The Female Child as a Surrogate Object

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Because most heterosexual pedophilic offenses are committed by males who in fact erotically prefer adult females, the hypothesis was tested that males with nondeviant erotic preferences are generally prone to react in a sexual way to female children. With nondeviant subjects, penile volume changes (PVCs) were measured to stimulus slides and movie pictures of males and females, varying in age. There were significant differences in PVCs to each of the female age groups shown, and responses were greater to all female age groups than to the male ones. PVCs to the youngest female age group (6 to 8 years) were clearly different not only from those to pictures of males but also from those to neutral slides. Reactions to certain parts of the female and male bodies at various stages of development were also assessed. Of female children, only the pubic region, and to some degree the buttocks, elicited clearly distinctive reactions.

INTRODUCTION

In previous studies (Freund, 1967a, b), there was support for the hypothesis that males who were charged more than once with a heterosexual pedophilic offense (incest excluded) usually sexually reacted more to female children than to adult females. The picture was different in those cases where no recidivism had occurred. This latter fact is in accord with the conclusion of Mohr et al. (1964) and Gigeroff et al. (1968) that most heterosexual hebephilic and pedo-

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philic offenses, especially when there is no recidivism, are probably committed by men who do not really erotically prefer female children or pubertal youths to mature females. These sexual offenses may be considered surrogate activity which, under special circumstances, occurs when the most preferred object, i.e., an adult female, is not available either chronically or in certain crucial situations. For example, such a pedophilic offense may be committed by the physically handicapped or the aged. Such a position assumes that not only pubescent females but also female children are to some degree generally attractive to males who are nondeviant in their erotic preferences.

In this context, it was of interest to know (1) which parts of the body of the female child, if any, are mainly responsible for her sexual attractiveness to the nondeviant adult male and (2) how such attractiveness would compare to that of relevant body parts of older females and to similar regions of the male body at corresponding stages of development.

The present study is composed of two parts. Part I was designed to determine (1) whether nondeviant males erotically discriminate among different ages of female children, (2) whether these reactions are distinct from those to males, and (3) how nondeviant males differentiate among certain regions of the female body at various stages of development. Part II was addressed specifically to whether the sexual reaction of erotically nondeviant males to female children is a positive one, distinct from that to neutral stimuli.

PART I

Method

Subjects

Twenty university students within an age range of 21 to 32 years and a mean age of 24½ and 20 recent immigrants within an age range of 21 to 38 years and a mean age of 24½ served as paid volunteer subjects in this study. They were recruited from a students' placement service and an English school for recent immigrants, both in Toronto.7

Apparatus

The phallometer, used in previous investigations, was also employed here to measure changes in penile volume. For a detailed description of the apparatus,

7 Two additional subjects were excluded from the study because they completed only the first of the three test sessions and did not show up a second time. A third subject, an immigrant, told us beforehand that he was very much interested in the study of homosexuality and that this was the reason for his participation. The test showed unequivocal androphilia (preference of same-sexed adults), and he was therefore excluded from the study.