

PAUL WILSON

**THE MAN THEY
CALLED
A MONSTER**

Sexual experiences between men and boys



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Paul Wilson is one of Australia's best-known and most respected social scientists. With degrees in Psychology and Sociology, his books cover topics in sexuality, crime and Australian society. *The Man They Called A Monster* follows in the footsteps of *Intimacy*, which was published by Cassells in 1979.

Dr Wilson has lectured in New Zealand, Great Britain and all of the Australian states. In 1974-5 he was a Fulbright Visiting Professor at the University of California, Irvine. He is presently Reader in Sociology at the University of Queensland, Brisbane, which is the city where the events recorded in this book took place.

Introduction

Once in a lifetime, if he is lucky, a social scientist stumbles across an incident that is both controversial and far-reaching in its implications. I came across such an incident two years ago when by accident, rather than design, I met Clarence Osborne.

The man himself was rather unimpressive and some would say distasteful. But the story he unfolded and the records and manuscripts he had in his possession were provocatively tantalising. This man had collected information about the physical and psycho-logical characteristics of thousands of boys and adolescents to whom he had sexually and emotionally related over a twenty-year period. This information, together with additional research material I collected on paedophilia, is the basis of this book. The conclusions I draw from the material are, it seems to me, inescapable, even if they are bound to be unpopular.

I knew that writing about paedophilia would be a difficult and controversial task. Indeed, both my friends and enemies expressed concern for me while writing this book. My friends considered that the 'radical troublemaker' image that had been projected onto me by those in power in Queensland would now be changed to a 'deviant' image. After all, anyone who writes about boy lovers without the vitriol that usually accompanies such journalistic discussions on the topic would have to suffer the deviant label himself. And my enemies were quite sure that if Paul Wilson was writing a book about paedophiles then he must have degenerated to a level of madness which made even them feel some pity.

But this book does not arise either out of deviancy or madness. It arises out of a compelling drive to write accurately and fairly a unique story that I had somewhat fortuitously acquired. It may not be a happy story, but it is one that must be told.

My decision to proceed with the book was finally made after a unique incident which should be related to the reader if for no other reason than to demonstrate the part that chance plays in a writer's decision to work on a topic. While in Mackay, North Queensland, I was reading through Osborne's own manuscript which told of his life, trying to decide whether I should write a book on the issues that his life raised.

A neighbour and friend of mine, Jim Barry, a well-known solicitor in the town, called in to the house I was staying at and asked me what I was reading. I told him I was reading Clarence Osborne's manuscript and invited him to look at it with a view to giving me legal advice on its possible publication. [\[*1\]](#)

Jim took the manuscript back to his home, sat down and proceeded to read it. He was interrupted by a knock on the door which he opened and greeted a young man of about twenty-six whom he knew well. This man asked Jim if he was working on office problems. Jim replied that he was 'just looking at material Paul Wilson had on a so-called Brisbane sex-monster who had recently been in the newspapers'.

The man became very white and very frightened. He said he had met this Mr

Osborne and wondered what was in the manuscript about him personally. Jim reassured his visitor that Osborne only included first names and the beginning initial of the surname when writing about his past partners. To prove the point Jim opened the manuscript at random and said to his visitor, 'Here look for yourself John K., Barry M., Jack T. . .' There was a stunned silence. Jack T. happened to be the visitor. It was a chance in a million and one that I took advantage of.

Jim Barry suggested that the young man reassure himself about his privacy being protected by speaking to me. I then spent two hours with Jim's visitor both reassuring him and checking the notes that Osborne had taken with the young man's recollection of what happened, when as a youth, he had met and related to Osborne. The two accounts coincided. I knew then that this book had to be written. If ever a sign from heaven was needed to tell an author to proceed with a book then this was that sign.

The difficult problem, though, was how to tell the story. Clarence Osborne's life and activities were full of paradoxes. In them we see both the unique and the general, the delicate and the brutally crude, the trivial and the far-reaching. His life could be sensationalised or it could be intellectually dissected in a cold-blooded impersonal way. I have attempted to avoid both extremes and to use the story of the man and his life to illustrate the wider psychological and social questions that the topic of paedophilia brings up. Consequently within each chapter I have attempted to move from a discussion of Clarence Osborne to the wider questions surrounding adult-youth relationships and the consideration of the legal, psychological and moral issues involved in this controversial topic.

Despite the difficulties of writing a book about men who love boys, I received help and co-operation from a number of unexpected sources. Many of the men who, as youths, had had a relationship with Osborne, recounted their experiences with a frankness and honesty that I found invaluable. While they may have initially come to see me to find out whether the police or I had a record of their association with Clarence Osborne, they soon confided in me and gave me their trust. They can be sure that this trust has been, and will continue to be, respected.

Assistance also came from the Queensland police force, who allowed me to interview officers associated with the case and to peruse some relevant material. Some officers went well beyond the call of duty and commented on earlier drafts of the manuscript. To save them embarrassment I will not mention them by name.

As usual though, encouragement and support came from trusted friends and colleagues. My friends in journalism, Hugh Lunn and Adrian MacGregor, offered me encouragement as did Carolyn Mason, Judy Abbes and Jeff Smiley. Editorial assistance and social support was given by Marilyn Bitomsky who, as she has done in the past, provided me with the motivation to keep writing when authorship appeared to be an uphill losing battle. Jim and Mary Barry, and Pam and Alf Rowe from Mackay encouraged me in ways which were both intellectual and personal, while Marian Rarnsay and the Inma Community provided me with the setting and support to contemplate the structure of this

book.

Colleagues from a number of Australian universities and academic institutions contributed invaluable ideas for the book. I would particularly like to thank Lex Watson from the Government Department at Sydney University, Professor John Collins from the Psychology Department at Macquarie University, Gary Jaynes from the Social Biology Resource Centre in Melbourne and Professor Duncan Chappell, formerly from the Australian Law Reform Commission and now Professor of Criminology at Simon Fraser University, Canada. Finally, I would like to thank Bernard Macdougall and John Shaw for their critical but constructive reading of earlier drafts of this book. Bernard Macdougall, in particular, used his lively intelligence in commenting on an earlier draft of the manuscript.

None of these people, however, can take any responsibility for what is in this book. In writing about one of our society's most taboo topics I alone must bear the brunt of any criticisms that arise from this book. I am, however, satisfied that every effort which was humanly possible has been made to present the reader with an accurate account of what occurred between Clarence Osborne and his youthful partners.

Paul R. Wilson

1981

Chapter One

Like most of us Clarence Osborne would have left this world without fame or notoriety if not for one incredible fact. And that fact is that this small sixty-one-year-old man had, over a twenty-year period, sexually related to at least 2500 boys before he voluntarily decided to leave this earth.

Not only did Osborne make love to this huge number of young males but he recorded in intimate detail how he made love to them and how they responded. Locked away in his insignificant house in a middle-class suburb of Brisbane was a repository of sexual information surpassed only by the Kinsey Institute.

Osborne's sexual adventures gave him the publicity at his death that he carefully avoided during his life. The Australian media uniformly described him as this country's greatest sex monster and newspaper headlines shrieked their disapproval at his activities. Loving boys, especially as many boys as Osborne loved, was not, it appeared, a way to win public esteem.

It was not only his sexual relationships with the youths that earned him displeasure. It was the fact that he photographed the boys in every conceivable position and measured their penises with scientific precision that shocked and horrified the public. And the boys he photographed, measured and masturbated were not just any boys. Many, some hundreds in fact, came from the most prestigious and wealthy homes in the city of Brisbane. Some were the sons of policemen, some were the sons of doctors and some, even, were the sons of political identities. Many of these boys are now men and they too have reached the top echelons in various professions.

Not that these men talk about their experiences with Osborne freely. They prefer to keep their experiences to themselves, privately remembering the days when, as boys or youths, they slept in Osborne's bed or engaged in mutual masturbation with him in his car. Discretion had helped them reach the top of their chosen occupations and discretion was going to keep them there.

While the media repeatedly referred to Osborne as a 'monster' and an 'animal' others thought differently. Many of his work colleagues considered him the finest court reporter in the country.

Acquaintances often referred to his acts of kindness and many of the boys he had affairs with stoutly defended his integrity and righteousness. He was indeed many things to many people.

For like most paedophiles, Clarence Osborne's life was full of contradictions. Despite the sexual pervert label so carefully created by the media, Osborne was consistently defended by his so-called 'victims'. He never used force to obtain sex but he was able to satisfy his sexual urges whenever they arose. His crimes were considered horrific but not one of his partners ever complained to the police. His collection of sexual material was described by the police and the media as pornography but researchers considered the material invaluable information. He was accused of having seduced boys but one of the major problems in his life was to satisfy the sexual desires of hundreds of boys who approached him.

To understand these contradictions we have to understand Clarence Osborne, the man,

and paedophilia, the sexual activity. The two are closely intertwined, yet separable. The questions that arise from these issues are myriad. Why, for example, was this unattractive person able to obtain sexual relations with so many young males? What effect did these interventions have on the social and sexual development of the youths? What was it about Osborne that made him a sexual pied piper of infamous proportions? We can help to unravel the answers to these questions by systematically exploring Osborne's life and the nature of paedophilia generally. This, of course, is the major objective of this book. Let us make a start then by considering from among thousands, just one relationship that Osborne had with a young male. Let us take the case of James.

One Boy, One Man

James was sixteen at the time he met Clarence Osborne. Now, five years later, he still bears the marks of the physical attractiveness that he clearly possessed when he was younger. Standing 180 centimetres tall, with long blond hair and suntanned from numerous encounters with the golden beaches of the Surfers Paradise region, James clearly would have stood out as he hitch-hiked along the Pacific Highway on his way to the famed Gold Coast beaches.

When a car pulled up and a middle-aged man asked James whether he wanted a lift, the youngster wasn't surprised. He usually managed to hitch a lift to the coast and never thought twice about accepting a ride from anyone. The man according to James had 'a nice face and appeared to be friendly'.

James recalled that it was easy to talk to the man. He was relaxed and introduced himself as Clarry. The man told James that he frequently took the trip to the Gold Coast and often picked up boys who wanted rides. Clarry was very interested in all aspects of James's life and frequently asked him about his parents, his sporting interests and his girlfriends. In fact James recalls that after about fifteen minutes they had struck up a firm friendship and the boy felt safe and secure with the older man. James told Clarry about his parents who had just separated and about the awful fights they had prior to the separation. His mother was a strict Catholic, while his father was an agnostic and this was one of the reasons for the constant fighting between the couple. There were other reasons, of course, and Clarence Osborne carefully explored them with his young passenger.

As they drove along the highway James told Clarence Osborne about his fears and anxieties. He recounted the fights his parents used to have: the yells and screams he heard in the middle of the night, the negative views he held of his now absent and still distant father— a man who apparently lacked spontaneity, warmth and emotion. Clarence Osborne listened with sympathy and apparent understanding.

The young boy listened attentively as well, especially when the conversation turned to sex. James recalls how he was recounting to Osborne incidents about his own personal life that he had never told anyone before. Osborne seemed very interested in what the boy felt about girls and whether he had ever come close to a female sexually. It seemed so easy for James to talk about his sexual experiences with girls, and he did so with enthusiasm and without any embarrassment. He told Osborne, for example, about the first time he undressed a girl and what he felt when he saw that in between her legs there was no penis but instead, a smooth and hairless mound.

Clarence Osborne gently asked him what he felt about that, and James had no hesitation in saying that he felt it was 'nice to look at and nice to touch'. Osborne then asked whether

his 'thing' got excited when he looked at the girl. And James admitted that it had. The older man then asked him in a gentle tone as to whether his 'thing' was excited now as he thought about the time he saw the undressed girl.

The boy became slightly embarrassed, but Osborne reduced this somewhat by saying, 'Well, we all start getting a lump in our pants when we think about sexy things like that.' And Osborne pointed to his own pants with a demonstrably large bulge rising in between his legs. Osborne then asked whether he had a similar bulge too and before the boy could reply Osborne quickly but smoothly put his hand on the young man's penis.

'I was so excited,' James said. 'I felt my penis getting bigger and bigger. The guy knew I was getting excited because he was slowly rubbing my penis up and down through my pants.'

When Osborne asked whether James would like to take a short detour from the main road, it was agreed to readily by the boy. Turning left into a cul-de-sac off the Pacific Highway, James and Charles Osborne began to talk more and as they talked the degree of sexuality between them slowly increased. Osborne asked the boy whether he would mind if he put his hand on the boy's penis 'properly'. James was so excited at this stage that he nodded his agreement and Osborne deftly undid the boy's zip and placed his hands on James's now erect penis. According to James the discussion then centred firmly on how he, James, masturbated, and by trial and error Osborne slowly found out the way that James liked to be stimulated. The continuous masturbation led to its inevitable conclusion. James ejaculated and Osborne put his mouth over the boy's penis and sucked the sperm as it came out.

The boy felt excited and relieved and as he told me, 'a little bit guilty'. But the guilt did not last for long because Osborne was always supportive, calm and interested in the boy's whole life, telling him that he knew about how boys felt and what they did because he had 'studied such things'.

This made James feel better because he thought that the older man must be a doctor or a psychologist 'or something like that', and that made what they had done together 'okay'. Even the sound of a police car siren (which was heard in one of Osborne's tapes recounting this incident) did not disturb the two unduly. They both felt safe and secure.

The drive to the Gold Coast beaches continued and the conversation ranged on topics as diverse as fishing and football. James was amazed at how easily Osborne could 'tune in' to those aspects of his own life that were important to him, but which he didn't think that adults would ever understand. And before the older man dropped the boy off at a Gold Coast beach they had arranged to meet the next day in Osborne's house which, as it happened, was not too far from where James lived.

Over the next few years James and Osborne saw each other regularly and became in James's own words 'firm friends'. Once or twice week, occasionally more often, James would call around to Osborne's house and they would sit down and talk about James: his wishes, his aspirations, and inevitably about sex. Clarence Osborne would show James pictures he had taken of both females and males, but mainly males, in all sorts of positions and poses. Generally speaking, the pictures were of boys his own age. The photographs were stimulating enough to act as a catalyst for deeper sexual discussions which would often culminate in physical relations between the two. The sex was of all types: sometimes it involved lying on the bed together with both engaging in mutual masturbation, occasionally it involved Osborne massaging the boy all over his body and even, less

frequently, kissing and licking the boy from one end of his body to the other. It was exciting and stimulating to James and the boy recounted his memories with pleasure and with little guilt. In fact, James admitted that he himself initiated some of the later meetings with Osborne and that he looked forward to them with considerable anticipation. When asked why he liked meeting Osborne, James was quite straight-forward: 'Because of the sex,' he said, 'and also because he was like a second father to me – I mean I didn't have a father and he really helped me understand things I knew nothing about.'

Clarence Osborne remembered James with much pleasure also. 'James,' he said to me, 'was a really nice boy. He was soft and gentle and a bit mixed up and I think I really helped him.' Osborne, who kept copious notes of these encounters, records the following observations about the boy.¹

James was an outstanding type of lad. Boarder at a Catholic college, first sign of approaching puberty at about 13½ was the growth of hair and the growth of penis. James told me he had his first intercourse about six months ago. 'I've only had one root. It was on the spur of the moment. I was fairly drunk at the time. I'm sure I got it in. She seduced me. I was in bed in a flat down the coast. I might have passed out. It was at a party.' This boy is clearly one with more sexual experience of masturbation. 'To be honest, I've pulled occasionally and a few girls will pull you off. Girls aged 18, 19 and 15. Mostly they'll leave my prick out of my underpants. She stripped from the waist up. I have a roaring horn, but I can restrain myself. I end up splurrying. Girls pull me off most when they are under the influence of liquor. I frustrate them. Girls dancing get pushed up against me and I've splurried.' James was with me for three years and developed into a good lad.

Osborne's notes continue along these lines, recording intimate details of James' sex life and other parts of his life as well. But always the notes come back to masturbatory techniques; the size of the penis, how often the sperm came out and what colour it was. Osborne recalls that the relationship lasted three years and that he, Osborne, eventually broke it off. When asked how he did this Osborne replied with a quiet assurance:

That was the easy part. Whenever I want to stop a boy coming around I just let him into the house and talk to him and don't give him any sex at all. This is the way I stop most boys from coming again if I don't want them to.

Osborne said that he ended the relationship because he had other boys who were younger and at that stage he felt that James was getting 'too close' to him. Osborne recalled that he didn't dislike James, only that 'a good thing has to come to an end' and end it he did.

James was not unique. Indeed, over a twenty-year period Clarence Osborne met hundreds of boys and adolescents like James and had hundreds of short-lived interactions with others. His files contain accounts of approximately 2500 boys whom he met and related to physically or otherwise.²

I met Clarence Osborne quite by accident. One day he arrived at my office clutching a bag overflowing with documents and papers. A short but stocky man in his late fifties, Osborne had penetrating eyes which watched your every movement.

He introduced himself and proceeded to get down to business. He was seeing me, it appeared, because I was involved in the Queensland Civil Liberties Council and had a reputation, fueled by many years of media publicity, for attempting to protect the rights of the individual against the might of the state – particularly that agent of the state called the police force.

He told me that he feared the Commonwealth Police Force would come and arrest him because the customs department had confiscated a pornographic movie. The movie, it appeared, was of two males engaging in sexual acts and it was typical of the hundreds that are made in Denmark and exported all over the world.

Osborne was not so much concerned with being arrested himself, but more concerned about the police confiscating what he called his 'research'. The research, it transpired, was a mammoth collection of files containing intimate details concerning the physical characteristics of 2500 young males he had met, together with over 8 kilometres of tape-recordings containing conversations between himself and these males. It appeared that Osborne had concealed microphones in his house and in his car which were continuously monitoring those who entered his domain. And the only people who entered his home were young boys and adolescents.

At this stage I was only mildly interested in Osborne's dilemma. He was not, at least in my eyes, a particularly appealing man. His staccato style of speaking, eyes boring into you and general nervous mannerisms were traits that did not make one feel relaxed. But I listened to him, aware of his unease, his obvious tenseness and his agitation. It was just that Osborne's situation with the police did not compare with that of some of my recent clients who alleged that they had been framed, verbed or beaten up by truculent members of the Queensland police force.

As I listened to him I began to find myself, almost reluctantly, getting more involved, more interested – not so much in Clarence Osborne's plight but more in the implications of what that plight represented. One could only marvel, for example, at the energy and patience that Osborne would have had to display in forming relations with 2500 boys.

He told me that although he had now retired, he had been active with most of the boys during his working life first as a court and then as a parliamentary reporter. It struck me that, demanding as court reporting was, it paled into insignificance in comparison with the effort required to make contact with, to interact with, and then to get involved with such an enormous number of boys.

If nothing else though, Clarence Osborne epitomised the protestant ethic. Whether at work or at play he was meticulous to the point of obsession, conscientious in 'getting the job done' and so ordered that he kept intricate records on what he had achieved.

And what he had achieved was overwhelming in its significance. Over twenty years he had collected transcripts and tape-recordings, as well as detailed filing cards relating to the overall physical characteristics of thousands of young boys. He had, in fact, taken measurements of their genital regions with a scientist's precision. These had all been carefully tabulated and filed and were there for the world to use – if the world could find a use for them.

The significance of all this material was not apparent to Osborne nor indeed to me. It was almost as though Osborne had collected data just for the sake of collecting it without any real objective in mind. He was certainly close to his material and several times called it his 'life work' and continually worried about the Commonwealth Police taking it away from him and posterity.

Over the next two months I met Clarence Osborne on several occasions and each time he brought me new material to look at. Transcripts, tape-recordings and his manuscript documenting his own life were freely given to me and supplemented by face-to-face

conversations of how he had met the young men in his life and why he acted as he did.

The basic facts of Osborne's hobby or, in his terms, 'research' were quickly apparent. Clarence Osborne would meet boys in a variety of different settings, establish verbal rapport with them and then attempt to further the relationship in both physical and emotional ways. He contacted young males everywhere, when they were doing anything or everything. He met them on highways as they were hitch-hiking; he met them in parks when they were playing sports; he talked to them outside their homes and in shopping centres – in short Clarence Osborne's *modus operandi* was both varied and complex.

The boys he formed relationships with came from diverse backgrounds. While the literature on boys who seek relationships with adult males suggests that they come from working-class homes marked by poverty, violence and general family breakdown, many hundreds, if not a thousand of the boys he had sex with, came from affluent middle-class homes where there was not always the fighting and alienation between the parents that so characterised the case of James. The rich, prestigious suburbs of semi-tropical Brisbane provided many young men who were, in some cases, to have clandestine affairs with a man who was old enough to be their father and, in some cases, their grandfather. Unbeknown to the solicitors, doctors and real estate salesmen who lived in the plushness of St. Lucia or Indooroopilly or in the hills of Hamilton, their sons were relating to a small, relatively insignificant man (at least as seen by others) with a degree of intimacy that they never manifested towards their 'socially and economically important fathers.

It is not only how he met the boys, or where they came from which is of significance, but also what he did to elicit their co-operation. Most studies of adolescent-adult sex assume that money or material goods change hands in a classic sexual economic transaction. For, it has been argued, why else would a young male wish to offer his body to a man who might be physically unattractive and experientially many years removed from the adolescent world? Robin Lloyd's book *Playland*,³ a recent well-publicised study of male child prostitution, emphasises the mercenary nature of paedophile relationships, while John Olsen's gripping analysis of Houston adolescent mass murders, *The Man with Candy*,⁴ stresses the predatory nature of Corll's approach to the young men he subsequently murdered.

This chapter's title has deliberately been chosen to contrast with Olsen's work. For, unlike Corll, Clarence Osborne did not offer his adolescents money or material goods or promises of extravagant life styles and surroundings. This was the man without candy; a man who was able to achieve great physical and emotional closeness with his youthful partners by verbal means alone.

Of course the phrase 'by verbal means alone' simplifies a complex set of motives and interactions that were evident in the interplay between Osborne and his partners. As we will see there were a variety of reasons why the adolescents sought a relationship with a middle-aged man and a variety of emotional supports that the man offered to the young males. And, just because no money or goods changed hands does not mean that the physical relationships established were morally justified.

The moral issues dominate both the specific case of Clarence Osborne and the general questions concerning paedophilia. Most of us express, when hearing or reading about adult-child sexual encounters, a feeling of disgust or disquiet. Such encounters run heavily against our current cultural patterns and directly violate the fundamental principles of Judaeo-Christian morality. We are all aware, as well, of the severe legal sanctions that

Anglo-American laws prescribe for persons caught engaging in such relationships.

Despite my own extensive intellectual and professional training in psychology and sociology, I initially reacted with some degree of discomfort towards both Osborne and his paedophilic practices. I found it unnerving to sense his obvious enjoyment in recounting to me his sensual experiences with boys and adolescents and to read his sexually saturated prose liberally sprinkled with explicit descriptions of the physical attributes of his youthful partners. To me, as to most adults, Osborne's exploits were a classic example of an adult using his superior experience and power to obtain sexual favours from inexperienced and naive youngsters. What could be more -morally reprehensible than this? And unwittingly, perhaps, I reflected on how I would react to a heterosexual alternative – say, my own eight-year-old daughter 'voluntarily' engaging in sexual relations with an adult male.

Personalising social issues is generally an emotional rather than a rational way to approach them. In the case of my own daughter and a hypothetical other man, I am sure I would act towards the man with a considerable degree of verbal aggression and, perhaps, violence. But while Clarence Darrow's well-known dictum – 'issues of this sort (referring in this case to capital punishment) are solved by emotion and not by reason' – might well be right, this is no justification for ignoring the intellectual dimensions that demand explanation when it comes to analysing social problems.

So during my interviews with Clarence Osborne and in the research leading up to this book, I attempted to apply the dispassionate rules of rational enquiry by analysing his relationships rather than reacting with a gut level antagonism. Often this was not possible. The 'feeling' component in all of us is profound and often distorts our attempts to see the world in purely intellectual terms. Nevertheless, I was able to win the confidence of Osborne and obtain information from him about his activities and they serve as the basis for this book.

And what of Osborne? He ended his life eighteen months later by committing suicide. At the time when he saw me he was worried that the federal police might raid his house. They did not, but the state police fulfilled his premonition by visiting his house and searching it.

A mother had overheard her son talking about a man who had taken nude photographs of him. When she questioned him the son told her about Clarence Osborne and how he had taken photographs of himself and others, all of whom had voluntarily posed in the nude.

The mother did not make a formal complaint to the police. Instead she casually mentioned the incident at a social occasion to the wife of a policeman. This officer then arranged to stake out Osborne, and with his colleagues, caught Osborne taking photographs of boys.

Police went to Clarence Osborne's house, searched it thoroughly and took three car loads of tape-recordings, files and photographs, together with Osborne himself, back to police headquarters. As the police involved were not from the squad which usually deals with such matters – the juvenile aid squad – they were reluctant to take further action against Osborne until the material had been more thoroughly perused and legal advice on what Osborne could specifically be charged with was obtained. So they drove Osborne back to his home.

No one except the police involved really knows what transpired between the time of Osborne's detention and the time he died. All we do know is that, on the surface at least,

both Osborne and the police co-operated with each other. When the police took Osborne back to his house Osborne voluntarily showed them some films and photographs of boys he had taken. He certainly talked freely to them about his life and activities.

We do not really know how the police responded to this small and strange man. It is clear that some police who were involved initially in Osborne's detention were nauseated by Osborne's activity. But what was said to Osborne by them is a secret which again, only they and Osborne know. What we do know, however, is that the police were most co-operative with Osborne for reasons that are still unclear. They did, after all, drive him back to his house.

Clarence Osborne must have used the time at his house to contemplate his future and the options that he had in dealing with it. He clearly decided that there was only one path to take. That night Osborne completed his final act. He went to his car, attached one end of a rubber hose to its exhaust pipe and placed the other inside the vehicle itself. He gulped down a large dose of sleeping tablets, turned on the engine, and waited for the end to come. Very soon he was dead.

Paedophilia: The Last Taboo

Like the topic of death and dying, adult-child sexual relationships are rarely discussed either in the popular media or in academic discourse. It is the last taboo and attitudes about it are deeply engrained and almost always conservative.

We could simply write off this conservatism as nothing other than blind prejudice and irrational thinking. It is, for example, not unnatural for a parent to be deeply concerned about an older person taking sexual liberties with a child or adolescent. Many adults would object to an older person using his superior experience and power to obtain physical gratification. The same adults might also feel hostility towards these people for employing what they would define as guile and subterfuge in getting the child to co-operate with them. Others would worry incessantly about the traumatic short and long-term effects of the sexual contact on the child's psycho-social and sexual development.

All these concerns raise more general issues on the rights of children and adults. For example, are we to allow sexual feelings and expression in children and adolescents and if so, who should control these feelings? Does an adult have the right to censor such expressions and if so, what means can he or she reasonably use? Some adults might argue that children have a perfect right to masturbate, but would draw back from sanctioning sexual activity with even another child, let alone an adult.

And what are the rights of children and adolescents anyway? Despite the rhetoric in recent years about children's liberation, only perfunctory moves have been made to advance these rights. In some countries children have a right to say what custody and access arrangements will be entered into after a marital break-up; but their voice, while listened to by family courts, does not necessarily determine such custody and access.

Progressive schools often allow children and adolescents to say how they feel about certain educational programmes existing in the schools, but it is rare for educational institutions to allow youngsters to determine the nature of the programmes. And when it comes to the subject of sexuality, children have no rights at all. Not surprisingly, a subject as emotionally charged as sexuality is seen to be under the exclusive control of adults who rigidly prescribe the rules of conduct appropriate for its expression — which, in the case of

children, almost always do not allow any sexual expression at all.

There may well be valid reasons for restricting the expression of childhood sexuality generally and adult-child/adolescent physical relations specifically, but such reasons have to be balanced against the realities of the costs involved in repressive restrictions concerning sexual expression. As we will see when Clarence Osborne's relationships are analysed, some of the young males that he interacted with were appallingly ignorant about their physical development and sexual equipment. Others were so obsessed with the taboo subject of sex that they pursued sexual contacts with a ruthlessness and dedication that their teachers and parents would never have dreamt of. Others suffered the consequences of sexual ignorance throughout their lives with, in many cases, disastrous effects for their wives or partners.

The costs involved in restricting childhood sexual expression are, in themselves, no argument for more permissive social policies towards children. Such costs, however, force us to face up to the dilemmas that confront the whole issue of sexuality and young people. What should be the age of consent in sexual matters? Should there even be an age of consent? Whom should we punish in the case of consensual adult-child/adolescent sexual contacts? The child, the adult, no-one at all? If we say that adults have no rights to have sexual contact with children because of the former's greater power and experience, does this mean that we should also condemn relationships between adult men and some women because the men have more social; economic and experiential power?

It is precisely because of these issues that heterosexuals form an alliance with homosexuals, both roundly condemning paedophilic relationships. Many lesbians of a feminist mould would argue, for example, that just as men have used their superior position of power to extract sexual favours from disadvantaged females, so too do adult males use their superior knowledge and experience of life to dictate the sexual interactions that occur between them and young males. In a slight twist to this argument some lesbians have suggested that because women are powerless, it is not nearly as morally reprehensible for an adult female to have sexual relations with an adolescent female as it is for an adult male to have sexual relations with either an adolescent female or male.

The argument is that females, compared with males, have little economic or social power. Adolescent boys are in a similar position to females in this regard, so that males who sexually relate to them are in a position to use their superior economic and social positions oppressively.

Nor do boy-lovers obtain much support for their cause from their male homosexual colleagues. To many gay people, paedophiles threaten to reinforce all the 'straight' stereotypes that homosexual activists have been trying to shatter. For many years gays have emphasised that adult homosexuals do not, in the vast majority of cases, have an interest in children or adolescents, that gay teachers will not seduce their charges, and that the cases of child-molesting amongst homosexuals are far fewer than they are for heterosexuals. Paedophiles, particularly those who proselytise their activities, are seen as undoing most of the constructive public relations work that the gay community has engaged in.

Clarence Osborne and Paedophiles

Rejected by their homosexual counterparts, scorned by lesbian activists and hated by most heterosexuals, the Clarence Osbornes of this world find themselves isolated. Rarely are

they listened to, their writings considered in an open-minded way or their calls for an acknowledgement of childhood sexuality heard.

Paedophiles are, in short, treated with contempt by all around them. They are often hounded by law enforcement officers and dealt draconian sentences by judicial officers. They epitomise to many of us the greatest of all sexual deviants. If the term 'pervert' is applied to any one group of people, it would be applied by the average man or woman to child-lovers.

We should not, however, let the antagonism concerning child-lovers cloud the complex issues that arise from an analysis of the relationships they engage in. Paedophiles might not be the folk heroes challenging the social and sexual frontiers that some of them see themselves as, but they also might not be the folk devils that the rest of the community generally acknowledge them as being.

Clarence Osborne's life raises a variety of general matters that surmount the rhetoric and stigma attached to men who love boys. There are not only the issues of consent and the expression of childhood and adolescent sexuality that emerge from an analysis of a case like Osborne's, but also the wider issues relating to those factors that either pushed or pulled the young males towards the older man.

We as a community should attempt to understand the dynamics involved in the attraction held not only by Clarence Osborne for the boys, but also the attraction that the boys felt towards Osborne. Why did many of the youngsters keep going back to him? Can we assume that their parents were out of touch with their sons, unable to communicate with them in an open and spontaneous manner? Did Clarence Osborne fill this vacuum by offering them not only physical but also emotional comfort? And are most parents so out of touch with their offspring that if the circumstances were right, their sons would form close physical relations with adult men? And do young males have a need for a rich variety of physical and affectionate experiences that we as adults have hitherto not recognised?

These and a host of other questions arise from studying Clarence Osborne's life. This book makes an honest and open attempt to trace the motivations and effects of his relationships in an attempt to look both at paedophiles generally and the issues that they raise for society.

Clarence Osborne's story, by itself, is of no more than transitory value. But in so much it raises general issues of a legal, social and psychological kind it has an importance that transcends the immediate. By using his life to illustrate these wider issues it is hoped that some balanced assessment can be obtained on the subject of paedophilia.

It is not only the nature of paedophiles and paedophilia that is illuminated by Osborne's material. The great Dr Kinsey, in the only other case similar to Osborne's I could find, recounted the case of a man who had relations with 600 boys, 200 girls and countless adults, and kept records on them. According to Kinsey, 'It took us seventeen hours to get his history, which was the basis for a fair amount of chapter five in the Male volume concerning child sexuality.'⁵ Clearly Osborne's life and records have profound significance for further understanding male sexuality generally. Let us turn now then, to the man who provides us with this material.

Notes

1. The Man without Candy

1. These observations are taken from Osborne's manuscript and notes. Similar comments by Osborne used in this book are from the same source. The comments have not been edited, although care has been taken to omit comments by him that could identify his past partners.
2. It is possible that there were many more boys and youths in Osborne's life. The two and a half thousand boys are only those on whom Osborne kept some records.
3. Lloyd, R., *Playland*, Quartet, London, 1979.
4. Olsen, J., *The Man with Candy*, Talmy Franklin, London, 1975.
5. Pomeroy, W. B., *Dr Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research*, Signet, New York, 1972, p. 129.

Chapter Two

Who was Clarence Osborne?

When Clarence Osborne committed suicide and the media exposed his sexual inclinations, most people conjured up a picture of him that was firmly anchored to his paedophiliac activities. There are, after all, few images more frightening to citizens than the proverbial dirty old man handing out candy to young children at the edge of a playground.

‘Dirty old men’ have the same image in western countries that terrorists have – they are assumed to be violent, mysterious, infectiously depraved figures who symbolise an end to the prevailing moral order. Visual symbols spring forth from these semantics. People who had never seen Osborne told me that they pictured him to be ‘large and flabby’ with ‘small narrow eyes’ and ‘big hands’. In fact Osborne was short and muscular, with large and expansive eyes and relatively small hands.

Stereotypes occasionally have some basis in reality and the way Osborne lived his life and the way he was seen by acquaintances and workmates reinforce some, while nullifying other aspects of the paedophiliac image.

I interviewed a number of men and women who knew Osborne – workmates, neighbours, policemen and acquaintances – and there were several points of agreement between them on his personal characteristics. Undoubtedly the major trait that most people remembered was his obsessiveness in pursuing anything he did. Osborne liked detail (what some would call trivia) to the point of alienating all those around him.

His own manuscript and paedophiliac activities bring this obsession out. Every detail of a youth’s penis was carefully tabulated with precise measurements and a massive collection of filing cards lovingly recorded his observations. The recordings he made of the conversations between himself and the boys, which were on 8 kilometres of tape, were carefully transcribed and typed out. He was a precise man who had to get, in his own words, ‘everything right’.

And he usually did. Clarence Osborne was a professional reporter who worked first in the courts and then in the parliamentary reporting bureaux. Not only was he a reporter but also, according to his colleagues, one of the best reporters in the country. According to a man now in a senior position in the Australian Government Reporting Service, Osborne was one of the finest practitioners of his profession in the country. This man said:

Clarence was an outstanding writer, there’s no doubt about that. And he was a good grammarian; but it wasn’t only this. It was the manner and the way in which he just expressed his knowledge. He was absolutely conscientious, single-mindedly dedicated to recording with accuracy what occurred in the court or in parliament.

Another former colleague of Osborne’s talked about ‘Clarrie’s genius’ when referring to his reporting skills and stated that Osborne could record the thrust of a torrid court cross-examination with more accuracy than anyone else he knew.

But while his colleagues might have admired his reporting abilities they were highly critical of his ability to get on with people. Rookie court reporters were petrified of Osborne’s savage tongue and fearful of incurring his sarcasm when they made an error.

Osborne's professional abilities overawed them and, though small in stature, his enormous ego and biting comments made him a formidable figure.

Many junior reporters spoke of a vindictive trait in Osborne and a tendency to humiliate young cadets who made mistakes. As a colleague put it:

Believe me, every boy who's been through his training class has bawled his eyes out at some stage and thought about a shorthand career as being absolutely hopeless because Osborne set such a high ideal.

His obsessive nature and perfectionist ideals in work were emulated in his leisure activities. He took, for example, a keen interest in genetics and this was expressed in the breeding and collection of caged birds. His house was redesigned to cater for this hobby and his interest in it culminated in his election as secretary of the local bird society and editor of a magazine dealing with birds.

According to Osborne 'pressure of work' forced him to give up this hobby and he began to study human genetics through another animal – the young human male. As an adolescent himself Osborne had joined the Young Men's Christian Association and while there, took an active part in gymnastics and weight training. After giving up bird breeding he became an owner of a small gym and also executive officer of a church youth society.

In both these places he organised physical training for adolescent to males and often had mothers pleading with him to take on their sons and develop their physiques. Osborne recalled his days at a gym with these words:

I really began to study boys there. The mothers lined up to bring the boys to me. They wanted them to be men and were worried that some of them were puny or small. I've had mothers pleading with me to take their boys in but often I had to say 'no' because I had so many. I found studying boys a lot better than studying birds.

It was from the days of running a gym that Osborne's real hobby developed. He began to take measurements of some of the boys' physiques, began a complex record-keeping system of his findings and started what was to become an enormous photographic library of the male body.

His obsessiveness with young boys was not lost on his workmates or on some of his neighbours, although few of them considered his interest to have a sexual connotation. A colleague who was junior to Osborne recalled:

I personally was absolutely astounded about the things said in the newspapers about him. They said Clarry was clandestine and secretive about his interest in boys but there wasn't anything clandestine or secretive about his interest in a them. Clarry was absolutely open about it. I mean he was open with it with the boys in the office, he was open with it if he was walking down the street, he was open with it in talking to the fellows in the office. He would often say things like, 'Look, I had so and so come out, and I can show you his development, you know I have a file on him.' We didn't think there was anything sexual about it, even though we knew he liked to look at male bodies.

And, even with the revelations in the newspapers about the tape recordings, files and photographs, many of Osborne's acquaintances still refused to believe that he had a sexual

interest in the boys. Mothers of boys, some work colleagues and others whom he met of: considered that Osborne's motives had been misconstrued by the us police and the media and that his only crime was to take a psycho-logical, and not a sexual interest in young males.

Others, of course, were wise after the event and often stated that they 'knew all along' that Osborne was physically involved with his young charges. Typical of these was a man who stated with what clearly was only retrospective wisdom that he 'always knew Osborne was pretty strange and that he had little boys coming into the house.

Apparently knowing Osborne's propensity for boys was not enough to deter him from allowing his own son to be involved with the older man. Police informed me that this particular man regularly sanctioned his son visiting Osborne and indeed, on some occasions actually encouraged it.

While some workmates or colleagues might have defended Osborne's motives, few were willing to say that they liked him as a human being. His colleagues were quick to point out his tendency to humiliate his professional inferiors and his verbal aggression towards those he disagreed with.

Two colleagues were willing to say that Osborne was their professional mentor and to acknowledge the career boost they obtained from some of his recommendations to superiors. But they worked uneasily with him and felt unhappy about mixing with him socially. A workmate recalled the occasion when he invited Osborne home for dinner. Osborne was apparently contemptuous of trivial dinner-table conversation and made it abundantly clear that he considered himself intellectually superior to all at the dinner party.

On a later occasion when the same colleague, feeling sorry for Osborne's apparent social isolation, asked him around for dinner, Osborne arrived with a collection of slides taken during his frequent overseas tours to the Philippines and Thailand. The enormous number of pictures of young boys that Osborne showed during the evening did not unduly disturb the host and hostess – they were bored and felt sorry for Osborne's lack of social skills.

Most people who knew Osborne saw him as a lonely, isolated man with no friends. But few realised that the loneliness and social isolation were self-imposed. He had no need for adults and did not consider himself lonely. Indeed, he had many friends, nearly all of them boys or adolescents and shared his life with them. It was when he was with boys that Osborne felt happy and relaxed and everything else in life was of minor importance. Clarence Osborne, contrary to what acquaintances felt, did not miss after-work drinks with the boys, female company, or the small talk between people that characterises much social interaction.

So what sort of man was Clarry Osborne? The picture that neighbours, workmates and acquaintances paint is a reasonably consistent one. It is of a man who was obsessively preoccupied with detail and exactness. It is of a man who understood the rules and regulations of his profession, but often could not see the broader picture or understand the politics of the job.

He was not an educated man in a formal sense but he was very well read, particularly in those areas that interested him. But even here, in his 'research' – the collection of information about young male bodies – he had no conception of what to do with the material he so carefully documented. It was almost as though he collected material just to

collect material. There was no grand plan, no overall strategy, no hypothesis to be explored. In the end he realised that this was what he had lacked and that realisation contributed to the profound a depression that he exhibited while seeing me. At one stage during our conversations he said, 'If this research is no good my life's been no good.'

Few around him realised that his life was his research. Instead, they probably (and correctly) saw him as a man who despised incompetence and who was capable of verbal aggression against those he considered intellectually inferior to himself. They also saw him as socially isolated from other adults, a pathetic figure who battled on with life's vagaries alone and unaided. No one who worked with Osborne or lived near him really wanted to get close to him; nor were they under any illusion that Osborne would allow them to do so, even if they wanted to.

But to say that Clarence Osborne was disliked by all adults would be overstating the case. Some colleagues remember the odd act of kindness, such as remembering a birthday or helping them get a promotion, with warmth. If anything, others saw him as a paltry figure, no real threat to anyone and certainly not dangerous. They often speculated about his upbringing and early adolescence, but one had any idea on just what form that development took.

A Growing Obsession

In his manuscript Osborne constantly referred to his own very strict puritanical upbringing and often described his own childhood as being for this reason 'hypocritical'. He stated that he was born into a very repressive religion and was not allowed to play with children outside the particular church that he belonged to. He had a brother two years older than himself from whom he was emotionally distanced, but he often wrote warmly about the 'very cordial relationship that he had with his twin sisters who were four years older.

Osborne did not feel close to any other female figures, including his mother, whom he described as 'strict' and 'aloof. When recounting his first sight of female genitalia he was singularly unimpressed, describing the female organ as 'a red hairless crack'.¹

Sex became very important to Osborne early on in life, however. He recounts, with obvious relish, his frequent and intense masturbatory habits during his childhood. These habits later took the form of mostly 'pulling up and down on the edges of doors or on an iron bedpost, up to five or six times a day from thirteen to fifteen years of age, with the most devastating guilt feelings'. His religious upbringing undoubtedly contributed to his guilt about sexual matters and he writes in his manuscript that he felt sure he was 'likely to be struck down dead during a storm while masturbating'.

When this did not happen Osborne claimed that the guilt slowly diminished and masturbation proceeded with vigour. Significantly, Osborne attempts to justify a lot of his actions with his youthful partners on the grounds that he was removing the considerable fears they held about the destructive aspects of sex and masturbation.

Osborne admitted to having sexual relations with the young boys under his care while an executive officer of the church youth society but was confused about his real sexual orientation. Clearly, this must have been a time of turmoil for him because, in his own words, he had three 'hectic affairs with females and about the same number equally intense with males'.

Uncharacteristically, Osborne steers away from describing the nature of the sexual relationships he had with his women friends. Certainly they involved intercourse, but just what he felt about it is not stated explicitly, although it is pretty clear from the chauvinistic comments throughout his manuscript that he did not have much time for females, either intellectually or physically. His early relations with males seem to have been no better. He states that it was only in later life than an element of intimacy or affection crept into his relationships with others of his own sex. But even here Osborne has reservations about his own ability to achieve intimacy with another human being. In a telling line in his manuscript he states, 'I now accept that I could not relate fully with another human being.'

Osborne said that his first serious interest in males began to develop when he took an interest in body building and photography. He used to photograph colleagues in training camps during body-building exercises and this hobby continued throughout his life (his files contain literally thousands of photographs taken of many of the boys he had relations with). It was about this stage that his obsessiveness with the male physique began to manifest itself and he remarks:

I can remember being astonished at the number of young athletes of sixteen and seventeen who stuffed handkerchiefs down their briefs to make the genitals more prominent for the photos.

Although Osborne was, at this stage, refraining from making overt sexual overtures to most of the boys whom he met in the gym, he began to develop a sophisticated and elaborate system of keeping records on their physical attributes. He admits to his own obsessiveness in obtaining these details:

Very soon I developed an almost insatiable search for accurate information [y on both physical development and behaviour of others, partly from a desire to understand myself better as I did not fully know why I was doing it.

The boys whom Osborne came across during this period were nearly as interested as Osborne was in their own physical development. He recounts how they would show an interest in whether they had grown 'bigger' from the time of the first recording to the last and how they compared with other boys of their own age. They would confess their masturbatory experiences to him in explicit terms and would ask him to tell them about the behaviour of other boys. All this is, of course, not unusual given the fact that male adolescents are usually fairly ignorant of sexual matters and of their own bodies specifically.

Gradually Osborne began to see himself as 'a therapeutic tic consultant'² offering young males a service which nobody else was offering. Slowly his card index on young boys grew into a dossier in which the name, the date of birth, the age, the height, the weight, the wrist and ankle measurements and circumcision status were carefully recorded.

Before long additional measurements were added to his card and dossier index, including the size of the penis both when it was flaccid and when it was erect, the width of the eye of the penis and all the variations of sexual activity that young males could possibly engage in either alone or with other partners.

Osborne clearly found measuring boys was a way of getting closer to them physically. He states in his manuscript:

It was almost invariably a natural development – and by no means a planned

manoeuvre – to jerk off many a lad through the sheer strength of his stimulated desire for measuring the erection. Moreover there was a mutual interest in the quantity and quality of ejaculate.

The assistance that some parents gave to Osborne in the pursuit of his interest in boys was sometimes astonishing. Osborne recounts the case of a young mother who 'through devious means' brought Osborne into contact with a young boy – her son – and who invited Osborne to their farm in the country and deliberately put Osborne in the bed with her two young sons. According to Osborne the woman encouraged him to take one of the boys on interstate trips and gave him money to buy condoms for the boy in case her son should have a relationship with a girl. It should be noted here that paedophiliac literature gives many other examples of mothers who actively encourage a man to have sexual relationships with their sons and treat them as though they were fathers showing their sons the ways of the world. Osborne states himself that:

From 1959 till about 1974 I was literally besieged by parents who wanted opinions on the bodies or sexuality of their boys and by boys who wanted to build themselves up or to discover whether they were tearing themselves down.

From this point on Osborne's range of contacts kaleidoscoped. He made contacts with boys at swimming pools, beaches, outside toilets, outside schools, but perhaps most of all while they were hitch-hiking. His recording collection was also enlarged as he installed a concealed tape-recorder in his car to supplement the one in his house. Over twenty years this method enabled him to record conversations between himself and his partners ranging from fifteen minute car conversations to two or three hour meetings with his boys at his home.

These were all carefully categorised and sub-indexed into his dossier files and many of them carefully transcribed. To Osborne it was a challenge: to elicit 'accurate and useful information'. Clearly Osborne was still suffering from some guilt about what he was doing because he says:

I saved my conscience with the knowledge that I was collecting the information in good faith and without malicious intent and with the same meticulousness as a professional, although of course without the protection of a profession.

His photographic collection was a mixture of erotica and pornography. Many of the films and photographs he had taken himself were studied profiles of the young male body that were tastefully and expertly presented. They would not have gone amiss in an art book on the human body and could easily have graced the pages of a coffee table tome on human anatomy.

Other photographs taken by Osborne were clearly pornographic, however, (no matter how hard one tries to restrict the use of the word). There were pictures of boys pushing their penises into vacuum hoses and plastic pipes, pictures of youth with sperm spurting from their erect penises and a picture of boys with eggs in their anuses emulating hens laying eggs. By no stretch of the imagination could these pictures be called erotic or photogenic, they were clearly distasteful (to most observers) and safely subsumed under the category of 'porn'.

While Osborne might well have justified the activities of the youths at using his time-honoured excuse of 'I'm just teaching the boys about sex', there can be no doubt that many

of the photographs were sent to overseas paedophiliac magazines for publication. Some were in fact published and it is clear that Osborne was not particularly concerned in these cases with preserving the anonymity of his partners. Yet to there was no commercial exploitation intended even here. It is obvious from Osborne's own writings that he simply wanted to share his obsession with young male bodies with all those who wished to listen and look.

Osborne's Viewing of Himself

While Osborne might have believed he operated 'in good faith' many would seriously challenge the legitimacy of his actions. In the next chapter I consider the ways he related to his youthful partners in some detail and readers can judge for themselves the morality of his actions in this regard.

Osborne had some firm ideas about his own morality even if from time to time what he thought of himself changed dramatically. When Osborne first met me and I showed obvious caution in interacting with him, Osborne, with some degree of anger, reacted to my coolness with the following remarks:

Who do you think I am? What sort of person do you think I am? What do you think I do with children? Do you think I rape them? Do you think I castrate them? Do you think I murder them? Do you think I cut them up into little pieces? No, what I do is kiss them! And they kiss me! I caress them. They caress me. When we want to masturbate together we masturbate together, but sometimes that doesn't happen in our relationship and sometimes we just in talk.

His own *modus operandi* in relating to the boys is of considerable significance when attempting to understand both the motivations of the boys and the psychology of Osborne himself. Osborne was well aware of how important it was to gain rapport with his youths:

I cannot stress too much that the whole key to gaining information is to establish a total rapport with the lad. It is the skill in establishing that rapport which determines the value of the information.

Osborne saw himself as a skilled craftsman carefully establishing trust between himself and his youthful charges by using techniques built up over many years. But was Osborne utterly Machiavellian, simply using different techniques with different boys according to what he thought would be most successful? In a significant passage in his manuscript Osborne tries to answer this question:

Frequently a lad will ask me straight out, What are you? What is all this for? Are you a psychologist? Are you a doctor? I always answered truthfully; as the lad leaves the car he will say, 'I hope I've helped in some way. What have you made of me? Am I a dirty bastard? Do you think I'm a freak?'

While Osborne writes that he 'answered truthfully' we have to be cautious before accepting his view. He often would not deny that he was a doctor, preferring to say nothing or, alternately, just to say he was 'doing research'. And a distinct impression is gained from Osborne's own writings that he would do and say whatever he thought was most effective in getting information from the boys he met or in attempting to obtain sex

from them. Thus he writes:

Several different lads have fallen for another simple ploy – simply to ask him at the last minute before stopping to let him out whether he would be prepared to swear on the Bible to the truth of everything he had said. Quite often he will say, ‘Yes, except for the things I honestly can’t remember’ or ‘Yes, everything except one. I know I shouldn’t have said that.’ Once the lie had been about wet dreams; most often it is that the frequency of masturbation has been played down or recent masturbation denied.

The implication of the ‘ploy’ (to use Osborne’s word) of asking the boys whether they would be prepared to swear on the Bible as to the honesty of what they had said about their sex life was to make Osborne appear more authoritative, professional and therefore acceptable to the boys. ‘Ploys’ in fact were used all the time in Osborne’s attempts to get what he wanted. For example, Osborne writes with amoral truthfulness that a technique he found particularly effective was to pull over to the side of a road or to a parking area to take some measurements of the boy’s penis and to:

test the truthfulness of the boy in the rather different and more strained atmosphere of a stationary vehicle where he feels more vulnerable after the comparative safety of driving towards his destination even with a stranger in strange car.

Osborne saw himself as a man for all boys. He was supremely confident of his ability to get what he wanted from any of them and unashamedly admitted that he would adjust his technique to the characteristics and situations of his partners:

With the appropriate subtlety it is extraordinarily easy to get the pants off even the most hardened hitch-hiker as long as he is satisfied of the bona fides and integrity of intention of his driver.

Osborne was probably no different from many heterosexual males in his approaches to his partners. The ‘end justifies the means’ philosophy comes through time and time again in his writings. He, like many others, rationalised his actions by using ‘neutralising techniques. For example, he described himself as just assisting the boys out’. He considered that he helped the lads ‘understand themselves’ and ‘got rid of the guilt about sex the boys had’. It is of course debatable whether his actions led to any of these consequences. What is not debatable is the fact that Osborne deliberately used techniques, or what he called ‘ploys’, in order to fulfil his sexual ambitions.

In the final analysis one paragraph from Osborne’s own memoirs tells us more about how he saw himself than anything else he wrote:

My own memoirs would be of some interest perhaps to a psychiatrist, partly because my own life has not been without its lewd highlights, but more because of my almost inhumanly objective approach. As far as I am able to judge, I observe others with complete detachment, without the slightest element of judgement (even though at times one part of me reacts with admiration or abhorrence at what I am being told). I do not regard this as paradoxical. My obsession with accuracy and perfectionism – my preoccupation with detail – sometimes bothers me and certainly affects my social relationships with people. People tend to regard one who aims at perfection as believing that he has

achieved it.

Osborne then was very perceptive about his dominant personality characteristics. He was, as all his colleagues and acquaintances have pointed out, preoccupied with accuracy and perfection and this obsessiveness was recognised by Osborne himself. He was 'coolly detached' from many of those around him, although he was quite capable of relating to some of his young partners with feeling and passion. But predominantly he was, to use his own words, the 'inhumanly objective', preferring to construct his own morality rather than subscribing to the morality of others. And Osborne's morality had a Machiavellian quality about it that made, at least to him, the verbal means justify the physical end.

He was not without beliefs and values though. While for Osborne all sex was liberating, some sex was less liberating than other forms. Osborne plays down anal intercourse as a sexual way of relating to boys and is positively antagonistic towards the concept of sex with animals. Similarly, he refers often to 'dirty old men – even dirtier than I am' although we are never quite told what 'dirtier than I am' specifically means in this context.

Just as he graded paedophiles he also graded the boys. To Osborne the 'better class boys are those who answer with honesty my questions about their sex life'. He states for example that 'criminal types, and poor types are the most difficult to wheedle information out of. And throughout his writings he frequently refers to certain boys as being 'poor types' or 'lacking intelligence' or of 'a low-class type'.

Clarence Osborne was a man who made many judgements, not only about others but also about himself. If, as he frequently did, he harshly dealt with others, he was even harsher with himself. In the end his self-confessed obsessiveness followed him to his death. A poignant suicide note found in his gas-filled car succinctly summed up Osborne's predominant characteristic – his attempt to be precise about everything. The note was written while carbon monoxide was pouring into the car from the exhaust pipe as he patiently waited for the fumes and the sleeping tablets to take effect. The scrawled handwriting simply said: 'I've been sitting here ten minutes and I'm still alive....'

His obsessiveness with detail did not lead either to success in life or to a triumphant death.

Men Who Love Boys

Categorising men and women is at best a hazardous business. The idiosyncrasies and variations of human behaviour are enormous and whether we are talking about paedophiles, heterosexuals or homosexuals, the differences within various groups in terms of personality characteristics are as great as the differences between groups. But there are some commonalties in people who occupy a certain marginal position in society and Clarence Osborne's life typified many of the common characteristics found among paedophiles.

Men who love boys are, like Osborne, generally lonely, socially isolated and sexually inhibited individuals. And, as we have seen in Osborne's case, they frequently come from homes where sex was a taboo subject and parental sexual instruction completely lacking. They devote most of their energies to pursuing their interest in boys and commonly collect extensive literature – both pornographic and serious – on the subject of paedophilia.³

It is not unusual for them to have scores, sometimes hundreds, and occasionally, as in the case of Osborne, thousands of youthful partners during their lifetime although most of

these relationships are short-lived. The high risk nature of their sexual pursuits make their day-to-day existence hazardous, and depression and feelings of loneliness accompany long periods of their life.⁴ Although figures are not available it appears to be very likely that suicide rates are high amongst boy-lovers – an inevitable result of their isolation and marginal position.

Violent tendencies within them are nearly always expressed in words and it is exceptionally rare for them to show aggression, either verbal or physical, towards their partners. They are not adults who deliberately flaunt convention but like Osborne, they are 'generally timorous, shy characters whose relationships with other adults, even on a non-sexual level, tend to be distant and unsatisfying'.⁵

While Osborne was typical of many men who love boys he was in some respects different from large numbers of them. The British paedophile organisation, P.I.E. (Paedophile Information Exchange), carried out a survey of their members and 96 paedophiles out of a total UK membership of 114 filled in details of their personal life'.⁶

The survey showed that adults who are sexually attracted to children are not just old men, dirty or otherwise. Contrary to popular belief there are considerable numbers among younger adults who may well be married. In fact one in five of all male paedophiles was married and the average age was slightly younger than the United Kingdom average for adult men over twenty.

Unlike Osborne the majority of those who responded to the PIE. survey were attracted to adults as well as to children. However a higher proportion of homosexuals (48 per cent) than of bisexuals (33 per cent) regarded themselves as exclusively paedophile, with the heterosexuals being the least exclusive (17 per cent).

Paedophiles were quite specific about the age of the children they were attracted to. Babies and infants attracted very few, but interest increased with each additional year of a child's growth reaching a peak at the age of ten and eleven in the case of heterosexuals, twelve for bisexuals and thirteen for homosexuals.

The theory that paedophiles are sexually attracted to children because they themselves were seduced by an adult in childhood finds little support. Some said that their first sexual experience was with an adult, but in far many more cases the other person related to was a child of roughly the same age. And even though the P.I.E. survey has limitations, both in terms of sample size and the quality of information obtained, other studies confirm the general picture of paedophiles presented by the British organisation.

Surveys of this type do not allow us to explore the dynamics of the relationships between boys and men. It is only from the detailed study of paedophiles and their partners that a picture emerges as to what really occurs in such relationships. Clarence Osborne's writings, particularly his propensity to record the conversations that occurred between himself and his youthful partners gives the researcher a unique opportunity to further understand the sexual and emotional components of relationships between men and boys. It is to these topics and conversations that we turn in the next chapter.

Notes

2. A Man Who Loves Boys

1. Unless otherwise stated this and other statements by Osborne about himself and his life came from his manuscript.
2. Osborne often used this phrase to describe his modus operandi, presumably to help himself rationalise his activities.
3. Police sources suggest that extensive libraries on paedophilia are commonplace amongst convicted paedophiles.
4. West, D. J., *Homosexuality Re-examined*, Duckworth, London, 1977, p.214.
5. *Ibid.*, p.214.
6. *PIE Survey of Members 1975*, PIE Press, London, 1978.

Chapter Three

Which Boys to Pick On?

To Osborne any young male was a potential sexual partner. His confidence in his own abilities were such that he boasted several times about his capability of getting involved with any boy or adolescent he met. Osborne's working philosophy was brutally frank but clearly effective: according to this strange middle-aged man, 'Any lad has only cock on his mind and if you remember that you'll be able to get their pants down.'

However, the boys whose pants he tried to 'get down' were not just randomly chosen. He looked for particular signs in particular boys before he approached them and was well aware of the best settings and situations in which to find appropriate boys. At its simplest but most basic level Osborne generally searched for young males who were alone, either hitch-hiking, standing by themselves near a park or outside a bus shelter or in a similar location. To be alone was not enough though. In Osborne's own words, the boys had 'to look as though they might be willing'. There were some obvious signs that indicated to Osborne that they might be potential partners for him. The signs were in their dress and also in their stance. For example, Osborne was attracted to boys who wore tight-fitting jeans or tight-fitting shorts because as he told me, 'They're trying to show off their cocks and if they're trying to show off their cocks it means they want someone to play with them.' He also looked very hard at boys at a close range and if they returned the glance without shifting their eyes too much he knew they were willing and interested in being picked up.

In fact Osborne was adamant that many boys were alone because they wanted to be picked up, and the success that he had with many of the boys, together with many of the comments the boys made themselves, would indicate that his assessment of the situation was correct. Osborne claimed that he could also tell the boys wanted to be with older men by the way they stood – if they had what Osborne called a 'come on' stance then 'they really wanted to make it with him'. If Osborne stopped and offered a lift to a boy who was hitch-hiking he could tell immediately whether there was any chance of a relationship with him. According to Osborne boys were discriminating about the sort of adult partners they picked up and a boy would look very carefully into the car and at the driver before deciding to accept a ride. Osborne stated that if there was any hesitation on the part of the boy in accepting a lift then he (Osborne) would not consider making a sexual overture to the boy. And, just to ensure himself against taking a ride that might be 'useless', Osborne always used to ask the boy first where he was going rather than let the boy ask him how far he (Osborne) was going. In this way Osborne could avoid committing himself to a ride that might not work out in the way that he wanted it to.

During the ride Osborne was further able to gauge both by the physical actions of the boy and by the conversation whether a physical relationship between the two was possible. He looked very carefully at how far the boy distanced himself from the driver; if, for example, the boy wedged himself closely to the passenger door then Osborne knew that the boy was wary of any physical overtures. If, on the other hand, the boy sat in the middle of the seat, then Osborne would assume that this was a positive sign indicating that the youth was capable of being cajoled or talked into a relationship. Osborne was also very suspicious of boys who kept referring to 'bloody poofers' during the conversation and who showed an obvious antagonism towards homosexuals. His experience had taught

him that many men who plied a paedophile trade were often the victims of physical assaults by their youthful partners. It was not uncommon for boys to reassert their masculine identity by beating up an older man after sexual relations. Similarly, Osborne was very wary of boys who didn't say anything and wouldn't talk no matter which tack he tried in order to initiate conversation.

But few boys appeared to fall into this category as Osborne was remarkably successful in initiating a conversation with even the most reluctant adolescent. Osborne, knowing as he did the fascination that all adolescents have with their own bodies, was capable of turning any conversation into a sexual one.

And who were the boys to whom he related? A precise answer to this question cannot be given as the records of all the 2500 young men he kept files on are firmly locked away in police headquarters. Besides, Osborne's files, though precise in recording details of sexual encounters and physical characteristics, were often hazy or in-complete when it came to social and family information.

However, a 250-case appendix Osborne attached to his manuscript described in fairly exact terms the characteristics of the boys he related to. From this, the best general deduction that can be made is that about a third of the youths came from working-class homes, another third from the middle-class and the remaining third could not be classified.

The boys listed in his manuscript were clearly a cross-section of Brisbane society. Although Osborne referred to them by their first name he often mentioned the first initial of their surname and occasionally, towards the end of his career, gave the complete surname. He did not go to much trouble in protecting the identities of the youths he related to and indeed, the tape-recordings are full of explicit references to streets and areas, father's occupation and other identifying characteristics that made, for many of the boys, anonymity impossible. Some of Brisbane's most respected citizens, in the legal, medical and teaching professions were not unnaturally concerned when they read in the papers about a man with whom they had, many years ago, shared their bodies and minds.

1

The Art of Conversation

Finding boys was one thing but getting close to them sexually is another. Osborne excelled in carrying out the second objective by a combination of knowing just how to relate meaningfully to youths and by steering the conversation around to sex. His ability to relate in a meaningful way to young males was attested to by some of his former partners. One told me:

He was simply able to tune in with where I was at – he was able to talk about things that I couldn't talk to anyone else about.

Yet another said:

He got me excited with all the talk about sex and when I got an erection he didn't think that was strange and anyway I enjoyed it when he rubbed me. It was a nice feeling – I thought he was doing it for research as it was.

But the following comment aptly sums up the way in which Osborne's youthful partners

reacted to his verbal overtures:

He was so easy to talk to, so easy to tell things to and to listen to. He also wanted to know all about me and what I was thinking about and no one else at the time, let alone my parents, did.

Osborne related to his boys on several levels. He was clearly aware of the fact that many adults, particularly parents, have no understanding of the topics and issues that really concern boys. Consequently Osborne would initiate conversation about football and fighting, about arrogant teachers and boring school lessons – about anything which really interested the boys. But Osborne also had, in the eyes of the boys, a redeeming characteristic that they found singularly lacking in most other adults. Osborne listened; he listened with attentiveness, with patience and approval to all the things that preoccupied a youthful mind.

His attempt to titillate the boys' sexual interest usually occurred after he had established some general rapport with them. Each time, however, he personalized the conversation so that the boy he was with could feel as though someone was taking a real interest in his physical well being. From out of the many hundreds of transcribed conversations, the following one illustrates the way in which Osborne used the art of sexual conversation to obtain sex itself.² The youth in question is fifteen-years-old.

Q. Did you get circumcised when you were born?

A. No.

Q. You've never been?

A. I thought only Jews were circumcised. None of the boys in the family have been circumcised.

Q. Does your foreskin come back quite easily?

A. I have no problems with my penis. It doesn't cover the head: it sits behind it.

Q. You do know the difference?

A. Yes.

Q. I am wondering whether you could be mistaken, whether you could be circumcised?

A. Oh, please, I've never thought much about it much.

Q. I'm wondering why you look so well built?

A. Probably because I'm well proportioned. I did long distance running for a few years:

Q. What are you wearing underneath?

A. I'm wearing jockettes.

Q. Leopard skins?

A. No, I'm not a Tarzan man.

Q. Are you blond all over?

A. Yes.

Q You couldn't have only 16 or 17 centimetres (obviously referring to his penis)?

A. I have . . . it varies.

Q. A bit unorthodox, but do two drawings for me.

A. It's just like anybody else's prick. (Clearly the boy begins drawing his own penis for Osborne.)

Q. This business of spunking at twelve, at twelve did you really, could you splurry?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you keep pulling regularly?

A. Yes.

Q. When did you do it the most?

A. At about fifteen or sixteen, once a day. A few times I did it twice.

Q. No sense of guilt?

A. Until fifteen but since then I had no pangs of guilt. I was raised to think it was bad. I was raised in a Catholic school for thirteen years. Takes minutes to pull off. Both in the shower and in bed, mostly in the shower. My spunk's now white, thick and jelly-like. Used to be a great quantity but just a bit less now. I get a few roots now with ten to fifteen-year-old chicks. My last pull was about a month ago but I rooted last night, she was bugged.

Q. You aren't a very good performer?

A. I don't know. They seem to like it. I've only been doing it a year.

Q. Ever had a homosexual feeling?

A. I've never had a homosexual feeling. I've been asked by homosexuals if I had a feeling like that.

A. You're not being asked now?

A. No.

Q. Could you imagine a prick up your bum?

A. No.

Q. There's a fair amount of hair there?

A. No.

Q. Is there a bald patch there?

A. No.

Q. I think you've been circumcised.

A. I haven't.

Q. Is there any scar?

A. No. I haven't been circumcised it's as plain as that.

Q. But your drawings show that you have been. When you masturbate do you pull the whole shaft?

A. Yes. I've seen different blokes at football, different prick types; there's definitely no skin

over my glans but I'm not circumcised. I've never had a thing wrong with me.

Q. Did you ever discuss masturbation?

A. No.

Q. Not even in the homosexual stage at school?

A. What do you mean? We used to have contests pissing up a wall at primary school. I can remember incidents like that but I can't remember every incident.

Q. I'm doubtful about your circumcision but I have to accept it.

(Clearly Osborne at this stage puts his hand on the boy's penis because he notes in the transcript of the tape recording: 'examined through lothes'. The boy at this stage doesn't mind because it is recorded that he says, 'My prick's up here, my balls there, the left one is bigger.')

Q. By your body type you could have an enormous whanger?

A. I have. You said it couldn't be. I'm pretty big.

Q. When you masturbate do your fingers touch?

A. No.

Q. You masturbate like that do you?

A. Yes.

(Clearly Osborne, at this stage, is masturbating the boy through his clothes.)

Q. Compared with your mates it's fairly big?

A. Yes.

Q. Probably 14 centimetres around and thick at the base, is it wedge shaped?

A. No. Not really, it just sort of angles a bit. The head is quite big. I suppose it would be like that.

Q. When you're about to shoot, is the thrill real?

A. I've only gobbled the once. I've never put my tongue in a cunt.

Q. That feels thick. You've got a stiff by the look of it. Is it growing?

A. Yes.

Q. Is that a full stiff?

A. No.

Q. If you get one I'll measure it.

A. It's practically gone now.

Q. I don't want you splurrying all over the car.

A. No chance of that.

Q. Where's your foreskin?

A. Here. This.

Q. Oh, that's the underside, I'll find some way of turning' it over. There you are, how's

that? Circumcised? It's not circumcised? I think it is. You are circumcised. There's the scar there.

A. Oh shit! Oh well!

Q. Is that nearly a stiff?

A. No.

(Osborne records in his notes: 'long wavy pubic hair, fully into groin and on to the thigh'.)

Q. You're extraordinarily randy. You're throbbing now with my touching it.

A. Yes.

Q. That doesn't mean you're homosexual?

A. No, just being stimulated.

Q. You're very easily stimulated! Why is it that force so great when I push it downwards? Can you get that into a girl without her guiding it in?

A. Most times I have to guide it in.

Q. Turn over on to your belly. (Osborne records: 'Dark brown back with snow-white buttocks; secondary hair comes up about 5 centimetres above his anus, then fine white hair.' Osborne ends this description of his interaction with the boy by noting: 'Enthusiastically thanked me for all the information; parted on good terms with him, still amazed at being circumcised'.)

This conversation demonstrates many facts of the interaction Osborne had with his young men. To begin with, he constantly reassured the youths that they were not homosexual thus allowing them to rationalise out their sexual adventure as just being 'play'. So we have Osborne giving the boy in this example a chance to explicitly deny he was homosexual. He also allows him to talk about his hetero-sexual conquests so that the image he has of himself as a man is maintained.

Secondly, Osborne was a master at arousing the boy's sexual interest without touching him and then, without threatening the boy, smoothly and quietly making physical contact. So, we see in the above example that Osborne first excites the youth by incessantly talking about his penis, ejaculation and girls and then gently places his hand on the boy's penis while continuing the conversation. In this way Osborne is able to personalise what began as a general conversation about sex and to move from a purely intellectual discussion about sex to the act itself.

Thirdly, Osborne was clearly well versed in the jargon of young males. His language was simple and direct, full of the colloquialisms of boys and adolescents. Thus we have words like 'splurry', 'shoot', 'prick', 'bum' and so forth, which, while they might not be commonly used in adult society, are part of the everyday parlance of male adolescent society.

Finally, Osborne could end an interaction with his partners in the same way that he began it – with overtures of friendship, support, and, perhaps most of all, an acceptance of the youth on the youth's terms. In other words, he made young males feel important and implied that all he (Osborne) wanted to do was to help them with their physical problems. Consequently, as with the example given before, it was not uncommon for the young male

to profusely thank Osborne for his help after physical contact had ceased.

These elements can be illustrated in another example, typical of hundreds that Osborne transcribed from a tape-recording taken in his house. The youth in question was a thirteen-year-old and throughout the conversation he demonstrates an intense but natural interest in his own body.

Q. Which came first in your case – hair or splurry?

A. Splurry.

Q. How did you first get it, masturbation?

A. No, wet dreams.

Q. You weren't corrupted by somebody?

A. Yes, I think I was masturbating because as a kid I did often masturbate.

Q. How young?

A. Ten to twelve. I went long enough but I couldn't get it. I would get an orgasm but I wouldn't expel spunk. When I first came it was a wet dream at about twelve.

Q. As a regular practice, did you do it daily?

A. Yes, maybe three times a day.

Q. For how long?

A. A few years. A bloody lot anyway. I've always had a big sex drive. It's very unusual to get spunk before hair. I wonder why that is?

Q. You were pulling it for some time without getting any spunk?

A. Yes.

Q. From about what age?

A. Maybe about ten.

Q. What gave you the idea of pulling it at ten?

A. God only knows.

Q. Nobody taught you?

A. I don't think so. Possibly my father.

Q. Hardly your father?

A. I don't see why not, because there's no harm in it, nothing wrong with it.

Q. You think that between eleven and fifteen you probably pulled three times a day every day?

A. Just about.

(Osborne notes in his records that the boy objected to Osborne beginning to writ down the interview and therefore Osborne did not write down the interview but just kept recording it. He notes also that the boy felt very safe while driving with Osborne.)

Q. You could screw three times a day every day indefinitely?

A. Yes.

Q. Fully each time?

A. Yes.

Q. I find that very hard to believe.

(Osborne now records that he said, 'Last time I measured my prick on the horn it was three or four years ago and it was 15 centimetres on the stiff, along the top only average thickness.)

Q. By the body type you should have a monster.

A. Well I haven't.

(Clearly at this stage Osborne puts his hands on the boy's penis because it is recorded in the transcript that he says, 'Something there feels pretty big. Have you got your swimming togs on under your shorts?')

Boy Seducers or Male Exploiters?

So far the impression that has been given from the conversation presented is that of an older man using his skill and expertise in communicating with young males in order to obtain sexual favours from them. But this is only half the story: it is quite clear that many of the boys deliberately sought Osborne's attention for the purpose of engaging in sexual relations with him. Osborne often boasted of his ability to attract boys and recorded many cases of where the boy, rather than Osborne himself, initiated contact.

Some of the adolescents who approached Osborne were clearly homosexual in orientation and were searching for sexual adventures with older, more experienced men. One such youth whom we will call Bill knew Osborne for a number of years and regularly came around to his house when he felt like sex. During one of these occasions, Osborne pressed Bill for information about his homosexual experiences and Bill, when asked 'Who was the first bloke who rooted you?', replied:

I was about fifteen. It was at a Christian Youth Camp down the coast. We sat up talking one night and got talking and eventually got around to sex. There were ten of us in the hut. Assembly of God Church Rally, I think. The others were all asleep. About 1 am this guy started rubbing his hand up and down my leg. I put my hand on his leg and soon our clothes came off. We were on my bed, he reached for his hair oil and put it right up me for the first time. It hurt at first but after a while I liked it very much. He did it the once. He lasted a long time. He was a very big boy. A neighbour of ours. He's square and roots girls. He lasted about twenty-five minutes up me. It was marvellous while it was up there. He didn't pull me off after it. I did that myself. I sucked his cock too, but he didn't blow again. I went looking for sex after that down the public toilets in the city. I had been looking before that too. Now at seventeen I get rooted only two or three times a week. I can take anything.

Osborne told me that even though he had a long-standing relationship with Bill, he eventually became 'sick of him' and decided to end their meetings. When I asked him how he did it he said he used the most effective way possible to break off relationships and that

was 'to give the boys no more sex!' And according to Osborne he used this excuse on many occasions either because he became tired of the youth himself or because the young male became in Osborne's words 'troublesome' and 'interfering when I had others to think about'.

Many of the boys who approached Osborne, or alternately whom Osborne approached, fell easily into a sexual relationship in an attempt to discover their own sexual inclinations. One former lover of Osborne illustrates this pattern well:

I didn't then know what I was, whether I liked girls or boys and when this man picked me up when I was trying to get to the coast and showed an interest in me, I knew that he'd have sex if I gave him any sign at all. And I must admit I wanted to find out what it was like doing it with a man, so I gave him all the signs that I could, that I was willing to have a go. And when he went on about the size of my prick I made sure I got an erection and he saw it and he put his hands on it and then one thing led to another and he undid my fly and began rubbing it. When I was about to come he put his mouth over my prick and sucked it and I came all into his mouth and it was really a nice warm feeling. I can't say that this experience helped me to work out anything more about myself. I find now that I'm probably bisexual, but I think I found that out through other ways even though I liked having it off with that guy.

Other boys and adolescents who approached Osborne were hetero-sexually orientated but enjoyed the stimulation and physical excitement that Osborne provide them with. And Osborne's notes record the intimate details of such associations. The following comments by Osborne about a seventeen-year-old youth demonstrates the amount of detail he was able to extract from partners about their former sexual relationships. Osborne tells us that the youth in question is a seventeen-year-old 'very good public school type but rather naive'.

Sometimes wears two pairs of underpants to hold in bulge of prick. Has had one root at sixteen, calls it a fuck. Often gets lovers' balls. Thinks flogging immature. 'I thought I had wrecked myself.' 'Even now I'm afraid I will have a spastic child if I pull too much.' When eleven or twelve a girl rubbed his hand up and down her cunt and wrapped her legs around his body. 'I didn't finger her, just undid my fly, pulled my pants down and just fucked her. I got it right in. Spunk in a tissue takes five minutes.' . . . 'Here's my prick' (guides my hand, gets a horn) . . . after three minutes gets desire and thinks of girls and conjures up mental pictures. 'I've shot in my pants a few times. I really loved this girl. I give her all the tenderness I can. Should I root her? I'm not extra pure. I reckon there's a time when everyone gets a chance.' (Osborne then asks 'a chance to what' and the boy replies 'to fuck girls'.)

Those youths who were heterosexually orientated and who initiated contact with Osborne were not necessarily looking for sexual titillation from middle-aged men. A distinct impression gained from talking to some of the youths who had relations with Osborne was that they would have preferred to have received sexual stimulation from another adolescent girl or boy, or for that matter a woman, but none was available. It was easier and less threatening to approach Osborne than it would have been to make physical overtures to a person their own age or an older woman.

In short, these male adolescents were simply looking for sexual excitement; they, in

common with most people, had a desire for sexual contact and wished to see that desire satisfied. And they found that in this society it is often easier to have this need satisfied by 'illegal' and what is popularly known as 'deviant' sex than by legal and socially approved contacts. Consider, for example, the following reason given by an adolescent who, when fifteen, had physical relationships with Osborne.

I met him in the shopping centre on a Saturday morning. I guess the night before had been pretty bad. I took this chick out and took her for a drive down the road but nothing happened. I tried and got my hand up her leg but then she stopped me and I got very excited but nothing happened. I was pretty horny and had been for a while. I suppose I hadn't really had many girls, although I did have one steady one before we broke off. I saw this guy standing by his car outside the centre and he was looking at me and I told him he had a nice car and he said something to me that I can't remember. Anyway he asked me if I'd like a ride in it and I said yes sure, so we went up to the back of the hills outside Mt Gravatt and he talked to me about lots of things but I guess he talked mostly about sex.

He seemed a nice guy and he could talk about anything and I knew that he wanted to do something with me even though he wasn't being heavy about it. And when he was talking he put his hand on my cock and just gently rubbed it and it really seemed nice. I can't honestly remember whether he told me to take off my pants or whether I just took them off so he could get his hand around my cock more easily, but it didn't really matter because I wanted to do it.

I didn't feel a poofter or anything as he was talking about girls, but he was asking me how excited I was getting and I was telling him the truth – I was getting really excited! He seemed to know exactly how to do it to me and he kept asking me whether I liked being rubbed this way or in some other way and I told him how I liked it the best. He was trying to ask me when I was going to come and I was telling him that I'd come all right and I sure did – all over the car. He wanted to measure my cock with a tape measure he had but I didn't want to because I couldn't see any point in that. He wasn't heavy about this and when I said no he just shrugged and began talking about something else. He took me back to the shopping centre and was as pleasant as pie.

I enjoyed talking to him and I enjoyed the sex as well. He's the only man I've ever had a relationship with before or since. As you know I am married now with two kids, but at times I still think back to when he did those things to me and get excited by the thought of it. All I know is that I wanted some sex then and I got it, even though before I could never have imagined myself having it off with another guy, let alone a man who was about thirty years older than myself. But there was nothing heavy about him and it seemed so easy to do it with him and there was no way I felt guilty about a thing. I guess I would have preferred a girl but sometimes it's hard to get one and some of the ones you get anyway won't let you do anything with them. When I read in the paper about this guy who killed himself and was called a monster I was amazed. He was not heavy at all and what they said about him in the paper was untrue.

Sex Between Men and Boys

The stereotypical picture of man-boy relations is that of an older man exploiting and seducing a naive, innocent boy. This stereotype is, as we have seen, clearly a simplification of the dynamics involved in relationships between the two. Similarly the stereotype about

the actual sexual practices that occur between men and boys is also a misleading picture of what actually happens. For if the public mythology is to be believed, we are presented with a picture of a boy passively lying or sitting down, being physically exploited by a man who is either manipulating the boy's genitals or alternatively committing sodomy with him. These images help to reinforce a common stereotype of paedophile relationships which assumes that an active, dominant older man oppresses an inactive, passive young boy.

Such was not the case with Osborne and his partners and an examination of the sexual activities that took place assists us unravelling the complex dynamics involved in such liaisons. Charles Osborne in his own writing often simplifies the physical dimension of the relationships that he had with younger males. In reading his manuscripts we are often presented with the picture of a boy beguiled into showing his penis in order for Osborne to measure and to masturbate it. And one of Osborne's prime, almost compulsive objectives, was to measure the size of a boy's erection and to take details of his physical features that would add to his monolithic collection of records. Consequently, in reading Osborne's manuscripts we often obtain the impression that very little activity occurred between Osborne and his boys other than these rather bland and monotonous occurrences. This was, however, only part of story and in the conversations I had with Osborne, as well as in so of the tape-recordings and dossiers that he gave to me, it is quite clear that the sexual practices between Osborne and his boys were often varied and diverse as the sexual practices between heterosexual man and women. And saliently perhaps, Osborne was not the only active participant in such relationships as in some cases the boys themselves played an active role in the sex that occurred.

The terms 'active' and 'passive' in this context are probably inappropriate ones because they imply one person dominating the other. In adult-boy relationships as in adult-homosexual relationships this is not the situation at all: both people take turns in playing an active or passive role, The public conception of sexual techniques between boys and men rests on the assumption that all the man wishes is to obtain anal intercourse, forcibly if necessary, with a helpless, agonised and struggling boy – a boy who is merely a substitute for a girl.

The sterility of this view can be seen in the physical activities that occurred between Clarence Osborne and his partners. For a start, Osborne was reluctant to engage in anal intercourse. He did, however, admit to having intercourse with a boy when the boy asked for penetration to occur – and this did occur on a few occasions.

Osborne also records in his manuscript that he was asked by a particular boy to lie down so that the boy could play the part of the active partner. These were, however, rare experiences and are in no way typical of the sexual activity that occurred between Osborne and his youths.

Obsessed as he was with the penile characteristics of his partners, a Osborne would often spend hours stimulating a boy's genitalia either to bring him to orgasm or, alternately, to bring the boy's penis to the longest possible length. This would occur while sitting or lying side by side with the youth. Generally Osborne would use a lubricant such as petroleum jelly or soap in order to increase the sensitivity of the act. In a sizeable number of these cases mutual masturbation would occur with the boy actively stimulating Osborne to the point of ejaculation. Osborne was also an exponent of what is popularly called 'French kissing', otherwise known as 'deep' or 'tongue kissing', where the it tongue explores the

partner's mucus membranes to the stage where the partner reaches a high state of arousal. Osborne would concentrate on kissing or tonguing the genitals and nipples which he considered erogenous zones of high sensitivity. He also engaged in what has been called a 'tongue bath' where most parts of the boy's body are systematically explored by one's tongue. There is no indication that boys would reciprocate this type of behaviour, although it is clear from Osborne's writings that some of them would engage in mutual kissing with the older man.

Often Osborne would attempt to teach the boy what to expect in heterosexual contacts by initiating oral intercourse. As heterosexuals who have engaged in oral intercourse will know, the sensations experienced by the person inserting his penis into the partner's mouth are approximately the same as those experienced by the same person performing vaginal intercourse minus of course, the face contact. Osborne firmly believed that he was furthering a boy's education in anticipating heterosexual experiences and would often talk about what the boy should be doing when he was having intercourse with a girl or a woman.

Osborne went to extraordinary lengths to make sure that his boys attained the maximum amount of sexual enjoyment and would stimulate his partners for hours in order to make them satisfied. He did not insist on a boy fellating because, as he put it, 'My greater penis size would create a gag reflex in the boy.'

One of the most common ways he used to relate physically to his partners was by engaging them in whole body contact techniques. This would take a variety of different forms. At its simplest it would involve wrestling or romping with a boy and embracing him in the process. In these situations he would rub his genitals against the other's body or alternatively make sure that the boy's genitals were rubbed against his own body. A quieter version of this full body technique was simply to lie with the boy and caress him and to have, in many cases, these caresses reciprocated. During these embraces mutual masturbation and 'tonguing' would often occur increasing the sexual excitement that both persons felt.

Although Osborne rarely engaged in anal intercourse, he often initiated a variation of this technique. Commonly referred to as the 'English method' this variation obtained its name from its occurrence among boys in British public boarding schools. In this method the social and physical taboos attached to anal intercourse are avoided as full penetration of the anus does not take place. Instead copulation between a partner's thighs, either belly to back, face to face, or back to back occurs, generally to the point of ejaculation.

Osborne would often use this method with his partners. Typically, he would suggest to the boy that the boy lie on his back and hold his thighs tightly together. Then Osborne would lie on top of the youth and with a lubricated penis, would insert it between the boy's legs just below his crotch. He would thrust his penis in and out of the boy's legs emulating sexual intercourse. Often too, Osborne would suggest that the boy lie on his stomach and would thrust between the boy's buttocks without entering his anus. He records that boys would often ask to be stimulated by this form of interfemoral intercourse and would obtain great delight from it.

Osborne's techniques of sexual stimulation were not particularly different from those of other men who practised Greek love. His preferences were idiosyncratic, to some extent, in that he obsessively measured and recorded penis sizes and was stimulated by doing just that. The fact, however, that many of the boys whom he partner played an active part

in the sexual activity is again not very different from what the literature suggests occurs in relationships between adult males and adolescent boys.

In Osborne's case, as I suspect in the case of other boy-men relations, the degree of reciprocity heightened according to the degree of intimacy in the relationship. In other words, it is clear from Osborne's own notes that the longer the period of contact with a boy and the more fondly Osborne felt about him, the more the boy was likely to be an initiator in any particular sexual act. Of course, as with heterosexual relationships, it is very difficult to ascertain from Osborne's writings whether the intimacy led to more reciprocal sex or whether reciprocal sex led to greater intimacy.

The longer the relationships between a particular boy and Osborne lasted however, the more responsibility Osborne felt toward teaching the boy new sexual techniques and guiding him on matters relating to the opposite sex. In his dossiers there are many cases where Osborne deliberately acted as sex counsellor in allaying any fears that the boy might have about his sexual performance with actual or potential female partners. In many of these cases it is apparent that Osborne was not discussing the relationships between the boy and his girlfriend just to get physically or emotionally closer to the boy. These discussions would often take place some years after Osborne had first established contact with a boy and had established firm sexual relationship with him.

Osborne expressed to me a genuine concern and interest in particular boys' future sexual development and a desire to ensure that they would be compatible in heterosexual relationships. One former partner of Osborne illustrated this point well when he told me:

He always wanted to know how I got on with my girlfriend and if we had any sort of hassles, physical or emotional. He would seem to be as concerned about them as I would and try and help me sort it out. It was almost as though he really wanted me to work it out with my girl.

In his files Osborne records the case of a sixteen-year-old youth who was Osborne's close neighbour and who confided to the older man the fact that he could not have intercourse with a girl once he had already engaged in intercourse with her.

All the thrill is in winning on. It's only the winning on that interests me. I'd feel guilty if I rooted a girl more than the first time. I drop every girl as soon as I've rooted her, even if I've had to spend months working up to it.

Osborne's reply recorded in his files simply says:

I told him that he had to change or he'd never have a satisfactory permanent relationship.

In other parts of his dossiers Osborne records conversations between himself and an adolescent where they worked out in detail how the sexual excitement of the adolescent could be increased by delaying ejaculation, getting the girl to stimulate the youth in a certain manner and in other subtleties of heterosexual intercourse.

There is no doubt that Osborne was amazingly successful in obtaining from his partners all the intricate details of their past and present sexual lives. One adolescent, typical of many others, made the following comment which Osborne dutifully recorded in his notes:

I can't get over this conversation. . . I don't usually talk to anyone about sex but I have talked to you.

And that of course is one of the secrets of Osborne's 'success'. For the first time many of the boys had found an adult with whom they could talk about their sexual fears and conquests, fantasies and desires, without fear of moralistic recriminations. Some of these boys also felt that they could act out their sexual desires with Osborne in a non-punitive atmosphere. It should not be assumed, however, that the boys related to Osborne only because of their hedonistic desires. A substantial number of the relationships, particularly those which lasted over a period of months and indeed in some cases years, were fulfilling needs in the boys that were not being met by their parents, teachers or other adults. It is to these needs and the myriad number of questions that arise from studying them that we turn to in the next chapter.

Notes

3. Osborne and His Boys: The Sexual Equation

1. This was one of the major reasons why I was able to interview men who, when boys, related sexually to Osborne. Many of them came to see me because they were concerned about the police or others identifying them. As Osborne often contacted boys who came from the same area and were part of the same gang or group, the boys kept in contact with each other. Consequently, if they were satisfied with their interviews with me, they would contact their friends suggesting that I could be trusted to hear their accounts of past relationships and keep their identities confidential.
2. Although most of Kinsey's material was collected from survey results he extolled the virtues of collecting verbatim material from males and females in compiling sexual behaviour patterns. See Pomeroy, W. B. *Dr Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research*, Signet, New York, 1972, pp 222 – 224.

Chapter Four

Other Needs

Not all the boys who related to Clarence Osborne came from oppressive, alienated home backgrounds. Indeed, from what can be gleaned from Osborne's records some of the boys came from environments which were marked by wealth, social status and exclusive educational backgrounds. Boys from the 'right' as well as the 'wrong side of the railway tracks were confidants of Clarence Osborne.

It would be wrong to assume that, regardless of their backgrounds, boys were attracted to Osborne only because of their physical or sexual needs. It is clear that in Greek love relationships generally far more than sex is involved.

Osborne gave, in his own writings, few accounts of the non-sexual aspects of his liaisons. He was so obsessed with the physical details the boy's development and with the erotic details of his meetings with the boys that he neglected the emotional side of their interactions. It was as though he was writing a novel which he was determined to make a bestseller and therefore wanted to have sex on every page.

In conversations with me, however, Osborne did talk about the emotional elements in some of his relationships. He said at one stage:

I'm amazed at how little parents know about their boys. It is as though they never speak to them, not only about sexual matters, but about nearly everything. Boys have often told me that they tell me things that they never told any of their friends or relatives or parents and that I can believe. If only some of the parents really knew what was going on in the boy's head.

This observation of Osborne's was reinforced by many of the men who, when boys, had short or long-term relationships with Osborne. A theme that they emphasised time and time again was that they were distanced emotionally from their parents and could not communicate with them on matters which they, when adolescents, considered important and critical in their lives. The following comments, made by a young man of twenty-six, recounted some of the reasons why he became involved with Osborne while a youngster of fifteen:

My father left my mother when I was very young and even though he sent me presents at Christmas and on my birthday I think I only saw him once when I was young. I love my mother but we never talked – it wasn't her fault because she had enough on her hands as it was. She had three other kids to look after and had to get work. She was always having trouble getting new jobs because the sort of jobs she had were only short-term ones – waitressing, working behind bars and those sorts of things. I often wanted to talk to her about lots of things but I never really got the chance and she really didn't have the energy to listen anyway. When I met this man he seemed to be able to talk to me about things that I wanted to talk about. He took an interest in me and in my life that no one ever had before. He was a really nice man and I looked forward to seeing him every time I went. I think I saw him about twelve times over three years and as well as the sex we used to talk about lots of other things as well. When I heard that he had killed himself, and heard all those horrible things the papers said about him I cried, and cried and cried. He was, I guess, the nearest

thing I had to a father, and sometimes I thought a mother, and here he was being described in the paper as though he was some sort of crazy man raping young boys. It wasn't like that at all, I went to see him and he didn't have to drag me there.

These observations are important because they emphasise a theme that was common amongst many of the young males who related to the older man. Although a thorough statistical analysis of all the males whom Osborne was involved with was impossible, I was struck by the number of men who, when young, became involved with Osborne because of the metaphorical or literal removal of one of the parents. In some cases one of the parents was absent because of separation, desertion or death. In other cases both of the parents were physically living in the home, but because of estrangement between them – preoccupation with climbing up a career ladder, or just plain laziness – they failed to interact in any meaningful way with their sons.

Father was in the house except when he went interstate on a business trip. But when he was home he may as well have been away. All he wanted to do was to read the newspaper and listen to the radio. I hate to think how it would have been if television hadn't been around! He didn't like me being around and making any noise and used to tell me to spend my time in my room. I can remember him yelling at me, but I can't remember him listening to me or trying to find out how I was getting on. He never hugged me or tried to talk to me.

The theme of an emotionally confused childhood demonstrated by an estrangement between the father and son was repeated to me over and over again by the men who, when younger, had intimate relationships with Osborne. The effect of being alienated from the male figure in the family was often, in itself, sufficient reason to drive a boy towards the emotionally receptive climate generated by Clarence Osborne. Often, however, this drive was fuelled by a traumatic event in the family itself which positively propelled a boy or adolescent towards the older man. The comfort and security he offered was a way of shielding the youth against the emotional upheavals generated by desertion, family violence or psychological torment. Nowhere is this better illustrated than by a man who came to see me straight after Clarence Osborne's death and recalled the night when he first met the man.

I was twelve when I first met Osborne. I think it was Osborne by the picture in this paper because it looked just like him. I guess I was used to my father being away from us all because my mother and father had been separated for many years and I put up with that – not that I had much time for my father anyway. My mother had three boys to look after and that was heavy going in anyone's language. There was always lots of yelling and screaming around the house and she obviously had trouble coping at times with us all. I had one younger brother and one who was three years older than I was. I suppose all of us were pretty demanding in a way and looking back on it all I can see under what strain she was. All the brothers used to fight and I never really got talking to my mother, even though I was the favourite, so I really didn't feel as though I had anyone to talk to about anything. I know I wasn't homosexual, although at the boarding school I went to I had affairs with boys but we didn't see many girls. I used to think about girls a lot and wanted to get to know them but I guess I was a bit shy; anyway at the school I went to there weren't girls. There was no one really I could talk to about these and lots of other things. I mean I never really knew my father and I missed him a lot. My mother didn't try to put

him down but she did it inadvertently I suppose, and I used to think of this man whom I didn't know as being a bit of a slob.

I had one friend around the corner from where we lived whom I went to see a lot, not only because he was nice but because he had a proper family with a mother and father and three other kids, and they treated me like one of their own. It wasn't as though I talked about any of these things with this family but it was just nice being there, the atmosphere and the life. Whenever I got hung up about anything I used to just, day or night, walk over to their place and they would always make me feel at home and I'd always feel a lot better. At times I used to hate my house and going to their house was a real relief.

Anyway, I remember this night well because my mother's boyfriend was around at our house. I guess it was about 9 o'clock at night and this guy – he was a doctor – was around at our house. They were in my mother's bedroom and I could hear much crying and shouting and weeping, especially by my mother. Then I heard the door slam and this doctor left all of a sudden and got into his car and went. About half an hour later my brother ran down to the phone. He'd been in my mother's room and apparently she had taken an overdose of sleeping tablets so he rang the doctor. This doctor came back again and went up to my mother's room and began to do things to her and I don't really know what happened. All I know was that I was feeling churned up inside and didn't know what to do and was both sad and angry at the same time. I guess I felt that my mother was trying to commit suicide – trying to leave me. I took all this very personally and saw it as an act of desertion.

I left the house and was going to walk to my friend's place. I suppose it was pretty late to go to my friend's place even though I knew that they would let me in because it would have been about 10.30 or 11, which was fairly late for me to be out at that time. There was a big tree halfway between my place and my friend's place and I stopped under the tree because it was raining lightly. I can remember beginning to cry and I cried and I cried and I cried and I felt lost, far more lost than I'd ever felt in all my twelve years. A car pulled up after I'd been there about ten minutes and a man got out and I wiped my eyes and he came over to me. I'm sure that was your Mr Osborne. He just talked to me quietly and said what a nice night it was now that the rain had stopped. He asked me what I was doing out late and I said that I was just going for a walk. He said all sorts of other things to me which I can't really remember at this stage except that he made me feel at ease and I felt comfortable with him. I remember he asked me whether I wanted to come and sit down with him on the grassy banks of a stream which was just across the road from the tree we were standing under. I didn't think twice about it and just went with him because he seemed a nice guy to be with and I wanted to be with someone at this stage – not just anyone, but someone who wanted to be with me.

Anyway we kept talking about everything, but mainly I think about me and where I went to school and what subjects I liked and what sports I played and whether I liked girls. Eventually all this led to what I suppose he really wanted and I can remember him putting his hand on my fly and saying things about my penis which was growing at that stage. Nothing like that had ever happened to me before and I felt excited but certainly not bad about it. He then undid my fly and talked to me all the time about my penis and how good it felt and what a nice body I had and then asked me if I would take off my trousers. I did this without any trouble at all and he then took down my underpants and began sucking me and he did this for a long, long time until I came in his mouth. I remember being very excited but at the same time feeling a bit guilty so what I did then is rather strange – I

asked him for some money. He gave me a small amount of money and I said to him it wasn't enough. He looked highly upset and said that he didn't have any more. I told him it didn't matter but I guess what I was really trying to do was convince myself that I was only doing it for the money which I didn't need.

I went home after that but I was going to meet him again. I never turned up for the second meeting, I guess because I was afraid of people seeing us together. I thought about it often though and wanted to see him again, both because he excited me and because I felt he had a real interest in me. But I certainly didn't go to him because of the money. I think I wouldn't have gone to him if it hadn't been for my mother attempting suicide, but I don't really know. All I know is that at that stage it was good for me because I felt that night and many nights afterwards as though someone had taken an interest in me and cared for me.

The Push and Pull Factors

Although the case of the boy whose mother attempted to commit suicide is a rather dramatic example, it does serve to illustrate the 'push' and 'pull' features that characterised many of the relationships that Osborne had with his partners. In the case recounted above, the adolescent was partly driven towards Osborne by the emotional turmoil in his own family, particularly the immediacy of the suicide attempt, and 'pulled' or attracted by the attentiveness that Osborne displayed towards him in both an emotional and physical sense.

Here, bathing in the warmth of physical attentiveness, the boy could forget the loneliness of his homelife. And, as with adults, the sexuality and eroticism generated by one person obsessed with another person's body acted as strong diversion against the traumatic memories of the immediate past. The physical attention just reinforced the psychological attention. The boys – indeed, I would suggest that most boys – would assume that at last they had found a man who really was interested in them. Why else would he listen to them so carefully, stimulate them so delicately and generally make them feel so good? And all this was done without their basic masculine identity being threatened. After all, they were just playing around weren't they? That was what the older man said they were doing and that was all they must have been doing.

Unlike the case of the boy who was attracted to Osborne because of a traumatic event in his home and who only met him once, other boys had less dramatic precipitating incidences that led them to Osborne. Strangely, however, some of these boys became involved with Osborne over substantial periods of time.

Let us take the case of Ted. He told me that he met Osborne at a camp which Osborne was involved in running. While there is no mention of such a camp in Osborne's own manuscript it is highly likely that, in his capacity as a youth organiser, he administered such activities.

Ted said he was twelve at the time and this was the first occasion that he had been away from home. 'Home' to Ted was in name only. His father, while nominally living there, would often spend days away with what his mother sarcastically referred to as 'his other girlfriend'. And, even when home, the father would rarely talk to the boy. The times when his father was home were, according to Ted, punctuated by violent verbal arguments between his mother and father, often with one or both of his parents hurling objects at each other. While these scenes are the stuff out of which cartoonists create the image of contemporary married life, they are hardly the scenes which would lead a young boy to

feel loved and wanted.

Nevertheless, despite the unhappiness of his home life Ted was very anxious about his first away-from-home camp. His anxiety was not eased by the heckling he received from some of his fellow students when he was unable to complete a junior marathon course organised by the camp controllers on the first day of the camp.

Ted was pleasantly surprised when one of the adults at the camp came up to him and told him 'not to worry' about the jibes of the other boys and reassured him that he was not a failure. This man, according to Ted, became his friend and over the next few days was always around to support him whenever he got into a fight with the other boys or was left to play by himself.

Ted liked the man enormously. He was nothing like his father whom he saw as distant, cold, uninterested in his fears and fantasies and singularly lacking in affection. This man was, instead, always ready to listen, to offer counsel, and to talk about anything that Ted wanted to talk about. He was affectionate too, but not in a way that unduly disturbed the youth. For example, he would put his arm around the shoulder of the youth when they were walking together and would also frequently tell him that he cared for him very much. At last, Ted thought, someone really does like me and worries about what happens to me.

It came as no surprise therefore, to find Clarence Osborne cuddled up close to him late one night. He shared a tent at the camp with three other boys and at first thought it was one of his tent-mates just fooling around'. But when he felt a hand far longer than his own on his penis he realised, without seeing the man's face, that it was Osborne.

The older man stayed with the boy for about an hour, stimulating and gently talking, reassuring the boy that 'everything was all right', that he really cared for Ted and that he would look after him.

Ted was embarrassed the next morning when he met Clarence Osborne, but the embarrassment was only short-lived. Osborne acted as though nothing had happened the night before and was friendly and warm towards the boy. During the rest of the camp the older man made no more physical overtures to the youth but their friendship was consolidated by frequent meetings and shared activities. And towards the end of the camp Osborne arranged to meet Ted after school in a nearby park.

Once, occasionally twice a week, Osborne would meet the boy in the park and either take him for a drive or bring him back to his house. At these meetings sexual activity would sometimes take place, but more often than not they would just talk. Their conversations would range far and wide from the problems that Ted had at school with the teachers and other youngsters, through to small talk involving the boy's interests and activities. Often they would playfully wrestle together, ending up on the floor with most of their clothes off panting and laughing together. Ted remembers the occasions with warmth and affection.

The relationship lasted two years, although in the second year the meetings between the two become less and less frequent. Ted began to 'grow out' of Osborne, preferring to mix with youths his own age and to make his first furtive attempts at meeting girls. But Ted considered those years with Osborne important. For this boy quickly moving into adolescence, Clarence Osborne became a father-figure, a man who offered him affection and attention that his own father failed to provide him with. Like most of the men I

interviewed who had relationships with Osborne, Ted had no regrets about the times he spent with the older man. For Ted, Clarence Osborne was an emotional anchor at a time in his life when he very badly needed one.

Osborne generally did not have long-term relationships with his boys. His *modus operandi* was essentially to concoct short-lived and passionate affairs with his youthful partners and then move on to other partners. His constant search for new stimulation with new boys was perhaps the most predominant feature of his life and his record of 2500 contacts bears witness to this observation. But like all rules there are exceptions and Clarence Osborne himself records occasions when he became utterly obsessed with specific youths. It was rare for him to talk about 'love', but in recounting his affairs with two particular boys to me, Osborne displayed an intensity of emotion reminiscent of his Hollywood love films. Take for example, Osborne's description of his two 'favourite' boys with whom he had frequent meetings over a number of years:

They were both blond. I think I like blondes better than any others. I saw Bill first when he was twelve and I stopped seeing him when he was sixteen. John was a bit older when I saw him to begin with – thirteen I think – and I stopped seeing him at seventeen although he still drops in even though he's married now. Bill and I got really close in the true Greek love fashion and he used to be quite open with me both sexually and otherwise. I remember that he often used to cry when he was upset by what had happened at school or when his parents wouldn't understand him. His father sounded a real dictator. He used to tell me that I was like a father to him and I treated him as though I was a father. We used to talk about everything that was important to him. Girls, beer, what he wanted to be when he grew up – it changed several times from an airline pilot to being of all things, would you believe it, a policeman! He was a really beautiful boy. Here take a look at this photograph of him (Osborne produces a photograph of blond boy lying nude on bed). John was a bit different, but I really think I loved him. He was a lot quieter and for the first year he wouldn't say very much to me although he used to be pretty active in bed. He used to love seeing photos of himself in the nude in all positions and that got him really worked up. He was the only boy who really ever asked if he could root me and I let him because I loved him a lot. But I really believed that John kept coming back to me because he needed me – an older man who could tell him about the way of the world and take some notice of what happened to him. He's now married and he's got a job as a teacher but I don't see him anymore. I wonder if he thinks much about me

Although I did not interview 'John', it seems likely that if I had, he too would have been defensive and supportive concerning his relationship with the older man. For this was the pattern with the twelve partners of Osborne's whom I did see. Some were at great pains to point out that their relationships were just a bit of fun' while others imputed deeper meanings to their contacts with Osborne, suggesting that they filled emotional vacuums in their lives.

All defended him and some wanted to 'put the record straight' regarding the media accounts of the man. These men were indignant concerning press coverage of the case and were careful to point out that Osborne did not pressurise them into sex or invade their privacy in any way. Of course the small number of Osborne's partners I interviewed

makes it hazardous to generalise about all of Osborne's youths, but given his own writings, and his own personality as seen by others, there is nothing to suggest that Osborne was a pressurising kind of individual.

Certainly there is nothing in the account of Osborne's former partners to suggest that they idealised the man or that they necessarily admired him. But at least they saw him as a friendly man with a personality very different from the monster image painted by the local press. It was clear that Osborne showed these youths degrees of affection and respect which they did not receive from their friends, relatives and most of all from their parents.

Osborne may not have deserved the respect he earned. While he was perfectly capable of being affectionate, his own writings and conversations with me indicated a ruthlessness in pursuit of sexual adventures that lies uneasily with the accounts of the encounters given by his former partners. One often wonders whether Osborne treated his partners with affection and respect in order to ensure that they did not report their meeting to other adults or whether he really wanted to be affectionate and respectful towards them. When I asked Osborne whether he was afraid that some of the youths would tell their friends or parents about their sexual activities Osborne just laughed and said:

No one's ever done that and I don't think it's going to happen. Why should they tell their parents when they come to me often because of their parents. They're not going to tell their friends because they don't want to be thought of as being poofers. Anyway, most of them I've had dealings with want to come back for another go and they're not going to tell anyone what they're into. All you've got to do is treat a boy with a bit of respect and show him that you really care about him. That just means showing that you like him for more than just his body and that you want to know what he thinks about. If you just measure his penis and put it on a card then he's going to think you're just a dirty old man. But if you spend some time talking to him and give him a drink and show him some books and photographs and things then he becomes your friend. It's amazing how many boys need to be looked after because no one else will look after them. They want to be loved but there's no one to love them. They want sex but they want more than sex. I guess they just want to feel as though someone is taking an interest in them and will like them. Look, you can change an angry boy into a soft kitten just by stroking him. You don't have to touch their penises, just by stroking their neck and their shoulders and their hands gently they can become warm and soft. If you talk to them as well about what they want to talk about then they'll be all yours for as long as you want. I told you before the problem I had was not worrying about the boys telling their parents but worrying about the boys coming back and back to me. It used to be like a railway station here (in his house) because there were so many boys coming around to see me that I hadn't planned on. That's when I decided I had to be a bit more selective. And some of them weren't just coming back for the sex although that was a large part of it, some just wanted to come and talk to me. I could always get rid of the ones who wanted sex by just not giving the sex, but the ones who wanted to talk were a bit harder to do something about.

The Emerging Dimension. Adolescent Males and Affection

Clearly Osborne was attuned to the fact that adolescent boys need affection from adults

but rarely obtain it. Part of the reason why they do not receive this emotion lies in the fact that except for men like Osborne, it is seldom given by other adults. And the reason for the dichotomy between the need for affection and its non-occurrence is the failure of youths to ask for it.

The reasons for these situations lie in the sexual stereotypes we impose on males and females. A boy or girl soon learns through subtle social reinforcement what behaviours and emotions are considered to be appropriate for girls and boys. Our notions of masculinity and femininity do not flow from our sexual organs but come instead from the socially constructed stereotyping about the appropriate behaviours that go with being a man or a woman.

In many different ways boys, adolescents and men are taught that they are the dominant sex and that this domination carries with it responsibilities and privileges. The privileges are self-evident: males generally have more success on the occupational ladder, are more affluent, and control the nature of sexual interactions between the two sexes. The responsibilities are equally apparent, or at least made apparent, to males at a very young age. One such responsibility is to be in control of their innermost thoughts and anxieties when dealing both with men or with women. Boys soon find by mixing with other boys and by observing their own fathers and other men that in order for them to maintain their male image they should not discuss their emotions, pains and fears. They cannot 'let go' of their own emotions and anxieties and must grapple with their innermost fears themselves. They cannot, as well, ask for support or affection from other people although in childhood, if not in adolescence, this is often allowed when interacting with their mothers.

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Boys soon learn that the privilege of being male has to be earned in many subtle ways. In competing for money, status, sex and power, men lose much of the sensitivity and humility that could be theirs, and this loss is exhibited by their inability to experience and express spontaneity, to ask for and to receive love, and to display openly and non-defensively the whole gambit of human emotions.

To show affection or emotion towards another person is generally not a way of demonstrating one's masculinity. However, while the penis may not be seen by all boys or men as a bludgeon or weapon, it certainly is seen by most boys and men as a concrete manifestation of the vibrancy and strength of one's masculinity. Hence males become concerned about the size of their penis and these concerns are a constant preoccupation from childhood to middle age. Inevitably, masculinity involves genital worries and obsessions about sex and as Clarence Osborne knew only too well, the resolution of these obsessions in boys or in men, either through sexual activity or sexual reassurance, is a way of reducing anxiety about their masculinity.

With females, of course, the expectations are completely different. The female learns to be 'feminine' with all the adjectival components that the term connotes: relative passivity, deference, low intellectuality, co-operativeness. In short, the female learns to fit in, to know her place and to take the cues from males. Traditionally, of course, females are supposed to have a lower sex drive than males and social comment is uniformly negative about extensive sexual activity of young females. The same social restrictions do not apply to males, which is one of the reasons why this double standard of sexual behaviour appears to be under direct attack from females. However, as researchers have recently demonstrated, females increasingly allow themselves, and are allowed by society, to be

permissive in their sexual behaviour provided they are affectionate with their partners.² No such demands are made on males. Being males, they are expected to form sexual relationships and not expected to seek or show affection in those very relationships. A large number of social science researchers have measured what the Americans popularly call 'dating behaviour' amongst adolescent boys and girls, using scales that allowed females to show that they were not interested in sex, but only interested in affection, and allowed males only to show that they wanted sex without affection.³

Recent work in adolescent psychology however, has suggested that this may not be the case at all. This research suggests that cultural forces are leading many adolescents and adults to reject traditional sex roles and adopt emergent ones.⁴ The roles, which may be adopted by either males or females, involve an integration of both masculine and feminine characteristics inside the one person. In fact, psychologists such as Bem suggest that the androgynous person is one who is able to incorporate both masculine and feminine characteristics into his or her personality and so respond to a wider range of situations.⁵ And the clinical testing of what boys and girls want out of relationships seems to indicate that elements of androgyny are incorporated in both sexes.⁶ So we find, for example, recent studies indicating that girls are not as disinterested in the sexual aspects of a relationship with a boy as was previously thought. While boys often have an interest in the emotional component of a relationship that is sometimes equal to that of their girl partners.

Australian psychologists, Doctors Collins and McCabe from Macquarie University, Sydney, produced conclusive evidence to validate these assumptions.⁷ Surveying groups of adolescent and young adult males and females they found that females at no stage in a dating relationship expressed higher levels of affection than males of the same age. Moreover, while males may still have strong sexual feelings in a relationship, this does not mean that they do not have equally strong affectional feelings and needs also. So what the Australian study was able to do was to lay to rest the commonly accepted notion that young males and females want different things out of a relationship. In many ways both sexes are remarkably similar in that they enter into a relationship wanting to give and receive affection and the desire for this affection increases with increased commitment to the relationship.

Clarence Osborne was well aware of the need to give affection to the boys and adolescents that he was with. It is also clear from his case studies that the longer the relationship between himself and a particular youth lasted, the more the boy was likely to lose his inhibitions and to give and receive affection. When we look through Osborne's case histories we find that the nature of the physical relationship changes with increased contact between Osborne and a specific boy. It is found, for example, that mutual cuddling between Osborne and a boy increased in occurrence as a relationship developed. There is nothing particularly startling in this observation as a vast number of experimental and clinical psychologists have formulated well-tested theories that a lack of affection in primates and other animals has adverse emotional consequences and, in the case of humans, badly impairs their own capacity to give affection in later life.⁸

In attempting to understand the attraction that Osborne held for the young men he was with over extended periods of time, it is useful to look at the theories Abraham Maslow expounded in his book *Towards a Psychology of Being*.⁹ Maslow distinguished between what he called 'being love' and 'deficiency love'. Maslow's proposition is that most human relationships that go under the name of love or friendship or infatuation or anything else,

are in reality a mixture of 'being love' and 'deficiency love' with the ingredients differing in proportion. For Maslow 'deficiency love' is a projection of one's own need to be loved and it comes from what Eric Fromm has called a basic primordial anxiety which is the fear of being abandoned and the fear of unending loneliness. It is, as Eglinton points out:

The kind of affection that children have towards their parents and others though to be sure this is mingled with other emotions – delight in play, delight in cuddling, warmth and joy, admiration and the desire to be admired.¹⁰

If we accept the personal testimony of many of the boys and youths who were involved with Osborne that they were abandoned by their parents, then clearly one of the major reasons why Osborne was attractive to them was that he minimised their fears of being entirely abandoned. In Maslow's terminology Osborne provided the object for 'deficiency love' that the boys and adolescents so badly needed.

Maslow's other form of love, what he calls 'being love', is more the 'pull' in the Greek love equation. 'Being love' is defined as a type of participating appreciative awareness of the other individual in his or her uniqueness, as in loving him or her exactly as he or she is and seeing him or her with all their good and bad points.

Proponents of Greek love make much of the fact that boys are attracted to mature men by 'being love' considerations. The argument is that:

The boys involved in such relationships themselves admired the poise, maturity, knowledge, sophistication, ability to get things done and have things their own way in the world, of their older lovers.¹¹

Clarence Osborne could hardly be described as an ideal model of this type of man because, as his manuscript indicates, there is nothing to indicate that he was mature, poised or sophisticated. Of course, it could be argued that in the eyes of the boys Osborne had these attributes and therefore they were attracted to him because of these traits. And it is probably true that some of the boys who had long-term relationships with Osborne were fascinated by what they saw as his worldliness and verbosity.

But even given Osborne's personal attractions it seems, from all the available information, that the boys were 'pushed' towards the older man because of the lack of warmth and security they found in their families. Osborne offered them a source of security and affection from the immediate loneliness that enveloped their lives. Many people, after reading the extracts from Osborne's manuscript given in this book, will consider that this man was nothing more or less than a sexual pervert obsessed with the physical attributes of young males. To the young males, however, he was seen quite differently, being at various times a social support, a source for finding one's identity, and a person who offered affection in an affectionless world.

Sex, Affection and Greek Love

It is worth repeating that boys who enter into a Greek love relationship do not always do so because they come from disturbed, alienating homes. Many boys and adolescents, simply out of sexual curiosity or sexual ignorance, seek out an older man as a way of exploring their sexual potential. And if society wishes to ascribe moral 'blame' to this situation, then it should first ask itself whom it should blame, society or Clarence Osborne? Osborne was the catalyst that enabled the boys to explore their sexuality and

find answers to questions about their physical development that had worried them for so long. But before we turn him into a monster let us look at our rather prudish attitudes towards sexuality that both objectify and trivialise a natural human function.

When we search for reasons why boys seek affection and security in men such as Clarence Osborne we should be careful before we blame the men rather than blaming ourselves. For even though we cannot precisely define the exact number, it is quite clear that a substantial proportion of the boys who had long-lasting relationships with Osborne did so because they lacked intimate and affectionate relationships with their own family. One can reject or accept the hypothesis that a combination of 'being love' and 'awareness love' pushed and pulled the boys towards Osborne. There is always an element of uncertainty involved in theorising about human motivations. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt from the material available in this case, that Osborne provided youths with affection and security – no matter how tenuous that security might have been – which the boys felt was lacking in other parts of their life. We, as a community, might not like the fact that security and affection have to be provided by a man so unattractive. But if the older man was a parent substitute, are we to put all the blame onto him or should we instead consider the obvious voids in contemporary family life that alienate so many youngsters from their parents?

Clarence Osborne's case confirmed what some psychologists are just beginning to tell us: that boys and adolescents have a need for affection and emotional involvement which is far stronger than we have recognised in the past. To paraphrase the words of Rollo May, we have taken the fig leaf from the genitals and (particularly with the case of adolescent males) put them on the face.¹² In doing so we have denied young males their need for affection and love just as we have for so long denied young females their need for creative sexual experiences. And if the Sydney psychologists are correct then adolescents are now changing their social behaviour in a more androgynous manner so that they are no longer bound by the rigid sex role stereo-types that dominated them in the past. The implication of this trend is that in the future adolescent boys will be looking for ways to have their affectionate and what could be called 'feminine' needs met. The question will be whether we as a society rely on the Clarence Osbornes of this world to fulfil these needs, or whether we are willing to more radically reorientate our attitudes towards what we consider to be appropriate masculine and feminine behaviour.

Notes

4. Beyond Sex: The Question of Intimacy

1. More detailed accounts of male emotional and sexual behaviour can be found in Wilson, P. R., *Intimacy*, Cassell, Sydney, 1979.
2. *Ibid.*, p.96.
3. Rice, F. P., *The Adolescent*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1978.
4. Collins, J. K. and McCabe, M. P., 'The Influence of Sex Roles on Psycho Biological and Psycho Affectional Orientations to Dating', *Journal of Current Adolescent Medicine*, 1981.
5. Bem, S. L., 'The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny', *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 42, 1974, pp.155 – 162.

6. Ibid., pp.155 – 162.
7. Collins, J. K. and McCabe, M. P., op.cit.
8. Prescott, J. W. 'Body pleasure and the origins of violence', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November, 1975, pp.10 – 20.
9. Maslow, A., *Towards a Psychology of Being*, Van Nostrand, New York, 1968.
10. Eglinton, J. Z., *Greek Love*, Spearman, London, 1971, p.115.
11. Ibid., p.116.
12. May, R., *Love and Will*, Fontana, London, 1972.

Chapter Five

The Media and Clarence Osborne

Good citizens who knew nothing more about Clarence Osborne than what they read in the newspapers could be excused for considering the man a 'monster'. For, with devastating effect, the media went about the business of creating yet another folk devil to be added to the long list of folk devils that have become part of popular culture.

With regard to Osborne the construction of the monster image was not done subtly. Indeed the Australian press, renowned inter-nationally for its directness, outshone itself in its presentation of the Osborne case. One of Australia's largest selling weekly newspapers, *Truth*, had on its front page, emblazoned in huge letters: SEX MONSTER's 2000 BOY VICTIMS. In bold sub-headlines the paper informed its audience that 'Police seized truckloads of pictures, films, tapes.'¹

On the same front page we learn from *Truth* that detectives 'have described the case as the most horrifying example of perversion in Australia's history'. The breathless reader then turned over to the inside front page of the newspaper to find the grisly details of the case.

The newspaper reprinted the comments of police-press liaison officer, Ian Hatcher, who was quoted as saying:

Even before we got halfway into the stuff we realised there was potential for millions of dollars of blackmail. In many cases the youngsters mentioned in these records have since married and settled down. Keep in mind these records go back twenty years. Among the photographs we recognised immediately a man who is now a national figure.

Truth is hardly recognised as Australia's finest or most respected newspaper, but it does reflect the trend taken by other national newspapers as well. The usually conservative and stately Brisbane *Sunday Mail* had a headline which matched that of *Truth*: MONSTER SNARED BY HIS CAMERA screamed the *Sunday Mail* in a lead story on 30 September 1979. Under the headline the paper informs us that 'The cremation of Clarence Henry Osborne, 61, in Brisbane last week closed what police described as the most horrifying chapter of perversion in Australia's history.' The newspaper goes on to inform us that, 'It will be at least three months before his shocking legacy – a room full of files outlaying his relationship with about 2000 boys – is burnt to ashes.'

It is extremely difficult to find out how this particular newspaper can describe the Osborne case as 'the most horrifying chapter of perversion in Australia's history' because, over the past year, the very same newspaper had described a series of rape/murders in Queensland in some detail. One wonders how the editors were able to equate a situation where there was consenting sex between two people with a situation where a man or men had brutally murdered many young women who were hitch-hiking.

Other newspapers across the nation followed the *Sunday Mail* and *Truth* example and the same picture of Osborne was presented in all of them. No facts at all were given to substantiate the claim that he was 'Australia's biggest monster'; instead all papers relied on police hyperbole and comment to paint a picture of Osborne and the relationships that he had with the boys.

For example, the *Sunday Mail* quoted extensively one detective sergeant, Don Reay of the

Queensland police force's Juvenile Aid Bureau, who said that he was disappointed that only two young men involved with Osborne had contacted police since his activities had been publicised! According to Reay:

They are now young adults but I think they were thirteen and fourteen when he knew them . . . I think Osborne's victims don't believe we have information identifying them. . . The two who came in did not remember his taking so many photographs, they were amazed.²

Truth newspaper informs us that apparently police did not initially think Osborne was the monster he later became. Queensland police-press liaison officer, Ian Hatcher, in explaining how Osborne was caught, told *Truth* reporters that police received word of suspicious activities by Osborne on 11 September 1979. Apparently a woman complained to a friend in the police force that her son had been approached by a man asking if he would pose for photographs. Police then arranged for the boy to meet Osborne and watched what happened.³

Mr Hatcher then told *Truth* 'Nothing untoward happened. Police asked Osborne a few questions then he was allowed to go home.'⁴ The next day Clarence Henry Osborne was found dead in a car parked at his home. A plastic hose lead from the exhaust pipe to the interior. Even though police had seen a substantial proportion of the material at that stage they did not consider it imperative to arrest the man who was later described by both the police and the media as 'a monster.'

The monster image was not created by the press alone. The electronic media, eager to show that they were keeping up with the newspapers pontificated about the horrible nature of the Osborne case and gave the usual warnings about not taking sweets from strangers. Even the Australian Broadcasting Commission's usually intelligent and perceptive television current affairs programme 'Four Corners' allowed itself to be carried away by the hysteria surrounding the Osborne case. On two consecutive weeks it presented segments which quite uncritically mixed up the issues of paedophilia, child pornography and prostitution in general.

In fact, Marianne Smith, who won a Logie Award for her coverage of the 'Four Corners' segment on child prostitution which included the Osborne case (even though Osborne rarely paid his partners), continued the distortions. She interviewed a number of police officers, clergy and self-appointed morality crusaders who made emotional, illogical and often inaccurate allegations concerning the topics of child-adult sex generally and the case of Clarence Osborne specifically. In the 'Four Corners' segment Clarence Osborne was presented by Marianne Smith through an interview with a Queensland police officer, who, in the words of a leading homosexual magazine was allowed to make, un-contradicted, a series of ignorant and bigoted attacks on homosexuals in general'.⁵ The same magazine, *Gay Community News*, also noted that 'the chief interviewee on the horrors of the Kings Cross vice scene was an officer of the New South Wales vice squad — when it is a matter of common knowledge in Sydney that the drug, pornography, and prostitution industries flourished through payoffs to the self same vice squad'.⁶

The Police and Clarence Osborne

In a sense the gay press's attack on the police's role in the Osborne case oversimplified the positions of many of the police men and women who investigated Osborne. In the course

of researching this at book, I interviewed a number of officers who were involved with Clarence Osborne and their individual positions on Osborne and on man-youth relationships were quite diverse.

These officers were co-operative in answering my questions but preferred to remain anonymous. When I have used their names it is because they themselves were publicly identified by statements given to reporters and reprinted in the press.

Two policemen who were intricately involved in the investigation of the Osborne case granted me an interview approximately six months after the death of Osborne.⁷ At the time of this interview the two police still had not gone through all of the files and tapes that had been seized from Osborne's house. At that stage they admitted that the analysis of Osborne's house had not lead to any further arrests but one of them stated that, 'information on file will be useful to us. It tells us a lot about homosexuals and we like to have records of that.' News-paper reports six months after my police interviews suggested that police investigations of the Osborne case had led 'to two more homosexuals who were charged over molesting boys and this fact was confirmed by a policeman associated with these arrests.

The police I interviewed disagreed among themselves and with the press on just how horrific the crimes of Clarence Osborne actually were. When I asked one of the detectives whether he would describe Clarence Osborne as being a monster he replied, 'Well he wasn't a monster but what he did was monstrous!'

The same officer, when asked to expand on why he thought Osborne's acts were 'monstrous' told me that while the older man might have changed only one boy in ten into a homosexual that was disastrous enough. As he put it, 'If that one boy is corrupted, grows up and corrupts another hundred boys during his lifetime then where will we all be?'

The police agreed that no money generally passed hands between Osborne and the boys, and consequently his case could not be considered just another example of child prostitution. They also confirmed the fact that there was no evidence to suggest that Osborne had used physical force or coercion in obtaining sex with any of the boys. All the police I interviewed also admitted that many of the boys had approached Osborne directly, looking for sexual encounters, and that many of them had voluntarily returned and seen Osborne on numerous occasions over a period of years.

There were two aspects of the case that most amazed the police. The first was the sheer number of boys involved with Osborne. Even here though, all the police involved in the case admitted that they had investigated, or were aware of, many other men in the Brisbane region who had been intimately involved with hundreds, if not thousands of boys.⁸ The second aspect of the case that struck police was the lack of complaints they received. In the words of a senior investigating officer, Sergeant Dan Reay, 'The most amazing aspect of it all is that not one boy complained to his parents or to anyone over the years.'⁹ In fact, as we have seen, the reason why Osborne was investigated was not the result of any complaint from any boy.

The first aspect of the case that astonished police – the sheer number of youths involved – requires no further comment. There is no doubt that the life and times of Clarence Osborne in terms of the huge number of youthful partners he involved himself with was remarkable. However, the second reason for their astonishment requires further explanation. Why did the police expect the youths to complain?

Through no fault of their own some police officers have little understanding of the psychological reasons that drive young men towards older men. Their antagonistic reactions to paedophilia often blind them to the subtleties of sexual encounters of this kind. And, like it or not, the reality of contemporary police public relations is that a significant section of the population – particularly young people – are cynical about the fairness and impartiality of their law enforcement agencies. Clearly the police are not seen as the trusted allies of the young, and even if some of the youngsters wished to complain about Osborne, it is doubtful that the police would have been the agency to whom they would have gone.

The police's response to the Osborne case stressed the horror of Osborne's activities and only later on reassured his past partners that they would not be in trouble. One detective told me that they intended notifying the parents of some of the boys who recently had relations with Osborne. Clearly they had second thoughts about this procedure because their public pleas for co-operation from Osborne's past 'victims' stressed anonymity and confidentiality. The police publicity campaign, in fact, attempted to get any person who had relationships with Osborne to 'come in and clarify a few things'. The police also reassured the public that persons who had had relations with Osborne and did come in would see their files destroyed and therefore would not have to worry about the threat of blackmail.

To reassure those who might come to them the police said they were not 'fishing for information'. According to Detective Reay the police 'have that, believe me. What we want is a broader picture of how Osborne approached the boys.'¹⁰

Detective Reay went to considerable trouble to reassure Osborne's partners that this was not a witch hunt. At one stage he announced publicly that 'we don't want to go digging up anyone's past, but if we are to formulate some sort of message for parents, teachers and the community, we will have to know more about his method of approach.'¹¹ And as if to admit that their expertise in understanding these cases was limited Reay honestly admitted that the police had relied heavily on the "don't-talk-to-strangers" message', but that 'we might have to update our thinking because of this fellow's success rate'.¹²

There are some worrying features of this still-continuing police investigation. To begin with, the state of Queensland has a national reputation for having some of the most violent rape-murders in Australia and, at the time of writing this book, a number of such murders committed on the tourist highway in the middle of the Gold Coast areas were still unsolved. One wonders whether a police force faced with such problems can afford the luxury of using experienced detectives on a case where no force was used and the 'criminal' had committed suicide.

Secondly, it is clear that many of the individuals mentioned by Osborne in his manuscript and tape-recordings – and there are hundreds of cases where specific individuals could be identified – would be classified by the police as homosexuals and that fact entered into the personal files kept by the force. As this particular force had just sought and obtained powers from the government to pass on personal information on file to other individuals and organisations, many young men could become disadvantaged in their employment opportunities and in other matters.

Finally, the strategy of the police in attempting to curtail paedophilic relations is hardly likely to meet with much success but it could well create a contemporary witch hunt. While the police I talked to agreed that the 'don't-talk-to-strangers' message might be

inadequate in terms of curtailing adult-adolescent relationships, this very message is still the mainstay of the police arsenal against paedophiles.

Despite the fact that at least one detective who worked on the Osborne case was perceptive enough to see that 'scare' or high fear campaigns rarely achieve their desired results, such campaigns are still used by the force. The detective who was able to see beyond the sex monster stereotype perceptively remarked to me:

I sometimes think about those families that the kids come from (in the Osborne case) and wonder just how much contact dad had with his son – I know I try to get a bit closer to my kids now after working on the Osborne case.

Such perceptions were clearly not dominant in the Queensland police force. Some months after the Osborne case the police arrested a man who was subsequently found guilty of indecently dealing with a young boy and girl. The Police Commissioner was moved to remark, when commenting on the case in a Sunday newspaper, that:

As a parent I firmly believe that the greatest crime any adult can commit on a child is to destroy his or her innocence. One can only speculate on the terror and mental and physical trauma to which these animals subject young children.

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While many people might share the sentiments of the Commissioner such outbursts do little to unravel the reasons why young males are attracted to older men. The use of words such as 'animal' and 'monster' places the onus on to the individual offender, rather than the community and parents, as the cause of such relationships. In constructing social monsters in order to explain human behaviour we disapprove of, we often reinforce bigotry and obscure truth. Such an approach can, in the long run, offer no protection to parents or their children because nothing is done to rectify the social and psychological pressures driving young males towards their older brothers.

Helping to Create a Deviant

Most of us probably think that deviants result as a consequence of specific acts. Thus Clarence Osborne was 'deviant' because he sexually related to thousands of young boys and youths. It was, in other words, both the quality and quantity of Osborne's sexual acts that made him a deviant.

But the construction of such people is far more sophisticated than that. To be sure, society has to recognise an act as abhorrent or different or threatening before that act, and the person who engages in it, is ascribed a marginal identity. However, such an identity arises not only from the act itself but also from the social reaction to it.

In the case of Clarence Osborne various techniques were used by society to impute deviantness to him. One of the major ways in which this was carried out was by the process of stereotyping. Stereo-typing, long recognised by sociologists as a deviant-making technique, involves a tendency to jump from a single clue or a small number of clues in actual, suspected, or alleged behaviour, to a more general picture of 'the kind of person' with whom one is dealing.

In the case of Osborne the media made much of the fact that Osborne was a child molester because among thousands of photographs found in his house, there was one of a baby

fourteen weeks old. There is no suggestion by the police that Osborne sexually interfered with this baby or that he generally related to young boys, let alone babies. On the contrary, the police themselves admit that the vast majority of Osborne's partners were adolescents and an analysis of Osborne's own transcripts suggests that 90 per cent of his relationships were with adolescents aged between thirteen and twenty. Yet Osborne was constantly described as a 'molester' of young children.

Despite the lack of evidence to the contrary some police were quick to assume that Osborne physically coerced and perhaps harmed some of his partners. It was almost as though it was impossible to have a relationship with a youthful partner unless force was used to obtain co-operation. And there were even darker hints by some police that when the case was finally over, dramatic revelations would be unearthed. As one police investigator put it to me:

It might well be that when we look through all these files we will find out that one of the boys could have gone missing, perhaps murdered.

In fairness to the police it should be pointed out that many of them made no such suggestions. In fact some were quick to point out that the aspect of Osborne's career that most amazed them was the lack of high-pressure tactics employed by him in obtaining sex from his youthful partners. And no one who knew Osborne has suggested that his personality was of an aggressive or over-assertive type. It is also worth reporting that after twelve months of analysing Osborne's material the police have no evidence of physical coercion being applied by Osborne and no evidence of physical harm being inflicted on any of his partners.

But the stereotyping of paedophiles demands that certain assumptions be made about them. Thus they must be interested in boys, rather than in adolescents, must use force or emotional trickery and often money to obtain sexual favours. Even a sophisticated documentary producer such as Marianne Smith unwittingly perpetuated some of these myths by including the Osborne case in her 'Four Corners' segment on child prostitution.

Another technique by which deviation is imputed to persons and acts is retrospective interpretation, a facet of the labelling process. This process involves the mechanism by which people come to see deviators or suspected deviators in a totally new light. An example from another field will explain: sociologists have long been aware of the social-psychological processes by which an individual perceived one day as simply 'John Brown, citizen' can (as a result of conviction at trial or even of having being held as a suspect) become a 'murderer' or a rapist' the next day. Often public events such as trials – called, not inappropriately, 'status-degradation ceremonies' – are ways in which the process of retrospective interpretation occur. Social theorist Erving Goffman has pointed out that the 'case record' or 'case history' approach dearly loved by social workers and psychiatrists is a typical mechanism by which we retrospectively interpret a person's behaviour as being 'deviant'.¹⁴ For example, the actual function of case records seems to be almost entirely in support of current diagnoses, in reinforcing the formal definition of patients as mentally ill and in denying their rationalisations and counter-assertions. Rarely is the case study approach used to show that the patients had moments when he or she could cope, or to provide a rough average or sampling of his or her past conduct.

And so it is with the case of paedophiles. In both the media and police accounts of his life the biographical reconstructions try to show that Osborne had a *special history* that *specially*

explained his current 'monster' identity and that the *present evil* of Osborne was undoubtedly related to *past evil* and could be discovered by a police and media search of Osborne's records and past life.

Nowhere in the media or police accounts of Clarence Osborne do we find any mention of the fact that he was considered by many of his work colleagues as vocationally helpful – someone who often put himself out to help a colleague. Nowhere do we find any acknowledgement of the fact that many parents thought him sufficiently useful for their sons to ask Osborne to take them for body-building courses. Nowhere also do we find any acknowledgement of the fact that Osborne provided many lonely and isolated young males with a companionship that, distasteful as it might be to us, was better than no companionship at all. Instead we find that by the techniques of stereotyping and retrospective interpretation Osborne is defined as being a 'monster'. Everyone it seems is able to be wise after the event. Thus one neighbour told me, 'I always knew there was something wrong with Osborne. He looked very strange and I wouldn't trust him.' The same neighbour in an earlier part of the interview had something rather different to say, 'There seemed to be nothing out of the ordinary about Osborne, in fact I always found him a pretty friendly sort of fellow.'

Sexual Folk Devils

Clarence Osborne and his fellow paedophiles are just part of a long tradition of folk devils created by a vengeful society and a sensationalist press. The process of creating monsters or folk devils has been cleverly described by British sociologist Stanley Cohen in his book, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics. The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*.¹⁵ Cohen demonstrates how the media and other powerful interest groups scapegoat those who dress and act differently, such as teddy boys in Britain and beatniks in America. Similar processes operate with mentally ill people, 'dole bludgers' and coloured people.¹⁶

But it is in the area of sexuality that the creation of folk devils becomes most obvious. Paedophiles are just one of a number of sexual folk devils that have been created by powerful interest groups and their agents, the media and the criminal law. Indeed as criminologists Norval Morris and Gordon Hawkins point out: it is as if the laws of western societies were designed to provide 'an enormous legislative chastity belt encompassing the whole population and prescribing everything except for solitary and joyless masturbation and normal coitus inside wedlock'.¹⁷ The examples of this theme are endless. In some American states extramarital intercourse is punishable with fines from \$10 to five years imprisonment. Bigamy, 'the triumph of hope over experience', can lead up to three years imprisonment and in many jurisdictions in industrialised countries heterosexual as well as homosexual sodomy generates fifteen years jail.

Consenting heterosexual acts with children which come under the rubric of carnal knowledge (in England and Australia) or statutory rape (in America) are generally not considered as horrendous as consenting homosexual relations between an adult and a child, but they are still punished in draconian ways. For example, maximum penalties for consenting heterosexual relations between a man and a girl have varied from death in fifteen states of the United States to ten years' imprisonment in other states. These penalties occur despite the fact that the statutory age of consent varies enormously from one part of the United States to another ranging from, for example, ten years of age in some states to eighteen years of age in others and in the state of Tennessee the age of

consent is fixed at twenty-one years of age!

Homosexuals particularly, have been made the modern folk devils of contemporary society. Religious zealot Anita Bryant is just the last in a long line of public dignitaries who have helped to create the homosexual folk devil myth by her concentrated attempt to stigmatise people who engage in same-sex relationships. Bryant's campaign was so effective that it led to car bumper stickers with the words 'Kill a queer for Christ's sake' printed in large letters: a message that apparently was taken to heart by some as several murders of homosexuals occurred across the United States. Male paedophiles, of course, are doubly deviant or super folk devils not only because they are homosexual but because their sexual drives are orientated towards children.

In unravelling the reasons for the prohibition against homosexual behaviour we should recall the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in the book of Genesis. These cities, according to the legend, were destroyed by the wrath of god because their citizens practised what were described as 'unnatural acts'. The Christian reaction against homosexuals and homosexual behaviour was later reinforced by the medical and psychiatric professions which have tended to therapeutise same-sex behaviour. For example, Irving Bieber, the most influential of all medical figures to write on homosexuality says, 'We consider homosexuality to be a pathological, bio-social, psycho-sexual adaptation consequent to pervasive fears surrounding the expression of heterosexual impulses.'¹⁸ And until fairly recently, most of the world's psychiatric associations considered homosexuality to be a mental illness, in the same way that schizophrenia and manic depressive behaviours are also considered to be mental illnesses. The creation of the homosexual folk devil is the work not only of Christians and psychiatrists but also of physicians. In one of the most popular books on sex ever published, *Everything you ever wanted to know about sex but were afraid to ask*, physician David Reuben assists in building the public stereotype of homosexuals by compounding the current myths about homosexual practices.¹⁹ According to Dr Reuben, lesbians use a dildo or artificial phallus 'held in place with an elastic harness' so that 'an unreasonable facsimile of heterosexual intercourse is possible'.²⁰ On the other hand, according to the good doctor, male homosexuals, 'find their man-to-man sex unfulfilling and so they secretly masturbate while forcing a carrot lubricated with vegetable oil into their anus, or have intercourse with a melon, a cantaloup or where it is available, a papaya'.²¹

With such nonsense written about homosexuals it is little wonder that some of the most derogatory words in the English language address themselves to known or suspected homosexuals: 'faggot', 'queer', 'punk', 'cock sucker' and 'fairy' are examples. Discriminatory language against homosexuals is continuously reinforced by police harassment, legal discrimination and media stereotyping, all of which have been extensively documented by homosexual activists and writers.

What homosexuals constantly find in fighting for legal and social reforms is that opposition to such reforms invariably raise the spectre of young boys being seduced by lustful homosexual men. The fact that the vast majority of same-sex persons are not paedophiles is rarely considered by the moral entrepreneurs of our society. Consider the following diatribe published in the Humbard Question Report in 1972 (not 1872) quoted by John W. Petras in his book *Sexuality and Society*:

Here in Youngstown we are shocked by a terrible crime against a young boy by a sex pervert which resulted in the boy's murder, yet our law makers passed a

bill legalising this crime . . . What insanity! This is giving a blessing to more and worse sex crimes. This is bringing out into the open what the law and moral standards have always condemned . . .! This bill, if it passes Senate will open a Pandora's box of crime and force unparalleled in the history of the United States.²²

Of course, why one case of homosexual violence should be any more typical of homosexuality in general, than one case of hetero-sexual rape-murder is of heterosexuality in general, is not clear. But the fact that this equation is taken seriously by many people demonstrates the powerful emotional effects of irrational arguments. And paedophiles, more than any other groups, receive the brunt of such arguments in many different ways.

In the public's mind paedophiles molest children rather than have consenting sexual relationships with them. Paedophiles are seen as preying on children rather than attempting to relate to them and corrupting children rather than showing them affection.

We will see some of these reactions in other parts of this book. In the Revere case in Massachusetts, for example, the media headlines claimed that the twenty-four men indicted for having had sexual relations with boys were involved in rape and pornography. There was no evidence presented during the trial of force being used or of pornography found. Similarly in a forerunner to the Revere case in Boise, Idaho, five men were arrested for similar offences and found guilty by the press before the case came to court. Headlines and editorials in the local paper such as 'Crush the monster' led to further police purges resulting in an additional twelve men being charged.

In Britain the first public meeting of the Paedophile Information Exchange showed the strength of the paedophile folk-devil stereotype. The meeting was broken up by a hostile crowd. Mocking and punching the speakers and participants and shouts of 'animals', 'monsters' and 'filth' eventually forced the conference participants to literally run for their lives. As one participant put it, 'Of course I realised for a long time that our society viewed sexual relationships between children and adults with horror. An affair with a boy of eleven when I was sixteen made me painfully aware of this. But until the events (at the PIE. meeting) I was not aware of the ferocity of this reaction.'²³

Whether it be in Revere, Massachusetts, or Brisbane, Australia, men who love boys are seen as violent, depraved and evil people who symbolise an end to the prevailing moral order. And the violence born out of this paranoia is not dissimilar to the violence displayed by the Spanish and English Inquisitions towards people who were alleged to be witches.

Consider, for example, the public reaction to a case of paedophilia occurring in the same town that Osborne lived in a short time after revelations concerning him were publicised. In this case a man pleaded guilty to charges of having attempted to have carnal knowledge of a girl, sodomy of a girl and her brother, and to charges of having indecently dealt with the girl and the boy on occasions during 1978 and 1979.

Details surrounding the case made it apparent that the children co-operated in the sexual acts, and indeed sought them on many occasions. While the man's behaviour could, on a variety of counts, be severely criticised and while in my opinion a jail sentence was not inappropriate, comments made by persons concerned with the case hardly assisted the community in dispassionately considering the issues involved in man-youth relationships.

The mother of one of the girls was reported in the local newspaper to have stated that she

'just wanted to tie him (the accused) on an ants' nest and pour boiling water over him'. The newspaper publicising these remarks frequently referred to the man as a sex monster' and criticised the leniency of the nine-year sentence given by the judge.²⁴

While the mother's anguish is perhaps understandable, her comments on the case were puzzling. To begin with she was reported to have told the press that, 'My little girl was abused and abused. She probably knows more about sex than I do. It sickens me to have to say it, but I think she came to like it. She must have, she was always excited when he came around to the house.' Even so, the mother was quite clear on how she felt towards her daughter. According to the *Sunday Sun* the mother said that 'when police told me what he had done to my little girl I thought she would be better off dead'.²⁵

Such is the community feeling towards men who have relationships with children. And in a very real sense ignorance about paedophiles leads to the creation of the monster myth which in turn leads to increased paranoia about their alleged effects on the children or adolescents. It is a classic triple play. But while everyone knows that paranoia is the fear of unreal dangers, little can be done to educate the public about the reality of adult-youth relationships while we cling to the monster myth.

American paedophile spokesman Tom Reeves has suggested that we need a word to describe a person who is the opposite of a paranoid: a word to describe those who should be afraid of activities which society condemns but are not at all afraid.²⁶ If such a word was invented then probably the majority of young males who met Clarence Osborne could usefully be described by it. For according to the scientific evidence generally and Osborne's past partners whom I interviewed specifically, the paranoia exhibited by the media and the police was unwarranted.

Notes

5. The Making of Monsters

1. *Truth*, 29 September 1979.
2. *Sunday Mail*, 14 October 1979.
3. Quoted in *Truth*, 29 September 1979.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Gay Community News*, Vol. 1, No. 2, December, 1979, p.9.
6. *Ibid.*
7. The Commissioner of The Queensland Police Force granted me permission to interview the two detectives. His assistance in this respect is gratefully acknowledged.
8. Clearly, while the Osborne case was unique in many ways, police investigations in the city of Brisbane suggest that it is not uncommon for many men to have relations with hundreds of boys. The two detectives mentioned a number of investigations involving men who were suspected of having sexual relations with hundreds of boys.
9. *Sunday Mail*, 30 September 1979.
10. *Sunday Mail*, 14 October 1979.
11. *Ibid.*

12. *Sunday Mail*, 14 October 1979.
13. *Sunday Sun*, 26 October 1980.
14. Goffman, E., *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1963.
15. Cohen, S. *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, Paladin, London, 1973.
16. Wilson, P. R. and Braithwaite, J., *The Two Faces of Deviance*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1979.
17. Morris, N. and Hawkins, G., *The Honest Politicians Guide to Crime Control*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970.
18. Bieber, I., 'Homosexuality: An Adaptive Consequence of Disorder in Psychosexual Development', *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 130, November, 1973, pp.1209–1211.
19. Reuben, D., *Everything you wanted to know about sex but were afraid to ask*, David Mackay, New York, 1969, p.218.
20. *Ibid.*, p.129.
21. *Ibid.*, p.142.
22. Petras, J. W., *Sexuality in Society*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1973, p.102.
23. *Magpie*, No. 2, 1979, p.2.
24. *Sunday Sun*, 26 October 1980.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Quoted in Willenbecher, T., 'A letter from Boston', *Christopher Street*, March, 1978, p.56.

Chapter Six

The Sexual Activity of Male Children and Adolescents

The Clarence Osborne case forces us to recognise what we do not like recognising – that male children and adolescents are sexually active and sexually curious. Time and time again, Clarence Osborne's writings emphasise the sexual drive and curiosity of young males. In one short conversation with me Osborne boastfully but correctly reflected on the reasons for his 'success' with his youthful partners:

Boys just want to know about sex and no one really wants to tell them about it – they want to play with themselves and with other people and they want to do it more times than teachers or parents would think possible. All I do is give the boys what they want and to let them talk about things that no one else would let them talk about.

The relationships that Clarence Osborne developed with thousands of boys over a twenty-year period were sufficiently diverse to allow some generalisations to be made about the objects of the young males' sexual attention. The first type of sexual awakening to be found amongst youths is essentially auto-erotic. Auto-erotic awakening takes place when a child is aware of the capacity to tactually stimulate himself and has the volition to do so. The second type – hetero-erotic sexuality – is essentially socio-sexual in nature which means that rather than stimulating oneself, the child is stimulated, and stimulates another, through the senses of touch, sight, taste or thought.

Both types of sexual awakening are illustrated by the conversations recorded in Osborne's manuscript.¹ For example, hundreds of examples are given by Osborne of the intense pleasure young people experienced when touching their genitals. Whether it be in a bed, in a shower or just by clothing rubbing against their penises the recollections of the youths who spoke to Osborne were carefully recorded. One boy said:

I first masturbated when I was six and I used to do it two or three times a week. As far as I can remember, I didn't quite know what I was doing or what it meant, but it was just great.

Another boy recalled:

I played with myself ever since I was young, perhaps four years old and I used to try and hide it from my mum and dad. But I used to do it every night and it was great.

Osborne was a master at evoking sexual memories from his partners about their first hetero-erotic desires. Hundreds of boys told Osborne about their interest when very young – perhaps as young as four or five – in their younger sisters and their desire to have their sister handle their own penises or alternately, to touch their sister's vagina. The same sort of sexual recollections were given to Osborne by the youths concerning their wishes to cuddle and kiss parents, relatives and other adults in sexually stimulating ways. One youth said:

I liked sitting on my father's knees and putting my arms around him and feeling his arms around me. I got a stiff sometimes, although Dad never knew.

The material that Osborne left for posterity might well be considered by some as immoral or even depraved, but it does at least allow us to see a number of specific features concerning male sexuality. In the following pages an attempt is made to outline the salient features of this activity and, at the risk of repetition, to emphasise the importance of each feature in fully understanding man-youth relationships.

1 Young Male Sexual Stages

If we reconstruct the stages of male childhood sexuality using Osborne's material the following phases in sexual development become quite apparent. In the first phase, boys from the time of their birth to the age of two years watch and play with their penis in a variety of situations, ranging from the bath through to stimulating themselves in their bed or in an infinite variety of other settings.² Infants in this period are not generally capable of the direct voluntary action which we call masturbation, but occasionally they do specifically stimulate themselves – an observation Kinsey noted in his famous research.

Controversially, the American psychologist James Prescott argues that infants who receive large amounts of affection display high levels of genital play.³ Indeed, Prescott suggests that societies which promote physical pleasure among children are peaceful while those that punish pleasure are violent. He contends that a society can reduce future levels of war and crime by providing more physical affection between parents and children and more sexual pleasure for children. Regardless of whether Prescott is right or wrong it is quite apparent that between birth and two years of age children do take an interest in and receive enjoyment from their genital region.

Between the ages of three and seven an explosion of sexual interest follows the hazy sensuality of infancy.⁴ Children not only actively experiment sexually but often seek physical intimacy that is manifested in hugging and kissing parents, relatives or other adults. Osborne's notes also make it very clear that many young males during this period are introduced to more advanced sexual play by slightly older children in the context of those familiar games of 'You show me yours and I'll show you mine' and 'doctors and nurses'.

But often much more than these activities are involved. Young males often get involved in cuddling, handling, and occasionally, sucking each other's sex organs, and attempts at intercourse – both anal and genital – of a homosexual and heterosexual nature take place. Indeed, homosexuality is a normal part of growing up for male children during this period and is often a preliminary step to hetero-sexual behaviour displayed by the majority of adult males.

Between the ages of eight and thirteen Osborne's material identifies a third stage of child and adolescent male sexuality. Contrary to past folklore this period is not a time of sexual quiescence or a time when sexual interest takes a break before the big push that occurs at puberty.⁵ Clarence Osborne documented endless examples of young males exploring every possible source of sexual pleasure during this period. The explicit techniques of sexual gratification are liberally illustrated throughout Osborne's manuscript and include such well-known practices as the 'circle jerk' as well as one-to-one sexual exploratory sessions with others of the same age in showers, clubhouses, homes or equivalent settings.

The obvious nature of child sexuality and the attempts by society to deny any expression of that sexuality has led to the emergence of a number of small and unpopular social movements which have advocated the lifting of legal and social taboos surrounding

children's sexuality. The United States in particular has produced several semi-secret societies which foster sexual freedom between children and occasionally between children and adults. One which has thrown caution to the wind and made public announcements on the subject is the Rene Guyon Society, an organisation with three thousand correspondents in forty-five states. Public opinion has been shocked by society spokespersons advocating child-to-child and child-to-adult intimacy, even to the point of sexual intercourse if contraceptives are used. The organisation is based in California and a specific goal it unsuccessfully attempted to achieve in the late 1970s was to repeal all California's legislation that was repressive of child sexuality. Based on some ideas they have taken from developmental psychology, the society has won little public sympathy for its position by the slogan, 'Sex by age eight or else it's too late!'

The Sexual Freedom League, another organisation advocating sexual activity between children, differs from the Rene Guyon Society in condemning transgenerational sex. Similarly yet another group, the San Diego-based Child Sensuality Circle, adopts a middle position between the other two groups, advocating child-to-child sex and child-adult encounters in specific circumstances. Many individual professional men and women in medicine and psychiatry have suggested similar heresies and the reaction against them is as vitriolic as it is against the child sexuality liberation groups.⁶

The objections of the community are not so much against their expression in any shape or form. Clearly Clarence Osborne was able to capitalise on these objections and barriers by providing a setting in which child and adolescent sexuality could be expressed.

2 Male Adolescents are Intensely Concerned about Their Sexual Potential

In past chapters we have emphasised the fact that Osborne capitalised on the sexual ignorance that young males have concerning their genitals. Time and time again Osborne was able to achieve a deeper level of intimacy with his partners by answering questions about the size of their penis or the growth of their body generally. Indeed, one of Osborne's favourite pastimes was to measure the boys' penises and to reassure them that they were 'normal'. And Osborne had the ability to do this in such a way that the boys thought that they were receiving a favour. The proof of this assertion can be seen in the fact that so many of the boys considered Osborne to be a saviour of their masculinity. Osborne was adept at reassuring his youthful partners that they were normal and just like other boys' and had no need to worry about the size of their penises or thinness of their pubic hair.

This concern about genital growth and body development is not an isolated phenomenon. Osborne's records demonstrate that its predominance is widespread and affects young males from a variety of different social backgrounds. The ignorance that the boys demonstrated about their own bodies often overlapped with concerns about their sexual performances. Whether it be auto-erotic or hetero-erotic sexual matters, Osborne was able to assure the boys that they were no different from anybody else. His reassurances took many forms. One common way was to show the boys photographs of other boys with erections or who were masturbating and to indicate that these boys were no different in their sexual interests and body development from the boy he was with. Equally importantly, however, Osborne acted as a mentor for some of the youths when it came to their sexual and emotional relationships with the opposite sex.

It was not uncommon for Osborne to take the boy through a 'dry run' in order to

anticipate sexual intercourse with a girl. The boy would ask Osborne a number of questions about how he should insert his penis, what he should do after the insertion, and when he should ejaculate. The older man would either verbally or by demonstration show the boy what he should do. Clearly Osborne was acting as a teacher or guardian even though he obtained intense sexual pleasure from doing so. And there is no doubt that many boys felt that they had learned to have relationships with girls without unnecessary guilt and with sufficient expertise because of what they had learned from Osborne. One male put it like this:

I could really talk to him about this girl whom I wanted to fuck. We had petted but I guess I was a bit scared about what to do then and she, I think was like me. We spent a bit of time together (him and I) working out what I should do and it seemed to work. When I went back to his place a week or so later I was very proud and couldn't wait to tell him what I'd done and how it had gone. He seemed very pleased with me and asked me all the details and I told him and we were both happy.

Let us explore these issues in more detail. The concern by the boys in our culture about their own physical development and their sexual performance has, to some extent at least, arisen because of morphological differences between boys and girls. For example, parents give a name to the boy's penis and this is one of the first words the child is taught. Since the penis is also the pleasure organ and produces sexual arousal, it might be considered that the boy has some social advantages compared to the girl who has no common name attached to her pleasure organ, the clitoris. A girl is therefore dependent on being told by someone who has learned about the connection between clitoral stimulation and orgasm or sexual arousal. This difference, it has been argued, could make sexual communication in boys easier than amongst girls.

This line of argument also suggests that sexual arousal in young males is physical and thereby communicated visually while this is not true for girls. Boys are therefore sexually aroused by watching an erect penis whereas between girls, such manifest evidence of sexual excitement is lacking.

But while boys may seem to have some advantages in terms of sexual maturation, the very advantages bring in their wake a whole host of problems to do with male sexuality. As a variety of researchers have indicated, problems in sexual development in children such as exhibitionism or sadistic, aggressive sexual desires as well as concern about genital size, seem to occur predominantly in young males.⁷ Boys also have a strong guilt feeling about normal erotic fantasies and about their desire to relate sexually with other boys – the threat of being called a poofter rests uneasily with their same-sex preoccupations.⁸

Osborne was well aware of the inhibitions and guilt feelings that boys have about sex and one of the messages that he was able to give to the boys was very simple. That message was, 'It is normal to masturbate and most boys do it.' An even more forceful version of the message was often imparted to some youths, 'I masturbate, I like it, and I am normal.'

Despite the length of the relationship, Osborne was able to convey to nearly all boys he interacted with a comforting message about their genital development and heterosexual concerns. That message was very simply, 'Your penis is all right and it is normal to be worried about sexual relations with girls. I can help you to learn how to have sex with girls.' He told the boys what no one else wanted to tell them and he did it at a point in

their development when they sought such information.

3 Male Adolescents are Commonly Bisexually Orientated

In my book *Intimacy* I pointed out that bisexuality has often been confused by some writers who invoke the term to refer not only to sexual preferences but also to the characteristics of both sexes found in a particular person.⁹ What these writers often do is to confuse bisexuality with androgyny. Some unravelling of basic terminology is necessary. Bisexuality refers to a sexual orientation or preference while androgyny refers to qualities that are seen as conventionally masculine and feminine. Despite the semantic difficulties of defining precisely what the term 'bisexual' means, it is quite clear that when it is used to refer to sexual orientation, the majority of the adolescent boys Osborne related to could be subsumed under the bisexual label. Of course the boys might not see themselves in that light but their manifest behaviour showed an interest in both sexes.

With many of the boys Clarence Osborne interacted with bisexual behaviour was the rule rather than the exception. The opposite sex was available to the boys and they often engaged in physical relations with them during the periods when they were away from Osborne. But even during these periods emotional bonds were formed between the youths and the older man. Even here though, there is no evidence to suggest that the boys were necessarily more 'feminine' in their psychological or social mannerisms than other adolescents of the same age who never met Osborne. Certainly, the number of boys involved in the Clarence Osborne affair and the time over which many of the relationships developed, suggests that the example of boys and youths relating to both older men and young women is not one peculiar to the Osborne case.

It is true, however, that most of the boys did not conceive themselves as being bisexual. As we have seen, the majority of the young males that Osborne related to went to great length to explain to Osborne that they were 'real men' and had a primary interest in women. Osborne understood this point well and went to considerable lengths to reassure the boys that they were 'really' males and to neutralise any feelings of guilt that might have arisen in their minds as a result of engaging in sex with him. Thus, with many boys the initial encounters were essentially sexual in nature and it was only after a period of time that some degree of emotional bonding between Osborne and them developed. It was rare for the boys to be anally penetrated and when Osborne began stimulating their genitals, he generally did so within a context of saying that it was normal for boys to get erections. There was also, of course, the sex researcher role that Osborne used with effect allowing the youths to rationalise their behaviour.

We cannot assume that Clarence Osborne 'made' the boys bisexual. Contrary to police hyperbole one person does not have the power to direct another person's sexual orientation. All the Osborne case has done in this respect is to demonstrate that boys do have a bisexual orientation and that they had this orientation well before they met him. It appears that most of the boys developed either a primary hetero-sexual or homo-sexual orientation in late adolescence or early adulthood and the available evidence suggests that Osborne had little effect on their particular sexual interests later on in life. Nevertheless, Clarence Osborne's extraordinary life does demonstrate that we can no longer divide the world simply into heterosexuals and homosexuals and consequently must recognise the polymorphs potential of human beings when it comes to their sexuality. At different times in our lives we will exhibit a whole range of sexual behaviours – some will exhibit these behaviours in fantasy, some in reality, and some will change their orientations according

to particular psychological and social pressures operating at particular moments in their life.¹⁰

4 Adolescent Males will Seek Older Men for Non-monetary reasons

It is worth reiterating that the boys who saw Osborne did so for non-monetary reasons. We have explored some of the motivations for the relationships that developed between Osborne and his partners but these need to be re-emphasised again. To begin with, some of the boys were craving for affection – an emotion which they singularly lacked in their homes and peer environments. Secondly, some were searching for new experiences – for what they commonly refer to as ‘kicks’ of a sexual and non-sexual kind. These boys saw Osborne as providing these ‘kicks’ until they were sufficiently emotionally mature to relate to girls. Thirdly and very importantly, the boys indulged in sexual activities with men because they greatly enjoy being fellated, touched and physically caressed. They were highly aroused by sexually stimulating situations and wanted to further their sexual experiences and sexual partners. The older male allowed them to fulfil their ambitions because pederasts enjoy giving the boys pleasure in the same sense of ‘enjoying the pleasure of the other’ which Sartre writes about in *Saint Genet*.¹¹ Pederasts do not generally kiss boys, usually because boys do not want to be kissed, so they tend to content themselves with teasing, wrestling and caressing which boys appear to enjoy.¹² Because men such as Clarence Osborne truly want a boy’s affection, they follow the boy’s sexual lead rather passively, becoming sexually active only as affection grows and as the boy wishes. Osborne once said to me, ‘You never really have to sexually seduce a lad. If you give him time, he will seduce you.’ As Parker Rossman puts it in his paper of pederasts ‘The ones who fall into the hands of the police are the ones who have forgotten that rule.’¹³

No one denies that there are boys who seek men for other reasons besides the ones I have given. These young men are generally motivated by mercenary considerations, born not so much out of poverty but because in their inner world material goods are important to them. But the boy prostitute is often in a very different situation from the boy who seeks older men for the non-monetary reasons I have outlined. In nearly all cases boy prostitutes are extremely sexually experienced and often take the initiative in proposing sexual relations. While they might well enjoy the sexual games that occur between themselves and a man, their prime objective for entering into the relationship is, in most cases, monetary.¹⁴ And while some boys may not be motivated by the push of poverty to charge money for sex, substantial numbers of them enter into the trade because they come from social areas and climates where prostitution is a common way of overcoming the economic deprivations of birth. In this regard they are no different from the majority of females who enter into prostitution.

It is therefore dangerous to confuse the dynamics of boys who enter into relationships with men and expect no monetary rewards with those of boys who enter into relationships with a prime objective of obtaining money or gifts. This confusion has arisen for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that in our culture there is a very strong taboo with respect to sexual arousal in children. If any type of sexual arousal should occur, regardless of the reason for it, as children, and the adults who stimulate them are the objects of extreme social sanctions. In other cultures, however, the situation is in very different. Among Cobeo Indians in the North West Amazon, A, body contact is very pronounced and according to anthropologists by such as Goldman, this explains their receptiveness to sexual arousal in both childhood and adolescent masturbatory and

homosexual to activity.¹⁵ In several cultures, moreover, mothers caress the child's genitals during nursing, often with the objective of 'quietening' down the body. While the developmental significance of these experiences is not yet fully known, no anthropologist suggests that societies which not engage in the sexual stimulation of their children suffer adverse consequences.¹⁶ This does not mean that, in our society, adverse consequences would not follow from such stimulation. After all, our culture and history is very different from the less developed areas that anthropologists have studied. But at least we know that some human communities do not view childhood sexuality with the same abhorrence that characterises the industrialised world.

5 Most Males Remember Their Adolescent Sexual Experiences with Pleasure

To say that males remember their childhood and adolescent experiences with pleasure seems to be stating the obvious. The point is though that regardless of whether the experiences are with girls, women, boys or men, most of them do not lead to the guilt-ridden traumatised memories that popular mythology would assume. Time and time again men I interviewed who had relationships with Clarence Osborne told me that they were enormously aroused and excited by these relationships. Nowhere is this better illustrated than by one man who, with explicit honesty, summed up his experiences with Osborne in this way:

It was really a big kick to have (him) do things to me. I mean I really liked him touching me there and all over the body in fact. I might have felt a bit guilty to start with but as the years have gone by I just see it for what it was; just a bit of fun and a way for me to get a new experience. I can't really think how this could have possibly affected me adversely, but I sometimes think about what would have happened if we had been caught. Certainly, he (Osborne) would have been devastated by the law and the police. I think I would have been made to feel as though I was some sort of freak and might well have sort of begun to think of myself as being a queer or whatever. But that's all that might have happened. What really happened was enjoyable and didn't affect me in a major way at all.

One of the reasons why many people cannot understand that a boy would thoroughly enjoy a relationship with an older man not only because they do not fully appreciate the interest male and (female) children and adolescents have for sexual exploration, but also because, in the case of the young male, they are ignorant about the exact sexual relationship that exists between men and boys. We have seen in a previous chapter that in the Osborne case, the nature of the sexual experience was determined by rules worked out conjointly by both Osborne and the particular boy involved. Most of the boys were very careful not to define themselves as homosexuals and Osborne went to great lengths to ensure that they did not see themselves in that way. For that very reason the nature of the sexual activity was often limited. Consequently, contrary to public opinion, the amount of anal intercourse and fellation that went on in this case (and I would argue in most interactions between men and boys) was very limited and rare. Instead, physical contact often took place in the context of 'having a bit of fun' or 'playing a bit of sport'.

When discussing male-youth sexual activities Rossman perceptively suggests that instead of discussing the extent to which pederasts and boys are indulging in oral intercourse, anal inter-course or mutual masturbation, it might make much more sense to study the

type of sexual games that are played, in which oral and anal intercourse are sometimes the penalty for the loser or the reward for the victor.¹⁷ He points out that most studies of sexual behaviour between men and boys point to the fact that the sex takes place in the context of playing games. Regardless of whether the games are gambling or sporting activities, such as wrestling together, sexual competitions and contests are intertwined with them. In 'playing around' together there is the hunt and the chase element with sexual prizes and punishments. In this way, of course, a boy does not have to think of himself as homosexual or as engaging in sexual perversions, but rather simply as engaging in 'fun and games', As Rossman puts it:

I do not know how extensive it is for adolescents to view sexual activity as a sport, but it seems to be very typical of those boys who are involved with pederasts, and seems to characterise the adolescent memories and fantasies of a high percentage of pederasts of all categories.¹⁸

The pederast also determines the limitations of the sexual relations that occur between him and a boy simply by adopting certain standards of behaviour. With Clarence Osborne we find patterns occurring that ensured the boys would find the sexual experiences pleasurable rather than traumatic. Osborne would generally only touch a boy's genitals once the boy had an erection and was therefore ready to be stimulated. It was very rare that he would engage in anal intercourse, not only because it was not 'his thing' as he put it, but also because he knew that this would threaten the boy's self-image. He was also very careful to limit the nature of the physical contact that he had with his partners so that while he might hug and caress a boy, he would rarely kiss that boy as that too would threaten the boy's self-identity. Most importantly of all though, it is clear that Osborne would make the decisions about the nature of the sexual interactions that occurred between him and the boys on the basis of, and in accordance with, the wishes of that particular boy. He would simply do what the boy desired and no more.

It is precisely because sexual contacts between men and boys take place within parameters that are worked out between the two partners and which are mutually agreed upon, that most males remember their sexual experiences with older men with pleasure. One may well argue about the effect of these contacts on the boy's psychological and sexual development, or the morality of an older man engaging in these sexual contacts. But it is an undeniable fact that, except in the case of intervention by the police and the courts or non-consenting participation by the boys, these experiences are remembered as sensuous and sexually gratifying even if there is a residue of guilt in some cases.¹⁹

Males and Sex

It is now time to place what we have learned about male sexuality through an analysis of the Osborne case into a wider perspective. In chapter four we looked at the affectionate needs of adolescent youths. There are, however, some lessons to be learnt about male sexuality generally from the experiences of Osborne and the boys and youths he had relations with.

The behaviour of the adolescents who were entangled both sexually and emotionally with Clarence Osborne reveals a substantial amount of information about male sexuality generally. A common view in our culture is that male sexuality, in contrast with female sexuality, is simple, straightforward, emotionless and problem free. Men, it is assumed,

are always ready and willing to engage in sexual encounters and in contrast with women they can do this because their genital equipment is basically simple. The myth also assumes that a man's sexual desires are easily fulfilled – most men, it is reported, simply want to 'stick it in anywhere' and engage in what the Americans popularly call the 'wham bam thank you ma'am' syndrome. Support for this view is reinforced by the popular belief that men have little interest in receiving or giving affection and that, in their relationships with women, they treat them purely and simply as sex objects.

If the behaviour of adult men is seen as reflecting these sexual traits then society generally considers that young men spotlight them. Most of us, when describing male adolescent sexuality, for example, admit that young males will get 'crushes' on members of the opposite sex. However, few people consider that adolescents are capable of, yet alone seek, a close and intimate relationship with another person where physical attraction and love for that person are closely entwined. Young men are also seen as epitomising the 'wham bam thank you ma'am' syndrome that is thought to characterise their older brothers. Young men, it is assumed, have no need for the sophistications and subtleties of close body touching, caressing and other forms of physical contact outside straight sexual intercourse.

It is only recently that some of the myths about male adult sexuality are being exposed. Bernie Zilbergeld, in his recent book *Men and Sex*, points out that vast numbers of normal, healthy men without any psychological impairment have quite severe sexual difficulties.²⁰ He found that most men were not satisfied with their sexuality and wanted to learn more about it. The problems were many: a great number of men were unable to obtain erections, ejaculated prematurely, lost interest in sex at a very early age, and wanted a different sort of sex than the type they were receiving. In my book *intimacy* I outlined similar problems to those that Zilbergeld found.²¹ Most importantly of all though, recent studies clearly demonstrate that males of all ages are enormously ignorant about sex in terms of both its social and physical parameters.²² Men are very hesitant to ask for a different type of sexual contact with a partner than what they have been receiving. Consequently while penetration is, in hetero-sexual relations, typically asked for and received, body contact and touching is rarely requested and therefore obtained. Men are constantly preoccupied with how they are faring sexually in comparison with other men and are often obsessed with comparing their sexual performances with the performances of other men. Almost every man tends to think that all other men are having a better time sexually than he is, and he cannot shatter this illusion because of the taboo among men about honestly and openly talking about these matters. Men, in fact, are extremely secretive about their sexuality. They certainly joke about sex and talk a great deal about it with other men, but the talk that they engage in is of a trivial type which centres on the physical attributes of their female partners.

Perhaps the most important part of the male myth centres around the set of rigid sexual rules that dictate the way men think and act sexually and emotionally with the opposite sex and with their own sex. These rules propel men towards a sexual history that they often neither wish nor enjoy. Regardless of age, the rules seem to be the same: I know all about sex; nobody (particularly a woman) can tell me about sex; the more sex I get, the more I know I'm truly masculine; sex will give me a real 'high'; sex is always fun.²³

Young males work under these rules and at times appear as though nothing else seems to matter as much as sex does – thinking about it, learning about it, talking about it and fantasising about it. Male adolescent popular culture reinforces this obsession on sexual

matters which is also reinforced by the external nature of the male genitals. In his superb and sensitive account, 'Being a Boy' Julius Lester tells of his experience in this way:

No wonder boys talked about nothing but sex. The thing was always there. Every time we went to the john there it was twitching around like a fat little worm on a fishing hook. When we took baths, it floated in the water like a lazy fish and God forbid we should touch it! It sprang to life like lightening leaping from a cloud. I wished I could cut it off or at least keep it tucked between my legs – but I was helpless. It was there, with a life and mind of its own, having no other function than to embarrass me.²⁴

While young men might well be obsessed with their penile characteristics and with sexual matters, I would suggest that the obsessions often hide a complexity of emotions and feelings about these topics that are not really fully understood. Adolescent males are the slaves of the masculine culture of sex that they cannot escape from. Bernie Zilbergeld put it succinctly:

In its obsession with sex, the functioning of the penis, and the uncontrolled nature of sex, adolescent sexuality is the closest most men will ever get to fantasy land sexuality. Our first experience of adult sexuality is therefore similar to the dominant model in our culture that is held up as a standard for the rest of our lives.²⁵

Clarence Osborne's life and experiences help us to slip behind the 'dominant model' of male sexuality and understand the real sexual and emotional needs of young male adolescents. The boys who related to him came from diverse social backgrounds and exhibited, in their diversity, a complexity of sexual attitudes and behaviour. To begin with, it is clear that boys experience and deal with their sexuality in different ways. Some rely on masturbation for their major sexual outlets while others, because of social situations or psychological makeup, quickly turn to another sex partner. Some appear to be unconcerned with sexual matters either because their parents sufficiently repressed their interests in it or because other interests predominate. Yet others appear to be so guilt-ridden or unsure about their sexuality that the conflicts about the subject rage inside their minds.

Behind these diverse experiences though, there lies a commonality of sexual problems that young males share together. These problems are exemplified by Clarence Osborne's life and writings and are an indictment of the prevailing masculine ethos operating in contemporary society. To start with, young and old males fake sex in the same way that they fake their reactions to women in a face to face situation. Clearly they do not fake sex physically – erections are still erections – but they fake the emotions and cognitions that go with sexual activity. Adolescents are not confident about sexual matters and are very uneasy about their own sexuality and bodily desires. Many of them are grossly ignorant about their genitals and their physical development and this ignorance often leads them on a sexual journey of self-discovery. The Clarence Osbornes of this world and the innumerable sexual contacts of both a homosexual and heterosexual nature that adolescents experience are a part of this voyage for sexual and social self-discovery.

In this search young males often neglect aspects of their personality that are not considered part of the masculine ethos. For example, some adolescent boys have a great need for emotion and affection, particularly if such emotions are missing from their

immediate home environments. Clarence Osborne knew this very well and was able to provide, in part at least, an outlet for those emotions, in a variety of sexual and non-sexual ways.

Other young males exhibit a totally emotionless drive for sexual fulfilment, preferring impersonal detailed sex without commitment or passion. In this respect though they are simply mirroring what many of their adult counterparts exhibit constantly. In recent times we have seen the emergence of what Rollo May has called 'the cult of technique' where bodies constantly meet but minds rarely do.²⁶ Osborne was fully aware of the interest that boys and adolescents have in the 'cult of technique' and was able to provide impersonal sex in private places without risk or unnecessary commitment.

We should not, however, trivialise such impersonal sex. Like their adult counterparts, young males use such sex in order to fulfil gaps in their life. It may be used to prove their masculinity, to raise their sense of self or identity, or to act out their fantasies. But regardless of how it is used, it is of psychological importance to the youth.

Before we condemn young males we should also consider that heterosexuals and homosexuals use singles bars and sauna baths in the very same way. And, as with the bars and baths, young males find that impersonal sex can serve, at an important point in their lives, a psychological function that no other person or institution fulfils.²⁷ The impersonal sex that occurred between some of the boys and Osborne may well, for example, have relieved the loneliness that envelopes some young males. It might as well be perceived by a boy as an intense sexual experience rounding out an existing imbalance in his life. In short, what to some can look like an utterly superficial contact, can to the participant be a richly motivated act of tremendous significance and meaning.

To summarise then, the case of Clarence Osborne helps observers of male sexuality get beyond the masculine ethos. Sex may not be the most important part of life either for a young or an old male, but it is certainly a major part and as good an indicator of the quality of their lives as any other. The hopes, worries, fears and problems that affect adolescents crystallised themselves in the physical and emotional relationships that the boys had with Osborne. And these fears and hopes are really quite understandable: the fears of not being considered a male; the fears of not receiving affection or love; the fears that one is ignorant about one's own body and genitalia and the emptiness that is felt because one is not able to talk with anyone else about this ignorance.

In the future we can expect that the position of adolescent males in regard to sexual matters will become even more difficult and they are likely to become the first battle casualties in the new war on sexual standards. It is obvious to most observers that traditional values concerning sex and sex roles are falling apart.²⁸ High divorce rates and the difficulties that men and women have in achieving intimacy bear testimony to this assertion. Both sexes suffer from this confusion but males might well be suffering more than they are willing to admit.

Men might want affection, love and emotional closeness but they are still bound by a masculine strait-jacket that negates them from giving or receiving this closeness. The assertiveness of women both sexually and socially often threatens male self-esteem and self-image and does little to validate the view men have of themselves as being 'masculine'. Adolescents are reflecting and will continue to reflect, this social and sexual uncertainty but will, because they are bound to a masculine strait-jacket, often be propelled towards a direction in sexual matters that they do not wish and do not enjoy.

No matter how harmful the old sex roles and other societal institutions were, they at least provided young and old males alike with the guidelines for social and sexual action that gave a predictability and orderliness to their world. Such predictability and orderliness, as well as a sense of identity, cannot be taken for granted in these uncertain sexual times.

Older men will either use this uncertainty in order to sustain their sexual interest in adolescent boys or alternatively, boys will seek out older men in order to reduce the psychological tensions that this uncertainty leads to. No matter what the reason, we can be sure that the Clarence Osbornes of this world will continue to thrive and will have no difficulty in finding youthful partners. For Greek love, as it is called, is as old as mankind itself. Its history has always been controversial and it is to that controversy that we turn in the next chapter.

Notes

6. Male Adolescent Sexuality. The Lessons from Osborne

1. The importance of the child or youth's own assessment of his sexuality — of the type, for example, that Osborne's taped conversations reveal — are seen in other studies of child and adolescent sexuality. Alfred Kinsey, in a letter to New York gynaecologist Dr Sophia J. Kleegman, wrote: 'Children's material is precious. It is giving us more insights into the patterns of behaviour than we ever anticipated we could get.' Quoted in Pomeroy, W. B., *Dr Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research*, Signet, New York, 1972, p.222.
2. Most of the material Osborne obtained on early childhood sexuality came from his partners' recollections of their infantile experiences. Again, Kinsey emphasizes the importance of this sort of material. *Ibid.*, pp.128 – 129.
3. Prescott, J. W., 'Body pleasure and the origins of violence' *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November, 1975, pp. 10 – 20.
4. This stage is discussed by Martinson in Cook, M. and Wilson, G., *Love and Attraction*, Pergamon, London, 1980, pp.489-491.
5. The Freudian concept of 'Sexual latency' during this stage is open to attack based on Osborne's material. Clearly, most of his partners were sexually very active during Freud's 'latency' period.
6. Individuals and organisations who have advocated more liberal attitudes towards childhood sexuality are discussed by Martinson. See Cook, M. and Wilson, G., *op. cit.*, pp. 490-491.
7. See Constantine, L., 'The Sexual Rights of Children' in Cook, M. and Wilson, G., *op. cit.*, pp.503-507.
8. See Martinson, Cook, M. and Wilson, G., *op. cit.*, pp.489-491.
9. Wilson, P. R., *Intimacy*, Cassell, Sydney, 1979, p.147.
10. The problematic nature of sexuality is one of the most established findings in the study of human sexuality and is extensively documented in the works of Kinsey, Ford, Beach and Freud.
11. Sartre, J. P., *Saint Genet* in Sartre, J. P., *Oeuvres Completes*, Gallimard, Paris, 1967.

12. There are exceptions to this rule and it is clear from Osborne's documents that some boys wanted to be kissed and enjoyed this activity considerably.
13. Rossman, P., 'The pederasts', *Society*, May/April, 1973, pp.29–35.
14. This theme is the basis for Robin Lloyd's book. See Lloyd, R., *Playland*, Quartet, London, 1979.
15. Goldman, I., *The Cubeo-Indians of the Northwest Amazon*, The University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1963.
16. See a discussion of this evidence in Longfeldt's paper in Cook, M. and Wilson, G., op cit., pp.493-498.
17. Rossman, P., op. cit.
18. Ibid, pp.34-35.
19. It would be very difficult, in this society, for guilt to be absent in adolescent same-sex relations given the antagonistic societal attitudes towards homosexuality.
20. Zilbergeld, B., *Men and Sex*, Hutchinson, Melbourne, 1978.
21. Wilson, P. op. cit., pp. 102–124.
22. Zilbergeld, B., op. cit., p.5.
23. Ibid, pp.3–li.
24. Lestor, J., 'Being A Boy', *Ms Magazine*, July, 1973, p.113.
25. Zilbergeld, B., op. cit. p.271.
26. May, R., *Love and Will*, Fontana, London, 1972. (See particularly chapter 1.)
27. Tripp has emphasized this point vividly in his writings. See Tripp, C. A., *The Homosexual Matrix*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1972.
28. Wilson, P. R., op. cit.

Chapter Seven

Clarence Osborne was an exponent of what is generally referred to as Greek love. Such love is the physical and emotional expression of affection between an older man and a youth. To Osborne, Greek love was the highest form of love, surpassing even adult heterosexual or homosexual relationships.

Osborne idealised both boys and adolescents. To him they represented the epitome of what was beautiful and natural. Relationships with young males were not seen by him as being exploitative, but rather as socially and psychologically beneficial to the younger person. In a reversal of conventional morality, Osborne argued that the love of a man for a woman was the archetypal exploitative relationship and, in a statement designed to alienate every woman stated that this was so 'because women are manipulators and devious people'.

Nowhere are Osborne's views about Greek love better expressed than in his own manuscript. Encapsulating the usual arguments put by Greek love practitioners, Osborne wrote:

For my own part I go along with the Greek love concept. At one level the boy seeks a father-image or is curious about advanced adult development and his sex drive is strong enough to take chances with homosexual contact on his terms, whereas the older man exults in the boy's fresh vigour, exuberance and manliness combined with the litheness and power of the tiger. I can well understand the preference for the fierce, passionate embrace of a wholesome, trusting youth over that of the most delightful looking female, who almost always is beneath the surface, bitchy, selfish and demanding, her counterpart is, of course, the far from innocent mercenary street boy.

To Clarence Osborne, Greek love was not only just a service but it was a *social* service. Frequently, in conversations with me, and throughout his own writing he referred to the way in which he was able to take a 'troublesome' youth, guide him like a father and show him the path to social stability and success.

Some boys I have met need my help and I have helped them. If you take a boy who would get into trouble and show him what the right way is it is amazing how you can change him. They have come up to me several years later in the street and thanked me for it.

The effect that Osborne had on the boys has already been discussed in past chapters. It is important, however, to emphasise again at this stage that Osborne was seen by many of these boys/adolescents as being a close friend. Senior Constable David Jeffries from the Queensland Juvenile Aid Bureau, one of the investigating officers in the Osborne case recalls:

It was not unusual for men, walking with their girlfriends and wives, to, when accidentally meeting Osborne in the street, rush over to him and shake him by the hands. When these men were kids they had known Osborne and looked on him now and then as being a really good guy. Some of the other policemen on the case just couldn't understand this.¹

Greek lovers like Clarence Osborne have consistently argued that they do not wish to harm the youths they relate to, but instead desire to impart their experience and worldly knowledge to the boys. While they emphasise love rather than sex, Clarence Osborne's manuscript and conversations were almost invariably centred on the physical adventures that he engaged in.

Osborne emphasised that the Greek love relationships he participated in were the epitome of non-possessiveness and openness. He was not jealous of the youth's past or present sexual adventures and indeed, revelled in the detailed accounts of his young partners' sexual adventures. In this sense Osborne characterised what Greek love practitioners see as the essence of the craft. The most widely read book on adult-boy/adolescent relationships is undoubtedly J. Z. Eglinton's *Greek Love*. Eglinton defines such love in the following terms:

Greek love. Love between adult (or older adolescent) and adolescent boy, without prejudice to the other love relationships either party might then or later be involved in.²

But both in this definition and in the life and deeds of Clarence Osborne we meet semantic difficulties. In the case of Osborne, and in the case of others who espouse the Greek love philosophy, there are numerous examples of the youthful partners being, in many cases, children rather than adolescents. Indeed, Clarence Osborne occasionally had partners who were aged anywhere between seven and ten years, which of course precedes what is generally recognised as the start of adolescence. And it is precisely because of the fact that the Clarence Osbornes of this world relate to children as well as to adolescents that they incur a public wrath from laymen and experts alike.³

Eglinton considers the term paedophilia to be an erroneous one because under its rubric are lumped both what he defines as Greek love and sexual interest in pre-pubertal children of either gender. Eglinton prefers to use the term paidophilia to refer to sexual interest in adolescents, and pederasty to refer to sexual concern for boys. To confuse matters further we have another term commonly used in the literature—'ephebophilia', denoting sexual preferences for adolescents.⁴

As Osborne related to both pre-pubertal boys and to adolescents it is not unreasonable to describe his prime interests as 'Greek Love' and 'pederasty'. The latter concept correctly encompasses most of Osborne's activities and describes in general terms the phenomenon that has been explored in this book which is, simply put, the sexual interest in young boys and adolescents. The use of this term in relation to Clarence Osborne's activities and to other men with similar interests does not deny the emotional component in adult-child/adolescent relationships. Often, as we have seen, the amount of affection in these liaisons is great. It is, however, the physical component of such relationships that causes the basic controversy regarding adult and younger male contacts.

A Turbulent History

The Clarence Osbornes of this world have always suffered harshly for their sexual preferences. Nowhere is this better demonstrated than in the famous trial involving allegations about Oscar Wilde's sexual relationships with Lord Alfred Douglas. Although Wilde was not accused of pederasty, the judge was so incensed at older-younger male relationships that in sentencing Wilde he said:

The crime of which you have been convicted is so bad that one has to put stern restraint upon oneself to protect oneself from describing, in language which I would rather not use, the sentiments which rise to the breast of every man of honour who has heard the details of these terrible trials.⁵

The judge, however, was not prepared to leave it at that. He went on to say:

It is no use for me to address you. People who can do these things must be dead to all sense of shame, and one cannot hope to produce any effect upon them. I shall, under the circumstances be expected to pass the severest sentence that the law allows. In my judgement it is totally inadequate for such cases as this.⁶

To the homosexual community boy love may well be to the 1980s what 'gay is good' consciousness raising was to the 1970s. If this is to be the case, however, and if heterosexuals as well as homosexuals are to view paedophiles in a different perspective, then more about them has to be known. In particular, the question of just how 'dangerous' they are can only be answered when we understand the motivations of their partners and their mutual physical and emotional activities. Clarence Osborne's life has allowed us to examine these questions in some detail and readers can make up their own minds whether Osborne threatened the youths or society generally.

Clearly the medical and legal responses to paedophilia suggest that the community as a whole defines the paedophile as dangerous. This is abundantly obvious, as we will see in the next chapter, from the punishments they impose and the 'rehabilitative' methods they employ. But the medical and legal procedures which are adopted towards the paedophile rest on the assumption that he fundamentally affects the boys' social and sexual development. Whether this assumption has any basis in reality is examined in the following pages of this book.

Reactions to older-younger male relations have not changed significantly since the days of Oscar Wilde and nowhere is this better shown than in the Revere, Massachusetts case.⁷ Revere, a medium-sized suburb of Boston, Massachusetts, is a quiet suburb populated mostly by Italians with a fair complement of Irish and Eastern Europeans. Although the town was suffering from industrial depression and economic stagnation at the end of the 1970s, it had on the surface an air of quiet affluence about it.

On December 1977, citizens woke up to newspaper headlines loudly proclaiming 'Twenty-four men indicted in a child pornography ring based in Revere'. 'That sort of thing just doesn't happen in Revere', citizens thought. But on reading further they found that district attorney Garrett Byrne had broken up an interstate ring centred in Revere involving the sexual abuse and prostitution of eight to thirteen-year-old boys. Coverage in the newspapers created the impression that the boys were detained against their will, supplied with drugs and drink and forced to have sex with adult men as well as having to pose for pornographic photos and films. The men responsible were held on various counts ranging from lewd and lascivious acts to statutory rape.

The public outcry was immediate and fed continuously by the eighty-one-year-old Byrne who promised a hungry electorate that more indictments were in the offing. Byrne established an 'emergency hotline' so that outraged citizens could call up and report any other dirty old man whom they happened to know of in the neighbourhood. One day after the hotline was installed Byrne gleefully announced to the press that his office had been

flooded with calls expressing 'outrage' at the child abuse and offering information that would lead to numerous other additional indictments, including, he hinted, that of a 'married Boston minister'.

Tom Willenbecher has pointed out that while Byrne's hotline was being established, the actual and not the alleged toll in human suffering began to mount.⁸ The twenty-four arrested men all had their names, addresses, and occupations in the papers and read on the television news – slowly, so that they could be copied down. The result of this media extravaganza was that each of the men was immediately swamped with obscene phone calls and death threats. Worse, most of the men were either fired from their jobs or suspended without pay. One therapist was suspended by his employer and barred from seeing his elderly patients, some of whom later got in touch with him on their own. The few self-employed men reported a drastic decline in business. One martial arts instructor saw all his pupils yanked out of class by irate parents, so he had to sell his karate school. A psychologist in private practice immediately lost most of his patients. Many of the men reported divorce, desertion or rejection by spouses, parents or children. The mother of one of the men had a heart attack soon after her son was arrested. Several had their homes vandalised by neighbourhood thugs. And the prospect of going to prison and being treated by prisoners as being worse than animals led one defendant to say:

If it comes down to that, I'll just swallow a bottle of pills. I'd rather go on my own than die in prison.⁹

The Revere case is not an isolated one. In a recent raid Toronto police went into the offices of the gay youth paper *The Body Politic* and charged the editors with pornography after the paper ran an article called 'Men Loving Boys Loving Men', a serious attempt to look at the whole area of man-youth relationships.¹⁰

On the other side of the ocean in Sydney, Australia, a thirty-four-year-old man was sentenced in the district court in 1979 to twenty-two years jail for offences against boys. Judge Thorley, who presided over the case said that the depravity of the man's conduct was overwhelming and did not set a non-parole period. The man convicted had pleaded guilty to five charges of indecent assault, one of assault with intent to commit anal intercourse, and one of having committed anal intercourse. All the charges arose out of relationships between the man and the boys concerned, although there was no suggestion that force had been used in any of the relationships.

All the boys in this case were aged between thirteen and fourteen. The judge was forceful in his condemnation of the accused. He said:

The sheer depravity of all that is described in the evidence is simply overwhelming. Not merely had the boys been abused for the defendant's own gratification, but also for the gratification of others by the use of photographs.¹¹

Judge Thorley went on to say that he did not wish to enter into a debate on the morality of homosexuality, but the offences were all committed 'on the altar of homosexuality'.¹² In one fell swoop the judge was able to reinforce all the stereotypes that people have about homosexuals and homosexuality, effectively putting back the gay liberation movement fifty years.

The judge of course was just reflecting current social attitudes and his views should not be considered special or unique – whether this makes them less objectionable is, of course,

debatable. He was at great pains to point out that it was his duty to protect society, and in particular, young male children in the community. After sentencing the accused to twenty-two years jail, Judge Thorley said he declined to specify a non-parole period. The reasons for this were, in his own words:

I do not regard you as one for whom paroles offer any purpose. Nor does it seem to me that any purpose would be offered to society.¹³

And Judge Thorley effectively sums up most current societal views towards pederasty:

These are men who are beyond redemption, who do not need consideration or assistance and who should be banished from society.¹⁴

One police officer who investigated a major case of pederasty encapsulated the antagonism of most people towards boy-lovers when, after arresting one, he was reported to have told another officer:

I won't ride in the car with the bastard. He is scum and scum is catching.¹⁵

Better Times

There have been times when homo-sexual relationships and Greek love have been widely practised throughout society and staunchly defended by the sages of the day. In his Symposium, Plato recounts, with obvious relish, many moral and philosophical arguments for the superiority of male-to-male love compared with the ordinary love between men and women.¹⁶

Proponents of Greek love are fond of pointing out that great philosophers such as Plato approved of their practices and that the Grecian concept of boy to man was one of pupil to teacher.

Indeed, in the Doric dialect the common word for 'lover' was actually 'inspirer', which indicates that the adult was also responsible for the boy's well-being in general ways. When the word 'lover' was used in regard to a boy, the Dorians used it in the sense of '... to love'.¹⁷ However, as Robin Lloyd points out in his book *Playland*, what is generally not known is that the Greeks drew a distinct line between sexual activity with children and sexual activity with older youth.¹⁸

Nevertheless, it is true that young males were honoured in Greece perhaps more than in any other culture. Men were seen as the focus of cultural and intellectual life and the onus was on older men to teach younger men the ways of the Greeks. Every man attracted to him some boy or youth and acted towards him as his tutor, guardian and friend. This custom, prevailing as it did particularly in the Doric states, was so much a matter of course that it was considered that a man was irresponsible if he failed to acquire a young ward. Greek philosophers and writers such as Plutarch and Plato offered strong opinions to the effect that one of the most masculine and desirable relationships that could be fostered was between adults and youths, and Plato even went so far as to argue that an army made up of lovers and adult-adolescent relationships, fighting at each other's side, could overcome the whole world.¹⁹

The Greek concept of masculinity is epitomised in their search for athletic prowess. In preparation for athletic performances the new performers, boys or men, were thoroughly

anointed and rubbed down with oil by other athletes. This was partly for increased suppleness, partly to avoid the effects of the weather and for obvious aesthetic reasons. This athletic cult did manage to produce some valuable cultural results. Sculptors used the young athletes as models, vase painters did likewise, and many Greek paintings document various aspects of the boy athlete. Poets such as Pindar lauded the virtues of the male adolescent body and Greek writers represented homosexuality as noble, normal and part of an honourable Greek tradition. And despite differences between scholars on whether Greek love was widespread throughout Grecian society, it is clear that relations between adult males and adolescent boys thrived and were fully accepted by large sections of the community in Greece at the time.²⁰

The situation in ancient Rome, however, was very different from that in Greece. In Greece, relationships between men and boys were not generally defined in terms of prostitution.²¹ In Rome we have the first evidence of boy prostitution becoming a major part of the sexual patterns of a country. Most Roman cities had houses of boy prostitutes to provide for the needs of poorer Romans. Those who owned brothels would send their agents to 'recruit' good-looking, attractive, young boys from the slave markets established as a result of Roman military adventures. These slaves were then placed in special schools and brought up with the belief that their sole function in life was to provide sexual enjoyment to adult males who had the money to pay for their services.

Moreover, Romans commonly kept one or more slave boys as concubines or persons to go to bed with for sex and sex alone. Occasionally a Roman would love a free-born youth, but as in today's society, public opinion was harsh towards such a relationship. Furthermore, it is clear that even when Romans visited boy prostitutes in brothels or elsewhere, the man would be considered effeminate and 'non-Roman' if he took a passive or feminine role, or if the boy remained in the usual passive role after his beard began to show, or alternatively, if either of them used the mouth to bring the other to orgasm.

There are examples in Roman history where boy love was given the same exalted position that the Greeks gave it. Emperor Hadrian Antinous so completely dominated his master that statues of the boy were set all over the Roman empire and indeed several of these statues can still be seen in museums around the world.²²

But this was the exception and generally relations between boys and males were commercialised relationships without any pretence of culturally romanticising man-boy love. The situation is best epitomised by Roman soldiers who often joined with others in keeping a boy for their own use when marching towards new lands and new adventures. The boys were bought from slave holders and were fed and clothed; but besides using them for sex, no other interest in them was taken.

Alfred Kinsey found that to some extent the same commercialisation of boy-man relationships still existed in Italy when he visited there in 1955. Kinsey described to his associate and eventual biographer, Wardell Pomeroy, the situation he found around the colosseum area. Pomeroy wrote:

At the time that Kinsey was in Rome, the colosseum was the centre for sexual activity. Its dark passageways and numerable niches and corners made it an ideal place. There was an altar at one end with the perpetual candle burning in memory of the martyrs, and so on the first night Kinsey was there it happened to be a holy night. He witnessed the weird spectacle of people holding services at the altar while unrestrained sex was going on all around them. Kinsey saw

more than thirty couples in every kind of sexual encounter from petting to intercourse. Many different kinds of people were cruising the colosseum – prostitutes, homosexuals and those looking for a variety of sexual encounters.²³

Kinsey apparently found Naples even more uninhibited than Rome because Pomeroy recounts that he found it possible to observe any number of people hunting for sex at any hour of the day or night. The prime area, Kinsey told Pomeroy, was the famous Galleria regions where roving bands of small children would approach visitors and offer to take them to girls or to boys – even their younger or older brothers – and finally if that didn't work would offer themselves. Pomeroy reports that Kinsey saw males, ranging in age from early adolescence to middle-age, exhibiting themselves in public toilets, parks and at railway stations, showing that they were ready for sexual contact. And Kinsey also noted that unlike Rome, where a bellboy who came to the room would be satisfied with a tip, Naples had bellboys who would make it clear that they would be glad to stay for other purposes.²⁴

Kinsey was cognisant of the fact that the boys' motivations were mercenary. Pomeroy notes that:

Kinsey was well aware that part of the abundant sexuality directed toward him and any other obvious American was motivated by the desperate need for money.²⁵

Unlike other observers of male-youth relations Kinsey drew a big distinction between boy prostitution and Greek love.

No such distinction was drawn by the enormously well-publicized but badly researched book *Playland* written by Robin Lloyd. Purporting to investigate the history of pederasty, Lloyd only succeeded in obscuring the whole topic. In a critical but fair review of Lloyd's book, Lex Watson observed that:

He (Lloyd) confuses prostitution with rape; commercial transactions with murder; adult with youthful partners; and prostitution from choice with prostitution from necessity.²⁶

Such confusion is not evident in the work of Pennsylvanian anthropologist and noted authority on cross-cultural aspects of male-youth relationships, Professor William Davenport.²⁷ Describing present-day institutionalised masculine bisexuality in East Bay society in Melanesia, Davenport noted that in that area nearly every male engages in homosexual relations during certain periods of his life.

Premarital intercourse is strongly disapproved of and boys are encouraged to masturbate until they reach marriageable age, but after this time the same behaviour is ridiculed as a sign of immaturity, sexual inadequacy or both. To avoid the stigma of childish behaviour, males in late adolescence shift from mutual masturbation to anal intercourse. Passive and active roles are played alternately by both participants. It is important to note that this behaviour occurs between friends and is taken as an accommodative gesture of comradeship with no special emotional bonds of love implied.

And such relationships are not just confined to those between adolescents. Until recently East Bay society prohibited marital coitus for many months after the birth of a child. The culture is monogamous but concubinage was formally approved and provided a

legitimate sexual outlet for husbands whose wives were temporarily taboo. Concubines, however, were expensive and many married men whose wives were nursing took young boys as sexual partners: a practice which was socially condoned as long as the boy's father gave his formal approval and the boy himself received small presents. Arrangements of this type were seen as secondary, and anal inter-course with boys was classed as an acceptable and necessary substitute form of sexual behaviour while the wife was unavailable.

Pertinently, Davenport found that in East Bay there was simply no recognition of, nor any cultural category for, exclusive male homo-sexuality or paedophilia.²⁸ Unmarried males whose sexual relations are confined to masculine partners are classified, not as individuals who prefer homosexual to heterosexual activity, but as men who, for one reason or the other, cannot find a woman who will accept them.

There is an important difference between paedophilia as practised in East Bay and that practised by the Clarence Osbornes of industrialised countries. In East Bay it is not uncommon for male adults to sodomise young boys on the verge of adolescence as a way of symbolically leading them into masculine society, no love or strong emotional bonds are developed from the physical relations.

Practices in East Bay are also different from the culturally approved pederasty of ancient Greece. Man-boy relations in Melanesia are tolerated, rather than glorified, and allowed in only very specific circumstances which generally have to do with entry into adult society. No such rationale exists in western societies for Greek love and far from being approved or even tolerated, pederasts are vilified and classified as 'dangerous.

Paedophilia and Dangerousness

Like most paedophiles, Clarence Osborne was considered by both the media and the public at large to be dangerous. Osborne represented, at least to those who were acquainted with his life only through newspaper accounts, the stereotypical dirty old man luring little boys off the streets and from the public toilets to his house in order to fulfil his immoral cravings. The boys, by implication, were innocent victims of this dangerous man and clearly suffered seriously from his cunning and perverted crimes.

In short, paedophiles are generally defined as being dangerous, although the specific reasons for this are rarely given. Who you describe as dangerous, though, varies from one historical point in time to another. In the context of understanding the dynamics of male-youth relationships it is essential to consider this point in more detail.

Over the past two hundred years there have been two major changes in regard to how people are classified as being socially dangerous.²⁹ The most clearly recognisable change is the decreased reliance upon religion – although it is salutary to note that witnesses to the Salem witch trials were still alive at the time of the American revolution. Corresponding to the decreased influence of religion has been another change which is an increased reliance upon medical practitioners to discern those who allegedly pose a threat to the established order. Consequently, psychiatrists and psychologists often keep in prisons or in mental hospitals people whom they define as being 'dangerous' and do not deserve to be allowed in outside society.³⁰

The whole concept of dangerousness, however, has strong political or ideological overtones to it. The historical records in industrialised societies on the individuals or

groups defined as dangerous demonstrates clearly that such groups are often those who represent real or imaginary threats to prevailing notions of ethics or morality rather than actual threats to other people in the community.³¹ Witches are a case in point: no one has ever demonstrated to me that a person designated a witch actually deserved to be burnt at the stake because she was dangerous to somebody else. Witches were simply defined as dangerous because they violated certain religious views.

The issue of dangerousness, however, is never raised in these terms. For example, when questions of homosexuality and drug taking are raised, the arguments are rarely posed in terms of competing values. Instead the behaviours are transformed into threats to the integrity of the social system, physical changes to the practitioners and perils to the innocent. Thomas Szasz sums up this view well when he writes:

Drunken drivers are dangerous both to themselves and others. They injure and kill many more people than, for example, persons with paranoid delusions of persecution. Yet, people labelled paranoid are readily committable, while drunken drivers are not. Thus, it is not dangerousness in general that is an issue here, but rather the manner in which one is dangerous.³²

And so it is with paedophiles. They are defined by the community generally and by community leaders specifically as being dangerous people. This definition does not arise because such men murder, assault or rape them. The criminological evidence on these matters is very clear-cut – it is the heterosexuals and not the homosexuals who commit proportionately most of the violent acts against both children and adults.

The dangerousness tag imputed to paedophiles arises because of the way they express their sexuality, the alleged effects this expression has on the youthful recipients, and because what society considers to be fundamental cultural and religious principles are violated by men who love youths.

In recent years an attempt has been made by paedophiles themselves to educate the public, and themselves, on Greek love. One of the major reasons for this campaign is to remove the dangerousness stigma so easily attached to them by an unsympathetic public. The publication of J. Z. Eglinton's book on the topic was undoubtedly a landmark in this campaign, stating as it did the unequivocal right of an older male to have a relationship with a young boy. Carefully researched and documented, Eglinton's work still stands as the major reference on the issue.

Undoubtedly its acceptance by a wide non-paedophile audience was hastened by the stamp of approval given to it by one of the world's leading sexologists and clinical psychologists, Dr Albert Ellis. While Ellis is highly critical of most Greek lovers and of the relationships themselves – he considers for example that most males who engage in these relationships are disturbed, narcissistic individuals – he helps to dispel the dangerous label affixed to paedophiles.

Writing in an appendix to Eglinton's book, Ellis comments:

Although I do not think that adult males who have sex relations with young lads are villains or blackguards, nor that they should be severely punished for their crimes, I do believe that this form of human sexual activity is decidedly more wrong than right, and I should not like to see it anymore widespread than it already is.³³

Although most paedophile activists would strongly attack the second part of this statement, Ellis's continuous support for Eglinton's book and his attempt to paint paedophiles as non-dangerous people assisted the process of public education. A host of other writers have added to this process by publishing works which, if not satisfactory to paedophiles themselves, make human a topic generally considered to be the work of the devil.

In this mould we have

A. J. Storr's *Sexual Deviation*,³⁴

D. J. West's *Homosexuality Re-examined*,³⁵

Angus Stewart's *Sandel*,³⁶

Andre Gide's *The Immoralist*,³⁷ and

Daphne De Maurier's '*Ganymede*'³⁸

Seminal books of recent years also include

Michael Davidson's *The World, the Flesh and Myself*,³⁹

William Kramer's *Forbidden Love*,⁴⁰

Dennis Drew's and Jonathan Drake's *Boys for Sale*,⁴¹ and

Tom O'Carroll's *Paedophilia: A Radical Case*.⁴²

Success in de-escalating the dangerousness myth by paedophile magazines and conferences, has been more limited. The English PIE. (Paedophile Information Exchange) suffered a long history of police harassment, prosecutions, the vehemence of politicians and political in-fighting.* A supporter of P.I.E., psychologist Dr F. Bernard, found himself the subject of verbal and physical attacks when he organised the world's first paedophile conference in England.

*The politics of P.I.E. can be gauged from a statement made to the police by a fifty-seven-year-old man arrested for having pictures of little girls. PIE. (13 April 1979) reports that the man told the police that one of the reasons he joined PIE. was 'to get some material, such as magazines and pictures of little girls, from other members'. He went on to say, 'But I cancelled my membership because all the members appeared to like little boys. I know I like little girls and that is wrong but I hate anyone who messes about with little boys.'

In America the serious academic magazine *International Journal of Greek Love* had a short-lived history as did similar journals such as *Boyhood* and *The Boy*. More recently, however, a new magazine emanating out of the Netherlands entitled *Pan* is attempting to discuss Greek love in an objective, intellectual manner. The Pan publishers, in announcing their publication say that:

It has long been our position that paedophiles are, in most of the western world,

a deeply misunderstood, disgracefully persecuted minority. We have designed Pan not only to help the boy-lover better understand himself but to educate non-paedophiles on the realities of this form of sexuality, as it relates both to the paedophile and the child.

It remains to be seen whether Pan will be any more successful than its predecessors in fulfilling its objectives, particularly the objective of making paedophiles appear less dangerous to the public.

Notes

7. Greek Love and Greek Lovers

1. Conversation between the author and Senior Constable David Jeffries, November, 1980.
2. Eglinton, J. Z., *Greek Love*, Spearman, London, p.483.
3. Most paedophiles have a preference though for either children or adolescents and will have an age or age group that they find most attractive. However, they will vary their age interest considerably according to the available parties, physical characteristics of the boys/youths and other factors. Osborne's preference was for youths aged between 13 and 15 years, although he related often to younger and older males.
4. Eglinton, J. Z., op. cit., p. 486.
5. Hyde, W. M., *Oscar Wilde: A Biography*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York, 1975, p. 293.
6. Ibid, p.293.
7. The Revere case is discussed in detail in Willenbecher, T. 'A letter from Boston' *Christopher Street*, March, 1978, pp.53 – 56.
8. Ibid, p.53.
9. Willenbecher, T., op. cit., p. 53.
10. 'Men Loving Boys Loving Men', *The Body Politic* 1979, pp. 14-20.
11. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 March 1979.
12. Ibid.
13. *Sydney Morning Herald*, op. cit.
14. Ibid.
15. This was told to me by a Queensland police officer who was also involved in the arrest.
16. These examples are given in Eglinton, J. Z., op. cit., pp.230 – 275.
17. Lloyd, R., *Playland*, Quartet, London, 1979, p.65.
18. Ibid., p.65.
19. Eglinton, J. Z., op. cit., pp.231 – 232.
20. Ibid., pp.230-275.
21. Lloyd, R., op. cit., pp.65-68

22. Eglinton, J. Z., op. cit., p.292-293.
23. Pomeroy, W., *Dr Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research*, Signet, New York, 1972, p.423.
24. Ibid., p.426.
25. Ibid., p.423.
26. Watson, L., *Campaign*, April, 1980, p.14.
27. Davenport, W. H., 'Sex in Cross-Cultural Perspective' in Beach, F.A. (ed) *Human Sexuality in Four Perspectives*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1977, pp.153 –157.
28. Ibid., p.155.
29. An excellent account of the history of dangerousness can be found in Szasz, T., *Law, Liberty and Psychiatry*, Macmillan, New York, 1963.
30. For a detailed discussion on this point see Wilson, P. R., in Bates, E. and Wilson P. R., *Mental Disorder or Madness*, University of Queensland Press, 1979, pp.75-93.
31. Monahan, J. and Geis, G., 'Controlling Dangerous People', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 423, 1976 pp.145 – 151.
32. Szasz, T., op. cit., p.58.
33. See Ellis in Eglinton, J. Z., op. cit., pp.429 – 438.
34. Storr, A. J., *Sexual Deviation*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1964.
35. West, D. J., *Homosexuality Re-examined*, Duckworth, London, 1977.
36. Stewart, A., *Sandel*, Hutchinson & Co., London, 1968.
37. Gide, A., *The Immoralist*, translated by Dorothy Bussy, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1960.
38. Du Maurier, D., 'Ganymede' in *The Breaking Point*, Doubleday, New York, 1959.
39. Davidson, M., *The World, The Flesh and Myself* The Quality Book Club, London, 1962.
40. Kramer, W., (ed) *Forbidden Love. The Normal and Abnormal Love of Children*, Sheldon Press, London, 1976.
41. Drew, D. and Drake, T., *Boys for Sale*, Brown Book Company, Farmingdale, New York, 1969.
42. O'Carroll, T., *Paedophilia: The Radical Case*, Peter Owen, London, 1981.

Chapter Eight

The Effect on Children

When Clarence Osborne carefully placed a hose from the exhaust into his car and patiently waited for the fumes to kill him he was undoubtedly choosing what he saw as the best of alternatives open to him. For if he had waited for the police to return and arrest him his tribulations would have just begun. A punitive criminal justice system would undoubtedly have incarcerated him in one of Her Majesty's prisons where the full fury of fellow prisoners would have descended upon him. Between the time of his arrest and imprisonment the media would have scapegoated and stereotyped him in ways that only paedophiles could anticipate.

Central to the fury and wrath exhibited by both the media and the criminal justice system is the common belief that Clarence Osborne's activities adversely affected the children he had relationships with. According to certain people sexual relationships with children must have a negative effect on children, especially on their sexual orientation. One policeman, reflecting the community's view on the subject put the argument bluntly, 'We've probably got a race of bloody poofers around now as a result of what that man did during his lifetime; it's probably just as well for everyone he died in the way he did.'

A man who fleetingly met Osborne during his training as a shorthand reporter in the courts reinforced the police attitude to the Osborne case. According to this man what Osborne did was 'to stop kids becoming just normal kids and made them into homos'. This workmate of Osborne went on to venture that, 'Those kids would have grown up to be normal kids just like you and I if it wasn't for that queer.'¹

The assumption behind these observations is that the encounters that Osborne had with his partners psychologically disturbed the youths and determined their sexual orientations later on in life. The Clarence Osbornes of this world, it appears, are given almost magical powers to substantially alter the sexual inclinations of young males as a result of transient or, in some cases, multiple contacts. While this may not be the only reason for vengeance towards adults who sexually relate to children, it has in itself sufficient potency to explain the antagonism displayed towards paedophiles.

Nearly all who speak or write on adult-child sexual encounters presume that all such contacts constitute abuse. As Larry Constantine writes in his paper on the 'Sexual Rights of Children', this view ultimately rests on the notion that children are neither sexual nor possessors of sexual rights.' But if, as seems perfectly reasonable in light of the evidence, children are seen as sexual beings with some rights to express themselves erotically, then not all sexual contact between adults and children can properly be called abuse. Psychiatrists Brant and Tisza are two of the few who have attempted to differentiate abuse from non-abuse. They define sexual misuse as:

Sexual stimulation inappropriate for the child's age, psycho-social development, and role in the family. Symptoms in the child and evidence of family dysfunction (are) criteria for inappropriateness.²

What Brant and Tisza are suggesting is that the effects of a sexual experience on the child can differ according to the circumstances and that the effects themselves might distinguish sexual abuse of children by adults from legitimate and constructive sexual expressions of affection between children and adults. This of course begs the question of just what are the

effects of adult-child sexual encounters? Many men who had a relationship with Osborne when they were young considered that the older man had a minimal effect on their sexual and social development. Not one person I interviewed implied that he changed his sexual orientation as a result of the physical contacts that occurred between himself and Osborne. Nor did any, for that matter, complain of Osborne having adversely affected their psychological functioning and social skills when they grew up. Of course the limitations of these declarations are obvious because I saw only a small number of the young males who had relationships with Osborne. However when we turn to the scientific literature on the topic similar information is found.

Larry Constantine is among many scientists who have carried out extensive reviews of literature on child-adult sexual contacts. In reviewing 130 separate sources on the subject Constantine concluded that: 'Immediate negative reactions are minor or completely absent in the majority of cases and significant long-term psychological or social impairment is rare.'³ As Constantine points out, this is a remarkable finding as most of the studies carried out on children who had sexual contact with adults were conducted with young males who were referred to psychologists for counselling, or alternatively who came from juvenile or adult penal institutions. These are clearly very biased sources of information and the fact that even with this selective sample negative results were found would indicate that, if nothing else, the psychological effects of adult-child sexual encounters are minimal indeed.

These findings are important when one considers that it is relatively common for young men to have had, during the course of their lives, a sexual relationship with an older man. For example, among the English youth studied by Schofield⁴ 35 per cent described at least one such experience and similar proportions have been obtained by Gibbins⁵ in the United States and by Tolsma⁶ in Holland. In the latter study Tolsma traced 133 men who had had homosexual contacts with adults when they were children. All but eight were married and had not continued homosexual practices. A long-term detailed follow-up by Bender and Grugett of a small group of child victims of molestation also led to the conclusion that the experience did not usually affect sexual adjustment adversely, provided the child was not in some way disturbed to begin with.⁷ Bender and others have pointed out that children starved of affection or attention from their parents might well be those most likely to suffer adverse consequences. But this is only conjecture as any character or sexual disorders that manifest themselves in later life could result from lack of affection in the family rather than from the sexual contact with a male.

These studies, together with others done by people such as Rasmussen⁸ and Burton,⁹ also highlight the fact that many of the children involved in adult-child relationships, even if they do not actively solicit sexual contacts, are easily lured by small bribes or by reassurance from a trusted adult and often become quite eager participants once contact is made. Any subsequent distress that occurs is far more likely to arise from the shock of discovery by other people and the ensuing criminal justice machine that is propelled into action. Police enquiries, family recriminations, court appearances and the prosecution of the offender are all situations that lead to considerable anxiety in the children. As well, children and adolescents are often distressed when the older male lover is punished by imprisonment and unable to see the child again.

Where the literature suggests that negative consequences of a short or long term nature occur as a result of child-adult sexual contacts, it is found that the consequences are generally associated with three common factors. The first relates to a situation where

physical force, coercion or psychological pressure is used. The most adverse reactions occur when physical violence is involved, especially when the child attempts to resist but is unsuccessful. The second negative consequence occurs when poor communications exist in the child's family. Sexual matters cannot be discussed openly and the child receives, or anticipates receiving strongly negative reactions to disclosure of sexual activities. The third relates to a situation where there is little sexual knowledge on the part of the child or alternatively where the child has absorbed parental values suggesting that sex is dirty, painful or frightening. But even when the last two conditions exist the effects, the research would suggest, are nowhere near as traumatic as popular folklore would have it.¹⁰

Let us consider these factors in relation to Clarence Osborne. The man never used force so this factor cannot be considered when discussing allegations of harm in his case. It is true that many of the young males Osborne had relations with came from families where there was no communication about sexual matters, but most were able to talk about sex with their friends and did not appear from Osborne's tape-recordings to be particularly guilt-ridden about disclosing their sexual aspirations and fears. The young males who were involved with Osborne were often ignorant about sexual matters, but I am not convinced that they were any more ignorant than other young males who did not meet Osborne. In short, it seems to me that in the case of Clarence Osborne there is no scientific evidence to suggest that in the vast majority of cases – perhaps as much as 99 per cent of them – negative consequences would have resulted from the relationships that developed.

All of this, of course, does not mean that we can categorically assume that Osborne had no effect on the sexual orientation of the boys and adolescents he had relationships with. But the accumulated evidence from all the research that has been done by physiologists, psychologists, and sociologists on sexual behaviour would strongly indicate that any individual's sexual orientations are the result of a diverse range of experiences and do not develop as the result of isolated encounters with one person.¹¹ This is not to deny the possibility that some boys may have found their encounters with Osborne so pleasurable that they developed homosexual inclinations. Such cases, however, would have been very rare and the change may well have occurred even if Clarence Osborne had not been present as a result of the boy developing relationships with males of his own age later on in life.

What can we then conclude from the studies done of boy-men relationships and from the experience gained by analysing Osborne's case? To begin with, it appears that what really determines the outcome of the relationship is what a paedophile does with a boy and how he does it. In other words, if force is used or if fraud and trickery are predominant in the approaches made by the paedophile to the boy, then the psychological effects on the boy are likely to be adverse. If, as with the case of most homosexual boy prostitutes, a consensual agreement is negotiated between the boy and the man then the psychological and sexual effects on the boy will be minimal. For it should not be forgotten that the vast majority of boy prostitutes are heterosexual in orientation and remain so for the rest of their lives. The literature strongly suggests that in nearly every instance in which the boy displayed a heterosexual interest, the interest was not interfered with by a sexual experience with an older man.¹² It is therefore foolish to assume categorically that man-boy relationships are inevitably traumatic for the boy.

Unfortunately the law and the criminal justice system have reinforced all the social stereotypes concerning the effects of man-boy sexual relationships and have ignored the scientific realities of such relationships. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the case

of incest. Here, heavy penalties await the father who has had sexual relationships with the daughter, and as a result of this imprisonment, an often already economically underprivileged family is thrown into poverty. In incest cases as well as in paedophile cases, the so-called 'victims' suffer from criminal justice interventions because they are removed from the home environment for their 'own good'. And the removal of the child from his or her family home can be more devastating than the actual sexual act that occurred.

The Medical and Legal 'Solution'

The harshness of the law and how it deals with paedophiles has been amply demonstrated throughout this book. It is very common for paedophiles to receive far longer prison sentences than rapists, even though consent was present in the former case but not in the latter. This savagery is perpetrated within the custodial institution itself and there are many cases around the world of paedophiles being brutally assaulted or murdered by prisoners who, in their attempts to establish a hierarchy of 'good' and 'bad' criminals, unleash society's vengeance upon them.

The rage and fury that the community generates towards men who love boys is illustrated by the recent prosecution by the British police of the English-based paedophile organisation known as PIE. Several of the executive members of that organisation have been charged with conspiracy to commit a crime. At the time of writing this book the trial had not yet proceeded but it was clear that the British police were mounting a concentrated attack against the organisation. In surveying most copies of their newsletter, I found nothing in it that could be assumed to be soliciting on the part of PIE members. On the contrary, the organisation went to great lengths to de-eroticise their publication, preferring to make the paper a self-help vehicle for paedophiles who were concerned about their social and legal position. There were, as with many other similar publications, advertisements placed by paedophiles wanting to get in contact with others who had similar interests, but in no way could these advertisements be construed as soliciting for boys. It can only be concluded that the conspiracy charge was brought by the police, not because of anything that the organisation was doing which was criminal, but because the very existence of such an organisation and a paper offended both the government's and the police's sense of morality.

The response of the criminal justice system both to the 'victim' and 'offender' in adult-child cases is counter-productive. We have already seen that the older male is treated with contempt by both the police and the courts and little sympathy is shown towards the way he will be treated in prison. Similarly, the young male's treatment bears a remarkable similarity to that received by incest victims. In both paedophilia and incest considerable distress to the boy or girl occurs when parents, relatives or the police themselves discover the relationship. Constant and often insensitive questioning adds to this distress and it is not unusual to find that many researchers have noted that far more damage is caused by the confrontations the child has with his parents or the legal authorities than by the act itself.¹³

In the case of homosexual molestation of a son by his father—a much less common occurrence than incest with a daughter — a similar distressful situation arises for the son. These cases usually occur in situations where severely disordered family relationships are present and the possible effects of the sexual incidents cannot be separated from those due

to other unfavourable influences in the boy's life. Such considerations have led workers in the field to devise model interviewing procedures for incest victims which attempt to minimise the effect that police or social work questioning has on the child.

No such consideration has yet been given to children in paedophilia cases, although some recent developments are encouraging. The inadequacy of the legal response to paedophiles is based partly on ignorance about them. Despite the rhetoric to the contrary, it is only a small minority of paedophiles who have criminal or anti-social tendencies and use aggressive sexual overtures in approaching children of either sex. Like Clarence Osborne, most paedophiles are isolated, passive personalities who find it hard to compete with their socially more robust male peers. Those whose attachment to children persists into later life become the typical fixated, exclusive paedophiles, who are liable to repeated convictions for indecent acts with children and whose prospects of change are rather poor. The statistics, however, show that the great majority of first offenders in cases of child molestation are never reconvicted.¹⁴ The sociological evidence suggests that many prosecutions, particularly of youthful offenders, arise out of incidental circumstances which are unlikely to be repeated, or alternatively out of the frustrations of young people who have not yet acquired acceptable techniques for forming relationships with people of their own age.¹⁵

West, in summarising the numerous surveys conducted on paedophiles, demonstrates that there is substantial agreement about the usual characteristics of these men and about the nature and circumstances of their offences.¹⁶ For example, whether the paedophiles choose male or female children, they tend to be lonely, socially isolated and sexually inhibited individuals. As we have seen in chapter three they frequently come from homes where sex was a taboo subject and sexual instruction completely lacking. Far from being unrestrained sex maniacs – the common view taken by both police and judges – their approaches to children are almost always affectionate and gentle and the sexual acts which occur are mostly mutual display and genital fondling, resembling the typical sexual behaviour which goes on between children.

Unwilling or unresponsive children are simply not pursued by paedophiles because it is easy enough for them to find responsive children amongst their neighbours or acquaintances. This pattern of making contact with such young people is particularly true for men who like young girls, because young girls are more protected than boys and less likely to go unaccompanied to cinemas, parks, sporting fields and similar places. And contrary to community expectations, paedophiles rarely hang around public toilets for they know that such places are hardly ever visited by boys looking for sex but are often visited by adults who would disapprove strongly of any approaches made by an adult to a youth.

Despite all this evidence on the passivity and non-aggressive nature of paedophiles, the monster myth continues to dominate the response of both the legal and medical authorities. The medical profession, for example, has proposed procedures for dealing with paedophiles that are both brutal and inhumane. In Germany, Denmark, Finland, Poland, Australia, England, and the United States, doctors have experimented with attempting to change the sexual inclinations of such men by drug or surgical procedures. Generally speaking this has been done without the consent of the men involved and with no regard to other possible options. Occasionally, drug or surgical 'solutions' have been imposed as a penal sanction or as an alternative to imprisonment or long continued penal detention. German law, for example, introduced penal castration for paedophiles and

other sexual criminals officially evaluated as being 'dangerous'. It is slightly ironic that the statute was passed in 1933 during the Nazi regime. Denmark, where castration of sex criminals became an acceptable preliminary to release from detention, operated a law as early as 1929 permitting castration provided the offender himself petitioned to have it done. And although it is illegal under the United States Constitution, there have been innumerable cases of judges in remote areas of America who have granted a paedophile probation or a suspended sentence on the condition that he agree to surgical castration.¹⁷

Castration, of course, is not confined to paedophiles. Kinsey reports, with considerable disapproval, on a paper presented by Hawke in 1950 summarising a psychiatric study in Kansas where 330 male castrates furnished material for a nine-year research programme.¹⁸ In the sample, boys as young as eight were all castrated because they were considered to be a 'defective delinquent group'. Such a study emulates prior American research conducted by Flood who castrated twenty-four males, half of them under fourteen years of age, 'for persistent masturbation and epilepsy'.¹⁹ The damage done to paedophiles and other young and old males in the interest of 'science is appalling and makes one wonder who really are the 'monsters' – the paedophiles or the psychiatrists?

In surgical castration the testes are removed with the penis remaining anatomically intact. However, by cutting off the body's main source of androgenic hormone there is a concurrent reduction in the potency of the sexual drive. A variety of studies have reported on the results of this operation. For example, Bremer researched the effects of legal castration in Norway and found that only a minute proportion (1–2 per cent) were detected in any further sex crime.²⁰ As West points out, considering that many of these men had committed sex offences on a number of different occasions before being castrated, the results from the criminal justice standpoint might well be regarded as being highly satisfactory.²¹

No such satisfaction, however, can be obtained from these studies. Recent clinical evidence suggests that the results are not as glowing as some doctors and judges would like us to believe. Often the individual who is castrated sublimates his anger and hostility into other kinds of crime as a way of 'getting back' at the society that has mutilated his body.²² Furthermore, despite castration, some men never lose their virility completely as glands other than the testes provide sufficient androgens to maintain sexual interest.²³ There can therefore be no guarantee that such men will not attempt to relate sexually to the person that they were involved with in the first place.

In addition, castration often leads to enormously embarrassing side-effects such as the formation of feminine contours of fat, loss of beard and body hair and the development of a smooth, facial complexion. Often the offender feels his body has been further mutilated by society and hits back at it in violent sexual and non-sexual ways.²⁴

Even more severe medical 'treatments' have been attempted such as that proposed by the German neurosurgeon Roeder, using a technique of inserting electrodes into the brain to destroy the ventro-medial nucleus by electrical burning.²⁵ The use of suppressant drugs, many with the female sex hormonal oestrogens, are frequently prescribed for those who are called male sex deviants and, like the surgical techniques, the side-effects have been particularly painful and often dangerous.²⁶

In general, the attempts by psychiatrists and psychologists to change happy homosexuals to unhappy heterosexuals have been dismal to say the least. This is particularly so when homosexuals are coerced into some form of psychological or psychiatric treatment such as

behavioural modification techniques. In the case of paedophiles the situation is even worse. Unlike homosexuals paedophiles have major external reasons for changing their behaviour – the social condemnation of their sexuality and the fear of criminal justice system repercussions are stronger than is the case with the homo-sexual. On the other hand, their fixation with young males is usually obsessive and few have any motivation to change their behaviour, preferring to suffer instead the loneliness and isolation that results from their lifestyle.

Some researchers consider that the prospects of diverting the paedophile's interest from younger boys to older males are better than the prospects of conversion to heterosexuality, but in both cases the chances of a conversion are slim. And whether it is a result of their sexual orientation or the social isolation that results from that orientation, it is clear that unlike the adult homosexual, many paedophiles are conspicuously anxious, confused personalities who would have difficulty in adjusting to an adult homosexual sub-culture even if 'treatment' was in fact successful.

West reports that claims have been made for the successful treatment of paedophiles by group discussion and individual psycho-therapy, or alternatively by conditioning methods and even by training in masculine assertiveness.²⁷ A perusal of these studies, however, shows that the successes involve only isolated cases and cannot be taken as indicative of the efficacy of these techniques generally. In most cases where 'success' is claimed we find that the paedophile has unique personal and/or social characteristics that do not allow us to generalise about the treatment of boy lovers as a whole. For example, Edwards describes one case history of a man who was in serious difficulties from compulsive homosexual paedophilia over a ten-year period.²⁸ After a series of behavioural modification techniques, including instruction in self-assertion, the client became satisfactorily adjusted with a permanent female partner. But this unusually favourable outcome was undoubtedly due to the fact that the man had had some heterosexual experience in the past and was married to a woman with whom he had a fairly satisfactory relationship. Edwards reports that the man was previously a resentfully submissive husband but after training in self-assertion he derived much satisfaction and gratification from practising his heterosexual domineering ways with his wife. While many paedophiles are married, very few have supportive and understanding wives who have the patience and the inclination to help in the time-consuming and often very emotionally threatening therapy of the sort that Edwards describes. In the case of Clarence Osborne these external support systems were not operating and it seems highly unlikely that, no matter what the treatment was, Osborne would have changed his sexual orientation, even if it is assumed that he wanted to.

The justification adopted by many medical and legal men for applying, in the case of paedophiles, barbaric 'treatment' procedures such as castration and suppressive drugs, is that they are doing this for the man's own good. The professionals argue that paedophiles risk repeated prison sentences of increasing severity if they do not curb their sexual inclinations and so suppressant techniques such as hormones, chemical castration or electro-convulsive shock therapy become fully justified.

Is it justifiable to alter the physical appearance and psychological make-up of a person without his consent because one disagrees with his sexual tendencies? If we see castration and brain surgery as essential for helping people towards a better lifestyle, then such people as doctors, lawyers or social workers should seriously question their role as 'helper'. These, the moral priests together with politicians, religious priests, warlords,

slave owners and others, have for centuries unsuccessfully tried to force men to take moral options. In doing this they have robbed individuals of their true personality and liberty. Changing a man's body and mind by surgical procedures imposes the tyranny of physical and psychological coercion disguised as therapeutic intervention. It therefore comes as no surprise to find that many paedophiles will say that they prefer imprisonment, with all its brutality, to the mind and body destroying treatment offered by contemporary psychiatry.

The Myth of the Molester

A major reason for the media and police's violent reaction to the Osborne case was that both groups assumed that Osborne 'molested' young children. The myth of the paedophile as a molester is a myth of major proportions and permeates most of the thinking on this issue. It is assumed, for example, that paedophiles are more likely to murder young boys than normal heterosexuals. And, so the view goes, if they do not murder the boys, then at least they use force or trickery to entice them into a sexual relationship.

Views of the paedophile are reinforced continuously by the written word and by television and film portrayals of men who have relationships with boys. In Houston, Texas, the American killer Dean Allen Corll was found to have employed two teenage youths to procure adolescents and boys for sexual purposes. The victims were tied to a hoard, sexually abused and tortured and then disposed of by shooting or strangling.²⁹ Similarly the mass murderer Ian Brady sexually attacked juveniles of both sexes, tortured them, recorded their cries of anguish and then murdered them. But as West observes, 'These cases are excessively rare and puzzling and no generalisations about their psychology can be made with any safety.'³⁰

Television often highlights in documentary form cases of men who love boys and use devious, if not violent means to entice them. In a well-publicised television programme created by the BBC entitled 'Johnny Come Home' a story was told of a man with a criminal record who claimed to be a priest and ran hostels for homeless men and youths for charity. According to the documentary the man would pick up destitute youngsters arriving from the provinces at London railway stations and would offer them accommodation at his hostel. The boys soon found that even though they did not have to pay in money for staying at the hostel, they had to engage in sexual relations with the man.

The view of the paedophile as nasty and devious was perpetrated by the documentary demonstrating that the man made substantial profits from charging different charities for the same boys. It was quite clear that this particular man was far from conscientious in seeing to the needs of the boys. Revelations indicating that he had a number of homosexual associates to whom he would pass on youngsters who no longer took his eye also added to the molester image. During the film the man was shown clothed in religious garments recruiting clients and describing his charitable activities in sanctimonious terms.

Originally the film was to be shown as an example of a good man works. However a murder had taken place at one of his 'homes' and police inquiries subsequently exposed the sex scandal and the frauds. Consequently the bogus priest was imprisoned and several of the man's adult friends were charged with homosexual offences. This did not stop the television company from going ahead with the film and by a careful piece of editing they were able to show the film to a huge viewing audience as an example of paedophiles

preying on innocent young children.

The reality concerning paedophile approaches to children is very different from that shown in 'Johnny Come Home'. Aggressive sexual overtures and a willingness to approach children of either sex are unusual for adults who have a sexual interest in children. To be sure these features do appear with some degree of frequency amongst a very small minority of paedophiles who have criminal tendencies in respects other than their sexual habits. But careful studies in Australia and the United Kingdom demonstrate that paedophiles have a lower rate of violence when it comes to children than do other groups in the community.³¹

An analogous situation is the position of homosexual teachers at schools. For years education departments, anti-homosexual groups and individual crusaders argued that young children would be in danger if homosexuals were allowed to teach in schools. Careful studies, however, have unequivocally demonstrated that homosexual persons have a far lower rate of molesting children in school than do their heterosexual counterparts.³²

A massive study of thousands of convicted sex offenders conducted by the Institute for Sex Research in Indiana confirms the view that while paedophiles form a group distinct from the ordinary homosexual population, their rate of violent assault on another person is very low.³³ The Institute's study demonstrated that the most aggressive types of men were those whose primary interest was with women and this particular group was marked by occasionally brutal attacks upon female children. The Institute noted that physical violence, though not unknown, is far less common in cases of sexual interference with young boys. As the principal of the Kinsey study noted, 'In our total of 18 000 interviews, no man or woman reported being victimised, as a child, by a sadist. Child murders in connection with sexual activity receive great publicity which gives the impression that they are not infrequent; actually they are extremely rare.'³⁴

Other researchers come to precisely the same conclusion. Thus Mohr in reviewing figures on heterosexual paedophilia found coitus rare and commented that, 'The great majority of sexual acts in heterosexual paedophilia consist of sexplay types – such as looking, showing, fondling and being fondled.'³⁵ And yet another researcher, Gagnon, in reviewing his findings concludes:

It appears that 85 to 95 per cent of all such experiences of pre-adolescent girls take either a form of observing the act of exhibitionism (a little over half) or single episodes of having their bodies touched, predominantly hand/genital contact (about a third of occurrences). For males there is probably substantially the same distribution of offenses.³⁶

These and every other major study done on paedophiles find the use of force a very rare phenomenon. Clarence Osborne was no exception to this rule. The vast majority of his activities were not of an aggressive, forceful kind but instead involved touching the boys' bodies, exhibiting penises and, most commonly, masturbation. And as with the experience of most other paedophiles, Osborne often did not have to entice some of the boys he had relations with as they came to him and initiated much of the activity. The myth of the molester is therefore a very large myth indeed. The myth's existence, however, ensures that paedophiles are hounded by criminal justice agencies rather than, upon detection, being calmly and dispassionately judged and sentenced.

Realistic Alternatives

If society is going to continue to assume that paedophiles should be subjected to criminal sanctions, then we are still left with the question of what should happen legally to both the victim and the offender if detection of their relationships occurs. To answer this question it might be salutary to return once again to the analogous crime of incest.

Generally in cases of incest where detection occurs, disastrous results occur for the adult and for the child. Take the case of father-daughter incest where, because of complaints by a neighbour or by the child herself, the police are called in to take action. What appears to happen in most cases is that the father is charged with incest and typically sent to jail for a substantial period of time. The mother, who as often as not knows that the incestuous relationship was occurring, is then placed in a position where she becomes economically at risk. The daughter is seen by welfare authorities and because the family is poor and now fatherless, the state considers she is at risk and requires institutionalisation in a government welfare or juvenile home. There she often languishes in an impersonal bureaucratic setting en-cumbering all the disadvantages that such institutions inevitably provide. In effect, the victim has been doubly punished by not only the act of incest itself, but also by the response of the legal and welfare authorities to her predicament.

An alternative approach in dealing with incest offenders and the children who are involved with them is to adopt a more humanitarian strategy which does not involve a punitive criminal justice system. Under this approach welfare workers attempt to alleviate the situational, psychological and economic factors that might have contributed towards creating the incestuous relationship. Under this strategy the father and husband would not initially be sent to jail, but instead would be asked to participate in well-designed family therapy programmes which attempt to locate the problems in the family structure that led to the incestuous situation in the first place.³⁷

The programme would continue by providing economic and welfare support to the families so that some financial and social security could be regained in the home. Obviously if the child in the incestuous relationship is suffering from traumas associated either with the attack itself or with the shock which occurred after the detection of the relationship with the father, then long-term supportive therapy would be provided.

This approach will not work in some cases. The literature on incest suggests that many offenders will never change their behaviour patterns and may attempt to enter into relationships with their children again.³⁸ There is, however, sufficient evidence of successful intervention in these cases to warrant society taking a more humanistic approach to incest than the alternative damaging criminal justice approach. And it should never be forgotten that the ultimate sanction of imprisonment is always open to welfare or legal authorities with an offender who refuses to co-operate with this more humanistic approach.

The incest experience is a salutary lesson for those concerned with paedophilia. If we insist in keeping paedophilia as a crime, then I suggest that a more constructive approach in dealing with both the victims and the offenders be instituted. In the case of Clarence Osborne the scenes that would have occurred if he had not taken his life might well have been destructive for all. Osborne undoubtedly would have gone to prison and either through his own hand or those of other inmates, died. Many of the boys he had been involved with would have been subjected to rigorous police examination and some undoubtedly, would have been further traumatised by presenting evidence in court.

As with incest offenders there are more constructive alternatives. For example in the Atascadero State Hospital in California there are approximately two hundred paedophiles. West reports that in the past, in spite of the widespread use of aversive methods to produce conversion to asexuality or heterosexuality, many of the patients were found 'unamenable' to treatment and were committed to prison by the court. A retraining programme for paedophiles was introduced based on an acceptance of one's homosexuality and encouragement of participation in the homosexual community. This approach was adopted because it was found that many of the paedophiles had limited their friendship to juveniles partly because they lacked the social skills needed to establish contact with adult homosexuals.³⁹

Similar programmes have operated in British and European institutions with considerable success. Under some Californian and British programmes homosexual volunteers are called in to act as models and instructors in an assertive training programme that includes role playing and social skill training in settings where the paedophile can learn to relate with other adult homosexuals. Evaluations of these approaches indicate that the paedophile's self-confidence and his willingness to discuss his problems frankly and openly improves dramatically.⁴⁰

I do not suggest that these training programmes are ideal ways of dealing with paedophiles. After all there is a certain amount of coercion involved in each of the programmes and coercive models do not generally lead to long-term changes of behaviour. And all of the social skill training programmes and assertiveness techniques that are used beg the question of whether paedophiles should be treated in the first place. Paedophiles themselves argue that child-adult relationships should not be an offence in themselves and that the law should intervene only when coercion is used as in equivalent homosexual or heterosexual crimes. But there can be no doubt that the adoption of welfare approaches based on voluntary participation by paedophiles themselves is a vastly better alternative to the past coercive 'therapeutic' measures of castration, drug therapy, or even aversion therapy.

In a sense, though, considerations of the alternatives in treating paedophiles are really premature, given a more important prior question. And that question is whether society should intervene in relationships between men and boys. If we do not attempt to come to terms with this question, then we have neglected some of the lessons that the Clarence Osborne case has taught us and failed in the process to learn anything about the sexuality and needs of adolescent boys. It is to this issue that we now turn.

Notes

8. Paedophilia: The Medical and Legal Response

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12. This literature is well summarised in Cook, M. and Wilson, G., op. cit.
13. This is the reason, of course, why so much discussion has centred on alternative procedures to punishment-oriented approaches in incest cases.
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Chapter Nine

The Case of Charles Osborne

What has been learnt during a dissection of Clarence Osborne's life demands one final short summary. At the risk of being over-repetitive, the salient features of the man and his activities need to be emphasised so that the social and sexual barriers Osborne assaulted can be re-evaluated in the light of his attack. The facts about Osborne can be pithily put and in themselves would not be disputed by policeman or paedophile activist.

Clarence Osborne was a man filled with an obsession for young males. From early adulthood most of his mental and indeed his physical energies were devoted to pursuing young boys and in recording details of their physical and genital development. He learnt very early in life that males have a desire to explore their sexual potential. He also learnt that young males require affection and love in the same way that females do. Osborne consequently became the man for all seasons and provided the boys with whom he came in contact small or large quantities of these commodities. Although a hunter for sexual thrills, Osborne often found himself hunted by the very boys he so desired who were quick to see in the older man a potential partner for their own sexual and psychological needs. But we should not simply see Osborne in sexual terms. He did, quite genuinely, concern himself with the youths' problems and aspirations and spend much time in dealing with them.

Although his youthful partners would have felt otherwise, to most adults there was nothing particularly pleasant about Osborne's character. He was, after all, almost neurotically obsessive, at times excruciatingly boring in terms of his obsessive interest in young males. His colleagues found him hard to get on with because of his obsessiveness with both his work and his hobby and because he exhibited a cutting and biting tongue that he used with effect. But all these traits hardly make him a monster and the acts of generosity that he displayed both towards the boys he was close to and with his colleagues at work showed that there was a facet of Osborne that was soft and gentle. Osborne could justifiably be criticised for some of the methods he used to entice young males even if he saw himself differently. Osborne appeared to convince himself that he was flawless as is illustrated by the following comment in his manuscript:

I can honestly say I've never been tempted to use even the smallest bit of influence I might have to get some boy to have sex with me. If there was the slightest bit of resistance then I backed off and lost interest.

Nevertheless, over twenty years Clarence Osborne was able to have a physical relationship with at least 2500 boys. This is some feat indeed, although it should not be assumed that the sexual relationships were as passionately wild as the media would have us believe. In fact Osborne's exploits would not make the first page of a gay sex manual – he was after all only really interested in masturbating his partners, measuring their penises and touching their bodies. It was very rare that he engaged in anything as dramatic as anal intercourse and even then he only did it when asked to.

In short there is a great deal of pathos in the man. The picture of Clarence Osborne that emerges is of a middle-aged man devoting his life to his card index containing, as it did, random observations of young boys' physiques, filling his house with over 8 kilometres of taped conversations and spending a lot of time rationalising out his activities by saying

that he was engaging in a 'science'. These activities are hallmarks of high tragedy rather than high drama. If monsters are made out of these ingredients, then we as a society have little to fear.

But Osborne was more important than he thought. For the case of Clarence Osborne raises a host of questions about the way we use sex in this society generally and the nature of childhood sexuality specifically. Perhaps the most crucial meaning of sex to adults is that in our culture it is charged with a tremendous amount of importance: the decision to 'consent' or 'not to consent' is assumed to have enormous consequences and ramifications. For the decision to consent' has overtones in our milieu of accepting a commitment or, at the very least, something which will radically and permanently affect one's future life. For this reason Osborne's case raises issues not only of consent but also of the morality of unequal power in sexual relationships. Before we grapple with these difficult questions it is important to explore some of the social myths surrounding paedophiles and paedophilia.

Myths about Paedophiles

In the case of paedophiles as opposed to, for example, parents, it is assumed that any disparities and inequities in power between the adult and the child will be exercised by the adult malevolently. In reality, however, many paedophiles are patently well disposed towards their partners and take the role of loving teachers, house parents, or simply close friends. Clarence Osborne often epitomised the benevolence that exists in paedophile relationships because, in many respects, he displaced the interest shown by their parents. In short, it is a myth to assume that paedophiles necessarily use their greater experience and power in a destructive way.

An associated myth concerns the very common view that the child is traumatised and socially and sexually seriously damaged. We have dealt with this point in length in past chapters, but it is worth reiterating that the evidence simply does not support these assumptions. In the short run the studies suggest that problems with the partners of paedophiles often flow from the reactions of parents and officials, who respond to news of their son's relationships with such horror that it elevates the significance of the event in the child's life. Even in the study showing the worst possible result – Gagnon's sample of 333 victims – only 5 per cent of the 'victims' had what Gagnon called 'damaged adult lives'.¹ Even here though 'damaged adult lives' is a vague term and diverse causes of the damage besides the paedophile relationship could be possible.

Similar myths surrounding the interactions between the youth and the adult are also without foundation. For example, coital relationships do not generally occur between the two and the usual sexual acts simply involve showing, fondling and being fondled. Most paedophiles are not into 'fucking little kids', and, as we have seen time and time again sexual relationships are rarely forced. Indeed, a substantial number of relationships are initiated by the child, continued by the child, and often, ended by the child or adolescent. While there are undoubtedly cruelly exploitative paedophile relationships, the vast majority are not of this type. And the literature does have a few case studies which demonstrate youths benefiting psycho-logically from their contacts' with the adult.²

There is no denying the fact, however, that there is a considerable problem when we come to defining the meaning of the term 'exploitation'. Clearly, many social and sexual relationships involve the use of power and domination. For example, feminists have

pointed out how men dominate women and how parents often use children to meet their (the adults) emotional needs. The critical question, it seems to me, is who benefits from the relationship and by how much. Thus, in many cases parents may 'dominate' their children but the child may gain a great deal from such domination. The questions of power and domination in sexual and interpersonal relationships are complex ones and righteous statements about the morality or immorality of such domination have to be considered in specific cases rather than in generalised categories or events.

As well as myths concerning the nature of the relationship between the child and the adult, a number of false assumptions highlight the arguments surrounding the paedophile himself. For example, one common view is that paedophiles are 'dirty old men'. However, as we have noted in previous chapters, paedophiles transgress all age ranges, although Mohr suggests three major clusters: one culminating in adolescence, another one in the mid to late thirties, and the classical old age category, which according to Mohr 'appears less frequently than the other two'.³

Paedophiles are also seen typically as being 'strangers'. In reality, of course, many paedophiles are close relatives or friends of the parents of a child and know the child for some time before an erotic liaison begins. Similar myths surrounding allegations about the paedophile being 'mentally ill' or 'monsters' are equally unenlightening. While the empirical evidence on the mental health of paedophiles may be far from complete, what evidence there is suggests that there are no greater incidences of severe psycho-pathology in them than there are in heterosexual or homosexuals.⁴ Even those studies which do seem to show psychological disturbances amongst paedophiles do not tease out the chicken from the egg. It is just as likely that observed disturbances could be seen as a consequence of the extreme stereotyping and scapegoating that paedophiles are subjected to rather than as an endemic pathology of the activity itself. In this context it is salutary to remember that adult homosexuals were seen as being both 'monsters' and as being 'mentally ill' a few short years ago, and even today such statements are made about homosexuals by moral crusaders such as Anita Bryant. In short, it is clear that to talk generally about the 'paedophile' or the 'homosexual' is as useful as talking about the 'heterosexual'. These labels are often terms which distort more than they help. For beneath the label lies an immensely complex and diverse set of personalities and experiences which are united in the case of paedophiles, only in one way: that is, the emotional and erotic attraction that these men have to children and adolescents. There are many other facets to a paedophile's life and the interest in children is only one part.

As Plummer perceptively points out, one obvious problem with the stereotyping of paedophiles and the consequent myths that arise as a result of these stereotypes is that the myths and stereotypes usually direct us to look only at the behaviour of men. Similar activities when performed by women such as cuddling, caressing, touching and stroking children are socially acceptable.⁵ But for a man to engage in such contacts is inviting the label of paedophile and possibly risking imprisonment. The stereotypes surrounding paedophiles erect a sexist myth – and that myth is that only men have intimate physical relations with children. The myth conveniently ignores the fact that women often engage in similar sexual behaviour and therefore perpetuates two common views. The first is that 'men should not do this but women can' and the second that 'any man who does this is deeply disturbed'. But by perpetuating these myths, we conveniently forget that children have sexual needs and emotional components that are well documented by contemporary psychology. The very barriers that we put between ourselves and paedophiles are in a

sense the same barriers that we put between ourselves as parents and our own children. With both groups we prefer to stereotype them ('paedophiles are monsters', 'children are innocent') and in this way avoid realities that we would otherwise be forced to face.

Why Society Reacts Violently to Paedophiles

There are a number of possible explanations why society reacts with so much vitriol towards men who have relationships with boys. Of course not one explanation in itself is the reason for the harsh social and legal stereotyping of paedophilia that characterises most industrialised countries; rather, different people react differently to various aspects of paedophilic relationships.

In explaining the antagonism towards paedophiles let us return again to the analogous example of incest. One of the reasons why so many people could be unwilling to come to terms with incest is that they themselves are frightened of any incestuous thoughts. As long as we continue to believe that incestuous assault can happen only in other families, we can avoid examining our own lives. These defences protect us from the sexual feeling we may have experienced as children for older family members and any possible interplay that may have occurred in our own childhood, as well as feelings we may have towards our own children as we watch them developing into men and women. And so it is with paedophilia. While most of us do not act upon these feelings, it is our refusal to acknowledge to ourselves that we might be sexually attracted to young boys and girls – to acknowledge in effect that we ever have such feelings – that creates our silence, aversion and unwillingness to openly discuss the issues associated with sexual relationships between adults and children.

If we are honest we know that there are many conditions under which adults and children become sexually aroused. For example, there is the favourite uncle who rocks his little niece on his knee, then is alarmed to find he has an erection. There is the brother who becomes psychologically and physically aroused at the unexpected sight of his sister naked; the father who suddenly sees that his small daughter is flowering into the bloom of adolescence. These are situations which many of us would like to forget and one of the ways of forgetting them is by condemning persons who reflect our own 'deviant' thoughts and past deeds.

On a more general level we can look at the undoubted fact that in this society children are the property of their parents; they are placed in the hierarchical family structure which demands that they be non-sexual and denies them the liberty to choose with whom they want to associate. However much a child may suffer persecution from peers and be unloved by parents, because of this property relationship, a friendship with an adult is frowned upon. Together with the wrath which results from their breaching of property rights, paedophiles also incur wrath because many people consider sex to be basically brutal and exploitative by its very nature and not mutually enjoyable. Some people therefore assume that any paedophile relationship must necessarily consist of an adult sexually exploiting a child. Consequently the law operates on the assumption that the superior power position of the adult has been used to force the sexual relationship. The criminal justice system then, according to this argument, is not primarily concerned with the safety of the child at all but with the safety of the family structure and the maintenance of private property.

No one puts this argument more forcibly than Greek-love advocate, Tom Reeves. Reeves,

a self-confessed pederast, is a Harvard graduate and a professor of history who has championed the cause of boy lovers in the United States and elsewhere. Reeves has often felt the brunt of the antagonism expressed by a hostile community towards paedophiles. Realising that his love for boys was his 'second coming out' he says:

I first realized I was gay and developed the ability to love men of all ages. But then I realized that I loved boys especially and felt the highest degree of intimacy in relationships with teenagers.⁶

Reversing the usual arguments about the exploitation of boys by their men lovers, Reeves springs to the attack and suggests that a man having sex with a girl or a woman is in a relationship laden with so many centuries of role-structuring that it is hard to shake free the dominance-submission dynamics that are involved. According to Reeves, a man loving a boy has a different tradition: one of rebellion, freedom and play. He argues that this tradition is full of youth and liveliness, self-awareness and social resistance.

Reeves proposes that there is a deep-seated reason for the intense feeling of abomination that society feels for Greek love. His argument is simply that as the sex in such a love relationship is involved with boys and the boys are the future of American capitalistic, industrial-istic society, then such a society has to condemn these relationships. Reeves proposes that boys are meant to grow up and become the future supporters of capitalist society by taking up their position of lawyers, doctors, corporation heads or whatever other positions are required for the perpetuation of the prevailing ideology. According to Reeves:

When men relate to boys with love and affection, that changes their image of what a man should be and makes them very sceptical of the competitive ideals that have been forced upon them.⁷

Reeves suggests that society is very much afraid of anyone who 'molests' its youth and by 'molesting' he means anything that keeps the boys from repeating the mistakes of past generations.

This argument may well be tenuous to some but its ideological overtones have a familiar ring to them. After all, it is no different from similar arguments put forward by feminists to explain the reasons why men oppress them in order to preserve a patriarchal family structure. It has as well similarities with other arguments put forward by radical gay collectives to suggest the reasons why homophilia is so rampant in capitalist societies. Proponents of these views do not suggest that on an individual level people consciously rationalise out their hatred towards paedophiles in these ideological terms. But they do suggest that as a collective entity society operates by these rationalisations.

We do not need such sophisticated arguments to unravel the nature of contemporary society's hatred of the paedophile. Less complicated explanations are sufficient for explanatory purposes. As we noted in the beginning of this section the paedophile reminds some of us of our own behaviour at some point or alternatively of fantasies that we have had that we would prefer to forget. The lovers of boys threaten the conception that some of us have of ourselves, of our views of ourselves as being 'masculine' and of dividing the world into those who have sexual feelings (men) and those who do not (boys).

Even those of us who are not worried by social roles and social expectations have severe

reservations about Greek love for other important reasons. Many men and women who are unconcerned about their self-image and self-identity feel very strongly that man-boy relationships are exploitative and epitomise the powerful dominating the powerless. Their concerns cannot be written off as fanciful delusions. They are made by people who, regardless of their own sexual inclinations, are genuinely worried about oppression in any form. Because this issue is such a vital one in any reasonable discussion on paedophilic relationships it must be dealt with seriously.

Power and Consent in Sexual Relations

One of the major objections to paedophilic relationships is based on the argument that adults have supreme power over children in terms of the economic, physical, intellectual and emotional aspects of their lives. It is argued therefore that in this situation, relationships of some equality cannot be formed when it comes to mutual sexual expression. This argument assumes that in an ideal situation where sexual relationships take place, the context is one where there is mutual agreement between both parties with approximately the same power base and where informed consent is given by the two persons involved.

Critics of paedophilic relationships do not necessarily deny that children are very sensual and erotic beings who enjoy physical contact. It is argued by the critics, however, that children do not have the same categorisation about sex as adults do and with a low level of autonomy and awareness, the child's inability to say 'no' should therefore not be taken as an informed and mature acceptance of mutual sex and contact.

In a considered, detailed submission on paedophilia, the gay socialist journal *Gay Left* argued against the legitimacy of paedophilic relationships using the power imbalance between the two parties as the central thrust of their argument. *Gay Left*, however, were honest enough to point out the paradox that exists when this area of sexuality is discussed. They, and many others, have observed that there is always much uproar about the power imbalance between adults and children in the sexual area, but there is very little debate about the gross economic differences between adults and children and about the intellectual and physical advantages adults have, all of which can be, and are, used to exploit and 'corrupt' children. As they put it:

It is paradoxical because it is in the sphere of sexual/physical pleasure that children could have been the relatively least disadvantaged. It is the one currency of social relationships that children are best versed in – we operate on the pleasure principle from birth. We do not deny that even on this level there are difficulties, but it is crucial that the debate has centred on child sexuality to the exclusion of other aspects of adult/child relations. What we must avoid is a totally adult centred solution.⁸

Critics of paedophilic relationships often become very ambiguous when they attempt to define an age or a period of life when meaningful consent to sexual relationships can be given. Two periods usually given where consent can legitimately be granted by the young person are puberty and adolescence. The two of course are not synonymous as puberty means quite literally 'being functionally capable of procreation', while adolescence refers not so much to a physiological change but to a social event that occurs between child-hood and manhood or womanhood. Both concepts, of course have enormous difficulties

associated with them. The myth that children become sexual at puberty has been largely dispelled by an avalanche of research that shows otherwise. And the definition of what 'adolescence' is, is irritatingly vague as it begs the all-important question of what characterises childhood as opposed to adulthood.⁹

According to Tom O'Carroll, the intellectual guru of the Paedophile Information Exchange, the question of what is maturity in terms of a child or adolescent giving informed consent to sexual relationships is really trivial,¹⁰ The issues to him are not so much ones of maturity but of wider matters surrounding the topic of paedophilia generally. O'Carroll considers that the major division between opponents and proponents of child-adult sex is the philosophical cleavage between people who believe that sex is good and natural and those who regard sexual activity as an area of special danger and difficulty. Indeed O'Carroll and other paedophile activists often reverse the argument of their critics and state that children are better equipped to sexually relate to adults with a spontaneous, unproblematic sense of pleasure, precisely because they are not mature: children in effect are less likely to have been damaged by society's prevailing anti-sexual mores.

Most observers of sexuality would agree that society seriously distorts the nature and discretion of sexual feelings and might well agree that childhood and perhaps adolescence are the only times in which people can act physically and erotically with a degree of naturalness. However, the imbalance in the power and experience between men and boys is not satisfactorily excused by referring simply to the naturalness of childhood sexuality.

There is no doubt that parents and adults generally have far more power than children do in most relationships. But it cannot be assumed that this adult power base is always used in a constructive way for the benefit of the child. There are many examples of both the physical and sexual exploitation of young boys and girls that are appalling in their consequences. The answer to this exploitation is not to abandon the often constructive aspects of parental nurturing as such but, as O'Carroll has put it, 'To think instead in terms of supporting alternative, less introverted family structures, in which power is spread more broadly and used more constructively for the benefit of the child.'¹¹ These structures and concepts of children's rights help to counterbalance the exploitative position of an adult power base and these will be pursued in the next section of this chapter.

In the case of paedophiles, as with parents and children generally, it is totally unjustifiable to assume that because there are some cases of child exploitation, all relationships between adults and children of a sexual nature are necessarily exploitative. Indeed, the evidence strongly suggests that the majority of paedophiles go to considerable lengths to look after and protect the child. In the Osborne case we have seen many examples of boys who came to him and continued their relationship over sustained periods of time in order to acquire his affection and knowledge of physical matters. In this sense Osborne represented an alternative to the strictures and narrow horizons of some of the parental homes that the boys came from.

Nevertheless, even with these caveats it must be admitted that the adult will generally have a greater power base than the child. Paedophiles are quick to point out that the child or adolescent often has his or her own power base – their sexuality – even though they certainly do not have the economic, social and experiential resources that the adult in a relationship does. Clearly though it is impossible to judge every case on the basis of this

general principle and the individual components of power and exploitation in particular cases have to be considered systematically and carefully.

The other major issue that confronts the advocate of Greek love relationships is one of consent. No one, not even paedophile spokespersons, would argue that an adult has the right to have sex with a child or adolescent without his or her 'consent'. The real question though is whether the child or adolescent is capable of making an informed and rational decision whether he or she will engage in physical relationships with an older person. Like the question dealing with power, the issue of consent is not only confined to paedophiliac relationships. For example, it has been argued by many feminists that mature women 'consent' to sexual relationships with men when they are not emotionally or socially really prepared to do so. In other words the argument is that men, because of their greater social and economic position, are able to obtain a false consent to intimate relationships from a woman and therefore in a true sense, consent is not given. Similar examples can be given in the fields of medicine or psychiatry where patients give their 'consent' to controversial surgical or treatment procedures without being fully aware of all the facts surrounding the procedures.

Clearly, in our culture sex is charged with tremendous importance and the decision to 'consent' or 'not to consent' is assumed to have enormous consequences and ramifications. Historically, the reasons for this state of affairs are not hard to find with sex for many years being tied to marriage and unwanted pregnancies a threat for women who engage in sexual intercourse. Today, however, it can be assumed that sex is not seen only as something that invited a commitment to a long-term relationship, but also as a method of obtaining short-term enjoyment just as playing a sport leads to short-term enjoyment. This is not to deny that there is more to sex than just playing games, but it is to state the obvious that sex is in itself an enjoyable activity and does not necessarily have to lead to a long-term relationship. In short, I am arguing plainly and categorically for a redefinition of sex, not only in the context of paedophilia but in terms of human relationships generally. Unfortunately, in our society sex is seen as one of the few ways of achieving intimacy and that is more a reflection on the way in which we have distorted and perverted the nature of sexual expression, than it is a reflection of the activity of sex itself. In other words, if there is no commitment and no adverse consequence to the sexual act, then concepts such as 'a sense of responsibility' or 'being mature about sex' have no meaning whatsoever.

In a strange and somewhat paradoxical way Clarence Osborne was reinforcing society's view that sex is tremendously important and therefore potentially destructive. The brilliant French philosopher and psychologist Foucault has often pointed out how in western societies sexuality has not so much been repressed as constituted or patterned in particular ways.¹² Priests, doctors, psychiatrists and others have invested sex with magical powers so that, as a society, we often look to our sexuality in order to find out about ourselves.

Osborne is very much in this tradition. It is, for example, perfectly possible to see Osborne not as the bizarre sex monster he was so often painted as, but instead as a high priest of the prevailing Western sexual ethos. After all, in measuring thousands of boys' penises and documenting his findings Osborne was doing in an exaggerated form what the doctors already do with sex. He was giving it an importance, 'constituting it' in Foucaultian terms, in a way that made it mystical and critical in people's lives. Osborne was giving sex an importance it probably does not deserve.

No such importance was given by many of the boys to sex. Osborne's youthful partners often saw sex as being no more than just a 'game' and did not expect it to lead to any major commitment. Indeed some of the children and adolescents were lured to Osborne because they thought that sex was pleasurable or, knowing that society thought it was 'naughty', they were positively influenced to try the forbidden apple. But in the vast majority of cases the boys who were engaged with Osborne conceptualised sex as simply being a game and not as an activity that led to the black plague or the end of civilisation. And while sexual liaisons were followed by close emotional relationships between Osborne and his partners, these occurred not necessarily because of the sexual nature of the interaction, but because, for the first time in their lives, an adult was adopting a caring and affectionate attitude towards them. These intimate relationships also show us quite clearly that paedophiles are as able as anyone else to relate to their sexual partners as people and not just as sexual objects.

A Bill of Rights for Children

In exploring the case of Clarence Osborne and looking at the children who were connected with him, it has become abundantly clear to me that 'laws of consent' or other legalistic manoeuvres that attempt to protect the child from sexual or social oppression by adults will invariably fail if for no other reason than the fact that they can never be enforced with any degree of effectiveness. To give a simple but obvious example, it is perfectly obvious that the number of paedophiles who are caught and punished by the criminal justice system is infinitesimal compared with the number of paedophiles who are able to have relationships with children undetected. And even if it were possible to enforce the consent laws, the oppression that this would bring to our community would be intolerable in a society which professes to be humanitarian and democratic. The criminal law is after all a weak instrument to use when it comes to the imposition of moral standards as even a cursory glance at the history of prohibition or of laws relating to homosexuality, gambling, and other 'victimless' crimes make clear. What really is needed in order to stop children being violated in social, economic and sexual ways is a children's bill of rights which besides having legislative teeth, becomes part of the social climate of our community. Such a proposal, of course, is hardly radical as it has been suggested for many years by supporters of children's rights.

The question is to decide what the major parameters of such a bill should be. While it is not my intention to give detailed submissions on such a bill the present discussion requires, at the very least, an outline of what areas such a charter should cover.¹³

To begin with there must be a right to self-determination so that children have at least some say on matters which affect them most directly. As it is now children are treated as the private property of their parents on the assumption that it is the parents' right and responsibility to control the life of the child. Parenting should be seen as a privilege and not as some innate right allowing adults to dictate their children's psychological, religious and social development. The implication of allowing children to have some say in their religious instruction, sexual behaviour and ethical conduct is, to most parents, quite frightening, but this right must be considered as a cornerstone by anyone seriously concerned with children's liberation.

A second right which meets with more social approval than the first, is a right to a *responsive environment*. It is quite clear that parents are not always the best people to bring

up their children and an estimated four million children are abused annually in the United States alone. It is obvious that alternative forms of parental care have to be designed. These forms should not necessarily be the bland institutional homes and orphanages which are the options open to children at the moment, but instead creative child exchange programmes, twenty-four-hour child care centres and various kinds of schools and employment opportunities. In Scandinavian countries such as Sweden, children have their own ombudsmen who are able to criticise the institutions they live in and suggest alternative living arrangements. In most countries though legislators believe that parents have an innate right to bring up their children. Consequently politicians have failed to use their creativity and imagination in order to consider possible options that might well provide more constructive and responsive environments.

A third section in any children's bill of rights must deal with their right to *equitable education*. This means that the child must have the right to all information available to adults including, and perhaps especially, information that makes adults feel uncomfortable. Such a right would mean that the formal, mundane, and compulsory nature of many courses that operate in our competitive schools would have to be abolished in favour of an educational curriculum that is non-competitive, innovative, and which is at least partly designed by children to cater for their own and not adults' needs. Education can change only through the achievement of new rights for those exploited and oppressed by it – the children themselves.

A fourth right relates to *economic and political power*. At the moment children are disfranchised and have no one to represent their constituency or to reflect on legislation that affects their day-to-day activities. Furthermore, children do not have the right to work to acquire and manage money or to receive equal pay for equal work. They never learn to use money adequately because they are never allowed to develop a credit record, nor do they learn what a binding contract means because children do not have the right to enter into such contracts. They must achieve financial independence and political power in order for them to be free of adult oppression.

A fifth right is their right to *freedom from physical punishment*. At the moment children are physically and sexually abused in the home and in schools by adults who feel that they have the right to treat 'their property' as cattle rather than as people. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the use of corporal punishment in homes and in schools which is often arbitrarily given with sadistic delight. A child should have the same rights as an adult has to be free from physical abuse and punishment which often comes under the guise of 'discipline'.

A sixth right is the child's *right to justice*. The juvenile justice system originally designed to protect children from the harsh treatment of the adult criminal justice system has ended up as a system where children lack the legal right of adults and where they are subjected to paternalism and arbitrarily punished for activities which, if they were adults, would not be considered crimes. Children must have the guarantee of a fair trial with due process of law, a lawyer to protect their rights from over-zealous bureaucrats, a uniform standard of detention, and the right to be treated as adults with respect to questions of what offences, would be considered to be 'criminal'. For too long children have been doubly jeopardised by the criminal justice system and are not only criminally liable for acts which, if they were an adult, would be considered crimes, but are also often charged with offences which would not be crimes if they were adults.

The seventh and final right is the *right to sexual freedom*. If one agrees with the other six rights that I have stated then it is only logical that children should have the right to conduct their sexual lives with no more restrictions than adults do. A prior condition to this right though is that children must be provided with all information about sex and related matters so that they are in a position to make reasonable choices concerning their present and future sexual behaviour. If we as a community are genuinely concerned about the fact that children might be sexually misused by adults, then we have a moral, and indeed a social obligation, to provide young people with the most contemporary and most relevant information and the knowledge which will allow them to refuse sexual advances. At the moment children are trained not to refuse adults anything and to accept all forms of physical affection as being the right of an adult to impose on a child. They are therefore not able to learn to trust their own emotional feelings and reactions to people and often become involved in physical relationships which they really do not wish to get involved in. We keep children innocent and ignorant and then somewhat hypocritically worry that they will not be able to resist the sexual approaches of people such as Clarence Osborne.

Which Way for Society?

Osborne's case drives home one important point that should be a clear message to us all. And that point is very simply that how adults react and what adults say to interpret sexual acts may be much more influential, and much more crucial in the emotional and sexual development of the child than the actual sexual act in which he may have been involved. A punitive and draconian justice system that directly punishes a paedophile, indirectly scapegoats a boy who has been involved in a sexual relationship with an older man, violates this message and does so with an impact that severely damages both the man and the boy. For the reality is that the boys have come to older men and will continue, for time immemorial, to come to them in order to have their sexual and emotional needs met. In a very real sense the boys are attempting to reaffirm their own identities, to obtain some measure of self esteem, and to fill the vacuum left by their home environments.

But in saying all this we are still begging the question of what approach society generally and the criminal justice system specifically should take towards sexual relationships between older and younger males. I have argued that a legal age of consent is an arbitrary point, a line drawn that has no basis in the physiological or psychological development of the child. Furthermore, an age of consent in law does not prevent the sexual activity taking place and serves to perpetuate the myth that most, if not all, adults can and always do rationally consent to sexual relations. I would abolish any age of consent in sexual relations on the basis that in my opinion it is both unjust and unworkable, and I would also repeal all legislation relating to the age of consent in the field of sexuality specifically. Instead, offences would be considered on the basis of the use of violence, force, fraud or pressure rather than an arbitrary age limitation. This would mean that the concept would be an arbitrary concept that would be applied variably according to the case that one was talking about. In practice the police would only investigate a paedophile relationship if there was a complaint by the child himself or by the parents or relatives or by anyone else concerned with the welfare of the child.¹⁴ The onus would be on the police to prove that force or fraud or trickery were used to obtain sexual relations with the child. The police would not be able to argue, as they do now, that a crime has been committed just because a physical relationship between a man and a boy or adolescent took place.

Obviously, there will still be with these new laws many cases where parents and other

people violate children. But no law is going to protect children from the physical or psychological abuses of adults, and if we pretend that they will then we are fooling ourselves very badly indeed. Whether it be incest or paedophile relationships, the only approach that will have any effect is the removal of criminal sanctions from non-violent sexual activities, but at the same time providing the maximum social means for protecting the child. In concrete terms this would mean implementing the seven fundamental rights that children should have as expeditiously and as honestly as we can.

A small, lonely, obsessive and not very likeable man living in a middle-class suburb in Brisbane, Australia, has more significance than even he thought. For he has shown us that many thousands of young people in western countries feel sexually repressed, alienated from adult company, and emotionally bankrupt. This should make all of us reflect on those social conditions and family structures that have led young people to become alienated from adults.

Clarence Osborne's life, pathetic as it might well have been, drives home some other fundamental lessons that we should all remember. Young boys are sexually active from a very early age and will pursue their sexuality whenever they can find an opportunity to do so; young males wish to give and receive affection in ways that we as a community have not clearly understood before; men who have relationships with boys often do so for benevolent reasons and assist those boys to cope with the business of growing up in an increasingly adult-orientated and impersonal world. For too long we have concentrated on the darker side of sexual relationships between adults and children without looking at the reasons for these relationships – the bland condemnation of Greek love and the resulting draconian measures taken by a vengeful society destroy everything they touch. We may still morally and aesthetically disapprove of adult-child relationships and that is our undoubted right. But if we don't heed the lesson that Clarence Osborne has taught us, then we will continuously reinforce bigotry and prejudice and we do so at the cost of further damaging our children's welfare.

Notes

9. Challenging The Social and Sexual Barriers

1. Gibbens, T. C. N. and Prince, J., *Child Victims of Sex Offences*, Institute for the Study of Delinquency, London, 1963.
2. See for example Bernard, F., in Cook, M. and Wilson, G., *Love and Attraction*, Pergamon, 1980, pp.499-501.
3. Mohr, J. W., Turner, R. E. and Terry, M. B., *Pedophilia and Exhibitionism*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1964.
4. See Plummer, in Cook, M. and Wilson, G., *op. cit.*, pp.537-540.
5. *Ibid.*, p.538.
6. Quoted in Willenbecher, T., 'A letter from Boston', *Christopher Street*, March, 1978, p.54.
7. *Ibid.*, p.56.
8. *Gay Left*, No. 7, 1978/79, p.5.
9. Paedophile activists replies to the *Gay Left* articles make this point strongly. See *Gay Left*,

No. 8,1978/79, p.13.

10. Ibid., p.13.

11. Ibid., p.17.

12. Foucault, M., *History of Sexuality*, translated from the French by Robert Hurley, Allen Lane, London, 1979.

13. This charter is similar to that outlined in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child and reported in Allen, J., *The Kids Catalogue*, Greenhouse Publications, Melbourne, 1975, pp. 171–174.

If the police had good reason to believe that force, fraud or pressure was being applied by a man to a boy/youth then they could still instigate an inquiry without a complaint from someone else. But the onus would be on the police to prove that they had information warranting such an inquiry. This would reduce random and discriminatory police investigations of male-youth relationships.

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One of the last taboos left in this age of sexual openness is the prohibition against sex between adults and children. Indeed, men who engage in sex with young males or females are treated as modern day folk-devils, deserving society's severest and most draconian punishment.

Clarence Osborne was a 56-year-old Australian court reporter who regularly had sex with young boys and adolescents. Indeed, this mild, frail-looking man was able to have sexual adventures with 2500 adolescent males, most of whom appeared willing to physically and emotionally relate to him.

In exploring the life of this sexual pied-piper, Wilson raises questions about sexuality that are bound to make this book a highly controversial one. The questions challenge conventional wisdom:

why shouldn't children and adolescents be allowed to engage in sexual relations with whom they want? Are men who have consenting sex with youths wicked sex fiends or benevolent father figures? Do men seduce boys or do the boys often seduce the men? Have we grossly misunderstood the sexual and emotional needs of young and not-so-young males?

Written without the jargon inherent in many social science tracts, Wilson's book is both absorbing and provocative. The reader may not agree with the author's conclusions, but he will at least be made to think hard about the moral and social issues surrounding sexual relationships between men and youths.