniformly low—all less than 1.50—indicating that men with different preferences were similarly discriminating against at least some age/gender category.

Correlates of attraction to women. Table 4 presents mean scores of attraction to women (17 and older) for men with various levels of sexual experience, satisfaction, and performance with them. Slightly more than a third of the sample reported no sexual experience with women, and their mean attraction to women was 2.34. In contrast, those with the highest amount of experience with women (more than five adult female partners) averaged 5.54 on their mean attraction to women. The 181 men who rated their sexual experience with women as either unpleasant or unsatisfying had low mean ratings of attraction to women: 0.52 and 2.42, respectively. In contrast, the 147 men who rated their sexual satisfaction with women as very satisfying had a mean attraction to women of 6.76. The 213 men who experienced at least frequent erectile difficulties interacting with women had mean ratings of attraction to women ranging from 1.60 to 2.81. In contrast, the 516 men who were either usually or always capable of penile erections when interacting with women had mean ratings of 4.74 and 5.82, respectively. When asked whether they engaged in sexual fantasies about children while interacting with women, 203 men reported that they did so usually or always, and their mean ratings of attraction to women were 3.60 and 2.14, respectively. In contrast, the 279 men who did so rarely or never averaged 5.40 and 4.68, respectively.

In general, results in Table 4 suggest that attraction ratings below 3 signal very low sexual experience, satisfaction, and performance capacity. In contrast, scores above 5 are consistent with some capacity for sexual satisfaction and performance, and scores near 7 are consistent with a high degree of sexual satisfaction and performance. It is notable that 480 of our participants had attraction scores toward adults (i.e., the higher of attraction to women 17 and older and attraction to men 17 and older) of 3 or lower, and most of these scores ($n = 287$) were 0. Thus, on the one hand, a substantial minority of the men in our sample lacked both sufficient attraction to adults and successful sexual relationships with them. On the other hand, a similar number of men ($n = 437$) rated their attraction to adults at least 7, consistent with successful sexual relationships with them.

Attractions Across Ages and Genders

We examined the extent to which the child-attracted men in our sample tended to be most attracted to a single age/gender category, or to multiple categories. Although most men rated a single age/gender category as highest in attractiveness, a substantial minority (412 or 34%) rated more than one highest (i.e., they had at least two categories tied for highest ratings). Of the latter, 292 (23.8% of the total) rated two categories highest, 92 (7.5%) rated three highest, and 28 (2.3%) rated four highest.

With respect to their highest attractiveness ratings across the four age groups (i.e., 10 and younger, 11–14, 15–16, and 17 and older), 843 (70.9%) of men had exactly one preferred age group, 246 (20.7%) had two that were tied for highest, 85 (7.1%) had three, and 15 (1.3%) said they were equally attracted to all four.

Table 2

Frequencies of Age/Gender Preference Categories, Defined Either by Preferences (Allowing Ties) or Exclusive Preferences (Including Only Men With a Single Highest Rated Category)

Age preference	Female attracted		Male attracted	
	Preference ^a <i>n</i> (%)	Exclusive preference ^b <i>n</i> (%)	Preference <i>n</i> (%)	Exclusive preference <i>n</i> (%)
Pedophilia	340 (28.6)	203 (17.1)	218 (18.3)	91 (7.7)
Hebephilia	328 (27.6)	151 (12.7)	429 (36.1)	255 (21.4)
Ephebophilia	125 (10.5)	18 (1.5)	95 (8.0)	15 (1.3)
Teleiophilia	162 (13.6)	37 (3.1)	64 (5.4)	15 (1.3)
Total	955 (80.3)	409 (34.4)	806 (67.8)	376 (31.7)

^a Erotic preference based on highest attraction category, including ties; thus, men can be in more than one category. ^b Erotic preference based on highest attraction category, for men with only one highest-rated category; men can be in at most one category.

Table 3

Attraction to Children, Adults, and Least Attractive Category of Person, Separated by Age/Gender Preference Group

Age/gender preference group	Highest attraction to any category of children ^a <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Higher of attraction to men and attraction to women ^b <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Lowest attraction to any category of person <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)
Female-attracted pedophiles	9.69 (.79)	4.07 (3.43)	.78 (1.97)
Male-attracted pedophiles	9.70 (.80)	2.67 (3.25)	1.35 (2.47)
Female-attracted hebephiles	9.57 (.86)	5.94 (3.32)	.97 (2.34)
Male-attracted hebephiles	9.62 (.82)	3.91 (3.47)	1.10 (2.40)
Female-attracted ephebophiles	9.64 (.87)	8.00 (2.94)	1.44 (3.06)
Male-attracted ephebophiles	9.51 (1.01)	6.24 (3.63)	.76 (2.10)
Female-attracted teleiophiles	9.08 (1.30)	9.49 (.98)	1.33 (2.92)
Male-attracted teleiophiles	8.86 (1.56)	9.47 (1.05)	1.19 (2.50)

^a Children include males and females age 14 or younger, generally corresponding to prepubescents and pubescents as measured by the relevant age ranges. ^b Men and women include males and females age 17 and older, generally corresponding to adults as measured by this age range.

With respect to gender, 455 participants (38.3%) said that they were attracted only to females, 420 (35.3%) only to males, and 314 (26.4%) to both males and females. Bisexual attraction in the present study primarily reflected attraction to children rather than to adults. Men who said that they were attracted to both genders were not very attracted to their less preferred gender of adults ($M = 2.11$, $SD = 2.93$); they were much more attracted to their less preferred gender of children ($M = 6.03$, $SD = 3.25$). Thus, our further analyses aim to illuminate bisexual attraction to children per se, rather than general bisexuality.

One potential explanation for the higher rate of bisexual attraction among child-attracted men is that males and females differ least in physical appearance during childhood, and they become progressively different during the process of sexual maturity. This is, in fact, another way of framing the age/gender gradient model of sexual attraction (see Figure 1). If this is correct, then pedophilic

men should be more likely than hebephilic men to be sexually attracted to children of both genders. This is because prepubescent children are closer together on the age/gender gradient compared with pubescent children.

Before discussing results of the relevant analyses, we explain conceptually how we distinguished men with higher and lower degrees of bisexual feelings (in this case, for children of both genders). Consider two men whose attraction to both boys and girls is nonzero. The first rates his attraction to boys as 8 and his attraction to girls as 3. The second man's respective ratings are 4 and 9. We consider the second man to have a more bisexual attraction pattern compared with the first man. This is because his attraction to his less attractive gender (4, to boys) is higher than the analogous value for the first man (3, to girls). Although there is more than one way to measure relative bisexual attraction (see Rosenthal, Sylva, Safron, & Bailey, 2012), the sense of bisexual

Table 4
Correlates of Attraction to Women

Correlate	Attraction to women (<i>M</i>)	Attraction to women [95% confidence interval]	<i>n</i>
Female partners, lifetime			
6+	5.54	[5.07, 6.00]	224
3–5	4.43	[3.98, 4.89]	230
1–2	3.30	[2.88, 3.72]	273
0	2.34	[1.99, 2.69]	396
Sexual satisfaction with women			
Very satisfying	6.76	[6.22, 7.29]	147
Somewhat satisfying	5.24	[4.85, 5.63]	272
Slightly satisfying	3.28	[2.75, 3.82]	144
Not satisfying	2.42	[1.86, 2.98]	133
Unpleasant	.52	[.00, 1.45]	48
Erectile capacity with women			
Always capable	5.82	[5.38, 6.26]	239
Usually capable	4.74	[4.34, 5.15]	277
With difficulty	2.81	[2.16, 3.46]	110
Rarely capable	1.70	[.82, 2.58]	60
Never capable	1.60	[.47, 2.64]	43
Fantasize about children during sex with women			
Never	4.68	[4.07, 5.29]	135
Rarely	5.40	[4.81, 5.99]	144
Sometimes	5.02	[4.53, 5.51]	209
Usually	3.60	[2.99, 4.20]	137
Always	2.14	[1.41, 2.86]	96

attraction as degree of attraction to the less attractive gender is best for our present purposes.

Thus, we created the variable, bisexual attraction to children, by comparing each participant's attractiveness rating for his most attractive age category of girl (i.e., either prepubescent or pubescent) with his rating for his most attractive age category of boy, and taking the lower number. For example, if a participant rated his attraction to prepubescent girls, pubescent girls, prepubescent boys, and pubescent boys as 7, 8, 4, and 3, respectively, his score on this variable would equal 4 (comparing 8, his rating of his most attractive category of girls, and 4, his rating of his most attractive category of boys, and taking the smaller number).

In our first relevant analysis, we compared men whose single highest rated category of children was prepubescent (i.e., those we have called "exclusive pedophiles") with those whose most preferred category was pubescent (i.e., "exclusive hebephiles"). Note that this analysis excludes men who rated more than one category highest as well as men who rated adolescents or adults as most attractive. Average bisexual attraction to children scores for exclusive pedophiles, $M = 2.65$ ($SD = 3.64$) exceeded those for exclusive hebephiles, $M = 1.50$ ($SD = 2.71$), $t(751) = 4.99$, $p < .0001$.

The previous analysis sacrifices information from those who were omitted. It also loses information from the numeric nature of the attractiveness ratings on which the preference categories were based. We conducted a closely related analysis of the same question that allowed us to retain all participants and the numeric nature of the preference variables. We regressed the Bisexual Attraction to Children variable simultaneously on four numeric predictors: Pedophilia score, Hebephilia score, Ephebophilia score, and Teleiophilia score. Each score represented the higher of attraction to males and to females of each relevant maturity level (e.g., for Pedophilia score, it was the higher of attraction to prepubescent girls and to prepubescent boys). The overall model was significant, $F(4, 1184) = 14.07$, $p < .0001$. Among the predictors, only pedophilia was statistically significant controlling for the other predictors, $\beta = 0.20$, $t(1184) = 6.58$, $p < .0001$.

The Age/Gender Gradient of Sexual Attraction

The age/gender gradient model of sexual interest proposed by Blanchard et al. (2012), and represented in Figure 1, implies that men most sexually interested in individuals of a particular age and gender should experience their second-strongest sexual attractions to members of contiguous categories. Furthermore, men should be much less interested in individuals who are distant in the gradient from members of their primary interest category.

To examine the validity of Blanchard et al.'s (2012) age/gender gradient model, we constructed eight sexual attraction gradients: one each for men with highest rated attraction to targets of the eight categories (and their associated sexual preference patterns): prepubescent females (heterosexual pedophilia), pubescent females (heterosexual hebephilia), adolescent females (heterosexual ephebophilia), adult females (heterosexual teleiophilia), and the analogous categories for male targets. These gradients are presented in Figure 3. Note that the order of target categories on the x-axis is the same as in Figure 1, with mature female and mature male comprising opposite ends of the unidimensional continuum.

The interpretation of the first, top-left, gradient is that men with heterosexual pedophilia have their highest rated attraction toward prepubescent females. (This is, in fact, how this group was defined.) The second highest rating was to pubescent females, the third highest was to adolescent females, the fourth highest to mature females, the fifth highest to prepubescent males, the sixth highest to pubescent males, and the final and least attractive targets were adolescent and mature males. Thus, the gradient for men most attracted to prepubescent females was generally consistent with the age/gender gradient proposed by Blanchard et al. (2012).

Figure 3 confirms that the age/gender gradient curve for men with each of the eight preference categories generally conformed to the Blanchard et al. (2012) model. The highest attraction was, by definition, to the category of target that defined the men's preference. Secondary attractions were to contiguous categories. The most distant categories of targets evoked much lower degrees of attraction.

Using a large sample from the CAMH, Blanchard et al. (2012) constructed gradients similar to ours, but with two differences. First, their gradients were constructed using genital sexual arousal rather than self-ratings of attraction. Second, their stimuli did not include (postpubescent) adolescents. Thus, Blanchard et al. could not construct gradients for ephebophilic men (who could only be identified via having maximum arousal to adolescent stimuli), nor could they assess arousal to adolescent stimuli. However, their data allowed a comparison of arousal to the other six categories of targets (male and female prepubescent, pubescent, and adult individuals). Thus, Blanchard et al. constructed six gradients (instead of our eight), each of which had six data points (instead of our eight).

We compared the similarity of our attraction gradients and Blanchard et al.'s (2012) arousal gradients as follows: We computed six Pearson correlations between respective gradients in the two studies: one for men in each of the six categories used in both studies (i.e., omitting ephebophilic participants) across the targets common to both studies (i.e., omitting attraction or arousal to adolescents). Each correlation thus used six pairs of scores. These correlations were all very high ($r_s > .95$) and statistically significant ($p_s < .01$). They were, however, inflated to some degree because the highest score determined the category the gradient applied to, and hence was a feature of the procedure rather than a finding. To eliminate this bias, we computed the same correlations using only the five pairs of scores not including the highest. Correlations remained high ($r_s > .90$) and significant ($p_s < .05$).

Development and Persistence of Padoheophilic Interests

The concept of a sexual orientation is associated with the ancillary issues of onset and stability. To be a sexual orientation, a sexual interest should emerge early and be stable (Seto, 2012).

On average, participants recalled that they first realized their attraction to children ages 14 and younger at age 14.24 years ($SD = 5.36$). They began to suspect that this attraction was unusual, compared with peers, at age 16.11 ($SD = 5.24$). They knew their attraction was unusual at age 18.12 ($SD = 5.89$). Only 2.5% met these milestones later than 29.73, 30, and 35 years, respectively.

These ages did not differ significantly across the different age preference groups. They did differ, however, between those who

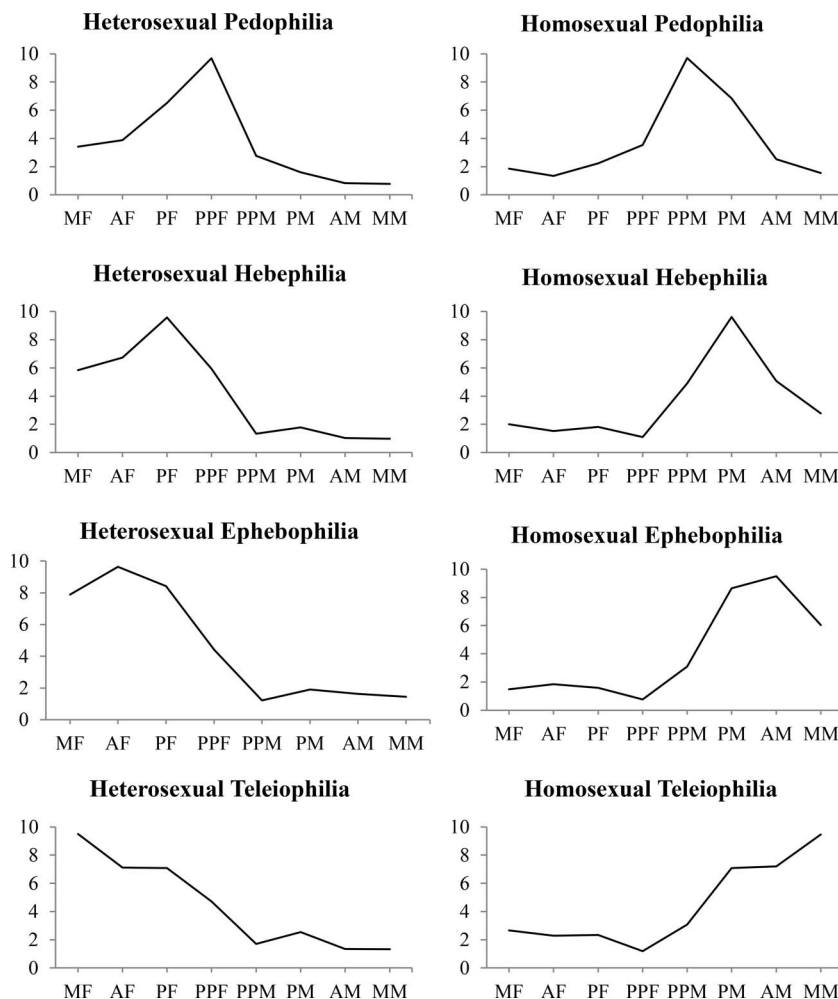


Figure 3. Average arousal to eight categories of sexual targets, for men with each of eight different age/gender preferences. Note that sexual targets on the x-axis are ordered as in the age/gender gradient of Figure 1. MF = mature female; AF = adolescent female; PF = pubescent female; PPF = prepubescent female; PPM = prepubescent male; PM = pubescent male; AM = adolescent male; MM = mature male.

were and were not attracted to males. Those with heterosexual, bisexual, and homosexual preferences realized their attractions at average ages of 15.21 ($SD = 5.93$), 13.91 ($SD = 4.65$), and 13.45 ($SD = 4.83$) years, respectively. They suspected they were different at ages 17.26 ($SD = 5.54$), 15.78 ($SD = 4.69$), and 15.11 ($SD = 5.06$), respectively. They knew they were different at ages 19.25 ($SD = 6.22$), 17.64 ($SD = 5.08$), and 17.27 ($SD = 5.93$), respectively. Thus, attraction to males accelerated the process of recognizing unusual attraction to children by approximately 1.5–2 years.

Because the average age of participants was 33.66, this implies that their attraction to children has persisted for an average of 19.42 (i.e., $33.66 - 14.24$) years, representing more than half their lives, and their entire adulthoods.

Discussion

To our knowledge, this is the first large nonforensic study of men attracted to children that has focused on their patterns of

sexual attraction. Our sample was recruited somewhat haphazardly via the Internet and so may be unrepresentative. Because there is no systematic way to recruit men sexually attracted to children, unrepresentativeness is a concern regarding every study of the phenomenon. Despite this important caveat, what have we learned?

Relative Attraction to Children Versus Adults

The large majority of men in our sample were more attracted to children aged 14 years or younger than they were to older persons, especially to adults. Attraction to men's preferred category of children was generally quite high, near the maximum on the 10-point scale. This is partly explicable by our recruitment procedure, in which we sought "men sexually attracted to young persons." Notably, we did not exclude men with high attraction to adults, as long as respondents were at least moderately attracted to children. (And we excluded only nine men for insufficient attraction to children.) Nevertheless, our sample was much less attracted

to adults than to children, on average. This was especially true of men whose highest rated attraction was to prepubescent children, but it was also somewhat true of men whose highest rated attraction was to pubescent children, particularly boys.

Men in our sample were markedly less attracted to adult men than to adult women. This did not merely reflect the fact that our sample included slightly (i.e., 3%) fewer male-attracted than female-attracted men. Boy-attracted men were less attracted to adult men than girl-attracted men were to adult women. The reason for this difference is unclear. Perhaps some properties of the mature male body are especially unattractive to men attracted to children. For example, the typical man's body is less similar than the typical woman's body is to a typical child's body, in the respects that men are hairier and more muscular compared with both women and children.

The finding that pedohebephilic men have especially low sexual attraction to men supports the idea that homosexual teleiophiles—men attracted to adult men (in common cultural parlance, “gay men”)—are not more likely to molest children compared with heterosexual teleiophiles—men attracted to adult women (“straight men”; see also Dreger, 2011). Intense sexual attraction to male children is distinct from, and not generally compatible with, intense sexual attraction to men. The belief to the contrary was common during the last century, although it is declining in frequency (Herek, n.d.).

A small minority of participants (4.4%; 52/1,189) was more attracted to adults than to children, although our recruitment procedure and inclusion criteria ensured at least moderate attraction to the latter. A larger minority (13.1%; 156/1,189) of participants was equally attracted to their highest rated categories of children and of adults. Men whose most attractive categories include adults comprised the least explicable group in the study. Why would men predominantly, or at least strongly, attracted to adults frequent websites dedicated to men attracted to children? This raises the question whether their results apply to adult-attracted men in general. We examine this issue further, along with related issues, in the next section. Our results suggest that strong attraction to adults can coexist with strong attraction to children, although it would be desirable to verify this with phallometric data. Regardless, men strongly attracted to adults comprise a minority of our participants, and likely also a minority who frequent websites for men attracted to children.

The Age/Gender Gradient of Sexual Attraction

Men's patterns of self-reported sexual attraction across age/gender classes were remarkably similar to the patterns of phallometric arousal established in prior research (Blanchard et al., 2012). This similarity strongly suggests two important conclusions. First, our main results do not apply only to our possibly unrepresentative sample. The sample of Blanchard et al. was assembled from heterogeneous sources. However, the subsample especially aroused to children primarily included a large number of consecutive assessments done on suspected contact offenders against children or child pornography offenders. That is, their sample was recruited both quite differently and somewhat systematically. Yet the two studies produced quite similar results with respect to the gradients.

The second conclusion is that the gradient, which Blanchard et al. (2012) called a “stimulus generalization gradient,” applies not only to their limited stimuli set and phallometric arousal, but also to sexual attraction to others. Not only do men tend to produce erectile responses in the laboratory to erotic stimuli representing age/gender categories that are contiguous to their preferred categories; they also tend to recognize this as sexual attraction. To be sure, Blanchard et al. believed this as well, but our findings provide direct evidence.

The age/gender gradient of sexual arousal and attraction provides an important framework to understand a number of phenomena related to erotic preference. Consider, for example, the higher rate of bisexual interest among pedophilic men compared with other men within our sample. The percentage of men most attracted to prepubescent children (including ties) who said they were attracted to both genders (32.3%) was much higher in our sample than in samples of men primarily attracted to adults. A review of recent sexual orientation prevalence studies among men and women attracted to adults concluded that only 5.4% of men identified themselves as something other than “completely heterosexual” or “completely homosexual” (Bailey, Vasey, et al., 2016). A large survey of American men found that a similarly low percentage reported sexual attraction to both genders of adults (Chandra, Mosher, Copen, & Sionean, 2011).

How does the age/gender gradient explain the increased bisexual attraction patterns among pedophilic men? In the gradient (see Figure 1), young boys and girls are relatively close, and thus attraction to both should be relatively common, compared with attraction to both older males and females, especially adult men and women.

Another implication of the age/gender gradient is that sexual attraction to children can occur among men who are primarily sexually attracted to adults (i.e., who are teleiophilic). Indeed, our subsample of teleiophilic men was strongly attracted to children (see Table 3 and Figure 3). However, as we have noted, our teleiophilic subsample is likely highly unrepresentative of teleiophilic men in general, because we recruited men attracted to children. Concluding on the basis of our results that teleiophilic men are generally strongly attracted to children would be an elementary mistake. Lykins et al. (2010) examined phallometric data from a sample of men recruited because they were primarily attracted to adult women, based on self-report, offense history, and phallometric response. Despite their preference for stimuli featuring adult women, the men were slightly but significantly more aroused by stimuli featuring either prepubescent or pubescent girls than by neutral, nonerotic stimuli, and by erotic stimuli featuring males. The sexual arousal and attraction patterns of typical teleiophilic men require further research before the magnitude of their arousal to child stimuli or their attraction to children can be estimated with sufficient precision.

Contributions to Two Controversies

Our results speak to two controversies that remain unresolved: whether hebephilia should be included in the diagnostic nomenclature and whether pedohebephilia can be considered a sexual orientation.

The hebephilia controversy. Male-attracted hebephiles comprised the largest preference-defined subsample in our study, with

36.1% preferring males aged 11–14, counting ties, and 21.4% preferring them exclusively. The analogous numbers for female-attracted hebephiles were 27.6% and 12.7%, making that preference our third most common (after homosexual hebephilia and heterosexual pedophilia). Notably, men preferring adolescents (males and females aged 15–16) were much less common (see Table 2).

Our data suggest that men most attracted to pubescents are substantially less attracted to adults. On average, female-attracted hebephiles rated their attraction to adults (of the higher-rated gender) 3.63 points (on our 10-point scale) lower than their attraction to pubescent girls. For male-attracted hebephiles, the analogous difference was 5.71.

The facts that pubescent-preferring men (but not adolescent-preferring men) are especially common on Internet sites for child-attracted men, and that pubescent-preferring men are substantially less attracted to adults, support the validity of hebephilia as an unusual sexual preference. Furthermore, it is a potentially problematic preference. Hebephilic age preference, 11–14, is below the legal age of sexual consent in all American states.

Is pedohebephilia a sexual orientation? We offer qualified but generally strong agreement with Seto's (2012) conclusion that pedophilia can be considered a sexual orientation. Results of our study support the idea that pedohebephilia—not only pedophilia, but the combined set of pedophilia and hebephilia—comprises a set of related sexual orientations characterized by much stronger sexual attraction and arousal to children of a particular degree of sexual maturity and gender than to members of some other age/gender categories. Respondents reported that preferences tended to emerge at a similar time as traditional categories of sexual orientation (heterosexual, bisexual, and homosexual attraction to adults, or teleiophilia), and thus to have persisted for many years, on average. Of course, reports of the onset of sexual feelings are retrospective, and so are undoubtedly imperfectly accurate. If there are systematic memory biases, then our conclusions may be mistaken. One possible source of systematic memory bias is the reminiscence bump, in which adults are especially likely to have recollections from their adolescence (Rubin, Rahhal, & Poon, 1998). However, we note that the reminiscence bump is generally considered to be a bias toward recalling accurate memories from youth rather than a source of false memories (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000).

Other aspects of our findings are also consistent with the idea of pedohebephilia as a sexual orientation. For example, attraction to children appears to be strongly motivating: An appreciable minority of men in the sample have engaged in illegal sexual activity with children, despite the serious consequences (for more information on sexual offending against children among men in this sample, see Bailey et al., 2016).

Finally, child-attracted men's relative lack of sexual attraction to adults is also associated with a low degree of sexual experience and satisfaction with adult partners. For example, one third of the child-attracted men had never had an adult female sex partner. In contrast, in a survey of a comparison group of men recruited for having primary attraction to adult women (Bailey, Hsu, & Bernhard, 2016), this percentage was 2.4% (3/127). The percentages of child-attracted men with somewhat or very satisfying sexual experiences with women were 22.9% and 12.4%, respectively. For the comparison sample, these were 32.2% and 59.5%, respectively.

Child-attracted men's sexual attraction patterns (high attraction to children, and often low attraction to adults) were associated with considerably different experiences compared with those of adult-attracted heterosexual men.

Pedohebephilia comprises a set of sexual orientations rather than one distinct sexual orientation because men vary in the type of children they find most attractive, and some men find some children outside their preferred type unattractive. For example, heterosexual pedophiles rated their attraction to pubescent boys only 1.59 (compared with 9.69 to prepubescent girls). Pedohebephilic orientations are related in the sense that levels of attraction to different categories of children are often correlated, as predicted by the age/gender gradient.

The frequency in our study of sexual attraction to members of different age ranges, or even genders, raises the question of whether pedohebephilic men are less specifically oriented compared with teleiophilic men. We suggest that these differences between adult-attracted and child-attracted men are more apparent than real, for two reasons. First, all categories of men we studied, from pedophiles to teleiophiles, were sexually discriminating against *some* category of person. Numbers in the final column of Table 3, average lowest sexual attraction to any category of person, are low across all preference categories. Second, men with conventional (i.e., teleiophilic) sexual orientations also experience sexual arousal to some categories of children, on average (e.g., Lykins et al., 2010). But conventional studies of sexual orientation do not generally attempt to assess arousal or attraction to children.

Opposing the extension of the term "sexual orientation" to pedohebephilia may be politically understandable, but scientifically persuasive arguments are lacking. Furthermore, such opposition is unnecessary. Homosexual people do not deserve equal rights merely because their defining difference is a sexual orientation. Their rights depend on the fact that enacting their sexual orientations is both important for their wellbeing and not harmful to others. Most people believe that sex between a child and an adult is harmful to the child and in any case, wrong. These attitudes and beliefs do not depend on whether pedohebephilia is a sexual orientation. Furthermore, understanding why some men sexually abuse children can only help limit the extent of the problem. And some men are motivated to sexually abuse children because they have early emerging, persistent, and strong attraction to certain kinds of children, attraction that dwarfs their attraction to either gender of adults. They have a pedohebephilic sexual orientation.

Limitations

Sampling bias. The most obvious limitation of our study is its unsystematic sampling method. Although our study was publicized via the most popular Internet sites (to our knowledge) in the United States for men attracted to children, we cannot begin to estimate the probabilities that men with pedohebephilic preferences saw our recruitment material, or that those who saw the material participated. Thus, participants may have been unrepresentative of pedohebephilic men.

Two decisions made investigating ways in which our sample may be unrepresentative difficult. First, we deleted from the data file cases in which respondents provided insufficient data for our main analyses. In retrospect it would have been preferable to keep

those cases, but to code them as incomplete. This would have allowed us to test whether these men were different than men providing complete data. Second, we did not include measures of personality, psychopathology, or social desirability. Had we done so, we could have compared our sample's scores against established norms.

There is currently no way to recruit a sample of pedohebephilic men systematically, except via referrals of men accused of sexual offenses involving children or child pornography. Not all men recruited that way will be pedohebephilic, and such sampling will miss pedohebephilic men who have not sexually offended against children. Our study suggests that the percentage of law-abiding pedohebephilic men could be large, although we asked only about adjudicated offenses.

Results from our study were generally consistent with research findings using pedohebephilic men identified because of criminal accusations. Most strikingly, the correspondence between our findings regarding the age/gender gradient of sexual attraction and Blanchard et al.'s (2012) findings regarding the age/gender gradient of phallometric arousal was quite high. We are less certain about the accuracy of findings such as the relative proportions of men attracted to boys, girls, or both genders, or the proportions of men with pedophilic, hebephilic, or other preferences.

Self-report. Unlike some past research in this domain, ours relies exclusively on self-report. Although phallometric testing can be more useful than self-report in contexts where the latter is suspect, our participants had no evident reason to provide inaccurate data. Participation was anonymous, and we did not ask about past behavior that could, if known, result in criminal sanctions. Participants learned of our study via Internet sites where men attracted to children congregate to discuss matters of interest to them. (The specific matters vary by site.) Thus, they were self-selected for willingness to discuss their pedohebephilia, at least in an anonymous forum. It is unlikely that intentional deception characterized participants' self-report data.

Lack of anchors for the attraction variables. An important limitation of the self-report attraction data concerns the lack of conceptual anchors between 0 (*no attraction*) and 10 (*maximum attraction*). The lack of anchors other than at the response extremes likely did not adversely affect the validity of our statistical tests, which do not depend on scaling (Lord, 1953) and are robust to violations of normality in large samples (Lumley, Diehr, Emerson, & Chen, 2002).

The lack of anchors (aside from the endpoints) reduces our ability to interpret some of the specific numeric values we obtained, however (Blanton & Jaccard, 2006). Interpreting attractiveness ratings of 0 or 10 is fairly straightforward. However, it is less clear what a rating of 5 means. If a man provides a rating of 5 to a category of person, does this mean that he sometimes has sexual fantasies about members of this category? Would he have sex with one? It would certainly be desirable for future researchers to examine respondents' ratings using more specified anchors than we used.

Nevertheless, some of our results do allow more precise interpretation. Note that the attraction ratings we reported were averages across participants, or subsets of participants. Concerning men's nonaveraged ratings, 0 and 10 were most common by a large margin, comprising 45.3% and 14.5% of ratings, respectively. The remainder was spread fairly evenly among ratings from

1 to 9. Crucially, men's ratings to their highest category of children averaged well over 9, across all participants. Thus, there is no reasonable doubt that the men in our sample were very strongly attracted to children.

Furthermore, analyses related to men's attraction to women were somewhat informative with respect to interpreting the scale values. Specifically, attraction ratings of 3 and lower were associated with low rates of experience, satisfaction, and sexual function with women. Furthermore, ratings of 3 or lower on attraction to adults were common, characteristic of 40.3% of respondents. Ratings of 7 or higher, consistent with sexually fulfilling adult relationships, were provided by 36.8% of the sample. Of course, the sample had much higher average ratings of sexual attraction to children, with 98.1% of respondents rating at least one type of child 7 or higher.

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