

Child Molestation vs. Child Love

Critically Annotated by Black Oak Clique

Feral Faun

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Introduction: A Word of Warning

Here Be Dragons

The material contained in this text is gut-wrenching and disturbing. What follows is a critically annotated edition of Apio Ludd / Feral Faun / Wolfi Landstreicher's *Child Molestation vs. Child Love*, from his (otherwise celebrated) anthology, *Rants, Essays and Polemics*. It is a defense of the sexual abuse of children and, ironically, a call to "fight the real child molesters" — Landstreicher's term for parents, schools, and churches. In some parts of the work, it is quite graphic and the reader should tread lightly. Those who have suffered child sexual abuse in the past may want to stop here. It is presented with criticism. It is not in the interest of Heresy Distro to distribute molestation apologia by itself. Our choice of publishing this work is in the interest of knowledge — not of the arguments of self-styled "child lovers," but rather knowledge about Wolfi Landstreicher's views on "child love" so that one can act accordingly in their interactions with him.

Morals?

Our intent is not to moralize. Our motives for publishing *Child Molestation* is love — real, egoistic love for children. We do not believe it is our "duty" to protect children nor are we guided by any outside, abstract, spectral "morals" to do so. It is rather our lived, experienced, and felt camaraderie with children; with our desire to return to the pre-civilized and Wild existence that is childhood. Rarely is there a moment with children when they are not mesmerized by the natural world — insects, spiders, the grass, squirrels, rocks, rain, thunder. This is not merely naïve curiosity. Children exist in a state before the bifurcation into man and animal. Truly, the trope of the "feral child" is not a child who has lost their humanity. Rather, they never developed it.

Childhood "sexuality"

One cannot deny that children possess a sort of sexuality, or, more precisely, what adults term sexuality. Childhood is a stage of exploration, and it is to be expected that children will partake in bodily exploration as well — individual and collective.

However, it must be made abundantly clear that a child's conception of sexuality is much different than an adult's. Children do not possess a concept of, and thus cannot grant, consent. Thus, an adult (who possesses a grasp on consent) who engages a child sexually will be enacting a sort of sexualized authority over them. Further, children are scarcely aware of the power dynamics that mark adult sexuality, and therefore cannot contend with and rectify them, as adults can. They are made into objects of pleasure, not, as Landstreicher contends, equal partners in a mutually-beneficial erotic relationship.

When one's reading of *Child Molestation vs. Child Love* is informed by this understanding, the true content of the piece is laid bare: a quasi-egoist appropriation of anarchist rhetoric to justify (and perhaps hide) a cruel and authoritarian desire to control and fetishize the bodies of children.

Child Molestation vs. Child Love (Main text from 1987)

A child is scolded, restricted, forced to conform to schedules and social norms, limited, bribed with rewards and threatened with punishments. This is called love. A child is kissed, caressed, played with, gently fondled and given erotic pleasure. This is called molestation. Something is obviously twisted here. (1)

One of the main dichotomies of this society is the child/adult dichotomy. It has no basis in any real needs or natural ways. It is a totally arbitrary conception which only serves to reinforce authority. (2)

Certainly, newborn infants need to be fed and watched over until they can begin to move around their environment with some ease, steadiness, and self-assurance. And thereafter, it is certainly a kindness to inform them of anything they may need to know to avoid accidents and relate well to their environment. But the structuring and regimentation a child undergoes in our society has nothing to do with natural needs or kindness. It is the slow destruction of the child's freedom under authority. (3)

From the moment an infant is born s/he is in the firm hand of authority. S/he is almost immediately forced to feed on a schedule. Early on, s/he begins to see that the "love" of most adults is something that must be bought by conformity and obedience. Sensuality begins to be repressed by the scheduling of feeding and the use of diapers and other clothing even when they're uncomfortable. Toilet training continues the process. And the constant threat of punishment instills the fear necessary to keep the process of sensual repression going strong. All of this is the dirty work of parents. What defines a "good" parent is their ability to instill this repression appearing to be the monsters they are. For once this repression is well begun, the child can be easily molded into what this society wants. School completes the process begun by the parent. It forces the child to regiment most of her/his daylight hours. Sensual activity is straight-jacketed during this time. After school, there is homework which the parents make sure the child does. This process usually continues well past puberty. All of these years of repression and forced acquiescence to authority make the child into a grown-up (more accurately, a *groan-up*), which, in this society, means a conforming, obedient, and usually anxiety-ridden slave.

It is the nature of this education process which makes society define the child-lover as a devil. For to the child-lover, a child is not a lump of clay to be molded to the will of authority. S/he is a god, the manifestation of Eros. The child-lover encourages the free expression of the child's sensuality and so undermines the entire education process. And the child, who has not yet been as repressed as her/his adult lover, helps to break down the repression within the adult. How could a society which requires repressed, conforming, obedient groan-ups possibly tolerate child love? (4)

It is clear who the true child molesters are. The parents and schools rape the minds of children, forcing guilt and fear, conformity and obedience to authority upon them, repressing their sensuality and imagination, their wild erotic ecstasy. (5) But children are still less repressed than most adults. Their divinity still shines through with an especially clear beauty. For they are not mere clay to be molded. They are wild, dancing gods. To adventure erotically with children is liberating both for the children and for we "adults" who are really just repressed children. It is a major blow against authority and an expression of paradise. For we all are gods, and all shared pleasure is a beautiful expression of our divinity. So let us fight the real child molesters, the family, the school, the church, and all authority, and share erotic pleasure as freely as we can with children. Then

we may again regain our own repressed childhood and become the gods we truly are in beauty and in ecstasy. (6)

Critical Annotations by Black Oak Clique

1. As outlined in the previous section, child sexual abuse is not simply kissing, caressing, and playing with a child. This is a gross and intentional mischaracterization of child molestation. Further, one can be opposed both to the imposition of authoritarian social norms and the sexualization of children.

2. It is true in some sense that the child-adult dialectic serves to reinforce unequal power dynamics. We dispute, however, that the dichotomy has no basis in real needs or natural ways. Perhaps the only meaningful distinction between children and adults is the development of a concept of consent. However, Landstreicher himself even goes further than this — he contradicts himself in the very next paragraph. One must wonder what his intent here in “disrupting” this dichotomy is...

3. Here is the contradiction — newborn infants cannot feed or protect themselves sufficiently and are totally reliant on their parents. Again, it is true in some sense that the structuring of a child’s life is more for the good of capital-S Society than for the child themselves. But to state that the child-adult dialectic is completely or wholly a construction of authority is fallacy. What is needed is not the complete or total destruction of the parent-child opposition. Rather, it is a radical reconstruction (or perhaps even a rediscovery) of the lived relationship of family. Unlike the empty, cold, mediated relationships we experience under industrial capitalism, the bonds of family, while certainly not wholly good in any sense, are fiery, hot, and emotionally potent. What is needed is not a destruction of the family — but liberation of it! Liberation from the chains of Morality and Obligation, and a reformation of the family as a real, lived experience.

4. In fact, the exact opposite is true. A child is exactly that to the “child lover” — an object to be molded according to authority. Landstreicher’s description of child molestation conveniently makes the truth of it opaque. Landstreicher’s child lover is more properly a child groomer, who, through the performance of affection and play, makes a child open to sexual acts they do not, and perhaps cannot, understand. They are not being “encouraged” to express their “sensuality.” Their sensuality is being produced, they are turned into a machine for the production of sexual pleasure.

5. How convenient that the authorities Landstreicher charges with “true” child molestation are the ones who are most directly engaged in the protection of children from sexual predators!

6. Finally, Landstreicher closes with the clearest objectification of children in this “rant.” For Landstreicher, in the end, the child is a tool for the production of an imaginary, repressed childhood. For Landstreicher, “child love” — molestation — is a ritual with which he can become feral and return to an Adamic state of “beauty and ecstasy.” It is not the relationship he intends to portray.

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