



VOL. 19, NO. 2
1991
\$ 7

The Journal of Psychohistory

**SPECIAL ISSUE:
THE SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN**

THE UNIVERSALITY OF INCEST

DARKNESS INVISIBLE

ADULT-CHILD SEXUAL PAIRINGS

**HISTORICAL SEXUAL
MOLESTATION OF CHILDREN**

THE SOCIAL TRANCE



The Journal of Psychohistory

P.O. Box 401 • New York, N.Y. 10024 • (212) 799-2294

3 Henrietta Street • London, England WC2E 8LU • 01-240-0856

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Assistant Editors: KENNETH ALAN ADAMS and CASPER SCHMIDT

Book Review Editor: HENRY W. LAWTON

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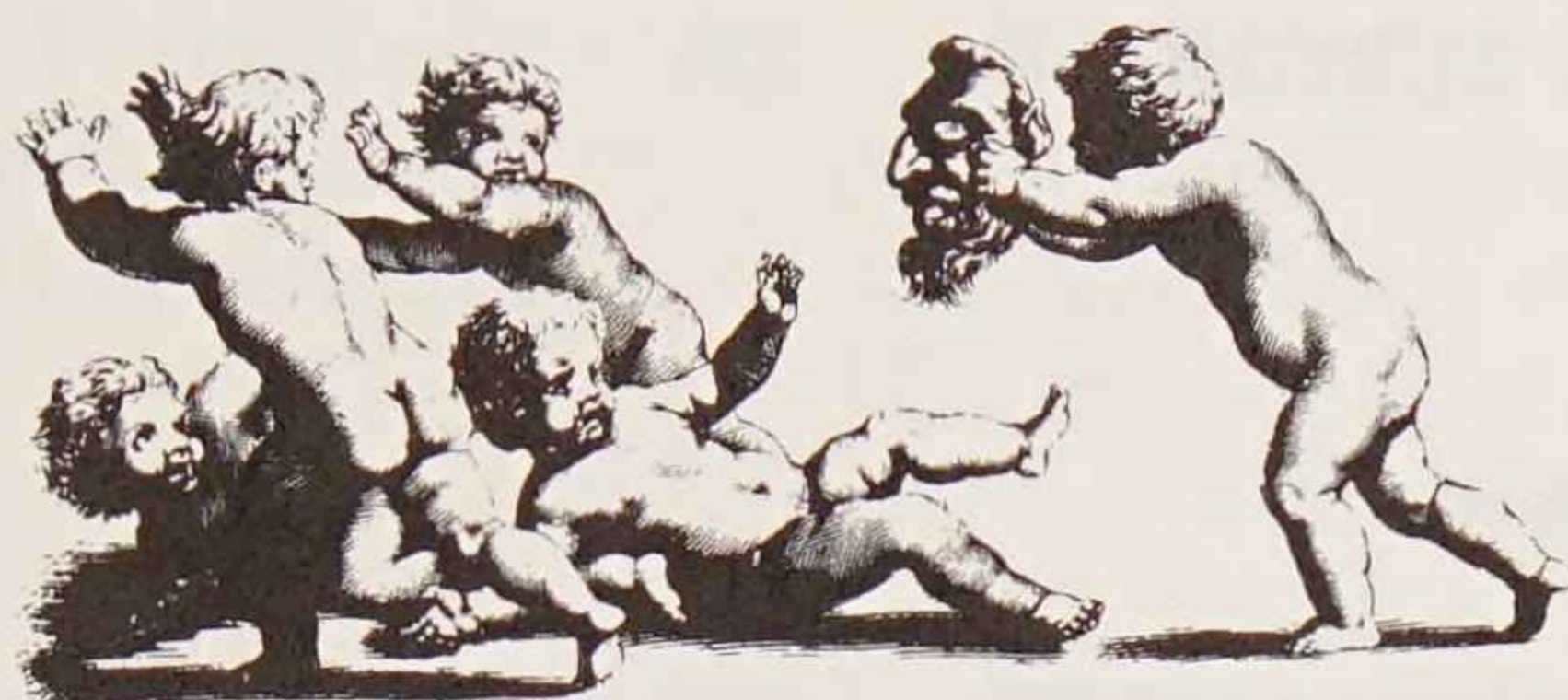
SUBSCRIPTION RATES: U.S.: Individuals—\$52.00 one year, \$92.00 two years; Institutions—\$99.00 one year, \$179.00 two years. Foreign Rates: Write London office.

PUBLICATION: *The Journal of Psychohistory* (ISSN: 0145-3378) is published quarterly by The Association for Psychohistory, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024. © Copyright 1991 by The Association for Psychohistory, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the publisher. Permission to photocopy is hereby granted to libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) for internal or personal use only at the base rate of \$5 for each copy of the article paid directly to CCC, 21 Congress Street, Salem, MA 01970. Serial Fee Code: 0145-3378/85 \$5. + \$0. Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of the authors alone. Second-class postage paid at New York, New York.

POSTMASTER: Send address change to: The Journal of Psychohistory, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024.

REPRINTS: Xerox copies of individual articles may be ordered from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

CONTRIBUTIONS: The *Journal* welcomes contributions of articles on childhood and the family, past and present, psychohistory in its broadest terms, individual or group, applied psychoanalysis except for purely literary studies, political psychology, the psychology of historical movements and psychoanthropology. All manuscripts should follow the University of Chicago *Manual of Style* and be double-spaced, including footnotes. Available in microfilm from Xerox University Microfilms. Abstracted in *Psychological Abstracts*, *Sociological Abstracts*, *Child Development Abstracts and Bibliography*, *Historical Abstracts*, *America: History and Life*, *Mental Health Abstracts*, and the *Abstracts Journal* of the Institute of Scientific Information of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 76-648893.



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Incorporating The Journal of Psychoanalytic Anthropology

A Publication of The Institute for Psychohistory

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Statement of ownership, management and circulation, required by 39 U.S.C. 3685. 1. Title of publication: The Journal of Psychohistory. A. Publication No. 992450. Date of filing: 9/24/91. 3. Frequency of issue: Quarterly. 3A. Number of issues published annually: 4. 3B. Annual subscription price: \$52/Individual; \$99/Instituit. 4. Location of known office of publication: 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397. 5. Location of the headquarters or general business offices of the publishers: 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397. 6. Names and complete addresses of publisher, editor and managing editor: Publisher: Association for Psychohistory, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397; Editor: Lloyd DeMause, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397; Managing Editor: Kenneth Alan Adams, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397. 7. Owner (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership, or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual, must be given): If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated: Association for Psychohistory, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397. 8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages and other securities, None. None. 9. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates (section 423.12 DMM only) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal Income Tax purposes: (1) has not changed during the preceding 12 months. 10. Extent and nature of circulation: A. Total number of copies printed (net press run): Average number copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1581. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 1750. B. Paid circulation: 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 0; 0. 2. Mail subscriptions: 1346; 1425. C. Total paid circulation: 1346; 1425. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier, or other means; Sample, complimentary, and other free copies: 175; 250. E. Total distribution (Sum of C and D): 1521; 1675. F. Copies not distributed: 1. Of- fice use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 60; 75. 2. Returns from News Agents: None; None. G. Total (Sum of E & F1 and 2 should equal net press run shown in A): 1581; 1750. II. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete: Lloyd DeMause, Editor.

The Universality of Incest

LLOYD DEMAUSE

“A new motto: What has been done to you, poor child?”

—Sigmund Freud, letter to Wilhelm Fliess, Dec. 22, 1897, citing Goethe, after relating his patient's memory of having been raped by her father at age two.

Ever since the Greek historians first wrote about the customs of other nations, scholars have compared the habits of different cultures, hoping to discover meaningful regularities in human behavior.

Yet the only universal trait that contemporary social scientists and historians agree has been found in every known culture is the prohibition of incest. As one standard text puts it, “The taboo on incest within the immediate family is one of the few known cultural universals.”¹ Kroeber stated, “If ten anthropologists were asked to designate one universal institution, nine would likely name the incest prohibition; some have ex-

1. James L. Peacock and A. Thomas Kirsch, *The Human Direction: An Evolutionary Approach to Social and Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970, p. 100.

pressly named it as the only universal one.”² That “no known tribe has ever permitted incest”³ has been a truism for cross-cultural studies ever since Durkheim and Westermarck’s early books on the subject.⁴

Furthermore, the same authors go on to state that the universal prohibitions on incest are virtually always *effective*, so that incest itself is rarely found in any society. Even when societies are found that approve of incest, they only “serve rather to emphasize than to disprove the universality of intra-family incest taboos,” according to George Murdock.⁵ Incestuous societies simply cannot exist, since, according to Talcott Parsons, the effective prohibition of incest is “linked with the functioning of every society.”⁶ The abolition of incest was accomplished at the beginning of human culture, Leslie White says, since without it “social evolution could have gone no further on the human level than among the anthropoids.”⁷ As Levi-Strauss concluded, “the prohibition of incest can be found at the dawn of culture...[It] is culture itself.”⁸

The certainty with which the effective prohibition of incest has been declared leads one to look for the evidence these authors might have for their assertions. Yet such a search soon proves quite fruitless. Most of them cite no evidence at all, or at most refer to a single cross-cultural survey by Murdock in his book, *Social Structure*. Murdock’s study, however, turns out not to be about incest at all, if by incest one means actual sexual relations between family members other than spouses. What Murdock studied was *marriage rules*. Yet authors continue to assume Murdock proved that a universal prohibition on incest itself exists, not just a prohibition on intra-family marriage.⁹

2. Alfred L. Kroeber, “Totem and Taboo in Retrospect.” *American Journal of Sociology* 55(1939): 446.
3. Warner Muensterberger, “On the Biopsychological Determinants of Social Life.” In Warner Muensterberger, ed., *Man and His Culture: Psychoanalytic Anthropology After “Totem and Taboo.”* London: Rapp & Whiting, 1969, p. 85.
4. Emile Durkheim, *Incest: The Nature and Origin of the Taboo*. New York: Lyle Stuart, 1963 (1898); Edward Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*. London: Macmillan, 1921 (1894).
5. George Peter Murdock, *Social Structure*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1947, p. 13.
6. Talcott Parson, cited in Blair Justice and Rita Justice, *The Broken Taboo: Sex in the Family*. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1979, p. 37.
7. Leslie White, cited in *ibid*, p. 36.
8. Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. London: Eyne and Spottiswoode, 1969, p. 41.
9. A historical survey of the huge literature on incest taboos can be obtained from Robin Fox, *The Red Lamp of Incest*. New York: Dutton, 1980; W. Arens, *The Original Sin: Incest and Its Meaning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986; and David H. Spain, “Incest Theory: Are There Three Aversions?” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 15(1988): 235-253. Arens alone is clear about the lack of study of incest itself.

Indeed, rather than examining the actual occurrence of incest in either historical or contemporary groups, the voluminous literature on the subject instead speculates on *why* incest supposedly doesn't occur. Many explanations have been proposed: the biological impairments attendant upon inbreeding, the utility of social alliances, the collapse of the family if sexual rivalry is allowed, even boredom with family members. When exceptions have been acknowledged—royal incest in dozens of societies,¹⁰ sibling incest among the general population in others,¹¹ widespread pederasty in still others,¹²—discussion has continued to focus on *why* incest is supposedly rare, not on *whether* it really is.

One begins to realize how odd this is when it is compared, say, with the study of other deviant acts, such as homicide. Although effective laws against murder long preceded laws against incest—and were far more often enforced rather than winked at—no one thinks of writing hundreds of studies on why mankind has a “universal homicide taboo.”¹³

This essay is intended to consider the evidence for the opposite hypothesis: *That it is incest itself—and not the absence of incest—that has been universal for most people in most places at most times. Furthermore, the earlier in history one searches, the more evidence there is of universal incest, just as there is more evidence of other forms of child abuse.*¹⁴

Two kinds of incest will be considered: *direct incest*, overt sexual activity between family members other than spouses; and *indirect incest*, the providing of children by their parents to others in order for them to be sexually molested.

There are two reasons why I believe indirect incest must be included in any definition of incestuous activity. First of all, arranging for children to have sex with other household members or neighbors is usually

10. John M. Goggin and William C. Sturtevant, “The Calusa: A Stratified, Nonagricultural Society (with Notes on Sibling Marriage).” In Ward H. Goodenough, Ed., *Essays in Honor of George Peter Murdock*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964, pp. 179-219.

11. J. R. Fox, “Sibling Incest.” *British Journal of Sociology* 13(1962): 128-150.

12. Barry D. Adam, “Age, Structure, and Sexuality: Reflections on the Anthropological Evidence on Homosexual Relations.” *The Journal of Homosexuality* 11(1985): 19-33; Bernard Sergent, *Homosexuality in Greek Myth*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1984 and *L'homosexualité initiatique dans l'europe ancienne*. Paris: Payot, 1986.

13. Anthony H. Manchest, “Incest and the Law.” In John M. Eekelacer and Sanford N. Katz, eds. *Family Violence: An International and Interdisciplinary Study*. Toronto: Butterworths, 1978, pp. 487-92.

14. For overview of childhood history, see Lloyd deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*. New York: Psychohistory Press, 1982.

motivated by the incestuous wishes of the parent; and, in any case, it is usually perceived by the child to be similar to direct incest. Secondly, clinical studies show that contemporary sexual abuse usually involves a parent or guardian, who, if not the direct perpetrator, covertly brings about the incident in order to satisfy their own incestuous wishes.¹⁵

PSYCHOANALYTIC VIEWS ON THE REALITY OF INCEST

When Sigmund Freud discovered that eighteen of his hysterical patients had conscious memories of childhood sexual seductions, mostly by family members, he faced a theoretical impasse.¹⁶ Since he believed only repressed memories could produce hysterical symptoms, the easily accessible detailed memories of his patients could not be the real cause of their hysteria. He therefore concluded that there must in each case have been an *earlier* seduction, the memory of which was repressed, generally occurring between the ages of two and five and never later than eight. These early scenes had to be reconstructed from fantasies and dreams, and even when Freud pieced them together for the patient, he admitted, "they have *no feeling of remembering* the scenes."¹⁷

These earlier infantile reconstructions, Freud quite correctly decided in 1897, were "scenes of seduction [that] had never taken place...they were only phantasies which my patients had made up or which I myself had perhaps forced on them..."¹⁸ But the clear memories of seduction in later

15. J. G. Jones, "Sexual Abuse of Children: Current Concepts." *American Journal of Diseases of Children* 136 (1982): 142-146.
16. The seduction theory is best traced historically in Jean G. Schimek, "Fact and Fantasy in the Seduction Theory: A Historical Review." *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 35(1987): 937-65; Norman N. Holland, "Massonic Wrongs," *American Imago* 46(1989): 329-352; Robert A. Paul, "Freud and the Seduction Theory: A Critical Examination of Masson's The Assault on Truth." *The Journal of Psychoanalytic Anthropology* 8(1985): 161-87; Zvi Lothane, "Love, Seduction, and Trauma." *Psychoanalytic Review* 74 (1987): 83-105; Elaine Westerlund, "Freud on Sexual Trauma: An Historical Review of Seduction and Betrayal." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 10(1986): 297-309; and Richard B. Ulman and Doris Brothers, *The Shattered Self: A Psychoanalytic Study of Trauma*. Hillsdale, N.J.: The Analytic Press, 1988, pp. 65-78; and Emanuel E. Garcia, "Freud's Seduction Theory." In Albert J. Solnit and Peter B. Neubauer, eds. *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*. Vol. 42. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987. All, however, have their shortcomings, so it is suggested there is no substitute to reading Freud himself.
17. Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. "The Aetiology of Hysteria." Vol. III, (1986). London: The Hogarth Press, 1955, p. 204.
18. Freud, *Standard Edition*. "An Autobiographical Study." Vol. XX, (1925), p. 34.

childhood and adolescence that his patients had spontaneously reported to him and about which they had strong reality feelings, he never doubted—contrary to the assertions of critics like Masson and Miller, who claim Freud lost his courage and denied that any incest had actually taken place.¹⁹ The particular theory of hysteria which he admitted “broke down under the weight of its own improbability”²⁰ was the *infantile seduction* theory and did not imply any doubting of his patients’ memories of real incest.

For the rest of his life, in fact, Freud reiterated his belief that these clear memories of incestuous attacks were real. In 1905 he wrote, “I cannot admit that in my paper on ‘The Aetiology of Hysteria’ I exaggerated the frequency or importance of...the effects of seduction, which treats a child as a sexual object prematurely...”²¹ Later, he repeatedly wrote such statements as that “the sexual abuse of children is found with uncanny frequency among school teachers and child attendants...and phantasies of being seduced are of particular interest, because so often they are not phantasies but real memories.”²² Furthermore, he considered the incestuous memories of such patients as Katharina, Rosalia H., Elisabeth von R. and the Wolf Man as reality, not fantasy, saying of such traumatic child abuse “You must not suppose...that sexual abuse of a child by its nearest male relatives belongs entirely to the realm of phantasy. Most analysts will have treated cases in which such events were real and could be unimpeachably established...”²³ He even called his own

19. Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, *The Assault on Truth*. New York Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1984; Alice Miller, *Thou Shalt Not Be Aware: Society's Betrayal of the Child*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1984.

20. Freud, *Standard Edition*. “On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement.” Vol. XIV (1914), p. 17.

21. Freud, *Standard Edition*. “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality.” Vol. VII (1905), p. 86.

22. Freud, *Standard Edition*. “Three Essays,” p. 148; “Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis.” Vol. XVI (1916-17), p. 370.

23. Freud, *Standard Edition*. “Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis.” Vol. XVI (1916-17), p. 370. It is true that Freud then went on to say that whether seduction had occurred in reality or in fantasy, “The outcome is the same, and up to the present we have not succeeded in pointing to any difference in the consequences, whether phantasy or reality has had the greater share in these events of childhood.” *Ibid*. Today a psychotherapist would say that it certainly makes a difference whether incest occurred in reality or not. It would be important, for instance, to know whether Freud's father was or was not the “pervert” Freud called him—especially since, like most German children of his time he slept with his parents in infancy. The point here, however, isn't whether Freud's every clinical opinion is held today. It is only that Freud didn't deny that real childhood seduction all too often occurred in his patients and in the society around him.

memories "genuine" of having been sexually molested as a little boy by his nurse, who had not only forced him to perform sexually and, he reported, "complained because I was clumsy," but also, he said, washed him in water that contained her own menstrual blood.²⁴

Therefore, regardless of all that has been written about the subject, an unbiased reading of Freud's works shows that whenever he confronted clear evidence of sexual molestation, he called it seduction, not fantasy. There was no "great reversal," no "suppression of seduction," no "betrayal of the child," no "assault on truth."

Freud's courage in acknowledging the extent of childhood sexual molestation was not shared by the majority of his colleagues. Most, like Jung, simply avoided the topic. Others, who noted that large numbers of their patients had clear memories of incestuous rape, blamed the victim, saying, like Abraham, that the molestation "was desired by the child unconsciously [because of an] abnormal psycho-sexual constitution..."²⁵ Analysts since Freud have routinely reported memories of seduction as unconscious wishes, while analysts of children regularly neglected to ask their patients whether their reports were real or not.²⁶ Psychoanalytic institutes have often taught that *all* memories of incest were wishes. One analyst recalls, "I was taught in my...early years in psychiatry, as most of us were, to look very skeptically upon the incestuous sexual material described by my patients...Any inclination on my part, or that of my colleagues in the training situation, to look upon these productions of the patient as having some reality basis was scoffed at and was seen as evidence of our naivete..."²⁷

24. Sigmund Freud, *The Origins of Psychoanalysis: Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts and Notes: 1887-1902*. New York: Basic Books, 1954, p. 220.

25. Karl Abraham, "The Experiencing of Sexual Traumas as a Form of Sexual Activity." In *Selected Papers of Karl Abraham*. London: Hogarth Press, 1948, p. 48. Abraham's blaming of the victim is particularly clear in his case of the woman who was raped by her uncle in "On the Significance of Sexual Traumas in Childhood for the Symptomatology of Dementia Praecox." In Karl Abraham, *Clinical Papers and Essays on Psycho-Analysis*. New York: Basic Books, 1955, p. 14.

26. This of course can only be ascertained for certain in the rare cases when the child analyst's full clinical notes have been preserved; the best example is Melanie Klein, *Narrative of A Child Analysis: The Conduct of the Psycho-Analysis of Children As Seen in the Treatment of a Ten Year Old Boy*. New York: Basic Books, 1960, where Mrs. Klein reports regularly avoiding asking whether the boy's reports of sucking his dog's penis and having his own penis sucked might have been cover memories for real incest, despite the boy's timid suggestion that "perhaps this had happened in the past with his brother." (p. 93) Klein, like Anna Freud, felt real childhood sexual events of little importance compared to internal fantasy.

27. Bernard C. Glueck, Jr., "Early Sexual Experiences in Schizophrenia," in Hugo G. Beigel, Ed., *Advances in Sex Research*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963, pg. 253.

Even when analysts were presented with evidence of childhood sexual and physical abuse so overwhelming they could not disbelieve it, they usually paid little attention to it in their case histories. For instance, Otto Kernberg rarely reports on child abuse in his extensive studies on his borderline patients. When he was personally told by a researcher that many recent studies of borderlines showed extremely high rates of sexual and physical abuse as children, he admitted that while this was true of his borderline patients as well, "it is hard to know what to make of it."²⁸

Freud's view of the reality of childhood seduction was not, however, wholly missing from earlier psychoanalytic literature. Ferenczi not only found that many of his patients had clear memories of late childhood seduction but also described how many of his adult patients confessed to having sexual relations with children, concluding: "The real rape of girls who have hardly grown out of the age of infants, similar sexual acts of mature women with boys, and also enforced homosexual acts, are more frequent occurrences than has hitherto been assumed."²⁹ Many women analysts, such as Bonaparte, Jacobson, Greenacre and Reich,³⁰ were able to empathize with their female patients and admit the reality of their memories of incestuous abuse. Rheingold reported encountering surprisingly frequent cases of real incest in his patients, including a great deal of overt maternal masturbation of young children, fathers orgasmically flagellating their daughters, parents forcing children to handle the parents' genitals, mothers encouraging uncles to rape their children, and so on, wondering why "scant attention" had been given to such material by others.³¹ Robert Fliess, after a lifetime of psychoanalytic experience in the removal of amnesia from early memories, regularly found real sexual molestation of his patients at the core of their problems, and concluded that "*no one is ever made sick by his fantasies. Only traumatic memories in repression can cause the neurosis.*"³²

28. Judith L. Herman and Bessel A. van der Kolk, "Traumatic Antecedents of Borderline Personality Disorder." In Bessel A. van der Kolk, Ed., *Psychological Trauma*. Washington D.C.: American Psychiatric Press, 1989, p. 116.

29. Sandor Ferenczi, "Confusion of Tongues Between the Adult and Child." *Final Contributions to the Problems and Methods of Psycho-Analysis*. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1980, p. 162; Judith Dupont, Ed., *The Clinical Diary of Sandor Ferenczi*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989.

30. Marie Bonaparte, *Female Sexuality*. New York: International Universities Press, 1953; Phyllis Greenacre, *Trauma, Growth and Personality*. New York: International Universities Press, 1950; Annie Reich, "Analysis of a Case of Brother-Sister Incest." In Annie Reich. New York: International Universities Press, 1973, pp. 288-311.

31. Joseph C. Rheingold, *The Fear of Being a Woman: A Theory of Maternal Destructiveness*. New York: Grune & Stratton, 1964.

32. Robert Fliess, *Symbol, Dream and Psychosis*. New York: International Universities Press, 1973, p. 212.

In the past decade, with the growing realization by the public of how widespread childhood sexual abuse is in contemporary society, psychoanalysts have begun to report on the therapeutic necessity of acknowledging early sexual seduction. They have even wondered if the analyst's denial might have prevented cure in those cases where reanalysis discovered incestuous abuse that the first analyst had denied.³³ In a recent study connecting borderline personality disorders and childhood sexual abuse, Herman and her colleagues report that "such patients may show remarkable improvement when the connection between symptom and trauma is recognized."³⁴

In recent years, psychoanalysts have begun to report uncovering considerable early sexual abuse that had gone previously unrecognized. One analyst described the analysis of a woman who had been raped at four years of age, saying "it took eighteen years of weekly sessions before there was a complete remission of symptoms...Would not an earlier recognition of the actual childhood rape have saved us many hours of analysis?"³⁵ Even the conservative *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* recently concluded a review of the question of the reality of incest by asking "Have thousands of analyses and clinical studies not yet resolved the question of whether adult hysterics had been assaulted or seduced in infancy and childhood? The answer is that they have not."³⁶

CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE IN CONTEMPORARY WESTERN SOCIETIES

In determining the actual incidence of childhood sexual abuse in modern societies, the main problem is that one must rely upon witnesses who have enormous emotional difficulties in reporting what they find—far more so than with any other psychohistorical subject I have encountered.

33. Miriam Williams, "Reconstruction of an Early Seduction and Its Aftereffects." *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*. 35(1987): 145-163.

34. Judith Lewis Herman, J. Christopher Perry and Bessel A. van der Kolk, "Childhood Trauma in Borderline Personality Disorder." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 146(1989): 494.

35. Joseph Peters, "Children Who Are Victims of Sexual Assault and the Psychology of Offenders." *American Journal of Psychotherapy* 30(1976): 401.

36. Lawrence Z. Freedman, review of Jeffrey M. Masson, *The Assault on Truth*. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 36(1988): 187.

For one thing, most writers on the subject have themselves usually been *advocates* of pedophilia. Ever since the early studies of such sexologists as Symonds and Eglinton,³⁷ most writing on incest has been by scholars hoping to justify sexual relations with children by showing how widespread the practice has been. Many openly state, as do Allen Edwardes and R. E. L. Masters, that "there is no shame in being a...pederast or a rapist if one is satisfied,"³⁸ or claim that incest can be "a positive, healthy experience," as does social worker LeRoy Schultz, who writes extensively on childhood sexuality.³⁹ Even Kinsey wrote: "It is difficult to understand why a child, except for its cultural conditioning, should be disturbed at having its genitalia touched,"⁴⁰ while his co-

37. John Addington Symonds, *Sexual Inversion*. New York: Bell Publishing Company, 1984 (1928); J. Z. Eglinton, *Greek Love*. New York: Oliver Layton Press, 1964.

38. Allen Edwardes and R. E. L. Masters, *The Cradle of Erotica*. New York: The Julian Press, 1963, p. 22.

39. Schultz' keynote speech at the first national conference on sexual abuse of children is cited in Sam Janus, *The Death of Innocence: How Our Children Are Endangered by the New Sexual Freedom*. New York: William Morrow & Co., 1981, p. 126; see also Leroy G. Schultz, Ed., *The Sexual Victimology of Youth*. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1980; and LeRoy G. Schultz, "Child Sexual Abuse in Historical Perspective." *Journal of Social Work and Human Sexuality* 1(1982): 21-35.

Other current scholarly works advocating pedophilia include Daniel Tsand, Ed., *The Age Taboo: Gay Male Sexuality, Power and Consent*. London: Gay Men's Press, 1981; Tom O'Carroll, *Paedophilia: The Radical Case*. London: Peter Owen, 1980; Edward Brongersma, *Das verfemte Geschlecht*. Munich: Lichtenberg, 1970. Brian Taylor, Ed., *Perspectives on Paedophilia*. London: Batsford, 1981; Fritz Bernard, *Pedofilie*. Bussum: Aquarius, 1975; Larry L. Constantine, "The Sexual Rights of Children: Implications of a Radical Perspective." In Mark Cook and Glenn Wilson, Eds., *Love and Attraction: An International Conference*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979; Edward Brongersma, *Das verfemte Geschlecht*. Munich: Lichtenberg, 1970; Tony Duvert, *Le bon sexe illustre*. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1974; Richard L. Currier, "Juvenile Sexuality in Global Perspective." In Larry L. Constantine and Floyd M. Martinson, Eds., *Children and Sex: New Findings, New Perspectives*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1981; Tony Duvert, *L'enfant au masculin*. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1980; Joachim S. Hohmann, Ed., *Paedophilie heute*. Frankfurt am Main: Foerster, 1980; Theo Sandfort, *The Sexual Aspect of Paedophile Relations: The Experience of Twenty-five Boys*. Amsterdam: Pan/Spartacus, 1982; Jeffrey Weeks, *Coming Out: Homosexual Politics in England Since the 19th Century*. London: Quartet, 1978; Parker Rossman, *Sexual Experience Between Men and Boys: Exploring the Pederast Underground*. New York: Association Press, 1976; Theo Sandfort, *The Sexual Aspect of Paedophile Relations: The Experience of Twenty-five Boys*. Amsterdam: Pan/Spartacus, 1982; Dennis Drew and Jonathan Drake, *Boys For Sale: A Sociological Study of Boy Prostitution*. New York: Brown Book Co., 1969; and the works cited in the journal *Paidika*.

40. Alfred Kinsey, Wardell Pomery and Clyde Martin. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Co., p. 121.

author in the Kinsey studies, Wardell Pomeroy, wrote that "incest between adults and younger children can...be a satisfying and enriching experience..."⁴¹

One must use the research of such scholars with extreme caution, since their main motive is to deny the coercion involved when adults seduce lonely, unloved children. Yet the task of digging through the truly staggering amount of literature on sexuality in past and present societies⁴² (there are over sixty journals alone with regular articles on the subject) is so overwhelming that, in order to locate the rare primary sources that are available, the researcher cannot avoid consulting the life work of pedophilia advocates.

41. Walter B. Pomeroy, "A New Look at Incest." *Penthouse Forum*, November, 1976, p. 10.

42. Recent bibliographic aids include Mary De Young, *Incest: An Annotated Bibliography*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1985; Rick Rubin and Greg Byerly, *Incest: The Last Taboo: An Annotated Bibliography*. New York: Garland, 1983; David Finkelhor, *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research*. New York: The Free Press, 1984; David Finkelhor, et al., *A Sourcebook on Child Sexual Abuse*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1986; Melodye L. F. Dabney, *Incest: An Annotated Bibliography: Offenders, Victims, Families, Treatment Programs*. Eugene, Oregon: M. L. F. Dabney, 1982; Benjamin Schlesinger, *Sexual Abuse of Children: A Resource Guide and Annotated Bibliography*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982; William Parker, "Homosexuality in History: An Annotated Bibliography." *Journal of Homosexuality* 6(1980/81): 191-210; Wayne R. Dynes, *Homosexuality: A Research Guide*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1987; William Parker, *Homosexuality Bibliography. Second Supplement, 1976-1982*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1985; Joan Scherer Brewer and Rod W. Wright, eds., *Sex Research: Bibliographies from the Institute for Sex Research*. Phoenix: Oryx Press, 1979; Vern L. Bullough, W. Dorr Legg, Barrett W. Elcano and James Kepner, eds., *An Annotated Bibliography of Homosexuality*. Two Vols. New York: Garland, 1976; Thomas M. Horner, *Homosexuality and the Judeo-Christian Tradition: An Annotated Bibliography*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1981; Carolyn F. Wilson, *Violence Against Women: An Annotated Bibliography*. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981; Nancy Sahli, *Women and Sexuality in America: A Bibliography*. Boston: G. K. Hall Co., 1984; Ulrich Herrmann, Susan Renftle and Lutz Roth, *Bibliographie zur Geschichte der Kindheit, Jugend und Familie*. Muenchen: Juventa Verlag, 1980; Florence Rush, *The Best Kept Secret: Sexual Abuse of Children*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980; Vern L. Bullough, *Sexual Variance in Society and History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976; R. E. L. Masters, *Patterns of Incest: A Psycho-Social Study of Incest, Based on Clinical and Historic Data*. New York: Ace Books, 1970; Luciano P. R. Santiago, *The Children of Oedipus: Brother-Sister Incest in Psychiatry, Literature, History, and Mythology*. Roslyn Heights, N.Y.: Libra Publishers, 1973; Herbert Maisch, *Incest*. London: Deutsch, 1973; Parker Rossman, *Sexual Experience Between Men and Boys: Exploring the Pederast Underground*. New York: Association Press, 1976; Edward Brongersma, *Das verfemte Geschlecht*. Munich: Lichtenberg, 1970; John Crewdson, *By Silence Betrayed: Sexual Abuse of Children in America*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1988; Judith Ennew, *The Sexual*

Statistical studies on the incidence of child sexual molestation in the United States go back to 1929,⁴³ but these early works were generally ignored by a public accustomed to disbelieving children's accusations and to the lack of punishment for the occasional molesters who were apprehended. The official incidence figures from the American Humane Association, working from reports from child protective agencies, estimated only 7,000 incidents in the U.S. for 1976. Although the AHA estimates rose steadily to 113,000 incidents for 1985,⁴⁴ even these larger figures represented under one percent of American children. Kinsey was surprised to find that 24 percent of his female subjects easily recalled sexual advances by adult males when they were children, but he downplayed their importance since most, he said, were non-contact approaches that he thought unimportant.⁴⁵ Except for a single study by Landis in 1956 reporting a third of his sample of 1,800 college students recalling childhood sexual molestation,⁴⁶ it was not until the late 1970s and early 1980s that careful studies began to be reported with samples large enough to warrant careful statistical analysis.

Exploitation of Children. London: Polity Press, 1986; Jill E. Korbin, Ed., *Child Abuse and Neglect: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981; Larry L. Constantine and Floyd M. Martinson, Eds., *Children and Sex: New Findings, New Perspectives*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1981; Joachim S. Hohmann, Ed., *Paedophilie heute*. Frankfurt am Main: Foerster, 1980; Thomas Marland Horner, *Homosexuality and the Judeo-Christian Tradition: An Annotated Bibliography*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1981; Wolf Vogel, *Berbotene Liebe: Paedophilie und strafende Gesellschaft*. Regensburg: Roderer, 1984; Robin Lloyd, *Boy Prostitution in America*. New York: Vanguard Press, 1976; Gitta Sereny, *The Invisible Children: Child Prostitution in America, West Germany and Great Britain*. New York: Knopf, 1985; W. Arens, *The Original Sin: Incest and Its Meaning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

43. Reviews of prevalence studies include Carolyn Swift, "Sex Between Adults and Children." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 4(1977): 369-384; Diana E. H. Russell, *The Secret Trauma: Incest in the Lives of Girls and Women*. New York: Basic Books, 1986, pp. 59-91; Stefanie Doyle Peters, Gail Elizabeth Wyatt and David Finkelhor, "Prevalence," In David Finkelhor *et al.*, *A Sourcebook on Child Sexual Abuse*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1986, pp. 15-55; and John Crewdson, *By Silence Betrayed: Sexual Abuse of Children in America*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1988, pp. 24-41.
44. Susan Diesenhause, "Child Abuse Victims Face System Made For Adults." *The New York Times*, March 6, 1988, p. 26E.
45. 45 Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin and Paul H. Gebhard, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Co., 1953, p. 117; Kinsey's raw material is reanalyzed in John Gagnon, "Female Child Victims of Sex Offenses." *Social Problems* 13(1965): 176-92.
46. Judson T. Landis, "Experiences of 500 Children with Adult's Sexual Deviance." *Psychiatric Quarterly Supplement* 30(1956): 91-109.

Although these two dozen studies have had somewhat differing definitions of sexual molestation and of the age criteria, their results can be made comparable⁴⁷ by eliminating noncontact abuse (such as exhibitionism) from the definition and by requiring either evidence of force or an age discrepancy of at least five years when the victim is over 12. When these adjustments are made, the studies report childhood memories of contact sexual molestation at rates ranging from 6 to 45 percent for women and from 3 to 30 percent for men.

The lower incidence figures in these studies turn out to be due to the method used in compiling them. As one moves from the lower to the higher figures, one discovers that the interview techniques begin to acknowledge the resistances of the respondents to such emotional questions. The lower figures are in response to written questionnaires or brief telephone calls, contacts that were considered intrusive by the respondent, while the higher figures, such as those of Wyatt and Russell,⁴⁸ were the result of carefully structured face-to-face interviews lasting from one to eight hours.⁴⁹ Obviously it takes a good bit of trust before respondents begin to relate memories of childhood seduction to strangers. Using these two studies, then, as the most accurate we have to date, one finds that either 38 percent (Russell) or 45 percent (Wyatt) of women interviewed reported memories of familial and/or extrafamilial sexual abuse during their childhood, almost half of which was directly incestuous.

Figures as accurate as these for men's memories of seduction are more difficult to obtain. The highest figure reported to date, that of Landis, is 30 percent. Other studies report lower figures because they are from brief questionnaires. Although most comparisons of male and female victimization show molestation of boys only about a third the rate of girls,⁵⁰ there is evidence that males are far more reluctant to reveal their molestation, partly because it usually occurs earlier for boys than for girls and

47. Stefanie Doyle Peters, Gail Elizabeth Wyatt and David Finkelhor, "Prevalence," In David Finkelhor, *et al.*, Eds., *A Sourcebook on Child Sexual Abuse*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1986, pp. 15-55; Gail Elizabeth Wyatt and Stefanie Doyle Peters, "Methodological Considerations in Research on the Prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 10(1986): 241-51; and Gail Elizabeth Wyatt and Stefanie Doyle Peters, "Issues in the Definition of Child Sexual Abuse in Prevalence Research." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 10(1986): 231-9.

48. Gail Elizabeth Wyatt, "The Sexual Abuse of Afro-American and White Women in Childhood." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 9(1985): 507-19; and Diana E. H. Russell, *The Secret Trauma: Incest in the Lives of Girls and Women*. New York: Basic Books, 1986.

49. Russell, *The Secret Trauma*, p. 70.

50. Brenda J. Vander Mey, "The Sexual Victimization of Male Children: A Review of Previous Research." *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 12(1988): 61-71.

partly because victimization may be even more difficult for boys to recall and report than for girls. Because it was conducted by interviews, the 30 percent rate of Landis' study undoubtedly is the most reliable we have for boys. Therefore, the best estimates for memories of childhood sexual abuse we now have for the United States are 40 percent for girls and 30 percent for boys, almost half directly incestuous for girls and about a quarter directly incestuous for boys.⁵¹

Yet even these astonishingly high figures are only a portion of the hidden true incidence rates. Four additional factors raise the actual rates even higher: (1) The groups interviewed do not include many people in the American population who have far higher than average sexual molestation experiences, including institutionalized criminals, prostitutes, juveniles in shelters and psychotics,⁵² (2) the studies only count admissions to the interviewer of abuse, and it is unlikely that *no* conscious memories were ever suppressed during the interviews, (3) a large percent of each study refused to be interviewed, and these may have been the most victimized of all,⁵³ and (4) most importantly, these studies include only clear *conscious* memories of events—*unconscious* memories, which are usually only uncovered during psychotherapy, would increase these rates.

51. Some authors think boys may be sexually abused as often as girls; the literature is reviewed by Kee MacFarlane, *et al.*, *Sexual Abuse of Young Children: Evaluation and Treatment*. New York: The Guilford Press, 1986, pp. 9-10; also see Robert L. Johnson and Diane K. Shrier, "Sexual Victimization of Boys: An Adolescent Medicine Clinic's Experience." Ms., Newark: University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey, n.d. and Mic Hunter, *Abused Boys: The Neglected Victims Of Sexual Abuse*. Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1990.
52. The evidence for the higher incidence of childhood sexual abuse in these populations is reviewed in Crewdson, *By Silence Betrayed*, p. 208; Rush, *The Best Kept Secret*, p. 5; Adele Mayer, *Sexual Abuse: Causes, Consequences and Treatment of Incestuous and Pedophilic Acts*. Holmes Beach, Florida: Learning Publications, 1985, pp. 6-8; M. Serrill, "Treating Sex Offenders in New Jersey." *Corrections* 1(1974): 13- 24; Mimi H. Silbert and Ayala M. Pines, "Early Sexual Exploitation as an Influence in Prostitution." *Social Work* 28(1983): 285-9; Cathy Spatz Widom, "Does Violence Beget Violence? A Critical Examination of the Literature," *Psychological Bulletin* 106(1989): 3-28; Elaine Carmen, Patricia Perri Rieker and Trudy Mills, "Victims of Violence and Psychiatric Illness," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 141(1984): 378-383.
53. Russell thinks her numbers are underestimated since 36 percent of the households in her study refused to be interviewed and these probably had higher victimization rates. See Diana Russell, lecture, May 17, 1988, Waukesha, Wisconsin, reported in Carol Poston and Karen Lison, *Reclaiming Our Lives: Hope for Adult Survivors of Incest*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1989, p. 259.

It is possible to correct the incidence rates statistically for these factors. Although only 11 percent of Russell's respondents recalled being victimized before the age of five, another study shows the most common age of sexual abuse reported to authorities is four years, while other studies report that from 21 to 50 percent of reported sexual abuse victims involve children under five.⁵⁴ Since few people consciously recall traumatic events of *any* kind before the age of five, and since the graph for sexual abuse distribution by age runs roughly level from ages two to sixteen,⁵⁵ the incidence figures stated above should be increased by at least an additional 50 percent⁵⁶ to account for these three factors. Therefore, the corrected incidence rates are at least 60 percent for girls and 45 percent for boys. Until someone is courageous enough to directly question the children themselves whether they have been molested—a simple procedure that has never been done in any published study to date—60 and 45 percent should be considered as the most reliable national incidence rates we now have available for the U.S.

These reports of childhood seduction are considered by researchers to be real memories, not fantasies. Not only do most researchers conclude, like Russell, that “*underdisclosure* was a significant problem...not fabrication of experiences,”⁵⁷ but another study of 53 women that attempted to independently confirm memories of childhood incest found 74 percent could be positively confirmed plus another 9 percent indirectly supported, while *none* were discovered to be just fantasies.⁵⁸

Because of such reliability studies, reports of memories of childhood seduction need not be as distrusted as they were in Freud's time. The

54. MacFarlane, *Sexual Abuse of Young Children*, p. 7; Crewdson, *By Silence Betrayed*, p. 162.

55. Robert Dube, “Sexual Abuse of Children Under 12 Years of Age: A Review of 511 Cases.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 12(1988): 313.

56. The first two factors, the higher-rate populations excluded from the studies and the suppression of memories, only account for a few additional percentage points. The third factor, the higher rate for households refusing to participate in the studies, is impossible to quantify, so I have here not corrected for this fact. The fourth factor can, however, be quantified, since the recovery of repressed memories for an estimated 90 percent of the incidents prior to age five and for an estimated 35 percent of the incidents after age five would boost the overall rate by almost 50 percent. For a study which concludes that patients “who were abused early in childhood” were the most likely to suffer “massive repression” of memories, see Judith L. Herman and Emily Schatzow, “Recovery and Verification of Memories of Childhood Sexual Trauma.” *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 4(1987): 1-14. The figures I use, therefore, should be considered conservative.

57. Russell, *The Secret Trauma*, p. 35.

58. Herman and Schatzow, “Recovery and Verification,” pp. 1-14. Other studies find even the ability of young children under five years of age to correctly remember

memories reported to these investigators were not vague images reconstructed in psychotherapy, nor were any incidents counted if they involved just exhibition of genitals to the child or other non-contact sexual approaches. Nor did any of these studies inquire about such common sexualized traumas as the constant giving of enemas or regular sexualized beating, both of which are often equivalents for the child to genital seduction.⁵⁹ These figures were limited to clear memories of overt contact experiences such as intercourse, fellatio, cunnilingus, mutual masturbation, anal intercourse and the kissing or sucking of the child's breasts or genitals.

The circumstances of these seductions have been documented in the large clinical literature on molestation, only a portion of which can be summarized here. Russell found that "most perpetrators lived under the same roof as their victims."⁶⁰ Most (85 percent) of the perpetrators were at least five years older than their victims.⁶¹ Of incest cases with females, uncles accounted for 25 percent of the perpetrators, followed in frequency by fathers (15 percent), brothers (12 percent) and stepfathers (8 percent).⁶² Women commit incest more rarely—at least in America—although the number may be larger than realized since studies of boys in early childhood are so sketchy (studies have found many mothers quite seductive toward their children even when they were being observed in a laboratory situation).⁶³

Even when the actual perpetrator isn't a relation, the parent or guardian is somehow implicated in at least 80 percent of the cases.⁶⁴ The other 20 percent contain many cases where parents invite neighbors to sleep

traumatic events is "uncanny"; see Lenore Terr, "What Happens to Early Memories of Trauma? A Study of Twenty Children Under Age Five at the Time of Documented Traumatic Events." *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 27(1988): 96-104. Also see Crewdson, *By Silence Betrayed*, p. 169.

59. John Leopold Weil, *Instinctual Stimulation of Children: From Common Practice to Child Abuse*. 2 Vols. Madison, Conn.: International Universities Press, 1989. These volumes are by far the best available on the consequences of incest and other traumatic child abuse practices.

60. Russell, *The Secret Trauma*, p. 101.

61. *Ibid*, p. 100.

62. *Ibid*, p. 216.

63. Alan Sroufe and Mary Ward, "Seductive Behavior of Mothers of Toddlers: Occurrence, Correlates, and Family Origins." *Child Development* 9(1980): 1222-29; Clare Haynes-Seman and Richard D. Krugman, "Sexualized Attention: Normal Interaction of Precursor to Sexual Abuse?" *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 59(1989): 238-45.

64. J. G. Jones, "Sexual Abuse of Children: Current Concepts." *American Journal of Diseases of Children* 136(1982): 142-6.

with their children, or do nothing about older brothers who molest younger siblings, or leave children with babysitters after they discover evidence of molestation, or continue to allow boyfriends to be alone with children after molestation. One must therefore conclude that the majority of cases of childhood molestation are either perpetuated by caretakers or are consciously or unconsciously set up by them.⁶⁵

Recent studies have destroyed many myths about sexual abuse. Abuse is experienced at far younger ages than once thought—81 percent occurring before puberty and 42 percent under age 7⁶⁶—and involves far less mild forms than has been assumed—even for infants the majority of seductions involve oral, anal or genital penetration.⁶⁷ Seduction of younger children by teens, often previously labeled “experimentation,” has now been found to be a quite serious problem, often the result of an earlier seduction of the teenager or another comparably severe traumatic experience.⁶⁸ In fact, some studies show that half of all reported cases of child molestation and 20 percent of all rapes are committed by persons under the age of 18.⁶⁹

Contrary to the earlier notion that sexual abuse occurred mainly among the poor, there actually is no correlation between economic class and rates of abuse.⁷⁰ Most pedophiles are male, although recent research is beginning to discover more female seduction of little children than previously reported, particularly since, as Lew has pointed out, “sexual activity between older women and young boys is rarely treated as abusive.”⁷¹ In all, only about 2 percent of total incestuous abuse is ever reported, and only a tiny portion of these few are ever convicted, even today,⁷² putting the notion to rest that society is as yet really much in-

65. As, for instance, in the case histories of Elizabeth Ward, *Father-Daughter Rape*. New York: Grove Press, 1985.

66. David Finkelhor, *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research*. New York: Free Press, 1984; J. Michael Cupoli, “One Thousand Fifty-Nine Children With a Chief Complaint of Sexual Abuse.” *Child Abuse & Neglect*. 12(1988): 158.

67. *Ibid*, p. 160.

68. Gail Ryan, “Juvenile Sex Offenders: Development and Correction.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 11(1987): 385-95

69. E. Brown, T. Flanagan and M. McLeod, Eds. *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics—1983*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1984; A. Groth and C. Lored, “Juvenile Sexual Offenders: Guidelines for Assessment.” *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 25(1981) 31-39.

70. Russell, *The Secret Trauma*, p. 388.

71. Mic Hunter, *Abused Boys: The Neglected Victims of Sexual Abuse*. Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1990; Mike Lew, *Victims No Longer: Men Recovering From Incest and Other Sexual Child Abuse*. New York: Harper & Row, 1990, p. 58.

72. *Ibid*.

interested in stopping the practice. Finally, the number of molestation incidents per child may be fairly high; while in Russell's study 43 percent of the cases of incestuous abuse are remembered as occurring only once, another study of reported incidents found that the average duration of abuse is five years.⁷³

The best evidence for the cause of pedophilia is provided by the clinical reports of the psychotherapists who have written extensively on the subject.⁷⁴ The pedophile, similar to other perverts, suffers from severe lack of love and fears of individuation in his or her early childhood, and both desires and dreads merging with the mother because of an enormous need to reinstate mother-child unity. Earlier childhood abuse of pedophiles is commonly found. As an adult, the pedophile must have sex with children in order to maintain the illusion of being loved, while at the same time dominating the children as they themselves once experienced domination, repeating actively their own caretaker's sadism. The pedophile uses the child as a breast-substitute, both in the sense of using him or her for gratification and also as an object for sadistic aggression.

The pedophile's sexual activity is extraordinarily compulsive because it wards off recurring feelings of fragmentation, depression and death. This helps explain why the pedophile's sexual targets are so interchangeable and why an active pedophile often seduces hundreds of children in his or her life. The seduction of children is a desperate defense against fears of personal disintegration. It should not be thought of—as it usually is by historians and anthropologists—as “an outbreak of instinctual sexuality” or as being due to “a lack of impulse controls” or “a weak superego.” Adults who molest children have extremely powerful punitive superegos and are often highly religious. They are driven to their acts not by their sexual instincts but by their overwhelming intrapsychic anxieties. Given the seriousness of the perversion, it is not surprising that successful therapeutic methods have only recently become available.⁷⁵

The time when one could deny that sexual seduction is extremely traumatic for children appears to have ended. The more studies that come out on the effects of childhood sexual abuse, the more severe the damage is found to be. The flood of books and articles documenting the emotional problems of victims both in childhood and in later life has to

73. Henry B. Bill and Richard S. Solomon, *Child Maltreatment and Paternal Deprivation*. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1986, p. 59.

74. An excellent bibliographic review is contained in Charles W. Socarides, *The Preoedipal Origin and Psychoanalytic Therapy of Sexual Perversion*. Madison, Conn.: International Universities Press, 1988.

75. *Ibid.*

be read in detail to appreciate the profound sense of betrayal and the terrifying fears felt by the child, so that even single incidents have the power to permanently ravage their lives. Severe somatic reactions, depersonalization, self-hatred, hysterical seizures, depression, borderline personality formation, promiscuity, sexual dysfunctions, suicide, self-mutilation, night terrors and flashbacks, multiple personalities, post-traumatic stress disorders, delinquency, bulimia, and the overall stunting of feelings and capacities have all been documented—the earlier and the more often the abuse, the worse the damage.⁷⁶

Outside the U.S., there has been only one comparably reliable study published: a thirteen-hundred-page report on face-to-face interviews of over 2,000 men and women done for the Canadian government by the Gallup organization, which concludes with incidence rates approximately the same as the U.S. studies.⁷⁷ In Latin America, anthropologists report a great deal of family sexual activity and widespread pederasty as part of *macho* masculine activity, though reliable statistics of incidence are not yet available.⁷⁸ In Puerto Rico, for instance, Oscar Lewis found “danger of seduction by stepfathers, sexual rivalry between sisters, between mother and daughters [and] male children erotically stimulated by their mothers and by other members of the family,”⁷⁹ E. N. Padilla reported parents and others regularly masturbating the infant’s penis⁸⁰ and Romon Friendandez-Marina found Puerto Rican fathers often masturbating their boys to show off their maleness to friends.⁸¹ In Mex-

76. John Leopold Weil, *Instinctual Stimulation of Children: From Common Practice to Child Abuse*. Two Vols. Madison, Conn.: International Universities Press, 1989; Gail Elizabeth Wyatt and Gloria Johnson Powell, Eds., *Lasting Effects of Child Sexual Abuse*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1988; Brandt F. Steele, “Notes on the Lasting Effects of Early Child Abuse Throughout the Life Cycle.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 10(1986): 283-91; Liz Tong, Kim Oates and Michael McDowell, “Personality Development Following Sexual Abuse.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 11(1987): 371-83; Alison Fishman Gartner and John Gartner, “Borderline Pathology in Post-Incest Female Adolescents.” *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic* 52(1988): 101-113; Anathony P. Mannarino and Judith A. Cohen, “A Clinical-Demographic Study of Sexually Abused Children.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 10(1986): 17-23; Wendy Maltz and Beverly Holman, *Incest and Sexuality: A Guide to Understanding and Healing*. Lexington,
77. R. F. Badgley, *Sexual Offenses Against Children*. 2 Vols. Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing Centre, 1984.
78. Stephen O. Murray, Ed., *Male Homosexuality in Central and South America*. New York: GAU-NY, 1987.
79. Oscar Lewis, *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty—San Juan and New York*. New York: Vintage Books, 1965, p. xxvi.
80. E. N. Padilla, “An Agrarian Reform Sugar Community in Puerto Rico.” Doctoral dissertaion, Columbia University, 1951.
81. Romon Friendandez-Marina, “Brief Communications.” *Psychiatry* 24(1961): 79-82.

ico, J. M. Carrier reported a large proportion of Mexican men had sexual relations with nephews, cousins or neighbors between the ages of 6 and 9.⁸²

European countries are about two decades behind the U.S. in interview techniques, and since they still use written questionnaires they usually report sexual abuse rates of under one percent.⁸³ Most European studies do not attempt to study statistical frequency, though some—such as a series of studies on Scandinavian incest—report considerable public acceptance of incest in some rural areas.⁸⁴

Even though there are no reliable statistics for most European countries, a recent flurry of books, articles and telephone “hotlines” has begun to reveal widespread sexual molestation. A recent BBC “ChildWatch” program asked its female listeners—a large though biased sample—if they remembered sexual molestation, and, of the 2,530 replies analyzed, 83 percent remembered someone touching their genitals, 62 percent of the full sample recalling actual intercourse.⁸⁵ Official estimates of German children sexually abused and raped each year now number over 300,000, and sexual abuse hot lines are becoming more widespread.⁸⁶ The establishment of Italian “SOS—infanzia” hotlines—initially much resented by the public—have begun to reveal widespread pedophile networks, baby prostitution and Boy Scout/Girl

82. J. M. Carrier, “Mexican Male Bisexuality.” In F. Klein and T. Wolf, eds., *Bisexualities: Themes and Research*. New York: Hayworth Press, 1985, pp. 75-85.

83. Jean La Fontaine, *Child Sexual Abuse*. London: Polity Press, 1990; Crewdson, *By Silence Betrayed*, p. 33; Jill E. Korbin, Ed., *Child Abuse and Neglect: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981; Richard J. Gelles and Ake W. Edfeldt, “Violence Towards Children in the United States and Sweden.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 10(1986): 501-10; Patricia J. Mrzaek, Margaret A. Lynch, Arnon Bentovim, “Sexual Abuse of Children in the United Kingdom.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 7(1973): 147-53; Christopher J. Hobbs and Jane M. Wynne, “Buggery in Childhood—A Common Syndrome of Child Abuse.” *The Lancet*, October 4, 1986, p. 792-6; C. J. Hobbs and J. M. Wynne, “Sexual Abuse of English Boys and Girls: The Importance of Anal Examination.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 13(1989): 195-210; Glenn D. Wilson and David N. Cox, *The Child-Lovers: A Study of Paedophiles in Society*. London: Peter Owen, 1983; also see bibliography in Dorothy P. Wells, Compiler, *Child Abuse: An Annotated Bibliography*. Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1980.

84. Neil Elliott, *Sensuality in Scandinavia*. New York: Weybright and Talley, 1970; Svend Riemer, “A Research Note on Incest,” *American Journal of Sociology* 45(1940): 566-75.

85. Jean S. La Fontaine, “Child Sexual Abuse and the Incest Taboo: Practical Problems and Theoretical Issues.” *Man* n.s. 23(1988): 1-18.

86. *Wetzlarer Neue Zeitung*, October 13, 1988, p. 1; Iris Galey, “Ich weinte nicht, als Vater starb. Bern: Zytglogge Verlag, 1988; see also *infant t.* issues 1988 to 1990.

Guide molestation, as well as the widespread sexual abuse of children within families, with a particular emphasis on the pederasty of boys.⁸⁷ Finally, the most careful European study to date is a recent unpublished German survey by the Institut fuer Kindheit that for the first time anywhere dared to ask the children themselves about their sexual experiences. I have been told that these researchers found an 80 percent childhood sexual molestation rate among Berlin schoolchildren.⁸⁸ The exact details of this study will certainly be revealing when it is published. It may be that direct questioning of children rather than relying on retrospective memory may produce even higher real incidence rates of sexual molestation than our 60 percent and 45 percent estimates for the U.S.

PEDOPHILIA IN THE EAST AND MIDDLE EAST

However high the rates of childhood molestation may turn out to be in contemporary Western countries, the incidence in countries outside the West is likely to be much higher. Because they have only recently moved beyond what I have termed the infanticidal mode of childrearing, whereby as much as half of the children born were killed by their parents,⁸⁹ the use of children for the emotional needs of adults is far more accepted, an attitude that fosters widespread incestuous acts along with other child abuse. Although the evidence is scattered and much remains hidden, enough exists to indicate the dimensions of what eventual scholarship will probably uncover.

Childhood in much of India begins with the young child being regularly masturbated by the mother, "high caste or low caste, the girl 'to make her sleep well,' the boy 'to make him manly...'" This practice has been said to be widespread by many reliable observers, including Catherine Mayo—whose extensive investigations in India in the 1920s led to the first child marriage laws⁹⁰—a physician,⁹¹ an ethnologist,⁹² a religious

87. *enfant t.* 6(1989): 10-11.

88. Personal communication from Karin Wellenkotter and Detlef Berentzen of the Institute fuer Kindheit, Berlin.

89. Lloyd deMause, "The Evolution of Childhood." In deMause, Ed., *The History of Childhood*. New York: The Psychohistory Press, 1974, p. 51; Lloyd deMause, "Appendix: On the Demography of Filicide." In deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*. New York: Creative Roots, 1982, pp. 117-121; Lloyd deMause, "The History of Childhood in Japan." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 15(1987): 147-51.

90. Katherine Mayo, *Mother India*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1927, pp. 25-26; also see Mayo's many subsequent books and other books written in response to hers, a bibliography of which can be found in Harry F. Field, *After Mother India*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929; and David and Vera Mace. *Marriage: East and West*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1959.

91. Mayo, *Mother India*, p. 26.

scholar⁹³ and a sociologist.⁹⁴ As is the case with virtually all non-Western cultures, the child sleeps in the family bed for several years and regularly observes sexual intercourse between the parents. The extent to which Indian parents go beyond this and overtly have sex with the child cannot be determined. Rampal, the sociologist who recently did interviews modeled on the Kinsey studies about contemporary Indian sexual practices, concludes that "there is a lot of incest...It is hidden along with other secrets of families and rarely gets a chance to come out, like seduction at the hands of trusted friends of the family...To arrive at even a passable estimate of incest cases would be to touch the hornet's nest...no one will ever confess to such a deed, therefore, any attempt to collect statistics may prove to be futile at present."⁹⁵

Boys as well as girls are reported as being masturbated and raped by the men in the family, including fathers, older brothers, uncles and cousins.⁹⁶ By the time children are four or five, they are usually taken to bed at night by others in the extended household. "A particular uncle may like her to sleep in his room, which is considered a great gesture of closeness."⁹⁷ As one girl describes it: "I hardly ever slept with my parents after I was four. I rotated almost every night between my various uncles and sometimes my grandmother. But it was difficult to have any space in her bed because all the grandsons slept in her bed...So I preferred to sleep in [uncle's] bed, who was very nice and put his arms around me in winter."⁹⁸ This practice is similar to the customary sharing of their wives by brothers, who have free sexual access to each other's wives, an ancient practice still approved of in some areas in India.⁹⁹

So acceptable is sex between close relatives in India that uncle-niece and cross-cousin marriages were preferred among certain Indian groups.¹⁰⁰ As the old Indian proverb has it, "For a girl to be a virgin at

92. R. E. L. Masters, *Patterns of Incest: A Psycho-social Study of Incest, Based on Clinical and Historic Data*. New York: Ace Books, 1970, pp. 46-47.

93. Ganamath Obeyesekere, *The Cult of the Goddess Pattini*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

94. S. N. Rampal, *Indian Women and Sex*. New Delhi: Printoy, 1978, pp. 69-71.

95. *Ibid*, p. 71.

96. R. E. L. Masters, *Patterns of Incest*, pp. 46-47.

97. Manisha Roy, *Bengali Women*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972, p. 24.

98. *Ibid*.

99. K. M. Kapadia, *Marriage and Family in India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966.

100. L. D. Sanghvi, "Inbreeding in India." *Eugenics Quarterly* 13(1966): 291-301; P.S.S. Rao and S. G. Inbaraj, "Breeding Effects on Human Reproduction in Tamil Nadu of South India." *Annals of Human Genetics* 41(1977): 87-98; A. K. Ghosh and P. P. Majumder, "Genetic Load in an Isolated Population of South India." *Human Genetics* 51(1979): 203-8.

ten years old, she must have neither brothers nor cousin nor father.” These sleeping patterns with relatives who live in common residences continue even after marriage, since husbands are often cold to wives, and sex with the husband’s younger brother is covertly encouraged by the family to give the wife someone to be “close” to.¹⁰¹ Grandfathers often call the little girls “my little wife,” give them candy and “play the role of an old seducer,” teasing them by saying “Don’t you want to marry me?”¹⁰² One observer sums up traditional Indian sexual stimulation during childhood as follows: “The little Hindu girls are deflowered by the little boys with whom they play, and repeat together the erotic lessons which their parents have unwittingly taught them on account of the general promiscuity of family life throughout India. In all the little girls of less than ten years of age the complete hymen is wanting...Incest is often the rule rather than the exception.”¹⁰³

In addition to direct incest by parents, the seduction of little girls who are taken in as wards or servants is quite common. Many older men, Rampal reports, “get down to seducing young girls whom they give protection at home for any reason—education, service, relationship, close friendship with father or brother. [They] take full advantage of the girl’s innocence and her lack of experience in dealing with men who desire them sexually. The girls generally regret such relationships because of [the] extreme dualism of calling their secret lovers as ‘uncle’ or ‘brother’ before others and indulging in coitus in the privacy of [the] bed-room...”¹⁰⁴ Fathers sometimes encourage the seduction by giving a daughter to a friend to be brought up “as his own daughter” so the friend “then initiates her to incestuous coitus.”¹⁰⁵

The sexual use of boys and girls goes back as far as records exist and includes all castes in India. As Mayo says, “For a period so long that none knows its beginning, the Brahmin has been intensively cultivating, and with priestly authority handing on, a passion for immature girl-children in sexual use.”¹⁰⁶ Temple prostitution of both boys and girls has a long history, and Mayo reported in 1927 that “the little boy...is likely, if physically attractive, to be drafted for the satisfaction of grown men,

101. *Ibid*, pp. 110-13.

102. *Ibid*, p. 24.

103. Allen Edwardes, *The Cradle of Erotica*. New York: The Julian Press, 1963, pp. 133-134, citing Dr. Jacobus (*non de plume*), *L’Ethnologie du Sens Génitale*. Paris, 1935, a book I have been unable to locate.

104. S. N. Rampal, *Indian Women and Sex*, p. 69.

105. *Ibid*, p. 23.

106. Katherine Mayo, *Volume Two*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1931, p. 47.

or to be regularly attached to a temple, in the capacity of prostitute. Neither parent as a rule sees any harm in this, but is, rather, flattered that the son has been found pleasing.”¹⁰⁷ Both priests and visitors used the boys and girls sexually, most of the children being “of good caste.” One community of temple prostitutes numbered two hundred thousand members, according to government statistics.¹⁰⁸

Child marriage has been the rule in India at least as far back as 300 B.C.¹⁰⁹ The rationalization for child marriage—like that for extreme seclusion of girls, *purdah*¹¹⁰—is that it is necessary to protect the girl from the seductive males around her. Indian mothers of higher castes admit that they are “afraid to leave their daughters of [age eleven] at home, even for one afternoon, without a mother’s eye and accessible to the men of the family. Far down the social scale the same anxiety is found. The Hindu peasant villager’s wife will not leave her girl child at home alone for the space of an hour, being practically sure that, if she does so, the child will be ruined.”¹¹¹ Therefore, the child has traditionally been married off as early as six or seven years of age.

While child marriages are consciously excused as defenses against seduction by males, they also, of course, carry out the seduction, since child marriages have generally been consummated right away and since the groom is almost always decades older than the child bride. As the Mahabharata says, “Let the man of thirty years wed a ten-year-old wife, a *nagnika* (one that has not yet menstruated), or let the man of twenty-one get one seven years old.”¹¹² Since prior to the 1929 Child Marriage Restraint Act most Indian girls were married and began sexual intercourse before age 12, they moved from familial incest to sex with older men chosen by the family while they were still children.¹¹³

107. Mayo, *Mother India*, p. 25. Also see G. Morris Carstairs, *The Twice-Born: A Study of a Community of High Caste Hindus*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967; Shakuntala Devi, *The World of Homosexuals*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1977; Johann Jacob Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India: A Study of the Comparative History of Indian Culture*. Two Vols. New York: Dutton, 1930.

108. Katherine Mayo, *Slaves of the Gods*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929, pp. 137-8.

109. Kamalabai Deshpande, *The Child in Ancient India*. Poona: Arya Samskrti Press, 1930, p. 193.

110. Patricia Jeffery, *Frogs in a Well: Indian Women in Purdah*. London: Zed Press, 1979.

111. Mayo, *Mother India*, p. 112.

112. Johann Jakob Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India: A Study in the Comparative History of Indian Culture*. Vol. 1. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1930, p. 58.

113. A. K. Sur, *Sex and Marriage in India: An Ethnohistorical Survey*. Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1973; I have adjusted 1921 census figures by 20 percent to allow for overstating of age, in accordance with evidence given in the census itself; see Harry F.

Fathers who allowed their girls to reach puberty without being married were condemned by their religion to hell. Therefore, the first child usually was born shortly after the onset of puberty, almost always dying during childbirth because of the physical immaturity of the mother.¹¹⁴ When attempts to outlaw child marriage were made in 1929, nine volumes of testimony were published by the Age of Consent Committee, most of them defending child marriage. The complaint was that it was the foundation of the Indian family, since “the girl-child must ‘get herself disciplined’ [raped] through actual consummation of marriage ‘to look upon one individual...as her lord and husband...’”¹¹⁵

Mayo said most of this committee testimony was too obscene to even repeat in its insistence on the necessity for child sex. The Committee was overwhelmed by those who insisted that *the children* were so oversexed that by the time they were seven years old that child marriage was their only salvation. “Little children, both boys and girls, they lament, naturally develop an unnatural, perverted and exhausting precocity, under the stimulus in which they are steeped”—that is, the family incest during the first seven years. Mayo reported numerous testimonies that blamed the little girls for their rape, claiming that early marriage was an absolute necessity, since “Cupid overtakes the hearts of girls...at an early age....A girl’s desire for sexual intercourse is eight times greater than that of males...When there is appetite, it is the best time for giving food...”¹¹⁶

The result of this early incest was a society where adult sexuality was considered extremely dangerous, where people suffered agonies of guilt every time they engaged in sex with their spouses, where all sexual intercourse between men and women was considered polluting and where popular movies still frequently need detailed rape scenes to satisfy the male audience.¹¹⁷ As might be expected, Indian religion has been permeated by perverse sexual fantasies, worship of the penis and extreme fears of loss of semen, including the worship of an incestuous penis-god,

Field, *After Mother India*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1929, p. 48-51. On the difficulty of enforcing child marriage laws in India, see David and Vera Mace. *Marriage: East and West*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1959, pp. 190-201.

114. Eleanor F. Rathbone, *Child Marriage: The Indian Minotaur* London: George Allen & Unwin, 1934, p. 37; and Mayo, *Volume Two*, p. 139.

115. Mayo, *Volume Two*, p. 63.

116. *Ibid*, pp. 68, 52-3.

117. Moni Nag, “Sex, Culture, and Human Fertility: India and the United States.” *Current Anthropology* 13(1972): 231-7; Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980; “Romance and a Little Rape.” *Time*, August 13, 1990, p. 69.

Siva—where women were expected to kiss in public the genitals of naked priests. Even today in cults such as the Hindu Śakti sect incest is advocated as “a higher grade of sexual intercourse and an advanced step toward religious perfection.”¹¹⁸

The Indian subcontinent provides a veritable Galapagos of psychohistorical variations of incestuous behavior, providing examples of a wide range of evolutionary stages that can be useful in comparative historical studies of other societies. In some endogamous Indian groups, such as the Baiga, actual incestuous marriage is practiced between men and their daughters, between women and their sons, between siblings, and even between grandparents and their grandchildren.¹¹⁹ “My impression is that most of them have little or no innate repulsion towards incest,” says Elwin, their ethnographer,¹²⁰ the viability of their society disproving by itself all theories about the impossibility of incestuous marriage.

Variations on the fully incestuous life style of the Baiga are numerous, and regular sexual intercourse during childhood is widespread in many Indian groups. One of the best documented is the Muria, who make their young children a part of their sexual activities in the family bed. Then, when their children are five or six years old, the parents claim they are getting too old to continue to take part in family sex, so they send them to a dormitory set up by the adults for the sexual use of the children by adolescents and older men.¹²¹ The Muria claim it is the *children's* fault they have to be removed from their homes and sent to the sex dormitory: “Some children are very good and understand [why they have to be banished from the family bed], but others are stupid and insist on crowding into the parents' room...” The adults supervise and encourage all the sexual activities that take place in the dormitories. Although at times children as little as two years of age are taken to sleep in the dormitories, they are usually not required to be part of the sex activities until 5 or 6, since if they are made to have sex at 3 or 4 they often “wet their beds [and] wake up crying.”¹²²

118. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva*. London: Oxford University Press, 1973; Nigel Davies, *The Rampant God: Eros Throughout the World*. New York: William Morrow, 1984; Blair Justice and Rita Justice, *The Broken Taboo: Sex in the Family*. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1979, p. 38; Alain Daniélou, *Les Quatre Sens de la Vie à l'Inde Traditionnelle*. Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 1963.

119. Verrier Elwin, *The Baiga*. London: John Murray, 1939.

120. *Ibid*, p. 193.

121. Verrier Elwin, *The Muria and Their Ghotul*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947, pp. 322-439.

122. *Ibid*, p. 358.

When being introduced into the sex dormitory, the children are made to fag for others and are “hammered into shape” by the adolescents in charge. The young children start their sexual activities by massaging the older children, and are only then “initiated” into actual intercourse. Intercourse begins at age 5 or 6, initiated by an adolescent or adult: “A big girl teaches a little boy by letting him fondle her breasts and hug her. Then she opens and spreads her legs and makes the little boy lie on her breasts. She shows him how to open her clothes and insert the little penis with his hand.”¹²³

There are two types of dormitories: the classic model, where girls cannot sleep with a partner for more than three days at a time, under threat of punishment; and the “yoking” model, where partners are “married” to each other for longer periods. The children are usually assigned partners by those in charge. Although sometimes a girl can name her own partner, she cannot choose *not* to have sex, or she will be gang raped: “Should a girl refuse to come when sent for, a number of young boys are dispatched to bring her by force. When she is brought, should she refuse to elect a mate, a number of older boys violate her one after the other, until she names the boy she would have for her mate.”¹²⁴

The children have intercourse in one another’s presence, with certain relatives, such as younger brothers, taking over if the older brother is absent for a time.¹²⁵ “Everyone belongs to everyone else” is the spirit of these dormitories; “you change from girl to girl just as you change your rings from finger to finger,” lest one be “ruined by love.”¹²⁶ (All these rules, of course, are set down and changed at will by the parents, not the children.) Older married men often visit the dormitories and have sex with the children, particularly when their own wives are having their period and are considered polluted.¹²⁷ The sex dormitory system of the Muria—which is similar to that of a number of other Asian and African groups¹²⁸—has been highly praised for its “enviable” positive attitudes toward sex both by the ethnologist who studied them and by other anthropologists reporting on his research.¹²⁹ The dormitories are called a

123. S. S. Shashi, *Night Life of Indian Tribes*. Delhi: Agam Prakarhan, 1978, p. 48.

124. Elwin, *Muria*, p. 340.

125. *Ibid*, pp. 333-338.

126. *Ibid*, p. 343.

127. *Ibid*, p. 369.

128. Edgar Gregersen, *Sexual Practices: The Story of Human Sexuality*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1983.

129. Richard L. Currier, “Juvenile Sexuality in Global Perspective.” In Larry L. Constantine and Floyd M. Martinson, Eds., *Children and Sex: New Findings, New Perspectives* Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1981, p. 18.

“happy, exciting world,” in contrast, says the ethnologist, to other Indian villages where there was more child rape than in dormitory villages.¹³⁰

Like India, China has only recently emerged from the infanticidal mode of childrearing, but reliable research on childhood sexuality is somewhat more limited than for India. Although parents traditionally sleep with their children until they are adolescents,¹³¹ exactly what happens in Chinese family beds has not yet been much investigated, although some observers have reported that Chinese girls, like Indian, have no trace of a hymen, supposedly because caretakers “clean the sexual organs of the little children during daily washings...so scrupulously...”¹³²

Like so many early civilizations, ancient China institutionalized pederasty of boys, child concubinage, the castration of small boys so they could be used sexually as eunuchs, the marriage of young brides with a number of brothers, widespread boy and girl prostitution and the regular sexual use of child servants and slaves.¹³³ Under the popular an-

130. Verrier Elwin, *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin: An Autobiography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 167; S. S. Shashi, *Night Life of Indian Tribes*. Delhi: Agam Prakashan, 1978.

131. Francis L. K. Hsu, *Americans and Chinese: Purpose and Fulfillment in Great Civilizations*. Garden City, N.Y.: The Natural History Press, 1970, p. 75; Francis L. K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow: Kinship, Personality, and Social Mobility in China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971, p. 221.

132. Heinrich Ploss, *Das Weib in der Natur- und Voelkerkunde. Anthropologische Studien*. II, stark vermehrte Auflage, bearbeitet und herausgegeben von Max Bartels. Band 1. Leipzig, 1887; Edgar Gregersen, *Sexual Practices: The Story of Human Sexuality*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1983, p. 228 reports “Some Hindus believe that intercourse with a bride whose hymen is unbroken is dangerous for the groom. consequently, some mothers practice ‘deep cleansing’ on their very young daughters which tears the girls’ hymen.”

133. Wou-Chan Cheng, *Erotologie de la Chine*. Paris: J. J. Pauvert, 1963; Robert Hans van Gulik, *Sexual Life in Ancient China: A Preliminary Survey of Chinese Sex and Society from ca. 1500 BC till 1644 AD*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961; Michel Beurdeley, *The Clouds and the Rain: The Art of Love in China*. London: Hammond & Hammond, 1969; Edgar Gregersen, *Sexual Practices: The Story of Human Sexuality*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1983, pp. 233-44; Vern L. Bullough, *Sexual Variance in Society and History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976, pp. 281-314; Taisuke Mitamura, *Chinese Eunuchs: The Structure of Intimate Politics*. Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, 1970; Andrea Sankar, “Sisters and Brothers, Lovers and Enemies: Marriage Resistance in Southern Kwangtung.” *Journal of Homosexuality* 11(1985): 69-82; John Barrow, *Travels in China*. London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1804; Pan Kwong-Tan, *Psychology of Sex*. Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1947; Dennis Drew and Jonathan Drake, *Boys for Sale: A Sociological Study of Boy Prostitution*. New York: Brown Book Co., 1969, pp. 97-107; Michel Beurdeley, et al., *Chinese Erotic Art*. Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle, 1969; Arnold C. Brackman, *The Last*

cient *sim pua* system of marriage, parents would adopt a girl during infancy, bring her up as a sister to their son and then force them into a marriage that must be considered as incestuous in every way except genetically. Alternatively, they could adopt a son to marry his sister.¹³⁴ Sexual use of adopted girls was said to be common.¹³⁵ Parents would send their boys to aristocratic households for sexual use—if volunteered as a eunich, the parents would have their boys' genitals cut off, which the parents carried with them in a jar.¹³⁶ In some areas, male marriage to boys was so popular that there are records of sacrifices to patron dieties of pederasty.¹³⁷

As was also common in other early civilizations, extreme maternal symbiosis caused the Chinese to believe that women were so powerful that they depleted men of their strength by taking their semen during intercourse. The Chinese thought women ejaculated a life force (*yin*) during sex, which a man could absorb and gain strength from, if he could withhold ejaculation himself. Manuals were written describing methods whereby the man could hold back his semen, terminating intercourse—called “the battle”—by inhaling the breath and sucking the saliva of the woman—who is called “the enemy.”¹³⁸ During adolescence, youths were instructed to have intercourse with young girls who have

Emperor. New York: Scribner's Sons, 1975; Chang Ching-Sheng, *Sex Histories: China's First Modern Treatise on Sex Education*. New York: Bantam Books, 1972; Jean-Jacques Matignon, “Deux mots sur la pederastie en Chine.” *Archives d'anthropologie criminelle* 14(1899): 38-53; Pan Kwong-Tan, *Psychology of Sex*. Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1947; Wang Shu-Nu, *Chung-kuo ch'ang-chi shih* [The History of Chinese Prostitution]. Shanghai: Sheng-huo shu-tien, 1935; Wei-Hsing- Shih-Kuan-Ch'i-Chu, *Chung-kuo t'ung-hsing-luan-mi-shih* [The Secret History of Chinese Homosexual Practices]. Two Vols. Hong Kong: Chai-you chu-pan-she, 1964; Akira Ishihara and Howard S. Levy, *The Tao of Sex*. Yokohama: Shibundo, 1968; Peter Tompkins, *The Eunich and the Virgin: A Study of Curious Customs*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1962; Charles Humana, *The Keeper of the Bed: The Story of the Eunuch*. London: Arlington Books, 1973; Richard Burton, “Terminal Essay.” In Burton, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, Vol. X. New York: Burton Club, 1886.

134. Arthur P. Wolf and Chieh-shan Huang, *Marriage and Adoption in China, 1845-1945*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980; D. C. Buxbaum, *Chinese Family Law and Social Change*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978.

135. Magnus Hirschfeld, *Men and Women: The World Journey of a Sexologist*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1935, p. 79.

136. Taisuke Mitamura, *Chinese Eunuchs: The Structure of Intimate Politics*. Rutland, Vermont: Charles Tuttle, 1970.

137. Bret Hinsch, *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: The Male Homosexual Tradition in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, p. 133.

138. Van Gulik, *Sexual Life in Ancient China*, p. 147.

“undeveloped breasts,” but to practice “moderation” by withholding their semen.¹³⁹ Rulers had more life force because they absorbed more of it from their many wives and concubines. Whether this led them to believe that men could absorb the life force from their children through intercourse is not immediately apparent, although this might be indicated by the widespread practice of buying (under the rubric of “adoption”) children in infancy under the popular *mui tsai* system—children who were then used by their “adoptive” parents both as domestic slaves and as sexual objects.¹⁴⁰ Boys, too, were often adopted for sexual use, and had their feet bound like girls—bound feet being considered sexually arousing.¹⁴¹

Foot binding was a unique Chinese sexual mutilation practice that was performed on girls of all classes. Like other fetishists, the Chinese were so afraid of the vagina as a dangerous, castrating organ that they could only feel erotic toward the woman’s foot—mainly her big toe. As a Cheng Kuan-ying described footbinding in the nineteenth century: “When a child is four or five, or seven or eight, parents speak harshly to it, and frighten it with their looks, and oppress it in every conceivable manner so that the bones of its feet may be broken and its flesh may putrefy.”¹⁴² The girl undergoes this extremely painful process for from five to ten years, crying out in pain each night as she hobbles about the house to do her tasks while holding on to the walls for support.¹⁴³ As the bones became broken and the flesh deteriorated, her foot became a perfect penis-substitute, often losing several toes as they were bent under her foot in order to emphasize the big toe sticking out.

The penis-toe then became the focus of the man’s perversion and of his sexual excitement during intercourse. “It formed an essential prelude to the sex act, and its manipulation excited and stimulated...The ways of grasping the foot in one’s palms were both profuse and varied; ascending the heights of ecstasy, the lover transferred the foot from palm to mouth. Play included kissing, sucking, and inserting the foot in the mouth until

139. *Ibid.*, p. 194.

140. The *mui tsai* system still existed until recently, although formally made illegal after China became a Republic in 1912; see Lt.-Commander and Mrs. H. L. Haslewood, *Child Slavery in Hong Kong: The Mui Tsai System*. London: The Sheldon Press, 1930; and Margery Wolf, *The House of Lim: A Study of a Chinese Farm Family*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968.

141. Robert Brain, *The Decorated Body*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979, p. 89.

142. Howard S. Levy, *Chinese Footbinding: The History of a Curious Erotic Custom*. London: Neville Spearman, n.d., p. 70.

143. David and Vera Mace, *Marriage: East & West*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1959, pp. 75-6; Levy, *Chinese Footbinding*, pp. 52, 82-88.

it filled both cheeks, either nibbling at it or chewing it vigorously, and adoringly placing it against one's cheeks, chest, knees, or virile member."¹⁴⁴ Thus even sex with a female could simulate homosexual intercourse for Chinese males.

Although Chinese literature has many descriptions of the screams of girls whose feet are being crushed,¹⁴⁵ the sources are silent as to whether the little girl herself fully understood the sexual purpose of her mutilation. Since she shared the family bed with her parents and presumably observed her father playing sexually with her mother's penis-foot, it is likely that the sexual aim of her painful mutilation was apparent to her.

Japan began to move beyond the infanticidal mode of childrearing at least two centuries ago.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, reliable accounts of traditional Japanese childhood sexual life are harder to find. Furthermore, there is currently such a taboo on talking about sexual molestation of children that current official figures report only a few hundred cases per year in all of Japan.¹⁴⁷ Although some recent visitors to Japan, witnessing almost everyone reading soft-core pornographic comics (*manga*) that feature young girls "being accosted, surprised, tied up, beaten, knifed [and] tortured,"¹⁴⁸ wonder whether the very low official child abuse figures reported are accurate, personal letters I have written to anthropologists, educators, psychoanalysts and others specializing in Japanese psychology have brought nothing but denial that sexual molestation exists in substantial numbers of families in Japan today.

Ancient Japan resembled both India and China in having institutionalized Greek-style pederasty of boys—by priests as well as warriors—temple prostitution of both boys and girls, and widespread child

144. Levy, *Chinese Footbinding*, p. 34.

145. A typical example, Ibid, p. 83: "My toes were pointed, my instep bent down,/And though I cried out to Heaven and Earth,/ Mother ignored me as if she were deaf./My nights were spent in pain,/My early mornings in tears;/I spoke to Mother by my bed;/How you worry when I'm ill,/How frightened if I fall!/Now the agony from my feet has penetrated the marrow of my bones,/And I am plunged into despair, but you,/You don't care a bit about me."

146. Lloyd deMause, "The History of Childhood in Japan." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 15(1987): 147-51.

147. Yoshiko Ikeda, "A Short Introduction to Child Abuse in Japan." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 6(1982): 487-492.

148. James Fallows, *Atlantic Monthly*, September 1986, p. 37; these pornographic works are currently being investigated by Kenneth Alan Adams and Lester Hill, Jr.; see their "Protest Analilty in Japanese Group-Fantasies," *The Journal of Psychohistory* 15(1987): 113-51; and Kenneth Alan Adams, "Oedipal Themes in Japanese Group-Fantasy." Presentation, International Psychohistorical Association Eleventh Annual Convention, June 11, 1988, and forthcoming in *The Journal of Psychohistory*.

prostitution, including the ancient *geisha* system.¹⁴⁹ Japanese brothels would start girls in sexual service at 5 to 7 years old.¹⁵⁰ Pederasty (*shudo*) by the aristocracy and priesthood is well documented since at least the 14th century, with young boys given by their parents to be used anally by samurais and by priests in monasteries—the buggered boys sometimes having been worshipped as gods incarnate in religious cults similar to those of the cult of the Virgin in the West.¹⁵¹

One of the most endogamous societies in the world, Japan has approved of incestuous marriages in court circles even in historical times.¹⁵² Preferred sibling, cousin, uncle-niece and aunt-nephew marriages have been so extensive that genetics experts have discovered that the inbreeding has affected their size and health.¹⁵³ How often this incestuous

149. Saikaku Ihara, *Comrade Loves of the Samurai*. Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1972 (c. 1680); Louis Frederic, *Daily Life in Japan at the Time of the Samurai*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1972; Donald H. Shiveley, "Tokugawa Tsunayoshi, the Gewoku Shogun." In Albert M. Craig and Donald H. Shiveley, Eds., *Personality in Japanese History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970; H. Paul Varley, *The Samurai*. London: Widenfeld and Nicolson, 1970; Ian Buruma, *Behind the Mask: On Sexual Demons, Sacred Mothers, Transvestites, Gangsters, Drifters and Other Japanese Cultural Heroes*. New York: Pantheon, 1984; Margaret Childs, "Japan's Homosexual Heritage." *Gai Saber* 1(1977): 41-45; Daniel Marc, "Les amants du soleil levant." *Arcadie* 66(1949): 356-51; Ihara Saikaku, *Tales of the Samurai*. Tokyo: Tuttle, 1972; Friedrich Salomo Krauss, *Das Geschlechtsleben in Glauben, Sitte, Brauch und Gewohnheit der Japaner*. Second Ed., Leipzig: Ithnologischer Verlag, 1911; George Ryley Scott, *Phallic Worship: A History of Sex and Sex Rites in Relation to the Religions of All Races From Antiquity to the Present Day*. London: Torchstream Books, 1941, p. 228; Michael Czaja, *Gods of Myth and Stone: Phallicism in Japanese Folk Religion*. New York: Weatherhill, 1974. For the age of *geisha*, see J. E. De Becker, *The Nightless City, or The History of the Yoshiwara Yukwaku*. Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1971 (1899); and Liza Crihfield Dalby, *Geisha*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, p. 197; Paul Gordon Schalow, "Male Love in Early Modern Japan: A Literary Depiction of the 'Youth.'" In Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus and George Chauncey, Jr., *Hidden From History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*. New York: New American Library, 1989.
150. J. E. DeBecker, *The Nightless City, or, The "History of the Yoshiwara Yukwaku."* Yokohama: Z. P. Maruya & Co., 1899.
151. Tsuneo Watanabe and Jun'ichi Iwata, *The Love of the Samurai: A Thousand Years of Japanese Homosexuality*. London: GMP Publishers, 1987; Ihara Saikaku, *The Great Mirror of Male Love*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990.
152. Michio Kitahara, "Childhood in Japanese Culture." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 17(1989): 43-72; Luciano P. R. Santiago, *The Children of Oedipus: Brother-Sister Incest in Psychiatry, Literature, History and Mythology*. Roslyn Heights, N.Y.: Libra Publishing, 1973, pp. 83-90.
153. William J. Schull and James V. Neel, *The Effects of Inbreeding in Japanese Children*. New York: Harper & Row, 1965; William J. Schull and James V. Neel, "The Effects of Parental Consanguinity and Inbreeding in Hirado, Japan." *American Journal of Human Genetics* 24(1972): 425-53.

marriage system occurred in traditional Japan is still largely unexplored. One indication of what is likely to be found is a 1959 study by Kubo showing that there were still rural areas in Japan where fathers married their daughters when the mother had died or was incapacitated, "in accordance with feudal family traditions."¹⁵⁴ Kubo concluded that incest was considered "praiseworthy conduct" in many traditional rural families. In the 36 incest cases he studied in Hiroshima, he found that there was often community moral disapproval of the families who lived in open incestuous marriages, but that the participants themselves did not think of it as immoral. In fact, when the father was unavailable to head the family, his son often took over his role and had sex with his sister in order "to end confusion in the order of the home." Other members of the family accepted this incest as normal.

In traditional Japan, quite young girls were introduced into sex by older boys who visited their bedrooms at night with the complicity of the girl's parents (called night-prowling, *yobai*). The boys "assembled in communal huts and instructed slightly younger village males in sex approaches and techniques..." Although they recommended "gentle persuasion,"¹⁵⁵ there was no guarantee that all was so gentle in fact, since the parents "looked the other way" in accordance with custom while the older boys had intercourse with their young daughters.

Western observers even today often notice that Japanese mothers still masturbate their young children during the day in public and at night in the family bed—in order, they say, "to put them to sleep."¹⁵⁶ The average Japanese today sleeps with his or her children until the children are ten or fifteen years old,¹⁵⁷—one recent Japanese study found daughters still sleeping with their fathers over 20 percent of the time even after age sixteen.¹⁵⁸ Even when the home contains a dozen rooms or more, parents and grandparents feel "lonely" if they sleep apart from

154. Shunichi Kubo, "Researches on Incest in Japan," *Hiroshima Journal of Medical Science* 8(1959): 99-159.

155. Howard S. Levy and Michiko Kawatani, Trans. *Japan's Dirty Old Man: Sex Adventures of Hirota Kichomaru (1628-1717)*. South Pasadena: Warm-Soft Village Press, 1979, p. 3.

156. Robert J. Smith & Ella Lury Wiswell, *The Women of Suyemura*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982, pp. 68-72; Douglas G. Haring, "Aspects of Personal Character in Japan." In Douglas G. Haring, Ed., *Personal Character and Cultural Milieu*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1956, p. 416.

157. John Connor, Takie Sugiyama Lebra, George DeVos and Alan Roland, personal communications.

158. Joy Hendry, *Becoming Japanese: The World of the Pre-School Child*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986, pp. 21, 44; Mizushima Kanae, *Shinshitsu Haibun ni Miru Oyako no shinsosei* [Parent-child intimacy as seen in sleeping arrangements].

the children in the family, and therefore go to bed with some child every night (the mean age in one study of children sleeping alone is 12.7 years).¹⁵⁹ Since so many families still practice what is termed *dakine* co-sleeping—with the parent or grandparent sleeping while physically embracing the child, a practice said to be beneficial to the health of the adult¹⁶⁰—and since most Japanese parents still regularly have sexual intercourse while the child is in bed with them,¹⁶¹ one wonders how scholars can continue to maintain that nothing sexual usually happens to the Japanese child in the family bed, particularly since none have yet asked the children themselves about their sexual experiences.

This stone wall on information about incest in Japan has been breached somewhat by four recent studies. The first is a Japanese feminist sex survey modeled on those of Shere Hite that reported one-third of the respondents having memories of being sexually abused by relatives or close friends as children, a figure considerably higher than comparable American questionnaire studies.¹⁶² Secondly, other studies show that the majority of urban parents in 1981 reported that they had lately begun to be bothered by the thought that children with whom they slept might be aware of their intercourse—a growing guilt about incestuous activities that was increasingly common in the West in early modern times and which led for the first time to separate beds for children.¹⁶³

Thirdly, two recent books on Japanese incest provide new insights into the subject. The first is a report of a “hotline” set up in Tokyo by a counseling service, which analysed the hundreds of calls they received

Ochanomizo Daigaku Kaseigaku-bu, *Daigaku-in 75-nendo Shushi Ronbun*, 1975; Morioka Kiyomi, *Kazoku Shoki Ron* [Family Cycle]. Tokyo: Baifukan, 1973; Samuel Coleman, *Family Planning in Japanese Society: Traditional Birth Control in a Modern Urban Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, p. 177; John W. Connor, “Family Bonds, Maternal Closeness, and the Suppression of Sexuality in Three Generations of Japanese Americans.” *Ethos* 4(1976): 192; William Caudill and David W. Plath, “Who Sleeps by Whom? Parent-Child Involvement in Urban Japanese Families.” *Psychiatry* 29(1966): 344-66; William Caudill and Helen Weinstein, “Maternal Care and Infant Behavior in Japan and America.” *Psychiatry* 32(1969): 1-43; Takie Sugiyama Lebra, *Japanese Women: Constraint and Fulfillment*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984, pp. 176-80.

159. Kitahara, “Childhood in Japanese Culture,” p. 54.

160. Lebra, *Japanese Women*, p. 176.

161. Coleman, *Family Planning in Japanese Society*, p. 177, finds most families respond to questions about why they have sex in the same bed with children by saying it would be “selfish” not to do so.

162. *Ibid*, p. 191.

163. *Ibid*, p. 188.

dealing with incest.¹⁶⁴ Since official Japanese statistics deny the occurrence of incest, they were surprised to find that their hotline was flooded with such calls. One of their major findings is that, in addition to the usual father-daughter and sibling incest found in the West, 29 percent of the Japanese calls complained about mother-son incest. This is an extremely high proportion compared to other countries, but about what could be expected considering the common frequency with which Japanese mothers sleep alone with their sons while the father is out having sex with other women—extramarital sex still being the rule for most married men in Japan.¹⁶⁵

The most commonly reported incest occurs when the mother sees her son masturbate as a teenager and tells him, "It's not good to do it alone. Your IQ becomes lower. I will help you," or "You cannot study if you cannot have sex. You may use my body," or "I don't want you to get into trouble with a girl. Have sex with me instead."¹⁶⁶ The researchers found that Japanese mothers and sons often sleep in the same bed and have sex together, although the exact incidence in the population was not investigated. According to the phone interviews, Japanese mothers teach their sons how to masturbate, helping them to achieve first ejaculation in much the same manner as they earlier helped them with toilet training.¹⁶⁷ Most of the sons had no sexual experience with another woman, and became jealous of the mothers' having sex with their fathers, feeling they should have the right to monopolize the mothers—perhaps helping explain why one informant told a family planning expert: "We have no Oedipal problems in Japan—there's no competition from the father."¹⁶⁸ Another recent Japanese book, based on one hundred incest reports, confirms these observations, including the unusually high rate of mother-son incest, although it, too, provides no way to determine true national incidence rates.¹⁶⁹

Finally, a recent psychohistorical study of Japanese childhood by

164. Kimi Kawana. *Misshitsu no Haha to Ko* [Mother and Child in the Closed Room]. Tokyo: Ushio Shuppan Sha, 1984.

165. Edgar Gregersen, *Sexual Practices: The Story of Human Sexuality*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1983, p. 246, cites Kinsey-style studies that show from 60 percent to 90 percent of Japanese husbands have extramarital intercourse.

166. Michio Kitahara, "Incest—Japanese Style." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 17(1989): 445-50.

167. Machio Kitahara, "Childhood in Japanese Culture," *The Journal of Psychohistory* 17(1989): 56.

168. Coleman, *Family Planning in Japanese Society*, p. 178.

169. Mutsuo Takahashi, Ed., *Kinjirareta Sei* [Forbidden Sex]. Tokyo: Ushio Shuppan Sha, 1984.

Kitahara¹⁷⁰ provides a number of new details about Japanese incest, including the acceptance of sibling incest in early historic times, the routine acceptance of pederasty up until recently, the wide extent even today of co-sleeping and co-bathing, and the degree to which incest depends on co-sleeping patterns and upon the very limited contact fathers have with their families.

The sexual use of children in the remainder of the Far East follows the pattern of India and China. In Thailand, for instance, a survey in 1990 found that 75 percent of Thai men had had sex with child prostitutes, from 20 to 40 percent of them HIV-infected, so that Asia is about to become what one expert terms "the epicenter of the AIDS epidemic."¹⁷¹ The rising incidence of AIDS among children around the world is just one index of how widespread their sexual use really is.

The sexual use of children in the Middle East is probably as widespread as in the Far East.¹⁷² Historically, all the institutionalized forms of pedophilia that were customary in the Far East are extensively documented for the Middle East during its earlier infanticidal childrear-

170. Michio Kitahara, "Childhood in Japanese Culture," *The Journal of Psychohistory* 17(1989): 43-72.

171. Jim McDermott, "Asia—Epicenter of the AIDS Epidemic." *The Washington Post*, June 23, 1991, p. B7.

172. Abeelwahab Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985; Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid-Marsot, Ed., *Society and the Sexes in Medieval Islam*. Malibu, Calif.: Undena, 1979; Jinoos Southgate, "Men, Women and Boys: Love and Sex in the Works of Sa'di." *Iranian Studies* 17: 413-52; Jefim Schirmann, "The Ephebe in Medieval Hebrew Poetry." *Sefarad* 15(1955): 55-68; Minoo S. Southgate, "Men, Women and Boys: Love and Sex in the Works of Sa'di." *Iranian Studies* 17(1984): 413-52; G. H. Bousquet, *L'éthique Sexuelle de l'Islam*. Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1966; Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols and Value in Zoroastrianism: Their Survival and Renewal*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966; J. S. Slotkin, "On a Possible Lack of Incest Regulations in Old Iran." *American Anthropologist* 49 n.s.(1947): 612-17; Richard Burton, "Terminal Essay." In *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, Vol. 10. New York: Burton Club, 1886, pp. 63-302; Samuel M. Zwemer, *Childhood in the Moslem World*. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1915; Marc Daniel, "Arab Civilization and Male Love." *Gay Sunshine* 32(1977): 1-11; Donald Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1970; Allen Edwardes and R. E. L. Masters, *The Cradle of Erotica*. New York: The Julian Press, 1963; Allen Edwardes, *The Jewel in the Lotus: A Historical Survey of the Sexual Culture of the East*. New York: The Julian Press, 1959, pp. 97-99, 183-253; Jonathan Drake, "'Le Vice' in Turkey," *International Journal of Greek Love* 1(1966): 13-27; Edgar Gregersen, *Sexual Practices: The Story of Human Sexuality*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1983, pp. 201-14; Arno Karlen, *Sexuality and Homosexuality: A New View*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1971, pp. 233-6; David F. Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988, pp. 172-82; Vern L. Bullough, *Sexual Variance in Society and History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976, pp. 205-44.

ing mode, including child marriage, child concubinage, temple prostitution of both boys and girls, parent-child marriage (among the Zoroastrians), sibling marriage (among the Egyptians, among both royalty and commoners), sex slavery, ritualized pederasty, eunichism, and widespread child prostitution. Furthermore, as in India, there are parts of the Middle East where customs from earlier times have been maintained intact, so that more detail is available than is usually preserved in historical documents.

In the oasis of Siwa, for instance, mothers regularly give their boys to older men for sexual use, both related and outside the family, and fathers regularly lend their young sons to each other, similar to the Central Asian Islamic tradition of *bacaboz*, where most fathers trade their sons with others for sexual use.¹⁷³ Pederastic marriages and pederastic prostitution have been so widespread in Siwa until just recently that everyone is accustomed to the proposition that men normally love boys more than they do women, saying: "They will kill each other for a boy. Never for a woman."¹⁷⁴ Muslim holy men (*imaam*) regularly have boys available for sex, saying the ingestion of the *imaam*'s semen is necessary for absorbing his spiritual powers, sometimes even extending to formal marriage with the boy.

Sex for boys in the Middle East is said to begin in infancy and continue throughout childhood. Parents and others masturbate the infant's penis in order "to increase its size and strengthen it," and older siblings have been observed playing with the genitals of babies for hours at a time.¹⁷⁵ As the boy gets older, mutual masturbation, fellatio and anal intercourse are said to be common among children, particularly with the older boys using the younger children as sex objects as a reaction to the overstimulation of the family bed. Pederasty of boys by the men in and near the extended family is said by an Arab sociologist to be common, since "the mere sight of pretty boys is regarded...as disturbing and terribly tempting."¹⁷⁶ Moralists often find it necessary to issue warnings such as these: "A man should never spend the night in a house with beardless boys" and "Do not sit next to the sons of the rich and noble: they have faces

173. Ingeborg Baldauf, *Bacabozlik: Boylove, Folksong and Literature in Central Asia*. *Paedika* 2(1990):12-31.

174. Gregersen, *Sexual Practices*, p. 203; Walter Cline, *Notes on the People of Siwah and El Garah in the Libyan Desert*. Menasha, Wisc.: George Banta Publishing Co., 1936; Edwardes and Masters, *The Cradle of Erotica*, pp. 245-6.

175. Edwardes and Masters, *The Cradle of Erotica*, pp. 40, 42, 239-45.

176. Abdelwahab Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985, p. 32.

like those of virgins and they are even more tempting than women.”¹⁷⁷

By the time of circumcision—a traumatic ritual¹⁷⁸ that is usually performed at ages 3 to 6, whose unconscious purpose is to purify the boy and cleanse him¹⁷⁹ of the molestation to which he has been subjected—the boy is supposed to stop wearing the dress-like shirt that allows ready access to his genitals and begin wearing pants. However, since he often continues to sleep in the parental bed, to have sex with siblings and cousins, to experience sexual attacks at school and to attend nude public baths (*hammam*) with his mother and sisters,¹⁸⁰ his sexual overstimulation often continues into the 7- to 14-year-old phase. Much of the incest may occur in the baths. Bouhdiba reports: “The *hammam*...is a highly eroticized place—so much so indeed that the name has come to signify for the masses the sexual act itself...‘going to the *hammam*’ quite simply means ‘making love’...Every Muslim can relive his childhood in terms of his experience of the *hammam*...notoriously a place of homosexuality, male and female...there the child has all the time in the world to contemplate, examine and compare sexual organs [so that] every Muslim is fixated on his mother...”¹⁸¹

As girls in the Middle East are considered worth less than boys, it may be that their incestuous use during childhood is even more prevalent. One report found that four out of five Middle Eastern women recalled having been forced into fellatio between the ages of 3 and 6 by older brothers and other relatives.¹⁸² A female Arab physician who recently conducted an extensive study of childhood seduction reported that “most female children are exposed to...incidents of sexual assault” during their early years by “the brother, the cousin, the paternal uncle, the maternal uncle, the grandfather or even the father. If not a family member, he may be the guardian or porter of the house, the teacher, the neighbor’s son, or any other man.”¹⁸³ The molestation, she says, begins with masturbation

177. James A. Bellamy, “Sex and Society in Islamic Popular Literature,” in Afaf Litfi Al-Sayyid-Marsot, *Society and the Sexes in Medieval Islam*, p. 37; Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam*, p. 33.

178. Vincent Crapanzano, “Rite of Return: Circumcision in Morocco.” In Warner Muensterberger *et al*, Eds., *The Psychoanalytic Study of Society*. Vol. IX. New York: The Psychohistory Press, 1981, pp. 15-36.

179. Because of their incestuous childhoods, Arabs are obsessed with purification, and have developed rituals wherein they are constantly washing the genitals and anal areas, including rubbing the penis against stone objects to empty their impure urinary tract; see Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam*, pp. 46-7.

180. Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam*, pp. 119, 168.

181. *Ibid*, pp. 165, 169, 171 and 173.

182. Edwardes and Masters, *The Cradle of Erotica*, p. 300.

183. Nawal El Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab World*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1980, p. 14.

or fellatio and then proceeds to intercourse. "In most cases the girl surrenders and is afraid to complain to anyone, since, if there is any punishment to be meted out, it will always end up by being inflicted on her. It is she alone who loses her honor and virginity. The man never loses anything..." The incidents are termed "frequent, but remain hidden, stored up in the secret recesses of the female child's self, since she dare not tell anyone of what has happened to her..."

Girls are reported to be sexually assaulted at school and in the streets,¹⁸⁴ and child marriage has proved as difficult to stamp out in many areas as it has been in India.¹⁸⁵ The assaults are accompanied by severe physical and psychological damage, according to research by one group of medical experts at the Ministry of Justice in Cairo, and usually go unpunished even in those rare occasions when they are brought to the attention of authorities, "in order to avoid scandal."¹⁸⁶ Since the girl's hymen must be intact when she gets married, surgical repair is sometimes requested in order to conceal the loss of virginity through the assaults. As in the Far East, young servants are particularly favored sexual objects, both for men whose wives are absent, menstruating, pregnant or frigid and for adolescents who sometimes feel less guilty having sex with servant girls than with their sisters.¹⁸⁷

Arab women, of course, are often aware that their spouses prefer having sex with little boys and girls to having sex with them. Their retribution for the men's pedophilia comes when the girl is about age 6, when the women of the house grab her, pull her thighs apart and cut off her clitoris and sometimes her labia with a razor, thus usually ending her ability to feel sexual pleasure forever.

The custom of clitoridectomy—which is not part of any religious doctrine and is not even mentioned in the Koran—goes back at least to pre-dynastic Egyptian times;¹⁸⁸ even mummies were missing their clitorises

184. *Ibid.*

185. Zwemer, *Childhood in the Moslem World*, pp. 98-9.

186. El Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve*, pp. 20-23.

187. *Ibid.*

188. Frank P. Hosken, *The Hosken Report: Genital and Sexual Mutilation of Females*. Lexington, Mass.: Women's International Network News, 1979; Janice Boddy, "Pharaonic Circumcision in Rural Northern Sudan." *American Ethnologist* 9(1982): 682-98; Edwardes, *The Cradle of Erotica*, pp. 57-64; Bullough, *Sexual Variance*, pp. 219-20; El Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve*, pp. 7-11, 33-42; Hamed Ammar, *Growing Up in an Egyptian Village*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954; Marie Bassili Assaad, "Female Circumcision in Egypt: Social Implications, Current Research, and Prospects for Change." *Studies in Family Planning* 11(1980): 3-16; Rose Oldfield Hayes, "Female Genital Mutilation, Fertility Control, Women's Roles,

and labia.¹⁸⁹ Presently, many Middle Eastern and African countries continue to practice circumcision of girls. A recent survey of Egyptian girls and women showed 97 percent of uneducated families and 66 percent of educated families still practicing clitoridectomy.¹⁹⁰ Nor is the practice decreasing; Hosken says "more female children are mutilated today than throughout history" and estimates that there are presently 74 million mutilated females in countries where documentation exists.¹⁹¹

Often the girl's labia are cut off in addition to the clitoris—the so-called "Pharaonic circumcision" or "infibulation"—and the remaining flesh is sewn together, leaving only a small opening for urination. The vagina must of course be cut open before intercourse, and the women often also have great difficulty giving birth and have to be further cut to allow the baby to pass through. The vaginal area is then re-sewn together after the baby is born "to give the men more pleasure during intercourse" and has to be cut open again during each successive birth. During all of these mutilations the girls undergo excruciating pain, sometimes die of complications, usually hemorrhage, often pass out from the shock (since no anesthetic is used) and often suffer from tetanus, blood poisoning, chronic urinary tract infections and infertility.

The rationalization given for clitoridectomy is that little girls are naturally so sexual that it is necessary "to release them from their bondage to sex" and "to stop them from masturbating." One informant reported that "girls fell from their bicycles because of sexual overstimulation if their clitorises were not cut."¹⁹³ Since the operation

and the Patrilineage in Modern Sudan: A Functional Analysis." *American Ethnologist* 2(1975): 617-33; S. Mclean and S. E. Graham, *Female Circumcision, Excision and Infibulation*. London: Minority Rights, 1985; Rafael Patai, *The Arab Mind*. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1983; Hanny Lightfoot-Klein, *Prisoners of Ritual: An Odyssey into Female Genital Circumcision in Africa*. New York: Harrington Park Press, 1989, Pia Grassivaro, *La circoncisione femminile in Somalia: una ricerca sul campo*. Milano: F. Angeli, 1986; Lilian P. Sanderson, *Female Genital Mutilation, Excision and Infibulation: A Bibliography*. London: The Anti-Slavery Society for the Protection of Human Rights, 1986; Olayinka Koso-Thomas, *Circumcision of Women: A Strategy for Eradication*. London: Zed Books, 1987; Tobe Levin, "'Unspeakable Atrocities': The Psycho-sexual Etiology of Female Genital Mutilation." *The Journal of Mind and Behavior*. 1(1980): 197-210.

189. Marie Bonaparte, "Notes on Excision." *Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences*, 2(1950): 70.

190. El Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve*, p. 34.

191. Fran P. Hosken, *Female Sexual Mutilations: The Facts and Proposals for Action*. Lexington, Mass.: Women's International Network News, 1980, pp. 6 and 0.

192. *Ibid*, p. 15.

193. Lightfoot-Klein, *Prisoners of Ritual*, p. 12.

usually makes the girl frigid, it can be said to achieve its stated aim of reducing girls' sexual pleasure. Men usually do not want to marry women with intact clitorises, believing they will be "oversexed" and betray them. It is the custom in some countries on the wedding night for the husband to be the one to cut his bride's vagina open with a knife, then have repeated intercourse to prevent it from closing again.

The initial mutilation of the girl's genitals is usually done by the women of the family, under the supervision of the mother. The unconscious motive seems to be revenge for the men's sexual abuse of the girl, since interviews so often reveal earlier memories of seduction. One woman relates her memory of her clitoridectomy as follows:

I was six years old that night when I lay in my bed, warm and peaceful...I felt something move under the blankets, something like a huge hand, cold and rough, fumbling over my body, as though looking for something. Almost simultaneously another hand...was clapped over my mouth to prevent me from screaming.

They carried me to the bathroom...I remember...a rasping metallic sound which reminded me of the butcher when he used to sharpen his knife...My blood was frozen in my veins...I realized my thighs had been pulled wide apart, and that each of my lower limbs was being held as far away from the other as possible...I felt that the rasping knife or blade was heading straight down towards my throat. Then suddenly the sharp metallic edge seemed to drop between my thighs and there cut off a piece of flesh from my body.

I screamed with pain despite the tight hand held over my mouth, for the pain was not just a pain, it was like a searing flame that went through my whole body. After a few moments, I saw a red pool of blood around my hips.

I did not know what they had cut off from my body, and did not try to find out. I just wept, and called out to my mother for help. But the worst shock of all was when I looked around and found her standing by my side. Yes, it was her, I could not be mistaken, in flesh and blood, right in the midst of these strangers, talking to them and smiling at them.¹⁹⁴

Clitoridectomy—like all genital mutilations of children—is, of course, an act of incest motivated by the perversions of the adults who perform the mutilation. Although we are not used to thinking of it in this way, in

194. El Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve*, pp. 7-8.

fact mothers who attack their daughters' genitals with knives are as incestuous as fathers who rape them.

Since genital mutilation is one of the most widespread childrearing practices, its presence alone makes incest a universal practice—despite our habit of denying its sexual motivation by terming it a “rite of passage” (it often involves no passage to a new state at all) or a “puberty rite” (it usually occurs long before puberty). Also, the sexual excitement of the adults attending the mutilation is overlooked, even when—as in Siwa—the mother masturbates the child prior to the mutilation, or when—as in Morocco—prostitutes regularly attend the mutilation ceremony in order to relieve the sexual tensions generated, or when—as in Australia—the mutilation is followed by group rape.¹⁹⁵

The mutilation of children's genitals is such a important need in humans that whole religions and state systems have been founded upon the practice. Yet when scholars attempt to explain why almost everyone since the beginning of recorded history has massively assaulted the genitals of their children, they assiduously deny that it is a sexual perversion or that those who do it ever mean any harm to the children.

Arnold van Gennep calls genital mutilation a ceremony “whose essential purpose is to enable the individual to pass from one defined position to another,” never wondering why parents couldn't celebrate the maturing of their children in a less harmful way.¹⁹⁶ Bruno Bettelheim claims that little boys *want* their genitals cut—because of an inborn “vagina envy”—and that the mutilation was so “pleasurable” to the victims that they asked adults to cut them, so they could “express their happiness.”¹⁹⁷ Others have claimed genital mutilation was done “to enforce social cohesion” (Yehudi Cohen), “to break an excessively strong dependence upon the mother” (John Whiting), to show the child “We love you, but we must rid you of your infantilisms” (Theodor Reik), and to make the penis look like that of a kangaroo (John Cawte).¹⁹⁸

195. Hamed Ammar, *Growing Up In An Egyptian Village*. New York: Octagon Books, 1973, p. 121; Vincent Crapanzano, “Rite of Return: Circumcision In Morocco.” In Warner Muensterberger and L. Bryce Boyer, Eds. *The Psychoanalytic Study of Society. Vol. IX*. New York: Psychohistory Press, 1981, pp. 15-36.

196. Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960, p. 3.

197. Bruno Bettelheim, *Symbolic Wounds: Puberty Rites and the Envious Male*. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1954, p. 84.

198. Yehudi A. Cohen, *The Transition From Childhood to Adolescence: Cross-Cultural Studies of Initiation Ceremonies, Legal Systems, and Incest Taboos*. Chicago: Aldine, 1964; John W. M. Whiting, Richard Kluckhohn and Albert Anthony, “The Function of Male Initiation Ceremonies at Puberty.” In Eleanor E. Maccoby, Theodore M. Newcomb and Eugene L. Hartley, Eds., *Readings in Social Psychology*. Third Edi-

There is hardly an imaginable form of genital assault that is not regularly performed on children. Girls' genitals are tattooed, cut off, sewn up, burned off, and ripped open with the fingers.¹⁹⁹ Boys' genitals are pierced by objects, sewn up, burned, cut off, flayed, "gashed open [so that] wedges of flesh are removed," and slashed through to the urethra so that "the penis splits open like a boiled frankfurter."²⁰⁰ The topic of childhood genital mutilation is so rich in meaning that it will have to await further discussion in the next two major sections of this study, "The Cross-Cultural Study of Incest," where the universality of incest in contemporary preliterate groups is documented, and "The History of Incest," where evidence is presented for the historical stages in the evolution of *homo eroticus* from incest to love.

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- tion. New York: Henry Holt, 1958; Theodor Reik, *Ritual: Psycho-analytic Studies*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975, p. 120; John Cawte, N. Djagamara and M. G. Barrett, "The Meaning of Subincision of the Urethra to Aboriginal Australians." *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 39(1966): 245-253. The best psychoanalytic reviews of genital mutilation theories are Vincent Crapanzano, "Rite of Return Circumcision in Morocco" and Robert Bates Graber, "A Psychocultural Theory of Male Genital Mutilation." *The Journal for Psychoanalytic Anthropology* 4(1981):413-434.
199. Edgar Gregersen, *Sexual Practices: The Story of Human Sexuality*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1983, pp. 101, 106-7 and 295; Armando R. Favazza and Barbara Favazza, *Bodies Under Siege: Self-mutilation in Culture and Psychiatry*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987, p. 159.
200. Robert Brain, *The Decorated Body*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979, p. 87; Allen Edwards, *The Jewel in the Lotus: A Historical Survey of the Sexual Culture of the East*. New York: The Julian Press, 1959, p. 95; Y. V. Chabukswar, "A Barbaric Method of Circumcision Among Some of the Arab Tribes of Yemen." *Indian Medical Gazette* 56(1921): 48-49; Favazza, *Bodies Under Siege*, p. 98; Lloyd deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*, p. 54; Charles Humana, *The Keeper of the Bed: The Story of the Eunuch*. London: Arlington Books; Peter Tompkins, *The Eunuch and the Virgin*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1962; Rosalind Miles, *The Women's History of the World*. Topsfield, Mass.: Salem House, 1988, p. 38.



DENIS M.
DONOVAN

Darkness Invisible

By some strange quirk in the physiology of destiny, when Oedipus gouged his eyes out Freud went blind, never to recover. Whether of psychology or of destiny, the same quirk has managed to survive over generations of analytic and nonanalytic readers alike. Drawing attention to this fact does not endear one to professional readers. Certain things, it appears, are not to be known, not to be said, and certainly not to be acknowledged—although they do tend to elicit astonishment when unavoidably encountered.

It was, of course, no accident that in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* Tiresias the literally blind was sighted and Oedipus the literally sighted was blind. Oedipus, who had solved the riddle of the Sphinx, had, as it were, recognized the human epigenetic odyssey in a riddle. And yet, clearly, much as Oedipus may have understood riddles, he understood little of the realities of childhood and their inescapable consequences. Indeed, Oedipus' reaction to discovering the realities that shaped his own life was to reduce the pretense of knowledge and wisdom to a self-imposed blindness, a model of "inquiry" and "archeology of knowledge" that Freud was to make his own and for which he was to become famous for all time. That identification—of Freud with the Sophoclean Oedipus—was celebrated in the medallion struck in honor of Freud's fiftieth birthday and offered to him by his Vienna followers. One side of the medal, "plainly meant as a supreme compliment to Freud,

the modern Oedipus” (Gay 1988, p. 154), depicts a naked Oedipus, complete with staff, contemplating the Sphinx and the inscription in classic Greek “Who divined the famed riddle was a man most mighty” from Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannus*; the obverse presents Freud’s bust in profile, his (misspelled) name, the city and the date. Freud’s great discovery, according to his medal-striking acolytes, was the discovery of an unconscious filled with childhood sexuality, a “discovery” purchased at the cost of extraordinary self-imposed blindness, a cost we are still paying dearly.

Another quirk, this time not of time or fate but of human self-regard, is that the greater the ostentation, the more complete the blindness. And how fitting that such blindness should be “hysterical”! Freud, the great seer, was blind to the most fundamental reality embodied in the expression he was to make a household term. For nearly a century practically no one has noticed that Freud had to reverse the central issue in the Oedipus drama in order to create his Oedipus complex. Freud and his exegeses are clear about what he meant.

What I have in mind is the legend of King Oedipus and Sophocles’ drama which bears his name.

Oedipus, son of Laius, King of Thebes, and of Jocasta, was exposed as an infant because an oracle had warned Laius that the still unborn child would be his father’s murderer. (Freud 1900, p. 261).

In *Freud And Man’s Soul*, Bruno Bettelheim, the late well-known psychoanalyst and longtime director of the University of Chicago Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School, reiterates Freud’s understanding of the Oedipus tradition, patronizingly noting the ignorance of American graduate students.

It is impossible to understand why Freud chose this particular term—this metaphor—if one is not familiar with the important details of Oedipus story. Unfortunately, most of the American graduate students whom I have tried to acquaint with psychoanalysis have had only the scantiest familiarity with either the myth of Oedipus or Sophocles’ play *Oedipus Rex*. (Bettelheim, 1983, p. 20)

Following countless others, Bettelheim sums up the essence of the human drama upon which Freud built his famous Oedipus complex.

The story of Oedipus begins with the incredibly severe psychological and physical traumatization of a child by those

who should be his prime protectors: his parents. The infant Oedipus—born of Laius and Jocasta, the King and Queen of Thebes, who have been warned by an oracle that their son is fated to murder his own father—is maimed (a spike is thrust through his feet) and sent away to be killed. (pp. 20-21)

Taking his place in an essentially uninterrupted century-long tradition, Bettelheim reduces the drama to its would-be essence.

The Oedipus legend tells of a father's fear that his son will replace him; to avert this, the father tries to destroy his son. (p. 13)

But are Freud and Bettelheim right? Is this *really* what happened in Sophocles' play? Let's take a look. When Oedipus, demanding to know his origins, asks the shepherd who found him how he came to have the child he eventually gave to the King and Queen of Corinth, what does Oedipus learn? We join the play at the point at which Oedipus has just asked the old shepherd about the child.

Shepherd: He was called the son of Laius; but ask the queen, for she can best inform thee.

Oedipus: Did she then give the child to thee?

Shepherd: She did.

Oedipus: For what?

Shepherd: To kill him.

Oedipus: Kill her child! Inhuman and barbarous mother! (Sophocles, trans., Francklin, 1904).

As Deborah McIntyre and I have noted elsewhere (Donovan 1988a, 1988b; Donovan & McIntyre 1990), this monstrous howler has escaped the notice of generations of readers—analysts and non-analysts, clinicians and scholars. Even when a scholarly book devoted entirely to *Freud and Oedipus* (Rudnytsky 1987) manages to take note of the fact that “Oedipus is felled by the Herdsman's disclosure that it was his *mother* who exposed him as an infant,” and adds that when Oedipus calls for a spear, “there can be no doubt that he wished to use it to kill *Jocasta*, in response to having learned that she sought to destroy him in infancy” (p. 258), there is still no astonishment, no realization of the significance of Freud's reversal of the Sophoclean situation. Indeed, Rudnytsky simply adds in his endnotes that [Mel] “Faber stresses that Sophocles' decision to specify Jocasta and not Laius as the one who exposed Oedipus in infancy represents a departure from his sources” (p. 378, n. 13). “Finally,” we are told on the dustcover, “in a revealing analysis of the

plays of Sophocles that so preoccupied Freud and his precursors, Rudnytsky shows how many of Freud's insights—including his abandonment of the 'seduction theory' in favor of the Oedipus complex—are foreshadowed in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*." Out of the single most striking example of conceptual blindness in modern intellectual and social history come "Freud's insights," "insights" that have served to divert attention away from the real world of the child, a world that has been replaced by an abstract and arbitrary symbology.

The very structure of psychoanalysis, in my view, far from being the source of great insights into forbidden knowledge, was—purposefully, if unconsciously—elaborated by Freud specifically to deny knowledge he could not face—the real and imagined horrors of his own life and that of his own family. This is not the place to delve into the complex but easily discernable reasons why Freud chose to replace the real with the imaginary, the reasons why, in pursuing his archeological excavations of the mind, Freud buried the living in the process.¹ Suffice it to say here that Freud did, indeed, turn from the real world in order to structure an imaginary world and that he did so at a time when child abuse was the story of the day, not just in Freud's own caseload, but in the Austrian capital itself.² It is this very structure, a view of man and society that has become so pervasive and ingrained in contemporary culture as to be invisible, that blinds scholars like Rudnytsky to what ought to astound, shock, and disturb.

It has become so fashionable in much of the clinical world to think that one has "transcended" analytic dogma and that critical appraisal of Freudian theory is facile and a waste of time. After all, doesn't everyone already know these things? Haven't we all "moved on"? In an otherwise positive review of our book on child psychiatry and psychotherapy *Healing The Hurt Child: A Developmental-Contextual Approach*, Fran Morrill of the Boston College School of Social Work chastises Deborah McIntyr and myself for our "persistent tendency to debunk 'traditional' child psychiatry, Freudian theory, developmental psychology, etc.," and adds in her follow-up to my response, "Surely it is disingenuous, at best, for the author to infer that in the 1990s psychotherapy has not come to terms with the treatment of child abuse. I am heartened," she concludes, "by the fact that most of us can live comfortably with a multiplicity of theories and contradictions."³ Ironically, the "contradictions" to which Morrill refers are the very contradictions I emphasized above: "open-mindedness" requires of the enlightened contemporary psychotherapist an acceptance of absolutely mutually contradictory theories and findings. Let me illustrate that all is not well in the enlightened world of mental health.

A woman in her mid-fifties was referred to me by an academic psychiatrist in another part of the country after she read an article in her

local newspaper in which the psychiatrist was interviewed at length on posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and childhood abuse and trauma. From ages three to five, “Esther” had been made by her mother to wear a dog collar and was chained to a pole outside the family farm in upstate New York. She was kept outside without shoes, was made to wear pants and a T-shirt, and kept there, chained to the pole, in all weather until the dead of winter, at which point she was locked in the farmhouse cellar until the spring. Esther was made to eat from a dog’s dish and was shunned by her father and siblings. When she was five the family moved from New York state to Florida and settled in a large city. No longer able to chain her daughter up in the back yard because of the proximity of neighbors, Esther’s mother locked her in a closet for the next thirteen years, bringing her out only to “inspect” her, beat her unmercifully, and sexually abuse her—always taking care, of course, that there should be no visible injuries to alert school personnel. The beatings and daily terrorizing were always accompanied by her mother’s threats to kill her if she ever told a soul. As previously, she was made to eat from a dog’s bowl. Esther was beaten especially severely if she urinated or defecated in the closet, which made the weekends extremely difficult and terrifying because it was so hard to keep from urinating especially. She spent her time in the closet lying on the floor by the crack under the door reading until the light faded, at which time she would settle into a corner of the closet and hold her shoes tightly against her—the way a little girl would hold a cherished doll.

Of course, Esther never did tell what was being done to her, not even when her maternal uncle pulled her from the closet one day and brutally raped and sodomized her, only to force her to lick her own excrement off his penis when he had “finished.” In fact, she told no one what she had lived through for the first eighteen years of her life until her mother died when Esther was in her late forties. And then she told only her husband.

After her mother’s death, Esther began to “fall apart.” Since no one else in her family had been willing to do so, Esther has cared for her mother throughout the final years of her life. She was not present, however, when her mother died in the hospital, and by the time she learned where her mother’s body had been sent, the cremation had already taken place. Unable to believe that a mother who had absolute power over her life was really dead and gone, Esther began to “see” her mother (and her uncle) frequently and became suicidally depressed. She sought help from a local psychologist who made her sit on his lap and fondled her. No sooner did Esther realize what was happening to her in “therapy” than the psychologist died of an unexpected heart attack. Once again it was too late to “tell,” to file a complaint with the Department of Professional Regulation, or consult an attorney. Her depression deepened and her flashbacks and intrusive memories increased, resulting

in five psychiatric hospitalizations, including a long stay at the local university psychiatric hospital. During this time she was treated with more than 30 psychiatric medications and received a long course of electroconvulsive therapy for “endogenous major depression.” Her medical insurance coverage for mental health services was depleted by the hospitalizations and subsequently her medical insurance was canceled altogether. She is presently uninsurable.

When I met Esther she had been wearing slacks and turtle neck sweaters for decades, slept in her clothes, and regularly spent several hours a day in her bedroom closet. By then Esther had read hundreds of books on psychology and psychiatry and belonged to two mental health book clubs but she had never played a child’s game and had never known the rules of even so simple a game as checkers. And more than any other clinical condition, hers most resembled that of the holocaust survivor: she was numb and unfeeling. Indeed, when I asked her if she had ever feared hurting her own children or if she had harmed herself in any way (like cutting or burning), she answered that she had never felt any emotion—positive or negative—toward her children and that, yes, she had burned herself once—but only to see if she *could* feel something. She didn’t.

No one at any of the five hospitals ever bothered to ask Esther what had happened to her as a child—and so, of course, Esther never told. She wasn’t about to volunteer that information. Even when, during one hospitalization, she “saw” her mother and uncle outside her hospital room window and was terrified, no one bothered to ask why. She was simply told, “Don’t worry. We’ll protect you. You’re safe here.” One for-profit hospital did ask cursorily about sexual abuse, although they did nothing with the information Esther provided. Still, none of the hospitals asked about other trauma and none ever learned of it—not even the prestigious university psychiatry center.

Why should Esther’s case not surprise is in the least? Because, in this era of enlightened awareness of abuse and trauma, rare is the individual or institution that really wants to know what happens to children. Indeed, the child has practically disappeared from child psychiatry. Consider, for example, what was until this year one of the premier child and adolescent psychiatry texts, the 1985 second edition of *Child And Adolescent Psychiatry: Modern Approaches*, published by Basil Blackwell and edited by Drs. Michael Rutter and Lionel Hersov. The large format text contains fifty-nine chapters, weighs five pounds on my office scale, costs \$169.95, and is 960 pages long. Yet, despite the fact that one can find Michael Rutter’s name over 1,700 times in the book (I know because that is where I stopped counting), not a single case history is to be found. Not even in the chapter on “individual” psychotherapy. There are no individuals in the Rutter-Hersov text. In reality, this child

and adolescent psychiatry text is not a book about children at all but, rather, a book about research about research about research—a fact that has not disturbed a single soul in the world of psychology and psychiatry. Indeed, the reviews were glowing.⁴ Thus, the student or practitioner can come away from a reading of this text with a solid grasp of 1985 child psychiatry—and yet not have the slightest idea what children are, what their real-world circumstances may be, or what to do with them when the office door closes.⁵

With the child largely absent from child psychiatry, how likely is the discovery of trauma even when it is there? Moreover, not even the would-be protectors can be counted upon: Sugarman and Kuehnle (1987, cited in Froning, 1988) found that 74% of the time allegations of sexual abuse were disbelieved by child protective service workers *in spite of—not for lack of—the evidence*.

If such is the case in the world of child psychiatry, what must it be like in the world of “modern biological psychiatry”? Let’s take a look at the very mainstream of American medicine and psychiatry. Roughly every eighteen months the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* publishes a *Contempo* issue highlighting the status of the major medical specialties, including psychiatry. There have been twelve *Contempo* issues since the first in 1978. The *Contempo* issues are widely read.⁶ Of the 353 references cited in the *Contempo* psychiatry articles, 180 (or 51 percent) are to the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, the vast majority of the remainder being to *JAMA* or biologically-oriented psychiatry journals. From the initial 1978 *Contempo* issue to the twelfth 1991 issue, *there has not been a single reference to human experience and thus, of course, no reference to trauma*. As the first issue noted, “Advances in brain and neurological sciences, diagnostics, and epidemiology continue to provide the momentum for psychiatric research.” And so it has remained for the past thirteen years. “Modern biological psychiatry” hasn’t even bothered to acknowledge trauma and its psychophysiological consequences.

So, is it surprising that Esther was treated as suffering from the psychiatric “disease” of major depression by five psychiatric hospitals, including a university psychiatry center? Her personal history is irrelevant because she is “old.” As Donald W. Goodwin, M.D., Professor and Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Kansas School of Medicine and Samuel B. Guze, M.D., Spenser T. Olin Professor of Psychiatry and Head of the Department as well as Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs of Washington University School of Medicine, put it in their (1989) fourth edition of *Psychiatric Diagnosis*, “The purpose of a psychiatric examination is to evaluate psychological function and to diagnose psychiatric disorders. To elicit enough information about the disorders in order to diagnose them, one must know their

signs and symptoms, course and complications” (p. 293). This is particularly easy with older patients because, as Goodwin and Guze assure us, “Details about early life experiences rarely bear on the problem of making a differential diagnosis in adults. School and social history are often important but not always, particularly in dealing with elderly people” (p. 295). Clearly, it is not just the child who has disappeared from psychiatry; it is the very person of the patient. The psychiatrist must know a lot about disorders but requires little knowledge about people. Still, what if Esther’s history of physical, sexual, emotional, and confinement abuse had been elicited? Would such information have made a difference in her treatment? Very possibly not. Jacobson, Koehler, and Jones-Brown (1987) note in their paper “The Failure of Routine Assessment to Detect Histories of Assault Experienced by Psychiatric Patients” that, even when such information is obtained during the initial interview, in only 9 percent of cases is the trauma information even mentioned in the patient’s chart.

Again, we are brought back to the nagging realization that there is something very wrong with how we view people and their lives. Clearly there is a hesitancy on the part of the so-called helping professions to see human cruelty and human suffering as they are. But how much more widespread is this hesitancy—in these days when the average five-year-old can look up from his bowl of cereal to see the picture of a missing child on the milk carton in front of him? The answer is that it is extremely widespread. Society is extraordinarily ambivalent when it comes to children: as much as society may want to protect them, it really doesn’t like children very much.

The very least one would expect from a genuinely caring society is an empathic sensitivity toward its most vulnerable members; yet a not-so-subtle hostility toward children also pervades many aspects of the very structure of society, a hostility that has, to the best of my knowledge, elicited no cries of protest from what Morrill has me call “traditional” child psychotherapy and psychiatry—or from the child welfare establishment. Can a society that produces *Garbage Pail Kids* collector cards, modelled on baseball cards, genuinely care for children? I don’t remember any cries of protest from the “caring professions” against the gruesome and hideous portrayal of children that characterizes those trading cards. Nor were there any cries of protests from the “caring professions” when the Cabbage Patch dolls appeared. Even the psychohistory movement, usually extremely attuned to the psychological significance of major social and political events, had no reaction to the attitudes toward children so obviously implicit in these two fascinating social phenomena.⁷ Typically, the end of the Garbage Pail kids (like LAUNDRY Matt, a child being “squeezed dry” like washtub laundry, JON Pond, a baby sitting in a pond of his own urine, DEAD Lee who

has just been sliced in half by a frisbee, or JACK Splat, whose vomitus flows from his mouth onto a Jackson Pollack-like canvas) was brought about not by overwhelming protest from a society that could no longer bear for its children to be entertained by such degrading portrayals but by market demand.

While the link between Garbage Pail Kids collecting cards and the view of children that tolerates or fails to see child abuse may not be hard to grasp, the same, clearly, cannot be said of the Cabbage Patch dolls phenomena. Indeed, many child mental health experts, as we shall note below, thought that the dolls represented a very positive development.

Cabbage Patch Kids are dolls that became an explosive overnight sales sensation in November of 1983. Originally created in 1976 by a Xavier Roberts, a modest twenty-year-old craft-oriented college student from north Georgia, the needle-molded or "soft-sculpture" dolls were originally marketed as Little People, hand-made artistic collector dolls. To enhance their attractiveness, the Little People were not presented as crafted or manufactured, as are regular toys and dolls. Instead, they were "born" in the Babyland General Hospital in Cleveland, Georgia and "adopted"—not "sold"—to the public, an idea, a William Hoffman notes in his 1984 book *FANTASY: The Incredible Cabbage Patch Phenomenon*, "that would turn out to be a stroke of marketing genius."

Subsequently, Roberts signed a deal with Coleco, the toy company. A Coleco vice-president changed the name of Roberts' dolls from the Little People to the Cabbage Patch Kids by a Coleco vice-president and sales virtually exploded. The dolls sold by the millions. The demand for the dolls were so great, in fact, that they almost instantly sold themselves. Advertising became unnecessary. "We don't need to spend the money," said Barbara Wruck, Coleco's director of corporate communications (Hoffman 1984). The demand was subsequently to fall precipitously, however, pushing Coleco into serious financial difficulty, but not before an astounding frenzy of selling (or, as the company put it, "adopting") had occurred.

What did mental health professionals, including child psychologists and psychiatrist, think of the Cabbage Patch Kids phenomenon? Although a number of individuals and adoption groups, such as Concerned United Birthparents, the Dallas-based Council on Adoption, protested, complaining that Cabbage Patch Kids were "harmful" or "degrade the concept of adoption," most of the comments appear to have been positive. Kent Ravenscroft, M.D., former Director of the Division of Child Psychiatry of Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C., is quoted by Hoffman as saying that the Kids were "an exciting development," making the adoption process appear more natural."⁸ Dr. Bruce Axelrod, a child psychologist and then director of Comprehensive Mental Health Services in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, noted that "A child

who adopts a Cabbage Patch Kid can act out the fantasy of being adopted. They can now play in play what they experience in fantasy.” Dr. Malcolm W. Watson, then associate professor of developmental psychology at Brandeis University, said that “The relative uniqueness of each doll, as well as the procedure of adopting the doll and committing to it, increase the child’s ease of attachment to the doll and the use of it as a companion.” Dr. Esther Bucholz, a clinical psychologist and then director of psychology of New York University’s Parenthood Program, pointed out that the adoption procedures permitted children to “take on adult rules, to experience emotions and control them through a bond with the doll.” Even Dr. Joyce Brothers, psychologist and nationally syndicated columnist, joined in the positive comments, enthusiastically noting that “It is comforting to feel the Cabbage Patch doll can be loved with all your might—even though it isn’t pretty,” a view more or less echoed by psychology professor Dr. William Tedford of Southern Methodist University, who said that, most dolls “already have their personality built in. But it’s about time for a plain baby doll that just lies there and lets a child mother it.” And so on repeatedly. The following quotation from the December 12, 1983 issue of *Newsweek*, cited in Hoffman (p. 161) sums up the prevailing attitude at the height of the Cabbage Patch craze.

In all the commotion, there is no getting around the fact that the Cabbage Patch Kids are ugly. But their ugliness has a touching runt-of-the-litter quality that adults and children alike find irresistible—a vulnerability that arises in part from their expression (which can be approximated in an adult face by sucking in both lips and puffing out the cheeks), eternally poised between a gurgle and a sob. After three years of toys with microchips, Cabbage Patch dolls address what child psychologist Doris McNeely Johnson calls “a universal need that children have to hold something and cuddle it.” Without actually resembling any real baby that has ever walked the earth—for which the whole human race can be grateful—Cabbage Patch Kids caricature almost every characteristic of babiness: blunt, fat features; round cheeks; big eyes; short, pudgy little arms and legs.

The Cabbage Patch press kit includes a paper by Brandeis University psychologist Malcolm Watson, who points out that these features constitute a “releasing mechanism” that triggers the instinct for nurturing in both adults and children. The same powerful instinct, vital to the preservation of our species, that makes you want to pick up and hug a baby in his crib has been harnessed to make you

want to snatch a \$25 toy off the shelf. The notion that the Kids are “adopted”—not just purchased—doubtless assists that release of protective love.

When the Coleco vice-president changed the names of Xavier Roberts’ Little People to the Cabbage Patch Kids, he was demonstrating more than brilliant marketing planning; he intuitively grasped one of the most intense of human needs, a need people will pay dearly for: the need to deny human cruelty—and particularly *maternal cruelty, rejection, and abandonment*. The denial is inherent in the cabbage patch phenomenon itself. The primary issue in adoption is the availability of the child. There are, in general terms, only two ways in which newborns, infants, or children can become available for adoption: they must be given away by, or taken away from, the biological “mother.” This fact, the rejection or abandonment of children, is brilliantly denied by the delightful convenience of the cabbage patch device: there simply is no “mother” to grow in, no mother to be born out of, no mother to keep, protect, and care for the baby. Babies are “born” and grow in cabbage patches. And, for once, society could actually determine the location of the cabbage patch: Babyland General Hospital in Cleveland, Georgia.

This denial of the real-world circumstances of children persists intensely today in our very “caring” professions. Consider the following continuing debate on disclosure of adoptive status in the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. Jonathan A. Sugar, M.D. (1991) of the Harvard Medical School writes:

Neither Dr. Donovan nor [his debater] Dr. MacIntyre, however, addresses a fundamental issue facing adoptive families—how they deviate from the American norm, and how this presents the family with major stresses. Schneider (1980), in his study of American kinship systems, notes that the tie of blood is most fundamental to our cultural conception of a family; thus, the birth child is irrevocably tied, in the American world view and cultural mind set, to its birth parents. Essentially, this tie cannot be undone.

The very institution of adoption belies this astoundingly naïve statement. Where do Sugar and Schneider think adoptees come from? The cabbage patch?

References notwithstanding, Dr. Sugar is not supported by the facts when he states that, in supposed contrast to the would-be irrevocable “tie of blood,” “the adoptive tie can be undone—the ‘disrupted’, or failed, adoptions in every adoption

agency's records attest to this fact." On the contrary, the very institution of adoption developed because the "irrevocable tie of blood" was so frequently and so easily broken. Keith Thomas (1989) writes in a review of an important book on the abandonment of children, "[John Boswell, (1989)] argues that the deliberate abandonment of unwanted children was a normal feature of domestic life in Europe between the Roman Empire and the Renaissance. He shows that the practice was, for the most part, tolerated by law and condoned by moralists. [...] Histories of child abandonment for more recent periods can extract figures from contemporary sources. Maurice Garden, for example, can prove that in late eighteenth-century Lyon a third of the children born were subsequently abandoned. David L. Ransel [1988] has shown in his recent *Mothers of Misery* (TLS, March 10) that in the second half of the nineteenth century the central Moscow home for foundlings were receiving some 17,000 children each year and at any one time had over 40,000 children out to wet-nurses and foster-parents in the countryside."

Like Freud, Drs. Sugar and Schneider have it backwards: it is the "irrevocable tie of blood" that is so easy to break. This accounts for the fact that rarely do true orphans account for even a modest minority of children found in "orphanages." Indeed, in those known to me personally, true orphans—children with no living parents—account for only 1-2 percent of the institution population. All the other children are rejected or abandoned children or children removed from their parents' "care" for reasons of safety.

Let's reconsider what psychology professor William Tedford of Southern Methodist University had to say about the psychological meaning of the Cabbage Patch dolls. What of the dolls' "features that constitute a 'releasing mechanism' that triggers the instinct for nurturing in both adults and children"? What did Professor Tedford have to say when the *Wall Street Journal* reported that "Coleco Industries, Inc. will report a 'very large loss' for both the fourth quarter and a full year primarily because of the rapidly fading popularity of its Cabbage Patch dolls"? What had become of the "instinct for nurturing in both adults and children"? As long as the doll's hand-made collector items, the "adoption" marketing approach assured some of what adoption social service agencies call "permanency planning." However, once children were targeted as mass consumers, the device became a set-up, a cruel parody of the adoptive situation, worse than any of the adoption organizations' complaints. It was a set-up because the fate of the Cabbage Patch dolls was as imaginable and predictable as that of any other

toy: they would eventually end up in the garbage can or in the pile of items to be given to the Salvation Army. Surprising? Not at all. Only the most naïve of naïvetés or an ignorance of human history could permit such an analysis.

The cabbage patch phenomenon was the ideal gloss for the one situation society cannot tolerate facing: maternal rejection, abandonment, and destructiveness. Thus, it was not for nothing that it was Bruno Bettelheim, again in *Freud and Man's Soul*, who pressed upon his readers another of his "insights" from the Greek classics: "The tale of Amor and Psyche describes the deep attachment of a mother to her son—the relationship that Freud considered the most unambivalent in a man's life" (p. 13). The same Bruno Bettelheim, by the way, who abused and terrorized patients and staff alike at the Orthogenic School in Chicago—a fact that was widely known, but rarely if even mentioned, long before his death by suicide.

What about that "deep attachment of a mother to her son—the relationship that Freud considered the most unambivalent in a man's life"? That "unambivalent relationship" is the locus of the one crime where women prevail absolutely over men: murder of the newborn and the very young child. There one can see the very societal blindness of which I am writing. Resnick (1969), in his now aged study of filicide *Child Murder By Parents: A Psychiatric Review of Filicide*, reports a remarkable statistic: of maternal filicides, 68 percent go to hospital, versus only 14 percent for paternal filicides, while only 27 percent of maternal filicides go to prison, versus 63 percent of paternal filicides. Nine percent of paternal filicides in his series were executed, whereas in no case were maternal filicides executed. And things have not changed since Carloni and Nobili wrote the original Italian edition of their book on "the bad mother."

With all due respect to Dr. Sugar, the issues he raises cannot be reasonably and rationally argued here: there simply is not enough space. They are too complex and reflect aspects of the human condition that are largely ignored by the "helping" professions and denied by the societies that permit them. Even contemporary "honor" is thicker than blood: Carloni and Nobili (1975) note in the first sentence of their first chapter entitled "Filicide in the history of law" that "the terms by which Article 578 of the Italian Penal Code sanction infanticide ('Whoever occasions the death of an infant immediately after delivery or of a fetus during delivery, in order to save their honor or that of their partner, shall be punished by three years in prison') leaves us astonished and perplexed. The astonishment is due to the unusual mildness of the

sentence when compared to that generally imposed for common homicide (21 years) or especially those of equal severity for lesser crimes (extortion, aggravated robbery, aggravated assault, etc.)” (my translation) [Donovan 1991].

In order not to see what the cabbage patch stands for, society must blind itself to maternal rejection and abandonment. This can only be accomplished by reversing or confounding opposites, the acknowledged recognition of any of which would obligatorily occasion the collapse of the original denial. Since this is apparently not psychologically tolerable to society, societal institutions must proceed against the grain of human need, as dictated by the original blindness. This means that gross insensitivity and even cruelty to children are not to be perceived even when they are obvious. If they are perceived, their meaning must be changed in true Orwellian fashion.

A caring society cannot define love and abandonment as co-equal and as having exactly the same meaning; yet this is what the “adoption literature” would have us do. Consider this typical example of “expert” opinion from the contemporary adoption literature. **“Question:** How does one discuss adoption with a child when the facts are painful (eg., rape, incest, drug abuse, retardation, etc.)? **Answer:** Yes, children should be told their **whole adoption story**, even when it includes negative or difficult information. However, this must be done in age appropriate fashion. No matter how difficult the information is, a focus must be maintained on the love the birthparents have for the child. As the child positively internalizes his adoption, his self concept will be positively impacted. This will allow him to integrate truths about his birthparents, in reflection on himself (Silber, 1990)” Note that the author, a social worker and director of an independent adoption center, refers specifically to *parents* in the plural; this means that adoptive parents should “maintain a focus” on the “love” the brutal rapist or incestuous father had for his “child” (or the “child” of his “child,” in the case of incest). Many children available for adoption have been abused, neglected, or terrified by their “parents”—the “other parents.” We need not limit ourselves to the children of rape or incest—or to the pristine newborn. “Special needs” children constitute an increasing percentage of children available for adoption. Something is very, very wrong when professionals are so blind to the implications and effects of their views (Rotheberg, 1980). (Donovan 1990, rebuttal)

It is interesting to note that Kathleen Silber, the author of the above views on “honesty” in the adoptive relationship, was a member of the Child Welfare League of America’s National Adoption Task Force at the time of the publication of the 1987 Task Force report. I have yet to see any evidence of concern in the child welfare community over what is, in my view, the unconscious institutionalization of insensitivity and cruelty toward children.

So, should we be surprised when Lloyd deMause, our foremost historian of child abuse, tells us of the universality of incest? No, there should be no surprise whatsoever. We should have anticipated it. We could not, of course, because the very blinders that have become part and parcel of the structure of society’s intellectual and professional world prevent the inquiry and critical thinking necessary for a clear view of the intolerable.

Here, however, I must disagree with my friend and colleague. Indeed, I would suggest that, for all the indispensable and excellent work that Lloyd deMause has done to heighten our awareness of the “the untold story of child abuse” (the subtitle of *The History of Childhood* (deMause 1974/1988), he has been caught up in the very structure of psychoanalysis that can allow Freud to be right and wrong at the same time—a structure that makes all meaning *sexual meaning*. DeMause begins the section on “Psychoanalytic Views on the Reality of Incest” citing statements by Freud to prove that Freud accepted the reality of his patients’ reports of seduction.

It was these *earlier* infantile reconstructions which Freud quite correctly decided in 1897 were “scenes of seduction [that] had never taken place...they were only phantasies which my patients had made up or which I myself had perhaps forced on them...”¹⁸ The clear memories of seduction in *later* childhood and adolescence that his patients had originally spontaneously reported to him and about which they *did* have strong reality feelings, he never doubted—contrary to the assertions of critics like Masson and Miller, who claim Freud lost his courage and denied that any incest had actually taken place.¹⁹

“For the rest of his life, in fact,” deMause continues, “Freud reiterated his belief that these later incestuous attacks were real,” and provides quotations from four works, “On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement” (1914), “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality” (1905), “Three Essays” (1916-17), and “Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis” (1916-17) to support the contention. But note the dates of the works in question: 1905, 1914, and 1916-17. Without taking the time

(which I simply do not have presently—I must ask the reader to wait for *Dreams of Death*) to review each citation, let's note that the original quotation, in which deMause would have “Freud quite correctly decid[ing] in 1897...,” is actually from a later work, the 1925 “Autobiographical Study.”

Before going further into the question of infantile sexuality I must mention an error into which I fell for a while and which might well have had fatal consequences for the whole of my work. Under the influence of the technical procedure which I used at that time, the majority of my patients reproduced from their childhood scenes in which they were sexually seduced by some grown-up person. With female patients the part of the seducer was almost always assigned to their father. I believed these stories, and consequently supposed that I had discovered the roots of the subsequent neurosis in these experiences of sexual seduction in childhood. My confidence was strengthened by a few cases in which relations of this kind with as father, uncle, or elder brother had continued up to an age at which memory was to be trusted. If the reader feels inclined to shake his head at my credulity, I cannot altogether blame him; though I may plead that this was a time when I was intentionally keeping my critical faculty in abeyance so as to preserve an unprejudiced and receptive attitude towards the many novelites which were coming to my notice every day. When, however, I was at last obliged to recognize that these scenes of seduction had never taken place, and that they were only phantasies which my patients had made up or which I myself had perhaps forced on them, I was for some time completely at a loss. My confidence alike in my technique and in its results suffered a severe blow; it could not be disputed that I had arrived at these scenes by a technical method which I considered correct, and their subject-matter was unquestionably related to the symptoms from which my investigation had started. When I had pulled myself together, I was able to draw the right conclusions from my discovery: namely, that the neurotic symptoms were not related directly to actual events but to wishful phantasies, and that as far as the neurosis was concerned psychical reality was of more importance than material reality. I do not believe even now that I forced the seduction-phantasies on my patients, that I “suggested” them. I had in fact stumbled for the first time upon the *Oedipus complex*, which was later to assume such an overwhelming importance, but which I did not recognize as yet in

its disguise of phantasy. Moreover, seduction during childhood retained a certain share, though a humbler one, in the aetiology of neuroses. But the seducers turned out as a rule to have been older children.¹⁰

Freud then continues in this work to describe the complex sexuality he attributed to children, all of which is embodied in his Oedipus complex which, as he so aptly observed, would come to “assume such an overwhelming importance.” The very expression “seduction during childhood” expresses what this concept came to be in Freud’s work and in the basic structure of subsequent psychoanalytic development: a variation on the “family romance” of the Oedipus complex. “Seduction” in no way conveys the brutality with which, we know today, children are often sexually used. Nowhere in the direction that Freud’s writings took over the years do we find an awareness of the reality and effects of such “seductions” as the shoving of loaded weapons into children’s mouths, anuses, and vaginas, the repeated raping and sodomizing of infants and children, or the unthinkable confinement abuses that come to light in our many media. While Freud’s patient Anna O. was most probably suffering from multiple personality disorder (the antecedents of which are almost exclusively brutal, terrifying, inescapable abuse—with sexual abuse leading the way), there is no evidence of any realization in the developed analytic ideology of the effects of *real* experience on children. Indeed, one has only to read Freud’s very last works to see the extent to which the arbitrary-abstract-symbolic had overwhelmed the real.

In regard to the passive impulses of the phallic phase, it is noteworthy that girls regularly accuse their mother of seducing them. This is because they necessarily received their first, or at any rate their strongest, genital sensations when they were being cleaned and having their toilet attended to by their mother (or by someone such as a nurse who took her place). Mothers have often told me, as a matter of observation, that their little daughters of two and three years old enjoy these sensations and try to get their mothers to make them more intense by repeated touching and rubbing. The fact that the mother thus unavoidably initiates the child into the phallic phase is, I think, the reason why, in phantasies of later years, the father so regularly appears as the seducer. When the girl turns away from her mother, she makes over to her father her introduction into sexual life.¹¹

I can see the defendant’s attorney, turning toward judge and jury as he cites the last two sentences of this quotation: “There you have it on no

less authority than that of Freud himself, Your Honor. This child's memories of being raped by her father were projected upon him by an absolutely normal little girl. She, like all little girls, was really seduced by her mother who excited her genitally during normal infant care." When placed in a context in which human lives may literally hang in the balance, the absurdity of Freud's view of childhood experience is embarrassing, to say the least. I can only hope that enough courage will be found to being an era of genuine insight, leaving the archeology of imagined pasts to archeologists of the imaginary.

Denis M. Donovan, M.D., M.Ed. is Medical Director, The Children's Center for Developmental Psychiatry, 6675 13th Ave. N., Suite One, St. Petersburg, FL 33710.

1. Long intrigued by the psychology of scientific theory building, I have been working for the past sixteen years on an intellectual biography of Freud entitled *Dreams of Death*, a biography that traces the development of Freud's exceedingly complex intellectual edifice. The process has required the painstaking contextual reanalysis of all of Freud's productions, including his dreams—not in a traditional psychoanalytic sense (which would be a contradiction)—but in a genuine biographic sense. Freud's great discovery was the semiogenic nature of human experience, a discovery he quickly abandoned—indeed, fled in haste—in favor of an abstract-categorical system. An abridged version of the long study will be found in chapter form in the forthcoming book *THE EMPTY MIRROR: Male "Solutions" to Human Problems*.
2. See Wolff, L. (1988), *Postcards From The End Of The World. Child Abuse in Freud's Vienna*, New York: Antheneum, for a narrative account of the spectacular child abuse trials that were major ongoing stories in the Viennese press in the fall of 1899, just prior to the publication in 1900 of *The Interpretation of Dreams*.
3. For the book, the review, and the discussion, see Denis M. Donovan & Deborah McIntyre (1990), *HEALING THE HURT CHILD: A Developmental-Contextual Readings*, the book review journal of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, vols. 5 and 6, pp. 24 and 31.
4. The most significant review was that of Melvin Lewis, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.Psych., D.C.H. in the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* (1986). Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at Yale, at the time of the review Lewis was also editor of the *Journal*. Lewis began his review by stating that the Rutter-Hersov text "aims to provide an accurate and comprehensive account of the current state of our knowledge of the field of child psychiatry" adding that "Rutter and Hersov have essentially achieved what they set out to do. The Editors and the authors are to be congratulated for providing us with such a high standard for a textbook on modern child psychiatry. I strongly recommend this book to every child psychiatrist who wants a reliable, up-to-date, comprehensive, informative, and very useful textbook. To my mind," he concluded, "this is the best book of its kind available today" (pp. 436-437).
5. *The obvious is that which is never seen until someone expresses it simply.* Kahlil Gibran was right. But it is worse than that. For an initial look at the disappearance of

the child from the child mental health professions, see Donovan and McIntyre, *HEALING THE HURT CHILD: A Developmental-Contextual Approach*. A much more detailed review of the disappearance of the real child from both education and mental health, see D.M. Donovan, *THE MYTH OF THE "BROKEN" CHILD: The Pathologizing of America's Children* (W.W. Norton, forthcoming).

6. According to the office of Dr. George D. Lundberg, *JAMA* editor, the English language circulation of the June 19, 1991 *Contempo* issue was 380,000. Another 290,000 copies were divided among eight other languages: Chinese, Japanese, Russians, Turkish, French, Polish, and Serbo-Croatian. Most of the sections on psychiatry have been written or co-authored by Daniel X. Freedman, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry at U.C.L.A. and Editor of the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, the American Medical Association specialty journal dedicated to psychiatry. The circulation of the June 1991 issues of the *Archives of General Psychiatry* was 37,000 copies.
7. There were, of course, objections to the influence of advertising and mass marketing and to the behavior of consumers as they scrambled to "adopt" the dolls. These, however, are "surface" phenomena when compared to the underlying issues inherent in the adoptive situation itself.
8. The quotations of mental health professionals are from the chapter entitled "The Adoption Controversy" in Hoffman (1984).
9. See these footnote numbers in deMause's lead article for references.
10. Freud, *Standard Edition*. "An Autobiographical Study." Vol. XX, (1925), pp. 34-35.
11. Freud, *Standard Edition*. "Female Sexuality." Vol. XXI, p. 238.

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Adult-Child Sexual Pairs: Psychoanalytic Findings

CHARLES W.
SOCARIDES

Lloyd deMause's encyclopedic article on the incest trauma is a superbly humanistic piece of work casting light in a scientific manner on a relatively mysterious yet vast area of human experience. His account is a panorama of human tragedy, cruelty, and misery in most of its conscious manifestations. In this brief communication, I shall attempt to shed light on the unconscious dynamics and motivations of the adults engaged in such sexual practices. The findings I shall cite are gathered from the psychoanalytic study of individuals who in the course of their psychoanalysis have actively engaged in pedophilic acts for a variety of motivations. I have divided such individuals into those who for situational and variational reasons have engaged in these practices (those who engage in *pedophilic behavior* or fantasy) and those who are true obligatory *pedophile perverts*. Pedophilic activity refers only to sexual congress between an adult and a prepubertal child, that is, before the development of the secondary sexual characteristics usually occurring at the ages of eleven, twelve, or thirteen.

To the best of our knowledge, the majority of individuals who engage in adult-child sexual contacts, whether incestuous or not, are not true obligatory pedophile perverts. A pedophile pervert is one who out of inner necessity must engage in sexual acts between a child and himself or suffer intolerable anxiety. In these cases the sexual pattern is stereotyped, unconsciously determined, and if not engaged in produces severe anxiety.

It is a method of establishing psychic equilibrium within the warring factions of his own psyche. A perversion is characterized by exclusivity, unconscious determinants, and stereotype of object choice. If the individual is forced to engage in normal adult sexual pairs, he does so with very little or no pleasure, if at all. Perversions are, according to Freud (1905), sexual activities which either (a) extend in an anatomical sense, beyond the reaches of the body their desire for sexual union; or (b) linger over the immediate relations to the sexual object which would normally be traversed rapidly in the path toward the sexual aim; or (c) those which occur between inappropriate objects, e.g., animals and children. The perversion is necessary to maintain a psychological stability of the pervert and much of his life revolves around it. The number of these individuals—at least in Western nations—are in all probability small compared to the large number of individuals who have had contact with prepubertal children in a non-obligatory fashion.

PEDOPHILE BEHAVIOR

The sexual drive is one that cannot be denied and it will choose inappropriate objects, i.e., children, for its expression on many occasions. Such an object choice is present in the dream life of neurotics who fear sexual activity and must choose a harmless object for its expression, whether in fantasy or in reality. Adult-child sexual contacts occur in states of depression, deprivation, and loneliness, especially in those who have not developed a satisfactory adult heterosexual pattern. Sexual desire for children is usually a transitory impulse followed by much guilt and despair, but in those who are psychopathic occurs with very little conscience or self-reproach. Often fleeting, periodic pedophile fantasies are reported by patients with intense fears of the opposite sex, together with suppressed (barely expressed) homosexual or heterosexual tendencies. Rarely do we see the startling appearance of pedophile activity in the elderly or late middle-aged, whose sexual patterns have been altered by multiple psychological and organic brain changes accompanying aging or neoplasm. Other individuals in the course of making a transition from certain psychotic states (often paranoid) to neurotic symptomatology (or in the opposite direction) pass through a transitional symptom phase of pedophilia or other perverse formations. Pedophilic acts appear in the manifest content of dreams of those who temporarily retreat from adult sexuality to the less threatening infantile sexual object choice. In my book, *The Preoedipal Origin and Psychoanalytic Therapy of Sexual Perversions* (1988), I noted:

Some adults have engaged in brief and isolated sexual contact with prepubertal children in the context of a seductive,

affectionate, curious child and in the state of drug intoxication, or having undergone a prolonged period of suppression of their sexual drives because of fear of the opposite or same sex. Such *pedophile behavior* may represent a loosening of impulse control and regression secondary to frustration and/or deprivation. As a rule, these acts are not stereotyped, nor are they the sole avenue for the individual's sexual gratification and are transitory. The high incidence of sexual abuse of children during the 1980s makes one conjecture that there may be a "facultative" or "epidemic form" of (non-clinical) pedophilia similar to that which may be occurring in homosexuality. Such epidemic or facultative forms of sexual pathology have been known to occur at times of social disequilibrium, when there is no "authoritative prohibition by society" (Freud, 1905, p. 222) against sexual license. In a sense, they represent the enactment of an earlier distorted belief in the adulation and primacy of the instinctual discharge processes, rather than a belief in the value of the sexual object per se (p. 448).

Freud observed that the sexual abuse of children is more frequent among those in intimate contact with them, e.g., school teachers and so on, and put forth a suggestion that those in whom the practice is exclusive (pedophile perverts) may well be "insane." Bernard Glueck, Jr., a psychoanalyst with extensive contact with homosexual pedophiles in prison environments, affirmed the high incidence of schizophrenia (76 percent out of 30 cases) already predicted by Freud (Glueck, 1956, p. 149).

Freud furthermore predicted in "The Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" (1905) that it is "only exceptional that children are the exclusive sexual object. They usually come to play that part when someone who is cowardly or who has become impotent adopts them as a substitute, or when an urgent instinct (one which will not allow a postponement) cannot at the moment get possession of a more appropriate object. Even hunger does not permit such cheapening, i.e., variation in the object as does the sexual instinct" (pp. 148-149).

PEDOPHILE PERVERTS

Pedophile activities constitute a perversion when they are the exclusive and preferred method of achieving arousal and orgasmic release as the usual channels for sexual behavior are chronically blocked by massive fears and unconscious conflicts and anxieties.

From my psychoanalytic research I have divided the pedophile perversions into three types: oedipal perversion, which implies a structural

conflict between superego and id, preoedipal perversion (an object relations conflict), and schizoperversion (the coexistence of preoedipal perversion and schizophrenia). In the oedipal and preoedipal pedophilias, the surface clinical picture of oedipal conflict may obscure the deeper and more important preoedipal ones, i.e., anxieties due to unresolved traversing of the separation-individuation phase. In the more severe preoedipal (type II) pedophile, preoedipal fixations are of prime importance and consequently dominate the psychic life of the individual in his search for a cohesive self. Oedipal conflict and castration fear defend against deeper fears and preoedipal fantasies may defend against the emergence of oedipal material. Every so often an oedipal pedophile pervert will reveal in his history a previous heterosexual orientation with an adult woman which was frustrated and led to a regressive attempt to secure orgasmic release through the use of prepubertal children. In almost all pedophile perverts there is a fixation in the preoedipal phase or even earlier, in the symbiotic period, with underlying borderline or psychotic symptomatology. My findings in preoedipal cases may be summarized as follows:

(1) Such patients show a splitting of the ego, splitting of the object, a symbiotic attachment to the mother. Often the personality is split into two sections, personality A and B.

(2) There is a high degree of paranoid symptomatology, fears of engulfment, and fear of a somatopsychic fusion with the mother. This fear of fusion with the mother is so intense that if perverse practices were not engaged in psychotic symptoms would develop. The perverse practice magically relieves the patient of paranoid concerns and feelings of fragmentation.

(3) The major mechanism of defense is not repression but splitting.

(4) In some cases of preoedipal type I, there is a degree of superego guilt and the patient feels ashamed and inferior for his pedophile impulses. However, in more severe cases, there is no automatic feeling of guilt but a fear of punishment.

(5) Pedophile impulses or practices often begin at the age of ten or eleven. In many instances the patient himself has been abused sexually as a child.

(6) Most patients have suffered traumatic injuries as small children at the hands of cruel mothers and uncaring fathers. In one case, the patient was left in an orphanage at the age of five and the mother never returned to visit him.

(7) Separation traumas were frequent secondary to operations on the patient, hospitalizations, and movement of the parents from one place to another with a consequent feeling of abandonment.

(8) all patients showed fears of dissolution of the self-representation, a fluidity of ego boundaries with impairment of body-ego, and introjective and projective anxieties.

(9) In all cases there was a primary feminine identification with the mother which was unacceptable. Object relations were from object to self, the self represented a narcissistic grandiose self. The pursued partners stood for the patients' own self (narcissistic) in relation to an active phallic mother.

(10) In cases of homosexual pedophile perversion the patient was searching for a prepubertal boy who stands for both self and mother. There was an identification with and incorporation of the masculinity of the prepubertal boy in the sexual act and an unconscious enactment of the mother-child relationship, the penis of the boy standing for the breast of the mother.

(11) Significantly, death anxiety was the predominant feature in most cases. The death anxiety itself derived from several sources: (a) severe separation anxiety; (b) a lack of libidinal satisfaction during early stages of psychosexual development; (c) an overproduction of primary and secondary aggression which threatened the existence of the self and the object. Fears of death were promptly relieved by seduction of and merging with the prepubertal boy as the boy signified the rejuvenated self, the self that will not die, the idealized good mother and her breast.

I conclude from the above findings that the major mechanism in homosexual pedophilia was incorporation of male children in order to reinforce the sense of masculinity, overcome death anxiety and remain young forever, as well as return to the maternal breast.

Charles W. Socarides, M.D., practices psychoanalysis at 242 E. 94th Street, New York, NY 10128.

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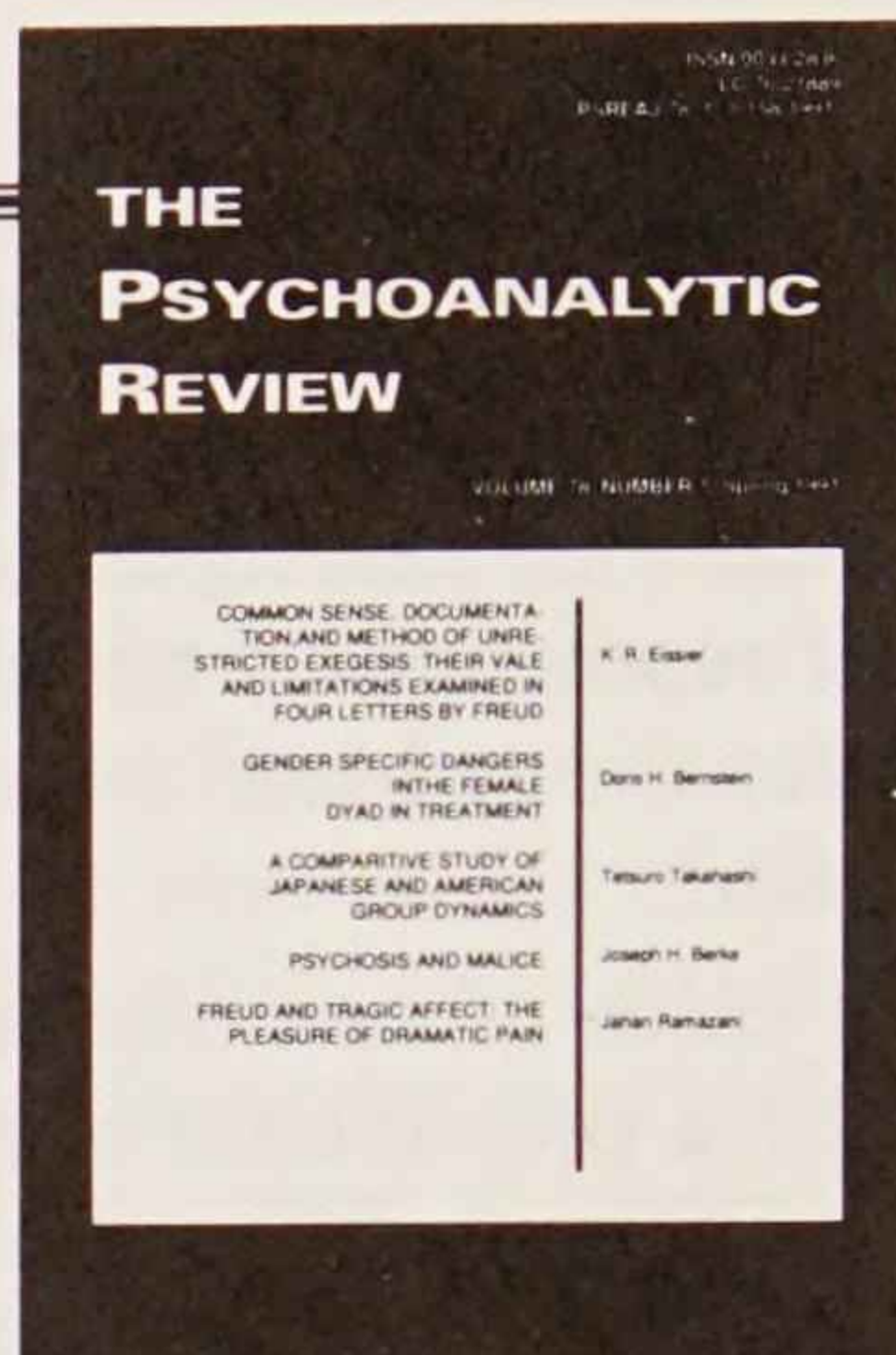
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The Sexual Molestation of Children: Historical Perspectives

BRETT KAHR

Some time ago, a child psychotherapist from the Tavistock Clinic in London told me a delightful story about a young boy, only four years of age, who had come to her for treatment. Apparently, the little child seemed quite confused indeed because he could not understand why he, a tiny lad less than three feet tall, had to sleep in a great big bed all by himself, while his two parents, both very large in size, had to cram themselves into only one bed. During a clinical session, the youngster asked his psychotherapist: "Why do mummy and daddy sleep in the same bed? They are so big and there's hardly any room for both of them. Why doesn't mummy sleep in *my* bed? I got plenty of space in my bed for mummy. Then daddy would have a bed all to himself."

One need not be a Freudian psychoanalyst to recognise the little boy's quite natural desire for physical intimacy with his mother, the primary caretaker. Analysts often refer to such childhood impulses as incestuous wishes or oedipal tendencies. In fact, these early yearnings form the basis of attachments in later life; many people regard such urges as quite universal. Moreover, some clinicians would be very worried if the child did *not* express an erotic interest in mother or father. This might be understood as an indication of the child's possible inability to develop meaningful interpersonal relationships.

Although there may be still a few people who would deny the existence of childhood sexuality (e.g. Gross, 1978), most of us realize that small

children love their parents and often express a desire to marry their mommy or their daddy. We smile at such "cute" stories of childhood, and we tend to think no more of them. Parents, too, may experience a frisson of sexual excitement when touching their children; for example, we know that nursing mothers will often feel a sense of arousal in the breasts while feeding their babies. Most parents, however, do contain these feelings quite adequately. Sadly, there are many instances when adults cannot cope with their erotic attraction for the child, and here we enter the devastating realm of actual incest and child sexual abuse.

Though it may be appropriate for a small girl to dream of marrying her father, the reverse situation would be catastrophic if acted out; when a parent sexually assaults a child, the emotional consequences are considerable, and the entire foundation of the family jeopardised. Youngsters who have experienced rape and other forms of abuse at the hands of an adult inevitably develop a plethora of troubling symptoms, and these might include: heightened anxiety; depression; confusion; deep anger; a tendency to sexualize relationships; suicidal and self-destructive behavior; promiscuity and prostitution alcohol abuse and drug abuse; impaired sexual and emotional relationships and a predilection for abusing one's own children (cf. Porter, 1984; Glaser and Frosh, 1988; Sinason, 1988; Steele, 1988). Dr. Richard Fry (1990) of St. Mary's Hospital in London has discovered that survivors of child sexual abuse suffer not only from depression, isolation, anxiety, and self-destructiveness, but these people also experience an infinitely greater amount of somatic dysfunction, such as sleep disturbances, irritable bowel syndrome, chronic headaches, asthma, ulcers, palpitations, and so forth (cf. Rimsza Berg, and Locke, 1988).

Jacqueline Spring (1987), the author of a moving memoir, *Cry Hard and Swim: The Story of an Incest Survivor*, described her ordeal thus: "I am too exhausted with rage and pain to cry any more." (p. 3). Later in the book, she addressed herself directly to her abusive father, and wrote: "'Forgive and forget' is the saying. I forgot you. For years I didn't dare remember you consciously. I buried you alive in my brain, but your image was reflected in the eyes of every man who looked at me." (p. 41). A woman of some fifty years of age, living in the British county of Bedfordshire, has expressed this sentiment even more succinctly, remarking: "I never felt completely free till my father died last year." (Quoted in La Fontaine, 1990, p. 99).

The deep anguish experienced by Jacqueline Spring and others is awful, but by no means unusual; and recent epidemiological research has begun to document that incest and child abuse occur so frequently that one would be justified to refer to the prevalence of these violations as a veritable psychological epidemic. Diana Russell (1983), a distinguished sociologist, has conducted what many regard as one of the most reliable

studies on incest, based upon her carefully constructed interviews with 930 women from California. Russell's research revealed that some 38% of the women in her sample had been subjected to an experience of sexual abuse before the age of eighteen years, usually at the hands of a male relative.¹ One must note that Russell defined incest in a very strict fashion as *direct physical contact*. When she included those women who had experienced *indirect* contact (such as men exposing themselves to the girls), this adjustment thereby raised the rate of incestuous encounters to a staggering 54% of her research sample (cf. Wyatt, 1985).

Lloyd deMause (1987) has observed that in spite of the care with which Russell conducted her investigation, she has, in fact, greatly underestimated the real state of affairs. Not only did Russell exclude interviews with women in prisons and in psychiatric hospitals, two groups known to have a higher rate of incestuous experiences (e.g. Rush, 1980; cf. Agathonos, 1983), but her statistics reflect only the *conscious* memories of the women in the study. What about all the women who suffered abuse in very earliest childhood (cf. Hobbs and Wynne, 1986, 1989; MacCarthy, 1988), but who *repressed* the experience?²

Clinicians have accrued an enormous amount of observational data and forensic evidence on the sexual abuse of small children younger than five years of age, suggesting that toddlers suffer considerable abuse (e.g. Wilson and Cox, 1983; Hobbs and Wynne, 1989); yet very few of the women in Russell's survey could remember any form of incestuous contact from their earliest years. Therefore, when one considers that Russell had studied only the *conscious* memories of a group of women *without* severe psychiatric or criminal histories, her initial estimate of 38% seems quited cautious; and thus, deMause (1987) has written that, in fact, "our best evidence shows that *the majority of women in America today were sexually abused as girls.*" (p. 424).

Other research findings in this field will no doubt create even more alarm. Karin Wellenkotter (1988) of the Institut für Kindheit in Germany has avoided the problem of retrospective data by asking young children directly about their experiences; her preliminary investigations reveal an absolutely horrendous molestation rate of 80% among contemporary Berlin schoolchildren. In Great Britain, we have only just begun to appreciate the magnitude of the problem. As a result of Esther Rantzen's famous "ChildWatch" program for the British Broadcasting Corporation, nearly three thousand women completed questionnaires regarding their experiences. Researchers analyzed 2,530 of these, only to discover that 90% of the women reported some form of abuse. 83 percent remembered someone touching their genitals, and 62% recalled actual sexual intercourse (La Fontaine, 1988). Even if we account for the biased nature of the B.B.C. sample (because one *might* argue that only the victims of child sexual abuse would even be interested in returning the ques-

tionnaire), the findings still clamor for outrage and action, and hopefully for explanation (cf. Baker and Duncan, 1985; La Fontaine, 1990).

These concise statistics are troubling enough, but in reality, they reflect only those assaults which have occurred in the *last few decades*, during the time following the Incest Act of 1908, the first secular prohibition of sexual relations between close family members in England and Wales. In view of this consideration, do we have any conception of the nature and extent of incest and child sexual assaults throughout history when incest was indeed a wholly *legal* activity?

Incest is not only a contemporary reality, but, I would argue, a pressing and sadly neglected topic in the history of psychiatry as well. John Hoenig (1983), a psychiatrist and historian from Canada, has remarked, "The history of psychiatry is not always a popular subject. It belongs, so it is held, to the fringe of our discipline, and is too remote from the field of action, the clinic, the courtroom or the research work to warrant much attention. It is best left to the older psychiatrist or the egghead blowing dust off old books in secluded corners of libraries" (p. 547). There is, of course, much truth in Hoenig's caricature of the psychiatric historian. Scholars who immerse themselves obsessively in the study of a papyrus or of a stone tablet from ancient Egypt may indeed be engaged in a defensive flight from the urgency of contemporary event. The Duke of Gloucester (1743-1805) used to taunt the prolific historian Edward Gibbon, author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, for his preoccupation with the ancient world. Apparently, when Gibbon presented the second volume of his *magnus opus* to the Duke, Gloucester mocked him with the following comment: "Another damned thick, square book! Always scribble, scribble, scribble! Eh, Mr. Gibbon?"³

But we must remember that the historical enterprise may also be a voyage of considerable illumination. After all, what is psycho-analytical treatment if not a study of one's own *past*? And even the most staunchly organic psychiatrists would agree on the vital role of "taking a *history*" during a consultation or a clinical examination.

Although we have ample evidence to document the existence of incestuous behaviour and other forms of child sexual abuse throughout the last three thousand years, this subject has received scant attention from the historical profession. When Lloyd deMause solicited contributions from fellow historians for his now-classic book *The History of Childhood* (1974b), he naturally sought a chapter on the treatment of children in ancient Rome. An eminent scholar gladly accepted this assignment, but he stated that he would refuse to write about either Roman pederasty or infanticide (deMause, 1988). DeMause felt that such an article would be dishonest, and hence that chapter never appeared.⁴ Perhaps it is less painful for some people to research Corinthian columns

or other architectural phenomena in antiquity, rather than cruelty to children; and so, generations of historians have neglected the seemingly universal heritage of child abuse.

Recently, however, many scholars around the world have begun to redress this balance, notably: deMause (1974a, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991); Valerie Fildes (1986, 1988); Magdelene Schultz (1986); Diana Dick (1987); Elizabeth Pleck (1987); Raffael Scheck (1987a; 1987b); and Zefira Entin Rokeah (1990). Florence Rush (1980) has written a very helpful survey of some of the earlier research on the history of child abuse. The title of Rush's book, *The Best Kept Secret: Sexual Abuse of Children*, certainly conveys the silence that has surrounded this topic for such a very long time.⁵ During the last four years, my colleagues and I at the British Institute for Psychohistory have undertaken a detailed study of much of this historical literature, and I shall now present to you some of the highlights from our findings.

Our whirlwind tour through the history of child sexual abuse begins in antiquity, with a special glimpse at the ancient Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, and Hebrews.⁶ The Greek penchant for pre-pubescent boys is well known, and Kenneth Dover (1978) has reviewed the data with great care in his study, *Greek Homosexuality*. We have ample evidence preserved in poetry, and even on pottery, that Greek men of all ages would seduce and sodomize young boys on a regular basis. This activity proved so popular that it soon became very widespread, ritualized, and socially acceptable; indeed, in certain classes, and at certain times, the practice became expected. As Dover (1988) has remarked in a later study, the Greeks "regarded homosexual desire as natural, normal and universal" (p. 115). Furthermore, the names that the Greeks chose for the two homosexual partners, namely, the *eromenos* (the youth who submits to buggery), and the *erastes* (the older man who initiates the intercourse), literally signify the "beloved" and the "lover." These terms contain not the merest trace of disapproval or degradation; indeed, they are a far cry from the pejorative and condemnatory labels that we employ today, such as "pervert" and "pedophile" (cf. Bremmer, 1989).

The poetic fragments that remain from this era contain copious and unambiguous references to the acceptability of such behaviors. Meleager tells us: "I was thirsty./It was hot./I kissed the boy/with girl-soft skin./My thirst was quenched."⁷ The obsession with the smooth, unbearded skin of the youth appears in much of the poetry of this time. In a very similar vein, Philip of Thessalonica has versified:

You were a pretty boy once, Arcestratus, and
young men burned for your wine-rosy cheeks;
you had no time for me then, on the game with those
who took your bloom away. Now bristly and black

you push your friendship in my face, holding out
straw after others have got your harvest.

The poet Flaccus has even bemoaned that as soon as his young male lover grew a beard, the lad abandoned Flaccus for an even younger boy.⁸ The disconsolate Flaccus lamented, "Fate is quick to revenge." One will encounter similar pederastic themes in the work of Alkaïos, Automedon, Glaukos, Skythinos, and many others.

But perhaps by studying the legacy of the prolific writer Strato we can begin to construct a clearer picture of sexual abuse in ancient Greece. Strato has left us numerous poems describing his lust for boys as young as twelve years of age. Let us consider the following illustrations:

Stolen kisses, wary eyes—
How long are we going on talking?
We're wasting time.
You'll grow a beard.
Come on Phidon, add deeds to words!

-or-

Even if I try not to ogle a boy in the street,
He passes by and I turn round.

The selections which we have examined thus far tell us nothing concrete about the family relationship between the *eromenos* and the *erastes*. The boy and the man might have been perfect strangers, but then again, they may have been nephew and uncle, or even son and father. One of Strato's poems provides an indications that fathers not only knew of the seductions of their young sons, but that they endorsed this abuse, as well, a practice that psycho-analytical thinkers describe as collusion:

There was this gym-teacher
Who took his chance while giving
A lesson to a smooth lad—
He whisked him over his knee, and started
Doing his press-ups there right up him, hand
Working his balls. At which moment the father
Comes looking for his son; the gym-teacher
Throws the boy flat on his back,
Leaps on top and grips him tight round the neck.
Father knows a thing or two about wrestling
And says, 'Easy, please! You'll have it right off.'

This sketch would indicate that the gym-teacher experienced at least a small degree of shame or modesty by ceasing his penetrations when the father of the boy entered the room; however we cannot ignore the relatively *laissez-faire* attitude of the father which is really rather disconcerting.

Quite apart from these revealing verses, we know about the existence of pederastic marriages and honeymoons in Crete and Boeotia; and the citizens of Athens could readily avail themselves of a rent-a-boy service. Many parents sold their children into concubinage; Musonius Rufus claimed that children who refused to become sexual slaves were, in effect, "disobedient" (cf. Flaceliere, 1971; deMause, 1974a). It may also be of interest to recall that Plato, certainly one of the most respected philosophers of any era, recommended that boys be kept in common and shared among different men. His pupil, Aristotle, condoned Plato's idea, but he did express a slight concern lest a father should sleep accidentally with this own son. This brief remark from Aristotle's *Politics* certainly advocates the sexual abuse of children, but it may well be the earliest reservation in recorded history about the practice of actual familial incest.

The Greeks treated their children with notorious cruelty, and as far as we can ascertain, most pre-pubescent boys became victims of the inappropriate lust of older men, a cycle which the boys perpetuated when they themselves acquired secondary sexual characteristics, much like the vicious cycle that we read about in contemporary clinical textbooks whereby abused children often become abusing parents (e.g. Schreiber, 1983). Most of the evidence concerns young boys; therefore, I cannot make any reliable statements about the rape of girls or of small infants, though we have no good reason to suppose that these atrocities did not occur as well. The abuse of boys, however, seems to have transpired almost daily; because in view of the relative paucity of documentation of any kind from the Greek period, it amazes me how often the seduction of the *eromenos* appears. More frightening still, it may be that these sexual encounters were among the *less* ghastly features of Greek life when one recalls the even more common practise of infanticide (Radbill, 1968; deMause, 1974a). To demonstrate the validity of our claims of Greek child sexual abuse we must rely on poetry and art, but the evidence for Greek *infanticide* may be substantiated with even greater ease. One need read only the work of the archaeologists (e.g. Stager and Wolff, 1984) who have uncovered the charred remains of literally thousands upon thousands of tiny children from Knossos, Carthage, and elsewhere, killed in ritual slaughters.

Many writers from ancient Greece and from ancient Rome (such as Diodorus, Orosius, Plutarch, Siculus, and Tertullian) have recorded the horrifying details of infanticidal activity. In Sparta, for example, a

special council of elders officiated at a ceremony whereby adults would hurl newborn babies from the heights of Mount Taggetus into a deep canyon known as the Apotheta (Radbill, 1968). But for those reluctant to believe the antique authors, the findings of Lawrence Stager, an archaeologist from Harvard University, prove conclusive. He and his colleagues unearthed the Carthaginian burial ground known as the Tophet. One section alone contained approximately 20,000 urns, each filled with the decaying bones of murdered children.

I can well imagine that some people may object to my portrayal of the Greeks as a society of child abusers. Perhaps I have cast a twentieth-century value judgment on these ancient people.⁹ Others may insist that the *erastai* really loved the young boys, and that they initiated them into the joys of sex in a helping and caring manner. I rather suspect, however, that this is not the case. Though we have no first-hand accounts from the youths themselves about the ravages of Greek abuse, we do have many painted vases which reveal that while the penis of the seducer is unmistakably erect, the young boy remains flaccid and uninterested.

If I had to select one visual image that might best describe the relationship between the ancient Greek adults and children, I suppose I would choose that of the god Zeus, disguised as a carnivorous eagle, descending from the skies, and abducting the unsuspecting youth Ganymede, clutching the young lad in his penetrating claws.¹⁰

The Romans sought much inspiration from Greek culture, and they imported many of the sexual preferences of their predecessors. And because of the growth of the Roman historical profession (e.g. Livy, Suetonius, Tacitus all wrote during this period), we have evidence of incest not only from Roman literature, but from numerous imperial court chronicles as well. If anything, the Roman exploitation of young children became increasingly more ritualised. For instance, youthful prostitutes all received a special public holiday each year, and the government taxed them for their services. The works of writers such as Horace and Virgil reveal the continuation of the Greek adulation of pre-pubescent boys. Also, let us not forget the reports from the orator Cicero and from the historian Polybius which exposed the ostensibly common practise of bribing members of court juries with young noblemen as sexual favours—yet another instance of the child used as a pawn.

The fragments of Roman verse that have survived resemble the Greek writings in many respects. One of the most notable similarities concerns the fascination with the beard and the bodily hair of the boys. As soon as the youngsters began to sprout facial hair, the older men seemed to have lost all interest. The *Epigrams* of Martial exemplify this sentiment most directly; consider, for example, his verse “On a Slanderer,” which begins: “Before your mouth was fringed with hair,/All pricks might find

a haven there.” He also wrote about a boy called Labenius (cf. “To Labenius”) who took much trouble to shave his chest, arms, and legs in an effort to rid himself of the dreaded hair. Further, Martial offered directive advice on the fine points of sodomy, suggesting, “refrain from stirring the groin with poking hand... Nature has separated the male: one part has been produced for girls, one for men. Use your own part.”

The famed book by Petronius, *The Satyricon*, contains a veritable trove of examples of the sexual abuse of children, both boys and girls. Petronius depicted a scene in which the youth Giton deflowers Pannychis, a girl of approximately seven years of age. A group of elder women observe the proceedings, encouraging and applauding the violation. One of the characters, Quartilla, the Priestess of Priapus, particularly relished this seduction, recalling that she too had lost her virginity at a comparable age. Even though *The Satyricon* would be classified as a work of fiction, we would be justified to presume that Petronius based his vignettes on real occurrences in Rome. This particular fragment would suggest that girls as well as boys became the victims of abuse, and that women as well as men actually participated in the molestation.¹¹

Incest and child sexual abuse at the courts of the Roman Emperors strike one as even more omnipresent, and in many instances as rather ghoulish. Both Suetonius (*The Twelve Caesars*) and Tacitus (*The Annals*) have furnished us with gripping and often confirmatory accounts of the private sexual indulgences of some of the infamous leaders of ancient Rome. The Emperor Tiberius, successor to Augustus Caesar, certainly ranks as one of the most notorious abusers of children in human history. During the later years of his reign, Tiberius led a rather reclusive life on the isle of Capri; in order to entertain himself, he arranged for scads of young boys and girls from all over the vast Roman Empire to join him, and there he enticed them to perform all variety of sexual feasts. This group became known as the *spintriae*, but we have no firm data about the psychological traumas that these youngsters must have suffered having been first abducted, and then violated and humiliated. Additionally, Tiberius harbored a group of young boys known as his “minnows” whom he would train to swim between his legs in the pool, and thence to lick and nibble his genitals; furthermore, Suetonius has recorded that Tiberius also entreated young “babies not yet weaned from their mother’s breast” to suck on his chest or groin. Tiberius also possessed the perverse talent of combining sexual molestation with murder. At one point in his rule, Tiberius commanded the killing of many young girls; however, contemporary Roman tradition prohibited the strangulation of girls who had not yet lost their virginity; and so, in order to permit the executions to occur, he ordered the executioner to rape the tiny girls before killing them.

The sadistic antics of Tiberius's successor, the infamous Gaius Caligula, seem more gruesome still. The historians tell us that Caligula engaged in sexual relations with his favourite sister Drusilla during their childhood, and by the time he reached maturity he had committed incest with all three of his sisters. During his leadership of the Roman Empire, Caligula established a brothel in a suite of rooms in his palace as a devilish means of raising money for his coffers; to staff the brothel, he forced married women and young freeborn boys to serve as prostitutes.

When Suetonius referred to Caligula's vices, he enumerated only the Emperor's peculiar combination of "over-confidence" and "timorousness," but he bypassed incest, as though it did not matter; perhaps, for the Romans, incest and child sexual abuse did *not* matter. Elsewhere, Suetonius did indeed chastise Gaius Caligula for his "savage crimes," but on this occasion he considered only Caligula's predilection for sadistic slaughterings: for example, the Emperor would arrange to have some victims sawn in half, while on other occasions he would order the executions of Roman children and then force their parents to watch the grisly proceedings. In view of these aspects of his behavior, Caligula's use of boys in his brothel must have seemed quite tame.

Claudius, the cunning despot immortalized by Robert Graves, readily joined the ranks of the incestuous by marrying his niece Agrippina, the daughter of his brother Germanicus. This woman, Agrippina, is better known as the mother of Nero, the son of her previous marriage to Gnaeus. Both Nero's parents committed further acts of incest: Agrippina slept with her own son Nero, as well as with her uncle; and Gnaeus had sexual relations with his sister Domitia Lepida. This Roman soap opera is by no means unusual; their counterparts in Egypt, the Ptolemies, seemed to marry no one but their closest relatives for generation upon generation. Nero shared his predecessors' taste for boys, and he seduced many of them, especially the freeborn. One lad called Sporus became married to Nero in a wedding ceremony, after the Emperor had arranged to have Sporus castrated; Nero also married another male called Doryphorus, who spent his wedding night with the Emperor imitating the shrieks and screams of a young maiden being deflowered.

I have cited only a small amount of the abundant evidence concerning child sexual abuse and incest among the ancient Greek and Roman population. The existence of source materials which document the rape of little boys is more accessible than comparable data on little girls, but, in view of the fact that the Greeks killed their daughters more frequently in ritual infanticide, this should hardly surprise us. For the most part, the ancient custom of paedophilia received widespread societal approval, with only the merest hints of reservation. Plutarch did at least query Plato's glorification of sex with children, but, in his treatise on "Educa-

tion," even Plutarch readily described himself as both a "sponsor and advocate of the practice." It is true that the generally impartial historian Suetonius did describe Tiberius's seduction of his little minnows as "almost too vile to discuss," but such intermittent outbursts of condemnation are really quite rare in the literature of the ancients.

Perhaps one may think that I have dwelt overlong on the sexual peculiarities of our distant ancestors, but I hold firmly to the belief that the Greek and Roman endorsements of sexual abuse have provided us with a horrendous heritage that has had a profound impact on the nature of child abuse today and on our responses to such crimes against children. We must realize that virtually all of the Greeks and Romans that I have described thus far would have been imprisoned for seducing minors, or at the very least referred for psychiatric treatment had they lived in the twentieth century. Therefore, in view of the fact that the abuse of children in ancient times seems to have occurred so often and with such intensity, would it not be plausible to posit that not only have the Greeks and Romans bequeathed to us the Parthenon and the toga, but, more seriously, an historical trauma of monumental proportions.

In ancient Egypt, incestuous behaviour prevailed, not only among the populace at large, but certainly as a feature of life at the court of the Pharaohs. The Ptolemies, in particular, became especially renowned for their exploits during the XVIIth and XVIIIth dynasties. Amenhotep III (also known as Amenophis III), often regarded as the Louise Quatorze of Egypt's XVIIIth dynasty, married his own child, the princess Sitamun, daughter of his earlier union with his queen and wife, Tiye (Desrosches-Noblecourt, 1963). Brother and sister incest also characterised much of this epoch; indeed, Freud's colleague Otto Rank (1912) has noted that in Egyptian poetry the ancient words for brother and sister actually mean the "lover" and the "loved" one (cf. Janssen and Janssen, 1990).

The Hebrews of yore seem to have maintained a somewhat more progressive attitude toward pedophilia, and, according to the ancient Jews, anybody who engaged in sexual activity with a boy older than nine years of age would be stoned to death; however, those who copulated with boys *under* the age of nine received only a whipping, because the Jews did not consider boys under nine as sexual beings.

As we progress through history, we begin to detect the growth of feelings of deep shame and guilt concerning sexual matters; the licentiousness of Rome gradually became replaced with the fanatical prudery of the medieval era. The Church soon developed into the regnant force in the lives of most people, and the Christian clerics began a highly successful campaign to make people feel humiliated about their sexual urges. One Church father condemned sexuality as unclean because semen passes through the same organ as urine. The incestuous wishes did not

disappear by any means, but at least people made greater attempts to control them in a number of ways. Giovanni Dominici, author of a treatise on education that dates from 1405, desperately tried to erect external barriers that would help prevent parents from seducing their children. He argued that youngsters should be dressed in nightshirts which stretched below the knee so that the child "not remain uncovered," as if the sight of a child's bare thigh might be too arousing for the parent. Dominici warned: "Let not the mother nor the father, much less any other person, touch him." Further, parents began to cope with their sexual wishes towards boys and girls by *projecting* their desires onto the children. In other words, the adults began to believe, "it is not *I* who fancies the child, but rather, it is the child who wishes to copulate with *me*."

This trend towards projection of adult wishes really flourished in the late Renaissance; and during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, numerous little girls were imprisoned, tortured, and burnt at the stake because their tormentors insisted that they had fornicated with the Devil and had attempted to seduce innocent and unsuspecting men. If a man of this era wished to rape a young girl, he could blame the assault on the Devil, rather than accepting any responsibility for his actions; and so, in 1624, the Chancellor to the Prince-Bishop of Wurzburg wrote that "there have been 300 children of three and four who are said to have intercourse with the devil. I have seen children of seven put to death." (Quoted in Rush, 1980, p. 39.)

Some of the most concrete information about sexual abuse in the late Renaissance may be found in the detailed diary of Jean Heroard, the physician to Louis, the Dauphin of France, later King Louis XIII. The royal doctor has offered a description of the fifteen-month-old prince lifting up his shirt and entreating various members of the court to kiss his penis. The aristocrats willingly obliged, and they would suck and fondle Louis's genitals. Heroard's diary contains many references to the nobility and the servants at court playing with the Dauphin's organ, and he has claimed that they did so at the express request of the future monarch. In truth, we have no other sources that can confirm or deny the doctor's assertions, but deMause (1974a) has expressed great skepticism that a young boy, aged fifteen months, could actually seduce a grown-up. Instead, he has suggested that Heroard's description is in reality a projection of the wishes of the adults at court to suck upon the phallus of their future monarch—one of the many projections that characterize this period in history.¹²

In the late Renaissance and the early years of the Enlightenment, experiences of incest proved a mainstay of the popular literature of the day, including the well known *History of an Incest* by Marguerite de Navarre, and also the frequently revived play by John Ford, *Tis Pity She's a*

Whore, which chronicles the sexual alliance between Annabella and her brother Giovanni. Further, Matthew Gregory Lewis wrote a much regarded book, *The Monk*, dating from 1796, in which the character of Ambrosio rapes his sister in a holy crypt, amid putrefying corpses.¹³ And who can forget Henry Fielding's graphic portrayal of the oedipal entanglement between the eponymous hero of the novel *Tom Jones* and his mother, Mrs. Waters. By this time, actual incest between family members could not consummated without marked reproach; therefore, in order to fulfil his oedipal desire, Fielding has arranged for Tom, abandoned as a child, to copulate with his mother without knowing of their blood relationship at the time of the act. Of course, Oedipus slept with his mother Jocasta in just this way. I suspect that, by the nineteenth century, Fielding and his contemporaries would have developed sufficient impulse control to enjoy a fictional character who commits incest "accidentally"; but in the days of Sophocles, the union between Jocasta and Oedipus touched too many raw nerves, and the hero had to blind himself. No doubt the murder of his father Laius also contributed to Oedipus's ocular mutilation.¹⁴

In the interests of time, I must now leap to the Victorian era, that not-so-distant period in which our grandparents and our great-grandparents were shocked by even the exposed wooden leg of a baby grand piano. Incest and child sexual abuse still plagued the youngsters of this time, but while the Greeks celebrated their pedophilic adventures in the much discussed public art and poetry of the day, the Victorians repressed their shameful lust, enacting their abuses only in darkened bedrooms and writing about their sordid deeds only in the most reviled pornographic literature of the time. Thus, while Lytton Strachey immortalised his heroes as the *Eminent Victorians*, Steven Marcus (1964), an astute literary scholar, referred to them, perhaps more accurately, as *The Other Victorians*.

The vast pornographic industry of the nineteenth century, studied at great length by Professor Marcus, indicates that though the Victorians never talked about sex in the drawing room, they certainly read about it at the very least. The stories are rife with examples of sexual encounters between young children of both sexes and the various people that they meet on their journeys who initiate them into the world of coital relations. For instance, "Little Miss Curious's Tale," which dates from around 1830, concerns a young girl in her "tenth or eleventh year" who is molested by her father's servant. Later on in the story, the servant consummates the affair fully, "in her own 'little bed,' she being only 12 years old." Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy's (1972) sterling study on *The Rise and Fall of the British Nanny* serves as an excellent and well-researched historical companion to Marcus's book on pornography; Gathorne-Hardy's work, based on autobiographical accounts, remains

an invaluable reference containing numerous instances in which the ostensibly prim nannies of the last century satisfied themselves with their young charges.

Recently, our understanding of the nature of sexual abuse in the nineteenth century has become infinitely more clear, and much more depressing. An historical investigation on child abuse in nineteenth century Queensland (Thearle and Gregory, 1988), based on criminal proceedings from the District Court of Brisbane in Australia, has revealed that during the period from 1888-1901, penalties for child abuse had been "generally light" (p. 97). If one falsified a birth record at this time, the guilty parties would ordinarily receive a sentence of two years of hard labour; however, those convicted of child abuse would be sentenced in general to serve only three to six months of labour. By contemporary standard, it does seem extraordinary that a conviction for an altered birth certificate should command a more severe sentence than one for child abuse.

Louise DeSalvo (1989) has further elucidated our knowledge of the abusiveness during this period of time. Her detailed study of the life and work of Great Britain's most acclaimed female writer, Virginia Woolf, has revealed at last the extent of the suffering that Woolf endured in her early childhood. In view of what we have discovered so far about the ubiquitousness of familial incest, it will surprise no one to learn that at about the age of six years, Virginia fell prey to the intrusive attentions of her two half-brothers, George Duckworth and Gerald Duckworth, both scions of British society. (Gerald later became the founder of a famous publishing house, still flourishing, which bears his surname). I shall not linger on the details, but suffice it to say that in their less noble moments, the two brothers caused Virginia great misery throughout her latency years, by examining her genitals and petting her; in fact, we really do not know the full story, and it may be possible that the brothers committed other abuses as well. This information certainly helps explain why Woolf always looks so very sad in her photographs. In 1941, she killed herself, ever cognizant of what the male members of her family had done to her.¹⁵

Though noting can diminish the impact of Virginia Woolf's suffering, we can at least express our gratitude to her for the vital role that she performed in introducing the works of Sigmund Freud to the English speaking world. Although some misguided authors have invested much energy in their attempts to prove that Freud ignored the actual abuse of children (e.g. Masson, 1984), nothing could be further from the truth. Throughout his long working life, Sigmund Freud distinguished himself as a champion of the rights of young children. He was certainly the first member of the medical establishment to recognise the degree of which even the most seemingly insignificant events from our childhood continue to shape and colour our adult lives, and he may well have been the first

student of human psychology to record actual dialogue from conversations with children, because he considered the speech of youngsters vitally important in order to understand their psychic lives (e.g. Freud, 1905; 1909). I cannot do justice to the supreme contribution of Freud and his pupils in the context of this presentation, but I know that none of the recent work on the prevention and treatment of child sexual abuse could have been undertaken without the contributions of the psycho-analytical profession.

Freud certainly examined the importance of seductions during the course of his early researches on the psychology of the neuroses. In his quite extraordinary essay on the etiology of hysteria (Freud, 1896), he reported several cases of sexual abuse, including that of a man who developed an hysterical paraplegia of the legs after having been forced, in childhood, to stimulate the vagina of a mature woman, using his feet! In this instance, the feet and legs became the scene of the crime for the child, and he repressed this traumatic memory by developing a paralysis; in other words, his hysterical symptom prevented him from moving his legs so that he would no longer be able to perform such acts against his will.

In his later writings, Freud continued to provide evidence of early child abuse. Masson (1984) would have us believe that Freud fully abandoned his seduction theory, but this simply will not do. I contend that, in reality, Freud *elaborated* upon his theory, considering the child's fantasies and fears, as well as the infractions of the environment.¹⁶ His subsequent works abound in references to infantile seductions. In his essays on sexuality (1905), Freud has devoted an entire section to the use of children as sexual objects. Later on, he wrote: "You must not suppose, however, that sexual abuse of a child by its nearest male relatives belong entirely to the realm of phantasy. Most analysts will have treated cases in which such events were real and could be unimpeachably established" (Freud, 1917, p. 370).

When Theodor Reik consulted his mentor, Freud, about the case of a composer who molested small girls, Freud replied to Reik: "He must have been seduced as a child." (Quoted in Natterson, 1966, p. 256.) Can this be the remark of a man reputed to have abandoned the seduction theory? Obviously, Sigmund Freud could not have uncovered all the atrocities of his time (cf. Wolff, 1988), but no one will deny that he gave a voice to childhood, and, for that, we will excuse him his oversights or resistances. Moreover, the advent of Freud's research marked an extraordinary shift in attitudes toward incest and child sexual abuse. Such assaults could no longer remain unnoticed; Freud and his followers charted the territory of diagnosis, treatment, and education—the very areas which constitute the heart of contemporary therapeutic work.

Now that I have presented this rather fiendish litany of examples of in-

cest and other forms of child sexual abuse throughout Western history, let us consider what we can reasonably conclude from all of this data.¹⁷ First of all, I must argue that, from the historiographical point of view, our work has only just begun. We still have countless documents and source materials that need to be examined with great caution; therefore, it would be premature to offer any definitive conclusions at this early stage in research on the history of childhood. Nevertheless, I do believe that we have enough primary evidence at our disposal to make some valid observations about the history of child sexual abuse, and we now find ourselves in a good position to ask some precise and important questions.

First of all, let us focus on the trends that we have detected thus far in the historical epidemiology of incest and abuse. We may begin by identifying four major periods in the history of the sexual abuse of children in the West:

- 1) *The Ancient Period* (roughly comprising the time of the Greeks and the Romans) in which adults used children to relieve their sexual needs. The adults seduced and violated their children in an unashamed and socially acceptable manner.
- 2) *The Medieval Period* (stemming from the rise of Christianity through the flourishing of the Renaissance) in which parents could no longer abuse their children with impunity. For the very first time, guilt became a prominent feature of psychic life, and adults projected their sexual impulses onto the children.
- 3) *The Early Modern* (covering the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries) during which time the sense of guilt and shame increased to such a degree that incest could no longer be regarded as an acceptable aspect of culture, and instead, it exploded on the pornographic scene and in the underworld, unacknowledged in public, and hidden from "polite" society.
- 4) *The Late Modern Period* (the latter half of the twentieth century) in which child sexual abuse has at last become that subject of widespread clinical and governmental concern, and a time when *both* the abused children and the abusive adults are regarded as victims of a very pernicious cycle of cruelty and deprivation. Moreover, during this time, treatment and prevention have become much more readily available.

This is, of course, an incredibly crude and very general schematization of some of the more observable transformations which have occurred

during the last few millennia—an outline that requires infinitely greater refinement and elucidation.¹⁸ However, the trend provides ample support for the theory of the evolution of child care first outlined by Lloyd deMause in his influential essay of 1974. DeMause has presented a surfeit of data to demonstrate that, “The further back in history one goes, the lower the level of child care, and the more likely children are to be killed, abandoned, beaten, terrorized, and sexually abuse.” (DeMause, 1974a, p. 1).

The media has certainly promulgated the ill-informed thesis that child abuse is a relatively new phenomenon, an expression of the perversion and corruption that characterises the Reagan and Thatcher era; but, as Kraemer (1988) has noted, child sexual abuse is by no means a new epidemic like AIDS, rather, it has been with us all along. What is new in the study of child abuse is the achievement of Sigmund Freud and his followers to examine the catastrophic consequences of incest and sexual abuse, and to provide guidelines for treatment, research, legal intervention, and public awareness.¹⁹

I must mention that the data which I have summarized—detailed, wide-ranging, and representative though it may be—is but the merest fraction of what we know about the nature of child sexual abuse in previous generations; furthermore, virtually all the information that I have cited in this essay can be found readily in *published* sources. None of my material has come from newly excavated archives covered in the proverbial layers of dust. Also, this documentation derives from predominantly Western sources. Therefore, if this article has been at all shocking or upsetting, imagine what the true state of affairs would be if I had included examples from the Eastern cultures or from unpublished archival materials and court records as well. And more horrifying still, let us recall that most battered children in ancient Greece or Renaissance Italy never left diaries or books or letters; perhaps these children did not even remember their rapes on a conscious level. Thus, I submit that the actual extent of abuse in history has been more grim than we can ever comprehend.

If we consider Karin Wellenkotter’s (1988) data which has revealed that approximately 80% of Berlin schoolchildren have reported conscious memories of sexual abuse, what must the real degree of incest have been in previous centuries, long before anti-incest laws, child psychiatry, or psychotherapy became realities. Lloyd deMause (1974a) could not have been more right when he proclaimed that, “The history of childhood is a nightmare from which we have only recently begun to awaken” (p. 1).

But we *have* begun to awaken, and although so many of our clients in psychotherapy report terrible experiences of early violations, numerous professionals have joined forces at last in an expression of constructive

outrage in order to protect the physical and emotional well being of the child. Although the scandal in Cleveland (in the north of England) has raised many pertinent questions about the ethics of the controversial anal dilation technique for examining suspected victims of sexual assault of (cf. MacCarthy, 1988), at least most people now appreciate that incest in the family and child abuse at large constitute grave dangers, and that both the abuse and the abusers must be helped and supported. I am therefore quite optimistic about the emotional future of children in forthcoming decades, for though we have been trapped in our historical nightmare. I believe we are now almost completely wide awake.

We still have to grapple with many questions that will help to elucidate the situation. I would like to know, for example, why it has taken so long for the law and for the psychiatric establishment to regard incest as a serious matter; but of even greater importance, I should like to understand why so many centuries have elapsed before parents could begin to recognize the manifold ways in which they have damaged the emotional world of their children.

But please allow me to finish by referring back to a concern that I expressed at the beginning of this study, namely: is there any value in researching the *history* of child abuse? It is all well and good that the doctors and the lawyers and the social workers should be labouring hard to help the abused children of the 1990s but can we really learn anything from the psychological crimes of our long-deceased ancestors? In October 1986, a group of men founded a crisis counselling service in London called Survivors which caters specifically to the needs of male victims of sexual abuse. In spite of the fact that Survivors dealt with approximately eight hundred telephone calls in 1988, the organization has been refused funding from over five hundred charitable trusts! Nigel O'Mara, one of the counsellors at Survivors, has stated: "The law says there is no such thing as male rape. Unless penetration of the vagina by the penis is involved, it's not defined as rape'" (quoted in Hirst, 1989, p. 7).

The refusal of acknowledge that male children can also be victims of rape stems from a profound ignorance of the extensive history of pederasty among the Greeks and other peoples. I certainly do not believe that an archival study of the history of childhood could transform our society, but, had the heads of the various charitable trusts recognized that the sexual abuse of children, both girls and boys, has actually occurred for thousands of years, then counselling organizations like Survivors might be able to receive the monies that they so desperately require to continue their important work.

In Great Britain, the marvellous telephone counselling service, Childline, receives roughly 10,000 calls each day from youngsters in pain. Sadly, the organization can respond to only a tiny fraction of these

callers, roughly 15% due to insufficient resources and shortages of staff (Mihill, 1990).²⁰ Those children who ring the toll-free telephone number, but who cannot speak to a counsellor directly, hear a message recorded by the television personality Esther Rantzen, one of the founders of the service: "Hello, this is ChildLine. All our counsellors are busy talking to children at the moment, but please keep trying to phone us, and make sure you choose a safe time and a safe place." ChildLine struggles valiantly, and, in fact, it may be one of the more successful providers of clinical services for the abused and the troubled. A recent report published by the National Children's Home (cf. Brindle, 1990) has revealed, quite shockingly, that more than half of Britain has no local treatment centre for the care of abuse children. Obviously, we all have much more work to do, but at least we have begun and research into the history of child abuse will no doubt play an integral role in the important sphere of public education.

I would like to thank Lloyd deMause, Dr. Lawrence Goldie, and Judie Kahr for their encouragement and for their constructive comments. I owe a great debt to Paul Hibbert, a classical scholar, formerly of the University of Oxford, for assisting me with many of the Greek source materials.

I presented earlier versions of this paper to the annual conference on "Problems in Psychosexual Medicine," sponsored by the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Royal Postgraduate Medical Federation of the University of London, at Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital, London, on 16th October, 1989, and again on 25th September, 1990. The delegates at the conference are medical practitioners, studying for the Diploma in Psychosexual Medicine of the University of London; and this introduction to the history of child sexual abuse has now become a regular part of the syllabus. I also delivered a slightly different version of this paper to my colleagues at the British Institute for Psychohistory, London, on 13th January, 1990, as part of our annual seminar series on "Aspects of Childhood: Psycho-Analytical and Historical Perspectives." I would like to thank all the members of the audience for their valuable suggestions and criticisms.

Brett Kahr is a psychologist and Director of the British Institute for Psychohistory in London. Address for correspondence: British Institute for Psychohistory; 91, Eton Place; Eton College Road; London NW3 2DS; England.

1 . Fathers and uncles committed assaults more regularly than any other category of relative reported in Diana Russell's study.

2. Christopher Hobbs and Jane Wynne (1989) have reported on 337 cases of child sexual abuse referred to their multidisciplinary treatment team in Leeds. 115 of these children were between 0 and 5 years of age; and a clinical examination revealed signs of anal penetration in more than half of this group (N = 69).
3. James Boswell reported this anecdote in his *Life of Johnson*, which dates from 1769.
4. The final edition of deMause's anthology did however include an article by Richard B. Lyman, Jr. (1974) on *late* Roman childhood and early medieval childhood, covering the period from approximately 200 A.C.E. to 800 A.C.E.
5. Scholars who wish to pursue further research in the history of childhood should consult the valuable references listed in Henry Lawton's (1988) superlative work, *The Psychohistorian's Handbook*, especially pages 123-159.
6. Avner Falk (1989) has written a worthy study on themes of incest in the Bible.
7. I have relied on the rather coarse translations which Dr. Stephen Coote (1983) has compiled for his edition of *The Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse*. These translations may not win scholarly approval, but they certainly capture the assaultiveness of Greek pederasty, whereas many other versions of these poems simply do not.
8. Contemporary pedophiles also report the same aversion to bodily hair on the children they seduce. One man revealed that he prefers boys specifically because "they have little or no body hair and their bodies are more effeminate" (Quoted in Wilson and Cox, 1983, p. 22). Another man confessed that he found body hair "obnoxious and horrible" (Quoted in Wilson and Cox, 1983, p. 75). For further elucidation on the psychodynamics of pedophilia, readers may wish to consult the useful article by Mervin Glasser (1988) and the exhaustive textbook on perversions written by Charles Socarides (1988).
9. When I presented an earlier incarnation of this essay, entitled "Historical Perspectives on Incest," on 25th September, 1990, to a conference on "Problems in Psychosexual Medicine," the eminent sexologist, Dr. Alex Comfort, a fellow speaker on the panel, strongly objected to my characterisation of the Greeks as child molesters. He suggested rather that the Greeks demonstrated great creativity in their wide range of sexual activities.
10. Adrian Stokes (1958) and Eli Sagan (1979) have supplied us with many revealing psycho-analytical observations about Greek culture.
11. In recent years, a number of writers have at last begun to explore the hitherto repressed topic of mother-child incest (e.g. McCarty, 1986; Welldon, 1988).
12. Elizabeth Wirth Marvick (1986) has authored a detailed study of Louis XIII which may be of interest to readers.
13. I am indebted to the painstaking scholarship of Professor Rudolph Binion (1989) for unearthing this reference.
14. The Greeks, indulged in incest and sexual abuse, as we have already discussed; indeed, their two principal deities, Zeus and his wife Hera, began life as brother and sister. But even the Greeks blanched somewhat at the idea of mother-son incest, at least in public.
15. For further information on child sexual abuse in the nineteenth century, I recommend the work of Harry Ferguson (1989, 1990), based on his extensive research in the archives of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Karen Taylor (1985) has broadened our knowledge of this era with her excellent study of venereal disease in children; and Linda Gordon (1988) has done comparable work using American source materials.
16. Lloyd deMause (1991) has written a well-informed critique of the work of Jef-

frey Masson; and Kurt Eissler (1991), the incomparable dean of Freud scholars, has just announced his plans to complete a full study on the seduction theory which will no doubt disprove the aspersions of Freud's detractors. Ann Scott (1988) has reviewed much of the controversy surrounding Freud and the seduction theory with refreshing sobriety.

17. Lloyd deMause (1991) has summarized a great deal of the evidence concerning child sexual abuse in non-Western cultures.
18. Of course, the four periods that I have identified correspond quite closely to the six modes of child-rearing that Lloyd deMause (1974a) wrote about in his early work on history of childhood. In the interests of time and clarity, I have reduced deMause's six modes to four rough periods, and I did this solely to avoid explaining the subtleties of the "ambivalent" mode and the "intrusive" mode, which would have confused the members of the audience to whom I first presented this research.
19. Leonard Shengold (1989) has authored a remarkably sensitive and highly readable study of the vicissitudes of child abuse. His book on *Soul Murder: The Effects of Childhood Abuse and Deprivation* will no doubt remain a model for psycho-analytical scholarship in this field.
20. A press release from ChildLine stated that, in fact, some 16,000 calls are made each day to the organization, not 10,000, as reported in *The Guardian* newspaper.

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SOME PSYCHOANALYTIC COMMENTARY ON THE DEMAUSE AND KAHR PAPERS

Neil Wilson

DeMause and Kahr offer a convincing, comprehensive overview of the prevalence of incest as it relates to Western society and other cultures. The research offered includes many types of sources and reflects an impressive array of scholarship. Much of the material should be an eye-opener for clinicians whose experience would be gained mainly in the consulting room. My commentary will focus mainly on the topic of incest as it relates to Freud and psychoanalysis. In addition, I will offer some theoretical and clinical material which may focus the issues in a manner experienced by a clinician in practice.

Both authors address Freud's early seduction theory. It is heartening that they comprehend the issues surrounding the recent controversies and do not jump on the current bandwagon which accuses Freud of denying the seduction theory for reasons of political expediency.

Naturally Freud knew that some of his patients were sexually seduced by a family member. He soon realized however, that it was implausible for all his hysterical patients to have been sexually seduced as children. The puzzle he finally addressed dealt with the activation of repressed childhood memories of incest. Recognition of these as screen memories removed an impasse in the development of psychoanalysis. The Oedipal complex was recognized as was the existence of childhood sexuality. Furthermore, the power of fantasy was seen as it relates to structure formation, perception, anxiety and developmental issues. Memory became organic. Also, memory and fantasy were seen as often intertwined. Early memory, therefore, was not taken at face value but was seen as distorted, reworked and subject to interpretation and change. Psychoanalysis would offer a means of change partially through changes in memory images.

DeMause and Kahr address these basic issues but only so far as they relate to wish fulfillment and the Oedipal father. An important addition to Freud's theory of incest occurred in 1931. In a paper on female sexuality, Freud expanded the topic of incest to include the pre-Oedipal mother. His expanded views are exemplified by the following paragraph:

In regard to the passive impulses of the phallic phase, it is noteworthy that girls regularly accuse their mother of seducing them. This is because they necessarily received their first, or at any rate their strongest, genital sensations when they were being cleaned and having their toilet attended to by their mother (or by someone such as a nurse who took her place).

Mothers have often told me, as a matter of observation, that their little daughters of two and three years old enjoy these sensations and try to get their mothers to make them more intense by repeated touching and rubbing. The fact that the mother thus unavoidably initiates the child into the phallic phase is, I think, the reason why, in phantasies of later years, the father so regularly appears as the sexual seducer. When the girl turns away from her mother, she also makes over to her father her introduction into sexual life. (Vol. XXI, p. 238)

Here the mother becomes the original seducer, the seducer of all children, both male and female.

An understanding of this early situation has far-reaching importance for a theory of incest. It places incest in the realm of psychoanalysis and object relations theory. Incestual desires become an issue for all of us on a pre-Oedipal level in addition to an incestual Oedipal level. The early mother-child relation becomes a major focus. How seductive was the mother in actuality? How stimulating was she? Did the young child identify with that aspect of the mother and perhaps repeat aspects of the pattern in later years? These become analytic issues of exploration. Also it must be noted that Freud here includes actual seduction (in reality) or at least the possibility of it being experienced as seduction. Again the subtleties of the relationship and the child's inner experiencing of it are most crucial.

DeMause and Kahr offer overwhelming data supporting the widespread incidence of incest and sexual abuse. DeMause's inclusion of what he calls indirect incest seems a particularly important contribution. A parent almost handing over a child to a spouse, uncle, etc. for sexual purposes seems so common. Analysts often have noted the seeming complicity of a parent when incest occurs in the upstairs bedroom. The victim similarly may recognize the not so subtle message of the parent. I would suggest however, that the dynamics of such an occurrence are more complex than those proposed by DeMause. The unconscious fantasies acted out by a parent would vary in each situation.

It should be noted that the problem of separating fantasy and reality is still with us. DeMause quotes Robert Fliess who regularly found real sexual molestation at the core of his patients problems. This finding does not always occur in psychoanalytic treatment. The following clinical example would not be uncommon in clinical practice.

A patient reported that in a productive first analysis repression lifted and he remembered his aunt sexually seducing him. Standing nude, she pressed his head into her "dirty" genital area. Associated with this early memory were fears of closeness with a woman and the experiencing of sex as dirty. It took two years of further analysis before this previously

repressed memory was seen as a screen memory. What actually occurred was that the little boy was actually watching his mother undress. The merger in the early memory was his wish, but displaced onto his aunt. Now without an additional analysis he would have spent his life thinking his aunt had in fact seduced him.

The complication here is that the patient and his mother actually did have a close mutually seductive relationship. Incestual desires abounded and, as was shown in the memory itself, had to be defended against. It may be expected that what is first thought to be actual active seduction in these types of patients does reflect deep incestual feelings and resultant conflicts in any case. It is in this sense that the difference in consequence between actual seduction and a close seductive dyad is more apparent than real.

Cultural background does influence how incest is experienced. A patient from Pakistan was sexually intimate with two sisters and had actual intercourse with a younger brother. This occurred during what should have been her latency period. Western patients with such active incestual experiences would usually show severe pathology. This quite intact woman, married and faithful, showed no discernable ill effects from her active incestual relations.

Similarly, a Lebanese man whose mother masturbated him often through latency led a productive life. There was no crippling Oedipal situation as might be expected by Western standards. He did expect his Western wife to similarly service him at (for her) inopportune moments. Yet this narcissistic investment was rather readily surrendered for the sake of his marriage.

Admittedly these two examples are nothing more than suggestive. Yet certainly the emotional attitudes derived from cultural norms influence the outcome of early experience. It is interesting how Kahr's work so readily fits into a psychoanalytic framework. Kahr offers four major periods in history regarding the sexual abuse of children in the West. He describes an "Ancient Period" when seduction of children was socially acceptable. The following three historical eras see an internalization of guilt and parallel societal prohibitions against incest. Finally Kahr sees current development as viewing incestual acting out as a sickness in need of treatment. His overview parallels Freud's thinking as exemplified in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930). This book shows the influence of guilt in its relation to the development of social structure. The internalization of guilt creates a built-in system of inner control for individuals, similar to the sequence proposed by Kahr in terms of society.

A final note regarding the authors' vision. There is clearly a tone in both articles that supports the rights of children. They have the courage to label abuse for what it is, regardless of the attempts of some to offer

massive rationalizations. These authors are not remote scientists intellectually curious about incest. Rather they appear also to be reformers demanding more of man. By attempting to open our eyes to society's sadism, they are performing an important function.

Neil Wilson, Ph.D., is a psychoanalyst at 800 Catalpa Avenue, Teaneck, N.J. 07666.

COMMENTARY ON "THE UNIVERSALITY OF INCEST"

David Finkelhor

I agree thoroughly with the premise that the sexual maltreatment of children has likely been widespread across cultures and throughout history. Without detracting from this central point, though, if I were undertaking a similar argument, I think I would try to observe some distinctions, which have analytic importance when it comes to understanding both causes and effects.

What DeMause is arguing in his paper is the universality of *sexual maltreatment of children*, not incest, even though incest is also widespread. One of the important criticisms of the anthropological literature is that it kept a narrow focus on sex between biologically related individuals (children or not). But he is not really interested in such things as marriage patterns among mature consanguines. He is cataloguing the variety of ways that adults have systematically traumatized children's sexuality. Trying to analyze this under the category of incest connects it unnecessarily to this irrelevant and misguided anthropological literature, and puts an unnecessary emphasis on the distinction between intra-family and other forms of sexual maltreatment.

I also think that within this larger category of sexual maltreatment, one might want to distinguish among three forms that it takes: 1) the sexual exploitation of children, taking advantage of children's powerlessness to gratify adults' own direct sexual needs; 2) the mortification of children's sexuality, including both the mutilation of children's genitalia and the vilification and repression of children's normal sexual interests; and 3) the eroticization of children, i.e. the establishment of environments where inappropriate stimulation eventually interferes with the child's ability to master other developmental tasks. I think the psychological dynamics underlying these forms are somewhat different as are their effects on children.

David Finkelhor, Ph.D., is Co-Director of the Family Research Laboratory, University of New Hampshire, 126 Horton Social Science Center, Durham, NH 03824, and author of many books on the sexual abuse of children.

COMMENT ON "THE UNIVERSALITY OF INCEST"

Andrew Vachss

In my view, the significant contribution of *The Universality of Incest* is its blunt recognition of evil. I realize "evil" is not a psychoanalytic term, and I don't suppose even the periodic sea changes undergone by the various DSM editions will ever acknowledge its existence.¹ However, as a combat practitioner of many years standing, (from USPHS investigator in sexually-transmitted diseases, to ghetto caseworker, to the Biafran war, to directing a re-entry center for ex-convicts and a maximum security institution for "aggressive-violent" youth ... and, finally, to a law practice which is limited to representation of children and youth), I have seen evil closely (and often) enough to venture an operational definition: evil is choice.

By documenting that incest is a product of the human (as opposed to cultural) condition, deMause gives cold comfort to its many apologists.²

In New York, for example, incest (PL §255.25) is a "Class E" felony. This is the lowest grade of felony charge, and axiomatically probation-eligible. This very classification represents a legislative assault on all incest victims in that it implies, even commands, the disenfranchisement of the jury's proper province. Incest is not "sexual dysfunction"—it is violent abuse of power, arising from a complex series of motivations.

In New York, incest is classified as an "Offense Affecting the Marital Relationship." So is adultery. Were this same classification proffered for rape or forcible sodomy, antagonistic public reaction would be near-universal. Incest, as conceptualized by the legislature, implies a bizarre form of "consent" by the victim. (The Biblical admonition, essentially a form of species-protection—to prevent the birth of bio-genetic defectives—applies to consenting adults, hence the still-continuing "parallel" to adultery).

The incest statutes do not mention "force," which would compel a harsher judgment of the perpetrator. Yet a child's ability to resist sexual intrusion by an all-powerful family member is virtually non-existent. Unless and until juries are permitted to understand that incest is nothing less than rape-by-extortion, it will be perceived as a "mental health" issue. And its victims, especially teenagers, will be perceived as complicitous.³

Juries are (at least in theory) societal microcosms. In our society, we grant legislators a leadership role—the legislature sets the tone for our perception of criminal conduct. Thus, we have two classes of child victims: those found within and without the "family unit." We cannot continue to reward a certain criminal sub-class simply because its members have biologically produced their own victims.

There are only three sources of the laws which govern us: the laws of nature, the laws of religion, and the laws of mankind. Incest violates them all. Incest is the rape of childhood—the theft of the soul.

As deMause's article so clearly illustrates, incest occurs in private darkness, but is sanctioned in various ways by various cultures. It is systemically traumatic, profound in its consequences, and a monumental impetus to every known manifestation of personal dysfunction.⁴

All cultures aspire to cohesive achievement. Some call that standard "civilization." But any "civilization" which verbally elevates children to the status of "treasure" while sentencing them to that of disposable toys is unworthy of the name.

The authors make a strong case for the fact that incest has always been with us ... as a living embodiment of broader child abuse. So long as our verbal condemnation of this evil is subsumed into our active condonation, it will continue to cast its shadow over all societies.

Incest is a chain. A chain that could be broken had we but the will to do so. We cannot stop every case, but we can, as a society, stop providing safe harbor to perpetrators.

Andrew Henry Vachss, 299 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10007, is an attorney specializing in juvenile justice and child abuse.

1. The diagnostic criteria for Antisocial Personality Disorder, for example, form a blanket which covers some serial killers and some chronic petty thieves equally well.
2. While researchers must confront apologists, those of us at ground zero must confront not only minimizers (court-certified "experts" who piously proclaim the "no real harm" theories and exalt "family re-unification" over victim protection), but active promoters. "Incest" is a specific category of pornography (photographic, video, audio, and written-to-specification) and advertised as such.
3. Indeed, in New York, such victims qualify as "defendants" if of sufficient age to "consent," regardless of when the course-of-conduct crime began.
4. And not all such dysfunction is limited to the original victims. Some include, but are not limited to "re-enactment scenarios" wherein a former victim now becomes a procurer. My caseload and personal knowledge includes former victims who have literally "turned over" their own children to the individual who attacked them, former victims who "advertise" the availability of their children to pedophiles, and former victims who produce "domestic discipline" and "Daddy-Daughter" pornography.

The Social Trance: Psychological Obstacles to Progress in History

JOE BERGHOLD

The phenomenon of hypnosis as a general model for authoritarian social conditions offers a promising approach to address some questions that are basic to psychohistory.

I mean questions like the following:

Why is it that our society is to a large extent unable to realize its potentials for creativity, self-determination, and satisfaction of needs?

Why is it that the possibilities of social solidarity, generosity, dialogue, and co-operation remain largely submerged and that social relations throughout history have been more marked by domination, manipulation, hierarchy, destructiveness, and exploitation? (All of which means the sacrifice of lives and life interests for goals believed to be of higher value than the pursuit of happiness.)

Why is human historical progress—which appears to be reachable fairly easily in terms of the given material and mental resources—only realized to a very limited degree, at the tragic expense of so many lives?

What is the nature of these obstacles to human progress?

Are there practicable ways of overcoming them?

The answers to such questions will have to be found in both the material and psychological spheres of human history. That is, they have their origin in both the conditions of economic survival—and in conflicts and hostilities deriving from these—and in the psychological conditions

of deeply-rooted irrational fears that prevent conscious awareness of our real motivations and needs and that compel us to destructive ways of acting out emotional conflicts.

From the necessarily unconscious character of these psychological conditions follows the logical conclusion that their importance generally tends to be denied or underestimated; for instance, through the displacement or projection of our unconscious motivations onto demons, gods, idols, leaders, enemies, etc.—and also particularly onto allegedly objective (economic) conditions of history.

Starting with such questions and considerations, the phenomenon of hypnosis appears as a singularly significant object for the investigation of those psychological conditions that impede historical progress (and in our epoch even threaten our survival as a species). As opposed to other typical forms of domination—which depend on different combinations of physical coercion *and* some degree of acceptance by its victims—hypnosis can depend on the psychological conditions of acceptance *alone*, that is, on an internalization of submission *alone*. Hypnosis may therefore be the essence, the deeper texture of the psychological component of all forms of domination.

In this context, it is revealing how often one can find scattered remarks and observations—once one watches out for them—that characterize the psychological dimension of domination in society as hypnotic (or at least as similar to hypnosis), be it in psychological, historical, political, sociological, or literary works of very different orientations (as I will illustrate later in this article). Which strongly suggests that a consistent understanding of hypnosis should point the way to some answers to the above-mentioned questions.

THE TRADITIONAL IMAGE OF HYPNOSIS

The familiar phenomenon of hypnosis appears as a form of uncanny domination through mysterious means of influence. In the prevalent traditional fantasy, which is also reflected in a long series of literary or cinematographic works—in such figures as George duMaurier's Svengali, Thomas Mann's Cipolla, Fritz Lang's Dr. Mabuse, Janowitz and Meyer's Dr. Caligari, among others—a certain type of an all-powerful magician can exert total control over the will, behavior, and consciousness of his subjects, can cast a spell on them, and can make them lose all of their free will, self-responsibility and critical abilities.

It seems useful to analyze this powerful popular fantasy as a distorted—but nevertheless quite meaningful—reflection of psychological reality.

Incidentally, the harsh rejection of the popular image by most modern

hypnotherapists often inadvertently supports rather than refutes its partial legitimacy. The manner in which so many expert hypnotists claim the traditional popular view to be mistaken in fact re-enacts the classical authoritarian hypnotic situation, where one side claims the status of being in possession of all the wisdom that the other side is supposed to accept fully and uncritically; for instance, when these experts describe popular opinions as complete nonsense or as the product of sheer ignorance and of long outdated legends and superstitions, which should be simply “eradicated” or “bent” to accept the higher wisdom of the experts (who at the same time have to admit, however, that they don’t have a satisfying theory of hypnosis).¹

A major motive for the experts’ rejection of the popular image seems to derive from the gradually increasing influence of ideals of personal autonomy, partnership, and equality of human rights, especially in the course of this century (even if more on the level of official, consciously held values than in reality). If the old masters of hypnotism could socially afford to claim uncritical submission from their subjects, modern hypnotists, on the other hand, are confronted with a considerable “image problem” due to “the continuing prevalence of Nineteenth Century Svengali-like stereotypes.”² The old Marquis Amand *de Puységur* could claim that there could be no healing without the complete suppression of independent will of the patient by the therapist;³ Auguste Liébeault and Hippolyte Bernheim of the famous *School of Nancy* could state that people with “docile brains,” “subjects used to passive obedience”—for instance former soldiers—are more apt to receive hypnotic suggestions;⁴ and even the early Freud—before giving up the use of hypnosis in therapy—could regret that it is impossible to achieve a state of “complete hypnosis,” in which “the ideal of mental treatment,” namely that “the idiosyncrasies of patients would [be] eliminated,” would be realized.⁵ By contrast, when a very prominent French psychiatrist in the 20th century, Henri Ey, is ready to justify the “transfer of the patient into a state of slavery in relation to the master hypnotist,” if only this allegedly serves therapeutic ends,⁶ he predictably provokes harsh criticism against himself, from even a rather conservative colleague like Henri Baruk, who accuses him of an attitude of “psychological imperialism.”⁷

If the experts’ rejection of the popular image of hypnosis has a strong component of denial, the popular imagination in part is motivated by defensive motivations, too. Such *absolute* hypnotic power, as the imagination has it, is obviously impossible—not just because the practice of hypnosis typically shows how a seemingly automaton-like obedience of a subject can suddenly disappear in front of a particular suggestion or command, but more fundamentally because, in and of itself, it is absurd to think that there could be any person or power in the world that would have magically limitless possibilities in any respect or direction.⁸

This delusional aspect of absolute power in the popular fantasy logically leads us to interpret it as the expression of unconscious wishes, that is, wishes that such all-powerfulness *should* exist—so that via (unconscious) identification, it can be fantasized as one's own. As Paul Schilder and Otto Kauders wrote, the hypnotized person “projects his desire onto the hypnotist and subsequently, by identification, attains magic powers which he would not otherwise be permitted to ascribe to himself.”⁹ Incidentally, such wishes also seem to be the underlying motivation of many delusional fantasies in the political sphere—fantasies of all-powerful leaders; invincible regimes, armies, and nations; perfectly organized manipulation and propaganda machines/political apparatuses; or the possibility of total world domination by one power or another.

The compelling irrational power of such wishes, and its foundations in childhood experiences, appear as a major focus of investigation in the hope of unveiling the ever-so-evasive character of hypnosis. As I will try to show, I believe these foundations can be partly understood as a *traumatic obstruction of the childhood development towards mature and consistent “boundaries between the ego and the outside world.”*

SOCIAL TRANCE

For an understanding of hypnosis as a psychological reality reaching far beyond its *explicit* forms and applications, it is useful to consider those scattered observations and reflections by many different authors that point to a general social reality of hypnotic trance as unconscious submission to authoritarian rules and figures. A few illustrative examples should convey a good sense of this.

A particularly intriguing description is given by Ronald Laing in a short chapter of his book *The Politics of the Family*, where he presents the idea that in many, if not most, families every generation hypnotizes the next from early infancy to carry out unconscious instructions and to take subliminally attributed roles for a lifetime: “When attributions have the function of instructions or injunctions, this function may be denied, giving rise to one type of *mystification*, akin to, or identical with, hypnotic suggestion. Hypnosis may be an experimental model of a naturally occurring phenomenon in many families. In the family situation, however, the hypnotists (the parents) are already hypnotized (by their parents) and are carrying out their instructions, by bringing their children up to bring their children up...in such a way, which includes not realizing that one is carrying out instructions: since one instruction is not to think that one is thus instructed. This state is easily induced under hypnosis.”¹⁰

No wonder, then, that Laing asks, “How much of what we ordinarily

feel, is what we have all been hypnotized to feel? How much of who we are, is what we have been hypnotized to be?"¹¹ and concludes, "I consider many adults (including myself) are or have been, more or less, in a hypnotic trance, induced in early infancy: we remain in this state until—when we dead awaken, as Ibsen makes one of his characters say—we shall find that we have never lived," having acted "parts in a play that we have never read and never seen, whose plot we don't know, whose existence we can glimpse, but whose beginning and end are beyond our present imagination and conception."¹²

The French philosopher Marie-Jean Guyau and the psychologist Alfred Binet, as well as the sociologist Émile Durkheim, long before Laing's perception of a permanent state of trance induced in childhood, came to the opinion that what they called the "natural" mental state of childhood was very similar to hypnosis, because children are largely unable to resist any intrusion of will upon them. Durkheim viewed this manipulability as so pervasive that in order to prevent children from developing into mere "carbon copies" of their particular family or educator, he could hardly think of any other option than "to ensure that children are not trained exclusively under the influence of a single milieu or, still worse, by a single and unique person," as in such case a child "must necessarily become a slavish copy of the one model placed constantly before him."¹³ Morton Schatzman, who analyzed the methods of the historically very influential German pedagogue Moritz Schreber, sees a trance-like state in childhood not so much as a "natural" condition, but rather as the traumatic effect of authoritarian—that is, basically terroristic—influences used by parents and educators. The "wonderful relationship," according to Schreber, "where the child is nearly always ruled merely by parental eye movements, [with only] a glance, a word, [or] a single threatening gesture," and in which the educator would thus become "master of the child forever," is, as Schatzman observes, "like the relation between a hypnotist and a subject in his power: a child who experiences a glance, a word, a gesture of the parent as a command resembles a person in trance."¹⁴

In a somewhat similar perspective, the East German writer Christa Wolf describes hypnosis in a chapter of her self-reflective book about childhood and adolescence in the Nazi era—as a general, vague, confusing, but inescapable coercion to conformity, under the powerful irrational premise that "one shouldn't feel above doing what everybody else does. Nobody has ever died of it yet."¹⁵ Thus, for instance, it is indicated in various details how "hypnosis was practiced at Nelly's confirmation,"¹⁶ as the girl was induced to submit to this ritual against her conviction and in the blatant absence of any sensible argument in its favor. Such a view of conformism as basically hypnotic is also expressed in comparable ways by Doris Lessing in various passages of her

Bildungsroman *The Four-Gated City*.¹⁷ At one point, the protagonist of the novel has a revealing memory of herself “as a tiny child, looking at grown-up people,” before the time she would, like everybody else, get trapped, “poisoned and hypnotized” into forgetting and into unconscious, frightened conformity. She had watched “and judged these [grown-up] giants as cowards and liars, engaged—incredibly—in meaningless activities and rituals of dressing and undressing and eating and talking, and their fear of each other, their wariness, was so great that two of them could not meet without going stiffly on guard and stretching their mouths and making movements which said: I won’t hurt you if you won’t hurt me; look, I’m so nice and kind, don’t hurt me. Martha had seen all this, understood it, had even said to herself in an anguish of fear that she would be swallowed up: Don’t let yourself be sucked in, remember, remember, *remember*—but she had not remembered, she had been sucked in, she had become a liar and a coward like the rest.”¹⁸

Especially in his classical study on authority and the family, Erich Fromm describes the psychological attitudes that underlie obedience and hierarchy in society as a quasi-hypnotic reduction of the functions of the ego: “the relationship of the doctor to the patient, of the officer to the soldier, of the clever salesperson to the client, of the famous personality to the average person of the masses are familiar examples. The socially most important case of relationships between persons similar to hypnosis is the relation to authority in general. Like the hypnotist, the authority impresses those subject to it as so mighty and powerful that, on the one hand, it is hopeless to use their own ego against it, and that, on the other hand, this is superfluous, because the authority takes over the task of the protection and the preservation of the individual, for the realization of which the ego has developed.”¹⁹ In this sense, Fromm also sees the prevailing forms of political and commercial propaganda as based on “hypnoid methods [that] are a serious danger to mental and psychological health, specifically to clear and critical thinking and emotional independence. ... This assault on reason and the sense of reality pursues the individual everywhere and daily at any time: during many hours of watching television, or when driving on a highway, or in the political propaganda of candidates, and so on. The particular effect of these suggestive methods is that they create an atmosphere of being half-awake, of believing and not believing, of losing one’s sense of reality.”²⁰ Interestingly enough, hypnotherapeutic authors often agree with the characterization of many types of political and commercial propaganda as hypnotic or hypnoid, though obviously in somewhat less critical terms than Fromm.²¹

Freud’s classical analysis of group formation (via the goal-inhibition of libidinal drives and the replacement of the own ego-ideal/super-ego by an introjected leader or by guiding values) claims a psychodynamic

identity of hypnosis with every kind of group formations—which implies that the hypnotic relation may be called “a group formation with two members. Hypnosis is not a good object for comparison with a group formation, because it is truer to say that it is identical with it.”²²

Authors like Fromm or Theodor Adorno have criticized Freud’s analysis of group formation as too generalized; the characterization of “socialized hypnosis” should, according to this criticism, be limited to “only” those types of group formation whose goals are objectively irrational to their members (that is, directed, to varying degrees, against their real interests).²³ Which actually might not be very much of a limitation, given the course of history up to now.

Lloyd deMause locates the hypnotic character of “charismatic” leaders, largely in keeping with Freud’s understanding of group formations; among other things, he finds it in their consistent, subliminal use of common trance-inducing techniques in their speeches, in particular by “embedding a string of emotion-laden words which have a hidden message of their own within a seemingly bland and often boring main narrative” through which they are able to “[implant] post-hypnotic suggestions into their audiences.”²⁴ Jerrold Atlas, who has also investigated the hypnotic influence of charismatic leaders, focuses particularly on shared childhood experiences of punishment that make historic groups susceptible to follow political leaders who “seize control of their nations and masterfully manipulate the masses.”²⁵

For a recent, topical example of this trance-induction by leaders through scattered emotion-laden words with a separate hidden meaning, deMause analyzes George Bush’s address to the U.N. General Assembly on October 1, 1990, aimed at gaining international support for his militarist policy in the Gulf crisis.²⁶ Under the surface of general declarations in favor of a world order of democracy and peaceful partnership of nations, a closer look at those words in his speech that have a strong emotional impact suggests a different picture: there is a particularly strong presence of the word “war” and of words that graphically express its horror. Based on his broader ongoing analysis of shared unconscious fantasies in American political life, deMause interprets “war ... children ... suffer ... joy ... reborn ... peaceful” as the most significant words for conveying Bush’s subliminal message of intended war, in which the suffering (sacrifice) of children is fantasized as leading to the joyful experience of being reborn into a peaceful state of mind—obviously an appeal to inclinations “that are split off and denied because they are so repugnant to our moral sense.”²⁷

DeMause’s geneal explanations of the psychodynamics that occur when nations are being drawn towards war can in fact be viewed as an important elaboration of Freud’s concept of the identity of hypnosis and

group formation. Threatened traditional defense mechanisms and unconscious guilt feelings because of an advancement of freedoms and satisfactions play a major role in this context: "As nations build up overloads of personal anxieties about too much change, they literally sink into a trance and hand over to charismatic (that is, hypnotic) leaders all their guilt and expect these leaders to *do something about things!* Wars 'do something about' guilt by providing an external sacrifice."²⁸ "In a group-trance, action becomes irresistible in order to carry out delusional motives. ... Because the enemy ... serves as the repository of projections ... the impulse to action implies the need to wipe out the carriers of these projected feelings."²⁹ "As nations sink into regressive war trances, enemies proliferate in direct proportion to the growing unconscious anxieties of the majority which had been brought up to feel guilty about its wishes."³⁰

Long before deMause, Leo Tolstoy—in one of his major appeals against war and militarism—declared that "to awaken from the hypnosis of patriotism" is the only means to overcome the social system of hierarchy, violence, and exploitation, which regularly discharges itself in wars. "You must understand," Tolstoy urged the people, "that the evil from which you suffer you are causing yourselves, in that you submit to those suggestions by means of which you are deceived by the emperors, kings, members of parliaments, rulers, military men, capitalists, clergy, authors, artists—by all those who need this deception of patriotism in order to be able to live by your labours."³¹ "The masses are so hypnotized," he wrote in a comment on assassinations of heads of states, "that, though they see what is continually going on around them, they do not understand what it means"—as, in particular, they don't understand the meaning of military parades, maneuvers and drills as being aimed at "stupefying ... men in order to convert them into instruments for murdering."³² Arguing thus that kings are far worse murderers than anarchists who murder them, Tolstoy above all called for people to disobey their kings' orders to go to war and murder. "If men do not yet act in this manner, it is only because Governments, to maintain themselves, diligently exercise a hypnotic influence upon the people. Therefore we can help to prevent people killing Kings and each other, not by murder—murders only strengthen this hypnotic state—but by arousing men from the delusion in which they are held."³³ Perhaps inspired by Tolstoy, Leon Trotsky once chose the expression of breaking through "the habit of submission, the hypnosis of class domination," to characterize the essential step in any real political change.³⁴

George Orwell's world of 1984, in which war has become a continuous institution, is certainly full of hypnotic features, which are sometimes also explicitly portrayed as such—as, for instance, when the mental processes of "doublethink," with its elaborate denials and simultaneously

held contradictory beliefs, are described by their necessary condition “consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed”³⁵; or when the sexual repression by the totalitarian regime is shown to render women frigid—their bodies “frozen forever by the hypnotic power of the Party.”³⁶

To round off this selection with two examples of another global view on hypnosis, one might consider some intriguing observations made by George Kennan in his speech “A Proposal for International Disarmament” at the occasion of being awarded the Albert Einstein Peace Prize in 1981: the psychological quality of the race for nuclear arms build-up, he remarked, is like a generalized hypnosis, when in spite of all warning voices and the widespread recognition of their well-foundedness, “we have gone on piling weapon upon weapon, missile upon missile ... helplessly, almost involuntarily: like the victims of some sort of hypnotism, like men in a dream ... [reaching] levels of redundancy of such grotesque dimensions as to defy rational understanding.”³⁷ To which the French expert of international law, Olivier Russbach, adds the comment that already the practice of nuclear threat as such, by which states commit acts that their own laws declare as dangerously criminal if pursued by their citizens, has the effect of a hypnosis of global scope—through its blatant arrogance of power as well as through the helplessness towards a danger beyond imagination it involves.³⁸

It is characteristic that most observations of such social hypnosis use the word “hypnosis” as if it were clearly defined and understood, that is, without any attempt to define or explain it. It often appears like a sudden emergence of a subliminal knowledge that afterwards resubmerges again.

This actually seems to correspond to a very paradoxical quality of the term hypnosis. On the one hand, it has an intense emotional significant—with its uncanny, scary, as well as fascinating aspects—which suggests that unconsciously we know quite well what it means. On the other hand, it has a very blurred intellectual or theoretical meaning; there is no generally agreed-upon definition of hypnosis, and there are only scattered elements of theory, nothing like an overall consistent explanation. This indicates that there are commonly shared, strong resistances in our culture against a conscious understanding of hypnosis and of what it stands for. “Let us recall,” Freud wrote, “that hypnosis has something positively uncanny about it; but the characteristic of uncanniness suggests something old and familiar that has undergone repression.”³⁹

EXPLICIT HYPNOSIS AS COMPARED TO SOCIAL HYPNOSIS

Whatever the real unconscious foundations and characteristics of

hypnosis should be, the phenomenon of social hypnosis outlined (or sensed) by so many different authors appears to be a much more serious and far-reaching phenomenon than hypnosis in the usually *explicit* sense (that is, in its applications as psychotherapy, experimental and training methods, show performances, and the like).

Explicit hypnosis is:

(1) obviously to a *lesser degree* unconscious, and thus to a *relatively* lesser degree fixated in a repressed psychological state (“power is most powerful where it operates invisibly, unrecognized, unconsciously”⁴⁰);

(2) more theatrical—as Freud noted, “some knowledge may be retained that what is happening is only a game, an untrue reproduction of another situation of far more importance to life.”⁴¹ This indicates a somewhat greater leeway for handling psychological conflicts—what one is able to perform theatrically is relatively more flexible and more open to awareness and change (although the theatrical character certainly *also* includes the defensive aspect of covering up the seriousness of a situation);

(3) less far-reaching as far as hypnotic obedience is concerned. For a significant example, the hypnotic order to kill is, probably always, “only” carried out in a *fictional* way under explicit hypnosis (as is shown by many classical experiments with “murders” upon hypnotic command that were carried out with play-guns), whereas it becomes bloody reality under the effects of a patriotic war-trance;

(4) and, perhaps most importantly, to some extent explicit hypnosis has a character of a *temporary* state (although the phenomenon of unconscious obedience to post-hypnotic orders, for instance, *also* indicates that the psychological frame of explicit hypnosis is not just temporary, but continues to be effective afterwards—that is, is embedded in a continuous condition). Any *temporary* regression, at any rate, includes a quality of “*regression in the service of the ego*,” the concept of which has been developed by Margaret Brenman and Merton Gill.⁴² It decreases the pressure of regressive urges—through its relative satisfaction—and thus makes some energies available to cope with reality. This, by the way, might well account for the evidence of some therapeutic effects of hypnosis (which, however, on the whole are very unreliable).

This distinction and comparison between the explicit and a “hidden” social hypnosis allows one to strike a highly paradoxical hypothesis: embedded in the general context of a deeper and more oppressive social trance, the explicit trance may have the character (or aspects) of a *relative emergence* from it. What manifestly looks like a “sinking into” a loss of autonomy, may really have features of a relative—if only timid and very limited—“coming-out” from deeper alienation. (This may account for the observation that severely pathological personalities are usually not hypnotically susceptible,⁴³ as well as, again, for the

occasional, however unstable, effects of hypnosis in psychotherapy.)

The distinction between explicit and hidden trance may also gain more substance in the light of an analogous distinction made by Robert Fliess between the hypnosis of the adult and the hypnosis of the child,⁴⁴ particularly if one incorporates the assumption that the latter induces a permanent hypnotic condition. As Fliess explains, hypnosis in childhood is the inadvertent traumatic effect of sexual and/or aggressive abuse by a parent (or educating adult): “*It is the overstimulation inflicted by him on his victim in the course of the exploitation that sooner or later makes the latter hypnotic.*”⁴⁵ As the child lacks the “critical institution” of the superego, “whose demands he could oppose to the hypnotist’s, he has ... no alternative but to yield.”⁴⁶ By contrast, in the adult’s hypnosis the hypnotist’s influence on the subject is, in Fliess’ terms, “restricted by the power of the superego over the ego; he can only work within the confines set by this power.”⁴⁷

If the (explicit) hypnosis of the adult thus has a considerably smaller impact, it is on the other hand founded upon a person’s childhood hypnosis (which implies that the latter is still a—hidden—psychological reality in adult life). It appears to enable the adult “*to re-experience the hypnosis inflicted upon him in childhood,*” while at the same time “*evading both memory and repetition of the experience;*”⁴⁸ it is motivated by “an urge for re-enactment” of the repressed childhood hypnosis, as well as by the overwhelming fear of “the arousal accompanying that urge”⁴⁹ that a *conscious* recollection would bring about. From this one can conclude that adult (explicit) hypnosis has the double character, on the one hand, of a (very limited, largely unsuccessful) working-through of the childhood hypnosis, and, on the other hand, of a defensive evasion (dissociation) from it that is essential to its continuing effect.

Perhaps part of Fliess’ disagreement with Freud’s identification of group formation with hypnosis can be resolved if, as Fliess himself indicates,⁵⁰ one refers this identification to the hypnosis of the child—which obviously implies that this is then to be understood as a more or less permanent trance induced through common childhood experiences of social groups.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE EGO AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

In order to investigate the psychological foundations of (explicit as well as social) hypnosis, I now want to pursue the above-mentioned approach of analyzing the unconscious wishes of omnipotence underlying the popular fantasy, while tracing a link between these and the hypnogenic childhood traumatizations indicated by Fliess, among others.

As Sándor Ferenczi first showed in his pioneering study entitled

“Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality,” the feeling of omnipotence is really a characteristic feature of the earliest stages of every individual’s life, starting in the womb.⁵¹ It is determined by complete helplessness and at the same time by the experience of being provided automatically, without any effort of one’s own, with whatever one needs: “For what is omnipotence? The feeling that one has all that one wants, and that one has nothing left to wish for. The foetus, however, could maintain this of itself, for it always has what is necessary for the satisfaction of its instincts, and so has nothing to wish for; it is without wants.”⁵² The development of a child towards a mature sense of reality proceeds through numerous successive stages of partial relinquishments of this original feeling, until finally (or ideally) “the feeling of omnipotence gives way to the full appreciation of the force of circumstances. ... The previous omnipotence ... dissolves into mere ‘conditions.’”⁵³ Before reaching this point, the later stages of this development are characterized by a seemingly complete renunciation of the illusion of omnipotence for the own person—while still upholding it for one’s idealized parental figures, with whom one identifies, and thereby is still able, indirectly, to save the illusion even for oneself. The eventual achievement of a consistent sense of reality is therefore based upon “the complete psychical detachment from the parents.”⁵⁴ An essential condition for this development to succeed is the reliable presence of adults that offer enough care, affection, patience, dialogue, and respect for a child’s autonomy so that the gradual acceptance of reality (as being fundamentally separate from one’s wishes) can be “negotiated” in a viable, gentle-enough manner. It is only with the slow overcoming of the real biological and psychological helplessness that illusions of omnipotence can gradually be given up.

This development towards a mature sense of reality—as well as the closely related developments towards mature object relations and mature sexuality—can be understood and summarized in a meaningful way as *a progress from non-existing through blurred to consistent ego-boundaries*, that is, boundaries between the ego and the outside world. As Lawrence Kubie and Sydney Margolin (who based their theory of hypnosis on a concept of development of ego-boundaries) wrote: “In this process, parental figures are at first the only avenue of communication with the world and are therefore an integral part of the infant Ego because of the lack of clearly defined Ego boundaries.”⁵⁵

I perceive the psychological progression from non-existing towards clearly defined ego-boundaries through the following perspectives:

(1) The original *feelings of omnipotence* are characterized by the total absence of ego-boundaries (and at the same time, of course, of any ego), inasmuch as they imply the complete non-recognition of an outside world with its own laws that differ from—and oppose obstacles to—

one's inner world of wishes and needs: whereas the gradual emergence of the *sense of reality* is characterized by the increasingly clear recognition of the fundamental "dividing line" between wishes and outside reality (or, in other words, by the gradual overcoming of magical thinking, which is based on the confusion between wishes and outside reality).

(2) The original state of *primary narcissism* is characterized by the "subjective non-existence" of outside objects (persons) and thus, again, by the feeling of identity—oneness—of oneself and the world. In the state of *secondary narcissism* developing out of it, the blurred ego-boundaries express themselves in the fact that the existence of other persons (parents, etc.) is gradually recognized, but only in a relationship in which they are experienced as "extensions of oneself" ("The child wants to get something from the object without returning anything. The object is as yet no personality, but an instrument for providing satisfaction"⁵⁶); whereas in the development towards *mature object relations* the clearer ego-boundaries manifest themselves in the increasing recognition of other persons as having their own needs and an existence in their own right.

(3) In the same sense, the development towards a *mature genital sexuality* can also be understood in terms of this recognition, as it goes along with mature love of another person—which implies that "consideration of the object goes so far that one's own satisfaction is impossible without satisfying the object, too."⁵⁷ In addition, the consistency and secure sense of ego-boundaries is also a precondition for allowing them to dissolve temporarily, for the time of genital arousal and ecstasy.⁵⁸

As is the case with psychological ("forward") development, *regression*—a movement in the opposite direction, as it were—can likewise be understood in terms of ego-boundary conditions, that is, as a (temporary or permanent) relative dissolution or loss of these boundaries.

The ability to *temporarily* regress appears to rely to a great extent on the relative clarity and security of ego-boundaries *in general*, so that the periodical dissolution of the borders between inside and outside is not experienced as too anxiety-provoking. This can be exemplified particularly with the above-mentioned case of mature genital intercourse and ecstasy, which involves a racial short-term dissolution of ego-boundaries, an intense regressive experience of merging with a partner, and somehow with the world as a whole: "mature sexual satisfaction brings an experience of undoing of individuation, of 'flowing together,' of 'oceanic feelings.'"⁵⁹ It is thus probably the most successful type of "regression in the service of the ego," of achieving a viable balance between the conflicting regressive and "progressive" needs of a person (that is, between the urges of the instincts to return to the rule of the pure pleasure principle, on the one hand, and the necessities and capacities of coping with reality, on the other hand.)

The less a person has been able to develop consistent ego-boundaries, the less he/she is able to achieve such a balance. To the extent that the regressive urges cannot be periodically quenched through temporary satisfaction, they exert a continuous, undermining pressure against an already insufficiently developed sense of reality, mature (reciprocal, post-narcissistic) object relations and mature genital sexuality. On the physiological level, this permanent regressive pressure can be particularly seen under the aspect that "genital sexuality differs from pre-genital tendencies in that it enables a physiological discharge in the sexual act, whereas a corresponding physiological possibility is lacking for the pre-genital tendencies. The level of tensions of genital sexuality is thus recurrently reduced, whereas the lack of a corresponding discharge that would extinguish the tension gives the oral and anal impulses a never-decreasing energy. Because of this, the pre-genital tendencies gain—from the mere quantitative point of view—a strength that makes their defense by the ego more difficult than the defense of the genital tendencies. This greater difficulty represents an inhibiting factor for the development of the ego."⁶⁰

Consequently, such a condition (that is, of being "stuck" in a more or less permanent regressive maelstrom) corresponds to powerful urges to abdicate whatever limited consistency of ego-boundaries may have been reached. This, in terms of its above-mentioned three dimensions, signifies an addictive need for illusions of omnipotence, manifested by a proneness for magical thinking (in many different guises), along with narcissistically-restricted object relations and corresponding pre-genital erotic orientations.

This general regressive disposition appears to be largely identical with the permanent, unconscious condition of social trance, as well as with the psychological basis of popular fantasies of hypnosis and of hypnotic susceptibility. A consistent understanding of hypnosis would then seem to require the uncovering of the reasons and effects of the obstruction that prevents the developmental progress toward clear dividing lines between the ego and the outside world.

THE OBSTRUCTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS CONSISTENT EGO-BOUNDARIES THROUGH CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

Owing in particular to investigations by Ferenczi and Fliess, the hypnotic condition of an obstructed development of ego-boundaries can be understood as the result of overwhelming childhood experiences of sexual and aggressive attacks, especially (or maybe exclusively) on the part of parental figures—that is, of those persons that a child cannot feel psychologically separated from or opposed to, since it is vitally dependent on the feeling of being "one" (or merged) with them to feel secure

and to maintain some degree of the original feeling of omnipotence.

In his most important paper on sexual child abuse, Ferenczi gives a graphic and convincing description of the psychological implications of sexual attack, when enormous fear paralyzes the spontaneous impulse to resist: "These children feel physically and morally helpless, their personalities are not sufficiently consolidated in order to be able to protest, even if only in thought, for the overpowering force and authority of the adult makes them dumb and can rob them of their senses. *The same anxiety, however, if it reaches a certain maximum, compels them to subordinate themselves like automata to the will of the aggressor, to divine each one of his desires and to gratify these; completely oblivious of themselves they identify themselves with the aggressor.* Through the identification, or let us say, introjection of the aggressor, he disappears as part of the external reality, and becomes intra- instead of extra-psychic; the intra-psychic is then subjected, in a dream-like state as is the traumatic trance, to the primary process, i.e., according to the pleasure principle it can be modified or changed by the use of positive or negative hallucinations. In any case the attack as a rigid external reality ceases to exist and in the traumatic trance the child succeeds in maintaining the previous situation of tenderness.

"The most important change, produced in the mind of the child by the anxiety-fear-ridden identification with the adult partner, is *the introjection of the guilt feelings of the adult* ... When the child recovers from such an attack, he feels enormously confused, in fact, split—innocent and culpable at the same time—and his confidence in the testimony of his own senses is broken."⁶¹

This vivid elucidation of a child's loss of personal boundaries in traumatic trance clearly concurs with Fliess' concept of childhood hypnosis brought about by sexually or aggressively abusing adults, with its characteristic effect of "*hypnotic evasion*," of permanent dissociation and splitting-off of the unbearable experiences and feelings. A confirmation of this concept can also be seen in Josephine Hilgard's findings⁶²—also tested by Jerrold Atlas—according to which "the history of childhood punishment ... is a central element in later hypnotizability. ... the severity of punishment correlates directly with the degree of later hypnotizability ... punishment creates dissociation to escape from the harsh reality and illogicality of these actions."⁶³ Hilgard mentions, among other reasons that she considers for this "unexpected relationship" between childhood punishment and later hypnotizability: "Strict discipline, which requires a child to toe the mark set by an adult code of conduct, must appear to the child to be arbitrary, and he learns to conform in some cases *because an authority insists upon it.* This habitual conformity may have something to do with the ready conformity in the hypnotic situation, in which the subject does indeed place himself in the

hands of an authority figure who also asks of him things that are arbitrary.”⁶⁴

Given the pervasive, if often denied, evidence of child assault—which Ferenczi started to see towards the end of his life and which has since been shown for human history in general, among many others, by Lloyd deMause and Alice Miller—the traumatic obstruction of ego-boundaries outlined by Ferenczi appears to be an almost universal pattern of childhood experience in history up until now (although, of course, with considerable variations as to the degree of its severity). All the more so, if one takes into account the childhood condition of fundamental vulnerability to trauma, as, for instance, child therapists Denis Donovan and Deborah McIntyre point out: “By virtue of the fact that infants, toddlers and children are literally dependent upon the care and goodwill of their caregivers for their very survival, the family itself can constitute an inescapable temporophysical space. Consequently, even ‘mild’ abuse within the family can constitute psychologically inescapable trauma because there is no genuine real-world escape for the child. The child cannot pick up and go, trade or change families, or divorce his parents.”⁶⁵

Ferenczi’s description provides the basis for a rather coherent picture of what, as a result of abuse, is involved in a child’s “*anxiety-ridden identification and ... introjection of the menacing person or aggressor*”⁶⁶: In the first place, there is the panic denial of many of its own needs and feelings (which then have to be projected onto some “diabolical part” of the outside world), along with panic acceptance as one’s own of opposed, hostile demands from the outside—the panic character of this denial and acceptance implying that subsequently they cannot be critically reviewed, changed, or compared with other experiences or demands. Thus, the various needs, impulses, feelings, or experiences that originally tend to “grow together” to a coherent perception of the own person are kept dissociated, and it remains more or less impossible for a person affected by such traumatizations to distinguish between own and imposed demands, that is, to be clearly aware of *who he or she really is*. This submersion of identity therefore corresponds to a deep and lasting split of inner experience as much as it is a permanent blurring of boundaries between the inside and the outside, between oneself and parental figures.

Necessary results of such conditions are: pervasive—particularly unconscious—guilt feelings (the logical correlate of fearful denial of inner reality), a deep sense of helplessness and confusion, as well as the expense of enormous amounts of energy to keep one’s denied feelings and tendencies “at bay.” On these grounds, the unconscious motivation to abdicate autonomy that underlies hypnotic behavior appears more

understandable under several aspects: the regressive “gain” of illusions of omnipotence through the narcissistic-identifying relationship to a hypnotist appeases the inner helplessness (even if it conserves it on a deeper level); the loss of self-responsibility appeases guilt feelings and provides a certain relief from having to use excessive energy against disowned feelings and tendencies—since the submission of one’s behavior to a “superior will” has several “advantages” in this context: in its aspect of punishment, it appeases the (inevitable) tension between one’s genuine impulses and the introjected “higher” demands; in its aspect of obedience to imposed rules and outside commands, it can support (that is, relieve) the inner energy expense for defenses against the disowned impulses; and in its aspect of experiencing one’s own behavior as “ego-alien,” as being directed by “other motives than one’s own,” it permits a partial (disowned) realization of one’s own disowned tendencies (for example, aggressive and pre-genital ones)—as one is allegedly “only following orders” (of one kind or another).

Such hypnotic motivations to submit to a will considered superior to oneself can certainly be located in the powerful political appeal of the different authoritarian leaders, groups, nations, parties, ideas, values, gods, religions, and so on, in history. This type of appeal offers an idealized, magically powerful entity to merge with psychologically in order to find an illusory solution to the inner desperation of confused ego-boundaries, permanent guilt feelings, and a violently split mind.

Kubie and Margolin wrote that in the (explicit) hypnotic induction “the subject recapitulates in a few moments or hours the most important and complex psychological evolution of infancy,” by which parental figures—that initially are part of the infant ego—are subsequently “in part dissociated from the infant and in part even more deeply buried (‘incorporated’) in the unconscious levels of the personality” and from there delimit memories and contacts, dictate purposes and distribute inner rewards and punishments.⁶⁷ This type of “incorporation” of parental figures and demands (that is never available for conscious questioning) obviously corresponds to the obstruction of clear ego-boundaries through childhood trauma—which Kubie and Margolin failed to see, probably because this “burial in the unconscious levels of the personality” seemed so normal (that is, universal) to them. Their other observation, however, was that at least *to some degree* the parental figures eventually *are* separated (“dissociated”) from the developing ego of a child; this may indicate that the traumatic obstruction (usually?) does not completely prevent the progress towards relatively consistent boundaries between the ego and the outside world. In other words, that to different degrees, all of us are partially hypnotized, but that we are also, in part, integrated personalities with somewhat clarified ego-boundaries.

SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Without any claim to a comprehensive understanding (of course), I hope that my attempt to conceive of the hypnotic trance as a general social reality offers some features of a sensible psychological elucidation.

A general framework for a meaningful explanation of hypnosis—and thus also for some meaningful answers to the questions at the beginning of this article—is certainly provided by the probably universal history of child assault and its pervasive traumatic effects. Historic progress through the awakening from the social trance then has to be based on the general dawning of consciousness about the hidden reality of child abuse, on its increasing prevention, and ultimately (in deMause's terms) on the advancement of all psychoclasses into the helping mode of parent-child relations.⁶⁸

From an understanding of hypnogenic trauma as obstruction of the development towards consistent ego-boundaries, I would like to draw some more specific conclusions regarding the psychological qualities of historic progress and of its obstacles. If it is true that historically progressive policies appeal to our tendencies towards consistent boundaries between the ego and the outside world, that is, to our sense of individual integrity and identity; and if it is true that historically reactionary policies appeal to our tendencies to (permanently) blur or dissolve our ego-boundaries, that is, to the hypnotized part in ourselves; it would then appear that one can outline some essential traits that any activity aimed at progressive, emancipatory goals has to be based on—as well as some essential traits that, by definition, it *cannot* be based on.

In this view it *cannot* be based upon:

—in the first place, *any appeal to magical thinking* (that is, to unconscious or half-conscious wishes of omnipotence): any narcissistically-idealizing fantasies of own leaders, groups, movements, nations, doctrines, values, etc. as somehow “perfect,” “invincibly strong,” “completely in the right,” “the holder of the only light of truth in an otherwise dark world,” “possessing infallible formulas for solving problems (for example, at a stroke...),” and so on, or also as having any (perhaps “mystic”) wisdom essentially superior to one's own ability to perceive, judge or reason; likewise, any demonizing fantasies of omnipotence about opposed social forces, leaders, groups, doctrines, and so on (for instance, as somehow endowed with an unfaltering will and perfected abilities to do harm); in addition, any denial of sad and discouraging realities (in particular in connection with beliefs in any type of historical providence)—the observation by the Italian writer Ignazio Silone that every defeat “is always less discouraging than the most encouraging lie” reflects the deep perception in everybody that the magical thinking that manifests itself in “optimism” through denial in reality expresses

desperate helplessness;

—*any motivations that derive from guilt, or shame, as they conserve the permanent hypnotic state of denial of one's real needs and feelings, and thus paralyze the potentials of confronting the real issues of life (guilt—moral condemnation—is radically opposed to feelings of responsibility or sadness about one's own failures, as these are based on a genuine recognition of one's needs and inner reality);*

—*any motivations to abdicate one's responsibility for one's own life—decisions, value judgements, orientations, goals, commitments, aspired roles in society, etc.—to whatever "higher entity" outside of oneself.*

In contrast to this, major psychological features of historical progress should appear in clearer contours: primarily through *the renunciation to illusions of omnipotence* (which, by the way, does not imply the absence of *fantasies* of omnipotence, as these are part of the wishful imagery of any day or night dreaming, but the clear distinction between them and reality)—the renunciation to beliefs in the existence of any magical qualities of idealized (or demonized) leaders, groups, powers, social plans or solutions. This implies a shift from a fixation on the "strength" or "weakness," "goodness" or "badness" of leaders, groups, doctrines, etc., to an interest in understanding the roots of social issues and conflicting; from the fixation on guilt and blame to an understanding of the conflicting human needs that underlie social issues; from the fixation on "receiving sense" for the personal life from whatever "higher entities" outside of oneself to the recognition "that there is no power transcending [man] which can solve his problem for him. Man must accept the responsibility for himself and the fact that only by using his own powers can he give meaning to his life."⁶⁹ It is on the basis of a consistent sense of individual identity—which also includes the recognition of individual separateness and solitude—that true solidarity, mature love, social responsibility, and dialogue become possible. It is from the recognition of the separate individual existence that one can build bridges of reciprocal relations to others.

This article is based on my thesis (U. of Salzburg/Austria), three papers for a recent peace research project, and my presentation at the 1990 Annual Convention of the IPA. I wish to thank Laurie Cohen and Lloyd deMause for helpful editing suggestions.

Joe Berghold, PhD, is a psychologist and freelance translator.

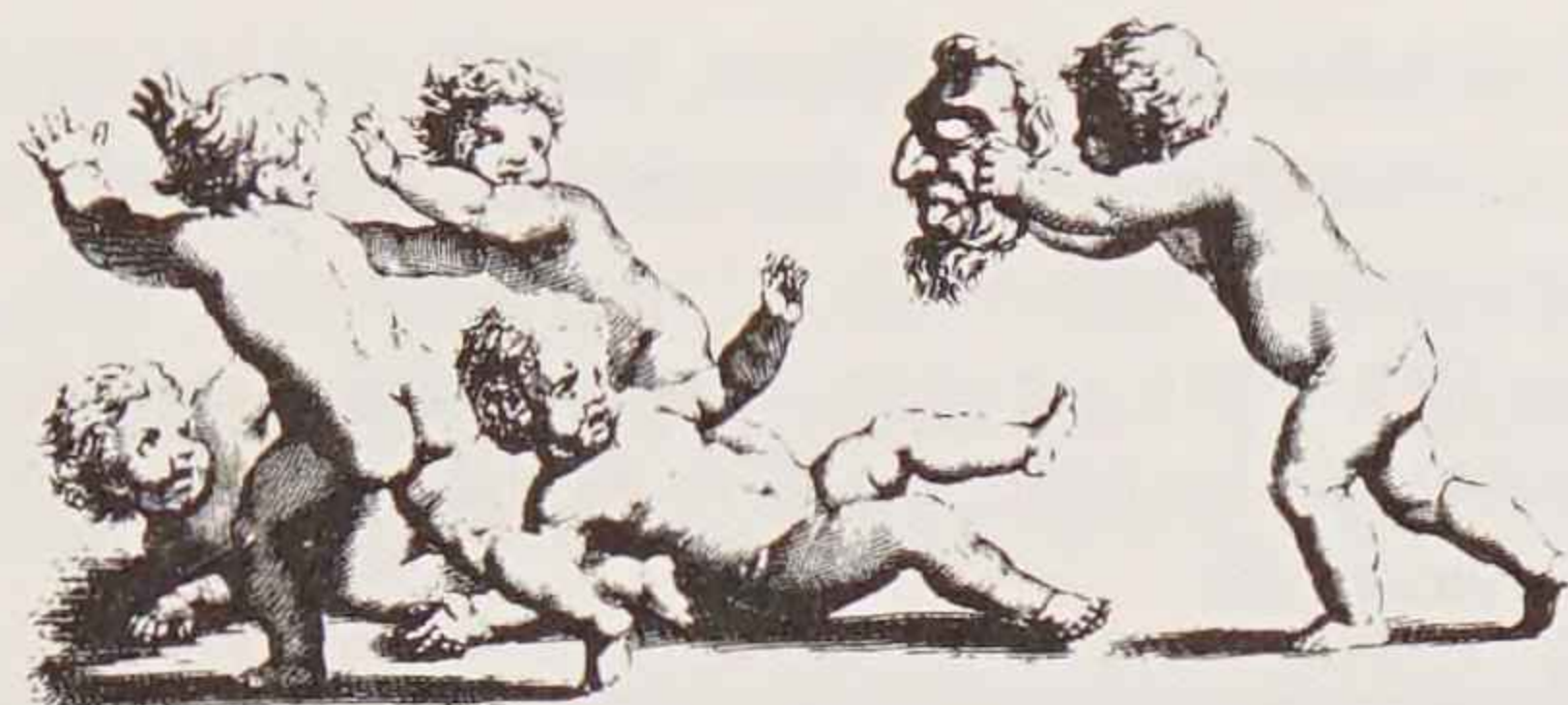
1. Cf., e.g., Leslie M. LeCron and Jean Bordeaux, *Hypnotism Today*. New York: Grune & Stratton, 1949, pp. 7 and 123; Jean-Paul Guyonnaud, *Endormir par*

- l'hypnose et éclairer par la sophrologie*. Paris: Maloine, 1976, p. 391; Guy Roland Rager, *Hypnose, sophrologie et médecine*. Paris: Fayard, 1973, p. 46; Perry London, *Behavior Control*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 72; Arthur Ellen and Dean Jennings, *Ich hypnotisierte Tausende*. Geneva: Keller, 1973, p. 20; Karl Schmitz, *Heilung durch Hypnose*. Munich: Lehnen, 1957, p. 36; Heinrich Wallnöfer, *Seele ohne Angst*. Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 1968, p. 24; Ludwig Mayer, *Die Technik der Hypnose*. Munich: Lehmanns, 1976, p. 29.
- 2.. Don Gibbons, "Hyperempiria, a new 'altered state of consciousness' induced by suggestion." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 39(1974): p. 49.
 3. Cf. León Chertok, "Psychotherapie und Sexualität." *Psychoanalyse* 4(1983): p. 9.
 4. Cf. Dominique Barrucand, *Historie de l'hypnose en France*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967, p. 106.
 5. Sigmund Freud, "Psychical (or Mental) Treatment." (1890) In: *Standard Edition*, vol. 7. London: Hogarth Press, 1953, p. 300. Freud's expression for "idiosyncrasies" in the German original ("*Eigenart*") could also be translated by "individuality" or "peculiarity." (cf. Freud, "Psychische Behandlung [Seelenbehandlung]." In: Freud, *Darstellungen der Psychoanalyse*. Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1969, p. 33).
 6. "Preface" to Léon Chertok, *L'hypnose. Les problèmes théoriques et pratiques. La technique*. Paris: Masson, 1961, p. 3. It appears quite consistent with the public embarrassment of such statements in our times that the English translation (by D. Graham) of Ey's expression "*mise en état d'esclavage du patient relativement au Maître hypnotiseur*" was toned down to "*subjection of the patient to the hypnotist*" (cf. Léon Chertok, *Hypnosis*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1966, p. x).
 7. Cf. Henri Baruk, *L'hypnose et les méthodes dérivées*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972, pp. 79-83 and p. 87.
 8. One of the major arguments of hypnotherapeutic authors against the popular image—that the obedience of subjects in hypnosis has its limits—is certainly justified; but from this it is by no means convincing to infer, as is often suggested or implied, that there isn't any degree of authoritarian control involved in hypnosis. (Cf., e.g., LeCron and Bordeaux, *Hypnotism Today*, p. 143; London, *Behavior Control*, p. 74; Guyonnaud, *Endormir par l'hypnose...*, p. 20; Mayer, *Technik der Hypnose*, pp. 31-32; Wallnöfer, *Seele...*, pp. 26-27; Paul Chauchard, *Hypnose et suggestion*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974, p. 18; Didier Michaux, "Au-delà de la représentation sociale de l'hypnose." In: Léon Chertok, editor, *Résurgence de l'hypnose*. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1984, p. 127).
 9. Paul Schilder and Otto Kauders, *A Textbook of Hypnosis*. In: Paul Schilder, *The Nature of Hypnosis*. New York: International Universities Press, 1956, p. 94.
 10. Ronald D. Laing, *The Politics of the Family*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1971, pp. 78-79.
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
 12. *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 87.
 13. Émile Durkheim, *Moral Education*. New York, London: The Free Press/Collier Macmillan, 1973, pp. 144-145; cf. also Durkheim, *Education and Society*. New York, London: The Free Press/Collier Macmillan, 1956, pp. 85-87.
 14. Morton Schatzman, *Soul Murder*. New York: Random House, 1973, p. 36.
 15. Christa Wolf, *A Model Childhood*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1980, p. 254.
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 253.
 17. Cf. Doris Lessing, *The Four-Gated City*. New York: Knopf, 1969, pp. 29, 68, 94-97, 468-469, 480-481.
 18. *Ibid.*, pp. 468-469.

19. Erich Fromm, "Theoretische Entwürfe über Autorität und Familie. Sozialpsychologischer Teil." In: *Studien über Autorität und Familie. Forschungsberichte aus dem Institut für Sozialforschung*. Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1936, pp. 107-108 (my translation).
20. Erich Fromm, *To Have or to Be*. New York: Harper & Row, 1976, p. 173.
21. Cf., e.g., Rager, *Hypnose...*, pp. 67-73; Paul C. Jagot, *Théories et procédés de l'hypnotisme*. Paris: Dangles, 1936, pp. 205-208.
22. Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. (1921) In: *Standard Edition*, vol. 18. London: Hogarth Press, 1955, p. 115.
23. Cf. Theodor W. Adorno, "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda." In: Géza Róheim, *Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences*, Vol. 3(5). New York: International University Press, 1951, pp. 296-300.
24. Lloyd deMause, "Nuclear War as an Anti-Sexual Group-Fantasy." (unpublished manuscript) 1988, pp. 19-20.
25. Jerrold Atlas, "Understanding the Correlation Between Childhood Punishment and Adult Hypnotizability as It Impacts on the Command Power of Modern 'Charismatic' Political Leaders." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 17(1990), p. 311.
26. Personal communication (cf. *The New York Times*, Oct. 2, 1990, p. A12).
27. Lloyd deMause, "It's Time to Sacrifice... Our Children." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 18(1990), p. 135.
28. Lloyd deMause, "The Real Target Wasn't Terrorism." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 13(1986), p. 425.
29. Lloyd deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*. New York: Creative Roots, 1982, p. 192.
30. deMause, "The Real Target...", *ibid.* An uncanny confirmation of the idea of a war trance comes from the impressionistic observation by *The New Yorker* that since the beginning of the Gulf crisis, "the United States has been sleepwalking toward war. Though there are trappings of a debate ... —thus far they have seemed insubstantial when set against the reality of President Bush's military buildup. Since early August, the Administration has pushed inexorably forward, assembling a vast American Army in the Saudi Arabian desert and bringing it steadily closer to combat. Not until early November, when the President's decision to send two hundred thousand additional troops made war seem suddenly more real, did the American people and their representatives in Congress, like drugged patients struggling to shake off sleep, begin to raise objections." In response to these, "President Bush and his aides have been doing their utmost to put the patients back to sleep." (*The New Yorker*, Dec. 10, 1990, p. 43) The impression of being drugged and sleep-walking, while the administration "is pushing inexorably forward," is an indication for the leader(s) being delegated to act out disowned impulses of one's own.
31. Leo Tolstoy, "Patriotism and Government." In: *War—Patriotism—Peace*. New York: Vanguard Press, 1926, p. 95.
32. Leo Tolstoy, "Thou Shalt Not Kill." In: *Tolstoy's Writings on Civil Disobedience and Non-Violence*. New York: New American Library, 1967, pp. 156-157.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
34. Leon Trotsky, *Whither France?* New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1936, p. 36.
35. George Orwell, *1984*. New York: New American Library, 1949, p. 33.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
37. George F. Kennan, *Nuclear Delusion*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1983, p. 176.
38. Cf. Olivier Russbach, "Objection! Votre Terreur..." *Le Monde diplomatique*, 7/1985, p. 11.

39. Freud, *Group Psychology...*, p. 125.
40. Michael L. Moeller, "Sich selbst überleben." *Kursbuch* 70/1982, p. 73 (my translation).
41. Freud, *Group Psychology...*, p. 116.
42. Cf., e.g., Margaret Brenman and Merton Gill, "The Metapsychology of Regression and Hypnosis." In: Jesse Gordon, editor, *Handbook of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*. 1967, pp. 281-318.
43. Cf., e.g., Chertok, *Hypnosis*, pp. 49-50.
44. Cf. Robert Fliess, *Psychoanalytic Series*, Vol. 3: *Symbol, Dream, and Psychosis*. New York: International Universities Press, 1973, pp. 265-297.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 266 (emphasis in the original)
46. *Ibid.*, p. 293.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 292.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 268 (emphasis in the original)
49. *Ibid.*, p. 285.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 292.
51. Sándor Ferenczi, "Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality." In: Ferenczi, *First Contributions to Psycho-Analysis*. London: Hogarth Press, 1952, pp. 213-239.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 219. Ferenczi could not, of course, foresee the findings in recent decades that show that life in the womb, especially in its third trimester, is often far from being as paradise-like as was imagined before (cf. deMause, *Foundations...*, pp. 251-258). Nevertheless, his basic assumption can be maintained: that in everybody's life, there was once—even if only in the earlier stages of fetal life—a general feeling of one's own omnipotence; and that probably even in later stages, before and after birth, it was upheld whenever possible by splitting off the recurrent traumatic experiences of helplessness that occurred when this feeling broke down.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
54. *Ibid.*
55. Lawrence S. Kubie and Sydney Margolin, "The Process of Hypnotism and the Nature of the Hypnotic State." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 100(1944), p. 618.
56. Otto Fenichel, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis*. New York: Norton, 1945, p. 41.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
58. Cf., e.g., Hans-Jürgen Döpp, "Minimal Erotic oder Die Erosion der Genitalität im Zeichen des Narzißmus." *Psychoanalyse* 4(1983), pp. 144-148.
59. Otto Fenichel, *The Collected Papers. Second Series*. New York: Norton, 1954, p. 260.
60. Fromm, "Theoretische Entwürfe...", p. 105 (my translation).
61. Sándor Ferenczi, "Confusion of Tongues Between the Adults and the Children." In: *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 30(1949), p. 228 (emphasis in the original).
62. Cf. Josephine R. Hilgard, *Personality and Hypnosis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970, pp. 207-224.
63. Atlas, "Understanding the Correlation...", p. 312.
64. Hilgard, *Personality...*, p. 220 (emphasis in the original).
65. Denis M. Donovan and Deborah McIntyre, *Healing the Hurt Child*. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 63.
66. Ferenczi, "Confusion of Tongues...", *ibid.* (emphasis in the original).

67. Kubie and Margolin, "The Process of Hypnotism...", p. 618.
68. Cf. Lloyd deMause, "The History of Child Assault." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 18(1990), p. 22.
69. Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*. New York: Rinehart, 1947, pp. 44-45.



Bulletin of the International Psychohistorical Association

International Psychohistorical Association, P.O. Box 314, New York, N.Y. 10024.

Herbert Barry, III, President; Henry Lawton, Secretary; Melvin Kalfus, Treasurer; J. Lee Shneidman, Bulletin Editor.

Membership in the IPA is \$18 per year. Those wishing to join should send a check to the address above. Membership includes the IPA Newsletter and a discount to the IPA Convention and IPA publications.

Vol. XIV, No. 1

Fall 1991

The Fourteenth Annual Convention of the IPA, held in New York City, June 5-7, 1991, was a success.

As our organization has grown in size, it has matured. Our members have become more sure of themselves and their discipline. One finds little of the defensiveness so prevalent a decade ago. A case in point: Sessions 22 and 24 at the 1991 Convention were devoted to reports from Child Development Research, directed by Dr. Judith S. Kestenberg. After a series of papers by Doctors Eva Fogelman, Flora Hogman, Doris Wallach, Ira Brenner and Milton Kestenberg, a member of the audience questioned the findings because he questioned the validity and the exactness of the methodology of psychohistory in general and of the study in particular. As other members of the audience responded, it soon became obvious that the questioner had neither read the various papers on psychohistorical methodology published in various issues of *The Journal of Psychohistory* nor attended previous meeting of the I.P.A. where the whole issue of methodology had been aired openly. This editor was particularly pleased with the consensus that psychohistorical practitioners are aware of the question of the nature of psychohistorical evidence and insist upon a rigid scholarly approach in presenting findings. It is by the establishment of such canons of scholarship that psychohistorical interpretations will become accepted by the general scholarly community.

The nature of the evidence employed is directly related to the subject under discussion and the purpose of the investigation. Another case in point: Evan I. Malachowsky's examination of Pink Floyd's *The Wall* and Jerrold Atlas' study of Jim Morrison and *The Doors* used film and video as well as textual material. Both presentations were exciting and properly used some types of evidence which would be both unavailable

and inappropriate for, let us say, Melvin Goldstein in his study of Fritz Morgenthauer. The fact that a more traditional study would not use film and video does not in any way reduce the validity of the use of modern sources. Those who tend to criticize such material simply are unwilling to expand the horizons and integrate modern sources. Scholars have had no difficulty in scrutinizing *Antigone* for its social, religious and political implications, or in examining *Ivanhoe* for its nationalistic component, or *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for its political impact, yet, to examine *The Wall* or *The Doors* sometimes seems unscholarly.

The criticism could not be aimed at the transcript of the video or the lyrics, since analyzing printed material is normal in academic circles. The criticism is aimed at the examination of the emotional impact of the total film or video. Yet, many who would object to the examination of *The Wall* would have no difficulty in using *Triumph of the Will* or *Alexander Nevsky*. What makes the Nazi and Soviet films more acceptable than *The Wall* or a Morrison video? Perhaps the former are overt propaganda and the latter are covert appeals to emotionalism. But propaganda is also an appeal to emotionalism. Perhaps it is the overtness which makes one acceptable and the other not.

Perhaps, as psychohistory becomes fully integrated in the scholarly community, all scholars will realize that there is a covert emotional component to reality. Whether scholars like it or not, action is as much determined by fantasy, emotionalism and non-rationality as it is by overt data. It is only when the hidden agenda are exposed that the scholar is able to reconstruct a past epoch.



The Gulf War is a contemporary yesterday. The documents are not all in, and they may not be for half a century. Yet the Convention examined the Gulf War from psychological/psychohistorical/psychosociological perspectives. Different types of evidence were employed: films, videos, cartoons, participants' letters, etc. Some papers examined causation, others reviewed attitudes, still others presented raw data. Undergraduates from Rockland Community College—Aidan Reynolds, Michael McNamara and Richard Thomas—were most impressive; Drs. Joan and Richard Zuckerberg and their sons Joshua and Benjamin shared their experience and letters during the period Joshua was in Israel; Dr. Rhoda Weidenbaum shared her feelings when a loved one was exposed to scud attacks, while Dr. Ted Goertzel reviewed the dilemma faced by those opposed to the conflict. Lloyd deMause, Brett Kahr, Jerrold Atlas and William K. Joseph examined group-fantasies in the United States, Germany and United Kingdom. Other aspects were examined by Daniel Dervin, Joan Lachkar, Glenn Wolfner and Ben Kerman. Future historians of the American attitude toward the war would do well to examine the papers presented.



As usual there were a great variety of papers. Drs. Jay Y. Gonen and Norman Simms examined psychological/psychohistorical aspects of language; Dr. Robert Jay Lifton's Distinguished Lecture examined aspects of Genocide; Dr. Robert Rousselle reviewed "Parapraxes in Plutarch;" Drs. Zvi Lothane, Richard E. Geha and Louis A. Sass reported on forms and contents of fiction. Films were examined by Jay Sherry, Henry Lawton, Gay Riedel and Richard Morrock. Morrock also examined aspects of Apartheid. Paul Elovitz reported on his on-going study of the Russian Revolution, while David Beisel reported on his findings on the Origins of World War II. Emigration and Immigration were discussed by Olga Marlin, Nobuko Yoshizawa Meaders and Roberta Ann Shechter. Dr. Rhoda S. Weidenbaum examined the early life of Deng Yingchao; Vivian Rosenberg reviewed William James and Josiah Royce; Carol Myers Ravenal viewed Henri Matisse; and Danielle Knafo examined David Lynch.

At any point during the three days one could hear fascinating papers by Jerry Kroth, Herbert Barry III, Stanley Rosenman, Irving Handelsman, Ted Cox, Alberto Fergusson, Victoria Peralta, Louise A. Taylor, Gerald Schoenwolf, Fernando Gonzalez-Reigosa, Charles Wesley Shike, Cherilyn E. Davidson, Mary Coleman, David Lotto, and Mena Potts.

The Convention is more than just a meeting to exchange ideas. It is a place to make new friends and renew old friendships. It was good seeing Mel Kalfus, Marv Goldwert, Jacques Szaluta and Bob Endelman. As our organization has matured, we have become not only co-workers in a field, but friends who know no time. It may have been a year since one sat down with Jay or Mel or Robert or Jerry, but the conversation seemed to indicate that it was a continuation from the night before. Diverse views exist, but rancor does not. One learns from the differences and extracts that which will help individual growth. One leaves the Convention with a feeling of growth; a feeling of having one's horizons expanded. It is a good feeling.



Plans for next year's Convention are well under way. It will again be held at John Jay in New York. Those interested in presenting at the 1992 Convention should contact Henry Lawton, 266 Monroe Ave., Wyckoff, NJ 07481.



During the meeting of the Executive Council, the members regretfully accepted the resignation of Jay Gonen, but we were not too concerned about the future because we knew that we would be under the capable leadership of Herbert Barry III, who assumed the office. Jay has our

deepest gratitude and best wishes. We will all work with Herbert to ensure the continued growth of our group.



Members of the organization are involved in all types of new activities. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press has just published *Creativity and Culture* by Daniel Dervin; Paul Elovitz, Director of the Psychohistory Forum, continues to present stimulating sessions throughout the year. Those interested in more information should contact Paul at 627 Dakota Trails, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417. Brett Kahr of the British Institute for Psychohistory, 91 Eton Place, Eton College Rd. London, NW3 2DS, also continues his fascinating series of lectures. Our French Branch has a new address: Dr. Robert Liris, 3 Rue Saint-Saens, 03700, Bellerive/Allier, France. Two new affiliates have been established in the United States: Julianne Adams, 604 W. Main, No. 13, Houston, TX 77006; and Sandy Mitchell, 5507 Kenwood Place N, no. 205, Seattle, Wash. 98103. The German branch is to hold a convention in Berlin this coming April, although Gerhard Bliersbach has not set the date. Psyche Press has just published *Love and Hate in the Nursery and Beyond* by Jule Eisenbud, and *Eros and Evolution: Prospects for PASO* by Robert Endelman. Jerry Atlas and the Center for Psychohistorical Studies also continue their programs and conferences. Henry Lawton and the Group for the Psychohistorical Study of Film continue their impressive work.

If you have information to share with the members, please send it to the Editor.

BOOK



REVIEWS

Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War, ed. Ralph K. White. New York: NYU Press, 1986. xxvi, 591 pp. \$45.00 (hardcover) \$20.00 (paperback)

Reviewed by David Lotto

In 1984 the Board of Social and Ethical Responsibility (BSER) of the American Psychological Association (APA) sponsored a meeting of research psychologists in the fields of war, peace, and conflict resolution to discuss ways in which organized psychology might respond to the prevailing paranoid political atmosphere in the United States.

One of the outcomes of that meeting was the establishment of a committee composed of Morton Deutsch, Herbert Kelman, and Ralph White to produce a "book of readings." BSER then invited another branch of the APA, SPSSI (the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues) to sponsor the book. The result was published in 1986 under the title *Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War*.

This volume starts with 23 pages of foreward, preface, introduction, and list of contributors, followed by 591 pages of text and index. There are 35 papers in all, only four of which are original for this book. These 35 papers are divided into 5 parts and 13 sections, each of which has its own introduction and its own editor.

It begins hopefully with a paper entitled *On Numbing and Feeling*

by Robert Lifton and Richard Falk, excerpted from their book *Indefensible Weapons*. Of the 35 papers, this is the only one that speaks with passion about the nuclear situation.

What should be the most interesting section from a psychohistorical point of view, the one that addresses motives relating to war, is a disappointment. The motives examined—pride, fear, the drive for power and glory, and selfishness—are largely conscious. The psychology here, as well as throughout the rest of the book, remains on the surface, ignoring the depths.

The hearts of the authors represented on these pages are in the right place. They all wish to be on the side of peace, goodwill, compromise, restraint, and rationality. Yet, by attempting to use rational problem-solving strategies, they aid in denying and defending against the realization that the nature and origin of the nuclear threat is an expression of profoundly irrational aspects of ourselves.

The structure of this book, with its high degree of ordering, mirrors its content. Perhaps we see the operation of a kind of obsessional defense, which attempts to use rationality and the power of the intellect to limit, control, and reverse a terrifyingly irrational state of affairs.

This type of approach illustrates the pseudorationality that lies at the heart of the nuclear nightmare. It was duly constituted committees of the most eminent statesmen, generals, and scientists, logically considering the alternatives and options, carefully weighing the choices, presenting arguments, and reasoning together that led to the decisions to drop atomic bombs on two densely populated Japanese cities without warning.

The only rational way of stopping the nuclear madness must start with a recognition of the power and pervasiveness of human destructiveness.

Us and Them: The Psychology of Ethnonationalism, Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry. N.Y.: Brunner/Mazel, 1987. xi, 147 pp. (GAP Report No. 123) \$12.95 (paperback) \$17.95 (hardcover)

Reviewed by Rudolph Binion
Brandeis University

Us and Them deals with ethnonational identity in the individual, which it views as a menace on balance—a problematic ego-prop that has lately been dividing the human species against itself with a vengeance. As the composite author of *Us and Them* sees it, “this current trend represents a remarkable contrast to the unifying movements that marked the earlier years of this century, when internationalism was the ideal.” In point of historic fact, ethnonationalism, spawned by the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon, has grown steadily and massively over the past two centuries at the expense of the cosmopolitan, universalist ideals

left over from the Enlightenment.

Drawing on object-relations theory, *Us and Them* finds the prototype of ethnonationalism in the child's symbiosis with the mother; hence it is a "regressive merging." To quote one schematic pronouncement from *Us and Them*: "Ethnonationalist ideology and sentiment are based on the reparative fantasy of fusion with the newly idealized mother" and confrontation with "the adversary, the oedipal father." And in another formulation: "The early border conflicts over differentiating the self from the other are now being addressed by an infant in the body of an adult."

I for my part cannot discern much resemblance between an Azerbaijani gunning for Armenians, or an Israeli gunning for Palestinians, and a fledgling self facing the otherness of (not to conflate the two) a jealous little Oedipus. (As for Oedipus, what of female ethnonationalists anyhow?) But even granting that resemblance, it would not evidence a connection: for this, ethnonationalists' consistent associations would be needed. Finally, such a connection would not even begin to explain the rise of ethnonationalism. Concerning causes, *Us and Them* indicates only that "ethnonationalism" rises with stress. But stress is at least as old as humankind, whereas ethnonationalism is a modern phenomenon, and one that students of modernity will all see as a cause far more than an effect of stress.

In brief, *Us and Them* leaves its vital psychohistorical subject virtually untouched.

El Nino Precolombino (The Pre-Columbian Child). Max Shin. Colona San Felipe Terremotes, Mexico: Editorial Villicana. 1986. 158pp.

Reviewed by Alberto Fergusson, MD
Bogota, Columbia

Even though this book is more historical than psychohistorical, it is a very interesting and enjoyable book. Shin's work is essentially descriptive, with lots of fascinating examples of Pre-Columbian attitudes toward children. But it is somewhat lacking in psychological understanding of these child rearing practices. The author is, for example, entirely too cautious in advancing hypotheses concerning the unconscious motivations and effects of widely practiced ritual sacrifices of children. Sometime in the future it would be worthwhile to take Shin's material and make it more psychohistorical by adding more "psycho-analysis" to it. Nevertheless, this topic is so interesting and Shin's descriptions are so illustrative that it cannot help but stimulate the interests of readers of this Journal.

I had mixed feelings reading this book. On the one hand, the fascinating descriptions aroused my interest and enthusiasm, but, on the other, the desire for more analysis which never came was frustrated. Shin

himself makes some admission that his work is good source material for psychohistorical interpretation. Now that we have some ground work for such interpretation, we can look forward to its coming with interest and anticipation.

Monkey On A Stick: Murder, Madness, And The Hare Krishnas, John Hubner and Lindsey Gruson. New York: Onyx, 1988. 449 pp.

Reviewed by Richard Morrock

John Hubner and Lindsey Gruson, two veteran newspaper reporters, have given us a detailed and chilling account of the evolution of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKON) from a seemingly harmless religious sect into a fascistic criminal cult. This book is of value to psychohistorians because of the parallel between ISKON and such societies as Cambodia and Iran, where the search for something better in a time of social stress led to something worse. It also illustrates the danger of cults, which is sometimes underestimated by people who value spirituality for its own sake.

We've all seen Hare Krishnas, but if you stopped to talk to them, it soon became evident that they couldn't tell the difference between the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and that their Hindu beliefs were just a pose. They never numbered more than about five thousand members in the United States, but their public dancing and unusual dress gave them particularly high visibility. In addition, the founder of ISKO, Swami Prabhupada, was a genuine religious zealot. But notwithstanding his sincerity, Prabhupada was unable to exert control over the worldwide ISKON movement from his home in West Bengal. Consequently, power-hungry followers, who were often drug users, emerged in control of their own regional satrapies, and became the dominant force in the cult after Prabhupada died in 1977.

Like many young people who came of age in the 1960s, the ISKCON followers inverted their parents' sexual mores and rejected their money-oriented values in their quest for spiritual enlightenment. For some, this path led straight to fascism, albeit of an unconventional kind. Rejecting their parents but unable to feel their childhood pain, the Krishna converts were at a loss for guidance in life, and soon became mindless followers of their Bengali Svengali and his corrupt successors.

Curiously, as Hubner and Gruson relate the tale, the Hare Krishna network of farms and temples became a haven for large numbers of career criminals. To some degree, their attraction to the cult was purely pragmatic: they could shave their heads, change their names, don saffron robes, and become invisible to the authorities. They could find hideouts all over the world, and network with like-minded persons. The Hare

Krishnas built temples of gold with money obtained from smuggling drugs and robbing jewelry stores, rationalizing that their crimes were bringing both victims and perpetrators "closer to Krishna."

Hubner and Gruson detail some of the goriest goings-on inside ISKON, including no less than five murders. For example, the founder of a breakaway group called the "Peace Krishnas" had his head chopped off by an over-zealous follower.

At the New Vrindaban commune set up by ISKON in West Virginia, there was extensive wife-beating and sexual molestation of young boys by the commune's leaders. Conditions in the nursery were horrendous, with children infested with parasites and suffering from severe malnutrition.

By the late 1980s, the corrupt gurus had either been kicked out of ISKON in the wake of an overdue reform movement, or had knuckled under and promised to mend their errant ways. By that time, most Hare Krishnas had already left the cult, usually to rejoin the workaday world. Here and there, some temples have started recruiting once again. It is not out of the question that ISKON may make the transition from antisocial cult to respected religious denomination.

However, there is always the other possibility—that ISKON, or more likely one of its more extreme offshoots, will develop into a second version of Jonestown. Now that Hubner and Gruson have published their gripping book, we cannot say that we haven't been warned.

Slaughter Of The Innocents: Child Abuse Through The Ages And Today
Sander J. Breiner, Plenum Press. 1990. 314 pp. \$23.50 (hardcover)

Reviewed by Jacqueline S. Paulson
College of Staten Island/CUNY

The printed page had always piqued my curiosity, and so in opening a new book, besides noting the desiderata of publishing houses, I carefully pay attention to dedications, prefaces, and acknowledgements. Where it is appropriate, and indeed necessary, I read critically the list of references appended. If I find some that are familiar to me, then I have perhaps a basic point of view shared by the writer.

Barbara W. Tuchman in *The First Salute* (New York: Knopf, 1988) dedicates her book, an analysis of the American Revolution, to her grandchildren. Her acknowledgements give a prominent place to her family, who provided her with moral support and professional assistance. Sander J. Breiner dedicates his book to his grandchildren, and in his acknowledgement credits members of his family who contributed their energies and competencies to his almost overwhelming project. These two writers,

separated by very different perspectives, feel a very strong affiliation with their grandchildren and trust that whatever they have accomplished will in some measure lighten the burdens society's children carry and brighten their futures.

The psychohistorical approach is spurred by its understanding of how societies evolve from families. Families raise and care for their young, thus transmitting through behavior and attitudes their preferences for life giving/life destroying values. Breiner examines five ancient civilizations, those of Egypt, Greece, the Hebrews, Rome, and China. He makes some telling comparisons between and among these very old civilizations and subsequently brings us to the time in which we now live. What can be gained through this particular study?

One obvious answer is that child abuse, as we are coming to recognize it today, is not new in the sense of never having occurred before; it has an ancient history. How can this record be made visible? Breiner takes as his basic focus the status of women in these five ancient cultures. How were women regarded and treated? Were they protected within the family? Did they possess legal rights to inheritance, property? Were they a subservient class? The record, as Breiner interprets it, was benign with reference to Egypt in the ancient world, more benign in China and significantly most benign in the Hebrew culture where there developed a very strong affirmation of the central importance of the women in family life. The record is not only bleak but brutal with respect to women in the old cultures of Greece and Rome.

The title *Slaughter Of The Innocents* may aptly refer to the carnage visited upon infants and young children in the old Greek and Roman periods. In these societies women as wives and mothers were relegated to the lowest ranks, nearly similar to slaves. Women's capacity to nurture and secure their children was wretchedly inadequate or perceived as hopeless. Breiner wisely refrains from too many verbal descriptions of how young children were abandoned, mutilated, or killed. The illustrations he does use cause the same gut-wrenching effect we experience when we read graphic accounts in daily newspapers of how young children are thrown out of windows, or burned or suffocated.

The chapters on these ancient civilizations provide a challenge to our prior assumptions about them. Breiner is not unmindful of the vast enduring works of art, architecture, monuments which attested to the power and wealth of the rulers of beautify their tombs, their places, their cities. Certainly it is impossible to ignore them for we have been told endlessly of the glory that was Greece and Rome and that we should be proud to be the inheritors of such cultures. Breiner appears to be suggesting we may do well to look again and see what it is that we have indeed inherited.

In the chapter "The Psychodynamics of Child Abuse," Breiner

discusses what has been learned from practitioners in the field of child abuse, detection and prevention. He enlarges the definition for abuse of young children to include emotional neglect/deprivation in the very early years which he finds devastating to later personality development. Breiner writes:

It is my view and the conclusion of my research that our whole world revolves around the newborn female, clearly the most important person in the world...Those societies that depreciate women to any degree are going to have an increased frequency of child abuse as well as the pathology that results...If a woman filled with hurt, rage, and self-depreciation has a female child with whom she identifies, she is going to pass along these same negative feelings to her offspring. She will have an untold amount of rage toward her male child, since unconsciously in her mind he presents the male world that has caused all her suffering...How the female is treated and viewed in a particular culture determines the future of that society. A society that appreciates the value of women and realizes their central importance in developing the entire community, beginning with the family unit, will be a society that has the ability to direct its attentions to all matters in a humane, kind way.

Breiner is to be commended for setting forth some of his thinking on what can be done now to forestall or ameliorate those injurious or in fact deadly assaults upon young children. What he recommends is a fundamental change in our society's attitudes and practices toward ensuring the viability of the very early mother-child relationship. This, under the best of circumstances, is an uphill task. Also, among professionals, both within early childhood care and education and those outside who in various ways are affected by the vast social changes sweeping through our society, questions are being raised as to whether the emphasis on the exclusivity of the mother-child relationship is either necessary or realistic. A fertile area of research has grown, outdoing itself to demonstrate that young children (including infants and toddlers) are good adapters to changing environments with surrogate caregivers. Against this tide, Breiner's study merits close reading.



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The Journal of Psychohistory

ISSN: 0145-3378

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