

# Pedophilia is a sexual orientation?!?

The *Independent* is [reporting](#) on a thought-provoking AMA (“ask me anything”) on Reddit that featured an anonymous, though verified, criminal psychologist and his/her perspective on pedophilia.

*Paedophilia is a ‘sexual orientation’ like being straight or gay, according to a criminal psychologist.*

*The idea that sexual attraction to children is an ‘orientation’ is highly controversial as it suggests that offenders cannot change.*

*But, writing on the Reddit networking website, the psychologist said it was possible to treat child sex abusers on ‘the understanding that the attraction may always remain’.*

*The psychologist set up the ‘ask me anything’ thread on Reddit. Their identity was not revealed but was verified by the website.*

*Asked ‘can paedophiles actually change?’, the expert wrote: ‘I believe Paedophilic Disorder is a sexual orientation with individual that are attracted to child features. In other words, an individual with paedophilia has the same ingrained attraction that a heterosexual female may feel towards a male, or a homosexual feels towards their same gender.*

*‘With that being said, it needs to be said that sexuality is more of a spectrum than a finite category. We know that heterosexuals may engage in homosexual behaviour, and deny they are bisexual or homosexual.’*

As you can imagine, the implications of such a pronouncement, particularly if it becomes widely accepted, are quite immense

and potentially damaging for children and society. That was clearly understood by both the psychologist and the *Independent* as further coverage revealed:

*However the psychologist stressed in a later edit that they had not mean to imply paedophiles could not be treated – to an extent.*

*‘Treatment, to me, isn’t about modifying the orientation per se, but getting the individual to find more appropriate behaviours to engage in,’ they wrote.*

*‘An individual can have paedophilic interests without ever acting on these behaviourally. However, as I am working with criminal offenders, my experience is entirely weighted to those who have engaged in this behaviourally.’*

*The psychiatrist said they focused on three main areas when trying to treat a child sex abuser: ‘One, do you understand who can and can’t provide consent? How will you go through and identify this? Two, can you identify the risks or situations which would increase when you engage in sexual activity with someone who can’t provide consent? How can you avoid these or limit them? Three, what can you focus on positive in your life which can replace or mitigate when you may be most likely to offend? What are some things you can do which are adaptive and help you in the long run?’*

We’ve come to an interesting place in the West. Where once we believed that what was natural was not always good, we largely now assume that the natural state is good or acceptable. Man is not corrupt from birth, but rather is corrupted by society or systems. Arguably, much of the way the sexual-orientation debate has been framed in recent decades is evidence of that change in thinking.

But if one’s natural state is to be a pedophile, we suddenly have a problem as society largely sees pedophilia as wrong. No

longer can we say that if someone is “born that way” that their behavior is therefore “okay”. We are confronted with the reality that man may be corrupt or evil from birth. But if that is the case, we must now reevaluate any number of arguments about being “born that way” as justification for various activities. It’s quite the slippery slope.

In the West’s traditional moral framework, deeply rooted in a Christian worldview, it was long understood that man was born with both evil and good in his heart. One may have a disposition to any number of vices or sins, but those sins were considered morally wrong and something that one must fight against throughout life. It did not matter whether or not pedophilia was innate or a by-product of the environment one was raised in because the moral framework of society saw it as wrong either way.

The challenge to us now is that having disposed of the Christian worldview, what does society stand upon for a moral framework? There is an attempt to create a moral framework with the term “consent” – you can see it even in the *Independent* piece. But if the chaos on college campuses over consent verses rape is any indication, it probably won’t work. Furthermore, how can you determine if a 4-year-old or 2-year-old consented to sex with an adult? Sadly, it seems that we no longer have a working language or framework for moral issues in a sexually liberated environment.

Now, it may very well be that pedophiles have an innate sexual orientation or predisposition towards children. If that’s the case, the challenge to the current moral order is incredible. With Pandora’s Box opened, we may find ourselves forced to rediscover some transcendent morality because our natural tendencies, if the psychologist is correct, could actually be evil and exceedingly harmful.

Welcome to our brave new world.