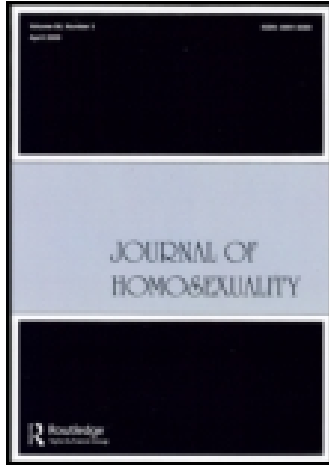


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BOOK REVIEWS

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BOOK REVIEWS



PAIDIKA: THE JOURNAL OF PAEDOPHILIA. *A quarterly published in English in the Netherlands and available from Postbus 22630, 1100 DC Amsterdam-Z.O., The Netherlands. Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer 1987, and No. 2, Autumn, 1987. Hfl 95, 1 year, 25 per issue, 64 pp. per issue.*

This is a new journal aimed at examining paedophilia within cultural contexts, with special emphasis on the humanities, history, and the social sciences. The editors emphasize that no assumptions about the sexual orientation of any author can or should be made on the basis of the appearance of his or her work in *PAIDIKA*.

If the first two issues are examples of future issues, there is much that the scholar and researcher investigating the topic of paedophilia would find helpful. Obviously, underlying the editorial policy of the Journal is an emphasis on the helpful rather than the harmful aspects of what the editors define as consensual intergenerational sexual relationships. Thus, there is little discussion of "child sexual abuse" but selections and analyses by such writers and poets as Lewis Thomson, William Merode, and Nathaniel Parker Willis, who wrote about boy love. There is a discussion of *Alcibiades the School Boy*, the first paedophilic novel published in Italian in 1652. Also included is a discussion of the Dutch paedophile emancipation movement by Frits Bernard, as well as an English translation of his 1962 pamphlet on paedophilia.

Though articles of this kind are perhaps aimed more at the paedophilic readers than scholars and researchers, the insights they

provide can be valuable to the latter as well. At the same time, there are reports of research such as that of Monica Pieterse on Dutch paedophiles and a review of Theo Sandfort's research as it appears in the English translation of his book on boys and their contact with men.

Issue number 2 includes an outstanding article by Lawrence A. Stanley, a New York attorney, on "The Hysteria over Child Pornography and Paedophilia," which summarizes developments in the United States over the past decade. Stanley's article is an effective antidote to much of the hysteria about child pornography that still prevails in the United States.

If the Journal can keep up the present level and not turn into a journal only for paedophiles, it should be required reading for those interested in research and studying intergenerational sexual relationships. Researchers need to know and understand not only the negative aspects of such relationships, but need to gain a wider view of the paedophile than the usual clinical practice or the interview with the convicted paedophile will provide and this Journal gives that view.

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LOVING BOYS: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF SEXUAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ADULT AND MINOR MALES. VOLUME 1. Dr. Edward Brongersma. Introduction by Vern L. Bullough. *New York: Global Academic Publishers, 1986, 335 pp.*

Loving Boys is the culmination of a lifetime's work by a committed paedophile to convince the world that man-boy love is a universal, natural, and wonderful experience. Brongersma is well known in paedophile politics and is one of its most articulate spokespersons. He has been a member of the Dutch Parliament on and off since 1946, but his career was interrupted by an arrest in the 1950s

for sexual contact with a boy of 16. He went to prison. Subsequently he has spent much of his life traveling the world, writing about paedophilia, campaigning, and ultimately establishing the Brongersma Foundation, which houses a significant collection of paedophile literature (much of which is cited in this book). I first became aware of him when the (now defunct) English paedophile group Paedophile Information Exchange tried to arrange a meeting at which this senior Dutch parliamentarian (knighted into the Order of the Dutch Lion in 1975) was to speak. The meeting was boycotted by the trade unions, slandered by the media, and ultimately canceled. Brongersma could not speak and was shocked by the puritanical moralism of the British.

In Holland the climate seems much freer—free enough for a senior and respected figure to be an ‘out’ paedophile. With his extensive knowledge, he makes an ideal advocate.

Loving Boys comes in two large volumes. The first deals mainly with the “adult lovers” and “the boys,” while a second (still awaiting publication) treats the problem of sexual oppression and the possible negative aspects of man-boy relations. The first volume contains only three chapters: a short one that deals with the purposes of sex, and two longer ones that deal with “Adult Lovers” and “Boys and their sexuality.”

The main thrust of his first chapter is to minimize the role of procreation in sex—it is “the most animal-like and the least human” function (p. 24)—and to highlight the importance of sex as an expression of emotion, pleasure and as a “Surrender to the Forces of Nature.” Having shown this, he can go on to suggest that:

a boy is mature for lust, for hedonistic sex, from his birth on; sex as an expression of love becomes a possibility from about five years of age; puberty is the best time for the “oceanic,” the mystic experience and for using sex to unite one with nature. Procreation should be the privilege of the adult man. (p. 40)

The tone is immediately set: natural, lusty, pleasure-seeking, sex-loving boys are everywhere to be found. Well over half the book is given over to the celebration of boys’ sexuality—tracing their physiological and psychological maturation; their penis size, ejacula-

tions and wet dreams; their initiation rites, and their sexual outlets. In all of this Brongersma is ever-positive about the boys' sexuality and cites a pornutopia of case studies of the boys' enjoyment.

The other central chapter of the book deals with the adult lovers. After a brief discussion of the range of adult-child love (nearly six pages, for instance, are devoted to woman-boy love!), the male boy lover becomes the prime focus. The author is at great pains to separate the genuine boy lover from the sexual psychopaths (like Dean Wayne Corll), who so frequently litter the social science literature; and also to stress that there are no "essential characteristic qualities which distinguish them from those about them save the predominance of children as objects of their erotic feelings" (p. 108). Only a few pages later, however, he is suggesting they are more youthful, less aggressive, etc.

In this chapter and throughout Brongersma's encyclopedic knowledge of different cultures, languages, and the social science literature enables him to provide a multitude of case studies and references from all over the world and throughout history, making this an extremely valuable source book.

Most "social science" can usefully be viewed as a form of rhetoric that exists to persuade, cajole or convert readers. This is not always immediately apparent in the case of both those who engage in elegant abstract theorizing or meticulous methodological research; but in the case of a book like this, the function of rhetoric is manifest. He employs a number of well-worn strategies. For example, there is the strategy of *universalization*: "everywhere and at all times on earth there has existed a special bond between man and boys, and like every other deep human relationship it strives for physical expression" (p. 67). To prove his point, the text is scattered with historical and cross cultural allusions: from boy temple prostitutes in the African *Hereros* to pre-revolutionary China where "boy-love was prevalent everywhere" (p. 86). Another strategy Brongersma employs is that of *naturalization*: sex is natural, boy-sex is natural, man-boy sex is natural. Biologically induced, it craves for release and satisfaction. Then there is the strategy of *normalization*: there is nothing odd about boy lovers, who are everywhere to be found. And, of course, there is nothing odd about child sex either.

It is clear, then, that this book is unapologetically partisan. Per-

sonally, I find its atheoretical essentialism an irritation; the phenomena lumped together here are not the same. Likewise his celebration of boys is overly romantic. Nevertheless, since most of the books that pass as “science” in this field are equally biased – in the opposite direction – this study could valuably redress the balance a little. The question is, will it? The scares over “child sexual abuse” that have swept both North America and the United Kingdom in recent years have also created a monopoly of thought and language in which books like this will scarcely find a hearing. Boys want sex with men, boys seduce adult men, the experience is very common and much enjoyed – these ideas are utter heresies to the new children’s crusaders who can only see evil. Vern Bullough, writing in the introduction to the volume, suggests it might be seen as a “lawyer’s brief” – but it would, I think; be a brave lawyer who used some of these arguments in public.

This is an important and controversial book to have around. But in the end, I fear it will only be read by those who already know and approve of its argument. Those who most need to understand this alternative position will simply ignore or condemn it.

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BOYS ON THEIR CONTACTS WITH MEN: A STUDY OF SEXUALLY EXPRESSED FRIENDSHIPS. Theo Sandfort. Introduction by John Money. *Elmhurst, NY: Global Academic Publishers, 1987, 173 pp.*

In this day of rising anxieties over the possible traumas resulting from “child sexual abuse,” Sandfort runs against the tide. In 1981 he published *The Sexual Aspect of Paedophile Relations*¹ which was generally savaged by American reviewers. In spite of the fact that the original Dutch edition had been published by the Sociological Institute of Utrecht University, and was a dispassionate report of scholarly findings, Sandfort’s conclusion that the 25 boys he had

studied had not been traumatized by their experience with adults apparently so upset most of his American reviewers that they tried to kill the messenger rather than examine the message.

Undaunted, Sandfort has written a second study, minus the tables and scholarly apparatus of the first, reporting in detail the responses of the boys to the questions he had asked. These answers are grouped around a series of questions, although three interviews are printed in full in the appendix.

Sandfort found his subjects through their adult partners and this meant they were, for the most part, still in active relationships when he interviewed them. Though Sandfort is the first to state that their attitudes about the relationship might change over time, he found the relationship at the time of the interview to be significant to the boys, all but one of whom were under 16. Sandfort asked such questions as the meaning of the relationship to the boys, how the relationship was established, what kind of sexual activities the boys engaged in, what they spent their time doing when with their adult partners, and similar questions which give us the kind of information which usually does not appear in studies of intergenerational sexual partnerships. Contrary to public opinion, the youths were not enticed into such relationships by adults offering candy, but knew the adults before they had sexual relationships, and, in fact, the youth often took the initiative in pursuing the relationship. Most of the boys, if not all, seemed to understand quite clearly what might be involved before they entered into the relationship. Usually, Sandfort found, the boy was in a position of power in the relationship, indicating what was and was not permitted. In only a few cases was there penetration, then in all but one case by the boy. The relationship involved mostly mutual masturbation or oral genital contact. In the latter case it was almost always the adult male who performed the oral part of the sex act. Sandfort found the relationship to be a learning experience for most of the boys, perhaps because the men came from a higher social class. Boys were able to do things which they might not have been able to do such as learning to draw, and they found the dialogues with the adults interesting and helpful.

The majority of the boys reported that they had good relationships with their parents but usually kept their sexual activities secret

from them. All of the sexual activity carried out by the boys with adults was illegal under the law of The Netherlands. Sandfort's reporting is objective and dispassionate until he comes to the question of legal change. He argues that young people should be protected from sexual abuse, but he would also like the law to allow young people who want to engage in sex with adults to be able to do so. I am not certain what he means unless he means keeping the age of consent at 16 but enforcing it only when children or parents complain. This raises issues which Sandfort does not discuss. Obviously, young people mature at different rates and have different needs and desires, but I remain uncertain how society should deal with that. Sandfort also devotes a chapter to power differences between adults and children and the possible abuse of power, and though I do not agree with it entirely, it does raise interesting questions.

In sum, the book is an important piece of research and raises question which Americans, perhaps when they get over their hysteria about child abuse, should examine. In the meantime, we can only be thankful that the Dutch system allows a much more dispassionate look at the questions than we presently get in the United States. What is needed is a great deal more research on the topic.

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NOTE

1. Sandfort, T. (1981), *The Sexual Aspect of Paedophile Relations*. Amsterdam: Pan/Spartacus. This as a translation of *Het seksuele aspekt van pedofiele relaties*, 1981. Utrecht: Sociologisch Instituut, University of Utrecht.