

Tossing the Last Taboo

Psychologists hail the benefits of pederasty.

By Gene Edward Veith

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First, the culture began to see premarital sex as the norm. Then homosexuality became culturally respectable. The next taboo targeted for overthrow by our sexual revolutionaries evidently is sex between adults and children.

Kiddie porn is now available not only on the Internet but at Barnes & Noble. Children are being sexualized in movies, in the music they listen to, in the clothes their parents buy them, and in their ever-younger patterns of dating.

But now influential elements of the intellectual establishment-and the psychology profession, no less-are openly sanctioning sex between children and adults. The leading journal of the American Psychological Association published an article maintaining that sex between children and adults is not harmful and, in fact, can be a positive experience for the child.

The article, titled "A Meta-analytic Examination of Assumed Properties of Child Sexual Abuse Using College Samples," was published in the APA Psychological Bulletin ([1998], Vol. 124, No. 1, pp. 22-53). The article was written by Bruce Rind, an adjunct instructor at Temple University; Philip Tromovitch, a graduate student in education at the University of Pennsylvania; and Robert Bauserman, a psychology professor at the University of Michigan.

The authors did not conduct any new research; rather, they examined 59 other studies that collected data on how college students coped with sexual abuse. Forty-two percent of the male college students actually viewed their abuse as "positive" when looking back at it. Twenty-four percent to 37 percent of the men saw their abuse as having a positive influence on their current sex lives. Significantly, only 11 percent of the abused girls reported that their sexual experiences with an adult was "positive."

Even in their own terms, of course, such numbers are bogus: If 42 percent of abused boys thought their experience was positive, that means 58 percent did not. As for abused girls, 89 percent considered the experience negative. Such numbers are heavily skewed toward homosexuality. If so many of the men considered their abuse to have been a good thing and "a positive influence on their current sex lives," this is simply more of the abundant evidence that child molesting turns its victims toward homosexuality.

Nevertheless, the study concluded that “the vast majority of both men and women reported no negative sexual effects from their child sexual-abuse experiences.” Although there was what they characterized as a slight association between childhood sexual abuse and psychological harm, they attributed the damage to negative family factors rather than to the sexual experience as such. As long as the sexual contact was not coerced and was enjoyed, concluded the authors, sex between children and adults may not be harmful at all.

We should therefore not be so judgmental. “Classifying a behavior as abuse simply because it is generally viewed as immoral or defined as illegal,” they say, “is problematic.” Science is supposed to avoid value judgments. The great science of psychology, therefore, should stop using negative terms like “child abuse,” “molestation,” and “victims.” The study suggested, “A willing encounter would be labeled simply ‘adult-child sex,’ a value-neutral term.... A willing encounter between an adolescent and an adult with positive reactions ... would be labeled scientifically as ‘adult-adolescent sex.’”

To speak of “willing,” “non-coerced,” and “enjoyable” sexual encounters between children and adults ignores the very nature of seduction. According to the statutory rape statutes—which, though seldom enforced today, are grounded in a far wiser worldview than contemporary psychological theory—it is impossible for a minor, being below the age of consent, to consent. An adult who has sex with a minor is therefore committing rape. Even if the child, seduced by the adult's greater experience or greater power or greater wiles, is “willing,” it is still rape.

That it is morally wrong for adults to use children sexually should be self-evident. The desire to be “value-neutral” about the subject is simply an attempt to rule the moral issue out of consideration. But debates about moral issues are often battles over the language we use to think about them. The insistence on “value-neutral” terminology for sex abuse is not neutral at all, but advances the ideology that children are fair game for sexual predators.

And this is coming from the American Psychological Association. During the reign of modernists, natural scientists—such as chemists, physicists, and biologists—were the cultural authorities. During our postmodern times, the social scientists—with their incessant talk of “culture” and “self”—are our authorities. Having lost our vocabulary of moral virtue, we speak of people who are evil as if they are “sick.” We defer to psychologists to tell us what behavior is “sick” and what is “normal.”

In 1973, the American Psychological Association removed homosexuality as a category of mental illness. Psychologists were to consider homosexual behavior as normal, healthy, and just as legitimate as heterosexual behavior—a position that has since spread throughout the culture. Last year, the organization ruled that psychologists should not try to treat homosexuality, even if the patient wanted help in changing his orientation. Now, the APA seems to be taking the next step.

According to the APA's latest diagnostic manual, a person should not be considered to have a psychological disorder simply because he molests children. A diagnosis of disorder should only be made if the pedophile feels “anxious” about his behavior, or if it interferes with his work or impairs his social relationships.

Mr. Bauserman, one of the authors of the study in the Psychological Bulletin, wrote an even more forceful apologetic for pedophilia in The Journal of Homosexuality, as part of its double issue on “Male Intergenerational Intimacy.” In his article, he questioned the “taboo” against “man-boy sexual relationships.” Another article maintained that a man who counseled troubled teenage boys could achieve “miracles not by preaching to them, but by sleeping with them.” A loving pedophile, continued the article, can offer a “companionship, security, and protection” which neither peers nor parents can provide.

Another article said that parents should look upon the pedophile who loves their son “not as a rival or competitor, not as a thief of their property, but as a partner in the boy's upbringing, someone to be welcomed into their home.”

As homosexuals have their way with academia, the media, and the cultural elite, such sentiments will be more and more common. One can only marvel at how the 3 percent of the population that is homosexual exerts such an influence on the culture, while the 80 percent that claims to be Christian and the 43 percent that goes to church every Sunday seem to exert no influence whatsoever.

That influential culture makers are trying to normalize sex with children is one reason Christians dare not opt out of the culture wars. If they do, letting the world go its merry way into the black hole of depravity, they will be putting their children in genuine danger.