

CHILDHOOD, SEXUALITY, and DANGER

A modern discussion of
child sexual abuse in
contemporary societies

Augustín Malón Marco

Originally published in Spanish (2004) by
Instituto de Sexología, Madrid, Spain, as
Infancia, Sexualidad, y Peligro

Childhood, Sexuality, and Danger

Translators' Foreword

The author of this volume lives and teaches in Spain, and he wrote the original in Spanish for readers in Spain. So there are places where he refers to "our country," which must be understood as referring to Spain.

This author is not nearly so constricted as he would be in repressive cultures such as the US or UK. He therefore lays out his brilliant deconstruction and demolition of the pseudoscience of victimology and its various derivatives, especially child sexual abuse hysteria, in a thorough, meticulous, and incisive manner. He can – and does – state truths that would no doubt cost him his academic position and social standing in the aforementioned repressive countries.

The team that translated and did preliminary editing of this volume, as well as various others who have seen the text presented on this site, feel that this book is every bit as important as past works of such giants as Brongersma, Bernard, and Sandfort. It will, when further revised to bring it up to date and to correct and polish the text, be submitted to major publishers in order to try to make it available to the non-electronic world.

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	7
Acknowledgments.....	10
Chapter I. The Sociological Imagination.....	13
Abuse Research.....	13
Sexual Abuse as Social Discourse.....	17
Reading Guide and Final Observations.....	19
Chapter II. Sexuality, Victims, and Danger.....	23
Introduction.....	23
Defining the Danger. An Example.....	26
The Accusation.....	26
A Clash of Institutions.....	27
The Discourse.....	30
Reasons for the Danger.....	31
Final Considerations.....	33
The Modern Resurgence of Sex as Danger.....	35
Abuse and Sexual Morality; or, Sexuality as Disorder.....	36
Sexual Revolution and Rising Abuse.....	37
Sexual Counter-Reformation and the Danger of Abuse.....	39
Discomfort with Sexuality, and, Social Purity.....	40
Sex and Its Victims; or, Sexuality as Domination.....	44
Feminism and Pornography.....	45
Sex as Aggression.....	49
Protecting Children, or, Sexuality as Threat.....	51
Child Abuse: From Want to Illness.....	51
Sexual Abuse: From Incest to Ritual Abuse.....	56
The Ritual Abuse Panic, or, Sexuality as Horror.....	59
The United States, the Devil, and Abuse.....	59
Ritual Abuse.....	61
The Sexual Abuse Industry.....	63
The "Recovered Memory Movement.".....	65
The Therapeutic Movement.....	67
The Courage to Heal: Survivors of Sexual Abuse.....	69
The Phenomenon at Present.....	75
Conclusion: Historical Context and Sexual Danger.....	77
Chapter III. Child Sexual Abuse: The Contours of a Danger.....	85
Introduction.....	85
The Discourse of Abuse: The Fine Line Between the Irrational and the Reasonable.....	86
The Inter-Relationship Between Science and Abuse Activists.....	89
Feminism, Abuse, and the Recovered Memory Movement.....	92
The Contours of the Danger.....	95
In Search of the Great Truth.....	99
Everyday Denial, Historical Blindness.....	99

Freud's Fatal Error.....	101
The Great Truth.....	102
The Trauma.....	105
Kinsey, the Sexologists, and the Goodness of Sex.....	106
Finkelhor, Herman, and the Recovery Movement.....	110
Multiple Personalities and Other Sequelae.....	112
Investigating the Effects: The Bold and the Fine Print.....	113
Its Extent.....	118
Statistics.....	118
Defining the Danger.....	121
Science, Abuse, and Sexuality.....	123
Science or Prejudice.....	123
New Proposals?	127
The Curse of Sex.....	129
Chapter IV. Combating Abuse.....	133
The Strategy of Accusation.....	133
Zero Tolerance.....	133
The Appeal and the Reality of Denunciation.....	136
Some Critical Considerations Concerning the Strategy of Denunciation... ..	139
Professionals and Abuse Intervention.....	145
"Believe the Children.".....	149
The Origin of the Interest.....	151
The Children's Truth.....	156
Believing in Order to Help.....	160
The Impossible Search, or, 'Specialists of the Invisible.'.....	164
The Genitals and the Cold Stare of the Physician.....	167
The Child's Behavior and the Adult's Suspicious Gaze.....	171
Tell Me the Truth.....	175
Some Final Considerations.....	177
Justice and Abuse.....	178
Sexual Liberty and Modern Penal Law.....	179
The Criterion of Age.....	180
Sexual Abuse and Morality in the Penal Code.....	183
The Least of the Penal System.....	184
Chapter V. Body, Danger, and Social Order.....	189
Introduction.....	189
Fear and Society.....	189
Body and Society.....	192
Sacred Childhood.....	196
The Anti-Onanist Obsession.....	201
From the Man with the Burlap Bag to the Man with the Candy.....	206
The United States: Moral Panics and Social Transformations.....	208
Modern Childhood and the Danger of Abuse.....	211
Epilogue. The Abuse Discourse and Contemporary Sexuality.....	221
Introduction.....	221
Abuse and Sexual Morality.....	222

Ideology, Trauma, and Science.....	225
A New Sexual Criminalization?	229
Bibliographical References.....	235
Endnotes.	243

Foreword

Back around 1997, coinciding with my postgraduate studies in sexology at the Madrid Institute of Sexological Sciences, I began to sketch out a doctoral thesis relating to the then emerging topic of the sexual abuse of minors. I had already fulfilled the course requirements for a doctorate in the department of psychology and sociology at the University of Zaragoza and was going about selecting a possible subject of investigation for the thesis. Ever since my university pedagogical studies at Salamanca I have been interested in the topic of child maltreatment, though the avatars of professional life would later draw me away from such questions. My introduction to the world of sexology and the obligatory reference to the abuse of minors -- which was a hot topic in those years -- was an opportunity to take on, as my new passion in the study of hum~ sexuality, the subject of childhood.

Following a long period of intermittent dedication the thesis was finally defended, with good results, in March of 2004 in the city of Huesca. Six or seven years had elapsed since I had begun mapping it out, and I had evolved both as a person and a researcher. But above all, I had undergone a surprising evolution in the way that I thought about those acts which we now group together under the general concept of the sexual abuse of minors. The present work is undoubtedly a result of this transformation, and probably the beginning of future inquiries and changes as well. .

During those years I had to combine my work as a sexologist -- above all in terms of sex education -- with investigation and study. My job was my only source of funding. I did not have a fellowship or assistance of any kind in developing my thesis. My only support came from my girlfriend, thanks to whom I was able to share in the unforgettable experience of a year and a half in Guatemala, where I did some fieldwork at a youth court. While investigating the subject of at-risk minors who had allegedly suffered sexual abuse, as well as accusations regarding minors who had themselves committed some type of offense against sexual liberty, my focus was providing professional intervention subsequent to these acts. This fieldwork was included in my doctoral thesis in an attempt to translate the day-to-day, concrete reality of what I had seen into a larger abuse discourse suitable to the era we were living through.

I was trying to look at how a social framework would manifest itself in terms of judicial reality and professional practice. Although the principal conclusions I was able to draw from the aforementioned fieldwork have been included in this text, I have decided to eliminate the major portion of the references to the cases I was able to investigate in Guatemala, as well as any discussions and professional actions taken regarding them. I have done this first of all in order to respect the privacy of the participants in my study - and their work -- vis-à-vis the public at-large; and secondly, in order to reduce significantly the length of the text, which originally exceeded five hundred pages, thereby making it more accessible. Nevertheless, references to Guatemala deemed useful or essential are included; but this is not a book about abuse in Guatemala. It is, rather, a book about the modern discourse over sexual dangerousness as it relates to the abuse of minors; the fact that this happened to take place in [8] Guatemala is neither here nor there, except inasmuch as it may simply suggest certain things. What is

important is that my contributions lead readers to critically re-examine what they have been saying and doing in this field.

In fact, if I had, to briefly summarize the central idea of this work, I would be inclined to point out two things. I would say firstly that it is my intention to point out to the Spanish reader, above all professionals and researchers, that a good portion of what has been said, written, proclaimed, or published in our country regarding the sexual abuse of minors is based on a theoretical model -- and an ideology -- that really originated in large part in the United States, and which emerged at a very specific historical and social moment that is not our own, and which is of no use to us. To put it into cultural context, which I will describe in this book, what was established was what we might call the *modern abuse discourse*, which imposes upon us a very particular way of interpreting, understanding, and responding when confronted with these types of situations; a model for action that we neither have reason for adopting nor should adopt. In fact I believe that we do not have to do so.

At the same time, we attempt to begin to understand this modern danger by placing it in historical perspective, in spite of the fact that we are still immersed in it. In fact, and therefore I will defend it in this work, the discourse over the sexual abuse of minors does not take place in a vacuum. Rather, we should try to expand our scope to encompass other dimensions of the phenomenon. A complex reality in keeping with the modernity in which we find ourselves, where issues such as the problem of the mistreatment of women, sexual aggression, harassment, prostitution, pornography, pedophilia on the internet and in the church, sex tourism, and many others also arise. One attempts, in short, a modern problematization of the sexual universe. There the subject of minors has occupied and still occupies a privileged position in struggles that are frequently more ideological than those over other matters.

My intention with this work is simply to provoke critical reflection -- which at times may be disquieting -- regarding how we see this problem, and how we respond to it. It is clear that the subject of erotic encounters involving minors and adults -- or other minors -- is complex and delicate. But this is precisely what needs to be brought up -- and what perhaps I shall attempt to address -- in this text. It is not a question of black and white, but of shades of gray, where variation is the only norm. For this reason, there is little use for dogmatic discourses which, under the banner of protecting the weak, end up putting society on the defensive.

It could be that when historians recall this period of our history, they will designate as its defining characteristic this social panic over sexual abuse, or if you like, the threats presumably plaguing children and -- along with them as always -- women. Threats frequently accompanied by the adjective, "sexual." I personally hope that it is a matter of a transitory phenomenon that will have burned itself out, not because we will have done away with erotic encounters between children and adults, or because we will have done away with all forms of aggression, be they sexual or not, but rather because we will have learned to place them within another framework, to interpret them in a different manner, and [9] to face them in ways that are calmer and more reasonable. Erotic encounters involving children always have existed and will continue to exist. Some of them will be abusive and violent; others, hopefully the majority, will not. No one is saying that they are desirable. But the fact that they should not happen does not mean that they

have to assume the degree of horror ascribed to them. Their undesirability does not mean that we must combat them in the ways that have been mapped out for us.

The majority of the experiences included by researchers in the category of abuse are not committed by so-called pedophiles; and yet, the latter have been converted into the bogey-men of modernity. Those who *love children* - and who very rarely attack them -- undoubtedly lead a complicated existence; especially those who are attracted to prepubertal children, since society is not likely to allow them to live out these experiences in relative liberty and tranquility. We have a lot to learn -- as do they -- about how to permit them to live out and express those desires through channels that are more acceptable, and that cause fewer problems for both minors and society.

But of course, we will not get to where we need to be by continuing along the path we have been on up until now, the path of fear and sexual dangerousness. Limiting ourselves to the logic of persecution, of the repression and punishment of adults, and of the victimization, salvation, and cure of minors is a road that leads nowhere. This is an obsolete discourse, or at least, that is how I see it. A discourse which, in my opinion, could end up blowing up in our faces because it produces nothing but pessimism, fear, and mistrust among its participants.

Huesca, 17 June, 2004

[10]

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all of the people who, directly or indirectly, have worked with me and supported me in developing this investigation. Firstly, as is only logical, I am grateful for the enthusiastic participation of all of the professionals from the Guatemalan court and other institutions where my fieldwork was carried out. And a very special thanks to the presiding judge, who opened the doors of that institution to me and allowed me to stick my -at times--impertinent nose into its day-to-day work. Thanks to everyone for their kindness, interest in my work, and selfless collaboration. Because the list would be very long, and in order to protect their anonymity, I shall not list the names of all of those who assisted me in Guatemala. In any event this thesis belongs, for good or ill, to all of them.

Secondly, a thank you to the professors at the University of Zaragoza, who listened to my doubts and provided some direction for my inquiries. A special thanks to Gaspar Mairal and José Angel Bergua; and thanks also to Raquel, my department advisor, with whom I was able to share some of the miseries and joys that I imagine are inevitable in the development of any doctoral thesis. Thanks also to Professor Teresa Picontó for her cheerful support both prior to and following the completion of my thesis, as well as for her enriching presence when it came time to defend it.

My most sincere thanks to my thesis committee. To Professor Gloria Medrano for her spirited and conscientious supervision of all of my work, who knew how to critique it in that constructive and optimistic spirit which is so characteristic of her. To Professor Amezúa for his professionalism and his constant invitation to study human sexuality, helping me to find a new

and enriched perspective, and for the inexhaustible ability to suggest and surprise that has made him a great teacher. Much of what is here is also his.

I am also grateful to Marien and the other professionals at the Huesca Pedagogical Library for their professionalism and dexterity in placing documents demanded of them at my disposal.

Lastly, thanks to my parents, sisters, and friends. Thanks for listening and for your inexhaustible emotional, intellectual, and occasionally financial contributions to this study.

Finally, a very special thank you to my partner, María Luisa. Thanks because without you, this work would not have been possible.; thanks for being my own personal fellow scholar, and for converting yourself into the solid depository of my constant illusions and disillusiones over the entire course of this work. Ah!, and to our future daughter, Jimena, who has not yet arrived but is due anytime, and who has also, for several months now, occupied a place in my reflections on childhood, sexuality, and danger.

[11]

THE CRIMINALIZATION OF SEX

Some Preliminary Words Along the Lines of a Prologue

1

This monograph is part of the doctoral thesis that the author just recently defended at the University of Zaragoza. I accompanied Agustín Malón through the process of its development, as co-director, along with Professor Gloria Medrano; and also, as is obvious, in his defense of it, which I have excellent memories of. The members of the committee made approving observations as well as rightly critical comments. This is evidence that they read everything very carefully. In the end it was adjudged *magna cum laude*.

To me, now from a certain distance, this work is a book of great significance. Firstly because of the author's pluck and courage, which is firmly rooted in the work's meticulous and conscientious methodology. Secondly because of its originality and approach. It is the first study to step into the breach with a critical view of what is designated sexual abuse as well as the financial motives associated with it, facilitated or supported by the general discourse imposed, and which, therefore, we have been in need of.

2

Already being immersed in the subject of sexual abuse, it is impossible not to think about that phenomenon of which the latter is only one small part. It is a question of the criminalization of sex -- or of its intention -- on the part of a sector of a society in which, as far as the United States is concerned, this process takes place under a very specific name: Puritanism, and in addition, that of the right-wing or extreme right-wing politics joined, among other movements, by a large share of feminism.

The laziness and languor that have characterized the study and the consideration of sex have permitted a reactive movement like this to propagate itself to the point of reaching the volume it has today, without any kind of critical debate about it.

If at the beginning of this century we had set out to design the poorest possible context for individual sexual development, it is difficult to see how we could have made things any worse. We are all more or less familiar with interpersonal conflict. But it turns out to be difficult to imagine that we would come to be ruled by its manipulation, elevated to the status of a theory. So long as one does not venture into this rugged terrain, what is hidden within it generally remains unseen. .

[12] Neither could we have imagined that sex would end up being synonymous with violence and aggression. For this is what has been laid out and put into circulation with the criminalization of sex, one of whose devices is that of sexual abuse.

3

Those who approach these acts for the first time find them to be quite moving. But this work deals not with the acts themselves, but rather their recounting and analysis. And, above all, it undertakes a critical analysis of the conceptualizations that researchers and professionals typically have of them. The purpose of this work is not to stir our emotions, but rather to offer us materials and mechanisms for action.

Professionals in the area of sexology need these instruments in order to do our work. And these principles, the most basic ones, are the concepts with which we approach these acts. We would have thought that we had made some headway with regard to sex, given that some years ago we would have spoken of the reign of taboo or of sin. But today, lo and behold, we are becoming saturated with crimes and offenses. And many to follow, such as they are.

This work deals with the perplexities posed by this and other avatars in productive, rich, and thought-provoking ways. I have only one wish: that it be of use. And that there were more like it.

E. Amezúa

Chapter I: The Sociological Imagination

Abuse Research

In my first readings regarding the phenomenon of child sexual abuse, I encountered a phrase from one of the most recognized researchers into the matter, David Finkelhor, to which I shall make frequent reference throughout this book. The aforementioned author, participating in a congress on child maltreatment, stated that "*research into sexual abuse is still in its infancy*" (Finkelhor, 1993, p. 215). That phrase, in its simplicity, immediately peaked my interest, perhaps because it would acknowledge the possibility of bringing new understandings into the area which I was establishing for myself as an object of study. I would continue with my investigation, driven in part by the idea that we still have a great deal to learn about the sexual abuse of minors; but curiously, what had originally been the spur to my investigative efforts would end up transforming itself into a question central to my work, which would have to be at least partially addressed in order to proceed: What is there really left for us to learn about child sexual abuse?

No matter how much one might read, the repeated impression one gets is that we already know everything, that the conclusions have been there, systematic and irrefutable. The contributions of ever more abundant researchers and professionals who have been rushing out to write about the matter would seem to be more in the nature of immutable truths than theoretical inquiries. In fact, doubts have been conspicuous by their absence, and if any should arise from time to time, they would be dealt with more as secondary aspects of the phenomenon than its central ones. The reality of sexual abuse has, therefore, showing itself to be clear and transparent; a simple one, both hard and terrible but always evident, well-known. The steps were elemental; the line of work, concrete. I was not encountering any doubts, and I was asking myself what I would be able to contribute to its study if there wasn't anything left to discuss, if there weren't

any remaining dilemmas to rethink or gaps to be filled in. We already know what abuse is and how to act when faced with it; we also more or less know why it occurs and what consequences it has; we know its extent and its statistical description down to the smallest detail. In that case, what's left for me? I was not be able to avoid the impression, perhaps erroneous, that there wasn't much left to establish; only to continue on this same course and, at most, summarize how to go about it.

If, as Durkheim would say, "It is science, not religion, that has taught men that things are complex and difficult to understand" (1992, p. 25), my sense would be that what we have before us are priests, not scientists. And, continuing with Durkheim, this would coincide with his notion that:

As far as social facts are concerned, we still have the modality of primitives. And nevertheless, if, in matters of sociology, so many present-day persons are still stuck in this feeble way of thinking, it is not because the life of societies seems obscure and mysterious to them; on the contrary, if they are so easily satisfied with these explanations, if they persist in these illusions which experience is incessantly contradicting, it is because social facts seem, to them, to be the clearest thing in the world; it is because they do not perceive their actual obscurity. (ibid, p. 25)

There would then arise, in repeated form, the complex relationship between the scientific and the social, between research and professional practice. Raymon Aron, in his prologue to Weber's (1997) book *The Politician and the Scientist*, develops an interesting analysis of this relationship in terms of the scientists and politicians involved, in the broadest sense of the word, warning of the risk that science takes in letting itself fall into the snares and interests of the state.

To Aron, science has the intrinsic capacity to break with the social *mythologies* by going inside social objects and disentangling their inherent complexity; just as Durkheim had asserted.

If we aren't careful —Aron tells us in his prologue to Weber— the concepts of science will be converted into characters from mythology, confounding our schemes of reality, neglecting the multiple meanings of complex phenomena that are designed terms like capitalism and socialism, and quickly substituting one for another. We are not, then, presently confronted with men and institutions, or with the imminent significance of their conduct or the structure of those things, but with a mysterious force that has kept watch over the meaning we have ascribed to the world but which has lost contact with the facts. (Aron, in Weber, 1997, p. 32)

In this sense, it is useful to divide the proposals that child sexual abuse researchers have made regarding their current work from those relating to future research. The same author with whom I initiated this section, David Finkelhor, devoted one of his most notable works on child sexual abuse to expounding on a proposal as to precisely how social science ought to approach this problem. In the preface to the book, entitled *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research* (1984), he explains how that work attended to theoretical requirements and research in this field. The fact was, according to him, that at the time this was written, there was a perceptible gap in these areas, with the lion's share of works focusing on other aspects, such as the treatment or experiences of the survivors.

I believe that Finkelhor is correct. There is a plethora of abuse research into the problem of one's victimization and the other's pursuit and punishment. It is essentially cross-sectional forensically and therapeutically oriented research. It is possible that this is due to the fact that sexual abuse, as its very name would indicate, leads directly to a kind of harm which, as we shall

see, is seen as inevitable. It is an *evil* associated with the sexual by definition, which could not have been so except in a culture like ours. It is an obvious fact: the problem of *child sexual abuse* has emerged—within modernity's uneasiness—with astonishing contentiousness in the space of little more than two decades. Discourses relating to the phenomenon have multiplied, generally in an ongoing tone of denunciation and alarm. Moreover the social implications are of such gravity, that there are, I believe, few other times when such a concept of evil would have been used by social scientists to explain a phenomenon of such broad dimensions, perhaps with the exception of masturbation into the 18th and 19th centuries (Malón, 2001).

In the face of this deficit of sociological insights, which evidently affects how child sexual abuse is viewed, and which also was denounced by Plummer (1981) in what he refers to as the proximate subject of pedophilia, Finkelhor offers us other approaches. His objective, he says, was to present and suggest answers to some new questions, such as the following: How is it possible that there could be so much abuse, given the intense social taboo regarding it? Why do these acts seem so horrendous to us? Why do some children suffer it, whereas others do not? These, Finkelhor tells us, would be applied within a theoretical framework which seeks to approach the problem more from a sociological point of view than the customary psychological one. Secondly, referring to the field of inquiry, he suggests, especially, the need to carry out studies of a sociological nature, focused on the gathering of data, systematic observation, and statistical analysis that answer questions such as: What are the short- and long-term consequences of abuse? Or, what groups of children are at greater risk? He proposed these last two questions as fundamental, and we would do well to ask ourselves: What are the premises and intentions that correspond to all of these questions, so prioritized?

Finkelhor dedicated an entire chapter to reflecting upon abuse as a *social problem*. A chapter in which he presented questions which turned out to be of interest to me, such as why the surge in social uneasiness over abuse and the consequent increase in accusations might have occurred, the question of whether we are dealing with a new problem or one that already existed but was not condemned, or how past cultural transformations in matters of sexuality might have influenced the genesis of the aforementioned phenomenon. Unfortunately, though he had already previously explained that this was going to be the general tone of the book, he did this in a very superficial way, and did not go into that which is of most interest to me.

I am referring to the consideration of this same phenomenon, *child sexual abuse*, as an object of sociological reflection, in a way that will allow us to respond in greater depth to the questions that keep cropping up as we approach it: Why is the sexual abuse of minors now a social problem? How and from where has this occurred? Why in such a dramatic way, and why at this point in history? What type of social problem do we really have here? What values, anxieties, and beliefs are in play? How has this unfolded socially? Where has it ended up, and within what frameworks and in what way has this occurred? In the final analysis we must ask ourselves what is *child sexual abuse*? What are we talking about when we talk about abuse, and how do we talk about it?

In this book, I want to present a proposal for an approach which favors a comprehensive, distinct, and fresh perspective on the phenomenon of child sexual abuse and the way in which it has been configured and dealt with by modern western societies. It is my intention to defend the need for a different sociological approach to this issue, going beyond the vast majority of explanations provided and studies done up to this point, which give the impression of responding more to political and professional exigencies—all of them very respectable and perhaps

necessary— than to theoretical questions of a different order. No matter how much they rely on large statistical studies and make reference to supposed social elements of the problem, I believe that in their approaches researchers have confined themselves by those very same things, for reasons which we will discuss. Therefore, it is no wonder that one observes a monotonous repetition of ideas and discourses in research, articles, and books about the matter.

To think that the only truly interesting social problem boils down to an adult who abuses a girl or a boy, and that our most pressing preoccupation as researchers has to be repudiating and abolishing these acts, means making the exigencies of the *politician* one's own, adopting his same pragmatic priorities and neglecting the real work of the *theoretician*. I believe, then, that it is possible to argue that, in research, with few exceptions, priority has been given to understanding child sexual abuse as an individual problem that needs to be investigated in order to be combated, on the basis of certain questionable and insufficiently grounded premises. I, for my part, shall propose the necessity of seeing them as a new social reality that we would do well to become acquainted with, precisely in order to understand our own society.

The point of departure of the present work will be to defend the idea that truly understanding the problem of child sexual abuse as a social issue requires going beyond abuse as aggression, crime, or deviance in order to approach the study of everything that surrounds the phenomenon, before and after it, including of course scientific knowledge generated with respect to it. As Plummer (1981) noted, it is necessary for scientists to dispassionately dedicate themselves to listening to the discourses, to the stories of children, adults, and groups, and to coherently place those accounts into the broadest context of history and social structure. Saving victims and condemning aggressors may be very urgent to some, but I ask whether that is the

sole purpose that should guide our research efforts. For my part I shall not proceed on this basis, no matter how much that may leave me open to criticism.

I want to stress that it is not my intention to reject any type of research or perspective, because I firmly believe that all of them have something to contribute —though I also believe that, as of this point at least, some have more than others. But it is, in fact, my intention to work towards a course which seeks to comprehend "child sexual abuse" as a cultural reality to be understood, and not as a social problem to be solved, so that we can begin to sketch out the contours of this subject just as we perceive them in our investigation. By way of negation, in this study child sexual abuse is not simply —as I have already suggested— an experience, a crime, a problem, or an aggression; it may be some or all of these and much more. That complex phenomenon, which we have provisionally come to call "child sexual abuse," will be understood as a constellation of discourses, beliefs, and actions which form an active part of the social mechanisms established to regulate society and hence its individuals. In fact, I am going to suggest that it might be more useful for us to see it as a danger that may need to be prevented. Or better yet, as a new moral code from which to fashion both of these things.

Sexual Abuse as Social Discourse

Every culture has its own risks and problems. ... In order to understand bodily defilement, we should compare society's unrecognized dangers with known corporeal themes, in order to try to discover what form they take (Douglas, 1991. p. 141).

A mother, facing the klieg lights of a string of Mexican television cameras, recommends to all mothers that they remain on the alert and protect their daughters from possible "sexual" approaches by their fathers, stepfathers, or other male family members; it may seem unbelievable, she says, but it happened to her and it is necessary to avoid it; for it is only through

attentiveness and a perceptive eye that prevention is possible. Educational and protection authorities, through trained professionals and investigators, establish educational programs for boys and girls in order to teach them to protect themselves from sexual abuse that might well be committed by strangers, or, more typically, by those nearer to them. A prosecutor of crimes against minors from a large Spanish city orders the seizure of suspect photos of a minor female from the show window of a photography store and instructs her parents, who had commissioned said photos and allowed them to be displayed in the establishment, perhaps without meaning to do anything wrong, about the risks to the minor that these types of activities entail; their daughter's body is sacred, and they have to protect it.

A social worker, attached to the juvenile court of a city in Central America, advises a grandmother who is looking after her granddaughter —the girl's mother is a prostitute and was not allowed to keep her— that the girl not be seen in suggestive clothing and that there is a risk that her step-grandfather, suspected of having committed abuse in the past, intends to sexually abuse her; the girl is six years old. Following the allegation of a lewd act having been committed by one minor upon another at a youth center, that same Court becomes uneasy and questions those responsible for the center about the programs and mechanisms that that institution has put in place to prevent this sort of aggression; a court psychologist is quickly dispatched to give a talk to the center's staff about how to comport themselves in front of the children and youth in order to prevent any possible abuse. That same psychologist explains, during an appointment with a grandmother worried about her granddaughter, the dangers that lurk behind the suspicious figure of a stepfather.

Explaining the existence of these activities as reflecting the logical responses of society and its institutions to the problem of child sexual abuse, with the basic and laudable objective of

protecting actual or potential victims of these acts might appear reasonable; nevertheless in my opinion everything is not as reasonable as it would seem, nor does it presuppose a minimally valid explanation of the phenomenon. It is possible that on the level of public discourse or individual rationalizations this would be the reason put forth; as Douglas says, "The attribution of danger is a way of placing a subject beyond all discussion" (1991, p. 40). Nevertheless the *sociological imagination* (Wright Mills, 1993) requires us to go further, in order to try to bring about a better understanding of that aim. What the five examples given here—all of them real—have in common is that they are a question of actions oriented towards the establishment and prevention of a certain risk and danger. They would be something in the nature of alarm calls, at the same time including practical instructions or "avoidances" —to use the Freudian term (Freud, 1912/1962) — employed to conjure up such dangers. But these actions go further than that claim, containing within them much more important meanings, since in a way they are but actions employed in order to create and re-create a social world through the emphasis of certain risks and the implementing of certain practices — but not others — employed in order to prevent them.

Even more than it is a problem, "child sexual abuse" is a discourse, or part of a new universalized discourse, of "abuse." A modern social discourse, and therefore a moral one, which is emerging and implanting itself into all of society, into its institutions and individuals, relying moreover on a language of its own, on legal codes, a structure, an internal logic and in short on an all-encompassing perception which acts as a mental regime within which to interpret reality. The world, or a significant portion of it—that of relations between the sexes—is interpreted in terms of abuse. It is claimed that we do not have any other terms at our disposal, any other alternative. The new moral language of "abuse" has come to replace old terms like sin or honor.

Before, we told ourselves, everything was sin; today everything is abuse. Moreover it is, as we shall see, a broad discourse, elastic, within which there can be room for diverse realities, desires, experiences, and objectives. Some adapt better; for others, which will have to be conveniently concealed, it is more difficult. And it is a question, ultimately, of a discourse of danger, a language in which danger, latent and dispersed throughout all parties, is employed anew as a system of social control, regulation, and power. This is precisely, I believe, the perspective which best enables us to contribute to its study, and it is the analysis of social reality that will give us the framework within which to do it.

I wish to approach and talk about child sexual abuse as a discourse characteristic of our society. And I wish to talk about it in terms of the images of *moral contamination* that it contains, focusing not only on its particular criminal implications, but also on its connection to our society's moral order. And I want to do it in this manner because I am reasonably well-acquainted with the hypothesis which says that the anxious way in which the phenomenon of the *sexual dangers* menacing childhood has been conceived —loaded with intense emotions, dramatic dimensions, and disastrous personal and collective consequences— corresponds more to ideological and moral controversies than to rational and reasonable practices. So-called *child sexual abuse*, referring to practically any "sexual" interaction involving a minor, especially when it is with an adult, is the central focus of disorder threatening the very foundations of our culture. Its discovery and the response which it has received would not appear to be comprehensible simply in terms of a proportional response to a crime. Its accentuation in recent decades should not be explained simply in terms of a rise in the social and professional awareness of a real problem, although some of this is necessary. What I seek is to justify the necessity —and I hope the utility— of approaching its study without even the slightest trace of surprise or astonishment

at the phenomenon's magnitude and form. I will try to demonstrate the usefulness of analyzing the multi-faceted phenomenon of *child sexual abuse* as a socially-constructed object which forms a part of the whole social order, and at the same time constitutes it. For we are within a territory that may be delineated by the convergence of three concepts which the West has bound together tightly for many years now: *childhood, sexuality, and danger*.

It is my intention to better understand the position which all of that emerging discourse about the dangers associated with the union between sexuality and childhood occupies in our modern Western societies. In his book *The Sociological Imagination*, Wright Mills would say that "Social science deals with problems of biography, or history, and of their intersections within social structures...those three things —biography, history, and society— are the coordinate points of, the proper study of man" (Wright Mills, 1993, p. 157). I believe that that task is, in large part, yet to be done as far as the social problem of *child sexual abuse* is concerned.

Reading Guide and Final Observations

The remainder of this work is composed of four parts, well-differentiated into the same number of chapters, as well as a final epilogue.

Taking selected readings as my point of departure, in Chapter II I undertake a detailed analysis of the social context in which the modern danger of sexual abuse arose in the United States of the 1970s and 1980s. In the aforementioned process, privileged positions were occupied by certain feminist discourses that proclaimed the notion of masculine desire as a source of danger, a right-wing moral politics imbued with fanatic —and satanic— tinges, backed by a broad social base in crisis due to recent transformations in areas like sexual morality, new political strategies in the area of the protection of minors and, finally, social panics which stirred up a general sense of horror and menace surrounding sexuality.

In Chapter III, I analyze and question what, in my opinion, are the three traits characteristic of how this modern dread of the sexual abuse of minors is defined. These traits are its presentation as an indisputable truth whose questioning is supposedly anathema; the terrible and unprecedented extent to which the existence of the problem has been highlighted; and, finally, the traumatic gravity characterized as inevitably inherent in these experiences.

In Chapter IV, I critically review the increasingly combat oriented language that dominates the field. So-called *zero tolerance* for abuse appears to be a premise undiscussed by anyone but which, in my opinion, corresponds especially to ideological strategies whose negative consequences will not take long to make themselves evident. In this chapter I question the logic of this sweeping battle, some of its possible effects on professional practice, and the role granted to the justice system and penal codes in solving this problem.

In a penultimate section I return to the origin of the work, expounding on my cultural interpretation of the way in which the subject of abused minors has become ever more present, thereby transforming itself into that generalized danger which is so well-suited to our epoch. I will try to look at how children's bodies and sexuality serve to articulate definite visions of society and its members, imposing social perspectives and sometimes producing uncontrollable consequences.

Finally, in an epilogue, I present some fundamental questions regarding the effect that this entire discourse about sexual trauma and dangerousness could end up having on the configuration of sexuality in modernity and on our way of understanding and confronting the moral conflicts and dilemmas that we experience.

One final consideration: It is possible that to some, it will appear that this book lacks the necessary sensitivity towards the suffering of victims, and even that this suffering is questioned,

or at least relegated to secondary status. Certainly my criticism is oriented in good measure towards the excesses that have been able to bring about an exaggerated victimistic mindset that has been promoted in the area of the sexual abuse of minors. I therefore shall attempt to demonstrate that this is a product of the ideological and symbolic use that has been made of this issue and the dramatic vision of it which has been disseminated, without taking account of variations, or shades of gray. It is equally certain that the focus of my work is not sexual abuse as a problem that requires denouncing and combating. We already have at our disposal an ample literature along these lines which has dedicated itself to that, and which in good measure is criticized in the present work. In fact, one of the consequences of my proposal is, I believe, to suggest that it would be interesting to investigate the topic via avenues other than the development of intervention programs and guidelines.

Nevertheless—and I shall not cease to feel obliged to explain myself, given the tone that the public debate on this matter has acquired—all of this does not mean that as a researcher I am unmoved by the suffering that lay behind many of these experiences, which had already become apparent to me through the reading of books, in conversations with professionals, and in reviewing the documents that I prepared during the fieldwork undertaken for my doctoral thesis.

Without forgetting or denying this suffering, what I am perhaps questioning here is in what form, through what strategies, and at the cost of which values, are we going to bring about the desired social transformation in order to avoid this pain. And for that matter, I am particularly interested in critiquing and questioning the way in which the *sexual* has been understood at the time that certain more serious experiences, as well as others which I dare say pose little risk of contradicting the principles of the modern abuse discourse, are interpreted. As a researcher I have acknowledged that my point of departure for this book was clear: to not automatically believe in

the horror of abuse which is reflected in what has been said and written about it in specialized books, manuals given out, pamphlets, the media, novels, etc. Neither do I share the view that fear and over-dramatizing are useful either in transforming a society or in protecting its individuals, be they children or adults.

[23]

CHAPTER II: SEXUALITY, VICTIMS, AND DANGER**Introduction**

Why this fear? I shall begin with a story, a short one, but with the aggravating factor of being true. From the 13th through the 18th centuries, Europe experienced a similar menace: that of witches. Thousands of them were burned alive and died under torture. Also during that time special tribunals and police were created, and minutely-detailed catalogs were developed that would allow witches to be identified by their visible marks or stigmata. Today it frightens us to think that such madness could cost so many lives and so much suffering, and we also know that onto witches were projected the various frustrations of the rural societies of those centuries. As a matter of fact, when Caro Baroja was confronted with the phenomenon he did not ask himself what the witches were, what kind of madness would have seized them, or how effective their spells were. On the contrary, the only way of confronting that subject was "to examine the consciences of those who were adjudged to be the witches' victims, not those of the witches themselves, and it is a problem of societies dominated by a particular fear." The witches' power derived from the fact that there were those who believed in them. That is why his book is entitled *Witches and Their World*, for as far as the subject of witches is concerned (as is also the case for "drugs"), the important thing is not what happens, but what is believed to happen, or, to put it in terms of a phrase coined by sociology, when people define situations as real they are real in their consequences, even though so defining them is senseless. (Lamo de Espinosa, 1993: 93)

Following these words, which form part of his analysis of the phenomenon of drugs as an example of so-called "victimless crimes," Lamo de Espinosa hastens to add that the Achilles heel of the majority of investigations of drugs has consisted precisely of the fact that they have been preoccupied with studying the "drug addict" and his personality along with the effects of the drugs, forgetting the fact that that is limiting the study of a social reality by obviating an analysis of the way in which society has precisely configured that world. I cannot resist quoting him once again.

It is also necessary to analyze the society which generates the "drug" stereotype, which applies this stereotype to some and not to others, thus believing in a notion of menace and which, finally, tried to contend with it by defining it as a moral problem, as a legal question, or as a sickness. Because "drugs" – always in quotation marks – are a collective fear which have effects, on part real, and in part – in large part – imaginary (ibid).

Certainly the problem of drugs is not of the same order as that of the sexual abuse of minors, and moreover it may be that said that in and of themselves, neither one nor the other constitute the same social phenomenon as that of witches, as is also true. Witch-panic would appear to stem almost entirely from the fruitful confluence of, among other things, an overheated rural imagination and the interests of certain political and religious groups, including particular individuals. (Cohn, 1980; Delumeau, 2002) Nevertheless, we have to concur with Lamo de

Espinosa that the two phenomena -- drugs and witches -- do have a lot in common. The question is whether "child sexual abuse," which now occupies our interest and without seeking to define it, is also susceptible to a similar analysis.

Few students of social matters now would deny the importance of investigating -- as the present author would suggest -- not so much -- or not exclusively - phenomena in and of themselves, as things or realities in a social vacuum, [24] but rather, the meanings which people attribute to those realities and the forms they take among people's beliefs and the popular imagination. In a certain way this principle forms part of any theoretical premise regarding research work, though this is often overlooked. My sense is that when this occurs it is often due to the fact that the aim of the research in question is eminently practical as opposed to theoretical, looking for concrete solutions to concrete problems. Problems which, in turn, have been given priority by the researcher, whose presuppositions, prejudices, and presumptions have not been subjected to any critical analysis. For example, I fear that this may have occurred in the majority of research on drugs, or at least the works which have been recognized and appropriated by the prevailing discourse regarding them.

In the case of research into child sexual abuse I would hasten to talk about something very similar. But besides the issue of having to dedicate oneself exclusively to studying the social "thing," without paying scarcely any attention to what society says that "thing" is and what it means, what is more interesting is that even that may have been done in an irregular manner. And this is so precisely because what is peculiar about the matter which occupies us, that of abuse, is that in large measure it has been precisely those persons who have studied it who have also constructed it -- in the sense of defining, delimiting, configuring, ascribing meaning to, symbolizing, and exhibiting it -- making it possible for those describing the object to simultaneously be the ones who have "created" it. This paradox could, theoretically, generate a false representation of the social object, since this serves precisely the interests of those who have produced it. The relationship between the observer and that which is being observed is so intense that it could continually corrupt their discourses, calling their validity into question. .

This means that we must pay particular attention to what has been and is being said about the problem of child sexual abuse, with respect to the discourses which have taken shape. In fact this phenomenon, which in a certain way came to be during and is characteristic of the last decades of the 20th century, is in large part as much a professional product as an ideological one. What I mean by that is that the works which began to take account of it and its characteristics would appear to be so inextricably tied to the particular interests of professional groups, as occurred with child maltreatment (Pfohl, 1977), or so in tune with the ideological watchwords of others, ie., the new surge in feminism, that it is quite possible that many of them will neglect to actually study what is behind that social reality and apply themselves to telling us what should be done about it, especially given that they have such a great interest in it.

In any event the important thing is that from that moment on they were counting on a new *social object*, a new focus of interest that would occupy its assigned place in a broader and more complex fabric of objects; it was a new social problem susceptible to elaboration. through discourse (social, political, scientific, professional). It would be named and renamed, classified, relationalized, localized, and of course studied in the most minute detail; appropriated by

institutions, collectives, and individuals for their public and private use. Intelligently integrated into discourse, programs, [25] debates, news, problems, and solutions. Adapted to social, political, or scientific reasoning. Reality disseminated through the infinite channels of the social, through fields of battle, through personal biographies. A phenomenon. to control, beings to protect, demons to chastise. That "social thing" was thus ripening, many times adopting mutable forms, based on the contexts and perspectives of their valuation. Now, it was not something formless and simply intuited; that which perhaps had been an amalgam of diverse conduct and isolated experiences congealed into a new category, into a new social danger that it was possible and necessary to fight against; a reality with clear, instituted, and reified meanings, firmly constructed. It now seems as if it has always been there, that we have known about it for our entire lives, without it ever leaving our side and, in fact, at this point we don't care by whom, how, or why it was placed there.

Because, in reality, what are we talking about, when we talk about *child sexual abuse*? What do these words tell us? Formerly separate, now joined in a tight relationship; envisioned as always having been bound together, as inseparable woof and weave, one going with another; a catchy tune that has taken up residence in our minds. Well then, I persist in asking, what is that object, really? Was it always there or did someone create it out of whole cloth? An act, they will say, an experience, a behavior, a crime, a problem. Undoubtedly the most widespread idea, responding to the last question, is that it always was there, but until now we would not have noticed it, would not have paid attention to it; for the problem was not with the thing itself, which was there all along, but rather with the observer, who would not see it. It may be that there is something to that. Nevertheless, we believe that a parallel form would have room for a different, more interesting proposition.

There is a lot of talk about homosexuality, or to be more precise, about *the homosexual* as a culturally constructed object over and above his existence as a natural reality. (Vázquez & Moreno, 1997; Plummer, 1991; Foucault, 1995, 1993) In fact the homosexual, as we now understand him, would not be an *a priori* transcendental, a "brute" fact, natural and universal, but rather a historically configured object, made real, temporal, and contingent. There would be no room for the *homosexual* of today in the *aphrodisia* which were problematized in the Grecian esthetic within the framework of an *ars erotica*. That homosexual which today strikes us as so customary, so evident, would only have been able to arise thanks to the practices that made it possible: "That object, the homosexual, is only possible when a whole series of practices (medical, juridical, administrative) convert sex into a decisive criterion for establishing individual identity. It is only able to take form when sex is identified not with a series of more or less discontinuous acts, pure or impure, natural or *against nature*, but rather with a psychological virtuality, omnipresent and more or less hidden within a person, subject to natural deciphering." (Vázquez & Moreno, 1997: 16) The mistake, from this perspective, is in understanding said practices as being subsequent to an object when they are really its origin; in confounding objects, for example *sexuality*, with their causes, with the practices which create them. In the same way, the social order would be not a "discovered" order, but rather one which is "brought into being." (Wolf, 1994; 147)

Now then, would we be able to say something similar with respect to the sexual [26] abuse of minors? Without a doubt. And it shall not simply be a question of arguing how in other

cultures or epochs behaviors which nowadays -- in our own -- are feared, guarded against, prohibited, and punished were permitted, encouraged, or ignored. It would be a question of understanding what that social object really is, what it implies, and to whom; to destroy it in order to re-construct it and thereby grasp its component parts; to historicize it. The analysis will compel us to demonstrate that it is a question of something more than a simple act, a behavior, an offense, or a problem. The problem we are interested in is necessarily the cultural meanings which have surrounded said realities and configured our way of perceiving them. *Child sexual abuse* will come to be seen as a historical fact, a recently created, broad, and complex social object which contains within it much of what we are, what this society is, and what historically has made it that way.

The present investigation was borne out of a personal uneasiness regarding this new danger which has emerged with a vengeance in Western societies in recent decades. It is a danger already familiar from antiquity -- albeit with different configurations -- but which is now a worry and fear of the first order within our societies. The objective of this chapter and of the one which follows -- the two being intimately interrelated -- is to sketch out the contours of the lay of the land, taking into account the forms and dimensions adopted by said phenomenon. In this first one, I shall devote myself to describing the historical context in which the danger of abuse arose -- especially in the United States, from which we inherited it -- and which could make its mark within a complex social fabric with one common denominator: the new perception of sex as danger. In the following chapter, entitled "The Contours of a Danger," I will focus in a more deliberative manner on the problem of child sexual abuse, and the way in which said problem was configured by science in the public discourse.

Defining the Danger: An Example

I have already mentioned that my doctoral thesis would include a portion devoted to fieldwork undertaken between the years of 1999 and 2000 in a Guatemalan youth court [EI], where I analyzed how the "sexual" would emerge in the cases filed and how this subject was handled by professionals. I have not included that portion of my thesis in this book; there are scarcely any references here to said fieldwork. Nevertheless, I will begin to describe an actual case that came up during my time at the court, which will serve to illustrate the emergence of this modern danger within the context of a real life case tied to a more global phenomenon.

The Accusation

During the development of my fieldwork, an interesting case came up [27] of alleged sexual abuse committed by a 13-year-old on a child of six. Both were placed in a center for at-risk youth; the case was eventually closed with the acquittal of the suspect and an order to transfer the victim -- as well as her sister, who had also been placed there -- to a different center, so as to avoid any further problems. Nevertheless that accusation, brought by the victim's father -- who evidently had his own personal reasons for lodging it - provoked a serious confrontation between the center where the children had been placed and some of the professionals at the youth court. This produced a series of cross-accusations between the parties in which, whereas some were criticizing the responsible parties at the center for not adequately safeguarding the minors who had been placed there, for not preventing the abuse, and for essentially tolerating these acts,

others were accused of coming to hasty and baseless conclusions, of having serious bias in their judgments, and of dramatically exaggerating acts which were, in essence, typical among minors, and mostly innocuous. The heart of the conflict lay in the fact that whereas the center defended the innocence of the minor accused of abuse, court experts, especially the psychologist and social worker, concluded that the accusation was truthful and that the minor was guilty. Logically, this implied a public questioning of the center's capabilities as well as its organization. The accusation, which for reasons which will become clear further below was echoed even in some of the local media, led to the juvenile court judge convening a meeting of the parties, which took place four days after the court took note of what had happened. I was permitted to be present at that encounter as an observer -- at no time did I participate -and was introduced as a researcher who was reviewing certain court documents and collaborating with the institution, in a context within which I did not want to be associated with either one party or the other. It is worthwhile to devote a fair amount of space to how that meeting unfolded and what consequences it had.

A Clash of Institutions.

The most interesting thing about that meeting was that it produced a small scale battle within the center itself over opposing views on the problem of sexual abuse between minors. At bottom the issue would seem to be -- although at no point was it ever stated explicitly -- whether the danger of abuse between minors who were under the state's care -- and among those who would have suffered it prior to coming into the system -- should be regarded as a real and important problem requiring intervention given its frequency and gravity, or, as the center's director would initially argue, there would be scarcely any acts of this nature occurring within the institution, and those which might take place were nothing more than "normal" manifestations of the development of interactions between children and youths who live together. To the court experts, as was made clear at the meeting and especially through their private comments to me during those days, those in charge of the center were, unfortunately, concealing an extremely serious abuse problem; the former deplored that stubborn attitude [28] in that it did not accept reality. To the center, by contrast, it would appear that the only serious and really worrisome problem was that the court was exaggerating these things.

The objective of said meeting, as the judge made clear to those present, would be to inform those who ran the center regarding the methods available for preventing acts of this nature. The judge took it for granted, as she asserted at the time and had already expressed to me on one occasion, that a high percentage of minors placed there would have suffered sexual abuse - her figures were oscillating between 60% and 70%, although sometimes one could hear things such as that "all" or "almost all" of those children had suffered sexual abuse; she wanted to know what would be done about it and how it was being dealt with. Likewise, as this act would have revealed, one "obviously" would have known that some cases of sexual abuse would occur within said institution among the minors themselves, and would wish to know how they intended to avoid their continuing occurrence. For their part the center's representatives -- its director, a psychologist, a social worker, and a European volunteer -- disagreed with these opinions and questioned their foundation. At most, they admitted that some minors would have come in with past experiences of abuse, and that only the usual games among children would occur in their social development, which would not be at all serious. Those were the initial positions of the two parties.

The two "contenders" remained in a certain balance of power, with both undoubtedly interested in coming out of that meeting with an amicable consensus that avoided any serious confrontation with their interlocutor. Although the court was displaying its institutional authority and was relying on its indisputable power to impose and demand whatever it wanted to, the center, privately-run by a European NGO, was the best one in the entire region, enjoying an excellent reputation among those who worked at the court as a place where at-risk minors could be sent. [E2] The center was better equipped in material terms, relying, in theory, on competent professionals and excellent facilities, especially compared with those of other centers. As one court professional would explain to me allegorically shortly afterwards, you cannot "chastise the child because then she will cease being of any use to you, or even make things worse." Therefore what occurred in that encounter was nothing more than a search for a consensus, whereby the two parties could be seen to be parting on good terms.

The juvenile court experts had to remain silent regarding many things about which -- as they would explain to me behind closed doors -- they were certain [E3], and the representatives of the center were obliged to yield, in large measure, to the perspectives which the former were attempting to impose on them regarding the problem of sexual abuse. Subtly, thereby altering their initial position, the reality of the problem of sexual abuse within the institution was admitted, and they unveiled a multitude of proposals, some of which -- curiously -- had already been put into effect two weeks prior to the meeting and one week before the abuse now being alleged had even taken place. Their purpose was to prevent the latter from happening again as well as to help the abuse victims who were arriving at the center. The problem would - in the end - have had to be accepted there, where perhaps no one was presenting it as an important issue. The trigger was a suspected case of sexual abuse -- which might be false or misrepresented -- and the result ended up being the accentuation of a danger which was [29] newly joining together sexuality and childhood.

The representatives of the center had to explain the sex education programs that would have been put into effect, the courses of treatment established for minor victims of sexual abuse, and the measures for preventing these acts from continuing to occur between residents of various ages. The court was quite insistent -- and therefore the representatives of the center concurred regarding the need to encourage the smallest of them to speak out about these experiences and provide them with ways to do it. The director himself confirmed that he would personally give a talk to the children along those lines. There was talk of the complicated problem of child masturbation and how it performed a function in that sense. The center presented its sex education activities, whereby all of these topics would be handled with a clearly preventive and/or curative focus. Notice was given that they would have to be more personally engaged so that the smallest children -- the older ones' potential victims -- would no longer be left alone at any time; their continuing vigilance was an indispensable requirement for avoiding the dreaded abuse.

There was talk of boys' and girls' sacrosanct bodies, of teaching minors that no one should touch them, not even their mother, especially on their "parts"; the center was advised to have the "moms" stop by their rooms every night to see whether everything was in its place. There was talk of the need to investigate -- child by child -- who had suffered abuse, in order to

understand the extent of the problem and properly deal with it, thereby avoiding the tragic consequences which, as we know, stem from these experiences. In short, in some instances of sexual abuse among resident minors, priority would need to be given to intervention, and a multiplicity of mechanisms would have to be put in place in order to ward off that new danger which would now undoubtedly appear to be far more terrible. The center's director attempted to minimize the seriousness of the matter, but in the end he had to surrender -- in the face of pressure -- to reality: the danger was there.

Likewise, out of that meeting came the double compromise of the court psychologist coming to the center to give a talk to the caregivers or educators, the so-called "mothers," as well as resident minors, on the problem of sexual abuse. These "mothers" were the ones responsible for the care and education of the boys and girls who were living at the center, and would stay there with them practically all the time. These proposals, for which the center was apparently grateful, were presented as a collaboration between the court and the institution, although it was inevitable that to all of those present it would sound like the supervision or correction of a problem which would have appeared right on the heels of the particular case that we are talking about. Barely twenty days following that encounter I presented myself, along with the psychologist, to the center to give the promised talk to the "mothers"; I was merely an escort, positioning myself way in the back of the classroom where the activity was to take place. I am newly interested in carefully examining what was discussed in that talk and how it attempted to focus on the subject.

[30] *The Discourse.*

I do not recall how the talk was presented to the center's staff on the part of those in charge of it, but the psychologist who gave it characterized it as a mutual collaboration with the juvenile court to assist them in the "difficult task of being a mom." And so it was. The meeting focused on how they were interacting with the children, a subject in which the theme of sexuality and abuse occupied a position that was beyond privileged. The schema was a familiar one: Children are like a blank slate, upon which older persons are going to be writing what that child will later become; absolutely everything that children experience is of crucial importance and all traumatic experiences are going to leave permanent traces. The adult, father or mother, is seen as a role model and the transmitter of moral values, which is complemented by the importance that communication with children takes on.

It would be repeated over and over again that trust was a fundamental factor. We have to be able to inspire trust in the children so, that they will communicate their experiences and problems to us. Even on the subject of sexuality -- or on it especially -- it is necessary to know how to deal with these themes in a natural way. The parts of the body, their names, its sacredness, the ever-present risk of deviation, how we are by nature; all of this speaks to the need to gain the children's trust. It is the job of adults to inspire trust in children so that they will admit things to us, come clean with us, and count on us: "Such-and-such happened to me, "they threatened me," or, most especially, "they abused me"...

The perfect complement to the desired trust of the children is the recommended distrust of older persons. The suspicion and the vigilance continue; hovering over children, observing

every gesture, at every moment, are virtues to be cultivated. Reference is made to the illustrative case of the teacher from whom a student would ask permission to go to the bathroom with suspicious frequency and then linger there for quite a while, later returning to her seat walking very slowly. Finally the teacher pays her the necessary attention and the child ends up confessing the repeated abuse that she was being subjected to by her brother: "My brother rapes me every night and I can't take it anymore," she tells the psychologist. Thanks to that the case is reported and the victim is protected. Thanks to the teacher's observation and preoccupation the abuse is able to be stopped. In any event, one insists, it is not easy to detect since no one will admit to these acts. They, psychologists, are accustomed to deceit and concealment, and have learned to see the reality behind the facade, their gestures, the anomalies; while the mouth lies the body tells the truth. We have to learn to observe where they cannot deceive us.

But moreover, distrust is necessary for prevention, not just detection. Talking about pregnancy, about abortion -- which can be fatal, is in the case where the girl died because she did not come clean with the mother, and the latter was weeping because she had not gained her trust -- about rapists lurking behind every corner, about alcohol, about homosexuality, about incest, or about masturbation. Prevention and a watchful eye are always necessary, [31] but especially in those places with so many children, where things of this nature are quite common. The young man who ends up being a rapist is but a failure of the mother who raised him. The metaphor of reaping as ye sow fits this to a tee. And one subject leads to another.

At that point, the talk shifts to adolescent sexuality. The unbridled libido of the male, who needs to discharge his semen; the female's restrained and moderate desire. The ever-present risk of abuse because of the acute, menacing desire within every boy; the requirement that they not satisfy themselves with a lady can lead to homosexuality and to the abuse of other males, who in turn run the risk of becoming homosexuals. From there the proposal to organize minors in homes based on age-group; the complaint from one staff member who comments that this goes against what is normal in that a family will have children of differing ages; and anyhow, this would not be sufficient to render the risk of abuse tolerable. At some centers, she asserts, they put iodine in the food and make them exercise a lot, all of which is directed towards preventing abuse. But even then, sadly, it's a lost cause.

The time came for conclusions and questions. An "uncle" -- a man responsible for a house of adolescent males and who, curiously, not following the model used with the women, is called not "father" but "uncle" -- is questioned as to whether he has seen homosexual conduct among his boys. He asserts that it has not gone to that extreme, but there have been gestures of tenderness and affection between them. The questioner invites him to be attentive and vigilant regarding what might happen. Insisting on continued vigilance, night and day, showing up unannounced in the children's rooms in order to detect suspicious behavior, gaining their trust and enhancing our own distrust. Attentive observation has to be our most sought-after virtue. The body is sacred and this must be instilled, especially in the younger children, who may not be aware that they are being abused. The danger is there in perennial form. Nobody should touch you, nobody should do anything to you. If it's happening, don't hesitate to tell me about it.

Reasons for the Danger.

A persistent question kept coming up as I was working on the development of this investigation; a query which in a certain way hangs over it from beginning to end and to which I have only been able to partially suggest an answer. A question regarding the actions which I have just described and that I witnessed first-hand which, in my opinion, are clearly illustrative. In short, and I am therefore willing to stand by this, what occurred on that occasion was nothing more than what I would dare to define as a reflection, on a small scale, of the process by which a new danger is pointed out, defined and, finally, reinforced. And it is in precisely that direction that my reflections were oriented towards. Signaling questions would more or less come down to the following: For what reasons and in what way was the problem of child sexual abuse successfully defined as a new and pressing social danger, especially starting with the second half of the previous century? What [32] forms did said danger adopt and what social measures did this lead to? Within what social and institutional contexts was it promoted and with what intentions, and what benefits were derived from this?

Placed in comparison, it is clear that in my example it is a question of a prompt result in a particular isolated context, while in the case the anxiety over child sexual abuse we are faced with a historical and social phenomenon of broader and more profound implications. But it is reasonable to suggest that perhaps the two have a lot in common. In neither case is it evidently a question of creating a new problem out of thin air. Instead it consists, as I have indicated, of pointing out with increasing insistence its vast presence, configuring its shape in a way that amplifies its extent and gravity, and finally proposing suggestions for its control on the part of select individuals and institutions. For in this way, we would be able to see the actions related as the construction of a new danger from a discrete act that very well could have been interpreted as an isolated case and without any more importance than that of any other unfortunate incident -- and in this case not even that, since it would not immediately appear to be necessarily "grave" for the victim, though it did to some of the professionals. Nevertheless from the moment that that act occurred and with it coming to light and to public attention *a new danger was defined*, noting its seriousness" its urgency, and its vast extent: sexual abuse between minors' within institutions.

It was subsequent to a concrete accusation that one could then count on certain public occurrences when initiating the first tentative steps towards recognizing the problem and the necessity of intervening with a certain celerity. Following numerous meetings such as the one described, discussions, negotiations, and warnings led to a talk being given, and to additional, predictable things like proposals for better protecting potential victims, such as an exhaustive search for the latter and necessary therapeutic support, better training of professionals, sex education programs specifically focused on and oriented towards the aforementioned aspects, etc

I do not know what actually came of everything that was promised there, since all I have to go on are the many promises themselves, as well as the talk which I was able to be present for. It is possible that none of the predicted results came to fruition, and that everybody quickly forgot what had occurred and what had been said. In any event, what is important at this point is to note how the firm promise on the part of the center -- to show greater sensitivity towards those sorts of acts -- was secured; a stance which could have an influence on similar, subsequent events, though I would not venture to guess in which direction. Sexual abuse among minors themselves was, in the end, defined as a real danger -- gravely present and firmly established -- meriting the dedicated vigilance and intervention of both society and its institutions [E4].

Would some sort of abuse have actually occurred on that occasion? Would that thirteen-year-old have actually *tried to rape* the six-year-old? We do not know this with certainty. Although as I have stated, based on the evidence available its importance and seriousness would have been more than questionable, that is not what matters to us at this point. What abuse is there between minors within institutions? Undoubtedly in the same way that sexual abuse and many other [33] types of maltreatment towards minors exist generally. But what is being discussed here is not the existence or non-existence of the abuse, but rather its recent revelation as terrible social danger, and the form which this has been adopting.

In the example analyzed here, we would then have to ask ourselves what would have been responsible for the judge's -- and especially the juvenile court experts' -- diligence in imposing their perception of the problem on those in charge of the center and subsequently on its staff. From where would have come that peremptory need to point out the problem, confront it, and intervene, acting to prevent it or regulate its consequences; what, in fact, would have been responsible for this posture? Was the mere existence of sexual abuse brought to life and into focus on this occasion by a particular event? Was this due to a sincere interest in improving their child protection work, or to a simple question of public image? Possibly a little of everything, though with many doses of emotion and few of common sense.

The supposed abuse that sparked this whole affair might well have been handled in a different and much more reasonable manner; but the fact that it came out in the media, the interest that institutions like MINUGUA [E5] exhibited following this publicity, one of whose experts paid a visit to the judge in order to get her to take an interest in the case, or the way in which news of this sort could damage the image of that court as an institution responsible for protecting minors were undoubtedly some of the elements which caused things to play out in other ways. The accusing father, with the specific goal of regaining custody of his children, succeeded in creating a certain sense of scandal which may have moved the juvenile court, as well as the center where the events occurred. He knew where to aim, and did so. In the end his approach did not accomplish a whole lot given that, in a way, it ended up working against his children's interests: They were later transferred to a different center, where they had to contend with worse conditions. He did not obtain the custody which he had sought, and the two children were run out of the center where it had all happened, as if they were the only or the principal ones to blame for what had occurred.

A short time later the case ceased to be of any interest. The father continued to petition the court for custody of his children, but got nowhere. The court and the center at issue returned to having more or less cordial relations, perhaps treating the above as an unfortunate event that was best forgotten. Abuse among minors housed in institutions of this type would now be in the minds of professionals who would not tire in pointing out -- publicly at least -- its existence and seriousness. At opportune moments, thus when circumstances required it, the danger would once again be pointed out and perhaps instrumentalized in various forms. It would continue to be noted that it was there, and that it was real, serious, habitual, and nearby.

Final Considerations.

Taking the events which I have just described as a jumping-off point, we might ask ourselves a series of interesting questions regarding the issue of how, why, and through whom that more intense preoccupation with the problem of sexual abuse arose in [34] our modern societies. A focus of uneasiness which, as would occur in the aforementioned Guatemalan institutions, is laid down as a pressing danger which it is necessary to prevent, control, and combat. One part of this analysis should be to take into account the aspect of that danger's justification. In short, in terms of social strategy, the question comes down to whether it is in fact its mere existence that justifies it or explains the way in which said dangers have been defined, as well as the discourses which have been generated from them.

In his study of the fears of the West between the 13th and 17th centuries, Delumeau establishes a difference between two types of dread. In a historical epoch characterized by a significant appearance of fear and the presence of a society more fearful than those which either preceded or followed it, Delumeau distinguishes between what he calls spontaneous fears felt by wide swaths of the population -- which in turn divide into permanent and cyclical ones -- and "reflected fears; that is, those derived from a question regarding the misfortune which is posed by those who direct the collective consciousness" (Delumeau, 2002; 41), making with it special reference to the church and its discourse regarding the devil. Said separation between the two types of fears is useful in answering the question: Who would be fearful of what? While peasants, sailors, or the majority of the population in general might have spontaneous fears such as the sea, wolves, ghosts, or pestilence, the church, with the complicity of certain political elites, imposed a more general fear, which in turn accounted for a variety of ills that saturated the whole society. Thus the church brought about a proliferation of fear towards the Turks, the Jews, heretics, and women. Behind all of them religious authority imposed a singular evil, the evil par excellence: Satan.

In the ensuing events at the above-discussed center for minors as well as the subsequent reaction on the part of the juvenile court where I carried out my research, we see some signs of a phenomenon similar to the one described by Delumeau. A deed is pointed to, and based upon it a danger is imposed, giving form to a problem which to some either did not exist or was not of such-and-such nature, but which thus corresponds to the perspective of others; i.e., the ones who impose it. In the same way that the church -for various reasons which Delumeau explains in detail -- propagated the fear of the devil in his diverse manifestations, modern society has done the same thing with child sexual abuse. And it has done so, if you will, through the mouth of a new religion, a certain psychological science that has even gone so far as to proclaim which is the most relevant source of our ills: sexual trauma in our innocent childhoods.

Various questions would emerge at this phase of the analysis of the phenomenon of child sexual abuse: What kind of fear are we dealing with? Who has been interested in stoking it and who suffers because of it? What is its history and its evolution? Where has it been imposed and where hasn't it? In what way and based on what data has it been knitted together? How has it been presented and what is said to be behind it? What, in the end, are its consequences or concrete effects? In what way does it affect individuals? In the present chapter I shall try to respond to some of these questions, putting together a history of how sex, and later, abuse, came -- for some -- to transform itself anew into the font of all evil. And how, in past centuries, Satan was [35] never far away.

The Modern Resurgence of Sex as Danger

Cohn-Bendit, accused of pedophilia in his youth

OCTAVI MARTÍ – Paris. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Danny the Red of the faded progressive mythology of May, '68, goes about these days haunted by his honesty and his past. In 1975 he wrote about his experiences as an educator at a self-governing collective in Frankfurt. At that time he related how some of the youngsters "would unzip the fly of my pants and tickle me." It was unthinkable to curb the children in order to prohibit the very embodiment of that which was forbidden and, from there, acknowledge that his "ongoing flirtation with the youngsters would continue to adopt the form of eroticism. And the unbelievable thing about it is that the majority of the time I would feel disarmed." In 1975, no one became indignant. The counter-culture fathers who were bringing their offspring to Danny's collective never imagined the red-head had pedophilic propensities that would threaten to throw their sons off kilter. Not one of them, 25 years later, has either denounced it or revealed themselves to have been traumatized by its toleration. But other children of the complex past do not forgive the man who today is a liberal ecologist. Such is the case of Bettina Rohl. The daughter of Ulrike Meinhof, the celebrated militant of the Red Army Faction who killed herself in prison in 1976, had not forgotten her mother's old friends and comrades, who today are people well-integrated into the system. The German Foreign Minister, Joschka, has seen his radical past re-examined by Bettina. And it is Bettina's website that has brought Cohn-Bendit's text back to life. ""Knowing what I know today about the abuse to which some children are subjected makes me ashamed of what I wrote back then. I acted flippantly," says Cohn-Bendit. It is a long way between that – realizing that certain subjects cannot be approached on the basis of slogans – and accusing him of corrupting minors. Those who want to revisit it also wish to eviscerate the liberating dreams of the hippies or of the radical alternatives. It is not a question of accusing just Cohn-Bendit: Marx, Wilhelm Reich, Kandinsky, Shoenberg, Gide, and Nabokov are also guilty. Or, as Bettina Rohl says, "traitors" to what they were. (EL PAIS DIGITAL. Sunday, February 25, 2001).

This press bulletin has been the subject of endless curiosity. I myself recall how this witty and so oft-quoted genteel man of Molière one day discovered that he had been speaking in prose his entire life without knowing it. The surprise, seemingly, would have to have been enormous. The only question is how colossal it would have been to that revolutionary of '68 who stood at the center of that scandal. To sense, after so much time had passed, that his conduct could involve some sort of sexual abuse without him knowing it, and having to wait twenty-five years to discover it, or for it to be discovered, must have been utterly bewildering. I don't know -- perhaps his response to the media was not really heartfelt and was just a matter of a politically correct way out or of humoring the general public, given the pitch that the debate over child sexual abuse has reached. In fact there is less there than meets the eye. What is important about this story is the transformation that it reflects. A cultural mutation in matters of sexuality and childhood very similar to what women experienced following the supposed revolution in Western eroticism of the 1970s.

Perhaps we can extract from all of this more of an account of that social change which relates to sexual morality, a species of counter-reformation that we have some examples of in the United States with the problem of [36] pornography and the phenomenon of child sexual abuse. "Cohn-Bendit," the headline says, "accused of pedophilia in his youth"; what the phrase fails to clarify is if he had already been accused when he was young or whether it was being done now that he was older; i.e., of having been a pedophile at the time. It is necessary to read the rest of the article in order to understand that the second alternative is the correct one.

Nevertheless, we might ask ourselves what would have been happening back then. It is possible that he could not have been accused of such a thing in his youth, or -- which strikes me as quite likely -- that it would not have occurred to many people to accuse him of it. Perhaps he had never come under suspicion, even though those confused games would have taken place out in the open. Nevertheless, any educator nowadays who does what he did, and especially if he does so openly, has a very good chance of being suspected, and later being prosecuted for committing sexual abuse. How to account for this? Or is there nothing to explain? It is simply, some will say -- and it would appear that this is what the story's own protagonist wants to say -- that at that time there we were not conscious of the problem of abuse and would have failed to recognize the sordid experiences to which a great number of children were subjected -- 20% of girls and a somewhat smaller number of boys, according to a majority of the statistics -- and neither would we have taken notice of their dramatic consequences. In fact some authors have compared the problem of sexual abuse with the advances made in the fields of aviation and aeronautics; of aviation's shaky initial attempts to break the sound barrier. [E6] In the case of sexual abuse something similar would have occurred: from the most, terrible ignorance to an understanding of what we now know to be only the tip of a dramatic iceberg.

Because what is of interest to me is finding out how it is that we have now begun to see it and, especially, the way in which we see it as well act in the face of it. To know whether we truly would not have seen it until now or that we see more now than we did before. Or whether what is now abuse would not have been before and, we might add, whether what now is, is perhaps not in fact what was back then. Stated with clarity, these would be the questions: Why have we looked at it as not something we ever would have done? In fact we shall see how we have been told that we were blind. How much of it are we seeing? Where have we been seeing child sexual abuse? What do we see and how do we see it? A drama, a horror, a nightmare made real. What do politicians, scientists, journalists, social movements, or the general public say about it? What consequences do we observe and what actions do we propose? In this vein we could add many other questions which the present investigational work has been presenting with greater or lesser effectiveness and profundity.

Abuse and Sexual Morality; or, Sexuality as Disorder

The sexual abuse industry has developed under the influence of the architects of the sexual counter-reformation, placing itself at its service as an agent of the counter-reformation. It will be the task of future historians to determine the degree to which the sexual counter-reformation has been orchestrated by an antisexual cabal, organized by

the agencies of religion and government, in the law, and by the politicians (Money, 1994: 29)

The West has experienced an epoch in which the transformation of attitudes towards sexuality has been dizzying, and most especially, we should point out, at the level of discourse and the law, given that the two things may well function in very different ways in day-to-day reality. There is absolutely no doubt whatsoever that beginning at around the middle of the 20th century, a cultural transformation occurred that would give a radical twist to the so-called Victorian sexual morality that prevailed throughout the West. Sexual freedom -- liberation from customs and of individuals in this sphere -- would be a sign characteristic of the times. For the so-called sexual revolution would become a fixture in the history of Western sexualities. What is at issue is knowing in what way it might have influenced the aforementioned process relating to the appearance of that new problem of abuse, or what position the latter occupies in the moral history of Western sexuality.

The Sexual Revolution and Rising Abuse. David Finkelhor, who as I have already explained is one of the most prodigious researchers in the sexual abuse field, would acknowledge the importance of this historical transformation in one of his first and most important works on sexual abuse. At that time, some questions were being posed regarding the manner in which these changes in attitudes towards sexuality and sexual behavior might, in a way, have had an effect on the problem of child sexual abuse. For him it was not a question of these changes in contemporary sexual morality *ipso facto* having created the problem of abuse, but rather that they certainly would have contributed to aggravating it. One of the characteristics or changes that occurred with that sexual revolution was, according to Finkelhor, the erosion and weakening of traditional ways of controlling sexuality, leading many people to ask themselves just what is or is not permitted in the area of sexual behavior (Finkelhor, 1984).

The traditional norms which would have existed at that time in the area of sexuality would have been relaxed in such a way that the boundaries between what was proper and what was improper would have become more uncertain. If the prohibitions, the author says, regarding sexual relations prior to and outside of marriage would have practically disappeared, wouldn't some people have had to ask themselves if the prohibitions against sex with children were still in effect? Moreover, pornography and its increasing inroads in the 1970s in the United States might have more and more been facilitating and empowering the resonance of child pornography which -- and he points to some articles -- saw a significant increase in those years. According to him, in some areas, around one-fourth to one-third of the pornographic titles would have alluded to incestuous relations or to sex with minors. Assertions which -- as we shall see further below -- according to some authors would be misplaced because they were turning out to be totally unreal, corresponding only to the child pornography panic that emerged in the late 1970s in the United States.

A second transformation, directly related to the sexual revolution, and which would negatively impact the problem of child sexual abuse, involves changes in expectations regarding sex. The social image that is transmitted about people's sex lives and about what [38] the latter should be -- key criteria from that moment on in the appraisal of an individual's happiness - added to the difficulty that a large portion of individuals have in realizing these desires, would

generate a sense of frustration in people that might lead them in the direction of other, more accessible options. One of these would be children.

Add to that, continuing on with Finkelhor's hypotheses, a third variable associated with the so-called sexual revolution. Changes in the roles and images of women in the area of sexual relations. Women playing a more active and crucial role in their erotic lives, setting aside the unquestioning submission to and acceptance of the directives of their male partners, may have led many men to look for a less demanding partner. Equality in sexual relationships between men and women and the need for the man to adequately "comply" with his partner devolve into an asymmetrical relationship: "Children are not critical of a man's sexual performance," asserts this author. (1984; 9)

Nevertheless, his balance sheet of the relationship between changes in sexual morality and child sexual abuse is not entirely negative as far as the former is concerned. In the face of earlier, dark epochs, the sexual revolution would clearly have fostered an atmosphere of sexual freedom which allowed the problems that would have given rise to this very thing in the first place to be able to be publicly discussed. The media's response to it, the possibility for victims to denounce it and professional assistance for them are also the legacies of those changes in sexual morality.

It is necessary to make note of the fact that all of the ideas which Finkelhor presents regarding this point are based on the assumption that there indeed was a rise in cases of child sexual abuse during the previous century, particularly in its second half. There would have been historical elements to support both hypotheses -- the one defending an increase in these acts as well as the one rejecting it. At the moment it is not possible for us to settle this question with clarity, and I suspect that we shall never have a definitive answer with respect to it.

I would not be able to say whether what Finkelhor asserts regarding the relationship between the so-called *sexual revolution* and the problem of child sexual abuse happened in the way that he claims, but what I do agree with is that that relationship does exist. Some of his ideas do strike me as being well-grounded, and I do in fact believe that a sociological understanding of the problem of child sexual abuse in our society requires taking that radical transformation of sexual morality very much into account, but without forgetting -- and indeed giving even greater weight to, if appropriate -- the *counter-reaction* that the latter provoked, something which he does not appear to have taken into account.

So there it is. Although Finkelhor's suggestion may be of use to us, I suspect that I shall present the problem in a somewhat different way. From my point of view, there is no reason why the sexual revolution and its subsequent counter-reformation would have fostered an increase in the number of sexual interactions involving children and adults. If they did in fact do so, the hypothesis is -- as I have already said -- difficult to either prove or refute. In my opinion, what certainly could help to explain those cultural phenomena is the way in which the problem of child sexual abuse emerged as a phenomenon of social [39] anxiety as well as the characteristics which this has adopted.

The Sexual Counter-Reformation and the Danger of Abuse. Finkelhor also asserted in his work, after discussing sexual abuse as a moral order problem, that the modern anxiety surrounding this topic does not correspond, in absolute terms, to a kind of resurgence in Victorian morality, given that, he says, this preoccupation is compatible with the most progressive attitudes towards sexuality, including child sexuality. [E7] What is in fact urgently needed, according to this author, is a moral clarification in matters of sexuality whereby the consent of those involved is its cornerstone. We may well agree with the idea that it might be of interest to present and debate new moral values that will help us to better organize ourselves vis-a-vis everything having to do with sexuality; what is not so clear, in my opinion, is the relationship -- which Finkelhor disavows -- between campaigns against sexual abuse and the conservative movements in the area of sexual morality which arose in response to the evils of the so-called *sexual revolution*.

In practically the same year in which Finkelhor wrote that classic work on the problem of sexual abuse, published in 1984, another author, in this case a sexologist, approached the phenomenon of contemporary sexual morality in a quite different way. In his analysis of what he calls the sterilization of the concept of gender and its relationship to the modern criminalization of sex, Money (1985) denounces what by his lights are the signs of a new epidemic of anti-sexualism particularly pronounced in a society such as that of North America, and which is culturally-rooted in the anti-sexualism of Puritanism and its fears of having been too permissive along these lines. In fact, as Money told us already in 1985, it is a question not of a sexual permissiveness but an erotic one, and more precisely, that which has to do with eroticism *above the waist*. From that point on the need to avoid any mention of the genitals in areas such as publicity, even in an implicit way, was politically established.

Also, from that point on, research into matters of sexuality would be financed with the aim being the study of aspects related to criminology and justice, not genital pleasure. Victimology would approach sexuality from the point of view of victims and the presumed harm they suffered, also collaborating in the pursuit and punishment of those responsible for that harm. Sexuality is thus seen, above all, as a font of aggression and pain. Simultaneously, sexual victims acquire significant power following the accusation. Every accusation involving the sexual is a powerful weapon.

What is new, Money asserts, is not the criminalization of sex, which has a long history in the Christian world. What is new, he tells us, is that said criminalization and anti-sexualism are the product of a *desexualization* of gender or, if you like, of individual identity. Sexual equality would be bestowed completely, except in the area of eroticism. It is from there that a new idea would successfully emerge: increasingly equating all sexual relations with the [40] violence via which men debase women and children.

Some years later, in 1991, Money took up this theme again at his speech to the 10th World Congress of Sexology held in Amsterdam. (See Money, 1999) In it he would describe the sexual revolution of the 1950s through the 1980s as a period of relative freedom between the two historical epochs with significant epidemics: syphilis and HIV-AIDS. "The two epidemics," Money says, "share the history of an absurd and irrational anti-sexualism, which manifests itself as a consequence of impotence in the face of an inability to contain them." (1999; 23) The *sexual*

reform of around the middle of the 20th century would be aided by the advent of methods of contraception, especially the pill, which would go on the market in 1960, as well as by the effective recourse to penicillin beginning in the 1940s. This reform would, later on, find itself confronted with what Money calls the counter-reformation, which also found an echo -- in the appearance of AIDS -- equal to what that other epoch of anti-sexualism encountered with syphilis. The new counter-reformation, this author asserts, is reflected particularly in an increase in accusations -- many unfounded -- of sexual abuse, as well as in the increasing association between the latter and accusations of Satanism, as we shall see in detail further below.

Joining these two phenomena, those of abuse and Satanism, would be other consequences, Money asserts, among them -- and which I am interested in focusing on -- the pursuit of pornography or a phenomenon which supposedly exploits women and negatively impacts childhood; the expansion of the definitions of violation and abuse to unanticipated extremes; the raising of the *age of consent* from 16 to 18; and, lastly, the appropriation of the clinical arena of an essentially judicial and political philosophy that includes terms like "victim, survivor, perpetrators, offense, offender, and relapse." (Money, 1999: 30)

Therefore the question that occupies us is not whether the sexual abuse of minors has gone up in recent decades and whether the transformation of sexual morality in the West has to be viewed in these terms; what we are interested in pointing out is precisely that the phenomenon of the sexual abuse of minors as emergent social danger coincides with a new historical and geographical context in which sexuality was beginning to be particularly problematized. We shall now examine this point in more detail.

Discomfort with Sexuality, and Social Purity. In 1985, Weeks (1993) published a work in which he analyzed some of the elements of modern sexuality, making special reference to what he points to as evident discomfort in the West in this sphere. In this work he gives a precise account of those two phases: one of a sexual revolution associated with permissiveness, and another related to the new conservatism characterized by a battle against the consequences of that presumed sexual revolution. The appearance of that new right-wing morality, Weeks asserts, is an exact reflection of our own sexual discomfort. Sexuality exists in a moral vacuum imbued with ambiguities and [41] uncertainties, which in turn foster the temptation to return to new absolutisms; it is the crisis of ideas -- such as that of the *sexual revolution* -- which has provoked the current controversies and difficulties in this area.

The sexual liberation of around the middle of the 20th century was nothing but an illusion. Too many hopes were riding on the social possibilities of said transformation, imputing to sexuality powers of social betterment which it simply did not possess. The crisis of that ideation -- its fall and even repudiation by those who had defended it -- forms part of the modern development of conservatism in sexual matters. Referring to the permissiveness of those years as the source of the ills affecting Western societies at the present time is a reasoning typical of the discourses which have repeatedly pointed out its failure and the disasters which it has produced. The disorder of the modern world, the crisis of the family, the isolation of the individual, and by all appearances a moral collapse; to which would have to be added phenomena such as the increase in sexually transmitted diseases and the problem of AIDS in particular. Sex and its "derailment" in the 1960s was conceived and presented as the scapegoat responsible for the sense

of crisis experienced from the 1970s on. Sexual politics had now moved beyond the initial level, due to the demands on the part of social movements like homosexuals and feminists or by those of new conservative groups, who used this opportunity to re-establish the traditional vision of sexuality as danger and menace.

In spite of a large portion of the population generally favoring a more tolerant attitude towards subjects such as homosexuality or abortion, the right-wing moral discourse insinuated itself into North American and British societies with the triumph of the conservatives in both countries in elections at the end of the 1970s. Reagan in the United States and Thatcher in Great Britain were the political results of these conservative movements strongly associated with evangelical Christian groups. (Weeks, 1993; 66f) The right appropriated so-called *social issues*, normally associated with the family and sexuality, as objects of its political discourse, fostering a view of sexual anarchy as the first step towards social anarchy. Sexuality was seen as both a source and a reflection of moral disorder. Family and religion were the two axes around which the new right's discourse was structured, seeing in sexuality one of the principal foes of the social order. From there, many women, participants in a familiar, traditional model, identified with the ideas being defended, making the fears that go along with them their own.

The right's moral discourse was characterized by a growing association between the religious and the political, in which God and the idea of America as a nation chosen by the former would be its articulated elements (Caneque, 1988). [E8] With historical antecedents like American fundamentalism -- strongly reminiscent of Puritanism -- or the nativist obsession -- which alternately localized the source of every ill stalking a glorious America in distinct social groups such as Jews, Catholics, or foreigners -- the new Christian right was able to make the bible an object of political and social reference once again.

Ideas about social purity, having already been present from antiquity, as well as the localization of [42] dangers in moral themes, were typical of these movements from the very beginning. Thus for example in the 1920s, the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and its aggressive moralistic campaign against juvenile delinquency; coincided with a clearly secular transformation of American society. Later would come McCarthyism and its paranoid struggle against communism, paralleling an evident transformation of the national and international scenes following the war. Surprisingly in 1960, coinciding with an era of greater social tolerance at least insofar as sexuality was concerned, John F. Kennedy, a Catholic politician, came to power. It would be in the '80s, with the ascent of Reagan, that the new Christian right would reach new benchmarks of social success.

With an efficient economic structure sustained in large part by the media, especially television -- it is also within that context that it would be dubbed the "electronic church" -- the new Christian right and its leaders would acquire a strong national reach. The various groups of which it was composed, among which Jerry Falwell and his "Moral Majority" stand out, were united in their fight against three elements: abortion, homosexuals, and pornography, regarded as signs of decadence in the United States. Their strategy would consist of putting so-called social issues first, establishing objectives of a moral nature oriented towards strengthening the nuclear family, differentiated sex roles, and social action guided by God, the church, the bible, and the family.

The new Christian right appears within a social context favorable to the emergence of a new political right based on tradition and economic liberalism. During a stage of recuperation from Vietnam, student revolts, feminism, and the sexual revolution, there is the articulation of a new discourse of the political right, confronting progressivism and its harmful effects on the family, the economy, and international politics head on. Social issues conspired to bring the political right and the Christian right together, capitalizing on a discourse in which the bible and God remained in constant combat with Satanic forces.

We have allowed the forces of Satan to rule our nation and control our destiny. These are not political issues, liberals against conservatives or Democrats against Republicans. We are not talking about political machinations, or economics or politics. These are moral issues – good against evil, Christ against the Antichrist. (1980 press release of the Christian Voice movement, which publicly supported electing Reagan. Cañeque, 1988: 116).

A Manichean discourse about good and evil which inevitably brings to mind What will -- as we shall see -- a short time later manifest itself in phenomena such as that of *ritual abuse* and the so-called *memory recovery movement*, and which would also be reflected in Jerry Falwell's most relevant work, *Listen America*. In it, the leader of the Moral Majority would rail against, among other things, feminism and homosexuals. Regarding the former, he would say that the solution to the problem of women and their true liberation would be to return to their traditional place in the family. The alliance which we know occurred between this movement and certain more radical feminist elements may well have been a surprising one. Nevertheless, it appears that the two groups coincided with the [43] decisive moment as much as they did in certain basic theories, such as bringing them to fruition via the media. With homosexuality, the discourse that the Christian right brings about is to present it as a sign of a nation in decline. Homosexuality, it will be said, is not something that one is born with: quite the contrary; sexual perversion regenerates itself by corrupting innocent boys and young men.

According to Nathan and Snedeker (2001), as early as 1977 the US Congress was already paying special attention to the issue of child pornography as a problem of interest and social preoccupation; in this way, the sexual was a new component to be added to the problem of child maltreatment which, in 1974, was especially focused on physical abuse. The campaigns by such personages as Denson-Gerber and Lloyd Martin stand out, propelled by the existence of this terrible sexual exploitation of children throughout the entire country. The figures cited were, by all indications, exaggerated, and moreover it was being claimed that incest had increased because of child pornography, something which Finkelhor, as we have already seen, would also suggest in 1984. The media criticized none of these assertions, which had no empirical basis and which would rely on the support of certain feminist groups. When the Congress or the FBI made up their minds to investigate the supposed drama of child pornography in depth, they found scarcely any evidence of its existence. Despite that, beginning in 1980 the media, the police, and other social pressure groups continued to proclaim the existence of an extensive child pornography network whose existence was never able to be demonstrated.

In that same period, as Nathan and Snedeker (2001) point out, a great flowering of sociological inquiry into sexual abuse took place which, expanding the boundaries of abuse to hitherto unimagined extremes, would result in the existence of a huge number of minor victims of abuse and point to the terrible consequences of these experiences. Among these authors Finkelhor and Russell would stand out. The latter would assert that 54% of women had suffered sexual abuse. Little by little the notion was disseminated of an increase in the number of men who devoted themselves to abusing minors, and one began to hear the term "sex ring" being used to describe organized groups of pedophiles that ferried children practically from one end of the country to the other to abuse them and produce pornographic material.

It is, then, in this political and social environment that this increasing anxiety over abuse emerges, and undoubtedly the connection seems clear enough in principle. Nevertheless, Finkelhor (1984) makes scarcely any reference to this context in his own analysis of the historical process analyzed here. From where he is sitting this author refers especially to the two great social movements that are located at the origin of the rise of sexual abuse as an important social problem. Each one of these large social groups would present and favor their own perspectives on understanding and approaching the problem. On one side would be the groups and institutions interested in the fields of child maltreatment and child protection in general; I shall refer to them below. On the other side -- a track which we are interested in pursuing in this section -- would be the feminist part, especially in terms of its fight against sexual aggression and pornography. From this feminist perspective, Finkelhor will say, the [44] problem of sexual abuse will be situated further afield from the problem of child maltreatment in general as well as the family context; there it would have to be understood in terms of the disadvantaged position of women and children in our patriarchal societies and the model of masculine socialization which the latter imply.

Sex and Its Victims; or, Sexuality as Domination

Returning to the work of Weeks, his observations' regarding how the discourses of the new conservatism reached a significant number of women who identified with its ideas are quite interesting. These women, active collaborators in the campaigns put forth from within the moral right, would come principally from the middle class of rural areas and from the urban periphery; women who were, in large part, devoted exclusively to homemaking and clearly had some religious anxieties. Their daily labors could, in a certain way, be seen as an extension of the campaigns for social purity in matters relating to the family, sexuality, and morality. (Weeks, 1993; 72) .To this author it is not surprising that these women would have joined in with the ideas and actions undertaken by the conservative movements, given that the sexual revolution could definitely pose a clear threat to the traditional model of family life, which they were clearly representatives of.

Aspects such as the family unit, the protection of women and children -- by the husbands -- from threats from the outside world, or the strength of the bond between man and woman -- no matter how much it was based on hierarchy and dependency -- might be threatened by social transformations that were implicating certain processes, on top of the revolution in sexual morality. The traditional woman, mistress of her house, might be threatened by a certain *running away from trouble* on men's part, the breakdown of the traditional family which had relied on a

clear identity, feminism's advance towards women's liberation, and the disappearance of the importance of motherhood combined with increasing opportunities to avoid pregnancy or obtain an abortion. Something similar had occurred with the feminist movements of the 19th century, which opposed advances in contraception or liberation from sexual customs due to a fear of rupturing the bonds between men and women.

Sexuality, and the intense social changes associated with it, was therefore seen more and more as a source of danger, and less frequently as a way of obtaining pleasure or happiness. In 1986, in the United States, two newsworthy events stood out in this regard. The so-called Meese Commission, established by Reagan, would decree that pornography causes violence against women, implying a need to prohibit it. On the other hand, the Supreme Court ruled that sodomy and oral sex were crimes that could be legally prosecuted. These were two signs of the transformation that was occurring in matters pertaining to sexual morality, which would be joined a short time later by the fight against pornography as that danger's *cause celebre* (Osborne, 1989). Sexuality, and the confusion that supposedly resulted [45] when it was freed from any moral constraints, was the subject of a campaign in which, curiously, the conservative groups were not alone. A most unexpected alliance was created between conservatives and certain feminist groups. Sex and its power to victimize was precisely what bound these two social perspectives -- initially opposing ones -- together as allies in a common struggle: the fight against pornography. It's not that women who were the defenders of a traditional and conservative model identified with the liberation proposed by the feminist movement. What happened is that the two perspectives coincided in many aspects of its rejuvenation. And finally, in both cases, women -- and children, who were put into that same category -- were the victims of sex and its dangers.

Feminism and Pornography. "In women's lives the tension between sexual danger and sexual pleasure is very strong. Sexuality is, at the same time, a terrain of exploration, pleasure, and action, asserts Carol Vance (1989: 9) in her edited work on the treatment of female sexuality within feminism. The feminist movements of the 19th century, this author asserts, would not have been in agreement on this point, given their clearly protectionist postures which implicitly disowned female sexuality, with the goal of protecting themselves from the risks associated with it, *until* attitudes and discourses became favorable to an active exploration of sexuality's possibilities as a source of pleasure, enrichment, development, etc for women. The right -- movements against abortion, against the rights of gays and lesbians, against sex education, contraception, etc -- took advantage of this fear and sense of vulnerability in the face of the danger of *the sexual* to argue for the need for a sexual morality centered more on traditional values, such as the association between sexuality and reproduction, restricting its expression, etc. For example, if male sexuality is understood as something basically uncontrollable, which would respond to any feminine provocation, it was obvious that this, in some way, implied the woman's culpability and the man's vindication, thereby inviting the former to avoid any public expressions of desire. "In short, female sexual desire would have to be constrained to the arenas favored and protected by the culture: traditional marriage and the nuclear family." (Vance, 1989: 13). Open, spontaneous, and provocative attitudes in matters of sexuality have their own risks because they might stimulate masculine desire, which is seen as lewd, unpredictable, and aggressive.

The ideas which arose as a response to this fear and which were centered on the self-control of female sexuality as well as the regulation of male sexuality -- including on women's part -- ended up assuming too high of a cost in terms of the vitiation of female desire, with their roots in fear, anxiety, and danger. The polarization and balkanization of male vs. female sexuality which arose as a response to these problems ended up generating new difficulties, especially in the way that female sexuality and its desires were lived out and expressed. The fear of male sexual violence [46] is not the only damage that is associated with sexuality and its pleasures. Fears of pleasurable experiences, of the body, of lost identity, of losing oneself in the sexual encounter, the dissolution of boundaries, and of dependency or abandoning oneself to one's insatiable desires, would be other possible driving fears. Even the possible competition for objects of desire that women would face among themselves, or the fear of transgressing the values of traditional femininity which is perhaps symbolized in the mother or other mothers, sisters, etc by the abandonment of desire and pleasure. "Our hidden fears add to the sum total of sexual terror. Given the nonexistence of better language, and the capacity to explore and delimit those other sources of danger, men are blamed for everything and in this way, their power is exaggerated and we impoverish ourselves. And what's more, we allow the volatile and irrational elements of sex to remain open to manipulation by others, rendering the former ready tools in campaigns against sexual deviation, degeneracy, and moral contamination." (Vance, 1989: 16) .

We have already seen how in 1977, within this social context which we have described, the US Congress paid special attention to the issue of child pornography as a problem of social interest and preoccupation, thanks to campaigns by groups propelled by the existence of terrible child exploitation across the entire country, in spite of the absence of any evidence. In 1976 the feminists added the fight against pornography to their agenda.

And there we are. Starting in the 1970s, from within the feminist movement, there was a triumphant ideological perspective that began to perceive sex as a source of danger and, in short, a reflection of the historical male domination over women. Pornography was, therefore, situated as the paradigm of the patriarchal society and the concept of women as objects to be exploited; in this case as sexual objects. According to Osborne (1989), the history of the anti-pornography movement can be traced back to the sexual revolution, following which there occurred a perhaps unexpected proliferation of so-called hard-core pornography, against which there arose various social movements to combat it. Their aims were basically the same as those of the feminist movement in general, except that they were choosing pornography as an object of their attacks for "tactical" reasons. The ideology of male domination over women was reflected in the models being exhibited by pornography. Nevertheless, that argument was not enough. Afraid of being accused of being Puritanical, as were their predecessors in these struggles, the anti-pornography feminists were obliged to use a particular kind of discourse. Due to a *contaminated* logic prevailing in our society, it was possible to base this battle on the weighty rationales that it would affect society generally as an abstract victim of pornography, or even its individuals as actual victims.

Pornography was associated with aggression in general; especially with sexual aggression. "From there came the idea that women are the principal victims of (hard-core) pornography, not in a symbolic but rather a real sense, by virtue of that apparent connection." (Osborne, 1989; 33). Pornography, aside from degrading women in general and hindering social

equality, would also incite violence against women, in a causal, direct, and [47] unequivocal relationship. In this way, as Osborne points out, feminists succeeded, on the one hand, in avoiding any connection with moralistic and puritanical groups and, on the other, in avoiding conflict with freedom of expression. Pornography was not being condemned just for the sake of it; it was being condemned because it was evil and had harmful effects. Apparently they did not succeed in doing either.

The curious thing is that this feminist anti-pornography movement has associated itself with groups of the new right who support measures such as those of the already cited Meese Commission, regarding which a prominent militant feminist pointed out the following:

Women have convinced an organ of the government with a national reach of a truth that they had been familiar with for some time: pornography inflicts harm on women and children."(Mackinnon, cited in Osborne, 1989: 45).

What is important in this struggle, some feminists will say, is not so much being on the left or on the right but fighting discrimination against women and the consequent sexual exploitation which they are objects of. Pornography would reflect not only the idea of the dominated woman in patriarchal societies but would also, in turn, be a source *of* it and a factor perpetuating discrimination against women. It would never cease to be surprising, Osborne (1993) points out, how pornography would go from being a minor reflection of discrimination against women to become the axis around which a good part of the feminist movement revolved as well as an object of combat designed to unify an ever more divided feminism. The fight against pornography was the key issue for a large portion of the feminist discourse in the 1980s. In the hands of so-called cultural feminism, the struggle against pornography was nothing more than the reflection of a broader struggle against sexuality itself and, in short, against everything male.

With cultural feminism, it went from holding culpable the patriarchy – i.e., the system which grants the power to males – to attacking men directly, individually or collectively, for the mere fact that they were men. That is, they conceived of the male nature as being essentially aggressive. Men were regarded as true sexual predators, given to impulses that were just short of uncontrollable. Greater permissiveness in the sexual arena could only lead to greater violence against women in real life, and, especially, in pornography, a true master of the art of abusing them, the consummate source of perversions from which all others are derived (Osborne, 1993: 23).

Undoubtedly, the crux of cultural feminism is that it established a radical separation between the feminine and the masculine, localizing in the former, in women, the qualities and virtues necessary for true social change beyond structural issues; it even brings to the fight leftist positions as more of a reflection of male repression, as well as to establish the possibility of becoming reconciled with traditionally criticized models such as capitalism, sexual repression, and biological determinism. The problem would not consist of how men and women have been culturally constructed, but in the two sexes' own natures, which depend not on culture but biology. It is a question of the culture returning to basic feminine values, whereby problems of race or class will end up disappearing. It is a reflection of an absolute confidence in women's

moral superiority, converting the individual struggle into a political one, and personal conduct into social combat.

It is thus a question of a movement filled with contradictions; e.g., the unequal treatment given to the masculine vs. the feminine. Where in ideas about female sexuality those traits stemming from the patriarchy (docility, passivity) are distinguished from those which stem from the female's own nature (tenderness, productivity, protectiveness, equality), in the case of the male's nature no such distinction is made, contemplating the masculine as something intrinsic, as an expression of the male nature, and not as something constructed, in part, by the patriarchy or by society.

According to Echols (1989), the transition from radical feminism to cultural feminism has basically manifested itself in the arena of sexuality; or to put it another way, we should look for -- in the debates over sex -- the reason for that excision which has occurred within feminism itself, and more concretely, in the relationship between feminism and lesbianism. Lesbianism, owing to the position of some sectors of the movement which were localizing in the sexual the source of females' oppression, was able to present its conduct not as sexual but as political options involving a withdrawal from the female vs. male world; upon lesbianism being presented as "the real measure of the trouble with feminism" (ibid: 91) the evident abandonment of heterosexual feminists took place, which nevertheless also assumed the development of a more normative and prescriptive model of sexuality, giving new meaning to the notion that "the personal is the political." "Of course the tendency to judge a woman based on her sexual preference, her marital status or the length of her hair did not begin with lesbian separatism, but the latter has contributed to its legitimation." (Echols, 1989; 91) This lesbian separatist approach was too fundamental to be written off as just a minority one; but, with its evolution towards cultural feminism, in which it was not men themselves but masculine values that were being rejected, it ended up being more attractive to more people. What was being proposed was not lesbianism but friendship between women, closer bonds; but no less tense and conflicted because of it -- heterosexual feminists will always be suspicious of being in an alliance with the masculine -- something which is perfectly reflected in the feminist fight against pornography.

Although the radical feminists adopted a posture towards sexuality which was part and parcel of how it was experienced at that time, and would acknowledge that dual dimension of pleasure and danger, cultural feminism carried this perspective further and more radically, focusing only on danger and excluding any consideration of pleasure; in that context, the fight against pornography emerged as a reflection of that male oppression through sex. The notion was that pornography was the theory and rape was the practice. This very posture came under even greater criticism; on the same level that pornography itself was, sexual fantasies were identified with reality, in the same way that pornography was associated with violence.

[49] Cultural feminists localize male and female sexuality at two fundamentally opposite points. Thus for example, in that which relates to the erotic, in the case of women it is described as tender, protective, emotional, and sweet, whereas male eroticism is necessarily perceived as aggressive, violent, genitally-centered, unfeeling, and egotistical. In the face of the compulsiveness, genitalism, irresponsibility, violence, promiscuity, coldness, etc of male

sexuality would be the passivity, diffusiveness, communicativeness, emotionality, sentimentality, sensuality, tenderness, affection, etc of the female.

If the view of male sexuality is that of an intrinsically violent force inherent in men and which cannot be gotten rid of, female sexuality is, in a way, denied, or at least of diminished importance. Female sexuality is less intense, less necessary for women, hidden, diffuse, etc This is a sign of a greater capacity for adaptation than the hypersexuality of men. All of this is leading to an ever more negative attitude towards every type of sexuality, including heterosexuality, which is seen as being culturally imposed on women, who never really enjoy it; male homosexuality, another manifestation of men's sexual insensitivity; transsexualism, which reifies and over-simplifies the idea of femininity; pornography, sex in public, sadomasochism, or "intergenerational sex." (Echols, 1989; 101) In a way, cultural feminism has put a new gloss on old concepts like "sexual deviation" or "perversion."

The sexual revolution and the wave of permissiveness that accompanied it are seen as the evil precursors of the many sexual problems which have affected women, as are the apparent increases in both rape and incest. These are understood to have increased because they are fostered by those new values which, along with pornography, have lost all respect for women, perhaps thinking instead that it would be a good idea to bring to light acts which previously had always been hidden. "Instead, they maintain that the sexual revolution allowed men to choose occasional relationships over engagement, pornography over people, and violence over love." (Echols, 1989: 104)

In this context, it is no wonder that rape was also seen as a reflection of that masculine violence inherent in all men and in which, more curiously, every heterosexual relationship has progressively been equated to a rape. Because in the end, consensual coitus would be nothing more than a euphemism for rape.

Sex as Aggression

Since the 1970s, a perspective has been taking shape within feminism which is inclined to criticize heterosexuality as an option and as an institution. Heterosexuality -- sexual relationships between men and women -- comes to be seen as more of a reflection of the male domination which is imposed upon women. It is via sexuality, this rising discourse will affirm, that men impose the patriarchal order: "It is through sexuality that the man exercises his power over the woman; having been [50] reduced from on high to a natural function, sex shows up as the result as well as the instrument of phallocratic power, a point of inflection in the relationships of dominion that men establish with women." (Lipovetsky, 2000c: 61)

Coinciding with the appearance of these theories was an upsurge in denunciations against sexual violence, with so-called radical feminism highlighting the importance that this sexual aggression has -- in its multiple forms -- in maintaining that male domination over women. Osborne (1993) points out how new forms such as maltreatment or sexual harassment were configured, and a significant proliferation of social institutions, laws, and mechanisms for condemning and intervening ,in these acts took place. Nevertheless, upon pointing out with such zeal and exclusivity the most dramatic facet of relations between men and women, they were,

likewise, fostering a sense that male domination was based on said violence, thereby neglecting other structural elements -- of an economic, social, and cultural order -- which were possibly of greater strategic importance, which would allow social inequalities to be maintained. [E9]

In this context, in which the particular struggle against pornography would be unleashed, heterosexuality was being questioned more and more, at the same time that lesbianism came to simply be a personal option associated with the erotic and an encounter between two people was converted into a decision with potent political connotations. The lesbian relationship was the feminist decision *par excellence*, whereas its heterosexual counterpart might be seen as treasonous to the female half of humanity.

From a specific struggle against sexual aggression, which would not rule out better relations between the sexes, all heterosexual relationships came to be defined as aggression. The fight against pornography achieved a strategic success by uniting feminism's diverse tendencies into a common struggle against male sexuality.

In the early 1980s, within this whole ideological framework and consonant with the *obsession with victimhood* which I shall talk about further below, there were already the first signs of an inclination to broaden the concept of rape to hitherto unimagined extremes, especially taking into account so-called date rape or rape among intimates. The mistake, it will be said, is thinking that rape is committed by persons unfamiliar to the victim, who attack her under cover of darkness and by surprise; notwithstanding this view, the lion's share of rapes' occur among persons who know one another. Nevertheless, what is odd about this is that now, rape would not even necessarily be defined by the use of physical violence; instead, mere coercion, and verbal insistence, pressure or psychological manipulation, will now be valid elements for defining what is and what is not rape.

In his analysis of the construction of the feminine in modern society Lipovetsky seeks to revisit this matter and, no doubt, to denounce the trap hidden within this new feminist discourse and the apocalyptic message that it transmits:

Talking about victim hysteria does not mean that the violence inflicted upon women is imaginary. Sexual mistreatment and aggression are undeniable. It's not so much the terrifying statistics brandished by feminists as a counterbalance. The figures should not be labeled trickery, but behind their apparent [51] objectivity is hidden an ideological undertaking to rewrite reality. To a far greater degree than any wave of male violence, what explains the spiral in rapes is the abusive expansion of the notion of sexual aggression and a reformulation of the criteria for normality and criminality. ... In becoming the definition of violence, in scaling back the tolerance threshold; criminalizing acts considered "normal" by common consensus, radical feminism has ceased illuminating reality in favor of demonizing it, no longer revealing a hidden face of male domination but unleashing sensationalism, as well as an imaginary victimology. (Lipovetsky, 2000c, p.64.)

To this author the American situation turns out to be an exception, and Europe, at least for the moment, seems to be far removed from those extremes. Exaggeration via the use of figures leads one to conclude that one in every four students would have been molested, although in the

majority of cases it would have occurred without their knowing it, and in a significant portion of them the victim would have continued having relations with the aggressor. The definition of sexual aggression becomes absurd: Its meaning takes shape within that definition of the masculine which is based on negative characteristics, and within sex as a sharper reflection of said evil.

Within this same logic, characteristic of one part of American feminism, are inscribed two significant phenomena illustrative of that new danger of sexual abuse which we have come to analyze in the present work. For one, the *ritual abuse* panic that emerged in the United States around the beginning of the 1980s, and which we are able to see as being responsible for the fact that sexual abuse will end up occupying a privileged position in terms of the attention of society and, what is more worrisome, that of researchers and child protection agencies. For another, as heir to the former, the *recovered memory movement* that emerged in the United States at the beginning of the 1990s. Both of these realities can perhaps be seen as caricatures or derivatives of that new social danger that was child sexual abuse. I do not think that it is simply a question of that, but rather, that they have to be seen as the legacy of what we are the direct heirs to. But even so, as with any caricature, in its outlines we will be able to observe some of the most prominent characteristics of the danger of abuse as we currently perceive them.

Protecting Childhood, or, Sexuality as Threat

Research into the treatment of minors, nevertheless, has many characteristics of a pseudo-science, a sort of illusory attachment that allows people to discover what they would like to believe. Feminists discover that this is a question of the expression of patriarchal power; Utopian socialists, that it is a capitalist perversion; conservatives, that it is a symptom of moral decay (Dingwall, 1989 p.60).

Child Maltreatment: From Want to Illness. In order to understand the modern concept of the danger of sexual abuse and the uses and meanings associated with it we must [52] defer to science, particularly the science concerned with child maltreatment. Finkelhor (1984) presents on the one hand the child protection movement, and on the other the feminist movement, as the two groups that made it possible for the subject of the sexual abuse of minors to appear on the agenda of social problems, with each of these two large groups bringing their own unique perspective to comprehending and solving this problem. Nevertheless, as we shall see, these two lines of thought or intervention were united in a single crusade, in which the differences that Finkelhor talks about would not be so clear.

According to Finkelhor, the authors and groups concerned with child protection have incorporated the phenomenon of sexual abuse into their global perception of the problem of child maltreatment. This may have led them to focus more intensely on those sexual abuse cases which endanger the minor's entire status; that is, in those cases where the abuse is "perpetrated by fathers or caregivers, which is why they would pay greater attention to sexual abuse of an incestuous or intrafamilial nature (Finkelhor, 1984). To this same author, their understanding of the problem and its underlying causes would also generally be different from that of other groups, placing greater emphasis on accounting for and intervening in these cases within the overall family context and advocating for less penal and more conciliatory solutions. With regard

to the scientific literature, it is customary to cite the classic work of Kempe and colleagues, around 1962, regarding what the latter termed the "battered child syndrome" (see, e.g., Kempe & Kempe, 1985), as the jumping-off point for a proliferation of studies of it, focused fundamentally on the ways in which abuse can be predicted, prevented, and treated. (Frude, 1989) But this work is typically not seen simply as an elemental point of reference in the study of the problem; rather, its role as a catalyst to professional and social consciousness of the problem of child maltreatment is often highlighted. The social resonance that the work of these authors had was a seemingly endless source of amazement, as was the fact that they were able to hold society responsible for something which the latter would have otherwise remained ignorant of, something as common as child maltreatment. (Crivillé, 1989) It is precisely this child protection perspective that has led to the greatest advances in research into the sexual abuse of minors.

Pfohl (1977) analyzed the rapid rise of an anxious preoccupation with what came to be called the "abused child syndrome" which, in turn, led to the passage of multiple pieces of legislation to prosecute and condemn all sorts of acts. The history of childhood, and, the institutional treatment of it, is a history which goes from the image of the dangerous or *predelinquent* child whom it is necessary to control, to that of the endangered or victimized child requiring protection. This latter notion of childhood at risk would not achieve complete success until the 1970s. Pfohl places the "discovery" of child sexual abuse within the unfolding of what was called the battered child syndrome, brought to the fore by groups possessing great authority, such as pediatricians and radiologists. What had started out as non-specific trauma ended up being converted into a general social preoccupation with the mistreatment [53] of children. Oddly, it was radiologists who first discovered and "exploited" these cases, as opposed to other social groups such as social workers, lawyers, and judges.

Radiologists, who for various reasons would not have been affected by the social or professional pressures that other groups -- such as doctors -- might have experienced, moreover possessed many characteristics which would have made them more interested in the struggle to acknowledge and professionalize the issue of maltreatment. Among these are the possible advancement within the medical community of -- as radiology was -- a marginal group in the medical field; another is the association with psychoanalytic medicine, which had also been sufficiently discredited with respect to somatic medicine -- besides the fact that the two could be mutually reinforcing one another; thirdly, there would have existed the possibility of developing a protocol that would be convincing to all concerned and which, in a way, would transfer to themselves a problem which had been under the purview of physicians; they would also control any entry by other professional groups. Moreover, Pfohl explains, the problem of the psychological obstacles to acknowledging the existence of this diagnosis was neutralized somewhat by referring to the pathology of individuals and fathers; instead of being seen as clients who needed to be protected, they came to be seen as patients who needed to be helped. Deviance was associated with illness, thereby maintaining curative authority over these acts.

In those years (circa 1973), Walter Mondale, aspiring to be the Democratic party's nominee for president, introduced a program against child maltreatment called the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which was enacted in 1974, and in which the problem of child maltreatment was medicalized, emphasizing physical maltreatment especially, and overlooking those studies which demonstrated that the principal problem in childhood was of an

economic origin: Maltreatment and neglect were problems associated with poverty (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001). The poverty, marginalization, and personal and social difficulties of all sorts, which were known to be tightly interwoven with the problems of child maltreatment and neglect, were persistently replaced by illness, disorders, or family dysfunction; later on the talk would be of patriarchy and male chauvinism. Therefore these sorts of acts were seen not so much as crimes but as an illness that would require psychological treatment and societal inquiry. This allowed a large number of "social" professionals to get involved in the rising and lucrative world of child protection that would occur in the 1970s. This opened the door to social professionals supplanting the work of the police and the justice system.

It was turning out to be politically expedient to medicalize the problem, for it absolved the state of any responsibility for the social differences and the poverty associated with maltreatment. This led politicians like Mondale to reject the proposals of the social scientists and, 9Y contrast, to listen attentively to the victimistic accounts of persons, including victims and abusive fathers, who were advocating for a cure for the abusers, there being not only scant resistance from society but in fact a warm reception. Social movements -- often with professional interests -- backed the various [54] campaigns and labels, as abusers were symbolically sent to the lower classes in order to remove them from those who were labeling them as such. According to Pfohl the labelers and those being labeled were well separated, with the latter having no say in the matter.

There then occurred an absolutely spectacular proliferation of social movements to combat the problem, already labeling it as such, of child maltreatment. The movement received the support of social groups of various persuasions -- including many feminist women -- as well as from medical organizations. There were also voices from within the legal community who were reclaiming the categorization of the problem as a crime which was to be prosecuted, but in general, Nathan & Snedeker (2001) point out, the idea was disseminated that abuse was an "illness" that ought to be cured, which was fostered by the media and its interest in heightening the anxiety with its sensationalistic headlines and treatment of the issue.

The social politics of it would have to change, going from an invitation to judicial condemnation to an ever more intense recommendation to report it to the child protection social services. Previously, only lawyers and doctors were obliged to report cases of maltreatment; following the passage of CAPTA, social workers, psychologists, teachers, etc were required to do so as well. Following this reform there was an explosion in the number of cases reported, which contrasted with a lack of resources to handle them, especially as far as sexual abuse was concerned, a subject rarely dealt with by professionals or politicians during the 1970s.

There was then a considerable proliferation of studies into the problem of maltreatment, encompassing a great diversity of themes in order to analyze and broaden the existing literature on the topic, which has now become, frankly, inexhaustible. The research unfolded in an initial phase which was fundamentally focused on descriptive and statistical kinds of analyses (Criville', 1989), basically concerned with analyzing the actual incidence of the different types of child maltreatment in various geographical contexts, the prevalence of the phenomenon, types of existing maltreatment, the variables related to each one of them, and the future consequences for victims. Another field of research logically related to the former would be that of concerning

oneself with the various models of intervention, the reception to and adoption of therapeutic treatments, the problem of the penal sanction in the modification and improvement process, etc (Concerning this, see Henry, 1997.)

Risk factors among children and adults, as well as in cultural, social, and economic contexts were at the forefront of the study, the objective being a mapping out of risk groups, which has been understood by authors like Dingwall as a reflection of the fact that research into maltreatment has, in turn, been in response to pressure and prodding from special interests who "elevated it to the status of public problem ... and whose unfolding has continued to reflect these and other influences." (Dingwall, 1989 p. 41). In fact this author denounces how politics has influenced the science -- also condemning the possible consequences of this -- as the former was encouraging the development of predictive programs: "There are political" and economic implications of this in terms of the perversion of research into and legislative measures concerning -- as well as sustaining the pseudo-science of -- [55] so-called "research into the abuse of minors." (Dingwall, 1989 p. 61) From this author's point of view, the obsession with predicting and talking about risk groups involves nothing more than the typical politics of social welfare that seeks to divide the populace and, perhaps in so doing, reduce the number of families that need to be controlled by limiting the number of private problems that are able to achieve public status. This, assuredly, leads to the obfuscation of the true underlying social problem; that of marginalization, poverty, housing, employment, or social relations.

Following that first surge in social and scientific interest in the problem, the abused child syndrome underwent a marked "diagnostic inflation." (Dingwall, 1989; 40) The concept of maltreatment was broadened considerably from its initial conceptualization by radiologists as "battered babies" -which would have referred to three-year-old minor children with serious traumatic injuries -- to its later definition as "child maltreatment," which included new typologies such as neglect --dating 'from around 1980 -- as well as emotional abuse, institutional abuse, the labor exploitation of minors in developing countries, etc The concept of child maltreatment was broadened to incorporate any problem that could theoretically have a negative impact on the child's development.

According to Nathan & Snedeker (2001), in the late 1970s in the United States there arose an endless series of new researchers in the area of victimology who began to investigate the subject of sexual abuse, within the social sciences, but appropriating the same rhetoric that was being utilized by feminist groups and their conservative allies in their fight against child pornography, incest, and abuse. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001 p. 42) Researchers like Diana Russell concluded that around 54% of women would have suffered sexual abuse, with other studies talking about some 62%. These chilling figures were published by the media without any criticism. What the populace would fail to realize is that in order to come up with these statistics the concept of sexual abuse would have been widened to the point of absurdity, encompassing all sorts of ages and circumstances, which could extend down to a sexual proposition between young people of the same age. Moreover, researchers began to insistently point out the inevitable gravity associated with all of these experiences.

Finally, in 1988, sexual abuse was included in the list of serious disorders (Parton & Parton, 1989; Avery-Clark, O'Neil & Laws, 1981). In a way, there is observable in that whole

process what Ibanez had already highlighted in his analysis of the science, suggesting that "scientific development takes place through a successive widening, the tilling of new virgin soil, a process of proliferation through division (Ibanez, 1983, p. 49); in that growth, sustained by the progressive dismantling of reality, the object of interest to us -- child sexual abuse as maltreatment typology -- is converted into a most attractive one for researchers.

[56] *Sexual Abuse: From Incest to Ritual Abuse*. I have already spoken, in the previous chapter, about the panic generated in the United States by the danger of ritual abuse or, we should say, of sexual abuse in general. The former was undoubtedly a good part of the reason why, at the end of the 1980s, sexual abuse came to be a social preoccupation of the first order, not only among the general population but among the variety of professionals and organizations charged with child protection -- social services and those for the protection of minors, prosecutors, judges, the police, etc A phenomenon, as we will see, proposed and encouraged by professional groups, institutions, and social movements which acted in concert to successfully bring the problem of the abuse of minors into that social space, going beyond treating it as it has been treated. But that social reality, which extended over the course of more than a decade, would have a series of antecedents that need to be understood and situated within that already described rising anxiety over child maltreatment.

According to Nathan & Snedeker (2001) one would have to look for the origin of the whole phenomenon, in the first place, in the feminist struggle against abuse which, at the beginning, was focused almost exclusively on the subject of father-daughter incest. During the 1970s, activists like Kee MacFarlane and Judith Herman [E10] -- who would later play prominent roles in, respectively, the ritual abuse panic and the recovered memory movement -- were actively involved in the fight against incest and abuse from a perspective influenced in large measure by feminism and the increasing interest in sexual crimes against women.

Its promoters initially proceeded based on the idea that incest, which was beginning to be interpreted as the reflection of a patriarchal system, could only be prevented by promoting equality between the sexes. Equality would allow girls to reject the abusive demands of their fathers and other relatives, in addition to facilitating their independence from their mothers so that they could strike out on their own. Nevertheless, this perspective was colliding with another more in harmony with the new interpretations of the problem of child maltreatment that were moving away from social differences and towards individual and family pathologies. In accordance with them, incest was perceived as a result of the personal problems of certain men or families, with intervention thereby crossing into psychotherapy. It meant that incest ceased to be seen as a crime only, thereby converting it into an illness.

It is in this context that a 20-year-old woman named McFarlane, with scarcely any training and with some experience in feminist groups devoted to the topic of incest, was hired as an expert on the issue of sexual abuse by the National Center for Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN). She was put in charge of allocating grants, whom to give them to, what sorts of programs or research were worthy, etc McFarlane played an important part in separating physical abuse, which at the beginning was the principal problem, from economic disparities. It was evident that in treating it as an illness, and thus being able to cure it through therapy, with groups like "Fathers Anonymous," one going against the earlier feminist discourse. From this [57]

perspective adopted by the new model of intervention, self-help programs were initiated in which the fathers, and particularly the mothers, would try to alleviate the frustrations and difficulties that were leading them to hit, put down, yell at, or neglect their children. Nevertheless, for various reasons, activists influenced by the feminist discourse adopted this line of theory and practice. According to Nathan & Snedeker, this might have been because it was more socially expedient to permit, on the one hand, a type of social solidarity that would unite different political currents -- conservatives and liberals -- thus allowing politics to approach the problems of mothers and fathers. Moreover the notion would be disseminated, accepted by all, that people who were experiencing difficulties could help each other through a form of solidarity that was supported by the authorities. But it would also have other advantages, from an ideological and strategic point of view.

Sexual abuse, Nathan & Snedeker point out, arose as a problem shortly after physical mistreatment did, and although there would also be studies that associated the phenomenon with poverty, the social groups interested in the protection of children and women opted instead to follow the path of pathology and therapy. [E11] It happened this way because, for one thing, the State did not appear to be combating the problem of incest sufficiently severely in the judicial arena. The law was strict in terms of sentences, but the latter were rarely applied, something which, for example, Herman criticizes in her works on incest. This would occur not only due to indifference on the part of the authorities, but because the abuse rarely left behind clear physical signs; without tangible proof, the accused were seldom convicted. Besides, Herman points out, the legal process might do more harm than the incest itself. The alternative to all of this was to make an offer to the accused that if he confessed his guilt and went into therapy he would be forgiven.

In response to campaigns urging the reporting of any suspicions of mistreatment -- incest or abuse -- an enormous number of accusations were made, even in upper middle class areas. In these cases it was a question of a problem of a different order, and some psychologists, like Giarretto [E12], began talking about problems in self-esteem among fathers; others, such as Herman, spoke of the problem of the patriarchy and the need to transform the model of fatherhood. For their part authors like Summit, who would later be a prominent author on the topic of ritual abuse, developed theories in which the mother was assigned the lion's share of the blame for the incest having occurred, accusing her of having abandoned her spousal role; meanwhile the daughter was reproached for adopting a seductive and attractive role vis-à-vis the neglected father. Even many of the psychoanalytically-oriented therapists adopted a posture which was, in a way, sympathetic towards the incestuous father. To that, Nathan & Snedeker add that many professionals, feminists, and other activists in the field of child protection would have been shaped by a leftist environment which would have detested the law and order model, thereby rejecting penal solutions to the problem.

At the beginning the feminists would have been obliged to reject such a discourse, which not only leapt to defend marriage but also blamed the mother for abandoning her traditional role, thus provoking the incest. [58] Nevertheless, strategically, they decided not to debate this model but to back it. This is something that would be extended, as we have already seen in the previous chapter, to subsequent alliances between feminism and certain conservative groups. According to Nathan & Snedeker this occurred because, for one, being very critical of social inequalities and

the patriarchy would not be able to win state support -- which McFarlane, who worked at a government organization, knew very well. Moreover Giarretto's Silicon Valley model was very attractive to them because the latter would have a strong self-help component for women, which would include sex education classes in order to facilitate greater development of their erotic potential or self-expression as women.

Adding to its attractiveness was the fact that there was a very transformative group for men that was intended, in a way, to feminize or maternalize them and control every detail of their private lives, including the sexual arena. Herman herself would acknowledge the value of this interventional model. In a certain way, this author would say, these programs are destined to create a new man, although they utilize the methods of totalitarian systems in order to do it.

In Giarretto's program, the accused are invited to either admit to their crimes and thereby enter into the therapeutic program -- called the "Godfather offer" -- or, just continue denying it and risk going to prison and seeing their life destroyed. Nevertheless, in these cases, faith is placed in new methods for obtaining confessions or even statements from supposed victims. Given that the objective was treatment, the police would not have already sought statements from victims in the first instance -- because, moreover, it would be insisted again and again that that might traumatize them -- but were, rather, interviewing teachers and adult relatives of the latter with their statements being taken, in a certain way, as the declarations of the victim herself. Moreover, and this assumed a radical change in the customary judicial logic, the investigations were carried out more and more frequently by social worker\$ unaware of the rigor of a police or legal investigation.

If in spite of everything it did go to trial, there were ways to more readily ensure that the guilty were punished. Social groups and organizations such as sexual assault centers, often set up by feminists, worked with the justice system to more easily obtain a guilty verdict, for example via the facilitation of victim statements or enhancing their credibility as witnesses. Lastly, although only under the threat of a trial, the majority of the accused did confess. [E13] In this environment, it was not surprising that the word "denial" . would come to mean something different from what it had traditionally in the legal arena. Though he denied it, the accused was considered guilty. Little by little, denial of guilt on the part of the accused came to be seen as a sign that the suspicion was indeed true. Victims couldn't lie. A father who denied it was seen not only as someone who would not acknowledge his problems, but as someone who was refusing to fulfill his obligations with respect to his daughter; this was intolerable to those working to protect minors, especially psychologists and social workers.

In 1975, Giarretto's therapeutic model for combating incest was disseminated throughout the entire state of California, and would have shaped all of the techniques associated with child protection. The Godfather offer was [59] institutionalized statewide. It is in this context that the figure of Roland Summit arises with greater force, penning his work on the abuse accommodation syndrome and applauding Giarretto's therapy model, which helped to shape it. In his work, Summit would defend the notion that victims never misrepresent reality, however irrational their narratives might seem. Believing them is, for him, an imperative for every professional and for society generally. McFarlane is also interested in the subject and continues to finance the molding of professionals in the light of this interventional model which, by the

way, is also of great interest to conservative political groups. In a short space of time, hundreds of programs along these lines are rolled out throughout the country.

In 1980, as Nathan & Snedeker point out, the problem of incest is no longer the obscure and hushed subject that it was a decade earlier. Now it is the order of the day. Hundreds of victims accuse their fathers, who admit their abuse and enter into therapy programs; as many other victims and fathers appear on television programs, while magazines and the media devote articles to the topic. What, at the beginning, was a method with good intentions ended up generating a rising crest of social consciousness about the problem of abuse which, in turn, was degenerating into an ever more paranoid and irrational anxiety over sexual abuse which, moreover, was also being seen as more and more prevalent outside of the familial context. From there the phenomenon of ritual abuse or that of the recovered memory movement -- which I shall now analyze -- would only be a step away.

The Ritual Abuse Panic, or, Sexuality as Horror

During the 1970s a renewed political, professional, and social interest developed in the United States in the problem of child abuse, especially in that which had to do with physical mistreatment. A short time later, throughout the 1980s, the danger of sexual abuse would be added to the list, garnering ever greater popularity and professional interest. This process will be expounded upon in the following chapter, where I shall analyze the antecedents of the modern anxiety over the problem of abuse. But first I would like to review in some detail a social phenomenon belonging -- although not exclusively -- to the United States and which, in my opinion, will help us to much better understand the way that the subject of the sexual abuse of minors has been dealt with. It is a question, in the end, of a social reality which illustrates in graphic detail the modern connection between childhood, sexuality, and danger. [E14]

The United States, the Devil, and Abuse. In the United States of the 1980s, following the sexual revolution, the transformations of that era, and the social anxieties they generated, [60] a new model of social villainy would end up being defended: the Satanic abuser. This phenomenon, which we are going to characterize in generic terms like *ritual abuse*, would be a response to factors whose genesis, though difficult to pin down, was actively influenced by the new fundamentalist Christian movements as well as certain feminist groups, professionals charged with child protection, lawyers, prosecutors, and the police.

As early as the 1960s there had developed in the United States a culture of Satanism, that was reflected, for example, in the abundance of films on the topic; e.g., "The Exorcist." Some studies showed that a large percentage of the population believed in Satan, with that number increasing in subsequent decades. Located within that same context was the disproportionate social paranoia regarding sects, many of them borne out of the 1960s counterculture, which were accused of an endless series of atrocities -- many sexually-related -- and particularly of "brainwashing" the innocent young people who were its victims. This brainwashing theory was often used to justify all sorts of violent actions, such as kidnapping sect members or so called de-programming treatments. Every group that was considered to be a "cult" was swiftly demonized and attacked without any evidence that it had participated in any criminal act. Many of these groups were put in the same category as Satanists or witches. The fear was localized especially in

the young people who were deep into this world; the acts committed by them were often exaggerated, converting into an organized Satanic cult what had been merely a game.

Starting in 1970, according to Nathan & Snedker, a series of rumors began circulating throughout the entire country calling attention to the threats faced by American young people: psychopathic assassins, kidnappers, practitioners of the occult, pornographers, and abusers. These rumors, without any foundation at all or based on gross exaggerations of actual fact, received the uncritical attention of the media, politicians, feminists, psychotherapists, and child protection professionals. In the early 1980s a Republican administration would promote lines of inquiry into pornography and sexual abuse which would do nothing but further inflame these panics. Little by little, the notion was disseminated of an increase in the number of men who devoted themselves to abusing minors and the concept of a "sex ring" became generalized, denoting the existence of certain organized groups of pedophiles. .

Now to 1980, when rumors of Satanic abuse were initiated, promoted by Christian groups which spoke of Satanic assassins, fiendish perpetrators, or rock groups who were transmitting cryptic messages in their songs, which did not altogether sit well with the North American middle class. Nevertheless, the latter certainly did begin to lend credence to other growing rumors, such as the one about stranger abductions of children, child pornography networks, or Satanic groups in daycare centers; rumors that were likely to originate from conservative groups. To those one would add, without any reservation, feminists and anti-pornography groups. All of it would lead to the ritual abuse panic of the 1980s.

[61] *Ritual Abuse*. It was within that social context, in which sexuality had come to be seen as a source of danger associated with abuse, aggression, masculinity, and the devil that, in the early 1980s, there arose some particularly striking and bizarre cases that would later come to be seen as the first signs of a huge wave of ritual abuse accusations throughout the entire country. According to Nathan & Snedeker the initial cases, such as that of Mary Ann Barbour or the McMartin preschool, would arise or originate from women with evident signs of mental disturbance; in spite of this, both were later accepted as valid on the part of ostensibly trained professionals. Nevertheless starting with these cases, especially McMartin, a large number of cases began to emerge across the country. In all of these, the accused as well as their victims and family members were members of the lower-middle and working classes; frequently, though not always, it was a question of persons of dubious morality based on prevailing moral criteria, which increased the weight of suspicion.

In some of these cases, the more or less explicit accusation would come out of nowhere. In others it was a matter of accusations of sexual abuse that had arisen within familial disputes, or of more or less well-founded cases of pedophilia that had, nevertheless, been converted into investigations of supposed Satanic ritual abuse involving all sorts of atrocities. At the beginning of 1985 there would be four ongoing cases of supposed sexual abuse rings in Kern County, California alone, with a total of eight eventually being discovered in a jurisdiction of some 130,000 inhabitants. Within a few years, hundreds of cases would emerge throughout the country. Information about ritual abuse began spreading like a line of gunpowder between the forces of order. Notices and materials relating to ritual abuse and its detection and prosecution were showing up all across the country. The notion of a vast network of abusers who were

associated with drugs or child pornography began to establish itself in a generalized way among professionals in the justice system, the police, and social services. Any child could be a victim of abuse.

All of these cases were characterized, among other things, by a complete absence of any material proof of the alleged atrocities. Frequently the children initially denied that the acts took place, and it was only after the interviews with the police, attorneys, social workers, and therapists that the children began telling the stories which would end up being the only evidence. Any facial expression, word, behavior, or fear might be a sign of abuse, from a small rash in the genital area to seemingly erotic play. Lists of words were distributed that, when uttered by a child, could indicate ritual abuse -- "naked," "hitting," "airplane," , and "orange" were some of them -- as well as behaviors which likewise might lead one to suspect abuse: sucking their thumbs, nightmares, nocturnal fears, and fears of monsters, blood, or darkness.

Typically the children were very young, with scarcely any ability to understand and explain what had actually happened. The kinds of acts that were related [62] and the persons who were pointed to as being responsible for them were turning out to be, by any measure, incredible and irrational. From acts of cannibalism, orgies, and all kinds of sexual relations, to bestiality, invoking the devil, and Satanic songs and rituals; to transporting the victims by plane to other cities so that other groups of abusers could have their way with them; to the ingestion of feces and urine, child sacrifice, etc Any person could be pointed out: a teller at a bank that the child might visit, a fruit vendor, a policeman, a prominent politician, famous actors -- like Chuck Norris -- and even some of the therapists who were bringing the cases; although on those occasions, no credence was given to the children's assertions.

The absence of conventional evidence meant that it was the word of the accused against that of the accuser, the latter being elicited through suggestion or coercion, or the even more ambiguous conduct of those involved, which was used to prove the supposed ritual abuse. Prosecutors -- including Janet Reno, who became the most senior law enforcement official in the Clinton administration -- approved the use of suspect methods to obtain statements from those accused -- hypnosis and guided imagery -- not to mention frequently utilizing the sexual prejudices of North American society against suspects -- accusing them of promiscuity, homosexuality, licentiousness, etc The justice system, pressured by social movements such as certain feminist ones that were involved in a fanatical struggle against sexual aggression, accepted as valid experimental methods that had never been permitted previously: videotaping initial evaluations, videotaped statements, or debatable psychological evidence -- drawings, tests, playing with dolls. The emotion and pretensions of ideological combat supplanted reason and justice in penal proceedings: children's supposedly indisputable innocence is a good example of this. Often, those children who had kept quiet or didn't say anything about abuse were even silenced by the accusers themselves, or, their words were reinvented and recreated via the most sophisticated or the crudest of methods. The discourse of dissociation, which we will get to further below, was the ultimate way to explain victims' silence; this presumed PTSD [E1S] was the latest cause to be added to the struggle against male violence, for the illness itself implied a criticism of the latter.

The medical evidence of those pointed to as experts in the forensic detection of abuse was based on theories with no scientific foundation as to the signs that anal or vaginal penetration leave behind in children. Children's genitals were converted into objects of obsessive attention. These theories of the professionals who were investigating these cases were themselves subsequently discredited by numerous investigations.

The accused rarely confessed, and in the few cases where they did do so, it was following some suspect treatment or pressure from prosecutors and lawyers, the goal being to avoid a long prison sentence. Nevertheless many of the accusations did go to trial, generating multi-million-dollar investigations -- even including large-scale excavations looking for tunnels used by members of Satanic groups, or cemeteries where the remains of the bodies of sacrificed children or animals were buried -- with no [63] evidence ever being discovered. Some trials went on for years, and although in many of them the accused were eventually freed -- after spending several years in jail -- many others remained in prison for many years. Some would still be in jail in 1995, when Nathan & Snedeker published their investigation. Some sentences amounted to hundreds of years.

The Sexual Abuse Industry. Around this phenomenon there took form what Nathan & Snedeker (2001) and Money (1999) have called the ritual abuse industry, formed by professionals from various institutions involved in and charged with promoting the truth of ritual abuse, and therefore with molding professionals throughout the country to detect and prosecute it. This campaign was, in large measure, financed by the state through millions of dollars in grants to organizations devoted to child protection which were subsidizing research and programs of intervention. The government, via these grants of monetary assistance, clearly collaborated in fostering a belief in the truth of the abuse through investigative groups which would explicitly assume the finality of putting an end to the skepticism that these accusations were generating. Conferences, meetings, seminars, books, research, and pamphlets were some of the means used to convey the truth of ritual abuse to professionals. The FBI also got into the game, actively participating in publicizing ritual abuse as well as in training professionals of all types to detect and combat it.

Whatever skepticism did exist regarding these discourses was effectively neutralized by an organized professional system charged with promoting the theories of ritual abuse. Its principal representatives occupied important positions in public and professional organizations as well as pressure groups associated with child protection. Sexual abuse, thanks to the members of these organizations, became a leading story in magazines and television programs. Other social and professional organizations became sensitized to the subject. A new language sprang up around it in order to be able to speak in an apparently scientific manner about that which was fantastical, in order to be able to render the incredible credible. These groups and professionals were charged with combating what they regarded as society's unbearable skepticism towards abuse, akin to that surrounding the Jewish holocaust, which would impede it from coming to light. Among anti-abuse activists, especially feminists, the notion began to develop that one would have to rely on the truth of the abuse and that intervention into a case of abuse fundamentally looked for the victim to put things right and publicly disclose what had occurred.

In general, any skepticism towards these sorts of processes, as well as the methods utilized in these investigations and trials, was conspicuous by its absence. Rather, there appeared to exist an environment of credulity or generalized, indifference towards what was happening. Those who did raise their voices were persons or organizations that scarcely had the power even to be listened to. What was odd was that the most intense protests would often come [64] from conservative groups of the Christian right. Some authors, clearly favorable to that ideology, furiously criticized authorities' intervention in sexual abuse cases and the general way in which the family's privacy was being invaded. Their arguments were, logically, those of protecting this institution and attacking the feminists who, in their opinion, were the ones principally responsible for what was occurring there. There were also authors who came from the left, steadfast defenders of freedom of expression who were generally criticizing the entire child protection system, or, some doctor or researcher who was publicly questioning the validity of the physical indicators used to prove sexual abuse.

Nevertheless, the press and the media in general supported the discourse of paranoia, and those journalists who did criticize it were often taken off the story or had their professionalism questioned. Things were much worse for mental health professionals, who often saw their jobs, their research, their grants, or even their physical integrity threatened for condemning the ritual abuse paranoia. In concrete terms, it was an orchestrated, publicly funded effort which utilized multiple strategies in order to discredit those professionals who publicly -- including in the courts -- spoke out against the methods used in these cases. These professionals were presented as people who were speaking on behalf of the aggressors; materials would be distributed with instructions on how to respond to their arguments, or even how to tear their critics apart if they were ever qualified by any court as experts.

Over time there was an increase in the number and intensity of critics of these sorts of accusations, the methods of investigation utilized, the existing -- or non-existing -- evidence, and the trials and convictions. Letters were sent to politicians and civil servants on the subject of how to avoid these sorts of atrocities. Researchers began questioning all of the methods used to investigate and deal with the issue. Convictions were appealed and a steady stream of the accused were being released. Nevertheless, these absurdities, and their gradual disintegration, were not successful in provoking a new debate over real child protection. Many of those who were the principal promoters of this new danger would continue to occupy important positions in public organizations.

Though it is true that movement activists had to moderate their language, according to Nathan & Snedeker this only produced a kind of cosmetic change in which those aspects which might end up being sordid or improbable -- like references to Satan -- were burnished in order, on the one hand, to save the reputations of the many therapists who had backed that irrational message and, on the other, to maintain the ideas regarding sexual abuse that had been established within the child protection arena. In a way it was necessary to create a new, more reasonable demon which, moreover, would serve to express -- via the innocent voice of children -- women's grievances with regard to male sexual violence. The strategy was to transform the concept and the logic of Satanic ritual abuse into "sadistic abuse," which spoke of multiple perpetrators, multi-dimensional sex rings, or multiple victimization, and associated the phenomenon with murders in a series of similar phenomena. This, [65] in turn, would occur in the 1990s, a time

when another therapeutic process -- heir to the former and involving the same components -- would emerge with a vengeance.

The Recovered Memory Movement "If you think you were abused and your life shows the symptoms, then you were." (Bass & Davis, 1988, *The Courage to Heal*).

Essayists in the United States, such as Wendy Kaminer or Robert Hughes, have spoken in their work of what the latter author has called "the culture of complaint" (1994) in reference to certain social phenomena which transformed the social and political reality of that country in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and in which references to *victimization* were a recourse utilized more and more in every public or individual conflict. At that time, a culture flourished in which the "omnipresent recourse to victimism culminated in the traditionally ever so esteemed American culture of the therapeutic. Seeming strong could simply be hiding a teetering edifice of 'denying the evidence,' while to be vulnerable was to be invincible. Complaint gives you power, though that power does not go beyond emotional bribery or the creation of unfathomable levels of social culpability. Declare yourself innocent, and you are." (Hughes, 1994 p. 19).

Kaminer, who had apparently already written one work which was not well received in certain feminist circles, talked in one of her books about certain "irrationalisms" that seemed to emerge in that country. I am referring to her work *Sleeping with Extraterrestrials: The Boom in Irrationalism and the Dangers of Devotion* (2001). One of its chapters, entitled "The Therapeutic Assault on Reason and Rights," is dedicated exclusively to what she calls the *recovery movement* and the therapeutic culture which, she says, has given life to it. This movement, firmly wedded to the whole "self-help" discourse, was denounced by Kaminer for its essentially irrational character which "looks for the truth in revelation rather than through dialogue; prefers increasing individual self esteem over placing his or her ideas in doubt, and judges subjects under discussion based in part on the degree of passion with which they are expounded and in part on their presumed therapeutic effect. True beliefs are those which 'heal.'" (p. 228) Her commentaries on this social phenomenon, which apparently had to have been deeply enmeshed in that society -- and perhaps still, is -- is of interest to us because of its continual references to the explosive rise of the problem of child sexual abuse, which in this case would simply follow in the footsteps of the ritual abuse phenomenon. To quote the author herself, "one of the most destructive legacies of recovery therapy has been the practical sanctification of the testimonies of those who say they have been subjected to abuse." (Kaminer, 2001 p. 230).

It appears, then, that in that process which I have talked about already, because of the fact that the sexual is increasingly dealt with from the reference point of victimization, child sexual abuse, and particularly incest, also came to occupy a prominent position thanks to this therapeutic movement. Abuse, along with [66] pornography, Satanic rites, and occasionally extraterrestrials, got ensnared in the same thicket of social paranoia. Those persons who denied the veracity of accusations of sexual abuse in the context of Satanic rites were, in turn accused by its more radical spokespersons of belonging to a grand conspiracy meant to cover the tracks of beings from other planets as well as any comments on the conspiracy to conceal what the entire world was certain of: the staggering reality of sexual abuse and the presence of extraterrestrials on our planet. The very concealment itself was revealing its existence. A large portion of the United States apparently shared many of these beliefs.

A characteristic of these social processes, highlighted by both authors, is the progressive sacred status of victimization. "The ego is now the sacred cow of American culture and self-esteem is sacrosanct." (Hughes, 1994 p. 17) In Kaminer's opinion, the so-called recovery movement would have had to convert support for those who would be said to be victims of some sort of sexual abuse in childhood, especially of an incestuous type, into a banner for its own social message. With it the populace was invited to remember, be vigilant about, and denounce those past experiences which, moreover, many victims had been totally unconscious of because they would have had to systematically and subconsciously deny them. But the abuse, a concept which at the beginning was applied generically to any kind of pedagogical inadequacy -- from screaming on up to a slap, pushed down into the deepest reaches of one's being -- would destroy the victim's life without him or her ever knowing what it was. Recovering it from the past and bringing it out into the light was the only thing that could save him or her from that terrible fate.

Unconditional support for victims and their declarations were entering places where they should not have; the tribunals of justice, such that "a blind faith in the truth of almost all stories of abuse guaranteed maximum injustice: predictably, various persons were unjustly accused (many times of Satanism and of subjecting their victims to sexual abuse of a ritualistic nature), in what has rightly been compared to the proceedings against the witches of Salem." (Kaminer, 2001; 240). Many states promulgated laws allowing cases to be brought solely on the basis of these therapeutic discoveries, and some fathers were sued by their daughters subsequent to the latter reading some of the movement's handbooks or following the therapeutic process itself. Elements such as the presumption of innocence or the right to confront one's accuser were secondary to the well-being of the victim and the absolute confidence in his/her truth. Moreover, there would be what this author points to as a confusion between justice and therapy, because if, on the one hand, the "rights" of victims and absolute trust in them were to be emphasized, without any regard for the rights of the "accused," on the other hand, the therapeutic role that convicting the accused would have for the victim was also highlighted. It was, then, necessary to punish in order to "cure," though there would have been no clear proof that the accused was guilty.

Examples of famous cases in which sexual abuse, pornography, Satanic rituals, and recovered memories intertwine are plentiful in this text. The long trials which ended in the acquittal of the accused, the innocents who spent years in prison hoping that the case [67] would resolve itself, the convictions that were later overturned, the strange supernatural stories that were cropping up in all of these proceedings, and the revelations of abuse following anxious questioning of victims by professionals, lead this and others to speak of a new witch hunt. It is worth the effort, then, to carefully examine this surprising late-20th-century reality.

The Therapeutic Movement. As Nathan & Snedeker explain (2001 p. 45f), in the 1970s there would be renewed interest in Freud and the dissociation theory thanks to some authors who dealt with the issue of treatment from a feminist perspective. This was also thanks to other phenomena such as the emerging notion of "brainwashing," utilized by U.S. authorities to account for the way in which American prisoners were treated by the communists in Korea. Later, with McCarthyism, much of the focus of inquiry shifted to the area of hypnosis.

It would later be shown that what that produced was more in the nature of fantasy than anything else, although there would be people who were quite sensitive to it. This fact, the authors point out, was something that would have been known among clinical professionals prior to the 1970s, but from that point on there would be a rapid transformation in the creation and the professional development of therapies. These were poorly crafted, and would come out of a great number of schools whose scientific rigor was more than questionable. Moreover the field became, in a certain way, feminized; a characteristically male arena became filled with women, who were, moreover, transforming the way that therapy was done, going from a more aloof therapist-client model to one that was closer and more emotionally intense. In this context the emergence of a previous history of sexual abuse was not automatically questioned -- much less minimized -- on the part of the therapist, who was often participating from a feminist perspective.

From there, it was just a short step to multiple personalities; many of these cases of multiple personality would originate from individuals involved in fundamentalist Christian groups, who would have had their own theories about Satan and mental illness. Pazder, a therapist and co-author -- with her client -- of the book *Michelle Remembers* -- a classic of the recovery movement -- was a devout Catholic who was fond of the world of possession and exorcism. In 1981, one year after the publication of the book, Pazder spoke, for the first time, of "ritual abuse" in a paper presented to the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association. The number of ritual abuse cases was reflected in the rise in -- and the large number of -- professionals specializing in the subject of multiple personality, who were paving the way for what would come to be called the recovery movement.

For more than a decade, Ofshe & Watters (1996) [E17] point out, a significant portion of the American therapeutic community offered memory recovery therapy to the public at large, especially women, who [68] suffered from problems ranging from depression or headaches to schizophrenia or arthritis. Its specialists would defend the idea that these patients were burdened by childhood experiences of sexual abuse that had been subconsciously pushed down and denied. That repression of the memory was the source of their ailments, and therefore their therapeutic recovery was the best way to cure them. In a certain way, metaphorically speaking, the repressed traumatic memory ended up creating an abscess which the therapist would lance and drain using her techniques of hypnosis and the recovering and re-living of those events.

Ofshe & Watters characterize the advance of this movement in American society as chilling. Publications by professionals and patients alike increased by leaps and bounds, with the latter -- self-proclaimed survivors -- coming to be familiar fixtures on television programs. Professionals relied on an ever-increasing number of publications and specialized manuals that were very popular and which became part of college curricula, with the movement's teachings reaching a significant share of the students in areas related to the issue; numerous congresses, conferences, annual meetings, training seminars, and radio and television programs were put together. Therapies on offer proliferated, and came to occupy entire floors in prestigious hospitals, often underwritten by multi-million-dollar grants from insurance companies; add to that the astonishing number of therapists who were joining the movement and advertising their ability to recover repressed memories in newspapers and magazines, on the radio, and in telephone books. The lists of symptoms supposedly associated with abuse, and which would be

interpreted as signs of its subconsciously denied existence, would encompass some twenty-five indicators of previous abuse. The authors cite the fact that, recently, the impresarios of recovered memory have started conducting professional seminars and selling their books in Europe.

To its defenders, it was a question of a new discovery that has opened the doors to recent advances in understanding the human mind and even the society in general which, to some, also had to be cured of its forgotten memories. Nevertheless, to Ofshe & Watters, it was a matter of a therapeutic modality based on a pseudo-science whereby fiction and reality were dangerously conflated, in the same way that patients' imaginings and memories got intermingled, converting into memories what had not been so previously. If their thesis is correct, they assert, it would demonstrate not so much that America is on the verge of crumbling under the weight of such a broad range of abusive and Satanic vices, but rather, that the therapists predisposed to believe in these mechanisms could come to believe in their patients' false memories.

For Ofshe & Watters, the new modality of recovered memory simply corresponds to a classic thread running through Western psychotherapy, because its premises -- like that of the power to find in childhood the roots of a current problem -- would already have existed. From their point of view, this movement has, once again, taken stock of how psychotherapy is able to adapt itself to -- or take part in -- the social phobias and interests of the moment. They are thus referring to how the feminist or 'self-help' movements, or the rising interest in child protection, are obviously social [69] and political mechanisms which have facilitated the development of this therapeutic model. In the 1980s, everything sexual was re-converted into an object of social anxiety related to the victimization of women and children via phenomena such as rape and, in particular, child sexual abuse. The recovery movement is more of an example of how science and ideology of social interest can easily degenerate into a clearly dangerous game of power politics.

The Courage to Heal: Survivors of Sexual Abuse.

Many times the awareness that one was a victim of sexual abuse begins with a small feeling, a sense, an intuition. It is important to trust that inner voice and work from there. Assume that the feelings are valid. It is rare for a person to believe that he or she had suffered sexual abuse, and then subsequently discover that this was not the case. The typical progression is just the opposite, from suspicion to confirmation. If you truly believe that they did abuse you, and your life shows the symptoms, there is a high probability that that is what happened. If you are not sure, keep an open mind and be patient with yourself about it. In time you will see more clearly. (Bass & Davis, 1995. *The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Sexual Abuse in Childhood* p. 33).

This book, the most representative of the movement, which ended up selling some 750,000 copies, counted among its central objectives encouraging these victims, oddly blind to their condition, to escape from that self-deception and to congratulate them for their bravery. In this work, originally published in 1988, its authors manifest the elemental principles of what would later come to be called the *recovered memory movement*, in which sexual abuse experiences in childhood take on a role that, up until that time, had never been seen before.

Among the assumptions of these hypotheses we come across one central premise: the movement's defenders conceive of the minds of children and teenagers as having the capacity to repress repeated experiences of sexual abuse for years or decades, with no possibility of consciously remembering them until the person is ready to recover them and is actually capable of doing so. During all of this time the memories remain frozen. The majority of women victims of incest would have repressed their experiences in just that way, one of children's principal psychological mechanisms for dealing with the abuse experience. In contrast to what would happen in the treatment of victims of sexual assault or of persons who were conscious of having suffered some sort of abuse in the past, the norms of this therapeutic model would insist that the patients had to be totally unaware of having suffered these experiences, even to the point of otherwise openly rejecting any suggestion of therapy.

Recovering these hidden memories from the deepest reaches of the mind is the only really valid road to completely curing victims who would otherwise reap -- for the rest of their lives -- the consequences of that experience, manifested in a wide variety of symptoms. [70] In the face of the ineffable suffering that is said, by these authors, to be part and parcel of having been a victim of abuse, the proposed therapeutic model promises the radical transformation of the *victim* into a *survivor*, of one type of person into a completely different one:

At the end of the trip through her memories, she will emerge more serene than she had ever thought possible. Reaching the wounded child within, learning how to play and how to trust your inner voice or intuition. Having an energized core self comes from "reparenting" yourself and discovering a state of self-love. This is the basis for allowing love into your life and developing the capacity for intimacy. Survivors have become excellent therapists, sensitive doctors, ground-breaking reporters, perceptive parents, compassionate friends. Other survivors have developed psychic abilities from their sensitivity (Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 113). [E18]

By any reckoning exaggerated and false, and almost mystical, the results promised augur a new person, pure and sanctified. By accepting the abuse, the patient becomes a member of a new social group: that of victim/survivors, thereby breaking the ties that had bound them to that other group -- the family. Those ties would disappear not just metaphorically but literally, with the severing of all contact with and even confronting that family in court, where its members will be adjudged either guilty or not guilty of the abuse. The new family will be composed of the therapist and often support groups, whose members will begin supporting one another beyond the therapeutic context; in addition to belonging to a larger community of abuse survivors.

Nevertheless, the sanctification of the victim continues to rely on a certain martyrdom dimension. In a definite way, the victim is transmuted into a martyr who has to joyfully suffer the inexpressible in the service of her existential transformation from victim to survivor. Unmitigated suffering as a phase necessary for transformation, a sort of glorification of self-destructive behavior. Those who hurt themselves are seen as persons with special honor, with a mysterious trait that confers to them ineffable power. Difficulties should not be avoided or done away with but, rather, embraced, recognized, and valued. Female pain is reappraised in the same way that it was, according to these authors, with the women of the 19th century. There thus occurs a sort of rebirth of the victim following a kind of ritual "death" based on pain.

In this process, which might last for many years, - the therapist adopts the form of a shaman who is "accompanying" -- though in reality, would direct or construct -- the patient in her journey into the past in order to reconstruct her future and her recollection. The relationship between therapist and patient was very intense, as was the latter's emotional dependence on the former. In this context, the classic power relationship between the two took on far more serious connotations. The therapist was invested with a quasi-magical aura that would make her a possessor of knowledge and abilities which would allow her to completely dominate that journey to the *great truth* hidden in the victim's past. Like never before, the therapist was converted into the absolute sovereign of the healing process.

Patients could fall into three kinds of categories, perhaps combining [71] aspects of each. In the first category were patients who would come out of therapy vividly recalling experiences of sexual abuse in childhood, onetime or repeated events, often perpetrated by their fathers or other family members. The second category would include victims of abuse which occurred in the context of Satanic rituals, which were considered more or less common, and which would include cases of cannibalism. The third would relate to those cases in which the patient ended up being diagnosed with Multiple Personality Syndrome. We will examine each of these.

In the first place, it is necessary to point out how the concept of memory and recollection was broadly transformed in order to make room for all sorts of behaviors, sensations, reactions, emotions, or ideas that were duly interpreted as memories of abuse. Therefore, experiences such as a sensation of displeasure when your father gives you a hug, a feeling similar to that of a frightened child, dreams, nightmares', anxiety when visiting the family, etc., are reinterpreted as clear indications of previous abuse, as recollections of it. Our concept of memory, these therapists would say, is too limited, and it is necessary to broaden it. Even a drawing made by a patient could be reinterpreted as the emergence of a dormant memory. Anything might be a memory of abuse, a memory which would not only tell you that you had suffered abuse, but many times would show you who would have committed it.

Nevertheless, it is not only a question of re-labeling some of the patient's emotions, behaviors, sensations, etc. as valid memories. The problem often consists of recovering memories that are dormant or hidden in one's innermost recesses. The methods indicated are diverse: from writing or drawing with the non-dominant hand on up to psychodrama. It is often necessary to initiate a process whereby the patient "believes" that she could have suffered abuse yet still remembers absolutely nothing, and this paves the way for bringing terrible and hidden experiences to light. Therefore, "believing" in the abuse precedes finding "proof" of it in the patient's past. Therapeutic strategies are pursued that are designed to present to the patient that particular vision of her current problem, relating it to something that had happened in childhood, something probably related to sexual abuse.

Little by little the therapist continues to indoctrinate the patient, until the latter is ready to construct that whole new vision of her past. If the patient refuses to believe in that possibility, that is a sign, on the one hand, that one will have to proceed cautiously with that patient, and on the other, that it is more likely that abuse really did occur. Resistance to believing in this possibility is an interesting indication of its correctness. Denial of the abuse, characteristic of

these patients at the beginning of the process is, to these memory theorists, the most intense indication that the abuse really did happen, and under no circumstances is this treated as a true recollection of what actually did occur: nothing. Unbelief is a sign of certainty. The therapist should work to eliminate any vestige of doubt in the client as to whether she was abused. As Bass & Davis would suggest, if one has even the slightest inkling that abuse occurred, [72] then it did.

Once the patient has accepted the hypothesis and is motivated to continue with the process of extracting the hidden memory, the mechanisms available are also diverse. From focusing on a specific sensation to writing an imaginary story where the patient is a victim of abuse, on to reading material relating to incest, hypnosis, or sharing experiences with survivors of those acts, the therapy strategies are varied. The entire process, Of she & Watters point out, is oriented towards reconstructing the presumed abuse, although it would be more correct to speak of it being created out of nothing.

A young woman who recalls her childhood as being happy and her father as a good person ends up believing that her childhood was a horror show and that her father was a monster who abused her, all thanks to a therapist's suggestions. One constructs not only a recollection of the abuse suffered but a whole reformulation of a past in which that abuse may have taken place. A negative image of the family, of friends, of school, of what was missing. All of her previous life is reinterpreted in the light of incest, and the view that she would have had of the former prior to therapy is seen as a self-invented fantasy -- even the fear incited in her by the movie "King Kong" or her dismay at or annoyance with her own political party become recollections viewed in this light. The description of the following case is replete with multiple examples of how any detail can be reinterpreted in terms of that abuse. One such example: Annoyance with a political party is interpreted as a memory of a man who wanted "to put something in her mouth."

Second, "Satanic Abuse"

Ofshe & Watters tell the story of a forty-something woman, a worker at a crisis center for victims of sexual assault, who enters into therapy due to work related problems, which ends up leading to the recollection of a sexual abuse experience. It is interesting how the authors explain the way in which the images of the abuse emerged into her consciousness little by little, and how, in this process, all of the literature on recovered memories of abuse -- which she would have been very familiar with prior to beginning therapy due to her work, which she subsequently became much more familiar with -- played an important role. The abuse, the authors explain, as recalled by the patient some five years previous to this point -- reviving experiences that took place when she was just a year old -- ended up being perpetrated not only by the father but also by the mother, who actively participated in it; sometimes the family dog would participate as well, which was, in turn, "raped" by the father or compelled to lick the daughter's genitals. For all of the atrocious images that would come to mind of the most variegated moments from her day-to-day life -- including the one in which her father compels her to eat her own feces -- neither she nor the therapist ever doubted the validity of those images of walled-off experiences in her childhood. And then the story got complicates in some unimaginable ways. Two of her six sisters, after she reunited

with and told them the truth, likewise recalled experiences of abuse; the number of perpetrators went up, encompassing the family dentist and one of the doctors who worked with her father. She thought she remembered how her father would put her in a coffin and close the lid, or how he compelled her to make things out of the body of a dead girl. This transformed itself until it was converted into a perfect and insatiable sexual perversion, which would include sadomasochism, torture with surgical instruments, and all sorts of sexual relations. The patient recalled having seen her father having sexual relations with boys and girls of all ages, women, prostitutes, and all [73] kinds of animals. She accused her father in front of judges, who compelled him to compensate her with a sum of money – which is not what she wanted – relying above all on the declaration of her other two sisters, who certainly would have remembered "something." The most recent memories of abuse would include images associated with Satanic rites (Ofshe & Watters, pp. 123-138).

In the therapeutic process there is typically a continuous escalation in the gravity of the memories because, oftentimes, no improvement in the patient is seen following the initial "recovered memories," which leads to a need to create -- if there is still room -- new recollections even more terrible than the previous ones, resulting in all sorts of Satanic atrocities: diabolical rituals, sacrifices, cannibalism, orgies, murder, rape, bestiality, etc. From 15% to 50% of this therapeutic model's clients have related these sorts of experiences, and in one state, laws have been promulgated specifically condemning these kinds of practices. Twelve percent of therapists have acknowledged having treated one or more of these patients; some of them, dozens or even hundreds. Many prominent members of the therapeutic world affirm that they believe in this type of abuse, and have written supposedly "serious" works about it. As would occur with ritual abuse, what lay behind these phenomena is a belief that these sorts of rituals have existed for a long time and have maintained their anonymity thanks to their perpetrators' magical and strange powers, which have allowed them to commit all sorts of atrocities without being discovered and eliminated. Complementing what would be said as well as seen in cases of ritual abuse, it was asserted that victims would have suffered a process of programming which led them to always deny the facts, even compelling them to commit suicide.

The media published stories of this nature uncritically and without confirming what they were saying; the police accepted hundreds of accusations of this type and carried out wide-ranging and costly investigations along those lines without finding even one single indication that would demonstrate that those sorts of cults actually exist. The evidence was thin, and it was turning out to be difficult for the movement's mentors to defend their assertions regarding, as well as maintain their confidence in, the veracity of the facts related. What was odd -- as they themselves would acknowledge -- was that patients rarely came into therapy with memories of having suffered ritual abuse, and it was during this process that those memories emerged into consciousness. Once the therapeutic process is initiated, many times with the aid of hypnosis, the construction of the ritual abuse is similar to the pattern that would be followed in the reconstruction of any kind of sexual abuse.

As Ofshe & Watters explain, accounts of ritual abuse, by any reckoning false, exaggerated, and above all without the slightest clear evidence -- as in the case of extraterrestrials -- are the Achilles heel of the recovery movement. The problem is that its

promoters cannot deny the veracity of the same because then they would have to acknowledge that their therapeutic methods have created false stories. It is an orthodoxy which continues to proceed based on the assumption that all of the therapy memories are true. When the defenders of these therapies are asked to provide evidence for what they are saying, they respond with the principle that their job is not to prove anything, but to help the victims. "Believing the children" is converted into the point of [74] departure for their entire discourse. Only those who believe in Satanic cults and in the existence of that abuse are allowed to accept the victims of those acts as clients. According to the movement's defenders, the important thing is that every victim has the right to reconstruct his/her past as he/she wishes; but the concern is that reconstruction blurs the boundary between the real and the unreal. The question as to what actually occurred gets replaced by "How do you feel?"

The psychologist Cory Hammond, a university professor and recognized researcher in this field, broke his silence -- according to him -- at the risk of his own life in 1992 at the fourth annual regional conference on abuse and multiple personality. In said exposition, Hammond explained in detail the true Satanic conspiracy hidden behind all of these acts, encompassing the Nazis, the CIA, NASA, and the media in an intricate, diabolical network in which sexual abuse is only the tip of a terrible subterranean world. Hammond expounded upon a complex theory, according to which the members of that mysterious Satanic network regularly carried out all sorts of Satanic rituals where, in addition to abusing the children, they sacrifice and even occasionally eat them as well. Those who participate in them are programmed to forget what happened, conceal it, or even kill themselves. The elucidated theory related by this author has of course not the slightest solid foundation; but curiously, according to Of she & Watters, its enormous influence on a multitude of therapies and hundreds of treatments carried out on patients who were supposedly victims of these acts is quite evident. That 1992 conference, which has been followed up by many others, was attended by hundreds of therapists who applauded his words, subsequently recognized as a text of pedagogical value by the American Medical Association.

Of course, authors' inevitable observations of a parallel between this phenomenon of ritual abuse and what occurred in other eras, such as witch hunts, are legion. What is odd is that the movement's defenders themselves utilize those phenomena as antecedents of the same cult that is now being discovered. Instead of being critically analyzed, those fears function as confirmatory evidence for those of the present day, as if they were successive manifestations of the same reality, with characteristics common to all eras. The absence of evidence, and the nonsense which would typically accompany those earlier as well as present-day accusations, lead the movement's defenders not to present better arguments in defense of their position but rather to destroy the position -- and above all the image -- of those who accuse them of naiveté, deceit, and stupidity. These critics are immediately accused of being on the side of pedophiles, rapists, Satanists, and other misogynists who are against women and victims. The other option is to think that those who deny or at least doubt these facts are a part of the population which is still not ready to confront that terrible truth. It is the recourse to denial which has been typical throughout history, and which all authors who have written about abuse point out in their works: Child sexual abuse has always been denied, concealed. It is a sign of inferior moral courage, a bravery which, in turn, is immediately bestowed upon those who certainly do steadfastly defend the veracity of these atrocities. [75]

Third: Multiple Personality Disorder

One of the most extreme syndromes associated with the problem of child sexual abuse has been that of multiple personality disorder (MPD) or, if you prefer, disassociative identity disorder (DID). The basic logic is simple: The trauma of the abuse experience leads the victim to split his or her identity into new personalities, thereby rendering the horror more "bearable." As Bass & Davis assert in their book *The Courage to Heal*, virtually all persons who suffer from multiple personality would have suffered severe abuse in childhood. Even many therapists regard each personality as bringing with it its own package of abusive experiences.

Hand-in-hand with memory recovery therapy, diagnoses of multiple personality have increased tremendously in the last ten years. If as of 1979 there would have been a few dozen diagnosed cases of multiple personality in the entire history of medicine, since 1980, thousands of recovered memory patients have been diagnosed as being stricken with multiple personalities. According to one recognized expert on the issue, around 1% of the population meets the criteria for this diagnosis; this means that in the United States alone there would be two million people with multiple personality (Ofshe & Watters, 1996; 206).

Ofshe & Watters critically analyze this supposed disorder, coming to the same conclusion as in the case of past sexual abuse narratives: Everything seems to point to the fact that it is the therapist who carried out a complex and subtle process of suggestion with the patient, thereby creating a series of variegated "personalities" that might include persons of different ages and genders, or even animals. Some researchers have suggested that there is every possibility that not even a single case of MPD has emerged in adults spontaneously and outside of a treatment which, probably, would have provoked it. Therefore the disorder does not exist per se, but rather is created by the therapists themselves.

The described effects of these therapies are off the charts. In many cases problems related to multiple personality are intertwined with the Satanic conspiracy already described above. Many experts rushed to defend the notion that behind all of this is the CIA, which relies on a program where children are mistreated in a thousand different ways in order to create adults with multiple personality. This was asserted by a noted author in the MPD field who, in turn, has served as the president of an association for the study of this disorder which has more than three thousand members. Of course, the whole position of attempting to demonstrate that multiple personality is nothing but a grotesque degeneration of the therapeutic process is quickly rejected as being part and parcel of said conspiracy.

The Phenomenon at Present. I have already noted in general terms the rapid rise of the recovery movement at the beginning of the 1990s, [76] following in the wake of the panics over ritual abuse. Its social success was reflected in aspects such as the progressive appearance of laws which would allow legal processes to be initiated based solely on memories of abuse recovered during therapy, the increase therefore in accusations of abuse encouraged by therapists and opportunistic civil attorneys, the millions of dollars shelled out by insurance companies to pay for costly therapeutic treatments, etc. The recovery movement, in turn, occupied a preferential and ever more influential position in the whole mental health field -- Ofshe &

Watters cite their influence on the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Association of Social Workers, as well as the great promise for professional development and advancement.

Now, they say in 1996, things have changed. They point to an obvious crisis in the whole recovery discourse and the beginning of a marked rejection by society in general and professional groups in particular which, little by little, is pointing out the pitfalls of this phenomenon. The movement's defenders have been ever more vigorously silenced, and many have been obliged to acknowledge their own fall from grace. Recognized movement authors, once media regulars, now scarcely ever appear in it, and their theories are often publicly ridiculed. Some authors, like Bass or Herman, now even admit that they may have created false memories, something which previously was absolutely impossible to acknowledge. One noted defender of the movement, who at one time had passionately highlighted the whole subject of ritual abuse and the worldwide conspiracy to control the world through the programming of children -- including the CIA -- wrote a letter in which he lamented the image of it that had been put out there, and rejected a large part of all that it was evidently capable of doing.

All of these concessions regarding possible errors are nothing -- in these critics' judgment -- but convenient ways of avoiding responsibility, casting the blame on the bad professional practices of certain individuals who had received inadequate training. Therefore on the whole things remain rather unclear, and concepts like dissociation or repression continue to exist and be accepted in the arenas of psychology and psychiatry. We should not forget, these authors say, that behind all of this have been three prestigious professional organizations -- those already cited -- which have protected the recovery movement, without accepting any sort of responsibility for what occurred. One central question arises in the last pages of their work: Why haven't the professional groups directly involved in the phenomenon -- psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers -- generally questioned these therapists' surprising proposals and practices? The answer seems conclusive: evidently that it is a question of protecting the entire group and its interests. No one, they say, is going to question their status by accusing a portion of their own profession. It is, curiously, physicians who have pointed to there being some risk along these lines, precisely because they do not belong to this field of intervention.

Lawsuits against therapists on the part of patients' family [77] members or even the patients themselves have, surprisingly, progressively increased, and the outlook for the future is that they will continue to do so. In many cases the judgments imposed against therapists have been in the millions. Some judges have issued opinions in which the scientific validity of the proposals defended by the recovery movement are clearly questioned, and in numerous cases the movement's victims, the patients themselves, have gone back to their supposedly abusive families and reconciled with them.

Nevertheless, although these authors do acknowledge the fact that many professionals have pointed out the tremendous errors involved and the great harm that is being done to many persons, the discourse's broad social acceptance and its proliferation in various professional arenas seems to augur a future that is not at all that promising for those who are critics of this phenomenon. A lot of data point to the fact that society and those who govern it appear to be generally disposed to accept these ideas, including in its laws. The phenomenon of the recovery

movement and its collapse, these authors assert, has helped to shed some light on the facade which obscures the entire field of mental health. If there is not a positive and clear change to a different framework, one more grounded in scientific understanding of some other phenomena with similar characteristics, it is possible that this could happen again.

Conclusion: Historical Context and Social Danger

Whereas in the 18th century the anti-sexual doctrine of onanism begins in Europe and emigrates to America, in the 20th century the emigration of the Satanism doctrine of sexual abuse has followed a different path. It is not that America has exported its anti-sexualism, but rather, that the way has been paved for anti-sexualism in other countries by the same technological and demographic changes that had first paved the way for anti-sexualism in America (Money, 199 p. 29)

This entire process, which I have been fleshing out in the preceding pages, unfolded first and foremost in countries like the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. We are undoubtedly talking about countries with a common heritage in terms of conservatism, Protestantism, and Puritanism. I have described that conservative surge in the United States in some detail, and have suggested -- as Money had already -- its relationship to the modern configuration of sex as danger. Nevertheless, we have not gone into the possible historical explanations for this reality.

What interpretation to give to this whole social phenomenon so characteristic of present-day America? Although I shall return to this question in the final chapter, for the moment I would like to put forward a few basic ideas. In the first place, according to Canaque (1988), the most reasonable hypothesis is that all of these phenomena -- referring now to the American fundamentalism, nativism, and new right of the 1980s -- are part and parcel of a rural America in which the descendants of the first European colonists would have been [78] observing how the world -- especially that which relates to morality and values -- had been disintegrating at a disconcerting velocity throughout the whole of the 20th century. It is within those social contexts that the radical discourse of the new Christian right would have had the most success. The cosmopolitan and the urban were associated with the progress of modernity and the devil, whereas Protestants themselves, in their rural world, would have felt like immigrants in their own land where, much to their chagrin, religion was coming to occupy a more and more secondary role. Intent on escaping from this social marginality they adopted a bellicose posture based on paranoia, pessimism, extremism, and intellectual isolation. Perhaps this might account for a portion of the already-described Satanic ritual phenomenon that spread throughout the entire country.

Secondly, Carleque closes his work with a barely sketched-out hypothesis which strikes me as interesting. He refers to the so-called culture of narcissism with which this conservative religious movement is associated. In this culture, according to Lasch's theory, the "me" cult is associated with the need to produce heroes that is so characteristic of American society, so that one can then live vicariously through them. This might also account for the generation of that new hero from this moment on. I am referring to the "victim" as a new consecrated object. A victim who, curiously, would now be defined not in terms of theft, aggression, poverty,

marginalization, illness, social oppression, or state-sponsored violence but an imagined assault on one's rights, identity, fragile dignity, or sensitivity.

In fact, according to Krauthammer (1994), what occurs in the United States in those years is what he calls a redefinition of deviance on the rise. Moynihan would denounce this as an astonishing denial of the obvious increase in social problems like criminality, family disintegration or mental illness, which had been interpreted as phenomena within the range of normality and therefore excluded from social or political anxieties. In a similar vein, Krauthammer denounces a process by which what is normal or secondary is reinterpreted as deviant. In concrete terms he is referring to three emergent phenomena: the expanded concept of rape, child maltreatment within the family -- where he makes special reference to sexual abuse and the recovery movement -- and the discourse of the politically-correct which is capable of criminalizing virtually any gesture imaginable.

The resort to victimism, as we have already mentioned, became common not only among certain feminist groups but also among other groups, such as ethnic minorities. Tzvetan Todorov (1988) [E19] tells of how the presence of a transformation in social values in the United States in the 1990s became evident to him. Said change would relate, above all, to a retreat from certain democratic values, particularly' the value of autonomy. According to this author the defining feature of democracies -- in terms of how its citizens see themselves as well as how they relate to others -- is that each person is responsible for his or her own fate. Autonomy is, therefore, a value sought-after and desired by the individuals who are a part of those democratic societies, something which, in the United States, would appear to be on the decline.

[79] The initial form of autonomy's renunciation – Todorov points out – concerns isolated individuals; it consists of their systematically thinking of themselves as not responsible for their own destiny, in thinking to themselves, to put it another way, as victims. All European visitors are astonished by this characteristic of American life. Here, one can always lay the blame at the feet of factors beyond the error of one's own life. ... In criminal proceedings, the main line of defense appears to be as follows: I am a former victim, was abused by my parents for years, so now I have the right to liquidate them (or to haul them before the justice system for all the bad things they did to me); my husband hits me, and that's why I castrated him. If I am not happy at the present time, my parents' past action are to blame. Although at the present moment it's society's fault. ... The only remaining question is whether, in order to obtain redress, I should get a lawyer, or a psychotherapist (Todorov, 1998 p. 259).

Taking upon oneself the role of victim, for all of its disadvantages and disagreeable aspects, turns out to be quite attractive to many people. It gives one the right to protest to and complain to others, with the latter feeling compelled to accede to their claims. The victim's object is not simply to obtain redress; it is oftentimes a question of being a victim for life. Moreover, Todorov points out, victimism is not limited to the private sphere; it is on the public stage that the "heroic ideal has been replaced by the victimistic ideal." Justice is, in turn, replaced by compassion, because it has been established that being weak is reason enough.

In this process, exalting victimization goes hand-in-hand with individuals identifying with the victim group to which they belong. It is the collective victimization to which individuals belonging to said groups are added. Blacks or women are some of these groups. It is within that logic of political and social thinking that Todorov situates the phenomenon of "sexual harassment," whose pursuit would have led, in his opinion, to manifest absurdities such as the power to denounce someone simply because they make us feel uncomfortable, as in the case of blacks or women. Witch hunts, asserts this author, the call to accusation, "rousing the ghosts of the 'offended'" (1998; 257) are the reality which flows from this discourse. In the opinion of authors like Todorov, Kaminer, or Hughes, all of these phenomena are nothing but a retreat from the advances of democracy and individual liberty, a renunciation of one's own autonomy.

That's what this process is responsible for. Todorov rejects any comparison of it with totalitarian regimes, or any talk of "soft totalitarianism." Nor would it be a question of simply returning to more traditional values. Rather, he emphasizes that the key is within the individuals who themselves -- not their governments -- choose the victimized road. The phenomenon is, instead, a perversion of, an exaggeration of, or a deviation from modern values. The ideals of justice, autonomy, and liberty, in addition to the possibility of obtaining reparations for offenses endured, are precisely the source of the problem. It is a paradoxical consequence of it being poorly carried out. Though the intentions may have been legitimate, the results were disastrous. (Todorov, 1998; 278)

Lipovetsky (2000c) suggests something similar in his analysis of the American feminist discourses of those years, and of the politics of [80] combating the expansive concept of "sexual assault." With regard to the "victimistic obsession," Lipovetsky refers to the way in which sex went from being a private matter to being a key political mechanism in the patriarchal structure. American feminism had a lot to do with that new surge of victimism, or at least palpably took advantage of it in order to mount a counter-attack on the established patriarchal order. Their accusations of rape, harassment, abuse, domestic violence, etc., culminated the historical process by which the private came to be political.

The problem, Lipovetsky points out, is that if violence against women is an undeniable reality, the definitions and statistics contributed by the feminists are not so much. The concepts of rape, harassment, assault, and abuse were broadened to ridiculous extremes, which led to the dissemination of terrifying and apocalyptic statistics concerning the problem. (2000c p. 65) Relations between the sexes, for example in the collegiate arena, came to be regulated via absurd protocols for politically correct behavior. Lipovetsky adopts a position similar to that of Todorov, whom he cites, in order to look for the origin of this phenomenon in American democratic ideals themselves. The endless search for autonomy, for individual liberty, for respect for one's rights, for compensation for wrongs suffered; the notion of society as a community based on the contract, on mutual agreement, on an equilibrium between the strong and the weak, etc., are the elements which would account for those extremes. This would, therefore, be a product of the judicialization of interpersonal relations in ways that were unimaginable prior to that time. To this, this author suggests, we must add the recent configuration of American society as a democracy of minorities in which various social groups -- organized by race, nationality, culture, or gender -- coexist with difficulty in a fragmented society. The politics of identity which derive from said phenomenon would, therefore, account for the extremes of feminist discourse in the

last decades of the 20th century, where the differences between groups -- in this case between the sexes -- are, along with suspicions and recriminations, exaggerated.

In this sense, Lipovetsky rejects any explanation of the phenomenon in terms of that country's tradition of Puritanism. In the first place, he points out, feminist discourses concerning sexual violence, in all of their forms and shades, are allegations not so much against sexual pleasure per se as against the relationships of power which might be implicit in said relationships. Their condemnation of sexual harassment on the job or at college does not seek to put an end to pleasant erotic relations between the sexes, but to regulate them and render them transparent in order to avoid any sort of hierarchical relationship. The regulation of sexual relations between the sexes, which calls for any consent to be made explicitly at every step of the interaction, seeks not to criminalize pleasure but to make absolute equality its guiding principle. The battles against pornography are directed at the patriarchal power that is hidden behind its messages, not against the potential pleasure that it might generate in individuals. The Puritan heritage endures and is difficult to eliminate, Lipovetsky asserts; but it does not explain the phenomenon analyzed here.

He may be right to argue that we cannot attribute everything that has [81] happened to either the aforementioned Puritan tradition or the powerful resurgence of the "New Christian Right," but this does not mean that we should not take their role into account. And there is, in fact, another reason why we cannot attribute what happened here to the right: the left, or the more progressive voices, have also had a lot to say along these lines. It may be that it is not simply a question of a modern criminalization of sex, eroticism, or pleasure, as Money would suggest; but that did have something to do with it. In fact, Lipovetsky neglects the alliances which we have analyzed between the feminist movement and the New Christian Right, or between the former's anti -pornography crusade and the Reagan administration's agenda against abortion, homosexuality, and sex education. Neither does he note the temporal coincidence with the problem of AIDS and the social meanings which this took on. It is possible that in the origin of that whole historical process we do not simply find a rejection of sex and its pleasures per se; but among its consequences, intended or not, we can hardly help but observe a modern perception of sex as threat. A reality which has brought it to the fore once again, shining a light on its darkest side, and also concealing and corraling the positive aspects that it can have for human beings.

I began this chapter by relating an experience I had in Guatemala which, in my opinion, merits being presented in order to serve as an illustration of the imposition of a danger. I would suggest that that event, which I was able to witness, was definitely a reflection, on a small scale, of the process by which abuse was localized as a grave problem requiring drastic and immediate intervention. The social context within which the successful branding of sexual abuse took place was characterized, among other things, by a modern conceptualization of sex -- and everything related to it -- as a potentially harmful reality, particularly when it takes the form of trauma in childhood.

As of this point, I have carried out a brief review of what I consider to be the important factors of that new wave of anti-sexualism, as Money would put it, which would have invaded the United States, Canada, and Great Britain beginning in the 1980s. I have said nothing about

Europe or our own country, Spain. It would appear that here, we are somewhat calmer than the United States with regard to the emergence of those social discourses and the dangers which they proclaim. In fact Lipovetsky defends the need to speak of an "American exception," given that the extremes which have taken place in that country would not appear to have the potential to take shape in other places in the world, much less in Europe. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge that we are heir to those fears, although we have managed to regard and handle them differently than has been the case in the United States.

From the effects of AIDS to the Satanic paranoia already described, on to the battles against pornography, a portion of the West has abetted a progressive process of the criminalization of a large portion of that which has to do with the sexual. I have, moreover, pointed out, as Money would suggest and which we have had a chance to see for ourselves, that the problem of child sexual abuse has played a prominent role in that transformation. In this historical process, in which it has been difficult to know at what stage we currently find ourselves, there have been many groups and ideologies whose interests have been in play, many of them [82] valid and others less so, making it difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff. There has also been a lot that has been said about the problem of abuse; here we are faced with the same difficulties in sifting out what is reasonable from that which is rather less so. Far too frequently, the attitudes which have been adopted have walked a fine line between reason and irrationality, common sense and fanaticism.

The reality is that I do not know the impact that the described phenomena of ritual abuse or the recovery movement managed to have on that country. Lipovetsky and Todorov do not cite them in their analyses; it could be that they will not show up in the history books either, although Krauthammer does cite them in his brief outline of the new concept of deviance in the United States. Others, like Money, Kaminer, Nathan, Snedeker, Victor, Ofshe, and Watters are insistent regarding the important dimensions and social consequences that they have come to have in that country.

In any event, if we observe its principle features, it is evident that the aforementioned phenomena share the same components that we pointed out as being characteristic of that victimistic culture. Thus for example the discourse of recovery allows any adult, especially a woman, to convert herself into the eternal victim of some past abuse whose veracity is difficult to establish. Without any basis in either science or reason, the movement's defenders have, in turn, converted an experience associated with the sexual into the source of all ills, and have ended up convincing society, and many judges, that the victim's word is sacrosanct. Victims became the heroes of that society, and victims of sexual abuse were, undoubtedly, called to convert themselves into role models.

In fact the image of the abuse victim, whose memory is dramatically recovered with the help of the "therapist-God," unites in that same reality the notions of victim and survivor. In this there is something of that heroic optimism of the phoenix rising out of the ashes, a symbol very well suited to the ideal of American individuality. If we add to that, as we shall see in the following chapter, a certain historical responsibility that was attributing every revelation and accusation of sexual abuse to a supposedly crucial part that the West would have played, or the role that Satan, the conspiring of certain social groups, the FBI, or the CIA, would end up having

in that process, we come full circle. The symbol of the "victim-survivor" that feminism and ritual abuse activists have constructed is the ideal par excellence of that society at that point in its history.

Therefore I would suggest that, in general, a good portion of the lay and specialized discourse concerning the sexual abuse of minors has been a product of that historical moment which we are participants in without being aware of it. In the United States in those years we come across, therefore, social realities which seem to converge towards the same point. To the Christian right the "sexual" was a sign of moral and generalized social disorder; to certain feminist groups the "sexual" was the new symbol of historical oppression and patriarchal domination; to those charged with child protection the "sexual" was the danger which best illustrated the threat that minors were living under, to everyone else, the grotesque [83] phenomenon of ritual abuse was the most indisputable manifestation of the horror into which the "sexual" could degenerate. And we must emphasize that it is within that social context that this modern anxiety and the discourse that has sustained it would have arisen; this is where what we now believe regarding the sexual abuse of minors was forged.

In the following chapter, consisting of a critical analysis of what I will call the *science of abuse*, in addition to those of feminist authors or the acknowledged work of Finkelhor, we shall also rely on the accounts of Freud and Kinsey. But I am just as interested in probing the possible connections between these (supposedly) scientific reflections and those other phenomena which I have already described. I will structure my exegesis according to what, in my opinion, are the principal elements which have given form to the modern discourse of the danger of sexual abuse in childhood, which it shares -- beyond a shadow of a doubt -- with the principles of ritual abuse as well as the recovery movement: the historical denial or blindness in the face of the problem, the terrible extent of it -- which renders that blindness all the more incredible -- and finally, its seriousness.

CHAPTER III: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: THE CONTOURS OF A DANGER

Introduction

In the preceding pages, we have been examining how in those decades, and especially in the United States, the subject of sexuality -- or of eroticism, to be more precise -- became newly problematized due to the convergence, in the public arena, of persistent messages which presumed that this dimension of human existence was characterized by disorder, domination, or threat. Everything points to the fact that the issue of the sexual abuse of minors, hysterically stoked by the imaginary irrationality of ritual or Satanic horror played -- together with other phenomena such as rape, harassment, and pornography -- a very prominent role in establishing this modern climate of sexual dangerousness.

But we must not forget that the major portion of what has been said about these questions in the public and specialized discourse has been given a scientific imprimatur which confers to its assertions the hard to argue with rank of 'truth.' In fact there have been authors with science backgrounds, as researchers or professionals, who have gone beyond talking and writing about abuse. There have been those who have collaborated, thrusting the problem into the public arena, and there have been those who have given form to it. We say this because we find ourselves confronted with what sociologists call an *expert discourse*, generated by those who designate themselves specialists in a certain area and refer us to the scientific foundations of their work.

Abuse ideologues and activists rely on experts from fields such as psychology, sociology, social work, and psychiatry to sustain their assertions and their combat policies. By the same token, a good portion of the researchers devoted to the study of sexual abuse in childhood are allied with the activists in this battle, adopting the latter's premises as their own. Finally, we are all too frequently faced with a confused jumble of ideology and science, without having a very good grasp of where one begins and the other leaves off.

At the moment, it is not possible for me to provide a detailed and definitive analysis of the expert discourse concerning sexual abuse, it being too complex and variegated. The research into and the statements regarding abuse are quite extensive, especially in recent decades, and I certainly do not claim to have furnished a complete description of the entire panorama. Although I do believe it would be work that would be well worth the effort, because an overwhelming amount of material has been written on the issue, for the moment I shall pursue other possibilities. My intention in this chapter is, rather, to point out what I understand to be the principal fault lines, the discourse's general logic, and the outlines of what the expert discourse has said about the subject, or at least [86] what it has said that has been most heeded or simply has known best how to make itself heard. We are, in short, confronted with a -- scientifically and publicly -- successful perspective on erotic encounters between minors and adults which has silenced, by its radicalism, any other possible alternative for interpreting and responding to these acts.

It is, therefore, a question of uncovering what in my opinion are the most relevant outlines of this triumphant discourse of the dangers of abuse. I will base this on my own readings on the topic and what I understand to be at least a good sampling of its most representative

examples. I seek, in a way, to sketch out the manner in which the danger has been defined. For that purpose I shall carry out, in this chapter, a concise review of the most salient premises of those authors who have persistently emphasized the problematic nature of abuse. But before I do that I am interested, in this next section, in precisely examining the possible connections between this scientific view and those other phenomena, also supposedly scientific and therapeutic, which I have described in the preceding chapter. I am referring to ritual abuse and the recovery movement, and their relationship' to what I am going to generically designate here as the "science of abuse."

The Discourse of Abuse: The Fine Line Between the Irrational and the Reasonable

Given my interest in not limiting myself to the ritual abuse phenomenon or that of recovered memory, but rather attending to the sexual abuse of minors as a generally matter, at this point in the analysis we would be obliged to attempt to adequately situate the heretofore described therapeutic and social phenomenon within the broader historical context of abuse as an anxiety characteristic of our era, asking ourselves about the relationships between these two realities as well as the courses which their possible connections would have taken. Perhaps for many, the phenomena of Satanism, ritual abuse, the recovery movement, and all of their baseless propositions would have to be evaluated simply as extreme and undesirable aberrations of the reasonable degree of attention which the problem of abuse does in fact merit. From this posture, so we tell ourselves, these irrational discourses would be nothing more than an unwanted, marginal, or, if you like, degenerate consequence of treating the issue in a scientific and sensible manner.

Of course, scientific and social anxiety over the sexual abuse of minors predates both the phenomenon of ritual abuse and its sequel, the recovery movement. Kinsey would have already made reference to the problem in the 1950s, although at that time he was also already denouncing the overly dramatic way that it was being dealt with. In fact the fear of the sexual abuse of minors was an old one in the United States; neither was it alien to previous centuries' degeneracy discourses in Europe. Also, we have already talked about how it was in the 1970s when the first large-scale studies of the matter were developed -- though they were carried out by authors who would later be more or less active participants in the other phenomena described, such as Finkelhor or Russell -- which began to call attention to the terrible statistics concerning the gravity of the problem.

[87] We therefore acknowledge that possibility, affirming that whereas it is one thing to treat the issue of abuse with the rigor and the attention that it deserves, what occurred in the United States in the '80s and '90s is another matter altogether. From this point of view, we would say that in terms of the two ways of dealing with the subject, one should not automatically assume that there is anything more than a purely parasitic relationship between one and the other. The irrationality imposed by the ritual abuse or recovered memory discourses, as their way of confronting the problem of abuse, is evidently and undoubtedly terribly shocking to many. The extremes to which they have gone in their assertions are of such caliber that they actually impede any logical or reasonable reckoning. That foolishness apparently has not become as evident in the typical discourse regarding the problem of abuse either in terms of the major portion of the

works that have been published or what has been implemented, at least for the moment, in European societies such as Spain's.

Moreover, it would be necessary to point out that it is not entirely correct to, for example, speak of complete unity within the recovery movement itself, as described by authors like Of she & Watters (1996). Within that same therapeutic movement there exist divergent lines of opinion, with some often questioning others. Thus, to cite one example, a recognized author in the area of multiple personality like Frank W. Putnam (1991) was questioning the basis of those theories which would defend the existence of Satanic ritual abuse -- although he does this in a way that is respectful towards the latter and their authors, treating them as serious scientists, quite far removed from the fiery criticisms of Ofshe & Watters. In his article entitled "The Satanic Ritual Abuse Controversy", Putnam (1991) acknowledges the division that exists in the scientific and professional community [E20] regarding the subject of ritual abuse and questions the fundamental principles from which those authors who defend the existence of this abuse supposedly proceed. Nevertheless, Putnam is a prominent promoter of the theory of multiple personalities and of their presumed origin in traumatic experiences during childhood, especially those of a sexual nature. As a prime example of the logic of his arguments, Ofshe & Watters point out that at the beginning of one of his works on multiple personality, Putnam invites therapists to suspect this disorder in those patients who exhibit a certain difficulty in presenting a clear chronology of their lives, for example being incapable of specifying whether a given event occurred before or after another event in their past. (Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 208)

Criticism regarding the recovery of supposedly repressed sexual abuse experiences was bound to emerge from within the child sexual abuse research field itself. A good example is Robbins's (1995) article, "Wading Through the Muddy Waters of Recovered Memory," in which she analyzes the theory of recovered memory in the sexual abuse area and attempts to establish a set of guidelines for professionals concerning how to interpret these statements and what limits to place on them. After exposing the fundamental elements of this therapeutic and social movement, Robbins refers to an illustrative example of said phenomenon: Benatar's work entitled "Running Away from Sexual Abuse: Denial Revisited," [E21] in which the latter author apparently criticizes the skepticism on the part of many people as well as the media [88] regarding the validity of the recovery theories, the techniques employed by its defenders, and the rising industry of incest survivors. Robbins concludes that Benatar is nothing more than a reflection of the association that has been established, on the part of the feminist and recovered memory movements, between two phenomena which, in reality, are completely different: recovered memory theory and the problem of sexual abuse. Denying the empirical basis of the former implied rejecting the veracity of the latter. To defenders of recovery theory, every memory of abuse -- because it was weak and foggy, as the latter would be -- was the reflection of a sexual abuse event that actually took place, which is just utter nonsense. .

One of Robbins's other criticisms is that no type of distinction is made between incestuous and non-incestuous sexual abuse, arguing as if the effects of the two were the same which, as Robbins indicates, is probably incorrect. As this author points out, the entire recovery movement is fundamentally centered on abuse of an incestuous nature, making questionable statements such as that some 60% of incest cases were subsequently repressed, and that the estimated rates of prevalence should be broadened to some 50%, something which authors like

DeMause [E22] would appear to defend, and which, according to Robbins, is nothing more than a notion based on speculation. She also notes that the abuse recovery literature rarely discusses the fact that many studies point to the existence of victims who do not suffer any types of symptoms or problems due to the supposed abuse, or the contradictory evidence concerning all of the problems cited, from dissociation to multiple personality.

In this sense Robbins carried out an analysis, similar to that of Ofshe & Watters, of the assertions regarding the existence of dissociation and the repression of the abuse, all of which, though based on case studies, are devoid of any clear proof of their existence, much less their supposed association with child sexual abuse. She therefore questions Benatar's statements -- typical of the whole recovery movement -- regarding memory functioning in the face of traumatic events experienced in childhood, presenting the way in which memory actually functions and establishing the significance of "childhood amnesia" which, far from being a reflection of trauma, is a reality common to all persons. Other points characteristic of the movement such as the presumed truthfulness of all abuse allegations -- especially when they involve extraterrestrials, Satanic rituals, past lives, or womb memory -- are likewise questioned by Robbins who, in short, seeks to defend the need to find out about previous experiences of sexual abuse without falling into the extremes defended by the recovery movement.

Robbins's article would, therefore, be more evidence that, within the scientific arena, it is possible to make more reasonable and less combative statements regarding the problem of abuse than those offered by the defenders of ritual abuse or the recovery movement. Many works in the sexual abuse field acknowledge the aspects commented upon by Robbins regarding the need to not confound the problem of abuse with that of recovered memory; to accept that, on occasion, the abuse is not so serious; that it is necessary to cast a critical eye towards these acts if there is no clear evidence; and, of course, that ritual [89] abuse and the CIA being in league with Satanic sects are things that are more than debatable.

All of this is quite true, and obviously, we should not accuse everyone who has ever written about sexual abuse of irrationality. Robbins's article is an example of the fact that there are those who place limits on the irrationality in this field. Nevertheless, without negating what was said above, neither should we stop investigating the possible existence of relationships which, in my opinion, render suspect a noticeable and fluid interplay between the two phenomena in terms of ideas and authors, in addition to the same shared roots. If Robbins rightly asserts that we should not confuse the problem of recovered memory with that of child sexual abuse, for our part we want to suggest that we must not forget that the two phenomena spring from closely-related origins, and that it is not precisely correct to simply speak of one as preceding the other, but rather, that the two are a reflection of the same discourse which is implicated in the strategy of that other historical phenomenon of major transcendence: the renewed perception of sex as danger. We see some indications that would justify what I am suggesting and which call for a more deliberate analysis than that which I have been able to carry out. [E23] Firstly, I shall refer to the connections between the ritual abuse panic and some of the most prominent and cited experts in the field, of the sexual abuse of minors. Secondly, I will briefly address the role that feminism certainly played in that whole, already-described phenomenon.

The Inter-Relationship Between Science and Abuse Activists

Many of the strident allegations of Satanism could easily be repudiated; not as a theory regarding the sexual abuse of minors, but as the phantasmagoria of a sick mind. Nevertheless, what one cannot deny is the existence of an entire industry based on sexual abuse (Money, 1999 p.28)

In the first place it is necessary to take note of the fact that although the authors on whom I have focused up to this point have -- with seeming rigor -- applied themselves to dismantling the ritual abuse and recovered memory hypotheses, it would appear that they simply could not avoid making some reference or another to the way in which the general topic of child sexual abuse has been dealt with in recent decades. Without denying the need to intervene in these sorts of acts and to avoid suffering on the part of many children and adults, these authors do evince surprise at the scale which this reality has assumed in Western societies. And so, for Ofshe & Watters, any analysis of the phenomenon of memory recovery therapy must be based on the modern anxiety over the darker side of sex, which would lead to the dramatic handling of the problem of abuse.

The 1980s were a reckoning time for many of the darker issues relating to human sexuality, including date rape, spousal battery, and sexual harassment. In particular, sexual crimes against children became a national concern. As the issue of child abuse grew into a political rallying cause, dispassionate analysis and debate were set aside, while unadulterated advocacy on behalf of the children and adult survivors was applauded (Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p.10)

Situated within this context is the alliance forged between the "zealous" child protection movement and that of recovered memory, reflected in the ritual abuse panic of the '80s as well as the increase in accusations of abuse in divorce proceedings. Moreover, what is more important for the purposes of this section in its continued critical references to the recovery movement's most prominent authors, is that many of the latter are also recognized figures within the field of abuse research. Names like Herman, Finkelhor, Browne, Williams, Briere, Schatzow, Putnam, Runtz, Rush, Green, Courtois, Goodwin, Surrrmit, and Young crop up again and again in sexual abuse handbooks and studies [E26]; and many of these are, in turn, prominent personalities within the recovery or ritual abuse movements. [E27]

Something similar occurs in Nathan & Snedeker's work on ritual abuse. According to them, many activists in the ritual abuse movement were members of IPSCAN [E28] -- founded by Kempe -- and were contributors to this organization's prestigious journal, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, although they would not have a great deal of influence, given that sexual abuse was only one part of the topics dealt with by this organization. Around 1985 APSAC [E29] was formed, which was more focused on the subject of sexual abuse, and which was run by professionals and researchers who were promoting the truth of ritual abuse. Prominent sexual abuse researchers such as Conte -- who was its president -- Finkelhor, Burgess, and Summit belonged to this association.

Nathan & Snedeker comment on the current situation of all of these distinguished professionals and researchers who, in its day, led the charge in support of ritual abuse. Not one of them -- nor any prominent child protection authority in that country -- has ever criticized those actions or amended their ridiculous theories. Quite the contrary. All of them continue to hold prominent positions in professional associations and public institutions which -- frequently -- continue to spread the ritual abuse message, this time in the new language of sadism and violence. Many of them continue to receive money and contracts to train new professionals in abuse detection techniques; many others continue to write about abuse. Among them are Finkelhor, Summit, McFarlane, and Meyer-Williams.

One idea is central in this sense: The reader of any manual published in our own country or in other European countries concerning the problem of abuse will see, at least implicitly, the clear influence of the ritual abuse or recovered memory discourses. Authors such as LaFontaine (1991) introduce, into their research on abuse, unmistakable references to ideas that clearly came out of the recovery movement. In his work "Child Sexual Abuse," LaFontaine points out how many abuse memories do not appear until a long process of therapy has been carried out, in fact referring to the observation of one victim who noted that the majority of victims do not remember it until many years later, thanks to [91] therapy (1991 pp. 91-92). LaFontaine, who supposedly approaches the problem of abuse from an anthropological perspective and based on his own research at a medical center, takes as givens the recovery movement's most questionable beliefs concerning memory dissociation and repression.

In a book edited in Spain by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Garbarino & Stoff (1993) -- the former being an acknowledged world expert on child protection -- present some Satanic ritual abuse cases as if they were true and with hardly any hint of criticism, which is also common in many other works. I shall refer to that book in the following chapter, where I will discuss this point in greater detail.

It is equally illustrative to look at works of an expository nature, such as that of the Argentinean author Irene V. Intebi (1988) entitled "Child Sexual Abuse: In the Best Families," which was published in our own country. One encounters a laudatory preface to this work by Joaquín de Paul Ochotorena, a prominent child maltreatment researcher here in Spain. Although at no time does Intebi explicitly cite or speak of the recovery movement as such, her theories regarding the problem of abuse are identical to those proposed by said discourse. The work is replete with constant references to the recovery movement and to the theories of noted authors such as Bass, Davis, Herman, Masson, and Terr. [E30]

In a chapter entitled "Symptoms of Pseudoscience," in which they present data which questions the scientific basis of the recovery discourse, Ofshe & Watters (1996) include well-known articles on the scientific investigation of abuse in an appendix entitled "Three Papers," where they analyze three recent studies which, in their opinion, show the empirical weaknesses of the recovery movement's research; they comment on these three articles whose authors are equally distinguished "figures in the scientific study of abuse [E31], and devote themselves, on this occasion, to investigating -- with positive results -- some of the presuppositions of the recovery movement, such as the association between sexual abuse and subsequent trauma, the

repression of memories of abuse, or the demonstration of the recovery of hidden memories of abuse as a product neither of fantasy nor of the therapist's invention.

In order to analyze the possible relationship between the two discourses, it might be useful to, for example, take into consideration the initial studies of the matter. If we devote some time to that classic work on the scientific treatment of abuse, which *Child Sexual Abuse* certainly is -- to which I have already referred numerous times -- written by David Finkelhor and published in 1984, we observe some connections of interest. As early as the Acknowledgments section, David Finkelhor cites some authors who are interested in the problem of abuse who, he explains, have surprised him by their interest and dedication to this field, and moreover by having been extraordinarily generous with their personal encouragement to carry out his studies. The six authors he cites include Judith Herman, Jon Conte, and Roland Summit, prominent researchers in the field of ritual abuse and of the recovery movement.

On the Meese commission on pornography to which I have already made reference, which recognized anti-pornography feminists such as [92] Diana Russell -- a prominent author, in turn, in the field of sexual abuse -- one finds Deanne Tilton Durfee, whose husband backed the principal accusers in the McMartin case. She cited Summit's recommendation that sexual abuse in daycare centers be studied more. The government provided a grant for this, whose administrator would be David Finkelhor. The latter was already a prominent sociologist in this area, having researched sexual abuse in collaboration with Russell, as well as having collaborated on a work on the McMartin and other similar cases.

Together with two collaborators, Finkelhor put together his "Nursery Crimes" book, published in 1988, which dealt with abuse in daycare centers. Nathan & Snedeker assert that this work ended up being converted into an obligatory reference for those who believed in the truth of ritual abuse. This occurred because this author was presented as a serious researcher who had done this work on behalf of the government; moreover, this investigation concluded that the problem was a serious one. According to these authors, what Finkelhor did was confound seemingly real data -- pedophiles who acknowledged their tendencies or accusations against the mentally-disabled sons of some daycare workers -- with the brutalities typical of Satanic abuse. He mixed truth and fantasy into an explosive potion which, though certainly questioning the ritual abuse paranoia, also reaffirmed it through the presentation of supposedly objective data.

I will return to this point further below, in order to expound upon the relationship that exists between the phenomena already described and the work of David Finkelhor. For the moment, I will point out that it is very telling that this author -- whose studies have been the foundation for a large portion of what has been and still is being said about sexual abuse, being an obligatory point of reference in every investigation into or publication regarding this issue -- maintains these kinds of intellectual relationships, and moreover reflects and reinforces, in his research, some of the irrational bases of the social phenomena already described.

Feminism, Abuse, and the Recovered Memory Movement

Perhaps incestuous rape is becoming a central paradigm for intercourse in our time. Andrea Dworkin [E32]

We have already noted the relationship which existed between the new conservatism, ritual abuse, the recovery movement, and some feminist groups. The previous chapter cited some facets of the connection that may exist between the whole feminist discourse expounded here and the phenomenon of child sexual abuse, which is of interest to us in the present work. As Osborne affirms, women and children have always been put in the same category, and this case is no exception. The perception of pornography as threat was affecting not only women but also children, who are explicitly pointed to as potential victims of the former and -- by extension -- of male eroticism and patriarchal ideology. Within this framework there evolved a large body of theoretical work produced [93] by feminist authors -- often from the therapeutic arena -- devoted to the problem of the sexual abuse of minors.

Feminist analyses of this problem explain that sexual abuse and incest are another manifestation of the exercise of male and patriarchal power, violence, and domination, which considers girls, boys, and women to be property at their service, which also includes obtaining sexual pleasure under any conditions and at any price (Bezemer, 1994 p. 12). [E33]

But their reflections on certain childhood experiences are often confounded by less rational statements. Certain feminist groups are in fact actively involved in the fight against ritual abuse as well as in supporting its victims unconditionally -- in addition to the struggle against pornography. In spite of the fallacy that may lay behind this entire discourse, the nonexistence of verifiable evidence to back up its arguments or its association with Satanic and patently irrational ideas, "an elevated number of feminists embraced the recovery movement and translated its irrational faith in personal truths to the public policy debate." (Kaminer, 2001 p. 250)

The sexual abuse discourse is saturated by feminist logic and the feminist struggle. In the works of Nathan & Snedeker or Ofshe & Watters, which we have used in the exposition of those two related phenomena, references to a certain kind of feminism as the ideological promoter of these new dangers are constant. Finkelhor emphasizes feminism's role in bringing the problem of abuse to social awareness, although its contributions, this author notes, are greatly mediated by its ideology concerning male domination, into which the problem of child abuse is integrated in a coherent way. More than being preoccupied with a vision of the problem from a dysfunctional-family point of view, feminism tends to blame the patriarchal society and male socialization in general, specifically rejecting those theories which, for example, speak of the role of mothers as incest's silent accomplices (Finkelhor, 1984 p. 4).

According to this same author, whereas the movements and professionals associated with protecting minors might entertain the possibility of intervening in cases of incest through support to the family as a global system, feminist groups were adopting a more victim-centered approach. Their intervention embraced forms similar to the support model for rape victims, with their recovery and the avoidance of subsequent victimizations being the central objectives. Suspicion towards proposals for reconciliation between victims and aggressors would be greater in this perspective, while at the same time, greater emphasis would be placed on penal sanctions. In the same way, in her analysis of organizations of sexual abuse survivors, Browne (1996) points out how the role that feminism played in recognizing child sexual abuse as a serious

problem in our society ,and the importance that the feminist perspective had in the whole philosophy of these organizations that were fighting against this social defect, became evident. According to Browne, the majority of survivors' organizations recognize that without the work of the feminists, the voices of the survivors would never have been heard. According to one survivor quoted by [94] the author, "child sexual abuse is on the agenda because of feminists." (Browne, 1996: 48). And it is precisely an analysis of abuse survivor organizations that includes those references to feminism. It is possible that this is simply a reflection of how feminism, or part of it, spoke of victims of abuse as survivors of it, as if that sacred object which was the victim of abuse merited that label, thus granting honor to the heroism of their past, present, and future experiences. The image of victims as survivors of abuse has been a key element in the evolution of the social perception, of the problem from the very beginning. .

All of the authors whom I have focused on have just as strongly emphasized the part that the feminist movement has played in the unfolding of ritual abuse and the recovery movement, converting sexual abuse, and especially father-daughter incest, into the prototype of a patriarchal society, and the source of a large share of its injustices with respect to women. The problem of sexual abuse was converted into a focus of interest in the 1980s because it represented the convergence of a supposedly clinical knowledge and feminist consciousness. Sexual abuse and the whole discourse of its therapeutic recovery constitutes, therefore, an excellent metaphor for the critique of the patriarchal society and its ills. In the same way that a woman "discovers" that she was abused, the society "discovers" -- via this movement -- its mistreatment of women. According to Andrea Dworkin, fathers rape their daughters as a way of socializing them into their female status. Kathy Swink, in her work entitled "The Dynamics of Feminist Therapy," asserts that incest is the extreme expression of a patriarchal society training its victims in what will be their future social function: attending to the needs of others, particularly men. (See Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 10.) And so what ended up happening was that the defense of this model definitively assumed the defense of feminism itself; whoever opposed the former was against the latter. (Robbins, 1995)

Child sexual abuse symbolized and metaphorically summed up many of the fears and dangers that were and are lurking behind contemporary societies: insecurity, children's vulnerability, changes in women's roles, sexual morality, etc In a victimistic climate in which every "survivor" of abusive experiences -- susceptible to being recovered if they have been repressed -- acquires a certain status of sacredness, anyone who criticizes the movement is accused of misogyny, and any lawyer who speaks of the rights of the accused is pointed to as the aggressor's co-conspirator. For many years criticism was rendered impossible, and even now, the above authors say, in certain contexts it still is.

In that process, in some ways the language and attitude of the recovery movement would be appropriated. "Some feminists, for their part, borrowed from the recovery movement terms like co-dependence, addiction, and abuse. The recovery movement contributed to the rise of feminist therapy, which demonized men, and whose objective was the restoration of the self-esteem of supposedly fragile and eternally victimized women." (Kaminer, 2001; 238). From there it was only a short step to an alliance between the most conservative groups and part of the feminist movement, in order to fight against pornography and other ills. The latter never stopped believing [95] in the relationship between Satanism, pornography, and sexual abuse. Antifeminist

writers themselves began utilizing the language of feminism, with the anti-abortion movement starting to speak of "surgical rape." (Hughes, 1994; 20).

An elevated number of feminism's critics embraced the recovery movement, translating its irrational faith in personal truths to public policy debates. The notion that discrimination, exploitation, and sexual abuse were fundamental issues (irrespective of how self-declared victims defined them), and that women do not lie, exaggerate, or err when describing the victimization, characterized the discourses that surrounded sexual harassment, rape by a person in a position of authority over them, and the sexual abuse of minors. To many who would come to the presumed victim's defense, there would be only one version of the facts: the victim's Kaminer, 2001 p. 250).

As Kaminer explains, feminists may have their own reasons for engaging in that accusatory discourse, undoubtedly with tinges of fanaticism and irrationality, because this would allow them to denounce what they regarded as the historical indifference towards and societal concealment of incest and sexual abuse. Things went from not believing any woman who said she was a victim of these acts to defending the immutable truth of what lay behind each and every revelation, no matter how improbable the account related by the victim might be. It was another indication, perhaps one of the first, of what would be the victim's social sanctification, which would turn out to be our culture's new kind of sacred object.

The recovery movement validated paranoia. If a minor was suspected of having been raped by her father, that was enough for her to be taken into the fold of the community of survivors, in which she would probably be praised for having sufficient courage to confront the abuse and sever contact with the family members who had been complicit in it (Kaminer, 2001 p. 233).

If the feminists had discovered -- as one of their theoreticians declared -- in pornography "a new theory of social causality," recognizing it as the root of female oppression (Osborne, 1993 p. 20), the defenders of recovered memory have found, in childhood experiences of sexual abuse, what would account for the entire genesis of a problematic adulthood.

The Contours of the Danger

The popular attention to this problem [of abuse] can be ascribed not only to ... the discovery of its true dimensions, but also to the idea that sexual abuse is a different sort of problem than was once thought. ... We now know that a great deal of sexual abuse occurs at the hands of close family members, particularly fathers and stepfathers. Not uncommonly, abuse goes on for an extended period of time. [96] Most victims never tell anybody about it, and the abuse can leave substantial psychological scars on its victims in the form of disturbed self-esteem and an inability to develop trust in intimate relationships (Finkelhor, 1984 pp. 2-3). [E34]

Felix López (1993; 1994) concisely stated what he considered to be the historical phases of the scientific treatment of child sexual abuse, going from the observation of a problem that had -- up until that time -- remained hidden, on up to the development of specific models. As this

author points out, an infinite number of studies and works have been devoted to the issue in recent decades, converting it into one of the most attractive subjects for research in fields such as child maltreatment or sexuality: "From this point of view it could be said that, referring to these societies -- and we are talking about the entire Anglo-Saxon world -- things have gone from an obsession with denying child sexuality to an obsessive interest in discovering, and punishing child sexual abuse." (1993 p. 221)

In her review of the academic and professional concerns in the child protection arena, via a content analysis of the principal English-language publications, Doyle (1996) concludes that in the early 1990s the topic of sexual abuse overtook all other forms of maltreatment. Thus for example a third of the articles published in 1995 by the journal *Child Abuse Review* referred to the subject of sexual abuse. In that same year "Child Abuse and Neglect," undoubtedly one of the most oft-cited in this field, dealt with the same topic in some 46% of its articles. The subjects dealt with in those articles, Doyle affirms, range from lines of inquiry into the problem to abuse in daycare centers, post-traumatic stress disorder as a consequence of abuse, the long-term effects of these experiences, and abuse committed by women or among similar-age peers. Also prominent was a 1993 special issue of *Child Abuse Review* on the topic of Satanic ritual abuse. Likewise, the theme of sexual abuse found its way into many of the other areas dealt with in the articles, like domestic violence, risk prevention, intervention, or the role of mothers in protecting child victims of sexual abuse -- with research from a feminist perspective. For above all, Doyle's conclusion is that "the greatest change since twenty or even ten years ago is that sexual abuse is clearly centre stage." (1996 p. 571). [E35]

In terms of our own country, it is enough to compare the statements issued in the papers presented at the 1st and 2nd National Congresses on Child Maltreatment in order to see how whereas in the first of these, held in 1989, sexual abuse occupied more of a secondary position with a lesser number of presentations with respect to it, in the second, of 1993, the subject of sexual abuse occupied, beyond any doubt, a privileged position among the diverse topics that were taken up by the presenters. Publications about it have also increased significantly, and the issue of sexual abuse has continued to occupy the interests of researchers and the agendas of seminars, meetings, and training programs.

Social interest in sexual abuse increased in the 1980s especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, which also manifested itself [97] in the research arena. The evolution of the latter would have gone through distinct phases (Upez, 1993) or modes of reasoning, which would have gone from an initial process of approaching the problem, to a more present-day interest in developing theoretical models to account for the phenomenon, and on to studies of a descriptive and statistical nature. López talks about the first references to the problem coming in the form of Freudian psychoanalysis or Kinsey's research, later entering a second phase of recognition and cataloguing where researchers devote themselves to the study of its potential effects through an analysis of concrete cases, but without utilizing large samples. In a third phase it would be a question of descriptive studies, which would have been carried out from the '70s to the mid'80s, where it was a question of evaluating the frequency and types of abuse as well as its short and long-term effects; always with a solid statistical basis using large samples and making global comparisons between them. The last phase, which he calls the "construction of explanatory models," which was first developed at the end of the 1980s, would have, according to López, had

as its objective the development of theoretical models that would be as much about accounting for the effects of the abuse as its causes.

It should be remembered that this whole flowering of research also coincided with the various social currents already explicated, whereby the sexual was configured into a powerful source of harm and danger. As Weeks (1993) explains, in the early '60s a social campaign was launched in Great Britain, led by Mary Whitehouse, to clean up television, alleging that it posed a danger to children; in 1976, in turn, Anita Bryant's campaign against the gay community in Florida took place, a moral crusade which called itself, oddly enough, "Save the Children." [E36] Beginning with these, pioneering efforts -- Weeks points out -- a series of moral panics swept countries such as the United States, Canada, Great Britain, and France. Said social phenomena, transitory in and of themselves but joined together by a common historical thread, were accompanied by terrible fears that were reflected in and multiplied by strategies of information manipulation by the media, and which "magically resolved themselves thanks to some symbolic action" -- for example, the promulgation of ad hoc laws (Weeks, 1993 p. 356). The era of sexual "permissiveness," which Weeks basically localizes between 1955 and 1965, gave way to a new era of the diabolicization of the sexual. Childhood, as we have already noted, would occupy a key position within that.

Robbins (1995) points out that, though there are studies on abuse dating back to 1929, few systematic studies were done prior to the late 1970s and early 1980s. LaFontaine (1991) locates the beginning of the professional anxiety over the problem of sexual abuse in Great Britain in the late '70s, but emphasizes that this does not presume a true social preoccupation with it. Nevertheless, sexual abuse is not mentioned in the health department's circulars until 1980. According to LaFontaine, in Great Britain, although some cases were beginning to appear in the media, public attention was not preoccupied with the issue; these experiences were regarded as being quite rare -- or so it seemed until the broadcast of a series of television programs in the '80s dealing with cases of abuse. In concrete terms, LaFontaine cites a [98] BBC program entitled "That's Life," in which a survey of the various forms of abuse was announced. Viewers were asked to request a questionnaire, which was to be sent to them by mail. The majority of those who responded were women and girls who had been victims of sexual abuse. Following the results of this study, another large-scale effort was undertaken which was seen by more than 16 million people. A short time later the famous Cleveland case erupted -- which I will summarize further below -- which multiplied the social anxiety over sexual abuse even more.

In the United States, LaFontaine (1991) points out, the social, political, and professional consciousness came into existence some ten days later. Finkelhor concurs with that chronology. In the late 1970s, this author points out, reported cases of sexual abuse increased exponentially, far more quickly than other forms of maltreatment. The number of reported cases went from 1,975 in the year 1976 to 4,327 in 1977, and to 22,918 in 1982. Between 1978 and 1982 at least a dozen books on the topic were published widely; approximately half of them dealt with the accounts of abuse victims' experiences. Movies, magazines, documentaries, and newspaper articles dealt with the subject with great assiduousness. .

Reviewing the bibliography of such an obligatory reference work on the topic of abuse as Finkelhor's (1984) *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research*, we observe the following:

Practically all of the books listed by the author were published after 1975, with the lion's share of them coming out after 1980.

The concept of sexual abuse only appears in these publications subsequent to 1975. Only in one single case is it encountered in the title of a work prior to that date; on the other hand, terms like incest, rape, pedophilia, sexual deviance, and "child molesters" were more likely to appear.

A good portion of the publications prior to that date did not make reference to the problem of sexual aggression towards minors -- at least in their titles --but were, rather, general works on sexuality, health, medicine, research, criminology, justice, etc

As Okami (1992) noted, if we analyze the listings from the Psychological Abstracts [E39], we see a clear increase in interest in the negative aspects of human sexuality. In 1969, categories for terms like "sexual abuse," "sex offenders," "sexual harassment," "rape," "incest," "sexual sadism," and "pedophilia" would not have existed in the index (Okami, 1992 p. 17) These subjects were included within a general category of sexual deviation containing some 65 articles, only 21 of which were related to some sort of sexual aggression or sexual relations with children. The majority of those 65 articles dealt with' topics such as homosexuality, transvestism, etc By 1989, by contrast, all of the above categories had already been incorporated, with more than 400 articles relating to sexual aggression, sex crimes, and sexual relations between children and adults. By the same token, sexuality in adolescence, which previously had been seen as a reflection of health and well-being, ended up being converted into an object of preoccupation and pathology. There were persistent references to the problems of unwanted pregnancies, sexually-transmitted diseases [99] -- especially AIDS -- and sexual abuse. Abstinence, previously praised in moral and religious terms, ended up being prized as a way of preventing these dangers.

On the other hand, Parton and Parton (1989) analyze the increase in social preoccupation with the problem of child maltreatment from the 1970s on, pointing to a widening of the field of intervention, especially in the new area of sexual abuse. For example they cite a 1986 NSPCC document indicating a 136% increase in sexual abuse reports over the previous year. Stevenson (1989) explains how in political science one observed, in the first place, an increase in the public's consciousness of the problem of maltreatment and a broadening of its definition, especially as far as sexual abuse was concerned -- also see Avery-Clark, O'Neil & Laws (1981) -- and finally, in the development of arguments in favor of intervention with the concept of "protecting the minor" as the key idea -- and which would emphasize that the child was the most important thing -- in the face of earlier arguments in which the notion of recklessly meddling in family matters would have had more weight.

In this temporal and scientific framework there developed what would later become, as Finkelhor (1999) defined it, the paradigm of reference in the scientific approach to abuse. Below I will show what, in my opinion, are the three pillars upon which said discourse has constructed itself, whose aim was, above all else, to convince public opinion and the scientific community of the alarming presence of this modern danger. The phenomena of ritual abuse and the recovery movement are part of this project, and are just as active participants along these three axes.

In Finkelhor's text -- with which this section began -- are gathered what in my opinion -- and therefore in the present chapter I shall argue -- are the principal elements that have given form to the modern discourse on the danger of abuse, and which share -- beyond any doubt whatsoever -- the principles of the ritual abuse and memory recovery movements: the historic denial of and blindness in the face of the problem, the terrible extent of it -- which renders that blindness all the more incredible -- and its seriousness.

In Search of the Great Truth

Everyday Denial, Historical Blindness. The ritual abuse and abuse memory discourses, and I believe the modern sexual abuse discourse in general, were born with claims of great truth. In that context, any questioning of its proposals becomes anathema. And so it is. One axiom of the phenomena which we have analyzed would make reference to the problem of the denial of abuse. I According to this principle, denying or doubting a presumed case of sexual abuse -- when there is an absence of even the slightest degree of solid evidence -- is not only more than slightly [100] vile and immoral, but moreover, is a gesture which constitutes a reflection -- or new evidence on a small scale -- of a historical denial of major transcendence.

It therefore becomes what we might define as a question of faith, thus presenting a basic dilemma: to believe or not believe that the abuse occurred. If one believes that it did happen, one is understood as being from that portion of society which does not deny the existence of abuse and incest; if one does not believe that a given case occurred or doubts that it did, then one joins that other part of society which continues to deny that tragic reality. As Ofshe & Watters (1996) point out, in the abuse memory discourse, in a certain way every individual case fits into social reality as a whole. One type of denial is confused with another in such a way that the notion that "the personal is political" acquires new dimensions. In the opinion of feminist authors like Benatar, Robbins (1995) affirms, this skepticism is obviously nothing more than a reflection of anti-feminism and a vehement rejection of sexual abuse survivors, thereby assuring all concerned that those who question the truth of recovered memories of these previously repressed experiences are simply trying to turn back the clock on recent advances in our understanding of the problem of child sexual abuse as well as its seriousness.

To put into question or to at least suggest the need to closely scrutinize victims' stories was, in a way, to clearly defile the most sacred aspect of the sexual abuse discourse. Those who criticized this blind faith in children's stories or victims' memories, which oftentimes related improbable accounts, were compared to those who denied the holocaust, when perhaps the true parallel was between the defenders of recovered memory and those who denied the Nazi's part in the former: trying to tell a story without any evidence to back up their arguments. As Kaminer (2001) comments, there would be no way of refuting a past experience of sexual abuse because the latter was based solely on the victim's memory which, to this discourse, was in and of itself evidence of absolute truth. But the defense of the victims would not be limited to the supposed acts of sexual abuse; it extended further, to the whole debate over political correctness -- heir, in her opinion, to earlier witch hunts -- and the language that would be permitted or condemned. The regulation of language was based on the possibility that someone could feel offended or

discriminated against; taking it to an extreme, any person might have such a reaction to virtually anything. The simple fact that one said he or she was "offended" or "abused" is enough.

In that same way that abuse victims, blind to their own condition, have to be subjected to the "truth's revelation" in order to be able to overcome all of their difficulties, society also had shown, and did show, blindness towards the reality of abuse. Individual dissociation is only the shadow of a long history of social denial. Therefore, society as well must be subjected to a therapeutic process which allows it to remove the blinders and confront its own shame. An example of this reality relegated to our collective unconscious would be the vast network of Satanic cults which have ritually abused and murdered children with impunity for hundreds of years. For to fight abuse, be it on the individual or societal level, whether it be with this or that kind of weapon, is to fight to bring a great [101] truth to light. A truth which Freud was the first to acknowledge, in spite of his later -- some assert -- wrongly denying or minimizing it.

Freud's Fatal Error This theory regarding Freud and his error in this area is not exclusive to the recovery movement of the 1990s or the most militant wing of radical feminism. In 1984, Finkelhor had already taken up this argument once more, and had accepted it as valid. Finkelhor was in fact well-versed in the feminist proposals regarding pornography, abuse, and other similar subjects. For example, at that time he was already referring to the suggestions of authors such as Dworkin and Rush, who were outlining the relationship that existed between child publicity or pornography and pedophilia. For one, Finkelhor cites a work concerning pornography and masculinity that was presented at a university in 1983; for another, he repeatedly makes use of a 1977 article entitled "The Freudian Cover-Up" [E38], as well as the 1980 book *The Best-Kept Secret* [E39], which deals with the issue of child sexual abuse. Rush's works deal with the reformulation as fantasies of Freud's patients' abuse memories, a subject which Masson later took up in a 1984 book entitled *The Assault on Truth* [E40], which Finkelhor also acknowledges in his sociological reflections on the problem of sexual abuse.

This work is often coordinated among the recovery movement's defenders, and also appears in some sexual abuse handbooks. Thus for example Irene Intebi (1998), in her book on the sexual abuse of minors published in our own country, refers to Masson's work in order to criticize, e.g., Iwan Bloch's attitude concerning the supposed seductress role played by many girls in their erotic relations with adults. Moreover Intebi includes a chapter entitled "Freud, Hysteria, and History," which is devoted to criticizing Freud's final posture towards abuse. Finkelhor (1984), for his part, calls on Masson's proposal in order to explain what he regards as the traditional skepticism towards abuse on the part of psychiatrists as a group.

In our own country, Félix López [E41] (1993) points out that one must look for the first scientific references to the problem of abuse in Freud's theories regarding child sexuality and the existence of erotic desires between parents and children. Freud would be the first to acknowledge the presence of abuse and to point out its frequency, although, as López acknowledges, he would subsequently abandon -- according to the theory defended by Masson, the recovery movement, and others -- this position in order to attribute everything to his patients' childhood fantasies and incestuous desires. Freud's supposed denial of the reality of abuse, transforming it into fantasy, forms a part of both the general abuse discourse and -- above all -- the recovery movement.

Given its interest in the modern configuration of the problem of abuse, we will analyze it in some detail.

According to Ofshe & Watters (1996), it is obvious that without Freud and his contributions, widely accepted throughout the West, the great flowering of the recovery movement and its theories would not have been possible; the latter would probably have been recognized as a "pseudo-science." Its [102] importance in the modern abuse discourse lay not simply in the position which -- as we have seen -- it occupied among recovered memory defenders as well as researchers in this field, but in the fact that its basic tenets have paved the way for the validation of the basic outline of danger analyzed here. The role of child sexuality, the importance attached to the most intimate family relationships where the sexual is ever-present, the position which sexuality in general occupies in its theories, and the fact that psychoanalysis "always explains the individual in terms of his or her past, and not in terms of the future towards which he or she is headed" (Beauvoir, 2000a p. 113), are undoubtedly some of the legacies which have allowed abuse -- especially of an incestuous nature -- to be configured in the way it has.

Ofshe & Watters were obliged to undertake an analysis of Freud's theories along these lines, making special reference to the debate over why he supposedly went from regarding his patients' memories of abuse as actual recollections to regarding them as a reflection of their own childish desires and fantasies. It went from an abuse theory to a seduction theory - Oedipus. These researchers assert that it is common in the recovery movement literature -- and we should add the sexual abuse literature as well -- to critically point out this change of perspective on the problem that Freud would have and -- what is more important -- that this change in attitude would have been due, above all, to the pressures of a Victorian society that was not prepared to accept that sexual abuse within the family actually existed. Because of that, the recovery movement's defenders are wont to return to Freud's initial writings, where he was still defending that these incestuous experiences were real. What these authors do not acknowledge, Ofshe & Watters assert, is that Freud -- and this can be seen in his own writings -- was using methods similar to their own -- generators of false memories -- in order to stimulate and construct in his patients memories which he wanted to create in order to support his own theories.

The Great Truth Regardless of whether this critic of Freud is right or not, an issue which I will not wade into, a very interesting idea suggested by Ofshe & Watters -- and which in a certain way goes beyond Freud -- is what happens to the defenders of the ritual abuse or recovery movements, and what -- in my opinion -- is also characteristic of the same scientific discourse surrounding abuse itself: the sense conveyed of having discovered or discovering humanity's "great dark truth," which is always being hidden and which, in a certain way, explains the whole of human existence, its societies, and its individuals:

The [recovery] movement's literature shows that some of the prominent experts believe that they are not simply exploring the pasts of their clients but also the history of patriarchal society, and perhaps even unearthing a secret Satanic organization that rules the world." (Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 296) [E42]

In that way the therapist -- entrusted with uncovering those memories buried in the past -- also enters into a level of existence superior to that which is commonly perceived, as a being of special importance and ability who is involved in the complex and important work of saving the individual and -- why not -- the society as well. A sense of having found a great truth may have also influenced Freud's thinking, or so at least these authors suggest; but of course, what certainly is being referred to is the sexual abuse discourse. The shame of having remained ignorant for so long in the face of this social defect is acknowledged by abuse theorists, and is brandished as an ongoing *mea culpa*: [103]

In conclusion, I will summarize by saying that sexual abuse is a grave problem which has not been taken very seriously, and which represents a hard lesson for all of us who work with children. All of us have been observing child development and the conditions of childhood, from a scientific approach, for almost a century now. In all that time we have made a great deal of progress. ... And so it is all the more disgraceful that now, at the end of the 20th century, we have to make it clear that *during this whole time of investigating childhood, we have closed our eyes to a problem as basic as that of sexual abuse*, with the majority of scientists, physicians, and educators having recognized neither the frequency of sexual abuse nor its serious consequences. This shame should serve to wake us up and make us take stock of the huge gaps which continue to exist in our knowledge concerning children. It is odd that we have even been able to overlook something so important, especially considering that all of us were children at one time." (Finkelhor, 2000 pp. 101-102. Emphasis added.)

In any event, what is interesting is that this litany, which allows for a whole range of "crusades for good" in the fight against sexual abuse -- in which we should also include child pornography and child prostitution -- also permits the justification of many of the discourse's other premises:

For one, emphasizing how, in day-to-day practice, intervention in cases of sexual abuse is often not seen as simply a law enforcement, social, or therapeutic response to an offense, an assault, or a discrete act. Every case of abuse is interpreted as another emerging tip of an enormous iceberg, never as rare or isolated acts. It could be argued that this is due to the demonstrated extent of the problem, something that I will briefly address; but the entire explanation does not, in my opinion, lay there. In fact, I would say that intervening in abuse, or simply talking about the topic, has taken on the characteristics of a sacrament, such that what is now converted into a taboo is not its existence but its denial or criticism. Saving or "curing" an abuse survivor is to make oneself a participant in a great social movement that is fighting against the horrors that are closing in on this society. In this struggle, ritual abuse or recovery movement activists are simply the most militant battalion; but they are part of the same army. Making a distinction between their objectives and their means runs the risk of turning oneself into a defender of the enemy. To resist believing in the horrors which they say millions and millions of children are suffering under due to the erotic desires of a whole lot of men -- and some women -- is a vile act that is difficult to equal. There is no middle ground.

[104] The victim, who from the perspective of a certain feminist discourse we come to see as a survivor of it all, also acquires signs of sanctity or, if you like, of heroism, for there is

something of the epic in his or her experience, which leaves an indelible mark. A mark which not only signifies a memory of the suffering but is, above all, an indication of the fortitude which belongs to those who have returned from hell. For good or ill, the victim remains at the margin of society, never to be the same again because that -- without exception -- transforms you. Observing the abuse victim demands a gaze somewhere between devotion and admiration, for you are in the presence of an exceptional being. Or so asserted the recovery movement and the supposed victims of ritual abuse, who went on to become well-known personalities in their communities and threw great parties for themselves to which they would invite distinguished personalities from television and the world of children's shows. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001)

One reflection of this that I will comment on is the tendency to believe in the truth of every suspicion. We have gone from that supposed blindness which would thwart even considering the possibility of abuse to a suspect tendency to credit everything, even the most outlandish stories or the most unfounded suspicions. Though this is clearly the case in the recovered memory phenomena, it is no less so in the academic and public discourse surrounding abuse in general. The sense of having found an always-hidden truth leads therapists to take its certainty for granted. Roland Summit, the author of "The Child Sexual Abuse Accommodation Syndrome" [E43] and a researcher cited in many works on abuse assures us that:

Because we see it clinically, we see something we believe is real, clinically, and whether or not our colleagues or the press, or scientists at-large or politicians or local law enforcement agencies agree that this is real, most of us have some sort of personal sense that it is. (Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 195) [E44]

Evidence is unnecessary and its absence means nothing, for we know that abuse is there, though it lay behind a story of outlandish ritual Satanic abuse which is never proven. The truth of abuse and the priority of protecting and curing its victims render all doubt obsolete. The slogan is "believe the children." [E45] As Dan Sexton, the director of the National Child Abuse Hotline in the United States, asserts:

I'm not a law enforcement agent, thank. God! I'm a psychology person, so I don't need the evidence. I come from a very different place, I don't need to see evidence to believe... I don't care what law enforcement's perspective is, that's not my perspective. I'm a mental health professional. I need to find a way to help survivors heal the trauma they had as children and to help support other clinicians who are trying to help survivors and victims of this kind of crime. " (Cited in Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 196) [E46]

The problem is that this dogma is also translated to the penal arena, radically altering what had been bedrock principles of justice in Western countries, such as the presumption of innocence or that [105] the defendant gets the benefit of the doubt. Moreover the testimony of sometimes very small children is accepted as valid, occasionally done via video or obtained in exploratory interviews conducted by social science professionals and not by specialized prosecutors; the victim's word would be given more weight than that of the accused, for one was quite convinced that the former seemed quite innocent; validity was conferred to the declarations of third persons concerning what the child "had told them," accepted as evidence was the opinion

-- always subjective and debatable -- of supposed "experts," psychologists and social workers, as to the veracity of the accusation; the most improbable medical indicia was sufficient to convict suspects. This is already happening in the European justice arena.

The great truth discovered in abuse allows, in turn, for nearly everything that happens to a patient to be explained. The recovery movement affirmed this with absolutely no qualms whatsoever: depression, schizophrenia, alcoholism, anxiety, work-related problems, anorexia and bulimia, headaches, arthritis, sexual dysfunctions, and relationship problems are just some of the many future effects of child abuse, and which can be explained simply in terms of that experience. Only the recovery of those dormant memories will permit one to overcome present difficulties. The sexual abuse discourse generally is also a participant in those beliefs associating sexual abuse with an endless series of future problems. Present problems are explicable in terms of past victimization. In that context, it is typically suggested that every patient who comes in for a consultation be examined for a possible past history of abuse; those who defend the recovery movement demand it, and those who write about abuse (e.g., Robbins, 1995; Vázquez Mezquita, 1995; Pruitt & Kappius, 1992) [E47] often suggest it. Behind all of this is nothing but the same, unquestioned truth: the terrible power of sex to do harm.

Lastly, combating this dramatic reality for the sake of a more just world -- as if that would solve one of the principal problems of society -- requires a rigid, infallible, and intolerant attitude with respect to these acts. This is what has recently become commonplace in Spain with news from the United States -- now extending to other countries - of sexual abuse within the Catholic church: so-called "zero tolerance," which puts each and every erotically-tinged experience on the same level and requires the reporting and prosecution of all such incidents. In the same way that every pornographic representation was once rejected and condemned, every erotic experience between a child and an adult is pointed to as being harmful and deserving of the most severe punishment.

The Trauma

The long-term effects of child sexual abuse can be so pervasive that it's sometimes hard to point to exactly how the abuse affected you. ... To quote the words of one victim: "As far as I'm concerned, my whole life has been stolen from me. I didn't get to be who I could have been. I didn't get the education I should have gotten when I was young. I married too early. I hid behind [106] my husband. I didn't make contact with other people. I haven't had a rich life." Bass & Davis, *The Courage to Heal*. (Cited in Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 79) [E48]

The reality of sexual encounters between adults and minors has basically been constructed from the perspective of maltreatment, practically blotting out the map of social and scientific interests, or for that matter, any other approach that dispenses with terms like abuse, maltreatment, and assault. In its configuration as a danger, not only has it been necessary to present it for public consumption as if it were a question of a historical discovery; it has also been necessary to stridently point out its terrible gravity. What is odd is that this gravity is, in a certain way, detected there for the first time, where others would not have seen it. The

connections between the scientific abuse discourse and that of ritual abuse or the recovery movement are also evident here.

Kinsey, the Sexologists, and the Goodness of Sex The most prominent author after Freud is -- according to López -- Alfred Kinsey, who in the 1950s included -- in his large-scale study of sexual behavior in the United States -- a reference to children's erotic experiences with adults. Though the percentage of subjects who had had such experiences was similar to that found in current studies -- Kinsey pointed to a prevalence of around 20% among women -- López accuses Kinsey of not adequately assessing the transcendent nature of these acts, and thus minimizing their seriousness. And it is in fact true that Kinsey, seen in light of what has been written since that time, brings a clearly benevolent perspective to these sorts of acts.

Kinsey pointed out at that time -- recall that we are talking about 1953, when his study of the sexual life of women was published -- the increasing social preoccupation in the United States with the subject of girls' sexual contacts with adult males. Concerning this, he cites various articles in the media calling attention to this threat that was engulfing childhood or to the existence of means to prevent it. And so he collects quotations such as the one referring to the existence of "depraved human beings, more savages than beasts, who are left to stalk America at will," gathered from a 1947 article entitled, "Is Your Daughter Safe?"; or his reference to "a 31 page book of bedtime stories which is meant to teach one to fear all adults -- people they know as well as strangers -- as sexual perverts, utilizing the techniques of magicians and witches, whereby friends are converted into monsters with base sexual instincts," which was published in 1952. At the same time, Kinsey explains, many states were passing laws concerning sexual crimes against children, stiffening the sentences to life without parole or even the death penalty. According to Finkelhor (1984), these messages understood the sexual abuse of minors to be a result of the liberalization of sexual morality that was occurring at that time. Nevertheless these moralists -- Finkelhor points out -- were wrong about the true nature of the problem, because whereas they were worried about aggressors from outside of the family, the real danger originated from within it.

Nevertheless, Kinsey would warn that most of the information that was available at the time was based on data from the clinical, law enforcement, and other social institution arenas. In his own study, based on information obtained from 4,441 women, Kinsey found that "about 24% (1,057) of the women had been propositioned by, or had had sexual contact with, adult males as pre-adolescents." (Kinsey, 1967 p. 117) [E49] The lion's share of these experiences -- some 80% -- were one-time events.

For another thing, some 5% of those who were involved in such contacts spoke of nine or more episodes throughout childhood. Repetitions occurred more frequently when the girls would have relations with relatives who were living in the same home. In many cases the contacts would be repeated because the girls were interested in their continuing, and more or less actively sought them out (Kinsey, 1967 p. 118).

The author went on to explain that around 62% of cases involved propositions or genital exhibition without actual touching, suggesting that we may be talking about adults who never

had actual physical contact with the girls; most of the remaining experiences were limited to touching, with only 3% involving penetration.

It is interesting -- apart from the statistical data to which I shall return in a moment -- to closely examine how Kinsey interprets or evaluates these kinds of acts. Although he acknowledges that it is still difficult to establish clear conclusions based on the data available, his impression was that the vast majority of these acts were not as harmful as is believed. His own words are worth quoting here:

The women in our sample who had had contacts with adults during childhood had done so for a variety of reasons: curiosity, pleasure, confusion, fright, terror, or' uneasiness combined with feelings of guilt. Contacts with adults are a source of pleasure for some girls, to the point that they are sometimes sexually aroused (5%) or brought to orgasm (1%) by them. Frequently, the contacts were mediated by demonstrations of affection, and some of the older women in the sample felt that their preadolescent experiences had contributed favorably to their subsequent psychosexual development.

On the other hand, around 80% of the girls had suffered emotional uneasiness or fright in their contacts with adults. A small proportion suffered serious disturbances; although in the majority of cases the fright experience<! would appear to be more along the lines of what happens when children are shown insects , spiders, or other objects against which they have been adversely conditioned. ... Of course there are cases of adults who have caused physical injury to children whom they have sexually assaulted, and we have the histories of some of the men who are responsible for such acts. But they are few in number, and the public should learn to distinguish between those contacts and others which cannot cause appreciable injury, provided that the parents do not overreact. The total number of children who suffer injury may be measured vis-à-vis the fact that among the 4,441 women regarding whom we have data of a sexual nature, there was just one who, as a girl, suffered serious injury due to a sexual assault, as well as some who had vaginal bleeding who, nevertheless, do not seem to have been done appreciable harm (Kinsey, 1967 p. 120).

And so for Kinsey the principal problem, in the majority of cases, is the [108] reaction of the parents or adults surrounding the child, and above all the cultural conditioning which invites children to react in a disproportionate manner to these sorts of experiences. He therefore criticizes the way in which these acts have been viewed and dealt with, thereby de-fanging the issue. Kinsey defended the innocence of many old men who were accused of sexually abusing minors, denouncing the hysteria of many girls at the idea of being touched by a stranger; he lamented many children's -- especially those of the female sex -- misinterpretations of affection in the face of certain behaviors on the part of adults, and even suggested that many children enjoy their sexual encounters with adults (Robinson, 1995).

Undoubtedly that is just what López reproaches Kinsey for, considering the fact that subsequent research would focus on the problem of "abuse," a newly-emerging concept, which was being seen as more and more grave. The later phases of abuse research, as cited by López,

were devoted especially to investigating the characteristics of abuse in individual cases and, later, to sketching out its most important statistical traits -- frequency, types, effects, etc It is evident that researchers' interest in the problem of the sexual abuse of minors shows a significant increase from the 1970s onward, and in parallel with this increase we observe a greater insistence on demonstrating the seriousness of the phenomenon.

In any event, Kinsey was not alone. In 1984 Finkelhor himself would acknowledge a tendency for other prominent authors such as Pomeroy -- a colleague of Kinsey -- Menninger or Storr to place particular emphasis on the alarmism with which everything having to do with child sexuality was being dealt with. Although the need to protect children from certain dangers was not being denied, the undesirable consequences that could ensue from the exclusive and excessive preoccupation with harm were being denounced. Moreover, some of them had a tendency to minimize the dangers of those sexual experiences. These intimations were, in turn, endorsed by some researchers who, in addition to questioning the scientific validity of the samples used to demonstrate the tragic consequences of abuse, undertook studies in which the results were not so negative, thus bringing to mind Kinsey's own work.

We see another example of this. In a pamphlet published a little over two decades later [E50], *Dealing With the Last Taboo* -- edited by SIECUS, the Sex Education and Information Council of the U.S. -- Ramey (1979) notes how in 1970, nine years prior to the date this pamphlet came out, a group of researchers who had gathered for a meeting on sexology discussed a prediction by E. Brecher, a journalist specializing in the history of sexology. [E51] This author predicted that, once the taboos surrounding homosexuality had been overcome, it would be incest's turn, the 'ultimate taboo.' Ramey and his compatriots discussed this prediction and appeared to be in agreement on the following points:

- the taboo surrounding this reality has impeded a scientific approach to the study of incest.
- lacking that scientific knowledge, we are condemned to learn about incest through the few criminal and clinical cases that we know about. [109]
- these cases are rarely, not to say never, representative of the reality of the universe of human sexual behavior.
- the clinical and penal based cases that we hear about lead us to make pronouncements regarding incest of a moral and religious nature.
- to date,. no research has plumbed the true depths of the phenomenon.

Nowadays, Ramey's assertions regarding the subject of incest would seem surprising. In the first place because Ramey avoids any discussion of victims. In this way, he questions the supposed tragedy underlying all of these experiences. His position is already made evident the moment that he points out that at the Institute for Sex Research, where Kinsey carried out his studies, there remains a large trove of unpublished material labeled, "The population is not yet ready for it." According to Ramey, this meant that the data would suggest that some persons with incestuous experiences had not been horribly harmed by them. Now, Ramey points out in 1979 -- some eight years after that meeting -- that although the social and scientific anxiety concerning incest has reached new and unforeseen heights -- books, articles, television programs, movies -- we know precious little more about the issue. In fact, he affirms, we find ourselves in the very

same position in terms of our view of incest, which is the one that would have existed a hundred years prior to the fear surrounding masturbation.

Likewise, Ramey suggests that the problem of incest originates, in large measure, from the intervention of authorities when it is discovered and the way in which they have to proceed, incarcerating the adult or taking the child out of the home. Either way, this author asserts, the victim is going to see his or her situation deteriorate. He rejects the notion of incest as a pathological act and the fact that incest is automatically associated with rape and violence, when we know that they rarely coincide. It is interesting to note that in those years -- 1979 -- Ramey also stood up and criticized the fact that some authors were talking about "sexual abuse" in place of incest. In concrete terms he refers to the work of Armstrong, the author of *Kiss Daddy Goodnight* [E52], a work often cited in subsequent studies of sexual abuse. According to Ramey, in Armstrong's observations, into which I am not going to delve too deeply, there is an endless series of dramatic and unfounded exaggerations. In fact, we do not have the valid information necessary to be able to seriously assert anything regarding the reality of incest.

Ramey's final criticism of that whole incipient discourse concerning incest is, curiously, the harm that -- in his opinion -- has been done to the population in general by over-dramatizing experiences which are oftentimes devoid of any suffering. Media sensationalism added to the increasing association of these acts with rape, child maltreatment, violence, etc, thus converting it into an easy scapegoat for explaining all manner of problems. The stories that are published everywhere end up generating new -- and more problematic -- ways of interpreting personal experiences. Moreover because of these discourses, families are going to fear any physical contact that could be suspected of being a prelude to a sexual contact. The 'harm in this case could be greater, the author warns. Ullerstam (1999) had already suggested something similar back in 1964, when he wrote things such as the following: [110]

Small children frequently demonstrate a marked interest in the sexual organs of their parents. Psychoanalysts consider it of the utmost importance to their psychosexual development that parents do not rebuff such approaches, which in some cases can turn out to be intensely libidinous. If they do reject them, there is a danger, based on what we are told, that various emotional disturbances will emerge later on in the child's life; psychoneuroses, sexual delinquencies, etc I do not know precisely up to what point this is true. But I am of the opinion that it would be very difficult for children to experience pleasant and spontaneous feelings vis-à-vis their parents if the latter do not allow them, in due time, "to play with them under the sheets." If they brutally reject their children, the parents will probably be the primary cause of some feelings of guilt and sexual anguish, which are converted into true dilemmas when the child reaches adulthood." (1999 p. 47) [E53]

We are already used to, Ramey would say, the government, the media, and other defenders of morality wanting to associate drug addiction with the act of having smoked something herbal. The same thing would happen in this case. The parallel nowadays is striking. What do we gain -- Ramey asks -by telling young people that their lives have been destroyed by that incestuous experience? It is time, he asserts, to approach incest from other perspectives,

becoming well-acquainted with the facts and responding to them with greater rationality and sensitivity than that which has occurred up to this point.

Ramey would say all of this in 1979. Nevertheless, his ideas do not appear to have had much success. During the 1980s, in the wave of ritual abuse panic already described, although a huge number of studies into the problem of incest or sexual abuse in general were carried out, their results were not very promising. The horror theory, of lifetime harm, of inevitable trauma, finally ended up dominating the scientific, political, and social arenas that dealt with the issue. And not only with regard to father-daughter incest, which was the most important object of preoccupation in this field's first research efforts; all sexual contacts between adults and children -- and a short time later between minors of different ages as well (Okami, 1992) -- were seen more and more, and with greater firmness, as the source of unutterable suffering.

Finkelhor, Herman, and the Recovery Movement Finkelhor (1984) would later oppose the proposals of some sexologists, along with other authors, who were reinforcing the notion that these acts were usually traumatic for children and that it was necessary and urgent to protect them from the former. This point of view, Finkelhor would acknowledge, had been reinforced by the feminist movement, which was denouncing the scant acknowledgment that this kind of trauma had received in the past. However studies along these lines were now quite abundant, and included references to problems like drugs, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, or sexual dysfunctions as possible consequences of victimization. He acknowledges the criticisms of these studies that perhaps they are not representative of the general population, and moreover, that those effects could be due to many other causes which have nothing to do with the sexual experience in question. Despite this, after presenting his own study of the consequences of abuse, he states conclusively that some [111] of the consequences are in fact due exclusively to that experience.

And so he concludes that sexuality-related self-esteem problems, the possibility of being re-victimized in the future, and homosexuality, can be very closely associated with the abuse experience. It is interesting to note how he devotes so much space to that last variable in order to analyze possible causes, in terms of how a victimization in childhood could lead to homosexual activity in adulthood. Finkelhor concludes that this is the case, at least insofar as boys are concerned; and this is in fact an echo of the fears typical of American society at that time, judging by campaigns such as that of Anita Bryant at the end of the 1970s. In any event, the final impression one gets upon reading Finkelhor's work is that he ends up defending a too pessimistic view of these sorts of experiences, in contrast to the relative benignity that, as we have seen, others would defend. From that moment on, the former perspective would -- beyond any doubt -- be the triumphant one in the whole abuse discourse.

I have already pointed out how Finkelhor was especially thankful to certain authors for their support of his own work, Judith Herman among them. This latter author has had a hand -- since the end of the 1970s -- in the new social programs for dealing with incest, supported the legal transformations that came right on the heels of the ritual abuse cases, whereby priority was given to victims' statements and protection -- almost always overlooking the rights of the accused -- and would later become a prominent partisan in the recovery movement. Herman is, moreover, an oft-cited author in many studies and writings relating to child sexual abuse.

Finkelhor not only cites her in his acknowledgments; he also refers to her work many times throughout his book, precisely in order to argue that abusive experiences in childhood are almost never innocuous, and that the consequences may last for many years or even a lifetime. He also returns to her work in order to bolster the possible role of patriarchal society in the existence of abuse, the importance of psychological abuse with erotic connotations which is not translated into actual incest, or the historical denial of child victimization and the trauma that it generates.

Finkelhor especially would refer to Herman's work entitled *Father-Daughter Incest* [E54], published in 1981 and which, according to Ofshe & Watters, brought her to national prominence. Herman was, Bass & Davis (1995) note, one of the first authors to deal with incest from a feminist perspective. A short time after her book, in 1984 -- the same year that Finkelhor's book was published -- Herman came out, along with E. Schatzow, with an article in which group therapy for women victims of incest is analyzed [E55] and which, according to Ofshe & Watters, explains how patients are invited, in each session, to reach concrete objectives such as the recovery of presumably repressed memories of abuse. In 1987 these two authors published another article, entitled "Recovery and Verification of Memories of Childhood Sexual Trauma." And then, in 1992, Herman came out with her "Trauma and Recovery" book [E57], which would be adjudged by some as the most important psychiatric work published since Freud (Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 329), and which would end up as part of the recovery movement's required reading.

Basing ourselves, as always, on the comments of Ofshe & Watters, that last [112] work by Herman -- according to them a recognized leader of the recovery movement -- defends the existence of repression or dissociation not only in individual cases but also on a social level, arguing for the need for a political movement along these lines which would, in turn, facilitate scientific advances in the study of trauma. It also explains how the feminist movement has not only made it possible for women to tell their stories of abuse but has made them able to remember them and not relegate them to the subconscious. Herman suggests to therapists that they utilize photographs, family trees, or visits to places from their childhood in order to facilitate the recovery of repressed memories, in addition to using events from the patient's day-to-day life or hypnosis. The relationship between Finkelhor and Herman was made freshly evident in the article by Finkelhor which, in 1993, formed a portion of the minutes of the 2nd National Congress on Child Maltreatment held in our own country -- in the city of Vitoria to be precise. The author points out that "one-fourth of cases occur prior to age 8, with some physicians now insisting that this percentage would be even higher, if it were not for the loss of memories from such early years," citing as his source a personal communication from Herman.

The *Trauma and Recovery* book is, according to Bass & Davis, a "brilliant synthesis, full of compassion concerning our understanding of the impact of trauma, which includes the experiences of mistreated women, child objects of sexual abuse, war veterans, and prisoners of war." (1995 p. 588) In it are gathered many of the recovery movement's characteristic principles, including of course the dramatic consequences that abuse often has.

Multiple Personality and Other Sequelae The consequences of abuse have always been divided into two overall categories: short- and long-term. The latter may have garnered greater attention on the part of researchers, at least in the first phase of investigation into the problem.

(Kendall-Tackett, Williams & Finkelhor, 1993) Finkelhor himself -- and I shall return to this further below -- laments this reality, denouncing the fact that whereas we have been very interested in the future consequences of abuse, we are far less so in what occurs at the time. Vázquez (1995) as well -- to cite an example from our own country -- takes up this question in her concise handbook on the forensic evaluation of sexual assault. She points out the problem of child abuse originally emerged in the context of the consequences observed in adults -- although she does not explain what this conclusion is based on -and adds a box in which she reviews the principal studies into the long term effects of incest.

It is interesting to observe that within this box, aside from the contributions of Finkelhor and Russell, Vázquez only includes the works of Herman, Putnam, and Ross, three prominent members of the recovery movement. We have already talked about the first of these. As for Frank Putnam, I have already noted that he is an acknowledged specialist in multiple personality disorder; as Vázquez indicates, Putnam points out how 97% of the cases of persons with this illness [113] that he analyzed had histories of sexual abuse. What Vázquez does not mention is the scientific weakness of the concept of multiple personality, the possibility that it is not so much something that is diagnosed as it is something which is simply constructed by the therapists themselves (Ofshe & Watters, 1996), and the suspect mechanisms by which the abuse memory may be recovered in this process.

That leaves her reference to Colin Ross, who in 1996 was the president of the International Society for the Study of Multiple Personality Disorder. Vázquez cites a multiple personality disorder study similar to Putnam's. Ross is another prominent specialist in this field, and some of his assertions are taken, by Ofshe & Watters, to be a sign of that supposed truth found in abuse about which I have already spoken. Ross asserted that the critics of his discoveries, which include references to Satanic rituals and the CIA, are simply indications that part of society is not prepared to confront the reality of abuse. What is even more surprising is that Colin Ross, in order to defend himself from those who were beginning to criticize the multiple personality disorder phenomenon as the invention of therapists and hypnosis, asserts that the critics themselves have been deceived by the CIA. In fact Ross believes, according to Ofshe & Watters, that many of his patients were trained to have multiple personalities, when they were children, by agents of that organization.

Since the late 1940s, Ross explains, the CIA has systematically abused children in laboratory settings using 'hallucinogens, sensory deprivation, flotation tanks, electric shock, enforced memorization and other techniques. (Ofshe & Watters, 1996; 224) [E58]

The long list of symptoms cited by the recovery movement as indicators of possible abuse is so broad that it could include anyone; but something also occurs in works concerning sexual abuse in general, with which the former shares a large group of symptoms. The insistence on abuse's grave and abundant consequences is not exclusive to the recovery movement. In relation to the latter and its lists of symptoms, Ofshe & Watters comment that this could lead one to suspect that their creators are something in the nature of snake-oil salesmen, who are only seeking to deceive the public and sell or provide more therapy. Nevertheless, they do not believe that that is the principal objective of the list; what is worrying is that the movement's

representatives actually believe in its usefulness, which -- according to Of she & Watters -- allows us to see the scientific fragility and lack of rigor of this therapeutic discourse. [E59] The premise that it is possible to associate a current symptom -- or constellation of symptoms -- with a specific past experience, such as that of abuse, is beyond arguable, even when the patient is aware of such an experience; to say nothing of when he or she is not. This criticism is also applicable to research into the effects of abuse.

Investigating the Effects: The Bold and the Fine Print Along these lines, Ofshe & Watters make reference to a prominent article by Browne & Finkelhor (1986) entitled, "The Traumatic impact of Child Sexual Abuse: A [114] Conceptualization," in which they proceed from what is now a foregone conclusion, that adults who, as children, suffered abuse are much more likely to suffer from depression, self-destructive behaviors, anxiety, feelings of isolation and stigma, low self-esteem, a tendency towards re-victimization, substance abuse, and sexual difficulties, among many other examples that one could add. What is surprising is that, in this same article, these authors question whether it is possible to rigorously establish a clear causal relationship between sexual abuse and problems in adulthood; in spite of this, however, the message ends up being the same. It is acknowledged -- and it could hardly be otherwise -- that in many cases such connections are not found, and some data with respect to that is furnished; but a repeated, final message is still conveyed, at least implicitly: abuse always -- or almost always -- has an impact; rarely is this a slight one; all too often, it destroys the victims' lives.

The notion that specific disorders in adulthood are due to abusive experiences in childhood -- thereby ignoring the complex genesis of any illness or personal problem -- is more than dubious; as is, of course, using any given morbid symptom as a reason to suspect the existence of those abuses. Obviously the therapists' assumption -- that behind all such disorders lies some sort of sexual abuse -- may lead the patient to reinterpret his or her present and past within a framework which is adapted to the premises of the professional who is treating him or her. Patient and therapist, proceeding based on the assumptions implied in this approach, end up fulfilling the symptom interpretations listed in the manuals to a tee, situating them in relationship to abuse and thereby establishing that that is what caused them. This is something which evidently has occurred not only in the recovery movement but very probably in the sexual abuse movement generally as well, which is already happening in therapy with victims and in the evaluation of cases where minors are asked to remember and interpret their experiences.

The connection established between sexual abuse and problems in adulthood seems to correspond more to the foundational assumption that those experiences are negative, which is a fact that is amenable to being empirically demonstrated. Just like what happened with the recovery movement, the science of abuse in general -- not forgetting the exceptions to this -- has established that abuse has to be the central element in the life of that person who, from that moment forward, shall be a victim. As Ofshe & Watters suggest, patients are seen not as complex individuals with the will to create and organize their own lives, but as one-dimensional creatures who share a singular and defining experience: abuse. (1996 p. 79) The sensation of having gone on to prove the truth of a pre-existing belief ends up being unavoidable upon reading a large portion of the literature on the effects of abuse. It is there, where these same researchers acknowledge the difficulty in demonstrating the relationship, that they simultaneously point to its inevitable presence.

The preceding refers to studies on the long-term effects of abuse. The other field of research relates to the short and medium-term effects on children, an analytical perspective which only received a significant degree of attention beginning in 1985. (Kendall-Tackett, Williams & Finkelhor, 1993) Therefore in that arena, it is not a question of inquiring into the pasts of persons with disorders or undertaking [115] retrospective studies on the general population in order to detect correlations between abuse and future problems. Here, rather, it is a matter of researching victims' reactions to the abuse and making opportune comparisons with control groups. Just as would occur with the consequences in adult life, in this case the relationship established between the abuse and the minor's mental health continues to be an exclusive one. The abuse is regarded as being harmful, and if the minor exhibits a given symptom, the latter will be due especially to that experience.

As Sandfort (1983; 1984) -- who carried out a study of 25 minors who maintained relationships with adults which were evaluated as positive -- very aptly commented, the erotic aspect has been the one which has attracted the greatest amount of attention in studies of pedophilic relationships, even though in many cases that element is either absent or occupies a secondary position. Moreover it is understood, on the part of both the law as well as scientists, that any sexual relationship between an adult and a child is abusive by definition, although there would also have been other authors who would understand that these relationships can also be positive, pleasurable, and desired on the minors' part. And so looking at things in this way, Sandfort comments, it is par for the course that the majority of the empirical data utilized in those discussions -- which according to him is quite limited -- is based on cases involving sexual abuse and which always encompass it, regardless of the minors' actual experiences. In his opinion the case of Finkelhor is illustrative because, despite the fact that he cites cases in which minors -- boys and girls -- responded positively to the experience, to this author they are still victims, and continue to be characterized as such.

Sandfort may be right, since it is likely that abuse researchers have created victims, even in spite of the fact that the former would perhaps not feel themselves to be such. Sandfort's criticism -- he being interested in pedophilia, not incest -- is along the lines that one has neglected to investigate the erotic relationship in the context of the overall relationship between the minor and the adult, often ignoring the experiences of the minors themselves, or, if they are taken into account, interpreting them in a biased manner. In the end, if one expects adults who have suffered abuse experiences in childhood to almost necessarily be victims for the rest of their lives, perhaps that is precisely what will happen to these minors.

In their review of studies into the effects of sexual abuse on children, Kendall-Tackett, Williams & Finkelhor (1993) indicate that among the symptoms analyzed in these studies, what stand out are "sexualized" behavior [E60], low self-esteem, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, aggression-related problems at school, delinquency, and many others. This assertion is regarded as having been proven, and the general idea of the paper is that abuse generates gravely traumatic situations. This certainly is how it is presented, despite the fact that in many senses of the word the research is not absolutely conclusive.

It is true that studies which have compared children who have suffered abuse with others who have not -- and who also do not come from clinical samples - are conclusive about the fact that the former do exhibit more symptoms than the latter. Nevertheless, it is evident that these studies are based on victims of abuse that has been detected, when all of the authors acknowledge that the vast majority of abuse cases are not detected. They are working, therefore, with populations of children who have already been through the whole [116] process of revelation and judicial or clinical intervention following the abuse. Moreover, in the case of many of the symptoms -- such as post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal tendencies, running away, or self-harming behaviors -- the results are based on just one single study, and as far as others are concerned -- like anxiety or low self-esteem -- the studies are contradictory and do not point in a single direction. Due to the number of studies and their results, the evidence is clearer for symptoms like depression, shyness, somatic complaints, antisocial behavior or delinquency, non-specific mental illnesses, school problems, and inappropriate sexual conduct.

When clinical populations of those who have suffered abuse and those who have not are compared, the results are less dramatic for abuse victims, who tend to exhibit fewer symptoms than clinical samples in general. Nevertheless, the authors point out, it is necessary to take note of the fact that in many cases, as far as the children in treatment who presumably have not suffered abuse are concerned, it is very likely that they also did in fact suffer it. Oddly enough, this caveat is not offered when it comes to comparing abuse victims with populations of children who are outside of the clinical arena. Counting conservatively, we might estimate that some 20% of those "normal" children have also been victims of undetected abuse.

Along these lines, we might cite a curious piece of data acknowledged by Finkelhor and his colleagues. A significant percentage of children, which oscillates between 21% and 49% of cases according to the study of reference, do not exhibit any kinds of symptoms, or to be more precise in terms of the notion expressed by the authors, which never ceases to be ascribed significance, the impact has been "muffled" or "masked." Although they acknowledge a certain degree of surprise in the face of these results, they do offer one possible explanation for such an oddity. In fact in this case Sandfort is right, because the authors continue to speak of "victims" of abuse, to whom the adjective "asymptomatic" is added. The solutions presented include not having taken into account all of the possible symptoms and thus leaving some obscured, or having relied upon insufficiently sensitive instruments. Because of that asymptomatic minors could not, in reality, be so. Another possibility is that the traumatic signs have still not shown up as of the time of the study, and that they should appear at later stages in one's development. The third possibility, they point out, is that these minors truly are less affected, and that asymptomatic victims are, in reality, those who have suffered less serious abuse, or that their own personalities or social contexts favor a better resolution of the trauma. The latter, in any event, never ceases to be present, although in some cases it may be quickly worked through.

In a later article, Finkelhor & Berliner (1995) undertook a review of the results and characteristics of therapeutic interventions in sexual abuse cases. In this work, they take up once again the topic of asymptomatic minors and introduce a new concept, that of "dormant effects," whereby asymptomatic minors develop sequelae in later phases of their development. In any case, at no time do they accept the fact that in almost half of children the abuse does not produce any effects worth mentioning; and when that is acknowledged, the latter is only "apparent";

something which is not asserted when they do exhibit symptoms, which are never evaluated under the disclaimer, [117] "seemingly."

In conclusion, the take-away message -- at least the one transmitted in bold print to the public and to all of those who do not closely examine the abuse literature's fine print -- is one of its seriousness, in terms of its negative sequelae and consequences. The words of LaFontaine (1991) may be illustrative in this sense -- I could have chosen any author. Abuse, he asserts, is only innocuous for children in rare cases; and those studies which have argued otherwise have done so because they have carried out singularly superficial appraisals of the matter: Being married and having a job do not imply the absence of harm. Sequelae range from physical problems, such as sexually-transmitted diseases, on up to psychosomatic ones like headaches, asthma, eczema, or anorexia nervosa; nevertheless, the lion's share consist of an infinite number of psychological problems associated with abuse, which manifest themselves over the short, medium, and/or long terms.

We could also look at another author, in this case a Spanish one. Félix López has been a pioneer in abuse research in our country. In his study of the incidence of abuse in the general population, based on the memories of adults, López (1994) points out that the population in general appears to have a more pessimistic view of these acts than victims themselves. As for the latter, some 35% ascribed "no" importance to the abuse -- among men this category would rise to 45% -- with another 36% ascribing "some" importance to it; 15% imputed "sufficient" importance to it, with some 14% ascribing it "a lot" of importance. The difference between the victims and the general population with regard to assessing the abuse's seriousness is due, according to this researcher, to the fact that the public tends to think about the greatest cases of abuse, which are actually the least common ones.

This must lead us to realize, he suggests, that we should "adopt postures which, rather than provoking a great social obsession with the issue, instead stimulate calmer and more realistic interventions. ... Intervention should be done in such a way that social alarm is not provoked, an alarm for which society may well be primed given the enormous importance imputed to abuse, as well as other false beliefs which we have already commented on." (López, 1994 p. 120) This less dramatic view of abuse contrasts with many of the messages which this very same author has conveyed to the media and in materials disseminated. For example, in a piece of material developed by educators and used for abuse prevention (López & del Campo, 1997), the authors present none of the finer points mentioned above, and convey a quite negative message regarding the effects of abuse. And so they assert that between 60% and 80% are affected in the short-term in some way, and that between "17% and 40% suffer clear clinical pathologies;" (1997 p. 24) as for long-term effects, they include the usual list of the harmful consequences of abuse, ranging from depression and attempts at suicide in adulthood to feelings of stigmatization, isolation, or low self-esteem, and on to sexual and relationship problems, revictimization, delinquency, drug addiction, mistrust, academic failure, or prostitution. According to López and del Campo, "The long-term effects are more difficult to study due to the confounding effects of a whole series of other factors. We make use, despite this difficulty, of sufficient works as to be able to establish certain enough relationships between [118] sexual abuse in childhood and particular subsequent problems." (1997 p. 25)

All of these elements which I have parsed logically lead us to ask ourselves what the fundamental question truly is. It is possible that it is a question, due to certain reasons which do not have any scientific basis, of the abuse experience in childhood having been given colossal weight due to its transcendent importance to subjects' entire lives. Gravity, and the absence of any possibly negligible significance, have triumphed in the bold print, in spite of the fact that a more careful reading of the studies will point us toward other meanings. Undoubtedly of key importance in this phenomenon is one final element which, in my opinion, gives form to this modern danger: the terrible extent of it.

Its Extent

II Samuel 24 tells us of how the Lord incited David to count the nation's people, and what resulted from that. The census was regarded as a transgression against divine authority because it made the individual conscious of his own power. And so in order to punish David for having undertaken the census, the Lord sent a plague with the aim of reducing the population, after which the Lord "called the evil off" of them (Cohn, 1980; 91-92).

According to López, a third phase of abuse research focused on analyzing its statistical incidence. In fact at one time, one of the most evident interests on the part of researchers was to make an assessment of the incidence -- the number of new cases occurring over a defined period of time -- as well as the prevalence -- the number of adults in a particular population who had suffered sexual abuse during their childhoods -- of the phenomenon. Configuring abuse as an emergent danger at the present time has required the aid of figures which, to many, are endlessly terrifying. Besides almost always being a grave act with serious consequences, it is shown that its supposed rarity is nothing but a product of our collective blindness.

A product of that great truth which claims to recognize the reality of abuse, and simultaneously its marked gravity and transcendence in the lives of each and everyone of its victims, is the establishment of its surprising extent. It is not only that abuse has ceased to be an unusual or rare act; it is converted into an everyday thing, something common and habitual, and therefore, close by. This latest profile of the danger, which I shall describe in a moment, is defined not only in terms of the numbers furnished by the statistics, but also in terms of what these same statistics understand abuse to be.

Statistics The various and more than numerous investigations that have been carried out with respect to it cite prevalence figures which hover around 20% of women and 10% of men. (López & Amaez, 1989) In our own country, López et al. (1994) looked into the prevalence of sexual abuse using a representative sample of the Spanish population. In that study, they report a prevalence of [119] 23% in women and 15% of men. Although the more prominent studies carried out in different countries are in line with these numbers, there still ends up being a great deal of confusion concerning the true prevalence of the phenomenon, given the variation in data between one study and another. This variability depends on factors such as the study's target population, sample selection methods, the methods of data collection and, above all, the definitions of abuse employed in a given study. It is only logical that those studies which regard a verbal proposition as abuse will end up with much higher percentages than those that only

include nonconsensual sexual relations. And so we may come across prevalences ranging from 7% to 62% among women and from 6% to 15% among adult men. (Thomas & Jamieson, 1995) According to Robbins (1995 p. 480), citing some studies, the incidence of abuse oscillates between 6% and 62% for women and 3% and 31% for men. Authors such as Birchall end up talking about a prevalence that oscillates between 0.3% and 83%. (1989 p. 35)

Despite the statistical variations the customarily accepted percentages in works on the topic, which have also become part of public opinion via the media; is that around one in five women and one in ten men suffered abuse during their childhood.

But evaluating the incidence of sexual abuse is, if you will, far more complex and uncertain, given that it is fundamentally based on the study and analysis of those cases which have been detected by social services over a given period of time, the results of which will necessarily depend on the "effectiveness" of those services and on other variables such as social sensitivity and the tendency to report these acts or the suspicion of them. In this sense, it is evident that during the 1980s there was an observable increase in the number of detectable cases in recent years (Parton & Parton, 1989). In the United States, for example, the number of cases of sexual abuse that were uncovered went from 325,000 to 500,000 between 1985 and 1992. (Cantón & Cortés, 1997) In our own country, an investigation (Jiménez, Olivia & Saldaña, 1996) that analyzed 15,308 records from 1991 to 1992 pertaining to some 8,565 subjects found 359 cases of sexual abuse; which is to say, some 4.2%. This study did not address the evolution in the number of cases.

An example: At the end of the 1980s, the following evolution of cases of child maltreatment, in their various categories, was tracked in the United Kingdom:

Table 1. Evolution of the cases of childhood maltreatment in the UK (extracted from Stevenson, 1989 p.27)

Type	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	
Physical Injuries	Fatal		6	8	7	8	3	3	3	6	6
	Serious	112	106	76	84	83	64	54	56	93	81
	Moderate	573	603	599	683	716	594	615	648	807	850
Abandonment			3	15	30	44	62	50	71	124	
Emotional maltreatment					4	17	31	18	22	41	
At-risk situation	274	317	360	293	278	288	278	208	337	462	
Sexual abuse	7	8	8	11	27	40	51	98	222	527	

[120] The astonishing increase in the number of detected cases of sexual abuse was undoubtedly due to transformations in public opinion and social politics, as well as in the preoccupations and interests of professionals. This evolution turns out to be even more interesting when we compare it to the minor variations in experiences of other forms of maltreatment. Sexual abuse was converted into a much greater object of social preoccupation relative to other kinds of abuse, far surpassing the social preoccupation with other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; it even squelched any interest in those cases in which the risk to minors' actual lives was much greater, an aspect which is uncommon in sexual abuse cases. (Stevenson, 1989) In a large survey carried out in 1986 by the BBC, Birchell points out, 3,000 people voluntarily filled out a questionnaire concerning child abuse. Oddly enough, some 90% of those

surveyed indicated that they had suffered abuse. Obviously, this did not reflect the reality of the problem but simply the fact that "the current atmosphere would probably have increased the share of responses from victims of sexual abuse." (Birchell, 1989 p. 28).

The above aside one may -- if one accepts the figures supplied by prevalence studies -- conclude that the number of detected cases is just a fraction of what is really happening, an idea which has already been conveyed repeatedly by research. Thus for example, based on a telephone study of children, it was calculated that some 81% never tell anyone (Birchell, 1989). Now an inherent part of both the incidence and the prevalence data is the repeated notion that, even in the most optimistic statistics, the number of victims turns out to be enormous. Thousands and thousands of children suffer abuse every year; millions of adults have already suffered it.

Although researchers are in agreement as to the serious extent of the problem in our society, studies into the frequency of the maltreatment of minors are also broadly criticized by some authors, criticisms which are more than applicable to the case of sexual abuse. Birchell (1989), in an article critically examining the foundations upon which these sorts of statistics are based, shows how the methods and the results of the principal investigations are more than questionable. Both population surveys generally as well as child maltreatment registries or extrapolations based on them are complex sources of information that need to be approached with caution.

This author devotes a special section to the problem of sexual abuse, something which she does not do with other categories of maltreatment, owing to its "special characteristics" . and to the fact that data regarding the former is more variable than that concerning other kinds of maltreatment. As this same author points out, "Assertions like 'one out of every three girls has been a victim of it' and that 'sexual abuse causes serious harm' have, in turn, given way to others, such as 'we have no idea,' and 'very serious cases of sexual abuse are very rare'." (Birchell, 1989 p.30) In this case the problem undoubtedly consists of clearly defining what abuse is, or coming to any agreement with respect to this.

Defining the Danger A central problem for researchers is defining what is, and what is not, sexual abuse. We address this problem not so much in relationship to a possible decision of a penal nature, in order to decide whether or not a crime has been committed, but rather, in terms of the definition which must be utilized in studies of a statistical nature. In fact the concept of abuse within the judicial arena does not necessarily coincide with that utilized in manuals. The problem in defining child sexual abuse derives from the difficulty of precisely defining what a minor is, what a sexual interaction is, and what abuse is. Studies of the phenomenon typically require an objective and delimited definition, which would include very concrete categories that can be converted into a list of questions and are amenable to statistical analysis. Though the reasons for wanting to proceed based on an operational definition have been numerous, we have already seen how difficult it is to impose precise definitions onto a highly-variegated social reality.

Therefore the enormous oscillations in estimating abuse are a function not only of the methods used to evaluate it but also the characteristics of the definition which is utilized. The definition of what "sexual abuse" is, along with its consequent emotional baggage and imputed

significance, is something that is socially constructed. In this construction, it is very likely that the studies that have been undertaken and the messages that these works have conveyed to the public have a lot to say concerning the social definition of the term. Despite the above-noted difficulty in defining which situations and behaviors are defined as sexual abuse and which are not, researchers have continued to rollout studies of a statistical nature whose results are conveyed to the public in a particular way. When the media publishes figures such as that 23% of women and 15% of men have suffered abuse prior to age 17, without putting this data into its proper context [E61], it would seem logical to think that the social image of the phenomenon that has been constructed is based on very particular characteristics. Social alarm may well be a foregone conclusion.

First of all, it is necessary to take note of the fact that the concept of abuse has a special capacity to encompass an infinite variety of experiences, ranging from any kind of erotically-tinged talk on up to the most violent sexual assault; from the subtlest of touches on up to anal penetration; from a one-time encounter with an exhibitionist to a prolonged incestuous relationship between a father and his daughter. And so it is. But what the public generally does not know is that studies usually encompass different categories of sexual abuse, allowing for the inclusion of such widely-varied cases as the sodomizing of a three-year-old boy, a sexual relationship between a 21-year-old adult and a 16-year-old girl, an isolated act of exhibitionism, or the showing of pornography to a minor. According to Diggwall (1989), even Finkelhor himself would recognize the importance [122] of disaggregating the statistics and very much taking note of the variety of acts that are included. This is in fact a serious issue, given that some researchers have included in their studies situations which the subjects themselves do not regard as abuse.

What is odd is that acts which we fundamentally consider to be the most serious -- without forgetting that the important thing is not the acts themselves but the experiences -- would also appear to be the least common. To cite an example, in López's (1994) study, in 22% of the cases the most serious conduct was propositions or exhibitionism, and in 51% it was a question of caresses. Only in a little more than 4% of the cases did anal or vaginal penetration take place. Some 56% of the acts only occurred once, with 20% occurring two or three times. Victim and aggressor were related to one another in approximately 11% of the cases. Some sort of physical injury occurred in some 5%, and 1% resulted in pregnancy.

Nevertheless, we have witnessed a process of abuse inflation similar to that which occurred with the concept of child maltreatment in its time. Any sort of interaction between a minor and an adult which has a "sexual" connotation is considered abuse and, as such, is very worrying. To it we must also add abuse committed by other minors, given that recently there has been an insistence on the existence of abuse among peers, among siblings, and among children of different ages. Moreover there has been an increase in the age limits in terms of what is considered abuse. In many states in the U.S., a girl cannot have sexual relations until she has reached her 18th birthday, and if those are homosexual relations she must be even older. Many studies into the frequency of abuse include minors up to 18 years of age and adults who are five or more years older than their victims. In our own country the age of consent went from 12 to 13, and some are arguing that it should be increased to 14. (Urta, 2000) According to Money, a necessary consequence of anti-sexualism as well as the sexual abuse industry is the broadening

of the concept of childhood from age 16 to age 18, and the criminalization of any "erotic" image of children below that age. (Money, 1999 p. 29)

In my opinion it is likely that this generalized utilization of the term 'sexual abuse,' including a great variety of acts and experiences, is a response to the ideological and professional needs of the moment. It is noteworthy, for example, that incestuous and non-incestuous relations have been placed in the same category. And also the fact that from the beginning, part of the feminist movement has resolved to speak of "incest" in any sort of relationship between adults and children with sexual connotations. In fact this proposal belongs to the recovery movement, which made a point of not differentiating between these two kinds of experiences. (Robbins, 1995) In the prologue to Bezemer's book, written by a Spanish feminist collective, a definition is adopted according to which "'incest is any physical or mental violation of the sexual integrity of girls and adolescents perpetrated by a person whom they trust, whereby such relationships are maintained in secret.' Therefore they regard abuse committed by familiar persons who are not related by blood, or by friends of the family; to be incest." (Prologue to Bezemer's book, 1994 p. 14)

Lastly, it is necessary to highlight how the differentiation between violent [123] and non-violent acts has also been swept away in the sexual abuse debate. In 1979, Ramey, as we have already seen, pointed out the importance of this aspect for adequately understanding the problem; and many other authors have echoed him in this. It is not a good idea to mix things that are different in together, he would say, because it does not make sense to equate incest -- or for that matter sexual relations between adults and children generally -- with rape, aggression, maltreatment, etc. In the 1970s, Leroy G. Schultz (1973) would do something similar. He emphasized that the effects of victimization in these cases have been exaggerated, both the short and long term. For his part, he would insist that only 5% of these offenses would involve physical violence. By contrast, he pointed out, the majority of children who have had such experiences with adults without violence having been employed experience these acts as nontraumatic, and feel themselves to be participants in a relationship of affection. A sense of guilt among victims is usually absent, although it may be instigated by the parents or during the legal process.

Nowadays, the absence of violence is simply interpreted as a reflection of the fact that aggressors are able to attain their objectives through deceit or the abuse of power or trust. If it were not so, it is assumed, violence would be present in a large number of cases. Now, when an adult does not use violence in these experiences, this is not a mitigating factor in his actions or a reflection of his essential goodness. Neither can it be a reflection of the naturalness and spontaneity with which these relationships are sometimes initiated and extended over time. The absence of aggressiveness is simply an indication of a perverse nature which is hidden behind his seemingly innocent gestures. The violence remains latent because it is masked, vile, premeditated, and disloyal. Therefore the aggressor is, if you will, more cowardly than those whose strategies for taking advantage of the victims are, at least, explicit.

In summary, the general line that scientific and social discourse has been following concerning abuse has been one of going on to label more and more situations as abuse, however ephemeral and transient they may be. [E62] It may be that at this moment in history, speaking

generally of "incest," while still including non-incestuous cases, has a social utility which transcends the act itself. The same thing 'may now be happening with the term "abuse," which we unconsciously -- at least in our own country -associate with the sexual. To now speak flatly of assault, which is happening, is not a trivial matter. The sexual abuse concept has triumphed, interposing itself to measure the infinite and varied reality that confronts us with the same yardstick. Now anything can be abuse, and is so to the same degree.

Science, Abuse, and Sexuality

Science or Prejudice

It is obvious, therefore, why it is so common for the child, of whatever age, to say that the abuse only happened one time, conditioned -- as he or she is -- by the shame and fear that the child experiences, faced with the possibility of the 'true' situation being discovered: that the perpetrator was his or her' friend! and that, therefore, both bear the same degree of responsibility [124] for what occurred because the child desired that person's company, accepted his gifts, and would not have resisted the acts. It is essential for children's emotional well-being that they reveal this secret to persons whom they trust, and are able to question the perpetrator's ludicrous reasons as to why the victim is to blame and the abusive situation was perpetuated. The adult who is truly concerned about the child should carefully investigate the details of what he or she says in order to trace what tied him or her to the offender, and what mechanisms were used to guarantee the child's silence." (Intebi, 1998 p. 167).

Elsa-Brita Nordlund, a child psychiatrist, has examined more than a hundred crimes of this kind committed between 1944 and 1949 (...) demonstrating, in particular, that the number of cases involving ongoing relations was double that of one-time contacts. The child frequently manifests a notable loyalty towards the guilty party with whom relations were maintained. And this detail confirms the conclusions that we are able to draw from the various reports that we have concerning the matter. Particularly sweet and gentle men, incapable of killing a fly, are plentiful among pedophiles. Very frequently a relationship develops which is filled with tenderness and repeated sexual contacts. The child receives sweets and a physical tenderness that does not exist in his or her home. Among the episodes related by Nordlund, there was one very significant one of the affection which a boy was able to come to profess to his "infamous man": When the boy was asked to point out the delinquent among various persons in custody, he pointed to a policeman, because he was "very kind." (Ullerstam, 1974-1999 pp.69-70.)

More than three decades separate these two texts. Both deal with the consequences for minors of having sexual relations with adults. The first of these is the work of an Argentinian professional who, as is pointed out in the prologue, relies on wide experience in intervening into cases of child maltreatment and, to judge by her book, in cases involving the sexual abuse of minors. The second text belongs to a Swedish psychiatrist; originally published in 1964, it appears to have caused a scandal at the time. In this case, at no point does the author claim to have direct and broad knowledge of cases of sexual abuse. Although the above Ullerstam citation points to the possibility that her proposals might seem less shocking today than they did at the time they were published, her two chapters devoted to, respectively, incest and pedophilia never

cease to be surprising, and I dare say they are even more so now than they were nearly four decades ago. Her work can, I suppose, be placed squarely within that wave of "benignness" which permeated the conception of sexuality into the 1970s. In fact it is a question of an amiable and even rehabilitated vision in favor of what are, curiously, called "erotic minorities," as opposed to using other, more common terms such as deviance, perversion, or paraphilia. By contrast Intebi's work, published in 1998, can be said to be in line with the currently most widespread and broadly accepted theoretical and practical discourses relating to the problem of abuse. We could have chosen any work along these lines; the central ideas would have been the same or very similar.

It is possible that neither of these is the most representative or rigorous of the leading works on the subject. That is not what interests me; the utility of [125] comparatively analyzing them lies, in my view, in the fact that they serve as examples of two quite different postures. Because of how far apart their respective observations really are, a side-by-side reading of these two works would be a source of endless astonishment. We could have selected any two texts; those same differences in their respective postures might still have shown up, thereby providing an example of the historical transformation in the way that the relationship between sexuality and childhood was perceived. It is certainly tempting to analyze the reasons why two people -- both of whom would appear to have a healthy dose of scientific rigor -- would exhibit attitudes that are seemingly so far apart from one another, on the question of what one might reflexively call "sexual relations between adults and children" with the other immediately adopting the term "child sexual abuse.?" Although we could argue that a great deal of time has passed since Ullerstam's work, and that research into this problem has made great strides, the answer would appear to lie elsewhere.

The first reaction on the part of the scientific community, above all from the field of sexology, was often to see as minimal or relative the supposedly harmful effects of these sorts of experiences; according to some this was due to a fear of excessively emphasizing the danger, which would go against the advances that had been made in the area of sexual freedom. We have already seen various examples with respect to this. Nevertheless this perspective -- which tended to play down the harm in a significant portion of cases -- was eventually barred from the scientific -- and therefore the political and social -- marketplace in favor of a more negative posture towards the problem:

...for years, sexologists have shown a resistance to study this subject, believing that it was a question of rejecting child sexuality or reinforcing the sexophobic fears of a conservative culture; but recently, having caught on to the enormous social, educational, and clinical importance of this field of research ... has, finally, broken the silence." (López, 1995p. 25)

In his criminological and penal analysis of the problem Tamarit (2000) also takes up these questions, making reference to authors such as Schorsch and Lempp who, according to him, would have reformulated their initial proposals from the 1970s, in line with Kinsey and other sexologists, in favor of other, more current ones, at least acknowledging that it was hard for these sorts of relationships to be completely innocuous in a cultural, social, and familial context such as our own. Schorsch does, however, caution against making generalizations regarding the

harmfulness of these sorts of acts, as well as responding to them by using "the blunt instrument of the penal law, which leaves nothing but destruction in its wake." Tamarit ends up giving credence to the modern conception of the problem, though he does warn against possible exaggerations and obsessions such as those that have occurred in countries like the United States, "to the extent that the protection of minors (as with the protection of women) appears to be confined to a new regression to a Puritanism which pervades the spiritual substrate of American society." (Tamarit, 2000; 20)

The scientific interpretation that in the end was accepted -- with some notable exceptions -- is one that imputes to these acts a gravity and seriousness which is practically indisputable. Sexual abuse, [126] we would say, continues to be taboo; only now, it is so in an inverse sense, since the prohibition is on talking about or dealing with it in any way other than that which has been ordained.

I have tried to point out what I consider to be the three most important aspects regarding how science has defined the problem of abuse, and I have shown that its commonalities with phenomena such as the ritual abuse panic and the recovery movement are more than significant, both in terms of authors as well as proposed theories. I have done so without claiming to have identified these two realities, which may well be more complex than that which I have been able to describe. Nevertheless, I have suggested that the line between dealing with the problem in a reasonable and civil manner, and an irrational and emotionally laden approach to it, is too diffuse, and often blurred.

I am not in a position to be able to refute what the new science of abuse has said regarding it. I cannot prove whether it is true or not, whether it is or is not scientifically based, although the indications which I have presented here do cause us to doubt a lot of what has been said. Of course when Kinsey, Ullerstam, or others spoke of abuse -- that is, prior to 1975 -- there would not have been as much extant research as there would be subsequent to that date, especially in the 1980s. It is possible that those sexologists and scientists from other disciplines were wrong in not grounding their assertions on a strong empirical basis. At least this is what is suggested by authors such as Finkelhor or López, who have been a major focus of the present work.

As the huge number of investigations that have subsequently been conducted -- which take account of the horror already described -- would suggest, this may well be the case. Nevertheless, there are also signs pointing to the debatability of this position. There may be others, equally well-informed, who would argue for a less dramatic discourse surrounding the problem. In fact Kinsey, to cite just one example, undertook the largest statistical study into the effects of sexual conduct. From this he isolated a number of girls who had had erotic experiences with adults similar to those said to be found in more recent research on the subject. He also interviewed them about their experiences and the effects which they might have on victims. Nevertheless his interpretation of the findings was quite distinct, being oriented more towards de-dramatizing the experience. But if the way that the problem is interpreted does not turn on the scientific data, then we must look to other factors.

As I have already said, it is not within my purview to perform an in-depth analysis of the scientific basis of modern abuse research. Evidently this was not present in the case of the recovery movement, or at least, that is what Ofshe & Watters argued. The latter criticize the lion's share of the ideas presented by the defenders of these theories which, given their characteristics, is obviously not too difficult to do. But they don't stop there. They also include in their analysis the more mainstream authors and studies concerning sexual abuse, whose conclusions are, in the opinion of Ofshe & Watters, more than debatable. Their final question, directed to the recovery movement but also applicable to a large part of the science surrounding abuse generally, serves to inquire upon precisely which data we have based everything that has [127] been done. Even some of the prominent representatives of the science of abuse, as we shall see shortly, have recently reacted to this.

New Proposals?

A large portion of the materials which I have been working with here are from the early 1990s and the years just prior to them. In general terms, it is my impression that what has been written recently regarding the subject, in our own country at least, is very much along the lines of those authors who have dedicated themselves to insisting on these same ideas; although some fine distinctions are being made here and there, the basic message remains the same. [E63] Though I must acknowledge that I do not know whether there have been significant changes in the scientific discourse concerning sexual abuse in other countries, and what forms these might have taken, it seems to me fitting to conclude this chapter on the way that science has dealt with abuse with some final thoughts from a prominent theorist on the matter.

I am referring to the latest works of David Finkelhor, or at least to the most recent one which has been published in our own country, specifically to the three chapters collected in the 1999 collaborative work *Violence Against Children* edited by José Sanmartin. [E64] These chapters are subsumed under the generically-entitled section "Childhood Victimology," in which Finkelhor proposes a presumably globalized way of studying and comprehending child maltreatment or the child as victim. Our interest in him here consists essentially of the criticisms that this author has reserved for the very same scientific abuse discourse that he, among others, helped to create.

Finkelhor proposes a concept of child victimization which is actually quite broad, and which deserves detailed analysis. By way of example, I shall simply point out that he denounces the fact that we do not regard a fight between two children in the same way that we do one between two adults, ascribing less importance to the former. In his writings, he invites us to be more conscious of the perpetual victimization to which children are subjected and pay attention to all of those "less important" and day-to-day experiences, given that most of the more serious ones are already being given their due. In this sense, therefore, there isn't a whole lot new here. The image of the "child-victim" is reaffirmed, and even expanded to heretofore less familiar territory. From this point of view, cases of physical maltreatment or sexual abuse would obviously be nothing more than reflections of a world replete with experiences of victimization for children. His parting shot is similar to that which we have seen in the case of sexual abuse: Children are victims far too often, and we are still blind to that reality. Insensitivity towards

children' s suffering, from their murder to fights between peers over the possession of a toy, are all the same.

And sexual abuse? Here there is something new. Although in general terms the same things do end up being said, what is new is that Finkelhor acknowledges that, whereas a large portion of the abuse research that has been done -- which he calls the "conventional paradigm of sexual abuse [128] research" -- does claim to be combating skepticism and showing the harm that exists, it promotes a simplistic discourse which homes in on abuse as the origin of all of the problems that people experience. He acknowledges, in turn, that a therapeutic model has also been established which is focused on recovering from those experiences, as the privileged route to a cure. Sexual abuse, he explains, was understood as a very traumatic and serious experience that was very successful in explaining the attention of both society and scientists. Its surge in the scientific and professional arenas was also due to rising interest in the traumatic model of psychopathology; in order to explain the psychology of a given subject, particular emphasis was placed on the importance of traumatic experiences. In the search for simple and direct traumatogenic causes, sexual abuse, as a unique experience, was undoubtedly a prime suspect.

That, Finkelhor says, was simply a mistake; and now, in order to continue to make progress, it is necessary to question those beliefs which science has established as true. The object of attention should now be not abuse per se, for which there is no reason to ascribe so much importance, but rather the general framework of a "victimology" that takes into account both children and their circumstances. Abuse, he now asserts, always takes place within a context which very much has to be taken into account, and which may, if you will, be more important than the abuse experience itself in explaining individuals' experiences and possible problems. If -- with a person who says he or she suffered abuse during childhood -- we must take into account the many other problems which that person might be experiencing surrounding the abuse, then the statistical correlation between abuse and subsequent pathology virtually disappears.

The catechistic model, which ties sexual abuse to future pathology as if they were inevitably associated with one another, is erroneous. Most of the time the latter does not come to pass; and when it does, it is often not statistically significant. If a person drinks, Finkelhor would say, perhaps this is due not to the abuse that he suffered when he was small, but rather to a possible relationship problem, or to some other factor. Surprisingly, he does acknowledge that recent studies have high numbers of children -- which may reach 40% -- who do not exhibit symptoms of trauma due to these experiences. This may be due to the fact that the trauma and the symptoms will appear later on; but he does admit that perhaps the problem lies in how difficult it is for us to simply accept this fact, due to our "lack of objectivity, and prejudices." (Finkelhor, 1999 p. 208)

Another surprise: Now abuse is not the democratic misuse of authority that exists in all social classes and familial circumstances. As Stevenson (1989) would say, sexual abuse would seem to have -- among others -- the unique characteristic that it is not able to be directly associated with factors such as marginality, poverty, unemployment, illness, or family problems as is the case with forms of maltreatment such as physical abuse or neglect. One oft-repeated idea is that abuse can strike any family, or that any child can become a victim. Nevertheless Finkelhor breaks with this premise of abuse science, and in these pages establishes that,

normally, abuse is associated with other social, family, and personal problems. It is within this pathological framework that one must situate the problem; abuse per se thereby becomes less consequential, or, must be relativized based on the context in which it occurred.

New winds blowing through the scientific abuse discourse? There are; but in [129] reality they are not all that new. The messages are toned down, conclusions become less cut and dried, and the tragedy inherent in sexual trauma is softened. Nevertheless there are still excesses in the area of child traumatization, and although the abusive experience is contextualized, it continues to be the center of gravity. The sexually abusive experience continues to be the crux of the matter, though it is, fortuitously, placed alongside those other variables which do have to be taken into account. It is the notion of the "psychological scar" -- also defended by authors such as Echeburúa -- that abuse leaves behind. It is an undeniable sign of the time and the circumstances in which the victim lives that such a history would be permitted to remain hidden, or that from it, or with it, pathology should emerge. The abuse is always there, latent, forever.

Sexual abuse, Finkelhor affirms, opens the door to the world of child victimology:

What is relatively neglected and, on occasion, underappreciated in terms of what one encounters in the study of child victimization is the fact that one of its forms has not been slighted or minimized in the least: sexual abuse. On the contrary, this topic has acquired, during the last decade, the status of a social problem thanks, especially, to an increase in society's level of consciousness. Because of its notoriety, sexual abuse has been the vehicle which has allowed us to gain entry into this area, in order, therefore, to better understand many aspects related to child victimization and also concerning the politics of supporting child victims, as well as the limits of that. (Finkelhor, 1999 p. 199)

And so the question that we might ask here is: What is it about that particular form of abuse that was able to raise the social consciousness and facilitate the scientific progress that Finkelhor talks about?

The Curse of Sex

In addition to the three elements that I have pointed out as belonging to the scientific discourse concerning abuse -- its status as great truth, its gravity, and its extent -- this would be a good time to point out a fourth major factor that accounts for a large portion of what has been said with respect to it. I am referring to the enormous power that sex apparently has to do harm, and the particular way in which it exercises this power.

Nathan & Snedeker (2001), in talking about ritual abuse or sexual abuse in general, ask how it could have happened that at some point in time, sexual abuse was ascribed an importance and a gravity that, surprisingly, was denied to other forms of maltreatment, such as physical abuse or neglect. Poverty and marginality, violence and negligence were pushed to the back burner -- and even minimized -- to sexual abuse's benefit.

Ofshe & Watters (1996) end up asking the same kinds of questions in their analysis of the recovery movement, questions that one might well ask upon reviewing the sexual abuse literature as well. These authors ask how it could be that sexual trauma in childhood is so dramatic that its repression would turn out to be so common, and why this does not occur in other types of [130] experiences -- such as physical abuse -- which are not repressed, especially given that children often do not distinguish between right and wrong touching, sexual or otherwise. Therefore, what is it about sex that makes it so terrible that it must be pushed back into the deepest recesses of one's memory until the therapist comes along to recover it?

The authors themselves personally put this question to Ellen Bass, coauthor of *The Courage to Heal* and a prominent promoter of the recovery movement who, her interviewers ironically comment, managed to give three different answers in the space of a single half-hour interview. (Ofshe & Watters, 1996; 28-30.) The key, says this author, lies in the trauma of the experience itself. But this does not explain why the same sort of thing does not occur in other kinds of maltreatment. In that case, perhaps it has something to do, for example, with the culpability that the abuser himself conveys to the child, a culpability which is especially intense when the medium is a sexual one, more so than when there is, for example, a physical blow; the horror is intrinsic to the sexual abuse itself, which even the abuser himself can't help but transmit to the child, which leads to repression during childhood and also explains why the same sort of thing does not occur in other kinds of trauma. There is also the ambiguity in these experiences, which would not be there in the case of physical abuse, which is more obvious; the obscurity of these acts -- which makes it impossible for children to comprehend them -- is what would account for their repression. [E65]

There is, then, something in the sexual which makes it especially threatening to the integrity of those who suffer its violence, real or symbolic. That idea belongs to the recovery movement and, in my opinion, is also implicit in what has come out of the science of abuse. Ofshe & Watters, as we have already seen, point to Freudian psychoanalysis as a necessary point of reference for understanding the recovery movement. Despite accusing Freud of having changed his mind regarding the veracity of these abuse experiences, the recovery movement bases many of its own ideas on the theories of the Austrian physician.

They point out how the human and therapeutic model or paradigm proposed by Freud is still reflected in the foundations of recovery theory. From its ideas about the unconscious to the therapeutic recourse to free association, or in its theories of repression and of the interpretation of dreams, psychoanalysis forms the basis of this new clinical model. But Ofshe & Watters fail to point out another legacy of psychoanalysis, which is at least as important. I am referring to the role that Freud had in newly situating sex -- as libido, and especially that which is associated with childhood -- at the center of the human psyche. The genital, as an equivalent of sex or desire, was established -- or we should say, reaffirmed -- as a requisite symbol for understanding the psychology of individuals, thereby reinforcing the classic model of *locus genitalis*, even its association with our most instinctual and animal side. (Amezúa, 1999) With Freud, sex was once again situated below the belt, and newly ascribed an importance which it has retained up to the present time.

It is true that those authors who have written about abuse have insisted that it is not a question of rejecting child sexuality, or the value that sexuality and its pleasures has for the human being as a whole. Certainly in these works, one does not necessarily [131] observe a negative view of sexuality in general. But it is just as correct to assert that ascribing so much importance and gravity to experiences between adults and children which have something to do with sexuality can only serve to reaffirm the harmful power that sex has had since antiquity.

Ofshe & Watters's conclusion was a radical one: We have converted a horror of this society, the sexual abuse of children, into a universal or eternal truth; incest, or sexual abuse generally, has been transformed into one of the most horrendous crimes that one could possibly be a victim of. In the end children's actual experiences are of little importance, since they are only used to reaffirm our horror of abuse. The important thing is for us to have the firm and unquestionable belief that enduring these sorts of experiences is the most terrible thing that could happen to us. It is in that context that abuse has been set apart as an object of veneration over and above physical mistreatment, poverty, marginalization, or even surviving the Nazi holocaust. And to that we must add the fact that we make no distinction between one kind of abusive experience and another; for example, if it was violent or not. And so any abuse experience, of whatever type, is regarded as serious and painful. (Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 31)

Sexual abuse as a new danger necessarily emerged within a historical and geographical context in which the sexual was newly adopting a more threatening posture. This would not have been difficult, given that that very tradition in Western history went back centuries. Nevertheless, I do not believe that it was simply a question of an anti-sexualist movement -- to use Money's (1999) term -- although that was part of it. Rather, it was a question of sex's ability to configure the social -- as Foucault would suggest -- given its excellent strategic power. Certain ideological interests associated with the culture of victimism created the favorable context. Sex was turned into a new instrument for fighting society's patriarchy or moral decadence. With sex progressively being associated with harm, and in the obsession with avoiding any sort of trauma, social logic ended up leading to the irrational. The social groups and institutions associated with protecting minors, which up to this point had been more preoccupied with other forms of maltreatment, were not immune to these new battles.

Krauthammer (1994) was astonished that, according to the statistics, maltreatment was now nineteen times more frequent than it was thirty years ago. The explanation for this, it seems, is simply that there has been a staggering increase in the number of accusations. What is curious, he adds, is that the number of cases closed due to lack of evidence has increased at the same rate -- according to him, two of every three accusations are unfounded. This, from his point of view, is nothing more than a reflection of a hypersensitivity towards abuse, which stands in stark contrast to the indifference with which we treat ordinary crimes. Aside from the increase in accusations and other factors such as changes in the moral appraisal of corporal punishment, a third element is added to help explain the problem. According to Krauthammer, we have seen the birth of an ideology of violence against children under whose influence professionals, believing in the existence of endemic violence, would have had not only to root out abuse but also -- where it did not exist -- invent it.

The recovery movement's famous phrase, penned by Bass & Davis, [132] illustrates this notion perfectly: "If you think you were abused and your life shows the symptoms, then you were." In a culture filled with stories of sexual violence against children it is not difficult, Krauthammer notes, to persuade vulnerable persons that their problems stem from a childhood experience which, by its very traumatic nature, they do not remember. Sexual abuse, this author comments, is perfectly adapted to the new ideology of childhood trauma.

Researchers, in many cases connected to or influenced by a certain feminist discourse, made themselves participants in this logic, collaborating in the search for that new and dreaded harm. The ritual abuse or recovery movement phenomena are nothing but the products of that same way of thinking, carried to its logical conclusion. Its professional bent allowed for the development of a flourishing sexual abuse industry (Money, 1999), leading to suspect offers of therapy and a heretofore unimagined degree of overlap between the realms of help and punishment; it has also affected the penal law in the area of sexual offenses, and has produced a combative atmosphere which is actually to no one's apparent benefit. This is what I shall focus on in the following chapter. [133]

CHAPTER IV: COMBATING ABUSE

The Strategy of Accusation

Zero Tolerance

The social pressure, the collective rebuke, and the visceral and well founded aversion to it permit the legislator not only to put forward strict laws and norms that are victim-centered and which, at the same time, aid in the rehabilitation of the offender; they also allow for the introduction of many more preventive measures that address the child's overall environment, neighborhood, and home, through family educators, parent training, etc; that monitor school absenteeism, which may be a symptom of otherwise hidden activities related to child sexual abuse; that empower youth officers in towns and cities; that provide material and human resources to juvenile courts and prosecutors, and particularly psychologists, who assess the declarations of children and teenagers, as well. as social workers and educators; that broadens the network of awareness among social service agencies, in such a way that the victim does not become re-victimized and/or get removed from the home, to the point that she feels like she is the one who is being banished; that establishes an urgently needed judicial procedure in which the truth serves the child's best interests, so that she does not have to continually verbalize and recall the harmful acts to which she was subjected, or endure the offender's menacing gaze (without thereby weakening the essential principle of the presumption of innocence), where it is clearly established that there is one (or several) guilty parties and one innocent one (the victim), and any hint of intentional collaboration is vanquished (Urrea, 2000 p.151). [E66]

Illustrated to perfection in this quotation, we now find ourselves confronted with an extreme which perhaps never ceases to astonish us and awaken our curiosity. I am referring to the passion with which the search for sexual abuse is both proclaimed and reported to the authorities. It is curious how the principal spokespersons of the public discourse on this matter do not appear to doubt the need to do so vehemently and combatively. Finkelhor, one of its most prominent representatives, does this throughout his works with obstinate conviction. Any handbook which we might care to look at will insist on this point: Sexual abuse is a terrible scourge that must be combated by rooting it out, prosecuting it, and reporting it. Javier Urrea, the author of the militant and dramatic demand that began this chapter, is another example of that certainty which is so frequently proclaimed without any trace of doubt and in a shameless appeal to visceral revulsion -- which then, paradoxically, also pretends to be "reasoned." Is it really necessary or wise to mobilize all of these forces in order to combat alleged sexual abuse? No one disputes the need to protect childhood, combat poverty, work with marginal families, or prevent school absenteeism; but is it necessary to do so in the name of preventing sexual abuse? What does this hunt for sexual abuse actually correspond to, and what does it presuppose? How can this whole energetic discourse be put into proper context? Do things simply have [134] to be done this way, or would it be a good idea to think this over, and perhaps question its objectives and methods?

Frequently, authors who have devoted themselves to this problem have spoken in favor of carrying out campaigns to bring to light as many cases of sexual abuse as possible. (LaFontaine, 1991) They invite any adults who have children in their charge to be alert to any sign of abuse, and encourage children who have suffered it to talk about it. We have already cited Finkelhor's (1984) work many times, because in our opinion it is a good point of reference as to where research and the scientific discourse concerning the issue of sexual abuse has gone. At the end of that work, the author devotes a chapter to the establishment of a series of implications or future directives for theory, research, and practical intervention in this area. In these three levels the problems of prevalence, prevention, and detection are undoubtedly the main focus, and it is because of that that the problems of revelation and reporting occupy center stage. Obviously the figures that are bandied about in this area are chilling, and one does not hesitate to emphasize that barely one in every five cases of sexual abuse are reported to professionals in some way or another. Assuming, Finkelhor says, that only 10% of girls were victims of sexual abuse -- when the widely accepted figures hover around 20% -- in a population of 60 million people under the age of 18, one would estimate that the number of victims per year would be 210,000. Based on cases which are actually reported, only one in five cases would end up getting any sort of professional attention. (Finkelhor, 1984 p. 232) If one adds to this the drama with which these experiences are -- without exception -- viewed, the alarm and the urgent need to publicly denounce them becomes self-evident.

Against this backdrop, as the anti-sexual-abuse activists demand stronger legal, law enforcement, and social measures, they also put out, to every quarter, the vigorous invitation to report any sort of abuse, which necessarily brings with it a major intrusion, on the part of the state and public authorities, into the private lives of its citizens. What is public versus what is private changes, in this case in the name of defending innocent victims, especially women and children.

For their part, the professionals call for and perfect techniques, knowledge, and personal skills that allow them to respond to the increasing demands that society and they themselves impose to attend to the problem of abuse. The number of reported cases increases daily and the experts must intervene in each one of them, in accordance with premises and claims that are often unreal. Discovering the invisible, showing what is hidden, searching for the slightest hint, or getting the accused to confess become urgent and yet often impossible, and are only achievable by resorting to the supernatural, or on occasion -- and why not just come out and say it -- lies and manipulation.

The strategy of accusation, strongly encouraged by abuse experts and the organizations that combat this scourge have adopted universal or universalized approaches, in which the particulars of each individual, and each family, community, society, or culture, are, swept aside in favor of a singular as well as double objective: punishing the guilty and saving the innocent. A Manichean discourse [135] characteristic of this modernity in which, oddly enough, the evil -- following a Western tradition dating back centuries -- is rooted anew in the sexual, thereby justifying the struggle. The indiscriminate accusation, without gray areas or even a chance of them, is raised to the status of indisputable truth, and the only way to end the scourge of the perverts. In what kinds of societies will it be possible to turn that strategy of accusation, with

pretensions of universality, into reality? Is it a question of a phenomenon that is characteristic of our societies? Is it, perhaps, more an example of an ultimate intention to combat the rising indifference of contemporary individualism by proclaiming a new social danger which newly unites childhood and sexuality?

From the most brutal rape to the most minimal touching or suggestion with supposedly sexual connotations, minors are invited to tell their parents or other trusted persons about it, while the latter -- be they private citizens or professionals -- are, in turn, encouraged to communicate this to the proper authorities so that they can compile statistics on the subject, which in turn leads to a search for abuse in every child, and around every corner. Despite the fact that authors recognized that there were some inherent dangers in this social policy, such as the possibility that there might not be sufficient resources or well-trained professionals to deal with all of the cases, or even an increase in baseless accusations, the norm that was finally established was one of accusation. It is simply a fact that combating abuse had triumphed in the public discourse; how quickly it would actually insinuate itself into individuals' lives would remain to be seen. What is clear is that no one discusses this premise anymore.

In fact in recent years we have become accustomed to using a concept that originated in the United States and which, in a principle applicable to criminality in general, has become identified more and more with the problem of child sexual abuse. I am referring to so-called "zero tolerance." [E67], According to this policy, even the most minimal offense is subject to accusation, judicial proceedings, and punishment, and by that same logic, even the subtlest sort of sexual abuse must be prosecuted and chastised. In our own country it has made itself known especially through the rising number of sexual abuse allegations involving the Catholic church, following the scandalous occurrences in the United States that were later exported, with less success, to the rest of the world. [E68] In essence, the zero tolerance policy regarding the sexual abuse of minors would end up determining that in the wide array of situations susceptible to being characterized as such there is no such thing as a trivial incident; all of them must be denounced, and those responsible for them, punished.

In point of fact, in my opinion this begs the following questions: What sociological significance should we give to this whole strategy of revelation? How should we interpret the anxious obsession with discovering and combating each and everyone of these acts? What significance and status should we ascribe to the various arguments used to justify this message? What is this campaign of seeking-out and denunciation in response to, and what social implications might it have? It is certainly a complicated issue. I am not going to go into an analysis of the possible explanatory value of humanity's supposed moral progress, whereby we would have become conscious of what had always been denied and silenced; this is a logically complex subject. Having said that, we could speak of certain professional and scientific interests in cornering the market in new areas of intervention and research, with all that that means in terms of [136] employment positions, grants, need creation, and strategies to be utilized in particular power games. An abuse industry that has to feed off of new victims, and which therefore demands an increasing reporting of these cases. (Money, 1985) It is evident that it is from very specific professional, social, or scientific groups that the lion's share of the calls for denunciation come; demands that, in turn, are fortuitously accompanied by offers of services. A

more detailed study would probably find a phenomenon in which supply and demand played an important role. [E69]

Or perhaps what is behind this social phenomenon is the strengthening of an ever more invisible and effective system of social control, in which even the most minute detail is observed and subject to considerations of health and deviance (Foucault, 1998; Cohen, 1988).

Police power must act "over everything:" the totality of the State or Kingdom, as the visible and the invisible body of the monarch, is not absolute; it is the detritus of events, of actions, of behaviors, of opinions – "everything that happens;" the object of the police are those things that happen all the time, those trivial things which King Catalina II spoke of in his Great Instruction. With the police, one is in an undefined realm of a control that tries, ideally, to reach the most elemental level, the most fleeting phenomenon of the social body: "Magistrates and police officers are of the utmost importance; the aims which they encompass are, in a certain way, undefined; they cannot be perceived except through a sufficiently detailed examination; it is the infinitely small of political power." (Foucault, 1998 p. 216)

It is likely that this whole discourse in which one is invited to publicly denounce any abusive act -- whether it be to persons nearby or to penal, social, or health authorities -- without any suggestion that the circumstances, the particularities, the variations, the degrees of unimportance or seriousness, the consequences of denunciation, or alternative solutions be taken into account, is nothing but a codicil inscribed on a far broader social mechanism. Perhaps the truly important thing on a sociological and historical level is the continuity that occurs with the perpetual appeal for inner examination and vigilance that Foucault called disciplinary practice, and which would characterize modern systems of social control from their very beginnings. Reading the suggestions of researchers like Finkelhor or those publicizing the dangers of abuse, or making sure that the latter is always detected, seem to have no bounds. One would have to ask oneself about its consequences in areas such as community relations, professional intervention, the penal law, or simply the better resolution of these cases.

The Appeal and the Reality of Denunciation

At this point in our argumentation it would be interesting to briefly explore a different level of analysis, making reference to the relationship between the [137] moral order and the behavior of individuals. Mary Douglas suggests that in order to adequately understand how societies deal with risk it is necessary to carefully observe that separation between the individual and society, between public discourse and private conduct. What an individual approves of insofar as he himself is concerned and what he approves of with regard to others, what he defends as a general moral principle or norm and what he desires and does at any given moment, are not always one and the same. In fact typically, what we regard as proper in terms of guiding the conduct of others directly contradicts with our own behavior and the moral assessment that we make of it. This distinction, in the opinion of Douglas, is crucial to understanding the moral workings of all of society, and in my opinion is also necessary for comprehending the complex reality of the day-to-day practice of denouncing abuse.

The fact that a private crime has formally become publicly present might presuppose that it was subject to the most rigid moral criteria, which could not happen if it were kept relatively private. It is even likely that its gravity would be augmented and multiplied, thereby reinterpreting and necessarily distorting the reality of the situation through rumor and commentary which, at the same time, is used as yet another argument for strengthening social control over other, similar acts, with the punishment becoming far harsher and more relentless. Making a private act public involves consequences which are not always either desired or, necessarily, positive for those who suffer them.

In an investigation into child sexual abuse in Spain based on adults' recollections of past experiences as well as their opinions and beliefs about the problem, López (1994) found that more than 90% of the people interviewed felt that these sorts of acts should be reported, which, this author explains, contradicts the reality, which is that these acts are hardly ever reported.

What is also surprising is the gap that exists between the view that these cases should be reported and the actual conduct related to denouncing them. Surely this ought to be one of the areas that intervention should be insistent about, as occurs with other forms of sexual violence, such as sexual harassment and rape among adult subjects (López, 1994; 86).

Finkelhor (1984) also analyzed the problem of reporting in one of his studies concerning child sexual abuse. That work, in which a sample comprised of fathers and mothers was asked about different aspects of sexual abuse -- personal experiences, knowledge of cases, beliefs, etc. -- looked into what their reactions had been to sexual abuse cases in which their own children had been the victims, or, for those who had not had first-hand experiences along these lines, what they thought the latter would be if they had to confront such an act. As counterparts to the 435 parents who asserted that they had not had such an experience were 48 who said they had. Of these 48 interviewees, a little more than half of the parents whose children had been victims of some sort of "abuse" -- the concept of abuse was, as ever, very elastic, allowing for the inclusion of an infinite variety of possibilities -- reported the acts to someone. The reasons that they gave for not having reported them ranged from thinking [138] that it was not something serious and would not be worth the effort or that it could better be resolved by taking the matter into their own hands, to what Finkelhor calls the "surprising experience" of feeling compassion for the abuser.

Whether or not the acts were reported also depended on who the abuser was. When the abuser was a member of the family, none of them reported him; when he was someone who was familiar to them 23% did so, and when he was a stranger, 73% did. By contrast, when the parents who said that they had not had such an experience were asked, 74% asserted that they would report it. Despite the fact that this study's results are fairly poor and not very solid, given the characteristics of the investigation itself, whose sample is quite limited, it is interesting to note the discrepancy between the interviewees' intention to report and the reality of reporting among those who had had to actually confront such circumstances. In practice, a little more than half of those affected had denounced the abuse, and none of them had done so when the responsible party was a close family member. [E70]

Something similar seems to occur among professionals. This same author (Finkelhor, 1984) carried out a study which, subsequent to sending out questionnaires to 790 professionals, inquired as to their experience with the issue of sexual abuse. These questionnaires also included references to reports or statements concerning these sorts of acts. Reports in which the accused was a stranger to the family were most typical of law enforcement and penal institutions, whereas "allegations" -- in quotes because many times they were simply commentaries concerning experiences that happened a long time ago and which were extracted in a medical or therapeutic context, etc. -- to social services or medical institutions would more typically include cases of incestuous abuse, especially fathers and their children. Moreover in the former case the report to the justice system would occur just a short time after the abuse was committed, whereas in the latter case a lot of time would already have gone by, with the central objective being not to punish but perhaps to provide therapy. [E71]

The laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where this study was carried out, required that the authorities be notified of any kind of case of sexual abuse, be it proven or only suspected. Apparently many professionals -- approximately 40% -- would not comply with their obligation to report cases of which they are aware to the authorities, as has been legislated. Finkelhor also presented to the interviewees a hypothetical case of sexual abuse in which a mother tells them of her suspicions that her daughter is being abused by her stepfather. The mother, it would be said in the scenario utilized, was convinced that it was happening, and didn't know what to do. It was a question of giving the professionals different intervention alternatives -- interviews of the various persons concerned, a visit to the home, the notification of other authorities, etc. -- and seeing what they would initially choose to do. In spite of the limitations of this sort of research [E72], it is interesting to note that the option of a police report was the least cited one. Moreover, a third of the interviewees would not, as a matter of principle, even entertain the possibility of reporting the case to child protection services, as was their obligation under the law. Finkelhor asserts that it is worrisome that in a high percentage of cases, professionals would not report the case of a mother who says she fears that her daughter is being abused by the father.

[139] Finkelhor draws some practical conclusions from his studies. In his opinion, it is necessary to better educate parents as to how to deal with these sorts of acts, especially in reference to their denunciation, given that little more than half report them, and that among those who do not, there was a strong feeling that it was not necessary to bring others into it, and that they would be able to resolve it on their own. In fact, this author asserts, parents are typically unaware of the advantages of both their children and themselves receiving professional help. Moreover, he asserts, when it is reported, the motive is usually to punish the offenders or protect other children, which is reflected in the fact that the majority report it to the police, with far fewer notifying health or child protection authorities; but what he neglects to mention is that, according to this very same author, as he affirms at another point in his work, after these professionals are compelled by law to notify the authorities of these cases, that is the end of their involvement. Arguments concerning the children's well-being, as well as the need to mitigate the harmful consequences of the abuse, will be the ones utilized by the author to convince parents that they must report the abuse. Abuse professionals thus become necessary in all cases, and other avenues for resolution, if they are needed, are pushed to the back burner.

This education [referring to the consciousness-raising of adults who become aware of the abuse] may be one important step to ensure that children suffer less in the long run from some of the potential effects of childhood sexual victimization (Finkelhor, 1984 p. 80). [E73]

What is characteristic of these studies, and of the commentaries of their investigators, is that, on the one hand, they take it as a given that the most reasonable and morally correct thing to do in these cases is to report them, in order to obtain the benefits already noted: the need to help the victims, to treat and protect them, and to punish or even also treat those responsible, in order to avoid abuse being committed in the future. [E74] Following this premise quite logically, researchers usually limit themselves to asking why parents or professionals do not report cases that they are aware of. In fact embedded in that question there would be -- and is -- a moral reproach towards those who do not reveal these acts. What these authors typically do not do is ask themselves, with the same insistence, is what it is that leads people to report abuse. If we accept that it is rare for it to be reported, we might well also ask ourselves why it sometimes is. In order to protect the victim, I will tell myself, but that -- or simply that -- is not always the case. I believe that the discourse of denunciation, which has also been promulgated as an article of faith in the area of so-called domestic violence, deserves a more detailed analysis, and at least a few reflections that I think are of particular interest.

Some Critical Considerations Concerning the Strategy of Denunciation

I recognize the risk of falling into a certain apocalyptic and catastrophic reading of the issue, exaggerating realities that really don't merit it. At least in places like Spain, it appears that uneasiness over sexual abuse does not seem [140], for the moment, to have reached the extremes that it may be said to have done in other countries that are more clearly hypersensitized along these lines, as we saw in the case of the United States. As of this point, in terms of our own environs, such counsel and limitations on the part of specialists and those most directly involved in the battle against sexual abuse have not come to pass; how long we shall be able to stay rooted in reality remains to be seen. Nevertheless, I do believe that it is worthwhile to reflect on this. What follows are some ideas along these lines.

The public accusation of a crime is not a trivial issue, and has obvious implications on the social level. If it is true that one of the inherent goals of sociology is to investigate the unintended consequences of human actions, one would have to ask about the implications of the strategy which we are discussing here. As this author says, "It is frequently the case that measures which are adopted in order to attain certain objectives bring about not only the latter but also cause other, unexpected consequences; sometimes these are harmful ones, which may even exacerbate the problem that one was initially attempting to solve." (de Espinosa, 1983 p. 21) In his analysis of so-called "victimless crimes," Lamo de Espinosa says that he established for himself two objectives: in the first place to discuss the legitimacy of using the penal law to impose a public morality and, secondly, to assess the effects as well as the nature of these penal mechanisms. We will be told that sexual abuse doesn't have anything to do with victimless crimes, since in this case there is always an innocent victim: the minor. Although generalizing this reasoning is debatable, I shall not address that at this point. Suffice it to say that regardless of its validity, there is one thing that has become evident: What I have termed the strategy of

denunciation, or so-called zero tolerance for abuse, configures a logic in this matter whose consequences must be assessed very carefully. I shall propose some considerations with respect to this.

We should not forget that adults at least, and many minors, are conscious of what it means to bring an act of this nature to the attention of any of the institutions of social control with the capacity and the obligation to directly intervene, adopting measures of negative force with the general population. Those involved are aware of what it means to make an act public, be it suspected or confirmed. It is one thing to tell it to a person you trust and who is not going to do anything that you don't want them to, and quite another to tell people who many times you do not know at all and who, you fear, might do things you don't want out of whatever motive -- such as separating, confronting, arresting, punishing, complicating things, etc. Moreover, we take it as a given that those situations which do not always seem dramatic, harmful, or painful must still be dealt with in the very same way vis-à-vis those involved, something which does not necessarily have to be. (Manseau, 1993)

Moreover, it seems to have been forgotten that inviting the reporting of the slightest suspicion of abuse when it is pointed out to a relative or other person close to the victim and his or her family is a proposal of no small moment. Reporting a suspicion of abuse is nothing more and nothing less than directly accusing someone of having committed abuse. The reputation of the person who falls under suspicion is immediately damaged, and the relationship between the accused and the accuser takes on dark overtones. To which we should add that the suspicion of abuse is destructive from the very moment it arises. [141] Imagining that sexual abuse may have been committed oftentimes means believing that it has been. The suspicion itself is destructive, and the accusation is a step from which there is no going back. The abuse may be confirmed; it is rarely disproved. At most it will be said that it was not substantiated, but then someone will come along and say that that does not mean that it did not actually happen. Who will prove this to me? Is it not, perhaps, the case that the secret and its concealment are cut from the same cloth? Sometimes, they say, its resistance to manifest itself is what proves its existence.

When one makes an accusation, one is not only denouncing an act but is denouncing a person. Therefore in order to explain the processes of denunciation and accusation, we have to focus not only on the acts themselves but on who those involved in them are, what the relationships between the accused and the accusers are, within what social contexts the accusations were made, who made them, and how they came about. The acts themselves never account for the accusation. Sometimes it is more useful to look at the accusation as a weapon which will only be utilized if the context within which the abuse occurred -- or is alleged to have occurred, since there are also false or unfounded accusations -- required it. To accuse is not simply to reveal an act which is regarded as transgressive; it also points to an element of the structure that understandably tries to facilitate its own operation. The accusation is, as Douglas would say, a useful weapon in the configuration of the system; sometimes, it appears that an accusation with sexual connotations adopts the ambiguous form of the accusation of witchcraft: easy to make, but hard to rebut.

It is not a question of arguing that denunciation is not necessary, or for that matter, that it is required. If used well, accusation is a positive recourse. Its use does not depend simply on our

being good or bad, on whether or not we fulfill our civic duty, on us being aware of the gravity of abuse of not; but rather, on the social and cultural context in which we find ourselves, and possibly, on the kind of society that we have or wish we had. It often corresponds to the usefulness of social consciousness-raising regarding the problem of sexual abuse, given that it would facilitate an increase in accusations as well as victim protection. As accusations increase, it is assumed, victim protection will improve, which is not necessarily the case. As Professor Amezúa once said, the sad thing is that an increase in accusations is the sole criterion of success in these sorts of policies.

In fact some have suggested that resorting to denunciation as well as intervention by professionals -- be they of the social, juridical, or law enforcement sort -- as a favored course of action in cases of sexual abuse is precisely the sign of an uncivilized society. (Amezúa, 2000) And it seems clear that to this extent, the strategy of denunciation made real necessarily means a radicalization of any intention to actually resolve this issue, given that this step is clearly a decisive one. It presupposes restricting other possible solutions, limiting the capacity for action to those adults who are related to the minor as well as the minors themselves. It would be of interest to note that we have begun to look into the resources which have been of help to people in solving their problems without having to bring the authorities into it. It will be said that when there are minors involved, we should not leave it to families and private citizens to solve the problem, especially [142] when the abuse may be occurring within the family unit, and with the approval of other members of the family. That may be, but it is in precisely those cases where we can at least hope that an accusation will arise and, albeit with difficulty, the case will be detected by a professional.

It has been said that denunciation, being the reasonable thing, is done in order to protect oneself, to protect others, or to punish someone. Though this is not incorrect, it is somewhat simplistic. The accusation is an action which is designed to attain certain ends, which may include protecting oneself, protecting or punishing; but also others which are far less honorable. And so the sexual abuse accusation is an especially useful weapon -- and this is so regardless of whether it is true, false, or neither -- because although it is hard to prove, it is also difficult to refute, leaving -- at the very least -- grave room for doubt. Besides which it is a useful moral and political tool in certain ideological as well as power games. [E75] There are many ways of protecting, or of protecting oneself. When someone who has an experience of this nature -- or knows of someone who is experiencing it -- decides not to report it, he or she may well be making the best possible decision for the well-being of the minor involved. Now, this does not imply not helping or not protecting, but rather, pausing for a moment to reflect on what these words actually mean. If the social, familial, economic, and personal contexts within which the persons who have these experiences are situated remain unchanged, we achieve nothing by merely asking people to report them. A sweeping discourse of denunciation doesn't achieve a whole lot beyond the symbolic power to reorder reality -- based on fear -- as well as being an attempt at example-making or deterrence, which in this case is rather useless, not to mention counter-productive.

It is evident that in the sexual abuse of minors we are confronted with the fact that the potential victims are minors, who therefore are unable to protect themselves from it. And so it is we, as adults, who are responsible for implementing the necessary measures to protect and treat

them. But to believe that minors are incapable of protecting themselves is to rely on an over-generalized and over-simplified view of this population. [E76] I do not believe that the notion of childhood innocence, together with its fragility and defenselessness -- so much a part of the modern abuse discourse -- represents the entirety -- or even a significant portion -- of minors who have erotic experiences with adults or older minors. Neither would it appear to be all that helpful to those who truly experience victimization (Kitzinger, 1988). Minors, or at least those who have reached a certain age are, in the first place, subjects or individuals before they are objects or victims, capable of assessing their situation and choosing among various possible options. Often the best option is not to report or reveal what occurred. We should accept the fact that when they do not disclose, it is perhaps precisely because their own assessment of the pros and cons has made them see that this is not the best course. Or, they may well see a chance to resolve the situation in a way that is less traumatic than an accusation, which perhaps would only complicate things further. Or maybe -- and we should acknowledge this -- because some simply do not wish to put an end to this so-called "terrible abuse." Abuse researchers and experts have been far too preoccupied with ending [143] what seems, to them, to be an unbearable silence. The question that I sometimes ask myself is for whom it is unbearable, since it may well be that for many of the principal protagonists, what would truly be unbearable is its revelation.

In order to protect minors, we should not give them *carte blanche* to accuse the people around them -- sometimes those whom they love the most -- but rather, give them agreeable and integrated positions within the society, in which they are able to share experiences with other minors but also with various trusted adults. It is a question of giving them the social space that they deserve. The problem that minors have is that as much as we want to protect them, we end up making them vulnerable. This is the thesis that runs through Judith Levine's 2003 work entitled *Harmful to Minors*. In her analysis of the anti-sexual discourse in the United States, the author concludes simply that a great deal of harm is being done in the name of protecting children and teenagers. In my opinion, policies such as that of using the telephone in order to ask for help are the clearest reflection of this society's failure with respect to its young people.

I do not overlook the fact that the strategy of denunciation relies, among its many ends, on exemplifying intentions in a double sense: expressive and instrumental. On the one hand it seeks to point out and emphasize a danger; and on the other, to scare potential perpetrators and convince the general population to actually pursue and report it. The objective of some social and professional groups, to exemplify and illustrate the dangers to which children and women are continually subjected, leads them to spread the word as to the need to publicly report any event which could be characterized as sexual abuse, to guard against and punish any incident of abuse, of whatever sort. Denouncing even the most innocuous of transgressions, the subtlest of blameworthy behaviors, are implicit premises in the whole modern child sexual abuse discourse; in the end rooting out abuse with the same passion and attention to detail with which sin used to be rooted out. (Amezúa, 2000) In that context the demand for the public denunciation of all of the above is a mechanism essential to these political, ideological, and social strategies.

The question that arises is one of importance, as well as historical and sociological significance. I shall inquire into whether it is possible that these mechanisms might lead to the further problematization of the phenomenon, converting the smallest of matters into an object of public anxiety and generating a more acute sense of danger and suspicion among the populace as

well as professionals, instead of actually fostering a reasonable solution that is currently lacking. It is precisely now, when the most protected and privileged minors are in our rich capitalist societies, that there are more dangers lying in wait for them and frightening us adults. Placing many of the acts with these characteristics in the public domain, in all of their variety and uncertainty, not only generates the pursuit of the suspect and perhaps his punishment; it also conjures up a particular image of the problem on the social level. The sense of danger, of risk, of there being a chance of it happening to me or to persons who are close to me, may increase. Suspicion is also multiplied and abuse is made ever more present, in addition to converting into an offense or [144] otherwise exacerbating what may have been experienced as an unimportant, indifferent, or even pleasurable affair. The questions that we have to ask ourselves are who has a stake in this increasing sense of danger, to what extent is it justified, in what ways might it harm us, and above all, how it affects other social levels such as the family, the conception of childhood and its relationship to other things, as well as education, the erotic, and encounters between the sexes.

A second exemplary and preventive claim would be that of controlling potential perpetrators via the fear of the abuse being detected and the subsequent penal punishment. The idea is that society's pursuit of these acts will lead many to repress their desires and avoid abusive conduct. For it is important that said sanction be made more likely and inevitable; in order for this to happen, it is necessary that the crime be brought to light and reported. Nevertheless, the preventive utility of penal punishment is, at the very least, questionable (de Espinosa, 1983). All the more so in certain sorts of crimes, where we know that no matter how much the punishment is intensified and made more certain for those responsible, they do not diminish. These would be the so-called expressive crimes, in which the criminal act is not a means but an end in itself.

In many cases the difference is clear; prostitution, drug use, homosexuality, gambling (almost always), that is, the majority of victimless crimes would fall into the category of expressive conduct. But not only those of course: crimes of passion, kleptomania, a large portion of juvenile delinquency (joy-riding, mischief), the majority of -- not to say all -- sexual violence, would be as well (de Espinosa, 1983; 49).

By contrast, those that are carried out as means to attain other ends, which would be termed "instrumental crimes," really would be amenable to prevention via better systems of social control and penalty assessment -- for example, traffic infractions or economic crimes. In the same way that it has been proven that the law is incapable of transforming the customs and values of a given culture, we know that resorting to punishment or its enhancement are not helpful in reducing so-called expressive crimes, among which we should also include the wide variety of acts that are subsumed under the heading of child sexual abuse. Increases in the number of accusations, in the sense of danger, and in prosecutions and punishments are probably not going to put an end to these sorts of acts. On the other hand, equally evident is a fear that if the drive towards public denunciation, law enforcement, and judicial prosecution is relaxed, it might bring about an increase in these acts, in the face of a sense of impunity among those responsible for them.

This is where the debate over the usefulness of the penal system in regulating sexual crimes -- above all those that might be considered less serious, and included in that category

would be sexual abuse -- comes in. As Diez Ripollés (1981) points out, there is a certain degree of agreement among experts concerning the limitations of the penal law in terms of its ability to act effectively in the face of the majority of these crimes. If we regard penal intervention as being the last resort, when other less drastic means have been exhausted, it is [145] clear that said premise has, if you will, been invoked with greater frequency in the area of sexuality. It is evidently not a question of the penal code not encompassing crimes against the sexual freedom of individuals, but rather of very much taking into account the fact that its efficacy for a large portion of the acts included in said category, particularly for the less serious ones, would appear to be more than arguable. The problem lies in the difficulties faced by the legislator in regulating sexual morality via the law, which can be done more effectively through other administrative strategies [E77], or simply through pressure from the social environment.

Undoubtedly the suggestion made by authors such as Tamarit seems reasonable enough, in the sense of proposing -- in the face of the prevailing wisdom which is favorable to intervention -- a desirable equilibrium, whereby the penal code is not brought to bear on each and every permutation of abuse, which will permit, in many cases, alternatives to castigation, and which will avoid, in many others, the unnecessary clumsiness of the law in dealing with these questions. [E78]

For this road, one should resolve to have an attitude which places in a just equilibrium, and knows how to bring together, two urgent needs: on the one hand, a reasonable de-mythologization of abuse, which avoids exaggerating its effects, and on the other, the need to respond with proportionate penalties to attacks on what legally belongs to minors (Tamarit, 2000 p. 180)

I shall return further below to dealing, in greater depth, with the issue of the penal law's management of these problematic areas.

Professionals and Abuse Intervention

For us the phenomenon of child sexual abuse is not of sociological interest merely, as it were, due to its criminal, deviant, or amoral aspects. That is to say, it does not attract our attention simply because there are victims and aggressors here, or because it is a question of a social danger, risk, or problem; but also because it, in a way, has reverberations in many other facets of social reality -- sex, the family, childhood, justice, etc. One of these areas is the professional and institutional flowering that accompanied the whole emerging reality of child maltreatment and, later on, that of child sexual abuse.

To say that a crime is a transaction is nothing new. Marx himself denounced the role of crime in capitalist society, and in a certain way believed in the possibility of a society free of delinquency. Deviance, in his opinion, had its origins in a functional dimension of the system of production.

And what is more, the criminal brings about the whole of the police and criminal justice, constables, judges, executioners, etc; and all of these various lines of transaction, which make up, in turn, many categories of the human spirit, and create

new needs and new ways of satisfying them. Torture alone begot the most ingenious mechanical inventions, and employed many honored artisans in the production of its instruments." (Marx, cited in Taylor, Watson & Young, 1997 p. 228) [146]

It is possible that in penning these ideas Marx -- as his commentators suggest -- was ironically highlighting the hypocrisy of a capitalist system in which the bourgeoisie believed themselves to be the "just" of their society, as opposed to the "degenerate" others, or simply denouncing the criminal nature of capitalism as a system. Nevertheless, in my opinion this theoretician was not entirely on the wrong track in pointing out the very close relationship between crime and production:

Crime, thanks to its continuously renewed methods of attack on property, constantly gives rise to new methods of defense, which are as productive for the invention of new machines as labor strikes are." (ibid.)

There is no doubt, these same authors acknowledge, that the fight against crime generates new activities and demands new techniques of investigation and control, something which obviously has occurred in the case of child sexual abuse. It therefore seems reasonable to look at crime as a transaction in the broadest sense of the term, and not only for those perpetrators who might gain economically -- or otherwise -- from their crimes; it is also a "transaction" for the many professionals who depend upon it in order to be able to survive and thrive. Investments which, on the other hand, we must not circumscribe in strictly job-related and economic terms -- social workers, psychologists, therapists, the media, researchers, etc.; because this also confers advantages in political or ideological battles, as occurs in the case of feminism or that of organizations devoted to the minor's defense. I do not mean to suggest that the problem of sexual abuse has been "created" or "invented" by certain groups, out of social or professional interest; but I do wish to call attention to its suspicious devotion to the birth, development, and maintenance of that new social reality.

In his reflection on the modern criminalization of sex, above all in the United States, John Money (1985; 1999) points to the role that certain professional groups have played in this process, in what he calls the "sexual abuse industry." His critique is clear and sharp:

Formerly, the sexual abuse industry would blaze a new trail, which did not encounter resistance among professionals. Currently, professionals follow the flow of paychecks, like seagulls following the wrong course. For the most part, they have been trained for social work. Or perhaps in psychology, in order to go into practice as therapists, or for other public health services. The majority have no understanding of the basic principles of the history of psychology. Their services are required predominantly in unauthenticated cases of sexual abuse, in those involving a mere suspicion of sexual abuse, and in unfounded accusations stemming from child custody proceedings. In many cases, the only evidence of sexual abuse was extracted from the children by they themselves (Money, 1990 p. 29). [E79]

Money's condemnations have also been directed towards the thriving professional and research arena of victimology, intimately associated with the anti-sexualism process that the

West and most especially -- as we have already noted -- countries [147] like the United States or England is experiencing. Victimologists, Money tells us, are professionals who are generally trained in psychology or social work, occasionally in medicine, and very rarely in sexology. Their area of intervention has been primarily -- though not exclusively -- the sexual, attending to cases of rape, abuse., incest, etc. Their job often consists of acting as witnesses in legal proceedings, in addition to their detection-related efforts and work with victims. What is paradoxical, this author points out, is that this necessarily produces a contradiction between their presumed professional goal of assistance, and that of punishment. This is so because it is explicitly defended by the professionals themselves or because legislation compels them to; as is the case virtually throughout the United States, these professionals end up being converted into paralegal agents of the system, actively participating in the prosecution and denunciation of those supposedly responsible for these acts.

It is evident that professionals and particular social pressure groups need certain social or personal problems in order to continue to defend their interests and arguments. And the possibility that the problem is sometimes inflated, exaggerated, and excessively problematized on the part of these groups -- consciously or unconsciously -- would not appear to be such a harebrained notion either, which was made evident when we exposed the recovery therapy movement. Ofshe & Watters (1996) would describe the impressive development in the United States of a flourishing therapy industry whose specialists would come from an endless number of therapy related professional arenas; they were psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, marriage counselors, or simply gurus with no training at all who would become self-styled therapists. The theoretical approaches were many: psychoanalysis, hypnotherapy, gestalt, or "new age counseling." It was a matter of a therapeutic movement that, in addition to obvious ideological interests, relied on significant economic and professional capital of every sort, which may well have served to spur on its impressive unfolding.

The rapid rise in social anxiety over the problem of child sexual abuse has generated its own self-serving reflection in the professional arena through the formation and training of those organizations and professionals which, from one sphere or another, would have to intervene in these types of cases. In this sense it is evident that sexual abuse is not a field of intervention exclusive to particular professional figures, but has actually allowed for the preferential development of experts specializing in the topic -- specialists in prevention, detection, diagnosis, training, interrogation, and treatment -- and therefore of a whole body of knowledge and skills that was necessary to combat these acts. Without any doubt whatsoever, there have in fact been psychologists, social workers, and professional groups, coming out of various institutional services, which have been more than interested in this new field of professional intervention. The therapeutic (treatment), the educational (prevention), the disseminative (consciousness-raising), the legal (training) [E80], and the social (protection) were some of the professional fields in which sexual abuse was beginning to acquire a relevance that was practically nonexistent previously. Within this sphere I am particularly interested in the subject of child protection, given that the abuse discourse ultimately revolves around the need to [148] protect and save the minor victims of sexual abuse.

We saw how child sexual abuse ended up being converted, in the 80s and 90s, into an object of particular unease in the arena of child protection in the United States, and subsequently

in other countries. In our own country, this boom undoubtedly occurred in the 1990s. We would say that this phenomenon coincided with a transformation in social politics, characterized by a step to the first level of the public discourses and anxieties over what were termed "social issues," which often had to do with questions of morality and customs. The emphasis shifted away from poverty, marginality, labor inequalities, or the deficiencies of the educational system, and towards degeneracy, immorality, sickness, deviance, machismo, perversion, and personal problems as foci of social struggle.

Along these same lines, one also observes a change of perspective in political strategies with respect to the protection of minors. We see that the sexual abuse boom in this social and professional sphere coincides with an evolution in the priorities adopted by governments and institutions in order to intervene in cases involving minors at risk (Piconto, 1996). In fact, it is curious that abuse would be characterized in the first place in terms of a type of maltreatment that is fundamentally divorced from social factors such as poverty or marginality. Although this has been questioned by some authors (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001), it certainly is the case that abuse exists in all social classes and that the perpetrators are "regular" people, which is why it cannot be combated with broad social programs of a preventative nature, but rather, through individualized rooting-out, reporting, and intervention in those cases that do emerge. At most, prevention programs are offered in the schools, where children are taught about the danger of sexual abuse, as well as how to detect, avoid, and/or report it.

What is interesting is that the appearance of the abuse problem and the logic that sustained it coincided with another, more general strategic transformation in child protection, which would place greater emphasis on the danger posed by -- and the need for intervention into -- the most serious cases. This evolution, initiated in the late 1970s, could be explained, according to some authors, in terms of a sense of failure over the politics of social well-being of the 1970s and its notion of social rehabilitation and betterment. Long-term measures looking to prevent delinquency, maltreatment, or mental illness through more general interventions that were meant to bolster community resources, address social inequalities, or improve education gave way to the development of more short-term interventions into the most serious cases of maltreatment, delinquency, or mental disturbance. According to Parton & Parton, this led to the state getting out of the business of improving families' general situation, in favor of more short-term intervention into what were regarded as the dangerous cases.

This strategy is almost the antithesis of post-war liberal reform, which emphasized indirect means of improving the functioning of individuals, families, and communities via universal improvements in social security, health, nutrition, and personal social services. Now the emphasis is placed on the direct observation and regulation of behavior, as opposed to the indirect and voluntary provision of state [149J services in a more negotiable form." (Parton & Parton, 1989 p. 80)

This new emphasis on the concept of dangerousness logically required the development of a new knowledge that was designed to detect what might be the most dangerous and serious cases, with the goal being intervention. The problem, as these same authors point out, is that it is impossible -- given the complexity of the phenomenon -- to know which cases one should try to prevent or intervene in more aggressively. The important thing would be, according to these

authors, that, while still intervening in those cases evaluated as grave or worrisome, said intervention should take place within a social framework that is beneficial to families in general, supports all of those persons who have children, and is based on a voluntary relationship. (ibid.)

The insistence on the problem of sexual abuse came to reflect, with particular efficacy, this new institutional logic and the need to accompany it with specialized, albeit fragile, knowledge. In fact regarding maltreatment -- and specifically, sexual abuse -- as a personal and localized problem fosters a much more limited notion of child protection, and generates unwarranted confidence in individualized professional methods of evaluation and prediction. In the present section I seek to go over some issues related to professional intervention in this area, and call attention to some undiscussed but -- in my opinion -- dangerous premises that run counter to a proper professional intervention into these acts. For this I shall address, firstly, the problem of how credibility in abuse cases ended up, at a certain point in time, acquiring the characteristics of a new dogma directly contrary to professional practice. A question which, as we shall see and as, in fact, was foreseen, is intimately related to the denunciation phenomenon already discussed.

Believe the Children

The second means of diagnosis is the elicitation from the child of the necessary information, either by an interview or by using various aids such as anatomically-correct dolls. Recent research in Britain and in the United States has shown that sexually-abused children play with the dolls in a manner that differs from children who have not been abused in this way. However, *it is worth remembering that a willingness to believe that some children are sexually abused is necessary to start with.* It is quite easy for doctors and therapists who are unwilling to believe in the possibility of sexual abuse to ignore even quite obvious signs, or, give them other explanations. (LaFontaine, 1991p. 217) Emphasis added. [E81]

Foucault would say that in the West we have historically localized our deepest truths in the innermost reaches of our desires, our bodies, our pleasures, and our sexuality. Within the last of these -- and most especially that of our childhood -- is hidden our origin as well as an explanation for our modes of [150] existence, of feeling, of behavior, and of thought. Within that child and adult sexuality are located our riches and our miseries, especially the latter; those of society, as well as those of its individuals. And I dare say that within the abuse phenomenon there is something that has been inherited from that, a certain continuity with that place common to our culture. Something of that interplay between knowledge and sexuality, between truth and desire, is present. An interplay which, in the area of child sexual abuse, shows or manifests itself on different levels: resorting to past abusive experience in order to explain present miseries; in the individual and therapeutic search for a past truth which is often forgotten and vague; in the pressing need to get to the truth, to the confession, in order to arrive at a cure, as classic Western therapy has proclaimed going back to its Christian origins; in its complement which is the past abuse's destructive power when it is relegated to an ever-present unconscious; and lastly, in the tremendous potential confusion that goes along with the concealment of the abuse and the constant invitation to reveal it.

Sexuality and childhood have traditionally been intertwined, and still are, in a discourse of each individual's truth, of his or her present, past, and future. The church and its threat of eternal damnation was replaced by the danger of mental and social disorder -- or its degeneration -- which was wielded by the hygienists and social reformers of the 18th and 19th centuries; sin became sickness, though it was localized in the same spaces. Later on, Freud would be the one to grasp the relevance of talking about the child as polymorphously perverse, and of the Oedipus complex that must be overcome in order to attain a well-balanced maturity. Though masturbation would still be discussed, the subject shifted to an unease regarding incestuous desires, the sexuality that throbbed at the core of every family. It was precisely when there began to be manifested a decline in psychoanalysis and the disciplinary society, more preoccupied with the problem of masturbation, that there began to emerge a new truth, which would eventually tie together, once more, the elements of childhood and sexuality. Child sexual abuse fortuitously emerged as the new danger, at the same time that it seemed to aspire to being converted into the new "truth." It may be that, when the dust settles, abuse will be to post-modernity what masturbation was to modernity itself; it may also be, as we have already suggested, that one is nothing more than a continuation of the other (Malón, 2001)

The former is, by the same token, an interplay between knowledge and truth which has facilitated and justified the participation of the specialists, of the professional groups who are entrusted with dealing out the cards in a ceaseless hunt for abuse, the truth of abuse that one knows yet does not see, of abuse that does harm silently, the truth that speaks for the victims, the truth that permeates children, the truth of their innocence, the truth of their future now forged in the miseries of desire. It is within that truth that the "specialists of the invisible," as Denzelot has called them, have established their territory, their area of authority and knowledge; forensics experts, social workers, psychologists, therapists, the police, and researchers hoisted their flag, saying, "This is our turf, because within it lies the truth, and we have to find it."

We observe, in this terrain, an increasing professional and social interest in the truth which is hidden behind children's behavior and language. But [151] of course the attention on this area is nothing new. It has been the particularly prolific domain of the psychologists and pedagogues of the 20th century, especially in its later years, after being conquered by generalist psychologists who gave preference to more humanistic psychological theories of teaching and learning. (Alvarez-Uría & Varela, 1994; Meirieu, 2001) From psychoanalyzing children and projective techniques such as the analysis of drawings, to intelligence, aptitude, or cognitive development tests, an entire body of theoretical and practical knowledge has been created around childhood. The child as object of moral, pedagogical, or medical attention. The child masturbator, the foolish child, or the dangerous child are some of the antecedents which have conferred a large portion of their momentum to a new child-object: the child victim. Although those other models have not completely disappeared, the former has acquired greater weight and interest.

In the area of sexual abuse and our understanding of childhood we have become absorbed by the pressing demands to which we have been subjected, or which have been generated by certain disciplines, promoting the development of a knowledge whose principal preoccupation, in the name of aid and protection, has ended up being principally that of vigilance and punishment. In fact, as far as abuse is concerned, the child has become nothing more than a

repository of evidence which must be unlocked in order to prove the crime. The minor has been unwittingly and quietly converted into a witness for the prosecution. Victim and witness simultaneously; often an ignorant victim, and frequently a silent witness. More than a person, the boy or girl is thus converted into a focus of professional interest and preoccupation. The child speaks without telling, and tells without knowing the truth which is hidden in his or her most recent past. The body, more than a subject who lives, feels, and thinks, is converted into law enforcement turf, the body of the crime. But on the other hand a living body, in motion, a body that is an active agent, and it is that conduct which shall also be an object of attention. A dead body for the forensic specialist, a live body for the psychologist or social worker.

Nevertheless there seems, behind all of this language of forensic expertise, of efficacious professional practice, to be a *sine qua non* of ideology. It can be difficult to understand the exhortations, the premises, the proposals, the standards of intervention, solely in terms of simple efficacy, mere professional effectiveness. The way in which adults -- parents, professionals, experts, politicians -- relate to children in these matters, or how we are told that we must do so, seems to conceal something more than objective success in professional practice, something different from the search for a rational response to these sorts of acts. Something which, as I understand it, points more to the symbolic configuration of a particular notion of childhood, directly affecting the way in which adults must relate to it. In a developed society in which transformations in the family have led to the latter effectively being limited to its function of physically and emotionally protecting the next generation, the image of childhood that is put across by the abuse discourse does nothing but shore up a particular notion of it.

The Origin of the Interest We saw how in the 1980s there began to spread throughout the United [152] States a dramatic rumor which spoke of the existence of organized Satanic groups that carried out -- with total impunity -- all manner of atrocities, in large part with sexual connotations, with children of all ages. Said rumor would become real with the discovery of numerous cases of ritual abuse in daycare centers, as occurred at the McMartin preschool. Right after that and many other similar cases, some of the parents of the supposed victims, professionals associated with the protection of minors, and other activists organized an association whose objective was to promote a belief in the reality of ritual abuse and combat it with every weapon available. It was the most important pressure group in that country as far as ritual abuse was concerned, with recognized researchers and public figures helping to oversee it. It turns out that the name which it adopted, "Believe the Children, perfectly illustrates the phenomenon that I will be discussing below.

The emergence and unfolding of the social preoccupation with the problem of child sexual abuse undoubtedly facilitated a resurgence of techniques for approaching children, their language, and their truth; According to Stevenson (1989), the tendency in social work to develop a direct treatment with the child, which has been fluctuating between an object of greater vs. lesser interest, took on greater importance in this category of maltreatment, especially in the area of legal and criminal proceedings. This author devotes a special section to the problem of working directly with children, criticizing, on the one hand, the clumsiness which has been typical of the protective services here, and on the other, the unfortunate resurgence of this anxiety in the sexual abuse arena. Citing the findings of the Cleveland Report [E82], she asserts:

There is a risk that in focusing on the welfare of presumed child victims of sexual abuse, one will overlook the children themselves. The child is a person, not an object of preoccupation. This important observation illustrates a problem which has moved front and center in the area of the sexual abuse of minors, in that one could spend a great deal of time divining what children "mean" ... It is a shame that the interest in direct communication with children has increased in relation to a particular problem and in the context of legal/criminal proceedings, given that it has so clearly been absent in the mistreatment of minors in general (Stevenson, 1989 p. 172).

The objective was clear: It was not really a matter of the children relating their experiences in the service of simply humane goals, but rather, of using the victims in order to uncover the abuse. According to this author, this sort of focused anxiety would not have developed with the same intensity in other types of maltreatment. It is difficult to say whether this huge interest in the declarations of minors in cases of sexual abuse is similar to that which exists in cases of child maltreatment; nevertheless, I do agree with Stevenson that things probably did not happen in that way. This was made evident in the astonishing number of investigations and protocols that were, for example, designed to assess the credibility of the accounts of alleged victims of child sexual abuse. It is an area of research and professional development that has not occurred in other arenas, such as other kinds of maltreatment or allegations by adults. (Berliner & Conte, 1993)

We can fundamentally affirm that the sexual abuse phenomenon has facilitated that development, sparking a multiplicity of theories, techniques, strategies, and specialists dedicated to evaluating the role and the weight of children and their declarations in sexual abuse cases. A good bibliographical example of these preoccupations is the collected work of Garbarino & Stoff with the suggestive title of *What the Children Can Tell Us* [E83] (1993). This book, published in the United States in the late '80s, is designed to help:

adults understand children when they're seeking out information that the latter may be able to provide them.. . shed some light which will help adults to understand children's view of the world and discover how one develops the capacity to empathize with them.. . encourage grown-ups to be skillful and sure-footed in communicating with boys and girls. ... Adults rely on them as a source of information in court, in classrooms, in the medical sphere, in the evaluation of programs and in family relations. ... *This necessity has acquired dramatic dimensions in legal proceedings concerning sexual abuse-related crimes* and in child custody disputes, in that an accurate evaluation of the child's wants and needs is required in order to be able to dictate an ethical and just mandate that will serve their interests. But such an assessment and orientation has also become indispensable outside of the halls of justice. ... By the same token, the present book was conceived in order to try to get professionals and other adults to become better consumers of the information that originates from and relates to boys and girls. It is intended to help readers to evaluate the information that they receive concerning children from other professionals. Judges and attorneys should know whether psychologists and social workers are presenting them with a plausible account of the information that has been obtained from a given child. Psychologists and social workers should know whether the legal system is right to draw conclusions regarding a given

child's testimony. All of us need to become better consumers of the interpretations that professionals make of children's information." (Garbarino & Stoff, 1993 pp. 13-14. Emphasis added.)

It is an endless source of curiosity how, at least in the Spanish translation, the term "consumers" is used to refer to the role assigned to adults with respect to the information originating either directly from the children or indirectly through professionals. "All of us need to become better consumers," they repeat, both in terms of what children tell us as well as what others tell us about them. And they state it in terms of an economic and working relationship between some professionals and others, legal professionals and social professionals. Characterizing these persons as consumers of information does in fact contain a certain element of truth, which is, in the end, often the image best illustrative of their relationship to children who have experienced sexual abuse. Consuming a product which is invoked, solicited, sought out, and corralled in order to be devoured, seized, and used. And all of this for the good of the children themselves, though many times there is a whiff of interests of a rather different order. We are, therefore, presented with a technical, professional, and clinical view. A grave view which is designed, above all else, to uncover a silent and hidden truth that urgently needs uncovering.

At its core the book's orientation -- as one can already sense from these initial observations, which is also confirmed as one reads further -- is obviously a law enforcement and forensics one, although the latter are justified under -- or, if you like, masked by -- the principle of helping and protecting minors. In fact, more than being acquainted with children's "wants and needs," or even their experiences, it is [154] devoted, in a very significant way, to evaluating children's testimony in legal or paralegal processes, at least insofar as those which relate to sexual abuse. And this is no wonder, given the orientations that the problem has acquired, with allegations, declarations, and interrogations relating to the issue of sexual abuse occupying a privileged position throughout the book; the problem of revelations related to child sexual abuse ends up being the axis around which other assumptions, on occasion, revolve. There are countless examples of this throughout the whole of the work, thereby illustrating -- as no other type of maltreatment does -- the difficulties, doubts, and risks confronting professionals when what is at issue is evaluating a minor's declaration. We might, therefore, ask ourselves about that centrality's origin and reason for being. We ask ourselves about its monopoly in legal and social practices in matters of sexual abuse as to the practical and day-to-day reality of its application in these cases.

It is difficult to pin down precisely why things have happened in this way; answers will require further investigation. Some authors have suggested that all of this uneasiness is nothing more than a reflection of a generalized societal refusal to believe in the existence of these sorts of acts. What would have generated the development of that whole expert paraphernalia would have been that very social skepticism itself (Berliner & Conte, 1993 p. 119). [E84] And that may well be; but of course in reality, more than skepticism, what we have actually seen is a widespread tendency to give it credence, in spite of an ongoing interest in finding a crystal ball that will detect sexual abuse. It is not just incredulity that may appear to account for that proliferation and interest, but also the social context within which the new danger of abuse -- and the ease with which it was accepted -- emerged. We shall now examine this point in greater detail.

One observes, first of all, that the development of a discipline in this specific area is part of a broader process of expert knowledge, in which psychologists and other specialists have been occupying an ever more prominent position, given that, as early as the 18th and 19th centuries, they were being incorporated into the penal system. (Foucault, 1998; Donzelot, 1990) A psychological knowledge which, on the other hand, was becoming more and more important in the ways in which childhood was being approached, to the point of attaining preeminence in the pedagogical discourse (Alvarez-Uría & Varela, 1994). And we should also emphasize that investigative and professional interest in techniques for detecting and evaluating these acts is located within a context of generalized attention due to the problem of abuse, which is not circumscribed by said techniques and strategies. It was localized, historically or spatially, not within an atmosphere where the problem of abuse was rejected, but rather, precisely within a context which was favorable to the latter. being placed on the front burner of new social dangers.

It was a question of a reality that would logically require the presence of professionals who, under the cover of scientific efficacy, made viable the localization and prosecution of those cases which, on the other hand, was relying on ever more prominent legal [155] and therapeutic aspects, for which it was, in turn, necessary to develop new strategies designed to assess possible victims and perpetrators. A reality which, in the end, was confronted with a problem as difficult as detecting abuse, which was silent both in terms of its execution and its effects. From there arose the need for a "pseudo-scientific" knowledge and discourse surrounding children and abuse that would appear to simplify and render viable what, in practice, is very difficult: observing what cannot be seen.

Thirdly, we must not forget the insistence, on the part of specialists in and publicizers of the problem of abuse, on the need to "disclose" these acts, as a necessary step both for healing as well as reducing even worse evils. A component of the abuse discourse Which, as I just suggested, can be understood as an extension of the interplay of knowledge and truth so characteristic of Western ways of dealing with sexuality.

And to this we would have to add, last but not least, that that preoccupation seems more comprehensible to me if we analyze it in terms of the gravity with which everything sexual was increasingly being associated -- particularly when it has to do with children -- in that new stage which overwrote the era of the so-called sexual revolution. And so it is given that, by way of comparison, even the slightest gesture with erotic connotations was likened, in terms of seriousness and danger, to the hardest blow or the worst physical maltreatment. In fact, any credible indication of abuse recycles tremendous fears regarding the minor's future as well as the risks that he or she runs, which is Why it is necessary to put together the subtlest and most detailed picture of what actually happened. In this way, more so than in cases where physical or emotional maltreatment or neglect is suspected, in sexual abuse the declaration of the minor -- which at bottom is nothing short of expert proof of the truth of what happened -- acquires considerable weight. One would even say that the child's life hangs on that truth. And this disequilibrium is an endless source of curiosity because, as Stevenson says, the loss of any sense of proportion has become habitual among those professionals who deal with sexual abuse cases, which are typically seen as more serious than other types of maltreatment, even when the minor's life really is at risk, something which usually does not occur in cases of sexual abuse. [E85] (1989 p. 180)

For all of the above reasons, I dare say that I would reject the suggestion that this significant flowering of techniques and knowledge designed to detect and prove the existence of abuse is explicable in terms of a supposed societal refusal to acknowledge these acts. It is true that in the early 1970s American society was, in a certain way, not disposed to uneasiness regarding sexual abuse. Nevertheless, the social and professional groups which facilitated the development of this whole push to root it out were deeply convinced of the truth of abuse, and more specifically that of incest, acting in collaboration with law enforcement and legal authorities who did not need to be convinced of the "truth" of the problem. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) One simply had to keep an eye out for its various forms, and look for evidence where there usually wasn't any. Therefore, this process instead forms part of the generalization of the truth of its own existence, and of that very same abuse discourse.

The Children's Truth

Almost vigilantly, although wrongly, the sexual abuse industry's dogma that children never lie about sex is simply accepted. A corollary to this, which is also false, is that children's fantasies are incapable of fantastical pseudo logic. Thereby paving the way, in order to give them ostensibly direct access to absolute truth, via children and teenagers, the sexual abuse industry's workers had carte blanche to develop their inquisitorial methods of interrogation. The catalog of the behavioral indications of sexual abuse was borrowed from the 19th century catalog of the signs of masturbation." (Money, 1999 p. 29).

According to Nathan & Snedeker (2001), the judicial history of the United States is characterized by an ongoing tension between advocates of accepting the word of children in legal proceedings, and those who argue that we cannot have confidence in it. The extremes of these positions would be, on the one hand, that of those who believe in the absolute goodness and sincerity of children, as if they were angels, versus those who proceed based on the assumption that any allegation of sexual abuse is suspect, and must be passed through a very rigorous filter in order to verify its truth. As they explain, at the beginning of the 20th century this second option more or less prevailed; rarely was such testimony admitted, since there would have been, on the one hand, a belief -- with a scientific basis -- that these witnesses were excessively suggestible, and on the other, that cases of sexual abuse were rather rare.

During the 20th century, and above all from the 1970s onward, the number of sexual abuse allegations increased. In these, the case would depend almost completely on the minor's declarations, and courts began calling minors to give evidence. We are talking, above all, of cases of incest or touching by educators or other persons in the child's vicinity. In those cases the victim's word was the only evidence. The field of psychology had demonstrated that both minors and adults were, under pressure, quite susceptible to suggestion in terms of their recollections, and so it was concluded that children would be just as good witnesses as adults, under impartial questioning that was free of intimidation or pressure, and which did not have a vested interest in proving the existence of abuse. Nevertheless, the former are in fact very sensitive to even the subtlest forms of suggestion:, with experiments clearly showing this to be the case.

The already-cited book by Garbarino & Stoff (1993) is devoted, directly or indirectly, to analyzing minors' ability to accurately relate their experiences, and to deconstructing all of the elements that might influence them when doing so. In the juridical and forensic arena these authors' conclusion is that children can be competent witnesses, provided that the adults in charge are capable of conducting adequate interviews; i.e., of following proper investigative protocols. It is in fact the case that in the course of this work examples have accumulated of children who do not always tell the truth, who can lie or alter the facts with ease based on the circumstances of the context and their interpretation of it, which can be easily manipulated -- sometimes without any real or conscious intention to do so; that their language [157] is deficient for many purposes, and that, just like adults, they reconstruct their past from memories that are influenced by certain beliefs, prejudices, interests assumptions, etc. Nevertheless, it is also riddled with references to children's usefulness as witnesses, to their capacity to relate their experiences and provide facts, and to the possibility of adequately orienting the interviews so as to obtain proper statements from minors in, for example, cases involving allegations of sexual abuse.

The reader will, understandably, be rather bewildered given that, throughout this work, assertions such as, "Children live in a magical reality that is often separate from that of adults; because of that, they distort the facts and explain them in terms of the logic of their own point of view" (ibid., 1993 p. 261) coexist with ones such as that made by the other author: "The free use of children's testimony is well-founded, to the point that the primary consideration is children's competency to testify. Their memory does not appear to be any more inherently problematic than adult eyewitness testimony, when recollections are stimulated by direct questions. Children do not have a greater propensity to lie than adults." (ibid., 1993 p. 300) Certainly this is an edited work, with different authors taking up one chapter vs. another. But the work is based on a single, very clear line of argument. The conclusion that its authors arrive at, as I have already noted, would be Solomonic as well as predictable: We cannot go to such extremes as to believe that children never lie; but neither can we go to others, such as the notion that they are always fantasizing.

Nevertheless, the book's final message and general proposal are nothing more than reflections of what is commonly accepted in the specialized literature. All of the studies seem to consistently indicate that false allegations of sexual abuse are fairly rare so long as the children are the ones who report the abuse, and that when the former does occur, it is due more to misinterpretation than to minors deliberately lying; the majority of the false allegations of abuse come not from children but from adults. (Berliner & Conte, 1993) In any event, all of these studies are based on the researcher's opinion as to the truth or falseness of an abuse allegation, which, in turn, renders the absolute validity of their conclusions more than questionable. In the majority of cases, there are no mechanisms by which one can decide, with a minimum degree of certainty, whether a given allegation of abuse is true or false, which makes it hard to know its statistical incidence. (ibid.) As Berliner & Conte affirm in that article, the majority of the studies simply indicate the criteria that were utilized in order to arrive at an opinion about the various cases; but the viability of these judgments typically is not clearly established. This merely constitutes an invitation to read these works with a great deal of caution.

They recognize, moreover, the inherent difficulties in undertaking these sorts of efforts, citing a work which highlights the risk that mental health professionals run when they hazard an opinion as to the validity or lack thereof of a given allegation of sexual abuse. They therefore emphasize the danger of forgetting the fact that these professionals do not possess some special ability to determine whether something is true or not. This leads them to question the validity of a system which is based on scales and tests in order to undertake an effort which, though perhaps helping to reduce professional insecurity, fails to appreciate the complexity of the evaluative process. And that is [158] precisely the opinion that they offer to professionals when the latter solicit it from them. Nevertheless, these authors do not call that fact into question; they accept that, regardless of what field professionals may work in, to some degree or another they must make judgment calls. We should say that one accepts the subjectivity, as well as the intuition to make decisions regarding whether or not abuse has occurred, recognizing that solid proof of what occurred is frequently nonexistent. As Nathan & Snedeker (2001p. 146) point out, this ended up leading more to a kind of intuition than to a forensic activity based on the principles of scientific knowledge.

Moreover, while still recognizing that there is a sufficient consensus that children never or almost never lie in their abuse accusations (López & Arnaez, 1989), some research points to the fact that there is still a high percentage of false allegations, which would have to be taken into account. (Cantón & Cortés, 1997); children can relate things that they have not actually suffered in order to please other adults who unconsciously believe that they have experienced them. Perhaps the pressure of successive interviews may make the child believe that he or she has not successfully told what he/she should have, therefore transforming his or her allegations in one way or another (Garbarino & Stoff, 1993 p. 180); or, it is even possible for children's fantasies to become overheated. And most worrying of all, some studies have suggested time and time again that often, the adults who are bringing the abuse case to the fore, including professionals, have shown themselves to be so interested in finding abuse that this has led them to utilize subtle -- and sometimes not so subtle -- techniques of persuasion in their interviews with children. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) This is something which would be proven to have occurred in ritual sexual abuse proceedings in the United States . Having heard recordings of those interviews, many juries ended up acquitting the accused when it was shown that the children's supposed allegations had been produced within contexts which were clearly coercive and manipulative. (Money, 1999; Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) [E86]

So it is. And this work by Garbarino & Stoff, like the lion's share of what has been said and done concerning this issue, leaves a particular taste in the reader's mouth as to the power of children as witnesses in sexual abuse allegations. The general impression that one gets of authors who write about abuse, at least those who have dominated the public discourse, is that they have situated themselves on one of two extremes, instead of looking for possible middle ground. That is, we must believe the children, and also believe that the latter usually tell the truth. This maxim, which took precedence over everything else, was what allowed the debatable use of evaluation techniques which, on occasion, bordered on the absurd. As was pointed out by Summit, one of the principal authors on the subject of ritual abuse in the United States:

It has become a maxim among child sexual abuse intervention counselors and investigators that children never fabricate the kinds of explicit sexual manipulations

they divulge in complaints or interrogations. (Cited in Nathan & Snedeker, 2001 p. 149)
[E87]

This means forgetting the ease with which children can be manipulated by adults and, on the other hand, accepting as valid narratives or sexual abuse even when they emerge in contexts with precious little impartiality. What is curious is that [159] often, this habitual corollary in theories concerning sexual abuse is complemented by another principle: When children don't say anything, or simply deny having suffered sexual abuse, they frequently are lying. This second principle is something which was also defended and justified by Summit in the work already cited; a premise which was later adopted by the general discourse. This new notion does nothing but confirm the validity of testimonies which could very easily have arisen due to the influence of adults who have a vested interest in denouncing abuse or in detecting or proving it, as sometimes occurs with professionals.

All of this is, in turn, possible because it is based on a particular image of the child victim, a social image part and parcel of our own era -- and more specifically, of certain geographical and cultural spheres -- that is hard to argue with, and which abuse's promoters work very hard to reinforce. A claim which, at its core, is able to conceal, as we shall have the opportunity to comment on in detail at the end of the present work, ideological and political objectives of a different order. And so we see that finally it ends up seeming almost immoral to not follow the maxim of "Believe the Children." [E88] It is true, these authors will say, that they do sometimes lie or alter the facts in some very significant ways and for various reasons; but if the adult knows how to do it correctly, proper statements can be elicited. Therefore, the truth lay not only with the child, we are told, but also with the adult expert, who knows how to skillfully extract it. The moral of the story is that we are, once again, obliged to place our trust in the professionals of the social sphere, even when it is a matter of condemning a person. The truth is within the child, and the former is perfectly capable of manifesting itself; one only has to believe it and know how to properly extract it. It is in this context that, citing a study by Everson & Boat, Garbarino & Stoff criticize the fact that many professionals are loathe to believe allegations of sexual abuse, regarding minors -- especially adolescents -- with suspicion instead of believing them, unless and until there is evidence to the contrary. And it is also in this context that Garbarino & Stoff conclude the following:

When allegations of sexual abuse made by children are investigated, the most efficacious approach is to proceed from a posture of believing them and recognizing that, for the most part, children's allegations are based on real experiences (even when those experiences may not, per se, constitute sexual abuse)." (1993 p. 130)

This suggests to us that aside from issues of technique in communicating with children -- which we are obviously not going to delve into since this is not our focus -- perhaps it would be useful to analyze and propose a different series of considerations regarding what, in my opinion, is inherent in work of this nature. Ideas which, generally speaking, are ones which are accepted as valid by many different authors, and which are found to be present in the form of premises in their observations concerning the problem of abuse. But we must go further, and understand this increasing anxiety over minors' testimonies not just as a sign of greater law enforcement, judicial, or even social or therapeutic efficacy. It is possible that we are capable of suggesting the

pertinency of this unfolding process, a social transformation of a higher order. And the fact of the matter is that if we pay attention to the contexts in which it occurs and the [160] implicit messages that it suggests, it would appear, in short, that the basic and more general problem is one of connections between children and adults. Or, to be more precise, men's connections with women and children. If not, how else can we explain this unusual alteration in the reasonably believable in this arena, which I shall address below?

Believing in Order to Help In the work by Garbarino & Stoff (1993) which we have been commenting on, throughout their book the authors repeatedly pose a question concerning adults' reactions to minors' accounts of abuse suffered. Among other things, these authors ask what factors influence an adult's disposition to believe what children are saying. In their opinion, there have been times when adults have openly scoffed at them; apparently these authors do not agree with the notion that there are bound to be disparities in the evaluation of the available evidence. One need only look at the frequently differing goals pursued by professionals from different institutions in their approach to minors. Thus, health or social service professionals would be more interested in the child's subjective experiences than in the veracity of what he or she says or exhibits; by contrast, justice system professionals would be more interested in finding objective evidence to confirm or refute their hypothesis as to the truth of what happened. The following phrase, cited by Garbarino & Stoff, illustrates what they are trying to say: "The law aspires to justice, medicine, to psychological benefit, and science to truth". (1993 p. 281)".

This enables us to illustrate the possible conflict between various professional interests as they approach a case of sexual abuse.

Nevertheless, the reality is not so simple. In fact there are signs pointing to something which Money (1985) has already denounced: the dangerous and bewildering mess that can be created by institutions and professionals who are able to alter their formal objectives under conditions which bear all the hallmarks of hypocrisy. It is suggested, therefore, that it is acceptable to "believe" or "disbelieve" abuse allegations and victim declarations based on the context in which they happen. If our objective is to help victims, they say, whether their commentaries are true or false is of less importance, because if we don't believe them, we can't help them.

These sorts of considerations are nothing but invitations to a faith in the truth of abuse, an offer which, I fear, cannot always be accepted, especially when the acts alleged acquire fantastical proportions. Curiously, Garbarino & Stoff refer to these issues after giving a history of the accusations of sexual abuse at the McMartin Preschool. I cite their description of the case as well as some of their reflections regarding it:

The lamentable and famous case of the McMartin Preschool involved allegations of sexual abuse as well as grotesque psychological mistreatment inflicted on children between two and eight years of age. The bulk of the information originated from therapy sessions that were conducted with them.

The initial charges, which included hundreds of counts of molestation, maltreatment, and rape, and allegations against seven defendants, were, little by little, reduced, following preliminary instructions and motions, until all of the charges against

five of them were dropped. The defense attorneys and the accused asserted that the children had made them up, influenced by the methods that the clinical professionals and the parents had employed in the interviews as well as during treatment. The parents believed that the majority of the allegations against the seven defendants were true. The defense attorneys declared that many of the children's stories were so fantastic as to invalidate the entirety of their testimony. The assistant district attorney rejected such accusations, saying: 'In this jurisdiction, we have a moral and ethical obligation to not bring charges when the evidence is insufficient. ... Nevertheless, the District Attorney believed that hundreds of children at the school were victims of indecent acts. Social service and health professionals were in agreement with this. A television newsmagazine segment took up the case of one of the accused, and a producer discovered a recording of interviews with a member of the district attorney's office which threatened the case's very foundations. The parents put out a nationwide press release entitled, 'Believe the Children'. Li (1993; 27)

Many pages later they take up this case once again, along with other similar ones, and point out the following:

Many of the children involved in these cases have told extremely disturbing stories of having been forced to perform in pornographic movies, raped and sodomized, forced to view animal sacrifices (and sometimes ones of human babies), and to keep quiet. The therapists who treated these children as well as their parents would say that they had repeatedly seen, over and over again; these extreme themes in their play, and that they exhibited symptoms of psychological problems. The mental health professionals, the parents, and the attorneys believed the children's stories. Nevertheless, many of the police officers and child protection workers who investigated the case as well as some of the defense attorneys were genuinely convinced that, as there had not been a single sign of these atrocities on the children's bodies, nothing had happened. They believed that, even in those cases in which the sexual abuse was medically corroborated, the children's stories regarding the most extreme activities were not valid, but were, rather, products of suggestion or fantasy." (1993 p. 244)

Sometimes, then, one gets the impression that believing or not believing the children's declarations is more a question of faith than of criteria of rationality and common sense. The authors who gave the above account of the events which transpired in California in the 1980s do not seem to evince any doubts regarding the sexual abuse that came to the fore, and even justified -- with therapeutic and protective ends, it is said -- the need to believe the victims. What does not appear to concern -- or surprise -- them are the types of accusations that have to be believed. Their observations, some of which are guarded, immediately bring to mind the ritual abuse phenomenon or the recovery movement, which I already took a good accounting of above. In this case -- whether intentionally or not I do not know -- the authors do not tell the whole story, and do not appear to want to take an explicit position as to the truth or falsity of what occurred there, although their posture is tacitly acknowledged. Because of this, I think it would be of interest -- despite its length -- to integrally cite a different account of what happened on that occasion. In this case it comes from the already cited article by John [162] Money [E89], in which he criticizes some aspects of the direction in which the phenomenon of sexual abuse is

evolving in the United States, which we saw already in our discussion of the recovered memory movement.

Exhibit A of prosecutions in America alleging the sexual abuse of minors is the McMartin Preschool case in Manhattan Beach, California ... The school's owners and teachers were indicted based on the complaint of a woman with a dual diagnosis of alcoholism and acute paranoid schizophrenia who died in 1986 from an alcohol-related illness. In July of 1983, she told her doctor that her 2-year-old son had anal itching. She herself had a vaginal infection, and it is possible that she may have infected him. Several weeks later she phones the local police to tell them that she had observed blood in the boy's anus, and that she had heard him saying something about a man named Ray, from his school (whom the boy was not able to identify in a photo of this same school). The police order a medical exam. The hospital intern established that the redness in the anal area is associated with sodomy, but admits that he is not very well-trained in the subject of sexual abuse. The mother progressively embellishes her accusations. She tells the police that Ray Buckey, the teacher, would hold her son's head in the toilet while sodomizing him; he wore a mask and a cape, covered the boy's eyes and mouth, tied the boy's hands, and would insert an air hose into his anus; he had made the boy ride on horseback nude, as he himself would be dressed up as a fireman, a clown, or Santa Claus. She also says that the school's teachers had poked the boy in the eye with scissors, and that they had placed some unknown substance in his ears, on his nipples, and on his tongue. ... The child had only attended the school for fourteen days, and had been supervised by Ray Buckey for just two of them. The police searched his apartment and the school without finding any incriminating evidence. Nevertheless, the two hundred parents of the preschoolers sent the police a letter, advising them that they suspected that oral sex, genital touching, and sodomy were obligatory when the children were alone with Ray Buckey. Not one child evinced any mistrust or suspicion. The worried parents were directed to ... an institute which specialized in the investigation of any suspicion of sexual abuse. The CII's (the institution's acronym) medical specialist advises the parents that it is possible that the McMartin children had been violated. The children were interrogated by an uncertified MSW, a self-described expert in the sexual abuse of minors. Using anatomically-correct mannequins and dolls, she creates a scenario in which she is the interpreter. This woman applies standard interview techniques, obtained from video recordings which she herself chooses in order to bolster her own suggestions and conjectures. She will offer the video recordings as expert evidence of their having been sexually abused. Furnished with these tapes, a politically ambitious prosecutor convenes a grand jury that issues 108 indictments involving some 42 children. Over the course of six years, the prosecution of the case cost \$15 million, and lost it. The jury acquitted every single one of the school personnel who had been accused. Not only had the allegations been false; they had also been fabricated by sexual abuse industry professionals. These professionals were not absolved of their responsibility for the harmful effects they visited not only on the accused, but also on the children themselves. For seven years these children, beginning when they were between three and five and ending when they were between eleven and thirteen years of age, were pressured to construct a biography, with the goal of determining a possible payout for injuries sustained. (Money, 1999 pp. 26-28)

This narration of the facts of course suggests an interpretation and assessment quite different from that of Garbarino & Stoff. Given that Money is not exaggerating or misinformed about what occurred, it seems reasonable to think that the former authors should have told the whole story, including a more nuanced analysis of it. Nevertheless they do not; on the contrary, they argue that the tendency to believe the children's allegations may be due to, [163] and at the same time justify or even be necessitated by, the need to believe them in order to be able to help them. Referring to these types of cases, and specifically to McMartin, these authors assert:

Although it is unlikely that we shall ever come to know the whole truth, or whether justice was served, we are going to make an attempt to dissect the influence of the professional roles played by adults in seeking out and interpreting information. In the case cited, the persons who were in the service of the justice system did look for objective and viable information. They would do so through investigation and interviews. The parents and the therapists, on the other hand, were more interested in creating a context of healing than in uncovering the facts. Whether or not these grotesque activities actually occurred would not have as much relevance for parents and therapists as the fact that the children believed they did. The therapeutic or healing process requires that adults understand and demonstrate their empathy for the children's subjective experiences, independently of the objective truth. It is, therefore, when we are able to help them overcome it that we are able to avoid a traumatic experience ending up constituting the basis of one's life and identity." (1993 p. 244)

But what traumatic experience are we talking about? What is it that they must be helped to overcome? If there is something that they need curing of, it is the paranoia that has been infused into these children, making them believe in what were nothing but grotesque lies. In fact, many would suffer harm as a result of those pressures. The implicit logic is, that believing the children is an indispensable prerequisite to their recovery, and that believing or not believing the alleged victims is, to a great extent, a question of what the institutional objective is of each professional or adult who intervenes. [E90] The question is whether these sorts of justifications are reasonable and acceptable.

Although I will not be taking up this matter again, one further question does immediately arise: How is it possible for one to assert that it doesn't matter so much whether these acts actually happened or not, and that what is important is that the children believe that they did? Could it be that what we have here is an undissolvable union between helping and punishing? Is it not true that parents and therapists are enmeshed in that same legal process, and would seek to prevail in it, whether it be in order to punish the offense and/or obtain benefits for themselves? Is there not, in the abuse phenomenon, an implicit and unquestionable association between accusation and cure?

I believe so. A great truth has been accepted without debate in the modern abuse discourse, which ineluctably asserts that the cure inevitably follows the revelation. If the child does not disclose the abuse and therefore the trauma is not healed, the consequences can be disastrous. Disclosing is not the same thing as denouncing, some will say; but in the discourses implicit logic, that usually turns out to be false. As Roland Summit would say, from a clinical

point of view, regardless how many doubts professionals from other fields may have, we have a sense that the abuse is real.

That reference is used by Of she & Watters (1996) in order to illustrate an argument common among the memory recovery movement's therapist-defenders, as well as many of the authors and professionals who carry the banner of the fight against child sexual abuse due to their faith in their patient's beliefs, from which the intention to help them springs. In this way, such therapists absolve themselves of any responsibility for the veracity of what their clients are telling [164] them, or, what is more serious, for what they supposedly "remember" or "acknowledge" in therapy. In the same way, Nathan & Snedeker (2001) point out, the psychologists and social workers who handle sexual abuse cases certainly do operate under Summit's premise, openly stating that their principal professional goal is not so much to validate an allegation as it is to help those who they consider to be victims. And helping them means, in the first place, facilitating the disclosure of atrocities they have suffered, although in principle they neither assume nor dismiss anything. .

This is, logically, endlessly paradoxical when the same professionals entrusted with "helping" victims -- without having demonstrated that they actually were victims -- are those responsible for bringing the accusations, finding the evidence, working with the police, testifying in court, and later on teaching other professionals to do the same. When what one is doing is helping presumed victims to emotionally recover, mixing this assistance with law enforcement investigation, besides having instilled in themselves a sense of being participants in a great crusade to combat that new horror, it is understandable how professionals charged with carrying out this work end up feeling that they are part of something truly transcendental. A mix of humility and megalomania characteristic of those who would feel themselves to be in possession of a special, sometimes divine power, and responsible for an enterprise of incalculable dimensions. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) In this context, and in that which has been generated by the modern discourse over abuse, it was equally predictable that some professionals would end up appropriating for themselves and taking as valid theories and knowledge whose only validity is, on occasion, the faith that one has in them.

The Impossible Search, or, 'Specialists in the Invisible'

We have been pointing out what is typically professionals' greatest anxiety in intervening into cases of sexual abuse: evaluation and diagnosis. The decision as to whether or not it has occurred, how it happened, and 1;Y whom is almost always a difficult and complicated process (Martínez, Martínez & Arribas, 1991) whose resolution does not lend itself to easy answers. But on occasion that is a mission impossible, or perhaps one which has been imposed upon them by others; or, professionals have arrogated it to themselves. From there comes the demand on the latter I s part for useful tools for detecting abuse or verifying the veracity of the allegations, not so much or not only with the goal of being more efficacious, but also, at times, in order to cover their own backsides. [E91] The experts have often made inquiries along these lines, proposing intervention protocols, exploratory techniques, and evaluational norms for deciding whether or not abuse is present as well as its characteristics. This is, without doubt, the great warhorse of the professionals in this area.

Berliner & Conte (1993) analyzed the obstacles with which the professionals who are charged with assessing whether or not abuse has occurred in allegations of this sort are confronted, which is one of their primary tasks when such accusations arise. It is obvious, they tell us, that a professional's opinion regarding the case will always have very serious implications for the lives of all of those concerned -- especially, I would say, when [165] the minor and the accused maintain a close relationship, and especially when it is of a familial nature -- and that often, expert opinions are the focus of intense debates among professionals from different areas. It is equally clear, they explain, that when evaluating these sorts of cases, professionals are going to encounter a variety of situations that are going to generate in them either greater or lesser degrees of decisional certainty. Possible influences on this might include the characteristics of the victim and his or her ability to personally recount what happened -- age, expressive capacity, etc.; the circumstances in which the abuse occurred -- divorce proceedings, obvious confrontation between parties -and what might otherwise lead one to suspect its veracity; who initiated the accusation, or what sort of relationship existed between the child and the adult. The problem, these authors say, is knowing to what extent the decisions of professionals are based on viable data, or on personal and collective beliefs regarding abuse which may be more than questionable. At the same time professional biases, being what they are, are present and obviously problematic, though that study did not devote itself to analyzing them. According to these authors, at the time, two general and complementary approaches would be developed in an attempt to improve the ability of professionals to detect or verify the existence of abuse: one based on indicators of abuse and on the characteristics of the minors' allegations themselves, and another preoccupied with guiding, in the most suitable manner, the conduct of the professional making the evaluation.

Indicators of abuse in children refer to "observable" traits of the conduct of victims, the accused, or other persons nearby which might point to the existence of abuse or, by contrast, render the latter more unlikely. From the presence of sexually-transmitted diseases to the manifestation of sexual behavior on the children's part, a good number of signs was being added to the proposed lists for detecting and confirming the presence of abuse. Nevertheless, as these authors explain quite well, these scales have many limitations, and are more than questionable in terms of their efficacy. Thus, for example, whereas some scales indicate that children should evince uncertainty or vacillation in their declarations in order for the latter to be credible, we may well imagine many reasons why they might not exhibit such behavior even when the abuse was real, or indeed, why they might manifest those signs when the abuse was, in reality, non-existent. These are criticisms which could just as easily apply to the lion's share of attempts to systematically analyze the narrations and declarations of abuse victims, another one of the more prominent areas of evolution in this field.

The second approach, complementary to the above and difficult to disentangle from it in day-to-day practice, is that of analyzing the way in which the professional charged with investigating suspicions comports him or herself. Numerous intervention guides have been produced for professionals dealing with these sorts of cases which advise them as to the types of technique to use, the sources of information to explore, when and how to evaluate the victim or the parents, when and how to conduct a medical exam, or how to evaluate the victim's credibility, in addition to recommendations as to how to comport themselves in order to maintain their independence or neutrality, how to deal [166] with the children, how to adapt themselves to the

latter's developmental level, etc. An attempt, then, to elaborate a more or less standard format for intervening in these sorts of cases, or at least in the first phases of professional evaluation.

The specialized literature has pages and pages of considerations concerning this, enumerating the symptoms and signs of abuse, alerting readers as to the behaviors of children and teenagers that might be indicators of it. Signs which are confounded with the harmful consequences that stem from that experience. From physical signs such as bleeding in the genital or anal area, anal fissures, bruises, urinary infections, pain upon sitting or walking, sleeping or eating problems or pregnancy among adolescents, to behaviors such as social isolation, relational distrust, knowledge and/or practice of age-inappropriate sexual conduct, sexual language, excessive masturbation, sexually assaulting others, delinquency or drug use in adolescence, school problems, etc, and on to anxiety, nocturnal fears, depression, feelings of blame, fear of adults or of a specific adult, aggression, and conflicts with family or friends. (López, 1997 p. 27)

The list could be broadened indefinitely if we were to add all of the various authors' contributions: sexually-transmitted diseases, loss of appetite, frequent crying, especially in emotional or erotic situations; fear of being alone, abrupt changes in behavior, unwillingness to undress or bathe, a tendency towards secretiveness, sexual aggression towards other minors, exaggerated interest in adult sexual behavior, seductive behavior or the rejection of affection, kissing, and physical contact.

It is true that, at the same time, all of these authors hasten to point out that none of the above symptoms refer exclusively' to the presence of sexual abuse and caution that the assessment must be a global one, eliminating other possible causes of these symptoms; but then, one would have to ask about the usefulness of these lists and the reason for their proliferation in books, pamphlets, and campaigns. And above all, one would have to ask about its application in day-to-day life. If it is true, as these same authors acknowledge, that they are not clear and unequivocal signs of anything, then what use are they? What is it that really makes one suspect abuse? Why doesn't something other than abuse come to mind first? Why must they be presented to the public without any sense of restraint or proportion? Because it is clear that in the end, more than facilitating the detection of abuse, they seem to favor the development of anxieties, fears, anguish, and alarm. They are gestures so common and repeated that they cannot completely account for the suspicion, justify thinking of abuse as an ever-present possibility, or explain anything; and yet at the same time, they allow everything to be suspect.

The medical and psychological knowledge regarding abuse, that has configured itself is designed, above all, to demonstrate its existence. From their bodies to their words, children are objects of analysis in the search for and confirmation of abuse. Never in its disconfirmation, for abuse is always a possibility. Professionals take great pains, therefore, to know the 'truth,' sometimes at the cost of forgetting the protagonists. We shall now briefly examine some of the central elements of this knowledge.

The Genitals and the Cold Stare of the Physician Apparently, one of the most significant focuses of discord in the so-called Cleveland case, to which we have already made some reference, was a supposed physical indicator of the existence of sexual abuse with anal penetration having to do with the dilatational reflex of the anus. (LaFontaine, 1991; Nathan &

Snedeker, 2001) This test was used by the two doctors who were the subject of major criticism, and who had carried out the medical exams in all of the cases investigated. According to LaFontaine this test, though believed to perhaps bolster a suspicion of abuse, was not absolutely conclusive and was not regarded in and of itself as a sexual abuse test, but rather, something which complemented the evaluation of other indices.

Nevertheless, what is most interesting is that the test itself originated in the United States, and more specifically from the work of Bruce Woodling, who would end up becoming a renowned expert in the evaluation of sexual abuse both in his own state, California, as well as throughout the entire country. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) He actively collaborated with legal authorities and organized training sessions for physicians from all around the country, so as to enable them to be able to detect signs of sexual abuse. One of his theories was based on the belief, already scientifically discredited in the 1970s, that among homosexuals who had been sodomized, their anus would respond to exploration by opening itself. In fact this notion would have originally come from Tardieu who, in the 19th century, was very concerned about both the subject of the abuse of minors as well as the medical detection of homosexuality. Woodling disseminated this theory for the detection of children who had suffered sodomy in scientific journals; later on it would encompass the hymen as well.

Just as Tardieu had done in the 19th century with the supposed physical signs of homosexuality and other deviations -- including child abuse -suggesting to physicians that its non-existence did not mean that the evil was not present, in the 20th century Dr. Woodling suggested to American physicians charged with detecting signs of abuse that they proceed likewise. What Nathan & Snedeker (2001) pointed out about how, at a certain point in time, physicians were converted into detectives and medicine ended up being converted into politics, is illustrative in this sense. And this was so because doctors were actively involved in a relentless hunt for sexual abuse that went far beyond what was reasonable. They did not stay within the bounds of trying to make objective evaluations and follow the principles or scientific knowledge; instead, many jumped on the bandwagon of this new danger. A good reflection of this fact, these authors point out, was that physicians began to assert that what was being detected -- though constituting more than a total absence of signs -- was not proof of abuse but was, rather, "consistent" with sexual abuse.

In that case, according to Nathan & Snedeker, physicians began to have the feeling of being participants in that new crusade to save the children, appropriating for themselves a fascinating power base upon representing a supposedly scientific knowledge necessary for the horror's detection and confirmation. They did nothing more than confirm abuse which had already been assumed to be valid. For it an intricate maze of millimeters, scars, apertures, dilations and contractions, [168] tissues, redness, etc. was elaborated around children's genitals. A knowledge which has since proven itself to be false, unfounded, and ridiculous. Surprisingly, these doctors overlooked the Hippocratic mandate "First, do no harm," or, believed that that principle involved defending at all cost -- including falsifying reality -- a pre-existing belief. Those physician-policemen only found what they wanted to find: abuse. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) That new wisdom, following the trail of what up until then had been the terrain of the invisible, was rapidly transmitted to all of the country's doctors. Its principal representatives and promoters obtained prominent administration positions, with their popularity spreading to the

entire medical community and even the general population. The rapidity with which these theories initially reached professionals contrasted with the tardiness with which their scientific rejection as valid abuse indices would later be widely disseminated. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) As a matter of fact, these methods still continue to be used by a significant portion of professionals who are charged with evaluating sexual abuse.

Physicians' increasing devotion to examining children's genitalia ended up filling a vacuum. Until the explosion of uneasiness over sexual abuse in the '70s and '80s, doctors had rarely dedicated themselves to inspecting the genitals of minors, and when they did it was in order to evaluate the evident physical signs of violence. They were confronted with certain cases of rape where the marks of aggression had made themselves apparent on various parts of the body, not just on the genitals. Moreover, Nathan & Snedeker point out, in the 1950s there would already have been fairly widespread skepticism concerning aspects such as infections and certain sexually-transmitted diseases, disbelieving that they might be symptoms of abuse. Nevertheless, from the '80s onward, in the new climate of the danger of sexual abuse -- made spectacularly more powerful by the ritual abuse panic -- doctors saw themselves as being obligated to evaluate cases of incest and ritual abuse in those who typically had no clear physical signs of abuse, since there was an absence of violence on victims' bodies -- although not always in their stories, which made them all the more incredible.

These physicians had not been trained to examine children's genitals, and so they proceeded based on the one thing they were familiar with: the genitals of adults, and particularly the characteristics of the female hymen. It was believed that the features of a given vulva somehow reflected the woman's sex life, above all the hymen; but this was false. Moreover the notion of a woman's virginity, as a value to be respected until marriage, would still persist among many of the physicians who began to be confronted with alleged cases of sexual abuse, where they would have to investigate the accusation's veracity or lack thereof. What is odd, Nathan & Snedeker affirm, is that they had not undertaken rigorous research into aspects such as what a normal hymen is or is not. The physicians entrusted with investigating these cases, who were not researchers but rather professionals associated with child protection services, the police, and the justice system, had no other option but to proceed based on subjective and debatable impressions, sometimes based on a few "scientific" articles which had more to do with the 'anti-abuse' battle than they did with rigorous scientific investigation. In fact sometimes, cases were evaluated by the consensus of a majority of the doctors who examined small [169] signs of supposed abuse.

The presence of physical indicia in cases of sexual abuse involving minors is rather rare, and even the existence of any of them can very often turn out to be questionable as direct and clear signs that abuse has occurred. Thus for example it is very difficult, not to say impossible, to know by an examination of the hymen whether a girl has had coital relations or not, unless evident lesions and tears exist, as may happen in rape cases and would apparently occur, for example, on the clitoris, the only point of vulnerability where the violence would have become evident at the time the event was assessed. Virginity which would have such central importance in the context studied here is, on occasion, difficult to objectively evaluate given that a woman's hymen adopts various forms and qualities, making it difficult to be able to establish general and indisputable norms. But at the time, and even now, that is exactly what would happen in the legal

context studied herein, with physicians taking it for granted that they are capable of discovering, with total efficacy, whether a girl is a virgin or not.

In 1981, word reached the United States of a Brazilian doctor who was using a small apparatus to examine women's hymens -- in that country, due to legal issues surrounding rape cases or marriage, proving their virginity was central. This contraption was called a coldscope; used principally to look for cervical cancer, it permitted one to observe and videotape the genitals' smallest details. It was used by that Brazilian physician to assess women's virginity, and a little later, to evaluate cases of alleged abuse and rape. Woodling heard about this invention and began using it for his examination of abuse cases. He began to see small details in the vagina's texture and structure which, cloaked in supposedly scientific terminology, would allow one to point out the signs of abuse trauma. The validity of that apparatus and its discoveries was later shown, from a scientific point of view, to be null and void.

Woodling participated in various high-profile cases of supposed ritual abuse. Particularly in evaluating the McCuann ritual abuse case where, for the first time, he applied his machine and his discoveries to proving the abuse. In that case he "proved" that the girl's hymen showed signs of penetration, and that the boy's anus would open so much upon being touched as to prove itself capable of allowing an erect penis to pass through, which was a sign that it had already occurred. He also participated in cases such as McMartin, where the exams were performed by a pediatrician who had been a student of Woodling, who would later follow his same methods and criteria. And it is curious because in that case this doctor did not even find Woodling's most miniscule signs; but despite this, she gave assurances that what was observed was compatible with the supposed abuse. This was, according to Nathan & Snedeker, a principle which had already been established by Tardieu and his students, who were urged to think that although there were no physical signs of abuse, it was possible that the latter may exist. Thus the doctor did not refute the abuse, and therefore the investigation could continue. [170] This was also what Woodling would tell his students.

In 1988, one Dr. McCann released an exhaustive study devoted to a detailed examination of the hymen, as well as the anus, of hundreds of children. His conclusion was a sweeping one: Neither the anus, nor the hymen, nor many of the other indicators habitually used to demonstrate the existence of sexual abuse were valid. Concerning the hymen, for example, he notes that there are all types of them at every age and that, barring the presence of an obvious lesion due to forced penetration, it is impossible to know, via a woman's hymen, whether she has had relations or not. In the same way that an intact hymen does not exclude abuse, a hymen with significant aperture doesn't confirm it either -- for example, a so-called "obliging" hymen exists, which allows for the insertion of one or two fingers without any problem -- and of course there is also the fact that the experts are not in agreement on this matter. (Cantón & Cortés, 1997) Martínez has pointed out that "the importance of the transverse diameter of the hymeneal orifice as confirmatory evidence of sexual abuse in girls has been overblown, and again and again one observes that it is a clinical datum which is not able to recommend itself as such." (1993; p. 598) In fact, in 1988 McCann's discoveries stunned the medical community by showing that the hymen is a structure which varies a great deal from one girl to another, or even in the same girl over the course of a single examination. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) What had been regarded as a

viable datum for proving sexual abuse, and was utilized as an indication in order to report potential abuse, was left completely discredited by an exhaustive study.

In that period in which the danger of abuse began to emerge with greater force, another privileged terrain of physical examination was that of vaginal infections and sexually-transmitted diseases. Along these lines, something similar occurred when reputedly indisputable signs of abuse turned out to not always be so, especially those – like vaginal itching -- that were typically associated with poor hygiene, but which some doctors began to associate with abuse. It went from questioning the physical indicators as signs of abuse to believing that all of them were suspect. Sometimes this led to the analysis of harmful micro-organisms, which were still difficult to differentiate from those that were not, and which were common in women. This produced positive results in lab tests and was sometimes carried out in ritual abuse cases, where initial claims of the abuse having been confirmed by the presence of gonorrhea turned out not to be true.

Therefore it was equally difficult to establish the viability of venereal diseases as indicia of abuse. Nevertheless some studies do point to a significant number of them as being indicative of the presence of abuse. (Argent et al., 1995; Cantón & Cortés, 1997; Martínez, 1993). Argent et al. (1995) studied the correlation between the presence of some sexually transmitted diseases and abuse. Evidence of some of these diseases was found in 96 minors, ages 2 through 14, who were admitted to a hospital. Vaginal discharge was most frequently the initial symptom presented (76%), particularly in 5-year-olds (90%). Evidence of sexual abuse was subsequently obtained in 67% of the cases, consisting of evidence of the presence of other physical indicators pointing to the existence of abuse -- sexually-transmitted diseases such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, etc -- or the obtaining of a history of abuse via the child or other sources. In 29 [171] of the 96 cases there were no further indications of abuse; in 14 corroboration was only obtained in the social investigation; in 16 only another indicator of a physical nature was obtained; and in 37, both physical indicators as well as abuse histories were obtained. We do not know what criteria were used to confirm the existence of non-physical indicia of abuse.

Nevertheless, with these sorts of indicators it is also necessary to be cautious; and we must establish differences based on the type of illness detected. Although diseases such as papillomas are regarded as sufficiently reliable indications that sexual relations have occurred, it is also a risky proposition to flatly confirm it in cases where there is no other evidence. In the case of candidiasis it is more than questionable to suspect abuse based solely on its presence, since its origin may have causes quite distinct from sexual relations. And the same goes for all of the so-called sexually-transmitted diseases. Therefore they would be indicators of abuse whose probative power varies based on their type. According to Martínez, the probative power of these signs in sexual abuse evaluations involving minors would be as follows:

In summary, in terms of sexually-transmitted diseases it would have to be said that, among prepubescents: (1) confirmed gonorrhea is evidence of abuse; (2) confirmed syphilis is evidence of abuse; (3) confirmed chlamydia, condilomas, and trichomas are manifestations of possible abuse; (4) confirmed genital herpes I is possible abuse, and if

it is herpes II it is probable; (5) bacterial vaginitis is uncertain evidence of abuse; and, (6) candidiasis unlikely to be evidence of abuse." (1993 p. 600)

The Child's Behavior and the Adult's Suspicious Gaze It is possible that masturbation has ceased to be a problem with the same salience that it may have possessed in other eras, and that it is in fact far less problematized than it had been previously. Nevertheless here we have an example, and there may be others as well, of how masturbation was re-problematized although in a different way; but problematic just the same. And that is because among children masturbation, as with any behavior with sexual connotations that might manifest itself, has been pointed to as a frequent indicator of abuse. That was to be expected. The pat relationship between cause and effect is more evident here than with any other symptom. In that relationship of kinship, Foucault would say the patness "conserves its fundamental form across time and space." (1978 p. 29)

Masturbating oneself, age-inappropriate sexual expression, play with erotic connotations, touching the genitals of other children or attempting to "abuse" them, imitating sexual behaviors, promiscuity, excessive tenderness or the use of seduction to obtain things. These and similar behaviors being too obvious to go unnoticed, children's erotic manifestations seem to point -- ever more readily and insistently -- to hidden abuse experiences. The latter's evocative capacity appears to have increased.

In fact, references to sexualized conduct as the symptom most characteristic of abuse are quite common in studies of abuse. (Kendall-Tackett, Williams & Finkelhor, 1993 p. 173) To some, these indicators are [172] those most intensely associated with the traumatic experience (Echeburúa, 2000), a notion which appears to be quite widespread among professionals themselves. Berliner & Conte refer to a study where a large sample of professionals were asked to assess the importance that they ascribed to certain indicators when weighing an allegation of abuse. There was a certain degree of agreement in terms of the most significant indicators, prominent among them being, first of all, those having to do with children's sexual conduct: children evincing age-inappropriate sexual knowledge (99%), exhibiting sexualized conduct during the interview (96%), showing precocious and apparently seductive conduct (91%), and masturbating excessively (91%). (Berliner & Conte, 1993 p. 115) Nevertheless, these same authors criticize the significance that was ascribed to children's erotic conduct or sexual expressions, when it is obvious that these signs are not as clear as some professionals and authors would believe. In fact, this would be applicable to practically all abuse indicators. Although it is clear -- these researchers note -- that we cannot discount the usefulness of indicators such as erotic behaviors for detecting cases of sexual abuse, which in their opinion has been empirically demonstrated, we cannot regard them as being absolutely determinative of anything. And they may be right; at least if we accept that things have been empirically proven to be so; the problem may lie in how those principles are utilized in actual professional intervention.

The following hypothetical case formed part of a study into the use of scientific information in reference to the relationship "between erotic conduct in children and sexual abuse:

Problem 1: Two seven-year-old children of the same sex have been observed exhibiting sexual conduct. The first child has been seen masturbating with a baseball bat. The second has been seen touching the genitals of other children.

According to Friedrich, Grambach, Damon, Hewitt, Koverola, Lang, Wolfe & Broughton (1992), the conduct of masturbation with an object occurs in approximately 11% of children who have not suffered abuse. According to this same study, the conduct of touching the genitals of other children takes place among approximately 26% of children who have suffered sexual abuse and 6 % who have not.

For the sake of argument, we accept that the above information regarding these two children is correct, and that Friedrich et al.'s (1992) discoveries reflect the true frequency of sexual conduct among abused and non-abused children. Based on the information presented here, which of these two children is more likely to have suffered sexual abuse?" (Case used in the study by Wood & Wright, 1995 p. 1263)

Wood & Wright (1995) would seek to analyze whether professionals were capable of translating the data -- in terms of frequency percentages -- from studies into the presence of sexual behaviors in child abuse victims to their own work in detecting and investigating these sorts of cases. For this, they present the subjects with two brief histories explaining that some children had been seen exhibiting certain kinds of erotic conduct -masturbating themselves, touching the genitals of other children, or imitating sexual behaviors -- and then gave them information regarding the percentages of child abuse victims in which these symptoms typically manifested. Solving these problems would require, according to the authors, [173] applying a simple arithmetic principle that would calculate the probability that these hypothetical children were or were not victims of abuse. The problem would consist, therefore, of evaluating the seriousness of certain sexual behaviors in children, and the probability that these were indicative of abuse. The professionals had to comport themselves like mathematicians in order to be able to arrive at the correct answer, taking into account the percentages that were supplied to them from other studies.

The subjects were divided into two large groups of students and professionals, who were then compared amongst themselves in terms of answers given. The results were that, although the professionals generally did "better" than the students, all of them were quite inept at applying the studies' statistical information to their decisions. This, in the authors' judgment, should cause us to wonder if, given that they are incapable of doing this in a hypothetical case, won't the same thing happen amidst the complexities of real life? The authors' conclusion is a predictable one. Professionals can in fact commit errors in judgment when intervening in cases of child sexual abuse, and it is necessary to conduct further research on them in order to improve the aforesaid decision-making processes. Formal decision-making methods such as risk-evaluation tools, which are already being applied in other fields, could also be adapted to this arena. Of course, the authors say, it is not a matter of asserting that professionals have to base themselves exclusively on the information provided to them by studies, as to the frequency of sexual behaviors or other signs as indicators of sexual abuse. It is obvious that they must settle on a different series of criteria for their decision-making. But what is clear is that it is also necessary that this probability data be taken into account.

It is a work which, in my opinion, has been of very little -- not to say no -- use to us, in that, at most, it illustrates for us a line of inquiry which has been common to studies of

individuals who analyze the big picture in order to make decisions based on concrete data, a view which is, undoubtedly, a partial and limited one. Its interest to us consists, on the other hand, in showing the ease with which certain behaviors on the part of children or teenagers are sometimes ascribed to sexual abuse. This is nothing more, therefore, than what is already commonplace in our knowledge of abuse: the existence of bright signs announcing the truth. The presence of the "sexual" in the child occupies a privileged position among them. The expert message disseminated with regard to this is clear:

Frequently pre-schoolers go back to wetting the bed at night after having already been potty-trained; they are hyperactive, show changes in their dream patterns, exhibit fears and intense phobias, evince compulsive behaviors, and have difficulty learning. They show explicit evidence of precocious sexualization, including early sexual play accompanied by a degree of curiosity concerning the sexual which is unusual for their age. In some cases, the adults are concerned because the children compulsively masturbate, sometimes to the point of utilizing objects – generally speaking, dolls, clothing, or parts of other people's bodies -- or inserting things into their vaginal and/or anal orifices. When this [174] happens it is not unusual to find genital lesions. Intense separation anxiety and seductive behavior towards adults may also be observed." (Intebi, 1998 p. 182)

It is a question of a chapter of abuse theory newly vindicated in scientific knowledge, which in this case is not ours to refute. It is clear, as Berliner & Conte would say or as many others assert, that these are signs to be utilized cautiously and within a given case's overall context, taking into account the many other elements which constitute it. Although none of these indicia, we are told, have the capacity to confirm abuse in and of themselves, all of them are potentially able to strengthen a suspicion. An argument regarding which there is of course not much to say, since it is, in a certain way, unassailable: Abused children show these signs; therefore, their presence invites one to think that they have been abused. In any event, it seems to me to be a good idea to ask ourselves not so much about the truth contained in such considerations, but rather, about the way in which the latter are appropriated by the general public or the professional community, and in what form they insinuate themselves into the day-to-day reality of expert tasks. It is a question, then, of asking ourselves about the position which these indicia occupy in the investigation of these acts, their theoretical discourse, and their practice. [E92]

In a work concerning sexual abuse prevention in the school, Félix López addressed educators in similar terms:

How can we know if a minor has suffered sexual abuse? Three things are most important here: a) That we listen to and observe our children and pupils. b) That if something happens to them, they are able to frankly ask for help. c) That they are protected. If they -- the teachers -- are attentive, if they are capable of noting sudden changes, if there is a climate of trust, it is very likely that they will end up communicating it." (López, 1997 pp. 26-27)

It seems clear that one of the major accomplishments of the social discourse of sexual abuse is having converted the latter into a permanent fixture of our quotidian existence, of having made it present even though it cannot be seen. In this way, therefore, it is certainly the case that now, a suspicion of possible abuse is always ready to emerge. It is suggested that if more abuse is not detected, this is, to a great extent, because professionals and other adults are not focused on doing so; which, in turn, implies that when more cases are detected, it is' because we have focused on looking for them. The question would be what leads us to try to do so with greater zeal and, especially to what extremes we are capable of going to in this search. Some of the professionals whom I have been interviewing expressed this idea to me quite clearly. Whereas before, they would tell me, we would hardly see any cases of abuse, now, more and more are being observed every day. An explosion in abuse which also manifests itself in professional practice and, of course, in day-to-day family life.

For example, as society has had to face, finally, the reality of sexual abuse, parents have become more keenly aware of the possible significance of a negative reaction on the child's part, due to the attention which they lavish upon him or her. Many parents of the children who attended the McMartin preschool, in California, explained that their children had exhibited many negative reactions, but that, at the time, they had not thought that these reactions had any significance. (Garbarino & Stoff, 1993 p. 240)

[175] Finally we have had to accept the terrible truth of abuse, and it has brought everyone, parents as well as professionals, to an uneasiness in the face of the most minimal of strange reactions in our children. A new restlessness which comes to further complicate what was already the problematized task of being parents, or the relationship between adults and children. The former need to learn to suspect abuse, since this is a fear or a possibility that is still unfamiliar to many of them. Even though you don't see if abuse is there, it manifests itself, springing forth from its truth to observable reality; one need only believe that it is there, give voice to it, and know how to recognize it. The key is simply wanting to see it.

And so, let us not be deceived. It has not been the development. of interview techniques, of psychologies of the truth, or the skills and the means to detect, suspect, and verify the abuse which have facilitated its improved detection or evaluation. It has been, by contrast, the unprecedented awareness of the danger, its growing presence which is thought to loom over every child or adolescent, the progressive ease with which it is feared and suspected, which have favored or even demanded the development of an often mysterious knowledge. In this case certainty has compelled its demonstration, facilitating the elaboration and the establishment of a discourse of the child's body in which the sexual has been situated on a privileged plane. A future increase in social preoccupation, in the sense of danger, in the credibility of these sorts of acts and the acceptance of their gravity will probably lead us to an even more intensive search for as well as the development of magical knowledge with Which to confront -- at last symbolically -- that truth.

Tell Me the Truth The historical study of the anti-Onanism campaigns which encompassed the whole of the Western world for more than three centuries has shown us how the confession of these acts was occupying an ever more central role in combating them, with the

insertion of said artifice into their entire framework -- first religious, and later, medical-pedagogical -- surrounding childhood masturbation. (Vázquez & Moreno, 1997) The confession of the sin of Onanism, with its long history in the West, would go on to occupy a central position in the whole process of detecting and treating those children who were guilty of the vice of masturbation. Nevertheless, in the case of sexual abuse, the interventions designed to reveal it have been not so much along the lines of inviting those responsible to confess them and mend their ways -- though there have also been proposals in this vein -- as they have to facilitate its revelation on the part of the victim or any other person who might be aware of it. This is part of the historical transformation from the "guilty child" to the "child victim." Here, then, the child's confession serves not as a means of expiation so as to recognize one's error, but rather, as an honest telling of one's suffering which, in turn, necessarily makes the occasion of its denunciation the first step in healing. Once the suspicion of abuse has emerged, however it may have come to light, it may be necessary to gather more evidence in order to confirm the suspicion and uncover the details. In this case, minors' declarations occupy a privileged position, as a successful manual targeted at parents suggests:

My seven-year-old daughter was watching television with her 25-yearold Uncle Pete. He was looking after her while we were at the cinema. Lisa is an active girl who really enjoys roughhousing with Pete. That night Lisa and Pete were having fun roughhousing during the short commercial break when all of a sudden, something strange happened. While roughhousing, Pete asked Lisa to undress. He told her that if she would do it and keep it a secret, she could watch television until 11:00. Lisa thought about all of the nighttime programs that she was typically unable to see, then reflected on this request, "had a funny feeling," as she would explain later, told him that she didn't want to do it, and went to bed. The following morning she told me: "Mom, Uncle Pete asked me to do those funny things that you've told me about." When I asked her what she was trying to say, she responded: "Oh, you already know, he wanted me to undress, but I didn't do it. Are you going to speak with him?" "Yes, I will," I told her. "I am very happy that you told me." She hugged me and said: "You know, Mama, I am very happy that we don't have any more secrets. " (Adams & Fay, 1991: *No More Secrets: How to Protect Your Child From Sexual Assault* p. 7).

It is undoubtedly the victim's word, her explicit narration of the facts, the longed-for evidence to prove the abuse and the step always required of victims, of minors who are insistently invited to speak up, to talk, to tell of the abuse. The latter is thus inexorably viewed -- disregarding any potential shades of gray -- as a secret which nobody wants to keep, least of all the victim, but which one does not dare tell due to fear, threats, shame, or trickery. That is where the adults -- parents and educators -- are invited to foster minors' trust. A trust which, as a guide for educators says, is converted into the sole and privileged vehicle of confession.

The most important thing is for teachers to know that if a boy or girl does suffer abuse, it is certain that it will manifest itself in some way or another. If they are attentive, if they are capable of noting sudden changes and, above all, if there is a climate of trust, it is very likely that they will end up communicating it. Throughout the intervention program with the students, it is essential to insist that they should ask for help if they've had an experience of this type. Asking for help is the best way of

overcoming bad experiences, making sure that they are not repeated, and making it possible to avoid those who perpetrate the abuse being able to do so again." (López, 1997 p. 27)

Trust seems, at times, to be the principal objective of the public abuse discourse; trust as a new way of connecting with the new generations that we have in our charge. Parents, teachers, carepersons, family members, doctors, psychologists, and social workers are induced to adopt new forms of coexistence, bonds, and communication in which trust takes precedence simply because it 'points to another great obsession: sincerity. "No more secrets", proclaims that manual distributed to parents which is designed to prevent abuse. A relationship devoid of enigmas, mysteries, and silences. The diligent mother is encouraged to foster a dialogue which is ceaselessly preventive and investigative, a detector of lies and secrets. Transparent communication; the absence of any fog which might allow what is hidden to thrive. In parallel with that attentive and suspicious observation of expressions to which I have already referred, we observe the proliferation of these lines of insertion. Along with mistrust on the part of grown-ups -- who have to be alert to any sign of hidden abuse -- there is trust infused in the children, who ought to be transparent, with neither secrets nor hidden rooms in which their drama is hushed up. This leads [177] to the truth being obscured, and to the victim not wishing to tell it. The problem is, moreover, that the "sexual" necessarily ends up being too difficult and complex to be brought to light. In fact, some victims do not even know that they suffered abuse.

Some Final Considerations In the name of vigorously combating the dramatic nature of the sexual abuse of minors, a principle that has remained undiscussed for some decades now, a professional undertaking and knowledge has been imposed which, for the most part, would merit some reflection. It is not a question of not having to intervene in cases of sexual abuse, or that nothing can be done about it on the part of institutions and professionals. Rather, I wish to suggest the need to re-formulate the way in which it is frequently being done; especially the typical expert discourse.

Everything points to the fact that in the detection of abuse and its related professional practices, one has frequently entered into a confusing, ambiguous, and clearly pseudoscientific terrain. Authors such as Money (2001) have denounced what in their opinion is the deplorable professional intervention into the realm of child sexual abuse carried out by psychologists or other experts in order to obtain evidence from the victims. [E93] Their complaint points out that in the obsession with the hunt for sexual abuse, there came a time when the ends justified the means, and the strategies used to obtain statements from the minors ended up lacking all basic logic. In our country we have the case of the Raval of Barcelona, illustrated by Arcadi Espada in his newspaper column. Now the child who paints with the color black is not a child who likes black, but rather, the child victim of maltreatment or sexual abuse. It may be that this is a caricature of what is actually happening in practice. That is possible. But in my opinion, it points to something which merits further evaluation.

The abuse discourse, the strategy of denunciation, and the fight against it have facilitated the development of a pseudoscientific knowledge in which the professionals of the invisible, as I have come to call them, have installed themselves sometimes to their own regret. There is no doubt that the task is a difficult one. Because of that I believe that experts' place in these sorts of

acts, whether they be in the protection or justice fields, has to be rethought, at least in discursive terms, establishing very clearly their potentialities, ends, and limitations.

What we are in need of here is an investigation into how these accusations are dealt with. However it is a question not only of the law enforcement knowledge necessary to prove abuse, but of the perspective which underlies these strategies. Questions such as the perception of abuse as something which is beyond widespread, the gravity with which any and all erotic experiences between children and adults -- or even between children themselves -- have been infused and what makes their detection so urgent, the dramatics with which these acts are being treated, the relationship which has been subtly established between morality and children's credibility, the sense that every solved case of abuse constitutes a newly-won battle on behalf of a great truth, etc., would be some of the cultural factors which, in my opinion, would have favored these sorts of practices. And then add to that other elements specific to the professional groups that intervene in these sorts of situations -- especially [178] psychologists and social workers. Prominent among them would be the pressure to respond to social and institutional exigencies in a professional, efficacious manner, the search for new fields to exploit professionally, the self-proclamation of experts in areas which are, necessarily, shaky and invisible, the problematic confusion between the arenas of assistance and punishment, between the social and the penal, with the consequent intertwining of professionals and objectives. All of these points are, in my opinion, crucial to accounting for the tone that professional intervention in the sexual abuse arena has adopted, which is in need of reexamination.

Perhaps the conclusion derived from these reflections, as well as their import for professional intervention, seems simple. As Finkelhor (1999) would well remember in his more recent works -- thus rectifying what authors like him had previously decreed as per the abuse discourse -- sexual abuse is not a total fact accounting for a minor's overall situation; and neither should professional intervention and timely decisions be based on it alone. The latter has been a presupposition implicit in the manner in which most researchers have studied professional intervention. In claiming to know how professionals would come to a decision about an abuse allegation, via the use of questionnaires or written abuse histories, the researcher was leaving aside the complexity of the life of every individual, a complexity which professionals certainly must remain cognizant of in their day-to-day labors.

Sexual abuse is an experience, a concrete act which can be experienced in quite varied ways -- as in fact occurs -- and which should be responded to in ways that are flexible as well as adapted to the circumstances in which they take place and are experienced. The minor is not the abuse. The minor is an individual with certain personal characteristics and a particular familial and social reality within which at a given moment, and in a particular way, the abuse or, simply its suspicion, has emerged.

And to make it clearer we should say -- and it is necessary to insist on this -- that sexual abuse is not reducible to the "sexual." And it may be that the sexual in and of itself or what is understood as such, is not even the most important thing. E94] That which is called abuse is, before anything else, a relationship, and it is that relationship and its implications which need to be evaluated. It is not a problem of a penis and vagina or an anus in a vacuum, nor is it one of a hand passed surreptitiously under a dress; behind those elements, behind those gestures are

people; individuals with such varied experiences and ways of relating to others that it may be difficult to squeeze them into rigid categories. I suspect that sometimes it is not necessary to combat sexual abuse in order to help individuals. I suspect that sometimes it is even counterproductive.

Justice and Abuse

The modern anxiety over the problem of child sexual abuse has also had an impact on the penal code, where significant transformations have occurred in terms of more intensively scrutinizing these sorts of situations. (Tamarit, 2000) The recourse to legal denunciation has been called for more and more [179J in order to intervene into such acts and there is every indication that the number of accusations has increased, while authors and social groups which denounce the problem have promoted legal transformations in areas such as the age at which one can freely accede to a sexual relationship or the meaning of words like abuse, assault, or aggression. In the face of modernity's moral crisis, it would appear that only the penal law can supply what is missing. But this is at the cost of conflating anew the penal and the moral, or of altering the modern justice system's minimal safeguards.

Sexual Liberty and the Modern Penal Law

In the era of sexual freedom, respect for sexual diversity is a value widely acknowledged as the right of every human being; but if the fact of its existence is able to confer many advantages it also occasions certain difficulties and contradictions, oftentimes making it hard to establish standards of proper sexual conduct. The problem of sexual morality in the West is a long ways away from having been resolved. Contradictions or dilemmas emerge in the most widely varied of social, political, scientific, or professional contexts. A good example of this is the posture that is adopted towards persons who manifest some sort of sexual deviation based on the prevailing criteria -- pedophiles, voyeurs, exhibitionists, transvestites, sado-masochists, etc. -- or the debate over "curing" these persons, in which there are established, for one thing, moral judgments in treatment; when maybe the right thing to do would be to help them to live with that peculiarity or even to change existing social prejudices (Crawford, 1981), especially when the person perhaps does not desire any help, much less to be changed.

The solution to the problem of where to establish the limits to this progressive acceptance of behaviors which previously were vehemently rejected is typically localized in terms of the existence of harm to others and in the presence of a victim which, based on the type of crime that we are dealing with, might be society in general or particular individuals. These are what are called offenses against sexual liberty; a given individual's sexual freedom would end at the point where the other person's liberty was being violated. This is where the former is converted into a sexual offender, and the latter turns into a victim. It is, therefore, necessary for society to define the ground rules under which such violations against personal liberty take place. .

Díez-Ripollés (1985) noted that there was wide agreement concerning the need to reorient the entire sexual penal law towards the protection of a legal good clearly delimited as that of "sexual liberty," it being the objective of the law in this area to punish all conduct which renders its exercise by a given individual impossible. The lawmakers of previous eras would

have based their considerations on concepts with great moral moment, such as that of "chastity," which no longer have any weight in present-day societies. For Díez-Ripollés, the idea of sexual liberty as the crux of the law is based on the notion that sexuality is a good central to the life of every individual, which would have to rely, for its self-actualization, on the most minimal social limitations. That is, it "presupposes a positive conception of sexuality" (ibid p. 23), with the objective being not so much to protect the right to exercise a given sexual freedom "but the right of [180] every person to freely exercise sexual liberty." (ibid p. 29)

This transformation in the penal codes of a good portion of the Western world would seek to do away with the introjection of morality into the criminal law, separating what had previously been mixed together:

... the repressive law should no longer be an instrument of the forced imposition of a particular moral order -- whatever the nature of that order may be; socio-sexual morality, religious sexual morality, group sexual morality, etc -- but rather, of a more modest form, a mechanism more geared to rooting out those behaviors, in keeping with a model which is compatible with liberty. (Casas, 1983 p. 214)

The Criterion of Age

Looking at things in this way, sexual relations between adults and minors, or between two minors, whether or not a familial relationship exists between the two, form an interesting group of situations for putting the model's fundamental elements to the test and bringing them to their logical conclusions. The adult is depicted -- from the penal perspective -- as someone who sexually injures another, in this case a boy or a girl, thus violating their sexual liberty; and that would be the principal reason for reproaching, prosecuting, punishing, and re-educating him. We need not wonder whether we are violating the sexual liberty of some adults by protecting the sexual liberty of others (minors), since the objective of this perspective would be to protect not so much a sexual liberty that one possessed, but rather, the right of every person to freely express his or her sexuality. It is not that one person's liberty is being restricted -- that of the adult -- but rather, that another's is being protected -- that of the minor. Nevertheless, there will be minors who will try to exercise that sexual liberty with adults, which in turn would call for a limitation on their rights in order to protect them. Minors would, just like persons deprived of reason, be limited in their sexual liberty; minors would lack the "capacity to understand and desire the importance and the transcendence of the sexual act, as well as the consent which they will eventually be able to give. That is to say, they lack sexual liberty." (Díez-Ripollés, 1985 p. 26) This is the so-called "sexual indemnity" to which minors are subjected; they are sexually "untouchable" on the part of adults, or even by minors who are older than they are.

Therefore the entire system maintains the impossibility of those affected being able to make decisions regarding their own sexual liberty. The question is, then, at what age or at what time does one acquire that right. With the penal code of 1999, in Spain the age of consent was increased from 12 to 13, with minors below that age regarded as never: being able to provide valid consent. [E95] The fact that occasionally a minor might possess that capacity for determination would mean nothing in terms of the generally-established presumption; the same criterion is used when establishing a definite age applicable in the case of minors who

themselves commit crimes. Apropos to this question, authors such as Casas (1983) would make statements which I believe nowadays, some two decades later, would probably strike us as -- at the very least -- bold, and which, as we have observed in the texts cited, would undoubtedly be condemnable to some. In that article, Casas questioned the generalization -- that would establish itself at that time -- of condemning as abusive and criminal [181] all sexual relations with 12-year-olds. According to Casas, this would mean forgetting about the individual variation that has been shown to exist in the area of sexuality, a human condition which corresponds not to simple age criteria but rather to personal developmental processes.

The abuse discourse, originating from the social sciences, has defended -- with few exceptions -- this kind of tendency to broaden the abuse criterion to encompass ever higher ages. And so, to cite just one example, we see how Broussard & Wagner (1988) utilize a presumed victim of 15 years of age and an adult of 35 in their study of how responsibility for the abuse is attributed to the two parties. They regard it as being of concern that in these cases the population at large as well as professionals ascribe a certain degree of responsibility to the minor when the latter either encourages or passively accepts it. These authors hail from the United States, and it is possible that there, the age criteria for assessing a sexual relationship as permitted or otherwise would be quite different from those which prevail, for example, in Spain. Those criteria might seem exaggerated to many of us; of course, our penal code is far more tolerant in this sense, given that from age 13 on up it is thought to be possible for the victim to consent to a relationship, which is not necessarily an abusive one. It is precisely on this point that a paradoxical -- or at least curious -- phenomenon has also occurred: the difference between the penal vs. the psychological or scientific appraisal of abuse.

There is not a direct correspondence between the psychological and juridical concepts of sexual abuse. In the first place, the psychological - and even colloquial -- concept of sexual abuse simply relates to minors. Nevertheless, in the new penal code this form of offense is limited to those acts that are not consented to which -- albeit without violence or intimidation -- violate the sexual liberty of any person, whether the latter be an adult or a minor. And secondly, although in the new definition of the penal code the punishable conduct has been expanded to the abuse of authority and deceit, that is where it stops; it does not encompass the more subtle forms of pressure via which the victim's consent might be gained, which could nevertheless produce psychological consequences that are just as negative as when explicit coercion is applied." (Echeburúa, 1999; 84)

It is likely, as this text may well suggest [E96], that it has been precisely through the discourse of child sexual abuse, elaborated within a psychological and social framework, that the arguments for justifying what to many might be a step backwards in the area of sexual freedom have been supplied, upon considering as harmful and abusive experiences which had ceased to be thought of as criminal or even morally objectionable. The expert discourse has appropriated the authority to establish a truth with respect to it. Its proposals even go beyond personal opinions and legal regulations. Its concept of abuse has thus become far more subtle, complex, and broad. And from that perspective, sustained by the science of abuse, they come to suggest modifications in the penal code, making it sensitive to even subtler abuse, because although "punishable conduct has been broadened to abuse of authority and deceit, that is where it stops; it

does not encompass the more subtle forms of pressure via which the victim's consent might be gained, which could, nevertheless, produce psychological consequences that are just as negative as when explicit coercion is applied." (Echeburúa & Guerricaechevarría, 2000; 24-25) The words [182] of Urra are newly illustrative in this sense:

I am conscious of the fact that I am using words that are not antiseptic, not neutral, not suited to an expert, a clinician. and so on. I write as a person who has the profound responsibility and the great fortune to defend childhood, to tell all of those bastards: Enough! We do not accept your presumptions, which harm both the present as well as the future of children.' Because of that, we led a three-year fight to raise the age at which a child can give his or her consent in order to have sexual relations with adults. I repeat, with adults. Nobody is seeking to prohibit or censure sexual relations between peers, between children. Neither does anyone seek to penalize the gypsy race, where one gets married informally prior to that. No, the aim here is not for an 18-year-old young man who has relations with a girl of 15 to bump up against the penal law. No, one will not engage in demagoguery in such important matters. The fact is that the penal code of 1995, a code of liberty, left some gaps or "blind alleys" in this sensitive reality. Because we are sincere with young people when providing them guidance, they are protected by what we understand to be their best interests. and their rights are limited. Note that they are not permitted to make use of such a fundamental democratic right as the exercise of universal suffrage; neither are they left to their own devices, or allowed to work, drink alcohol, attend certain spectacles. or... What's more, they are sometimes obligated to complete certain activities, as happens with school attendance until age 16.

Well then, the 1995 penal code permits a boy or girl who is one day past his or her 12th birthday to give consent to sexual relations with adults. Consent? Which is to say: Do they know -- and can they anticipate -- the consequences of such relations? No. This is not a progressive measure, nor is it a liberating one; it is an unnecessary risk, a half-open door for some abusers to explain to the judge that "the child consented" and remain at liberty, while the child (because at 12 years of age, they are children) is infused with a terrible feeling of co-responsibility. And that should not be. To the child in such situations, the adult is like a rock that they've tripped over. And so we got the age of consent raised from 12 to 13; and though that is something, a step in the right direction, we remain unsatisfied. We had proposed 14, an age which presumes a psychological change and serves as a lower limit for juridical purposes, such as the possibility of entering into a marriage contract (with the consent of the parents as well as the judge)." [E97] (Javier Urra. "Rain Eyes." Epilogue to Echeburúa & Guerricaechevarría's book, 2000 pp. 154-155)

It has not been juridical thinking which has taken the initiative to gather these acts into its bosom but rather the scientific and ideological sexual abuse discourse, which has facilitated what are, on the face of it, timely modifications to the use of a symbolic penal law. Money had suggested that behind the whole sexual abuse "boom" was hidden an industry based on its denunciation and "fiercely devoted to including the sexual abuse of minors in the legal definition of the age of childhood, defined in the United States as the period between birth and age 18." (1999 p. 29) We shall see below, in the final chapter, how widespread accusations and sentences

-- to many years in prison -- of and for so-called "statutory rape" have become in that country, where consensual erotic relations between 13-17 year-old girls and older boys have been criminalized. (Levine, 2003) In that country any person over 18 who takes a nude photograph of his or her partner, if the latter is under 18 years old, can be accused of pedophilia. According to that country's Child Protection Act of 1984, the depiction of any person under 18 with their genitals exposed or simulating any sort of sexual act is explicitly criminalized, whether or not it is done for commercial purposes. Strictly speaking, the law goes after any depiction of a minor's genitals. (Money, 1985 p. 288) Everything seems to point to the fact that the abuse discourse, its way of [183] constructing the problem and its strategy of denunciation, have permitted the reintroduction of morality into the penal code, and not only in terms of the increase in the age of consent.

Sexual Abuse and Morality in the Penal Code

The atmosphere of the 1990s favored the transformations in matters of the sexual penal law which would occur in Europe. In those years the problem of the sexual abuse of minors, with its long history in the United States, had arrived in the countries of Europe, and specifically, Spain. [E98] In the penal arena it occurred at an international level; an inheritance of what was said and done in the United States, a renewed uneasiness over sexual crimes. It went from rape to abuse, and from there, to new fears such as child prostitution or child pornography on the Internet. In 1997, the Council of the European Union adopted the "joint strategy," which urged all governments to review its laws concerning matters pertaining to human beings and sexual exploitation, making special reference to minors. In countries like Italy, France, Germany, or Portugal, during the late 1990s, sections relating to sexual offenses were revised, sometimes spurred by social scandals arising out of current events -- particularly high-profile ones in which minors were the victims of sexual assault. Beginning in 1996 in Spain, where a significant review of the 1995 penal code was undertaken, a bill designed to modify protections on minors' sexual liberties was debated; it would eventually be adopted in 1999. .

European and Spanish lawmakers, as had already been done in the United States, toughened their penal codes and broadened the conception of what constituted a crime, harking back to presuppositions more suited to previous eras. Experts in the penal law -- or a portion of them -- denounced this as political opportunism and an unjustified strengthening of the penalties for, as well as the criteria relating to, such offenses. In Germany, with intensive reforms especially in the area of pornography and a robust strengthening of the penalties, the German Society for Sex Research characterized the new measures as "a return to times in our civilization which had already been overcome." (Tamarit, 2000; 52) To some the fight against the sexual abuse of minors, in all of its forms, would only serve to harden the penal legislation regulating offenses against sexual liberty generally. [E99]

It could be a symptom -- referring to the demonstrative effect of the legislation regulating the protection of sexual liberty -- of one of the perversions which we seek to denounce, using the protection of minors as the garrote of a punitive strengthening which allows for the satiation of irrational demands for penalization, or as the Trojan horse of a regressive criminal politics of a moralizing nature in the sexual penal law." (Tamarit, 2000 p. 35)

In any event, it is easy to understand why it took minors, and the problem or abuse, to be able to slip morality back into the law. [E100] This is due as much to the problem, already noted, of regulating the sexual freedom of minors -- in precisely that area in which the lines between what is acceptable and what is unacceptable are blurred [184] the most -- as it is to the ambiguity of the abuse concept itself. [E101] It appears that some of the most significant problems with these laws would and do stem from the fact that "sexual abuse" is a penal category which lacks a clear definition, within which, given its vagueness, may be included a variety of acts whose criminality ultimately resides in subjective interpretations of actions which are difficult to prove. As Díez Ripollés (1985) has already recognized in his commentaries on articles referencing sexual abuse, which would comprise the less serious offenses against sexual liberty, it turns out to be more complicated to define what is -- and what is not -- punishable sexual conduct. According to this author, in the other cases commented on, cases of rape, the difference between what was and was not a punishable action was clearer, which is not so with abuse. [E102] This question has also been analyzed by Tamarit (2000), who criticizes the penal code -- that of 1995 and even more so that of 1999, because of its inclusion of 'sexual indemnity' -- for its vagueness with respect to punishable conduct in the area of sexual abuse, which is typically readily apparent. [E103]

In the case of sexual abuse, as a way of protecting the sexual liberty of minors in those less serious cases in which violence has not manifested itself, it appears that we end up with the same problem: allowing morality to be interjected into the penal. In fact some authors, such as Amezúa (2000), have pointed out that ultimately, sexual abuse, and the meaning of the "sexual," are nothing more than the heirs of "unchasteness," firmly reviled because of its moral connotations. The lewdness of such acts would stem from their impure character, as per Christian sexual morality, which was then carried over -- nearly intact -- into lay reasoning, by way of Onanism and other sexual perversions.

According to Amezúa, what was characteristic of such reasoning, embedded in our Christian heritage, was that those acts were never inconsequential; and with the disappearance of any gradations, all of them become grave sins. Although things were changing, and the aforementioned generalized seriousness was debated, many of those small pleasures continue to remain cloaked in guilt, dangerousness, immorality, or simply a "badness" which places them, without exception, on the margins. (Amezúa, 2000 p. 174) Through the "sexual" part of abuse, this author notes, what had previously been an abominable sin was re-branded as a crime.

The central objective of the fight against the new sexual abuse is to protect minors: not to cause any harm to minors with that sexual connotation. Since what's wrong is wrong wesh01.11d, at the very least, protect minors. (...) When it is a question of defining these abuses we see that they include touches, caresses, words, gestures, relations; in short, actions hovering between suspicion and fragments, between veering towards very slippery connotations and sinuous, interlacing codes which either are, or are not, important, as a function of one's interpretations. In this marginal and shifting terrain what is invoked as a solid criterion is, at times, the formula of the libidinous intention, to which corresponds deceit, as well as a perverse' sexual connotation,' according to the concept of counterfeit sex." (Amezúa, 2000 pp. 175-176)

The Least of the Penal System

In the area of sexual abuse there has arisen a social and legal debate which [185] apparently has not emerged vis-à-vis other kinds of crimes that affect a minor's safety. I refer to the debate over the evidence necessary to convict a person of supposed sexual abuse. In their analysis of the "sin against nature" in Baroque societies, Tomás & Valiente (1990) point out that when there was a desire to ramp up the prosecution of a given crime, they would increase the penalties for it and, above all, introduce into the penal process mechanisms to facilitate both accusation as well as the introduction of evidence, in such a way that, "even though the evidence would not be conclusive, though the proof of the commission of the crime of sodomy would not be as ironclad as it would with any other crime, it would be sufficient." (ibid. p. 43) That happened in the 15th century with the crime of sodomy in Spain; measures which, moreover, were enhanced a century later by Philip II. In the legal texts, courts were instructed that, even when there wasn't sufficiently solid proof, if the accused were discovered to have committed some other act that was sodomy related, or if the propensity for engaging in it could be established, the culprit should be denounced and punished as if said accusation were true.

Judging by Nathan & Snedeker's (2001) description of the criminal proceedings for alleged cases of ritual abuse in the United States, it seems clear that, in the cases documented by them at least, this alteration in the evidentiary criteria is readily observable. From 1980 on, in some US states -- starting with Texas -- a transformation began to occur in terms of how minors were viewed as potential witnesses in sexual abuse cases. Laws were passed which would permit, for example, children to testify via closed circuit television; and especially it was accepted that minors were excellent witnesses -- even better than adults -- since it was taken for granted that they would rarely lie. According to Nathan & Snedeker (2001), this discourse would follow the path blazed by feminist groups, who had fought to change the way that rape cases were prosecuted; and although many of their demands were reasonable and undoubtedly positive, what was forgotten was that minors were not adults, and that they were quite vulnerable to being impacted by the latter's opinions. This generated lots of problems in the justice system; in the end, it would appear that priority was given to prosecuting and punishing abuse, as opposed to respecting the accused's minimal legal and constitutional protections.

Given that women and children have always been equated with one another -- as much when rights are taken away from them as when they are given to them -- in the case of sexual aggression the two groups were, likewise, compared in such a way as to question the soundness of minors as witnesses; to some this also meant questioning women. It is because of this that the legal changes in proceedings relating to the abuse of minors would follow the logic of those which concerned the rape of adult women.

It was during the 1970s that, thanks to the feminist movement, some of the legal norms that had traditionally been employed in rape cases were changed; these had made it very difficult to bring forward an accusation, compelling -- moreover -- the woman to endure a true procedural tribulation. Things were changed such that, from now on, one would not be allowed to inquire into a woman's sexual history or make any references to chastity; also dropped were the woman's

obligation to both undergo a psychiatric evaluation in order to assess her credibility, as well as to have physically resisted the assault.

Another issue of interest was the ever-increasing role that was being played by [186J "experts" in sexual abuse trials. These were psychologists, therapists, and psychiatrists who specialized in assessing aspects such as victim's statements, their emotional state, or even the veracity of what had happened. Despite the fact that they did not -- and do not -- rely on any even minimally valid method for arriving at the truth, beyond intuition, they were admitted to testify at trials and their opinions were taken into account when deciding cases. [E104] It is curious that, according to Nathan & Snedeker (2001), precisely this use of experts in abuse trials would have come out of these professionals' roles in juvenile courts, where the intermingling of the penal and the educative would have rendered those games at the margins of justice, and with the rights of the defendants, much easier.

In this process there came a time, in the late 1970s, in which there began to be created a figure who specialized in rape cases and who would actively participate in trials, assessing whether the victim had signs of rape related trauma. The "Rape Trauma Syndrome" theory, and its supposed legal usefulness in deciding the veracity of an accusation, was created by Lynda Holmstrom and Ann Burgess, the latter of whom would later be an advocate of the notion of the never-proven ritual abuse "sex clubs." This theory was based on their clinical experience of women who would say that they had been victims of sexual assault and had shown up at the emergency room. These investigators never concerned themselves with finding out whether these patients were telling the truth or not. It was, rather, a question of compiling a list of the signs of the supposed aggression, and then, later on, evaluating the cases in order to see whether or not a rape had actually occurred. Around the mid-1980s, this "forensic" method was criticized and discarded, since it was obviously incapable of proving anything; but the theory remains, in order to explain that tardiness in bringing an accusation, tranquil behavior, or not resisting the rape are normal responses to sexual aggression, and are not per se indications that an accusation is false.

The pressure groups that changed the laws for pursuing and prosecuting cases involving the rape of adult women are the very same ones that promoted changes vis-à-vis the sexual abuse of minors. The two phenomena coincided over the same time period. Nathan & Snedeker refer to what Herman's abovementioned work -- as well as that of authors like her -- has called for. In a certain way, these authors regarded the Constitution and the justice system as a refuge for the perpetrators. Penal transformations would insist, for example, on reducing any possible suffering on the minor's part, in the judicial proceedings, to the absolute minimum -- which was described as another form of abuse or secondary victimization -- avoiding, for example, his or her having to give testimony in court or having to see the accused, or permitting video-recorded testimony. [E10S] Likewise, the use of "experts" who provided testimony and "interpreted" children's statements -- or even the soundness of "hearsay" testimony; i.e., third-party declarations of what the child had said -- became widespread. [E106]

According to Nathan & Snedeker (2001), at the same time that minors were practically being described as angels who were incapable of lying, whose testimony simply had to be completely valid -- even when they were two or three years of age -- one was warned that they could be affected by the accused's presence in court. It was within that context that there arose a

desire to modify the Sixth Amendment, which requires that the [187] accused be able to face his accuser. Numerous child protection groups, or those from various social or health fields, promoted changes in the law along these lines, with no civil liberties groups saying anything about it. In those cases the child was always characterized as a "victim," leaving little room to question whether that was actually the case; and we must not forget that with all of these legal methods what was, in a way, being said to the juror or the judge was that the accused was a threat to the minor, thus doing away with any presumption of innocence. In fact this may be a justice system phenomenon relating to child protection generally -- and perhaps the protection of women as well -- whereby "the principle of the presumption of innocence is more of an allegorical referent than a real one." (Picontó, 1996; p. 281)

The debate is also present in Europe. On March 6th, 1999, the newspaper *El País* published an opinion piece by Javier Marfas entitled "Guilty or Guilty." He began it by relating a true story that happened in France, regarding which something had already been published in that country. It concerned a man who had been accused of sexual abuse by the son of a former girlfriend. The victim was eighteen years old at the time the accusation was made; he denounced acts which had occurred when he was eleven:

In court it was nothing more than one person's words against the other's; perhaps one memory against another. That of the teenager left something to be desired: He contradicted himself on numerous occasions, and on too many aspects (not so the man), and was unable to recall either the name of his high school or his home address at the time; or so it seemed. His version, moreover, was strikingly similar to the theoretical framework expounded in a book whose author was one of the psychologists who evaluated him and testified on his behalf. ... The mother had never noticed or suspected anything; nor had she believed her son until after her relationship with the defendant had ended, and the latter had gotten married to a different woman.

The accused was condemned to ten years in prison, and given the nature of the judicial system in France, it was very difficult to get another court to hear the case. In the rest of the article, Marfas criticizes the scorn which is generated in these sorts of accusations -- in violation of the principle of the presumption of innocence -- as well as the swiftness with which the accused is convicted, with scarcely any evidence, or, based solely on the word of a child. In fact his article would turn out to be quite timely, because a short time later the Spanish Supreme Court would rule, in an appeal, that the victim's declaration of a sexual crime was sufficient proof in order to convict. Said evidence would be sufficient in these sorts of offenses where "of course there aren't any witnesses to what happened," to which they added that in the instant case "the victim's statements were repeated, coherent, without any gaps, unambiguous, and without even a single contradiction among them."

It never ceases to be interesting how among the proposals of the authors who have researched and written about the problem of abuse is that of believing the victims -- and I would not be lapsing into absurdity if I were to assert that in the end the message is to "believe all of the accusations" -- even despite the incredible stories that they can, sometimes, tell. And it is also endlessly curious how that attitude has permeated professionals in general, even many jurists, judging by what this writer has denounced. It is, in truth, another example of what, in [188]

earlier chapters, we have called the increasing power of the victim, a quasi-sacred object in our culture. In fact, Mariás explains how in his French article, whose contents are similar~ he replied to a ruling by the Nantes Juvenile Court in an article entitled 'What Do You Know of Victims, Monsieur Mariás?' In that article, he would allude precisely to victim's disempowerment:

What do victims have apart from their word? ... What does this writer know about the shame and guilt feelings that the victims deal with, which render them silent for so long?

The difficulty in proving these sorts of acts and the experiences that their victims might endure would, then, justify the need to "believe" the victims, and to regard their allegations as sufficiently firm proof in order to take action. Therefore the polemics would seem to be in place and difficult to dislodge, as was illustrated by a recent news item wherein the Supreme Court was also found to be divided as to the weight to ascribe to this sort of evidence. [E107] One runs the risk of insisting so much on protecting and helping the victims, on the part of the judicial organs, that the latter end up being converted into institutions for the former's assistance, rather than places where objective and impartial justice is dispensed. A phenomenon which, on the other hand, some have pointed to as being part and parcel of our time, given the tendency to be more and more indulgent with those who are designated as victims~ acceding to privileges that are denied to other citizens. (Bruckner, 1996) [189]

CHAPTER V: BODY, DANGER, AND SOCIAL ORDER

Introduction

"The life of a child is sacred, but it can be profaned." (Urrea, 2000)

I began this work by describing what I understand to be the origin of a new danger -- or to be more precise -- a modern reframing of an already familiar problem. It was essentially a matter of asking ourselves about the historical context and the reasons why the problem of so-called child sexual abuse has vaulted into the public spotlight, going on to form a part of the anxieties characteristic of our era. This was what I defined as the origin and contours of the abuse danger. I noted, on the one hand, its presentation as a great truth and the tone of reproach with which it was bandied about, given the earlier blindness of which society was accused; on the other hand, its gravity and the terrible extent to which the phenomenon was said to exist was denounced. I have already questioned this sort of discourse, and shall return to it in this final chapter.

On a similar note, I am equally interested in analyzing the manner in which this way of perceiving and interpreting the problem of sexual abuse has been able to affect how we confront these acts, as much in terms of the public language as in professional intervention. For this I examined aspects such as the search for abuse, the push to report it, professional intervention, and some of the elements of the penal system along these lines. In this chapter I am going to carry my analysis further, reviewing the role that the specific issue of the sexual abuse of minors may be playing in the political and social strategies of the groups that worked together to establish this danger.

In my opinion, we can understand little about the modern sexual abuse discourse if we fail to take into account the historical construction of childhood and sexuality in the West. The problem of abuse stands at the crossroads between childhood and sexuality, a necessarily problematic mixture inasmuch as the two things refer to traditionally opposite and mutually exclusive symbols and meanings. On the one side innocent and virginal childhood; on the other, perverse and dangerous sex. And in the middle, the body. It is in that terrain where the symbols of abuse have manifested themselves and staked their places within the discourse. It is, in the end, children and their bodies which are the subjects of uneasiness, the emotional stratum from which this new danger and its dramatic handling, near the close of the 20th century, has nourished itself.

Fear and Society

As a long-term consequence of collective trauma, the West has vanquished the "named" - - which is to say, identified- - anguish, even while "fabricating" certain fears." (Delumeau, 2002 p. 33)

Upon describing the phenomenon of the sexual abuse of minors as a new [190J danger characteristic of our time, I referred to Delumeau's (2002) analysis of Western fears, and the way in which he would distinguish between spontaneous community fears and fears which, in a

certain way, were induced by particular authority groups as responses to or explanations for the misfortunes that befall the populace. Human fears, as Delumeau would say, are -- in contrast to animals' -- diverse, manifold, and subject to change, due to the fact that they are products of our thinking. Every civilization has its own fears, ranging from those having to do with the forces of nature on up to those which speak to us of the "fear of being killed, raped, or even devoured by our fellow man" (citing Kochnitzky, Delurneau, 2002 p. 25). Along with this, Douglas would add that every society has its own particular dangers and ways of confronting them; anyone, she will say, who wishes to know a given society must study those fears.

As Douglas showed (1983, 1996), the sense of danger, the consciousness of it, its slight or intense presence, the types of dangers present and not present; how they correspond to cycles, customs, or transformations in the manner in which they are presented and the ways in which they are perceived and experienced, are not free-standing phenomena. To Douglas the study of the dangers of a society -- just as that of its notions of purity -- should form an integral part of cultural analysis as a whole; It is through its dangers and how they are dealt with that we are able to understand the bases of those societies. Every society has disorders which affect it more than others. If, previously, it was adultery that affected the "water line" of traditional societies (Flaquer, 1998 p. 93), at the present time the dangers affecting childhood reflect, among other things, the modern uneasiness with this stage of life.

Therefore the danger is not an objective one. The delimiting and configuring of the meanings of that which is dangerous, and especially the way in which it is so, is culturally constructed in every society, in accordance with its own characteristics. The risks that a society determines for its individuals, the distribution of dangers menacing some and not others, and the way in which these are defined in order to be constituted as such correspond to social preoccupations and interests oriented towards maintaining its own social organization. A society's discourses and beliefs about them and their consequences, and its mechanisms for prevention or compensation once they have come to pass, act on two basic levels socially: an instrumental one, and an expressive one (Douglas, 1991). [E108]

Instrumental because they are useful for controlling society, for regulating the conduct of its individuals:

Anthropologists will always agree that physical dangers, those which threaten childhood or one's person, are weapons utilized in the ideological struggle for domination. In no way is this a new idea. It is implicit in Michel Foucault's critical analysis of the discourse which imposes its discipline on the body. Nowadays, it would turn out to be extraordinarily naive to conceive of a society in which the risk discourse was not politicized. (Douglas, 1991 p. 22) .

Expressive because, given their symbolic potential, they express and objectify the social [191] and moral order:

It is not difficult to see how beliefs concerning contamination can be utilized in a dialogue over the recovery and counter-recovery of a social category. But as we examine beliefs concerning contamination, we discover that the class of contacts which

are regarded as dangerous also convey a symbolic meaning. This level is the most interesting one; in it, ideas about contamination are connected with social life. I believe that some contaminations are employed as analogies in order to express a general vision of the social order. For example, there are beliefs to the effect that every sexual act constitutes a danger for the other person, via contact with sexual fluids. ... I believe that many ideas about sexual dangers are better understood if they are interpreted as symbols of the relationships between different parts of society, as configurations which reflect the hierarchy or symmetry that applies to a broader social system. (Douglas, 1991, p. 30).

Instrumental because it has been and is being used as an argument in the political and ideological struggles of certain social groups, or in fights against particular individuals. Expressive because, as we have seen and shall see in greater detail as follows, the danger of the sexual abuse of minors is inscribed, in my opinion, within a broader general framework in which, as would occur with Douglas's timely example, what is in play is a certain symbolic representation of certain social groups -- men, women, and children -- and the relationships between them. It is this theoretical point of view that I should like to adopt, for the sake of argument, in order to flesh out a possible explanation for the problem.

In the introductory chapter to this work, I was quite insistent about the fact that I would not be seeking to approach the abuse issue as a crime or as a practical problem in need of solving. I am, instead, interested in approaching it as a new social phenomenon which is not totally explicable in merely pragmatic but rather in ideological and symbolic terms. If Douglas's proposal is on the mark, there is absolutely no doubt that we must take her statements concerning our subject very much into account. Therefore, I believe that the danger of child sexual abuse can and should be studied simultaneously from this dual instrumental and expressive perspective.

We now return to Delumeau and his reflections concerning the fears propagated by the Catholic church relating to the figure of Satan. In fact from the Middle Ages on, the church would come to say that the sea, wolves, hunger, or disease -- spontaneous and sufficiently generalized fears -- "are less terrible than the devil and sin, the death of the body less so than that of the soul." (Delumeau, 2002 p. 42) The struggle against the devil was, then, a liberation, given that he was, in the end, responsible for all the misfortunes which beset society at that time. To Delumeau the church, at a time of social anguish, insecurity, and crisis, did nothing but create its own scapegoats or re-employ already familiar ones -- Jews, Turks, heretics, women -- in addition to generating fear towards them, since any one of the Christians themselves might fall into their pernicious snares.

This phenomenon, fostered by the church and, in large measure, many states was, according to Delumeau, the response of an elite to what appeared to them to be a gathering threat from a part of a rural and pagan civilization which was perceived to be Satanic The fears of some vs. others -- those of the church vs. those of the general population -- are different, and reflect the coexistence of two distinct cultures. The church [192] would have sought to share its own fears with those of the populace, substituting the former for other, more "visceral" ones. But if the proliferation of the fear of Satan can be explained in terms of a certain social and institutional confluence, what is to be said about the modern danger of sexual abuse? Might it correspond to

similar considerations? Is it, in short, a reflection of other crises, of social insecurities or cultural transformations? And conversely, in the same way that the presence of Satan and of sin become ever present in the medieval and renaissance west, thus transforming the configurations of its individuals and their interrelationships, we might ask ourselves about the consequences of these modern dangers for society as well as its individuals. I am referring, for example, to the problem of conflicts between the sexes and the fears which are generated there. These are questions which I shall try to flesh out in this final chapter.

Body and Society

It would seem that for some time now, the already common association between sexuality and childhood has been a generator of dangers. This mixture has been present throughout the history of the West, particularly in the last several centuries, beginning with the so-called anti-Onanist crusades that got their start in the 17th and 18th centuries. In a previous work, I noted what, in my opinion, was a curious resemblance between the danger of Onanism and the modern problem of abuse. (Malón, 2001) At that time I pointed out that, upon analyzing the unfolding of the two phenomena we observe a series of interesting similarities, thereby raising the possibility of there being a continuity between them. From the invisible nature of both of them, which requires the mounting of searches as well as the development of new mechanisms for discovering its presence, to their evil nature, destructive of both childhood innocence and the social order, it is possible to detail distinct points of intersection. At the same time, this parallelism causes me to think that it would be worthwhile to historically and sociologically examine the abuse discourse, in the same way that others have done with masturbation. If some have characterized the Onanism-danger discourse as the reflection of a series of transformations in the bourgeois social order, the family, or childhood, it is reasonable to suppose that this new fear of abuse and its dramatic unfolding are also susceptible to a similar analysis.

And just as important as that complex tandem of sexuality and childhood is the position that sex in general has occupied in the history of the West. A habitually complicated and dangerous dimension, the object of profound interdictions and severe impositions in one sense or another; at the intersection of desires and fears, veneration and profanation, pleasures and dangers, sexuality has traditionally occupied a particularly conflicted yet intense place in our history. In fact it would be difficult to reconstruct our past -- and understand our present -- without taking into account the position and role that has been conferred upon this condition of our existence.

It would be difficult to separate the body from the social order configurations from which reality is constructed. A way of being, some would say. Corporeal existence. The body is not given to us as something that we possess; it is, rather, precisely what [193] we are. We are nothing if not a body. A particularly propitious space for regulating individuals, the body has been the object of ongoing symbolic appropriation by cultures in order to organize society as well as its individuals. A complicated, changing, manifold, adaptable, emotional, and experiential apparatus, the body has shown itself to be an exceptionally good place for cultivating the symbolization of social forms. Discourses about the body, be they under the banner of health, beauty, or liberty, have been lavishly utilized in all cultures -- to use the words of Foucault -- as

power and knowledge devices. The 17th and 18th centuries ushered in a new golden age of the use of the body as a mechanism of social regulation (Foucault, 1998),

but it was not the first -- nor would it be the last -- time that the body was an object of intensive social attention. The aforementioned author himself shows this in his analysis of the problematization of the body and sexuality in classical Greece and the first two centuries of our Christian era.

Mary Douglas has also referred to the body as a privileged route to the expression of social forms. In *Natural Symbols*, Douglas devotes herself to looking into the possibility of establishing general categories for expressing how "the image of the body is used in different ways, to reflect and advance the social experience of each person." (1978 p. 18) The apparent paradox encompassed by the title of the work -- given that all symbols are cultural by definition, not products of nature -- is overcome if, following its line of argument, we consider the fact that if it is true that social relations are the structure of a society's logical and symbolic thinking, we can imagine that there will also be a natural system of symbols common to all cultures: "The search for natural symbols is thus transformed ... into a search for natural systems of symbolization." (1978 p. 14) One of these is the human body. It therefore becomes a matter of explaining what social elements are those which remain manifest in notions about how one should understand the body and its by-products. That, in turn, would allow for the carrying out of one of Douglas's central interests: comparing primitive and modern cultures. The remainder of her work, which according to the author herself grew out of some of her ideas in *Purity and Danger*, essentially refers to the social conditions which facilitate notions of spirituality whereby the body appears to pass to a secondary level of importance, or is even rejected altogether.

Criticizing simplistic psychological analyses -- especially of a psychoanalytical nature -- which attempt to explain people's bodies in terms of the personal needs of individuals themselves, Douglas proposes a sociological reading of the phenomenon. In a way, by acting upon the human body, society is symbolically intervening into the body politic; the norms of conduct, the consequent risks of contamination, and the frameworks imposed upon the body in ritual processes would be some of the elements of that symbolic corporal language. The body -- human and animal -- has often been a staple of ritual processes; but it is the former which is particularly a blank slate, specifically reflecting social experiences.

The body is a model which can serve to represent any precarious frontier [194] or threatened object. The body is a complex structure. The functions of its various parts, as well as their inter-relationships, offer a font of symbols and other complex structures. We certainly cannot interpret the rites surrounding excretions, breast milk, saliva, and the rest, and not be disposed to see in the body a symbol of the society, and regard the powers and dangers which are attributed to it by the social structure as if they were reproduced, on a small scale, in the human body." (Douglas, 1991 p. 133)

The body would be, in a way, the mirror in which society itself is reflected, with its limits, its structures, its inlets and outlets, strong and weak points; the fear of impurity, different in every society and preferentially manifested in the human body, would be nothing but a symbolic mechanism for the protection of the social order (Luc de Heusch, 1975). In that way food, excretions, physical remains, the corpse and putrefaction, signs of the violation of the body,

or gestures acquire importance as a language in which the culture is symbolically reflected. The body is thereby converted, in that richness of which it is comprised, into an obligatory point of reference for social expression and regulation, and therefore that of its individuals as well. And within this whole interplay of languages, some dimensions are apparently privileged as much in our culture as they are in many others. Those having to do with sexuality. The sexual body, the masculine and the feminine, the genitals, desire, contact, pleasure, penetration, menstruation, ejaculation, and masturbation are . anxieties common to many cultures, particularly our own. Via restrictions or approbations, exclusions or inclusions relating to the body in terms of its sexual dimension, society would acquire a precious resource in which questions of a different order would be reflected, thereby promoting certain esthetics, modes of identity, and conduct.

Rules relating to purity and impurity, right and wrong, secular or sacred ritual, the dangers that threaten certain relationships, or expressions applied to sexuality configure -- in more or less subtle ways -- schemas of individual and social existence. As Douglas suggests, sexuality and the dangers associated with it are often employed as analogies to a certain vision of the social order. Beliefs concerning the dangers which one sex might pose for the other, for example through contact with bodily fluids, would be better understood, this author will say, if we understand them as symbols of the inter-relationships among society's various parts, between one sex and the other, or between one social group and another -- men, women, children. (Douglas, 1991 p. 30) It is in this context that, while in no way seeking to universalize the suggestion, we might ask ourselves the reason why sexuality is a useful instrumental and expressive mechanism of social regulation.

In the prologue to Douglas I s work *On the Nature of Things*, Luc de Heusch proposes some ideas along these lines. This author highlights Douglas's focus on sexual contaminants and its variations, especially in her work *Purity and Danger*. And it is obvious that they do have their importance; for example, sperm or menstrual blood have been -- and are -- objects of intense fear or veneration. We would have to ask ourselves about the possible ideological origin of such apparently different considerations relating to purity and sexuality as those of the early fathers of the church and their metaphysics concerning the body and the spirit vs. [195] those of the Bemba people, who wash themselves after every sexual act due to a fear of a dangerous contamination being transmitted to the household hearth and then onto the food. (Luc de Heusch, 1975 p. 31) As this same author says:

Sexuality is one of the fundamental ambiguities of human societies, to the extent that they must adopt a position with respect to the nature (of where it comes from and should be utilized) and the culture that defines its proper status. ... Sexuality is the dominion of rules *par excellence*, the principal place where culture intersects with nature." (1975 p. 32).

And perhaps it would be for that reason that sexuality, while not being the sole or even the most important issue, would still, nevertheless, often be subject to that symbolic manipulation, that rigid regulation, and that accumulation of positive and negative norms. Sexuality is, if you will, the bridge that spans the individual -- rooted in the body and one's being -- and the social -- through relationships, reproduction, and. the family. And it is perhaps in that context that, while certainly a source of danger, sexuality can never be rejected completely. With

the exception of some very unusual social groups, where the search for purity and esthetic ends up rejecting the sexual altogether, no culture can allow itself the luxury of completely rejecting this dimension. As Luc de Heusch says, it is that contradiction between what is desirable and necessary for the society and its individuals, and the dangerousness and fear that this dimension conjures up, "the only true mystery," that is the permanent subject of regulation:

One must resign oneself to its having been converted into a strictly policed and conditional activity, prohibiting it on certain days, proscribing it to certain women, decreeing it incompatible with the hunt, war, or blacksmithing, circumscribing it so as not to be inundated by it (Luc de Heusch, 1975 p. 33).

Perhaps an assertion overly oriented towards the repressive, which may -- in regulating sexuality -- be neglecting the positive, equally powerful side of regulation; but undoubtedly an accurate expression of the uneasiness which often accompanies all that is susceptible to being stuck with the adjective, "sexual." Of course our own culture has not been immune to such phenomena; some might even say that we are particularly susceptible to them. As suggested by authors such as Michel Foucault, this centrality of sexuality has been especially intense in our own Western societies.

In relationships of power sexuality is not the most quiescent element but, rather, one of those which is endowed with great instrumentality: utilizable for a large number of maneuvers and capable of serving as a support, a bridge, for the most varied of strategies." (Foucault, 1995 p. 126)

Talking about the history of Occidental sexuality and the thinking that our society has produced with respect to it undoubtedly requires talking about Foucault. He devoted his final life's work precisely to the study of what he characterized as a "privileged social mechanism" in the games of "truth and knowledge," in which he analyzed, in the final two volumes of his *History of Sexuality* the problematization of sexuality in classical Greece and the first few [L196] centuries of our own era. Foucault's proposal is, at least, original. Made at a time when the so-called sexual revolution of the 1970s was still in full swing, and in which the reference to the sexual repression of the past was an argument that was repeatedly accepted and utilized in order to reject earlier mores and praise current ones, Foucault presents a historical hypothesis in which precisely that repression, without being denied, passes to a secondary position of theoretical importance in order to be substituted by its exact opposite.

The West -- Foucault will say -- and the history of its sexuality, more so than by a violent rejection of sexuality -- as what he called the "repressive hypothesis" would assert -- are characterized by a proliferation, a cultivation, a multiplication of discourses and practices around a new object: that of "sexuality." More than silencing sex the West has compelled it to speak, and has converted it into our great truth. Repression or approbation, Foucault would tell us that, at bottom, that is the least of it; sexuality has been appropriated by the body social in order to send messages and regulate behavior.

The real problem is the following: Why is it that, in a society like ours, sexuality is not simply the factor which allows for the propagation of the species, the family, and

individuals? Or something that brings pleasure and joy? Why is it that it is regarded as a privileged place, where one reads, where it is said that our deepest truths lie? Because that is precisely the heart of the matter: Ever since the rise of Christianity the West has never stopped saying: "In order to know who you are, search out the deepest reaches of your sex." Sex has always been the nucleus to which one is bound, while at the same time transforming our species, our individual human truth (Foucault, 2001 p. 157)

Foucault's innovation, and in my opinion his master stroke in terms of the analysis of sexuality, consists in denouncing how what we mean by sexuality is going to be difficult to grasp so long as it is seen as a force, an energy, or a basically innate drive for power tending towards disorder or inundation, as it was configured under the repressive hypothesis. Sexuality is, first and foremost, a privileged social device in games of power. A particularly strategic element -- Foucault would say -- in relationships of power between men and women, parents and children, teachers and pupils. As a modern social mechanism, Foucault points out, sexuality is constituted of four overarching territories, prominent among which -- together with the hystericization of the female body, the socialization of reproduction, and the psychiatrization of perverse pleasure -- is what Foucault calls the "pedagogization of the child's sex." The child is defined as a creature who is sexual in a problematic way and given to explorations which violate the social order and pose a challenge to the propagation of the species. On this last line is placed the modern problem of child sexual abuse which, via recourse to the body profaned by desire, taps into a particular notion of childhood.

Sacred Childhood

Around the child bend all the three Sweet Graces:

Faith, Hope, Charity.

Around the man bend other faces:

Pride, Envy, Malice, are his Graces.

(*Dry Sticks, Different Graces*, Walter Savage Landor, 1858)[197] [E109]

The history of childhood has been a subject of growing interest in recent decades on the part of researchers, following a prolonged neglect of it which was evident in the annals of historical reflection. (deMause, 1982) In this field we come across, on the one hand, authors who would have been preoccupied with the study of the treatment that children have received from adults throughout history (deMause, 1982; Flandrin, 1984). Rearing methods and practices, pedagogical customs, dress, worries, education, nutrition, work, etc. A history of the modes and ways of dealing with and bringing up children, analyzing the social position that was ascribed to them. On the other hand, the history of childhood may be the history of what adults have said and felt it to be. It could be a history of actions, behaviors, and modes of upbringing; but also, and no less important, a history of its significance, its meanings, and its implications -- not for children, who usually do not make history, but for adults themselves. It may also be a history of discourses and their relationship to practices. A history of the words and ideas about childhood, or a history of the "sense of childhood."

From this second theoretical perspective childhood is understood as something along the lines of a historical configuration, emerging into social reality at a given point in time. It is a

theory suggested by historians such as Ariés -- undoubtedly a pioneer of the historical study of childhood. Though it is certainly not a simple proposal, it at least allows us to grasp its central idea: the notion of childhood, as we understand it today, is a historically constructed object with -- relative to previous eras -- new meanings and practices. Notwithstanding potential controversies surrounding the existence of a sense of childhood at the dawn of the modern era (Ariés, 1987; deMause, 1982; Flandrin, 1984), what does seem clear is that as social reality, childhood and the meanings that have defined and determined it in terms of relations between adults and children have evolved throughout history, in such a way that that "sense" or "idea" has been ascribed various meanings prior to the present time, where it now occupies -- in our society -- an unprecedented position in the social order, considered by some to be the "obsession of contemporary thinking." (Flandreau, 1984 p. 157).

Some of the recent sciences, such as psychoanalysis, pediatrics, and psychology, are devoted to the problem of childhood, with their buzzwords bombarding parents via a vast literature or vulgarization. Our society is obsessed with the physical, moral, and sexual problems of childhood." (Ariés, 1987 p. 540)

The modern sense of childhood, according to Ariés, appeared with notable clarity starting in the 17th century, when the family began to organize itself around the figure of the child, which shed its earlier anonymity and went on to occupy a new position in the social order. What was, according to this author, probably a simple transitional stage without a great deal of social or individual transcendence would end up being converted into a more and more valuable reality. The signs pointing [198] to this transformation are many. From the appearance of the child in religious iconography to the development of a more precise terminology about childhood, or recognized images of life-stages in the way that the latter were conceived of; the figure of the guardian angel or the use of clothing specifically designed for children.

Childhood -- again, according to this author -- was, then, pointed to as a vital stage of the utmost importance and set apart. A good example of this is the world of play, which had previously been a joint or intermixed affair involving both children and adults. Later on, beginning with that historical transformation, adults began to become anxious to preserve and train childhood morality, prohibiting their access to certain games and fostering their involvement in others. (Ariés, 1987 p. 119) In the same way, the problem of children's hygiene and health would be converted into an object of familial and social attention. Now, therefore, the child would not be a creature stuck somewhere between existence and non-existence; he or she would be a person with his or her own identity, and whose loss would end up being irreparable; having another child would not be -- as previously it might have been -- any consolation.

In the preface to his book *The Cult of Childhood*, George Boas (1966) points out that when the two Americas had been completely colonized, there came about a kind of deception regarding the supposed noble qualities of the savage, as a Western ideal in the search for models among primitive peoples [E110] as well as nature. It went from that archetype as Utopian referent, to Polynesian societies, images of sexual freedom, and the abundance of fruits, tranquility, and beauty that the latter appeared to offer. Once that culture became better known, there occurred a certain deception which, nevertheless, did not end with the search for new referents, which in this case would be culturally -- rather than chronologically -- important.

These referents were the woman, the child, rural folklore, and, later on, the irrational or neurotic and the collective unconscious. According to Boas the characteristics common to these new referents, despite their intrinsic differences -- which would have allowed themselves to be converted into examples of that historical search -- would be a species of intuitive wisdom, in contrast to learned knowledge; a profound appreciation of beauty in its most natural, non-academic sense; and, lastly, a great sensitivity for the appreciation of moral values. (Boas, 1966 p. 8) In his opinion, the appreciation of these values would form part of a rising tide of anti-intellectualism, which had begun emerging in the 16th century and which, curiously, would coincide with advances in the natural sciences.

Focusing on the historical evolution of the cult of childhood as human ideal, he points out how in the United States this uneasiness has reached surprising magnitudes, exemplified by thousands upon thousands of habits on the part of adult citizens, illustrating the idea that the child has, for them, been converted into the paradigm of the ideal man. [E111] According to Boas, childhood in the United States has come close to complete happiness; not seeing any of one's wishes denied, being spoiled and obnoxious creatures who are never punished; or even stating that the school curriculum is based on their interests alone. In any event this -- so intensely reflected in that country -- has its roots in diverse elements of the European culture of the last few centuries. Starting with the notion of childhood in ancient Greece, which is, absolutely, regarded as an admirable epoch, we are presented with a journey, through the works of Western philosophers, poets, novelists, and pedagogues, which [199] shows an increasing admiration for children and their natural qualities, right on up to the fascination of the 20th century.

In this review the author notes how this admiration for childhood will always spring from the font of chronological primitivism or the law of recapitulation [E112] -- a constant theme in this work -- whose central idea we might define as being that the life of the individual recapitulates the history of humanity. In this way, childhood would be reflected in the characteristics of a kind of natural primitivism, a human origin, a state of purity similar to the Genesis creation period. Innocent before science and the arts, uncorrupted by the artifices of civilization (Rousseau), the child would be the ideal of beauty and existence, an ideal of innate as opposed to acquired wisdom.

Thus, for example, Boas points out how Rousseau was impelled to configure childhood as a state which was particularly distinct from and in contrast to adulthood. In that way, pushed by his own antipathy towards society, Rousseau commences to show admiration for childhood as such, and stops thinking of maturity as the stage at which the individual should arrive, as if that were a desirable objective. After Rousseau would come Bernardin de Saint-Pierre and Pestalozzi. In the last of these Boas sees the first sign of the cult of childhood which, without going to extremes -- which would occur later on -- would ascribe to the latter many desirable traits of an innate character. He, along with Froebel, are regarded by Boas as being partially responsible for the cult of childhood, particularly due to their conception of it as *speculum naturae* (Boas, 1966; 40), admiring naturalness over and above art and urban civilization. As Earle would say:

[The child] is the best copy of Adam before he tasted of Eve or the apple. ... He is purely happy, because he knows no evil, nor hath made means by sin to be acquainted with misery." (John Earle) [E113]

The above quote -- extracted from a 17th century text -- may be characterized, according to Boas (1966 p. 43), as the epitome of the entire history of the cult of childhood, boiled down to its essentials. First, in that comparison of the child with Adam before the fall, one can observe the author's fusion of all chronological primitivism: He anticipates the central idea that the life of the individual recapitulates the history of humanity; what Earle describes will also be said by the authors of the 19th century, who will see in the child primitive man. Second, to grow up implies degeneration, at least of the moral kind: "The baby is closest to God, the adult farthest from Him." (Boas, 1966 p. 43) Third, the experience is the disfiguring of original purity, instead of a gradual realization of the child's potentialities. He notes how the metaphor of the blank slate was taken up and popularized by John Locke; but to Earle, in contrast to Locke, the experience would soil the purity of the slate's blankness. Fourth, the child is pure and innocent, its soul being similar to that of the denizens of heaven; its soul is free of sin.

Later on would come Freud; despite never being a cultural primitivist or inviting people to return to their childhood and adopt its ways of thinking, his theory certainly did, in a way, serve to support these proposals, and indeed, it was some of his disciples and followers who encouraged the ideas about childhood that we are now examining. He would [200] basically establish, in his work *Totem and Taboo* a clear parallel between the childhood of the individual and humanity's infancy; ie., primitive man. In addition to this, his theories would uncritically assume the existence of a continuity between generations, and hence the permanence of psychological processes in the different ages of humanity. This implies that the child lives on in the adult and, what is of greater interest to us, the primitive man also endures within ourselves.

Psychoanalysis would also encourage the development of theories concerning the relationship between the artist and the child: In the artist there would be a recouping of childhood, but not the childhood that we are familiar with which, inevitably, is already going to be mediated by society, the mother, the family; but rather the pure and ideal childhood, preexisting all that is social and liberated from its repression. It is, therefore, impossible to find that skill in real life; it exists only in theory, and in the possibility of the adult recouping it. Dadaism, surrealism, or cubism, just like the development of projective techniques in the psychological evaluation of children, would be movements that are heir, in large part, to those principles.

What is interesting, for the purposes of the present work, is that in this whole historical process, childhood was pointed to as an innocent and pure stage of nature, a notion which has persisted right on up to our own time, though in paradoxical coexistence with other concepts, such as that of dangerous childhood. The idea of the child was associated more and more with the ideal of purity, of being immaculate and innocent of all sin. It is in that context that there emerged, for example, a parallel, between angels and children. [E114] According to Ariés, it would be from notions of children's weakness and fragility that this whole new symbolism -- which would convert the idea of childhood into a modern adult ideal - - would be nourished.

In the same way, to Boas -- and so his work concludes -- the term most often used to praise the child is that of "innocence." An initially moral -- and later also esthetic -- innocence. The former is based on its innocence in terms of any sins committed, in spite of being heir to the sin of Adam, from which they are freed, early on, via baptism. Its as yet undeveloped body precludes sins such as adultery or theft; others, such as gluttony or envy, may be committed, but also, forgiven. In this process it is necessary to associate childhood with the primitive man in order to justify the characteristics which it has been ascribed: innocence, freshness, candor, and the like; an uncritical acceptance of the law of recapitulation would be at the root of all of this. This artfulness also bolstered said proposals as well as society generally; in that way, it is possible to find -- he says in the United States, or perhaps anywhere -- an emphasis placed on ideas associated with childhood and youth: feeling, being, living... as a child, as a young person.

It is obvious that if we are in favor of development, of human progress, and of desiring that last stage of reason and maturity, this author points out, we will not be very interested in looking back towards paradises lost. The former was, apparently, the general tendency in the 18th and 19th centuries; the belief that the future will be better than the past. Nevertheless, the history of the 19th and 20th centuries does not allow us to be very optimistic about this: Humanity's problems have not come to an end, but have, in a way, increased, with revelations proving to be fraudulent. This would have been able to bring about, according to Boas, a generalized state of [201] nostalgia, which would impel people to take a backwards glance towards that quainter time.

This is no wonder since -- given this symbolism associated with childhood -- the subject of sexuality would end up occupying a prominent place in said configuration, although it is necessary to point out that it has done so in a peculiar way. And, although it seems certain that this notion of childhood was triumphantly imposing itself on the history of the West as a human ideal, as a symbol of the virginal and the beautiful, it also appears certain that there simultaneously emerged a fear of the corruption that would threaten said reality. It is there, between the body and its pleasures, that that notion of childhood may be seen as being especially threatened. It is, then, where sexuality as danger would occupy a principal position, particularly by way of the violent anti-Onanism campaign of previous centuries.

The Anti-Onanist Obsession

Now that we have taken into account the role that sexuality -- and necessarily, the body -- might play in the symbolic social order in its intrigues of power, we may return to the subject of the sexual abuse of minors in order to dig deeper into its parallels with that other phenomenon -- Onanism -- and later, go on to analyze in similar terms the problem of abuse. In that already cited article, where I sketched out the contours of said similarity, I suggested that:

Masturbation has been situated within a broader context of the transformation of childhood, the family, and the middle class. Throughout this whole comparison between masturbation and the sexual abuse of minors, there is one basic commonality that I have not highlighted: In both cases it is a question of child sexuality in its essential and most problematic localization -- the family. The question that we have to answer is where to situate the problem of child sexual abuse in its multiple facets, and with the meanings

that define it at the present time. My working hypothesis is that said processes are intimately associated with other social transformations which are tied to the construction of childhood in general, perhaps with the broadening of its bound Ariés and a more precise definition of the status of the adult, where the "sexual" is nothing but a procreative strategy. Perhaps it is also a question of power and domination, of some social groups' control over others. Whatever the case, all of these phenomena were seen as being strongly animated, "in useful symbiosis, by the economic and social interests of new professional groups, heir to those specialists of 'the social' who began their crusade in the previous century, along with their powerful instruments, techniques, and knowledge." (Malón, 2001 pp. 86-87)

According to Foucault, in his comment Ariés on the anti-Onanist obsession, the objective of those discourses and the campaigns that accompanied them was not so much to proscribe child sexuality as it was to construct a network of authority over childhood; another thing is that, as a consequence of this strategy, certain miseries were introduced that went along with -and still accompany -- child eroticism.

An example which I will discuss in the next volume -- unfortunately I did not write that work: At the beginning of the 18th century, child masturbation was suddenly ascribed enormous importance, which was generally pursued as if it were a matter of a sudden and terrible epidemic, capable of compromising the entire human species. ... The important thing about that time was, especially, to reorganize relations between children and adults, parents, and educators and to strengthen intra-familial relationships; childhood converted into a joint [202] enterprise between the parents, educational institutions, and public hygiene; childhood as nursery. At the intersection of the body and the soul, of health and morality, education and training, children's sex is simultaneously converted into both a blank slate and an instrument of power. Thus was constituted a specific, precarious, and dangerous 'child sexuality,' which it was necessary to be on constant guard against." (Foucault, 2001 pp. 160-161)

Apparently in agreement with Foucault on this point are other authors who have associated the subject of masturbation with a new conception of childhood, youth, and their education, as well as with the transformation in familial relationships or between adults and children generally (Ariés, 1987; Elschenbroich, 1979; Varela, 1998). [E115] Returning to Ariés' work (1987), this author asserts that at the dawn of the modern sense of childhood, virtually no thought would have been given to what children might see, hear, or even feel concerning the matter of erotic pleasure. From its presence in adult conversations which included bawdy subjects, to the quotidian presence of certain games, caresses, and gestures which adults were allowed vis-à-vis children, and which would be prohibited as soon as the child entered puberty -- what would more or less come to signify entry into the world of adults -- it seems that the sexual was not, in general, a subject of particular mistrust. According to this author the reason for' this was, on the one hand, that pre-pubertal children were considered indifferent to or unaware of such matters; and for another thing, it would not have been thought that these experiences even could mar an innocence which, by the same token, was not taken very seriously anyway. (Ariés, 1987 p. 150)

If Ariés is right, we might very well speculate that it is precisely the consideration of an erotic potential in children that would go along with, or make possible, the anti-Onanist uneasiness. And if it is correct to think that it is precisely the absence of any sexual dimension -- or at least an absolute indifference towards it -- that would have made the promiscuous mixing of children in matters of adult sexuality possible, we may assume that the opposite is what gives rise to the obsession with separating children from that whole world.

As far as this author is concerned, it is precisely the preoccupation with the themes of childhood that would lead to a greater scrutiny of its world and, by extension, that of its sexuality. Concretely, he mentions Gerson and his work *De Confessione Mollicei* as examples of 17th century precursors of this underlying interest in childhood:

Gerson has studied, then, children's sexual behavior. He does this so that confessions will awaken in his little penitents -- of ten to twelve years old -- a sense of guilt. He knows that masturbation, and erection without ejaculation, are common: If he asks a person about this subject and he denies it, then he -- with absolute certainty -- is lying." (Ariés, 1987 p. 151)

In this sense, and following Foucault's logic, with which -- in this case -- I am in agreement, we should not understand the anti-Onanist phenomenon as an attempt to reject any possibility of erotic pleasure -- or, if you like, asexuality -- in childhood; at least that was not its principal objective, in the same way that -- as we shall see -- that is not the objective of the abuse discourse. Rather, the problem appears to reside not so much in what the child does or does not possess per se -- and even if he or she does not possess a "sexuality," the latter might be childlike, innocent, pure, [203] tender, affectionate, etc. -- but in the danger that others might corrupt, contaminate, or transmit it.

In fact, if we accept this hypothesis, the central historical process is the configuration of childhood as a stage "apart," separate, and distinct from that of adulthood. This was done by converting it into a sacred object with recognizably admirable qualities: innocence, purity, sensitivity, intuition, etc. If we recall Durkheim's concept of the sacred, according to which something is "sacred because it inspires, for whatever reason, a collective feeling of respect which places it beyond the scope of the profane!" (Durkheim, 1992 p. 249), it is evident that the historical transformation of childhood that we have been describing is perfectly suited to this process of sacralization. [E116] According to Elschenbroich (1979), the radical change consisted of constructing a status of childhood distinct from that of the adult and in large part its opposite, as a social group isolated -- perhaps more and more -- from the adult world and as a unitary class; that of children.""

It is curious -- according to some authors -- how, if we pay attention to the discourses and mechanisms that have been introduced into the anti-Onanism fight, we observe that -- in large part -- the arguments expressed end up protecting children not only from themselves but especially from adults. In any event, masturbation and other erotic expressions were seen as a danger from which it was both possible and desirable to protect children, whether it emerged from within themselves or, as was more common, it was introduced to them by other persons.

It is in that context which, for example, Gerson would suggest the need to keep a close eye on relations between children, guarding against suspicious physical contacts between them -- "one will avoid allowing children to kiss each other, to touch one another with their bare hands, or to gaze at each other" (Aries, 1987 p. 151); moreover the supervision of relations between children and adults will also be required, in an attempt to regulate what would probably have been the promiscuities typical of hearth and home; lastly, we should cite the moderation in language that Gerson was calling for, which, according to Ariés, was rather scarce in many of the pedagogical materials or scholastic practices of the 16th century.

Along these same lines are the statements of Neuman (1975), who suggests that the uneasy notions and social anxieties surrounding masturbation, especially during the two centuries preceding the first world war, both reflected and influenced the evolution of the modern concepts of childhood and adolescence. The reasons for that rising phenomenon are not entirely clear; there would obviously be a need to look into the confluence of multiple factors. It seems clear, Neuman asserts, that it was not simply a question of a failure of medical or scientific knowledge; that talking either of a phobic defense of, or a general neurosis in, European society at the time will go a long way towards helping us to understand that reality and its sudden appearance. Its explanation would, rather, reside in the confused social responses to the early onset of adolescence in Western Europe, which were nevertheless the product of certain middle class sexual concepts that both reflected and reinforced other economic values and social attitudes.

The notion of the child as an innocent creature, who must be protected, in an ongoing way, from moral corruption originating from adults was an idea key to the Jesuit [204] pedagogical model which both predated and shared space with the danger of masturbation. The notion of a strict pedagogical framework, which leaves scarcely any breathing room for children, which would require ongoing vigilance to regulate their activity and keeping watch over their contacts with adults of a suspicious moral nature, is implicit in the whole hygienic discourse concerning masturbation. Moreover, coinciding with the preoccupations of the middle classes, in 1758, Tissot affirmed that masturbation might make it difficult to have the attention and energy that all individuals require in order to carry out their daily labors.

According to Neuman, in presenting his thesis relating Onanism to certain social classes' model of childhood and adolescence, it is likely that the anxiety towards masturbation originated from certain medical and educational professionals who were part of the middle class, and whose theories would rely upon an entire set of pre-existing negative attitudes towards sexuality which was characteristic of the middle classes in general. That increasing anti-Onanist sentiment could, therefore, be seen as a reflection of the intentions of these middle classes to defend their model of work, family, and paternal authority from the external threats that were encircling the middle-class family. Neuman points to the transformation that occurred in 18th and -- particularly -- 19th century society, especially among the middle classes of the bourgeoisie. The woman was removed from the working world and relegated to that of the family; the child and adolescent were, likewise, secluded in pedagogical spaces for ever longer periods of time. Marriage was,

more frequently, put off until later, age 20 or even 30, when the young man was capable of supporting a home in accordance with his social class.

In short, what Neuman suggests is that beginning in the early 19th century, the period encompassing childhood through the threshold of adulthood saw an enormous expansion. There thus emerged a new model of adolescence characteristic of the middle classes, where the temporal space between biological maturity and social maturity, in which marriage was the only valid erotic space, was broadened dramatically. Although there would exist other, alternative and minority sexual moralities at the time, official Victorian morality logically rejected pleasure as one of the ends of sexuality, which was essentially viewed as a reproductive dimension. This repression of middle-class fathers and mothers would have been reflected, Neuman says, in the repression which the latter exercised over their own children, who were seen as innocent, asexual beings, to whom all erotic interests were foreign. But this notion obviously did not square with a reality that seemed to grow ever more evident to the scientists of the time: that masturbation was a very common vice among young people from advanced societies.

But if children are regarded, in terms of their conduct, as sexually neutral or at least innocent beings, how, then, to account for the frequency of masturbation among them? This was explained in terms of organic problems -- irritations on the genitals caused by worms or filth -- or, more commonly - and which would only make sense among middle-class populations -- as being due to carepersons -- nannies, servants -- touching the children's genitals, the goal being to calm them down. Physicians would establish that such touching caused sexual precociousness and serious problems in adult life, above all relating to a sort of [205] hypersexualization among those individuals, in whom the seed of those touches would be seen to grow. It is difficult to know, Neuman asserts, the frequency of these supposed touches; but it obviously is suspicious that they would originate precisely from those members of the lower and working classes whose morality was more than debatable to the Victorian middle class, and that, curiously, this accusation would allow the children to be absolved of any responsibility.

From 1850 on, this whole theory of the evil of masturbation was being questioned more and more, even by some prestigious physicians; nevertheless, those who would continue to defend it would not completely disappear. In Neuman's opinion, the transformation was not due so much to a change in attitudes in the medical community among authors such as Freud or Ellis, but rather to the progressive introduction of that other, less restrictive sexual morality, and to what he calls "respectable incontinence," in which sexual relations within marriage with the goal of mere pleasure are not seen as bad. Contraception began to become widely available in the second half of the 19th century, with gratification as the goal of eroticism becoming more and more accepted.

Nevertheless, masturbation continued to be an important problem during the first decades of the 20th century, although it would no longer necessarily be associated with significant mental problems. Although it was no longer a serious medical problem, it was a behavior that could alter adolescents' normal development and maturation, and which would require vigilance and prevention. He points out, for example, a late 19th century work in which masturbation continues to be something quite negative, especially for the degeneration of the family line, provoking various alterations in both the individual and the species. What was odd was the invention of a

supposed substance called "spermin," which would be needlessly squandered during masturbation. The consequence of this medical discourse continues to be that of prevention, via means similar to those of previous centuries. Chastity during this prolonged period of adolescence is seen as the desired and necessary virtue that must be practiced in order to arrive at full maturity.

In time masturbation would no longer be a grave disturbance associated with mental illness, but a type of moral and physical degradation with possible harmful consequences, above all when one abused it. In 1899 a German doctor, just as Tissot and Rousseau had done, or experts in the United States around that time would do, recommended that parents keep constant watch over their children, especially during the period of puberty, in order to prevent masturbation: that teachers supervise their children when they go to the bathroom, that parents inspect their children's undergarments daily in search of semen stains -- in case of doubt, they are advised to go to a doctor in order to have a microscopic examination performed. The family and scholastic upbringing should, therefore, teach adolescents self-control, sexual abstinence, and chastity before marriage. Likewise, aspects such as the academic bureaucracy, boredom, and a dense curriculum were often seen as things that could end up generating among the students a greater interest in masturbation; it is in that context that a two-track pedagogical transformation was recommended: favoring entertainment and, above all, strengthening the determination to guide students [206] towards better control over their instincts, especially the erotic ones.

From the Man with the Burlap Sack to the Man with the Candy

We find that during the first decades of the 20th century, theories of masturbation as the source of mental problems, neuroses, or moral degeneracy -- as well as the moral rejection of it -- still remain partially in effect (Hare, 1962). Though it is true that its strength in scientific circles has declined, masturbation was still an object of uneasiness -- albeit in a less weighty form. It is at that moment that in the United States there seems to arise a new object of social fear which, as we have seen, authors like Kinsey denounced as being baseless or unnecessarily and unjustifiably overdramatized. I am referring to the figure of the pedophile or simply the sexual corruptor of minors, frequently associated with homosexual tendencies (Weeks, 1993). Of course logically speaking, it does seem reasonable to imagine that this fear would also have existed prior to that; but it is, undoubtedly, equally clear that it became much stronger in the '50s, '60s, and '70s in the United States, in large part as a reaction to the social transformations of the sexual revolution.

In his analysis of contemporary sexuality, aside from the existence of an eroticism in the West of a broader scope and subject to slower transformations, Delgado (1991) asserts that in recent decades sexuality has been characterized, in large part, by counter-reaction and dissent with respect to the liberalizing discourse of the 1970s. In answer to the orgasmic, functional, hedonistic, and spontaneous norm, Delgado points out, came a three-pronged response. On the one hand what he calls dissolutions, into which sex is evaporated and diluted in favor of a more ethereal, phenomenological, and dispersed desire; he is a critic, therefore, of the genitalization, sexological functionality, and sexual health rigidity that became popularized in those years. Secondly, negation, in which the abandonment of said revolutionary referents manifests itself in ways ranging from the imposition of new physical ascetics -- celibacy, diets, sports -- to the

increasing Puritanism of religious fundamentalism, demonizing anew the erotic as an element degenerative of both the individual and the society. And lastly, metasentiments, or discursive and behavioral lines in which sex is acknowledged, but relegated to a secondary plane in favor of a sentimentalization of relationships, conceived primarily in terms of love and seduction.

In this counter-revolutionary process, following the liberational festivities of the 1960s, some of its consequences may be observed. Prominent among them, for example, are what Delgado defines as the ironic criminalization or pathologization of the model of male eroticism reflected in new disorders like sexual addiction, whereby what previously was normal is now sick. The archetype of the male seducer, whether it be at work, on the street, or in the world of entertainment, is recast in contemptible terms. The Don Juan becomes a pervert, a stalker, a joke, or at least a boor. Hippie ideals end up being converted into criminal justice matters via the criminalization of certain behaviors alleged to occur [207] in minority collectives, sects, and the like, which would often have children as their alleged victims.

In another one of his works Delgado (1992) explores this question in greater depth, pointing to the resurgence of a legendary fear in the Western imagination. Part of the metaphor of understanding childhood, children, as the basic sustenance which every society must raise and look after. Without them, every society would die; hence the interest in protecting them. There would be two basic elements of this social requirement: on the one hand the obligation to prepare children for their future useful insertion into the social world of adults, via certain rites of passage and initiation, e.g., schooling; secondly, the obligation of families to let them leave the fold when this process of acculturation is finalized, in order to integrate themselves into the processes of social alliance-making and interchange that make society possible. Impeding this course in any way -- giving rise in children to particular, egotistical patterns of consumption -- presupposes somehow converting oneself into an enemy of society. It may be, according to Delgado, that this is one of the reasons why in Europe, there are two great transgressions that those who attack the foundations of society have been accused of: incest and child sacrifice. Pedophilia, or ritual infanticide are, therefore, crimes which immediately mark their perpetrators as sub-human, monstrous, and abominable creatures lacking any trace of humanity. The problem is one of violating the purest and most precious thing that we possess. The cannibalistic feat, the devouring of souls, and sexual vampirism have been the interchangeable bogey-men of the powers-that-be because they represent the greatest existential threat to the nourishment which sustains both the state and society: children. The innocence personified by a boy, by a girl, assaulted by the -- usually male -- adult who is driven by the violent facets of his nature: his instinct, his animal desire, his sex.

This hellish vision of creatures who devour children has led to a plethora of mythological characters such as Saturn, as well as literary ones like Hamelin's flutist or the ogre; to simply home-grown ones such as the man with the burlap sack, not to mention the current media vision of modern pedophile murderers and torturers of children, third-world child trafficking and, as a particularly telling illustration, the market for transplant organs. To Delgado, this whole recourse to the anti-child persecutory imagination continues to function to this day, although perhaps in a muted form within certain cultural contexts. But it certainly would continue to be used as an imaginary recourse for attacks on these groups that were regarded as dangerous in some way, accusing them of using children for their own interests, usually unmentionable, or simply

destroying them. In this case it would no longer be a question of consuming their flesh but rather their spirit, their soul, or if you like -- to put the idea in modern terms -- their personality. The minds of innocent victims twist and bend in the face of the hypnotically seductive strategy of the adult. This mechanism for protecting childhood from pedophagic attack is nothing but an already ancient strategy for reinforcing stigmatization; the accusation of the cannibalizing of children forms part of a mechanism which was invented in order to punish one's enemies, which in operation would frequently change its object, but not really its objective.

[208] At the present time, according to Delgado, the whole horror and social hatred generated by the cannibalism of children has been substituted by a new personage who is no longer an ogre, but simply a pedophile: the man with the candy has come to occupy the position of the man with the burlap sack. [E117] It is surprising how this society has, up to that point, swept away any trace of sexuality in children, depriving them of that dimension; as well as how it has sent the child-lover to the nastiest position that any creature could occupy. In fact he points out that battles against religious and social minorities have gone, since the 11th century, very much hand-in-hand with the fight against erotic minorities, particularly the most terrible one of all during much of the time, that which offended against children. Thus the accusation of pedophilia, which would have been substituted without difficulty for that of pedophagia, continues to be utilized as an effective recourse against marginal groups -- and sometimes not so marginal ones, as is now occurring with the abuse scandals in the Catholic Church throughout the entire world -- who withdraw from society, especially when this moral withdrawal involves minors in some way. [E118]

In any event, it was in the United States where Puritan fanaticism reached the heights of the political and social establishment, and it was there that there emerged with a vengeance in the 1970s -- possibly with the help of a broadly popular tradition going back decades -- the fear of that whole cabal of pedophiles, pornographers, sexual killers, rapists, and other representatives of the imaginary cannibal. [E119] Associated with the demonic, they gave rise to ritual abuse scandals that fall into the hands of militant professionals who were involved in a personal battle -- with the clear participation of feminist groups -- against the devourers of children. But those ritual abuse panics, the recovery movement, and other such nonsense were nothing but a reflection, undoubtedly of marked symbolic transcendence, of a more deep-seated social and professional process, less histrionic and cartoonish, but subtler and more profound. The danger would no longer come from outside of one's familiar circle, as the work of dissolute individuals at the margins of society -- as perhaps would still have occurred in the '40s and '50s with the fears that Kinsey talked about -- but from within that circle itself, from those closest to you -- parents, uncles, familiar persons. Even from one's own siblings or playmates. The danger of abuse, more and more present, was located in one's own home, at the edge of the bed or at the other end of the sofa, in the school, in the car, at the battlefield, or in the garden.

The United States: Moral Panics and Social Transformations

What's behind this whole phenomenon? What were the conscious or unconscious intentions of those who would have supported it? To what was its success, its spread, and its acceptance by North American society in general -- and most especially its experts and professionals -- due? The first question that we should attend to is why this sexual danger in its

diverse forms, whether it be focused on women or on children, be it peppered with Satanism or not, thrived with particular intensity in the United States, and then from there -- with greater or lesser success, although I believe the latter was generally the case -- was spread to the rest of the world. There are many possible answers, some of which have already been [209] noted at various points in this investigation. Below I shall point out some of the unique features of American society which, in the judgment of some authors, would help to account for these phenomena. .

In previous chapters I revealed how in the 1970s the feminist movement -with its own particular fight against incest and sexual aggression -- began proposing therapeutic and social models in the face of a failed law enforcement and penal method. Along these lines the feminist discourse ended up shepherding the development of important child protection-oriented social programs, particularly with regard to the problem of incest. These institutional services relegated social inequalities as causes of maltreatment to a secondary tier and became enervated about intra-family relationship problems, insisting on the miseries of patriarchal society. As we have already seen, sexual abuse was converted, among maltreatment professionals and researchers, into a more and more important element. Of course sexual abuse, as symbolic reality and in a way similar to pornography (Osborne, 1993; Weeks, 1993), would correspond quite well with the interests of these professional and ideological groups; i.e., it being a problem basically originating with men and their erotic desires, which supposedly would extend to all social classes, and which, moreover, would touch -- more than physical abuse or neglect -- the heartstrings of the citizenry.

Authors such as Nathan & Snedeker (2001) and Echols (1989) would offer us possible answers along these lines. The key seems to be a transformation in the strategies adopted by the bulk of an American feminist movement. For one thing, they cite the crisis that would later on be weathered by the 1960s proposal whereby women were encouraged to fundamentally question what a patriarchal society had used to tie women down to the private sphere in a position of inferiority: sexual morality, chastity, modernity, family, etc. This strategy would be enormously disturbing, not only to men but to women as well, in that it caused them to question their own identities and existence at a time when there were not a whole lot of alternative models, and when in turn, feminism was being attacked as a danger to the social and

It is at that moment that feminism begins to transform its strategy, emphasizing other kinds of realities such as incest and domestic violence, which were pointed to as the products of a patriarchal society and male violence; a therapeutic model of intervention was established, thereby obtaining the cooperation of state institutions. This led to the pushing aside of possible structural causes associated with social inequalities, poverty, ignorance, or marginality. The important thing to bear in mind, according to these authors, is how feminism went from criticizing the patriarchal model in the 1960s to developing the theme of child sexual abuse. This would have the advantage that, with the victims being children, there would be no debate as to their innocence or culpability in what happened -- as certainly would have occurred vis-à-vis women who were raped -- as well as the fact that, in contrast to the physical maltreatment or neglect of children, sexual abuse was committed, above all, by men. At the same time, raising the danger of child sexual abuse would allow feminists to fight against other subjects that were of interest to them: rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, etc.

[210] Therefore sexual abuse symbolically focalized female frustration with the non-existence of real changes in terms of equality between the sexes, and turned out to be a more useful instrument of combat than others -- such as pornography -- which had been utilized up to that time. Although anti-pornography feminism would not be based on the traditional morality that rejected any sort of erotic expression, its particular battle against male sexuality did coincide with a wide swath of North American society which was experiencing a period of social and moral crisis, which in turn was spurred on by religious groups who were involved in their own moral crusade against the decadence of American values. In this environment, the subject of sexuality and the debates generated around it were converted into an attractive symbolic territory for ideological struggles.

Okami (1992), for his part, points to the existence of a moral crusade whose ultimate aim would not be, per se, to put an end to abuse, nor would its goal be to question the existence of an active child sexuality; he does not believe that that is the true objective. In fact what Okami proposes is that the moral crusade hidden behind this whole discourse of abuse is nothing more or less than an assault on the very notion of the positive sexuality that emerged beginning in the 1960s, as well as the sense of an increasing sexual liberty behind said changes. He says it with clarity: "What the promoters of the danger of abuse -- which is nothing but the vehicle for a different social fight -- are truly concerned with is advancing another sexual ideology, and a social agenda which is totally different from that which was proposed in the years of the sexual revolution. (Okami, 1992 p. 123) At bottom, what we find is a society in crisis.

According to Victor (1996; 181), the social changes happening in the United States after the 1960s would have generated huge amounts of tension within the family, significantly altering traditional relationships between the sexes as well as between generations. The number of divorces and intrafamilial conflicts increased, with the work involved in parenting becoming enormously more complicated. Many adults as well as children received less emotional support, and a greater number of people felt socially isolated. Family problems, frequently associated with separations and living in single-parent families or ones with stepfathers and stepmothers generated, in Victor's opinion, an intense discrepancy between the family ideal and the social reality, which in turn would have generated discomfort among many Americans. And added to that would have been the economic policies affecting a good portion of American society, especially manual laborers, generating unemployment as well as economic difficulties and insecurity.

Family ties became extremely fragile for many, especially when expectations would continue to be so elevated. In a social context in which a wide swath of the traditional population would have felt themselves to be under moral assault due to the existence of phenomena such as pornography, the acceptance of premarital sexual relations, abortion, or a tolerance of homosexuality, it would seem that the role of parents became more problematic and anxiety-ridden. An increase in rumors concerning the dangers associated with ritual abuse coincided with an increase in American parents' fears about the safety and well-being of their children -- drugs, precocious pregnancy, suicide, abuse, kidnappings. [E120]

[211] This social transformation also led to a widespread sense of moral decay which was shared by some very different groups, ranging from religious and conservative ones to

progressive groups such as feminists or ecologists. According to Victor, the United States is characterized by a historic tension between a Puritan moral ideal in the public discourse, and a pragmatic and -- in a certain way -- amoral one in individual day-to-day practice. (Victor, 1996 p. 188) This trait would have led to an increasing hypocrisy between the apparent and the real that would generate, by extension, a more and more generalized sense of mistrust, moral corruption, and conspiracy. This generalized impression gives form to a widespread discontent about something that has gone wrong in a series of moral values in recent decades. Moreover these moral changes spurred the development of new values -- freedom, tolerance, or free love -- which collided with traditional values with respect to the family, the church, and the nation. It allowed a series of social themes to go on to occupy a prominent place in the public debate: abortion, AIDS, women, multiculturalism, patriotism, education, etc. This crisis, according to Victor, was more pronounced among those social classes who were more respecting of traditional values, who lived in rural areas or small cities, and who saw themselves as more threatened by economic and social problems.

Modern Childhood and the Danger of Abuse

It is possible that what appears to be designed to control and regulate the extraordinary -- as the abuse discourse may be -- does nothing but give form to the day-to-day, the normal. Perhaps the public discourse concerning the problem of abuse merely serves to give shape to broader social phenomena such as sexuality, morality, the family, or education. Beyond certain characteristics unique to the United States, which accounted for these fears as well as their spillover into social panics such as those described here, it is evident that the modern danger of sexual abuse and the obsession with breaking the taboo that surrounded it in the past has to do, in any event, with a general transformation both in the conception of childhood in postmodern societies, and in the way in which we relate to it. As Douglas would say:

It is more illuminating to regard risk as a lens for bringing the social order itself into sharper focus. Institutions use the issue of risk in order to control uncertainty with respect to human behavior, reinforce norms, and facilitate coordination." (1996 p. 143)

It is possible that, in the end, the sexual abuse discourse is nothing but one more push in a historical process of accentuating a new form of paternal-filial relationship whereby parents owe more and more to their children, with the latter seeing their own obligations and duties with respect to the former decreasing. A new mechanism for converting childhood into a more acute object of preoccupation, where the other basic needs of care and attention have already been met. In the same way that, as we have seen, it was possible to understand the masturbation discourse as being at the center of a transformation in the relationship between parents and [212] children, simultaneously being both a cause as well as an effect of it, we might conceive of abuse -- or what is said about it -- in similar terms.

As Lipovetsky (2000b) points out, the feeling that one gets, through both familial and scholastic upbringing, is not one of promoting among the new generations a sense of respect and obligation towards one's parents and other adults, but rather one of promoting the happiness of individuals and the full development of one's personality. Few things transgress current morality as deeply as going against what is best for the children.

Undoubtedly, no other "positive" moral obligation enjoys such strong legitimacy: the post-moralist era globally weakens children's own responsibilities, while strengthening a spirit of responsibility towards them. Because of that, reproaches aimed at parents never cease to multiply. ... The list enumerating parents' faults is a long one: They shift their own responsibilities onto teachers, allow children to stare blankly at the television, and no longer know how to elicit respect. As the child triumphs, the family's defective childrearing is more systematically pointed out and denounced. There no longer are bad kids. Only bad parents. (Lipovetsky, 2000b p. 165)

In the "post-duty" era, as this analyst defines it, the individualist ethos ends where one's obligations towards children begins. The explanation for this lament would lie not so much in the decline of parental obligations as in the success of a culture focused on the child in which families are made ever more responsible for ever more diverse spheres. What is interesting about this is that said invitation is not extended via moral sermon but rather by way of information, scientific vulgarization, and media consciousness-raising. This is the way in which the phenomenon of child maltreatment has ascended like foam in the public discourses which illustrate the most common of fears; and within it, that of sexual abuse as a particularly alarming reality, emotionally and viscerally useful for pointing to a childhood in danger and the urgent need to continue to get upset about it. Lastly, it appears that that invitation to believe the children is nothing but one part of a broader social discourse oriented towards defining new -- or old -- ways of relating to childhood, especially on the part of parents and -- most particularly -- on the part of mothers, the main receivers of these messages.

Let us return to the United States. Another important factor which, in Okami's (1992 p. 124) judgment, would account for the association between the crusade against sexual liberation and the one against the dangers associated with child sexuality was the very widespread sense among Americans that children are in a perpetual state of danger in their daily lives. Illustrative of this are the false rumors concerning child kidnapping and many other dangers that were prevalent in that country during the 70s and '80s, including the ritual abuse phenomenon which I have already described in detail. The existence of supposed groups of sadists who, on Halloween, would distribute to children poisoned candy or razor blades hidden inside apples was just one of the more popular fears, along with others such as that many children were being kidnapped, murdered, mutilated, or raped on a daily basis. Sometimes based on actual -- though in any case exaggerated and over-dramatized -- events, and more often as the product of pure imagination, these rumors and moral panics would simply strengthen the [213] sense that the most terrible dangers were menacing children and young people in their daily lives.

Along these same lines, and without going back to the extremes that were seen in that country, it certainly is possible to recognize in this whole process an insistence on the configuration of a childhood at risk. Although the child victim takes on various terms, all of them are aimed at emphasizing, time and time again, adults' responsibilities with respect to minors. Education, health, psychological development, physical or emotional maltreatment, neglect, or sexual abuse are some of the arenas in which the obsession with protecting childhood has applied its principles. In the end, all of these phenomena stem from a 'no trauma' logic which has remained below the surface in everything that has been said and done surrounding childhood. A

logic in which one seeks, above all else, to avoid any kind of suffering on children's part, especially if that suffering is of a 'sexual' nature. And the trauma of sexual abuse is perceived as being particularly severe. "Don't cause any sexually-tinged harm to minors. Because what's bad is bad, at least protect minors." (Amezúa, 2000; 175)

In Finkelhor's (1999) most recent publication which I have been able to review, to which I have already made reference in a previous chapter, this author would acknowledge the serious error that occurred in the scientifically-accepted abuse discourse when it was converted into an exaggerated focal problem as well as the privileged source of an endless series of disorders. Nevertheless, Finkelhor -- who was attempting to rectify the situation by reducing the excessive dramatization and importance ascribed to the problem of sexual abuse per se, and give more weight to the victim's general situation and what had occurred -- does nothing but propose a model of child victimology in which the concept of the child-victim is expanded in heretofore unimagined ways.

Finkelhor explained it quite well. The alarmism and social uneasiness over sexual abuse, he asserts, at least served to make us conscious of the fact that children are the victims of the most diverse forms of aggression, and that it is necessary to develop an understanding of it and especially a better system for the social protection of childhood. According to Finkelhor, children are the victims of an infinite number of assaults on the part of peers as well as adults, and we think nothing of it. But when we observe that among his examples is a fight between two boys, which he would equate to a physical assault among adults, we might suspect that his concept of the child-victim is rather broader than that which is commonly accepted.

It is something similar to what occurs among authors criticized by Okami (1993) who have converted any sort of erotic play between children into serious sexual abuse, though they be of similar age, where there is a whiff of pressure, exploitation, seduction, deceit, mischief, etc. One example is Lamb & Coakley's (1993) article in which they attempt to answer the question of what is normal and what is abusive in erotic play between children. In their arguments, they appear to seek to apply to children's encounters the same contractual logic that was imposed in some contexts of American society under the influence of feminist discourse. In the same way that Finkelhor suggests that we interpret as similar a fight between two 8-year-old boys and one between two men of 30, a threat between boys with a threat between adults, authors such as Lamb [214] & Coakley seek to convert into abuse, rape, or simply sexism games in which a boy asks a girl to unzip his zipper. The impossible obsession with avoiding any sort of trauma in children -- or even adults -- is what is at the bottom of this whole discourse, of which sexual abuse is only a small, though privileged, piece.

Children's bodies and their profanation, especially when the latter is sexual, given that this presupposes an exploitation of the former for the benefit of others, adopts a special symbolic power to reflect said victimization. This agrees with what Douglas, as we have already seen, tells us about the body as a symbolic terrain where social dangers, taboos, and morality are localized. Expert theories concerning medical proof in sexual abuse cases, many of which have now been rejected, would have been but a metaphor for what the body was saying about the victimization that it had endured. It was what Nathan & Snedeker called the "neo-politicization of the anus." (2001 p. 196) In the same way, during my fieldwork in Guatemala I could see how allusions to

abuse as a diffuse and generalized danger were utilized as an expressive recourse in a multiplicity of contexts, and to various ends. Thus, for example, it might be used in the rural vs. urban debate in order to criticize either rural natives or the degeneracy of the city; likewise, it could serve -- and I shall return to this later on when talking about sexual morality -- to regulate erotic relations between young people and maintain control over them. But it was also utilized in professional contexts to generally symbolize the terrible situations in which many children would experience neglect, maltreatment, poverty, misery, marginality, and exploitation.

Victims' bodies are converted, by the abuse discourse, into a terrain to be shaped with a single goal in mind: to denounce a horror which, in the majority of actual cases, is more imaginary than real. Boys' and girls' bodies, and especially their orifices, are converted into unconsciously altered symbolic elements for expressing a grievance whereby women and children are eternal victims. In the concrete case of Guatemala, in an aspect which perhaps has less weight in other countries, the themes of virginity in girls and homosexuality vis-à-vis boys -- when the abuse was via the anus -- were ever-present. Both orifices and their respective profanations took on, in turn, the form of a social message in reference to the harm committed. For girls it meant the loss of a virginal purity which they were supposed to preserve and which, on account of the abuse, could no longer be established. With boys, it was a question of altering their path towards perfect masculinity by inciting homoerotic and feminized disorder. To both, in turn, was added a possible future danger related to excessive desire, overflowing eroticism, and a promiscuous and chaotically centrifugal sexuality.

Children's bodies, transgressed or wounded by the insatiable desires of adults, almost always men, have gone on to form a part of our societies' collective imagination, reflecting, as no other phenomenon does, the fragility of the child victim exploited by the infamous world of men. The child body's orifices, an obsessive terrain among those physicians and professionals who are obliged to substantiate abuse, have also been an object of uneasiness for the [215] accused in many of the ritual abuse cases in the United States. [E121] More than neglect, marginality, hunger, or labor exploitation, which are undoubtedly far more common, sexual abuse would serve as privileged expressive recourse. [E122] Sexual abuse, in its various forms, is conceived of as a danger that is universal, ever-present, and -- if you will -- greater day by day.

On the other hand, the premise that it is necessary to believe children in order to be able to protect them is an additional example of this postmodern exaltation of the child-victim. With the emergence of the danger of abuse there was -- as we have already seen -- an explosion in strategies aimed at finding out, through the child, the truth of the trauma that he or she had suffered. Given the concealment that was characteristic of these experiences, it was necessary to look for signs of its existence by employing some unusual measures. From hypnosis [E123] to playing with anatomically-correct dolls, the task of professionals to discover the truth was converted into one of their principal responsibilities.

In the abuse discourse we found, at bottom, the feminist grievance against the abuses of the patriarchy. It is not a matter of a civil and dignified professional discourse, but rather, the particular ideological struggle that lay behind it. In that sense, sometimes with reason and sometimes without, the defenders of the truth of abuse attempted, above all, to fight what they saw as a refusal to recognize the truth of the victims. As much in cases of rape -- though perhaps

a bit more cautiously -- as in cases of sexual abuse, there was an insistence on acknowledging the truth of what the victims were saying. This meant that it went from questioning their accusations, or at least not accepting them without solid proof, to accepting them as true without even the most minimally valid evidentiary basis. In parallel with this process, the truth of abuse and of its victims, as it would be defended by organizations like Believe the Children, was converted into dogma, with those questioning it swiftly being accused of being monsters who were insensitive to others' pain.

Nathan & Snedeker (2001) explained it in terms of their own experience as investigators into the phenomenon of ritual abuse in the United States. They tell us how they came to be introduced to this area of research, pointing out the fact that although they themselves were skeptics from the very beginning, that was not the case with the rest of North American society. It is curious, they note, how to the parents and professionals who participated in these accusations of and investigations into ritual abuse, even the slightest degree of skepticism was seen as truly treasonous, not only vis-à-vis the children but also they themselves, who saw themselves as the victims' saviors. To be characterized as a skeptic in this polarized atmosphere, they explain, meant being accused of belonging to the patriarchal reaction against the women and children who were simply trying to denounce, and defend themselves from, sexual violence.

Any trace of skepticism about these discourses was effectively neutralized by an organized professional system charged with promoting the theories of ritual abuse. Many ritual abuse movement activists, as I already noted at the beginning of this text, were members of IPSCAN [E124] and were contributors to their journal *Child Abuse and Neglect*. Around 1984 APSAC [E125] was formed -- an association much more focused on the problem of sexual abuse -- which would be led by prominent authors and professionals from the ritual abuse field. To it would belong [216] authors such as Finkelhor, McFarlane, Burgess, Summit, etc. Its president was Jon Conte, another recognized researcher in the sexual abuse arena. Sexual abuse, thanks to the members of this organization, became a hot topic in magazines and television programs. Other social and professional organizations became sensitized to this issue. A new language sprung up around it, in order to be able to lend a scientific gloss to the fanciful, in order to be able to render the incredible credible.

During my fieldwork in Guatemala, I was able to observe how there was a widespread belief that abuse was an ongoing reality affecting a huge number of children, particularly those living in certain protective institutions. It was thought that virtually all of these children had suffered sexual abuse. The truth of abuse -- without foundation, and yet, unchallenged by anyone -- was a generalized and commonly accepted rumor. It was abuse as rumor.

Douglas spoke about the interest which would surround the study of the question of public credence in rumors regarding the risks associated with technology" (1996 p. 113) and the credibility that was ascribed to them. Interest was not confined to the ecological risks that Douglas was concerned with in that work, but rather, any sort of rumor -- understood as "unconfirmed messages which pass from person to person" -- as well as the degree of credibility that it enjoyed. According to her, the explanation for this would not be a psychological one -- based on a rational and scientific assessment of the available data -- but rather a social one, since it is the group, the social, which explains the validity ascribed to rumors and beliefs that would

be difficult to empirically test. Studies of rumors seem to point to a dual qualitative and quantitative transformation. As per the social networks through which rumors circulate, they may increase and undergo significant changes, thus reaching heretofore unimagined extremes.

The panic that gripped Orleans in 1969, owing to rumors of a sinister Jewish conspiracy to sell young women into white slavery (...) is a case of increase. The rumor was converted into an unfolding anti-semitic myth, propagated by married as well as single middle-class Catholic women, expressing .. a collective civic anxiety over modernism and the erosion of the regional culture." (Douglas, 1996 p. 112)

We must ask ourselves something similar regarding the credibility of any abuse allegation, or such strange turns of events as we have seen in the United States -- cases such as McMartin and the like,-- or, now in our own country, what occurred in the Raval district of Barcelona. (Espada, 2000)

The expert discourse on sexual abuse has now reached the public -- particularly certain social and professional groups. That's what happened in Guatemala, with something similar occurring in other Latin American countries. We have a good example of this in the German work, published in our own country, by Ullmann & Hinweg (2000) entitled *Childhood and Trauma : Divorce, Abuse, War*. An edited work with various articles, whose authors do nothing but repeat the theory of trauma and its effects promoted by the recovery movement in the [217] United States. The bibliographical and theoretical references to authors such as Terr, Summit, Bass & Davis, and Gil are constant. Finkelhor is the author of one of the chapters, where he gives an account of his usual, sociological discourse on the problem of abuse. What is interesting is that the book's editors, as well as a good portion of its contributors, are associated with an NGO called "Child Villages" that has a strong presence in all of Latin America -- with several shelters operating in Guatemala and one in the city in which I carried out my study -- and which is devoted to childhood. In those centers, judging by what is asserted in that book, first priority has been given to the problem of sexual abuse, which is regarded as being quite widespread; something similar to what would occur in that one particular Guatemalan center following the scandal involving the supposed abuse of a minor, and the meetings that they had with law enforcement and child protection authorities -- see Chapter II.

As one of the authors (Wolfgang Grassl 2000) explains, sexual abuse has been converted into an object of professional attention within his organization. In it, various steps have been taken which were designed to give specialized consideration to these sorts of cases. Despite acknowledging that in the great majority of cases we do not know with certainty whether the abuse really occurred or not, and that many times it is a question of suspicions which must be verified, the whole institutional machinery seems to be organized as if it were known who has suffered abuse and who hasn't. It is necessary to point out that in accounting for the special treatment that these presumed abuse victims receive, the language that is employed turns out to be very similar to the Guatemalan case that I was able to study.

Sincerity, trust, the invitation to talk about what was experienced, to break victims' silence, the conscientiousness and expertise of the "SOS Mothers" in terms of observing and suspecting; the sexual education oriented towards abuse prevention; the call for attention to

abuse between minors, which could be confused with normal experiences of erotic experimentation; breaking the cycle of abuse in order to avoid victims being converted into perpetrators, etc. All of it is encompassed by the description that Grassl provides of how intervention into sexual abuse is done in the SOS Child Village centers.

Along the same lines, Perez, Aldrian & Stender (2000) [E126], who explain the philosophy of the Paraguayan centers, point out how, once the important influences of poverty, marginalization, uprooting, social violence, etc. or the problems of child prostitution and sexual abuse are acknowledged, the abusive experiences occupy a central place in children's biographies, even to the point of obscuring other aspects. To these authors, abuse is the single most important factor for understanding minors and orienting their professional intervention in those centers. To the family and social dramas that these children experience must be added, they say, the terrible trauma of abuse, of the assault on intimacy, "of the degradation by and the seed of subjugation to the power of a terrible older human male." (Pérez, Aldrian & Stender, 2000 p. 128). Just like Grassl, who admitted that they would proceed as if abuse occurred even though they didn't know who had suffered it and who had not, these authors too point out that, "despite not knowing exactly how many -- and which -- children have had sexual abuse experiences, the SOS Child Village professionals are [218] trained to confront the abuse, break its silence, and help the victims to become "survivors" of the abuse."

In this way, one helps not only the children and youth but also the SOS mothers to overcome the day-to-day difficulties of children's conflicts, aggression, and bouts of depression, which are due to the mistrust and lack of self-worth which are the consequences of the abuse (2000 p. 128).

In an impoverished, marginal, violent, corrupt, and disillusioned social reality, child sexual abuse assumes -- like no other experience -- the requisite symbolic freight to express the pain of childhood. Knowing which children have suffered sexual abuse and which have not is the least of it; in fact, it is impossible to know this with certainty. Suffice it to say that a majority has endured it -- as some of the Guatemalan professionals would tell me -- and act accordingly, in order to reorganize the social order, establish a loving and compassionate approach towards children, understand their suffering, their tantrums, their hatreds, and their erotic disorders. All of it, these authors shamelessly suggest, has its origin in sexual abuse. The credibility of sexual abuse and the general discourse that supports it, as a fad that may pass, is therefore nothing more than the consequence of the intention of certain groups to establish a new social order in relation to childhood and women as victims of a patriarchal society.

In fact I shall close by highlighting the need for protection that has been newly imputed to women. In so-called cultural feminism there has occurred, along with the rejection of masculine eroticism, a new assessment of those aspects that have been traditionally associated with femininity -- such as feeding and protection of children -- which have been rejected or questioned by other feminists. (Osborne, 1993) By the same token, in the abuse discourse mothers -- and women in general -- are urged to protect boys and girls from such assaults, and establish with them a special relationship of trust. In Guatemala the risk of abuse -- coming from men, with fathers not being above suspicion either -- would serve to reaffirm the need for mothers, above all, to protect their children. Women and children are victims of the same thing,

and therefore would be defined as a group apart from the other one, that of men. The latter, potential abusers, are thereby denied any possibility of participating, in a meaningful way, in the education and protection of children, or at least maintaining a special relationship of affection with them. It was the same perpetuation of the moral mother that emerged in the 18th century, associated with the Puritan phenomenon (Leites, 1990).

Nevertheless, if it is true that, as has been said, the final objective of this whole discourse is to protect childhood, there would have to be many arguments against it. In the first place we would have to say that, in essence, the problem of abuse, or its place in the discourse, a strategy in large measure symbolic, on its face, of certain political, social, or moral transformations is, in a certain way, configured as a fad in which solidarity with minors or their protection is not all that different from a short-lived empathy with the such things as "walks" for a just cause. These are, as Bruckner (1996) would say, a good reflection of the nature of modern solidarity. A new uneasiness that would permeate the daily social landscape in [219] as yet unrecognized ways. I highly doubt that a breathless struggle against the sexual abuse of minors, going far beyond what is reasonable, should be the principal priority in child protection. Neither, in fact, do I believe that what we are confronted with here is the widespread horror to which some have alerted us, beyond abuse's ability to generate intense and symbolically powerful emotions. I fear that the sexual abuse discourse is not the most desirable strategy for protecting childhood or granting it true social breathing room. No one doubts that it is necessary to avoid abuse. The question is at what cost, or whether a supposed end or benefit justifies any means, which, on the other hand, turns out to be doubtful enough in and of itself.

ENDNOTES

- E1. In Guatemala, the juvenile courts are as concerned with protecting at-risk minors as they are with prosecuting and punishing minors who have committed an offense.
- E2. Pointing out that the available institutional network to which at-risk minors might be directed was quite poor and deficient. Such a well equipped center was a resource which the court could not permit itself the luxury of losing.
- E3. As they explained to me, they had received some non-specific information regarding sexual abuse, pregnancies among the girls at the center that ended in abortion, and other similar acts. The center was practically described as a great bacchanalia. Nothing was said about that. It was, undoubtedly, false. A subtle, inexplicable rumor; from where -- or why -- it emerged I do not know, but it disappeared just as quickly. .
- E4. The development of specific guidelines regarding cases of sexual abuse among institutionalized minors is a process that has also occurred in other European organizations working in the Third World like Child Villages SOS, an organization which also has some centers in Guatemala. Concerning this see Ullmann & Hilweg (2000). Further below we will make some reference to the discourse of these centers in relation to the theme of abuse.
- E5. ONU mission to Guatemala.
- E6. Hobbs, Hancks & Wynne (1993). *Child Abuse and Neglect: Handbook for Clinicians*. C Livingstone, Ed. Cited in Maideu (1999 p. 224).
- E7. Finkelhor would be accused by some of defending moral conservatism, upon asserting that the sexual revolution had fostered in increase in sexual abuse. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001) .
- E8. The major portion of the ideas expressed here on the subject of the new Christian right are based on the work of this author.
- E9. Along these lines it is of interest to us to cite, as an example, McCormack's arguments (cited in Osborne, 1993 p. 272), in pointing out that perhaps violence has been mistakenly utilized as a fetishized object within feminism, When the origin of the inequalities may be found in positive -- not negative -- strategies. Sentimentalizing women, romance novels, or the mystique of motherhood would be living cultural myths of far greater structural importance in terms of explaining certain social inequalities between the sexes.
- E10. We recall that Herman published her famous book *Father-Daughter Incest* in 1981. This work would later be an obligatory referent among the promoters of ritual abuse, sexual abuse, and the recovery movement.
- E11. A good example of the contradictions generated by the dilemma between marginality and poverty vs. deviance or sickness was the way in which young male prostitutes -- "chaperos" -- were dealt with during those years. Instead of being seen as boys who were driven to such activities because of their social situation, they were perceived and treated as perverted homosexuals, or even as victims of organized mafias. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001 p. 45)
- E12. The latter developed a therapeutic program of self-help and treatment groups for incestuous fathers which would then go on to be a model for the whole country. Giarretto applied this program in the Silicon Valley area, a prosperous enclave where, with many upper-class couples divorcing within a short space of time, numerous accusations of sexual abuse would emerge.

- E13. This was asserted by authors such as Berliner, who actively participated in these programs (see Nathan & Snedeker, 2001 p. 25) and then went on to become a prominent researcher in the sexual abuse field.
- E14. For the explication of this system, I shall fundamentally base myself on Nathan & Snedeker's research as published in their book *Satan's Silence* (2001). One may also review the work of Victor (1996), for another sociological analysis of the ritual abuse phenomenon. Also see the critical texts of Mitzel (1982) and Rubin (1982), or more recent references to it by authors such as Levine (2003) and Jenkins (2001).
- E15. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This clinical concept arose out of theories concerning the sequelae experienced by veterans of the Vietnam War.
- E16. Cited in Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 80
- E17. For the development of this section, I am going to base myself especially on Ofshe & Watters's (1996) book *Making Monsters. False Memory, Psychotherapy, and Sexual Hysteria*. One might bear in mind that practically all of the information regarding [244] the recovery movement that is provided here comes from these authors; I shall, therefore, avoid excessive bibliographical references, adding them only when necessary.
- E18. (Isolated references from other works -- *Reclaiming the Heart* and *The Courage to Heal* -- cited by Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 113
- E19. For a more detailed analysis, see the work of Hughes (1994) .
- E20. He speaks of the "child abuse community" in reference to the scientific and professional community which is devoted to the problem of abuse against children.
- E21. Benatar, M. (1995). Running Away from Sexual Abuse: Denial Revisited. *Families in Society* 76, 315-320.
- E22. His *History of Childhood*, originally published in 1974, is a much-cited book in publications on child sexual abuse. DeMause 's theory is clearly consonant with the abuse as well as recovered memory discourses.
- E23. It would, in my opinion, be interesting to carry out a detailed study of how, when, and where the anxiety over child sexual abuse first emerged, similar to the one undertaken by Pfohl (1977) on physical maltreatment and radiologists' role in bringing it to public attention.
- E24. "Date rape": a term which refers to rape by persons one has some acquaintance with, including partners or dates, and which would allow the broadening of the definition of what constitutes rape to spheres such as marriage.
- E25. Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 10)
- E26. References to these authors are commonplace in articles and books published not only in the United States and Great Britain but also in Germany (see Ullmann & Hilweg, 2000) as well as in Spain. In the latter case, one might take a look at the review by Cantón & Cortés (1997), the various works by López on the topic (1993, 1994), or Vázquez Mezquita's (1995) manual oriented. towards forensic practice.
- E27. Prominent among them are, for example, Herman, Briere, Williams, and Putnam.
- E28. International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

- E29. American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. Their periodical is the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.
- E30. The last of these, to cite just one example, is a prominent expert on trauma repression theories. According to Ofshe & Watters, Lenore Terr was a witness in the 1990 George Franklin trial. This man was accused and convicted of the murder of a girl that had supposedly been committed some twenty years earlier. The only evidence on which the accusation was based were the recollections of his daughter, Eileen Franklin, whose memory had returned during the process of therapy. In said process of therapy, supposedly hidden memories of abuse and rape were "recovered." Finally, the patient recalled having seen her father murder a friend of hers -- the crime was a real one, and had never been solved -- and thereafter legal proceedings were initiated. Lenore Terr, who would later write a bestseller about the case, testified at trial, explaining her theory of repressed trauma and the therapeutic process that was carried out with the patient. Her testimony was decisive in convicting the accused, on the basis of that evidence alone.
- E31. I am referring to Williams, J. M., Briere, J., Conte, J., Herman, J., and Schatzow, E.
- E32. Cited in Ofshe & Watters, 1996; 10. Andrea Dworkin is a prominent feminist who led the antipornography movement.
- E33. From the prologue to the Spanish edition of Bezemmer's (1994) book, written by Belén Nogueiras and the women of the Health Space Team for Women Among Ourselves.
- E34. 1996; 571
- E35. 1996; 571
- E36. As Weeks points out, homosexuality has, historically, been associated with the corruption of minors.
- E37. This is a reference index for everything published in professional journals which is related to the field of psychology.
- E38. *Chrysalis*. 1: 31-45. In this work, Rush makes reference to Freud's alleged denial of the veracity of his patients' memories of abuse.
- E39. New York: Prentice-Hall. Bass & Davis, authors of *The Courage to Heal*, describe Rush's book as a "lucid feminist analysis of the sexual abuse of children, from biblical times on up to the present day. Rush was a pioneer in the uncovering of Freud's concealment." (1995 p. 589)
- E40. Spanish Ed., Masson, J. (1985).
- E41. It is curious how this same author introduced his own attachment theory which, as he himself points out, is presented as a substitute for Freudian Oedipal theory, paving the way for absolving the child of any responsibility for the seduction since, he asserts, it is a need for affective intimacy that has nothing to do with the sexual. (López 1993 p. 222)
- E42. Ofshe & Watters, 1996; 296)
- E43. (1983). *Child Abuse and Neglect* 7, 177-193. He has also written articles concerning the repression of memories and the societal refusal to acknowledge them.
- E44. Ofshe & Watters, 1996; 195)
- E45. This is the name of the McMartin pre-schoolers' parents' movement, following the 1983 allegations of ritual abuse by teachers. The accusations were never proven. See Money (1999)

- E46. Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 195
- E47. These authors note that given the results of the research into abuse -- and they base this on Finkelhor's articles on the effects of abuse -- it is no wonder that in clinical populations one finds high numbers of past experiences of abuse. For women in treatment the prevalence figures range between 13% and 44%; for men they are between 0% and 20%. In cases of patients with multiple personality, they assert, the prevalence approaches 90%, 71% among patients with borderline personality disorder, and some 60% for patients with eating disorders. Looking at things in this way, they comment, it is surprising that one can still find many therapists who do not immediately ask their patients about such experiences. (Pruitt & Kappius, 1992 p. 474)
- E48. Bass & Davis, *The Courage to Heal* Cited in Ofshe & Watters, 1996 p. 79.
- E49. Kinsey cites, along these lines, studies from 1929, 1931, and 1940.
- E50. Ramey, J.W. (1979). *Dealing with the Last Taboo*. SIECUS Report. New York. SIECUS is the acronym "for the Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S.
- E51. Mary Calderone, Wardell Pomeroy, and Albert Ellis were also at this meeting.
- E52. (1978). New York: Hawthorn.
- E53. Another example from Ullerstam: "Elsa-Brita Nordlund, for her part, believes that under certain conditions. such cases have been shown to leave emotional scars. Nevertheless, she does not believe that sexual approaches can have pronounced pathogenic effects in and of themselves, provided that the guilty party does not employ violence. In reality, what traumatizes the child is his or her mother's harsh and hysterical response. -Anna-Lisa Annell concurs with this. A priori, one may well imagine that children would be disturbed by the manipulations of an "old scoundrel" when his/her parents had previously inculcated him/her with a fear of sexuality. In such cases, one could say that the parents are more pathogenic than the old scoundrel. This problem of mental hygiene has, then, its solution in parents learning how to demonstrate common sense as well as calm." (1999 p. 71)
- E54. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- E55. Herman, J.L., Schatzow, E. (1984). Time-Limited Group Therapy for Women with a History of Incest. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy* 34(4): 605-16.
- E56. *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 4(1): 1-14.
- E57. New York: Basic Books.
- E58. Ofshe & Watters, 1996; 224
- E59. Ofshe & Watters illustrate that characteristic methodological deficit in the research by commenting on the historical debate over whether bulimia is a reflection of sexual abuse experiences in childhood. There have been various theories to explain bulimia, from biochemical alterations to cultural models of beauty or kinds of family relationships. It was in the late 1980s, in parallel with the rise of the recovery movement, that child sexual abuse was introduced as the source of said eating disorder. It came to be established that one could suspect abuse in any patient with an eating disorder -- including "anorexia or obesity -- and that some 90% of these persons had suffered sexual abuse. In conclusion the authors cite some studies clearly rejecting any sort of correlation between the two phenomena, which also

methodologically question the validity of other works that certainly did find a close relationship.

- E60. This includes a variety of behaviors, such as "sexualized" play with dolls, the introduction of objects into the anus or vagina, excessive or public masturbation, seductive behavior, soliciting sexual stimulation from adults or other children, age-inappropriate knowledge, etc. The relationship between these researchers and the recovery movement is made newly evident here. In concrete terms, see an article as well as a "personal communication" by Frank Putnam, an expert on multiple personality, where he points out that he has detected high hormone levels among girls who have suffered abuse and in those who hit puberty a year early. This, Kendall-Tackett, Williams & Finkelhor assert, suggests how deep and penetrating the impact of sexual abuse can end up being. (1993 p. 173) Williams has also researched the topic of the repression of sexual abuse experiences in clinical populations, coming to conclusions which -- in the opinion of Ofshe & Watters -- are absolutely unfounded.
- E61. Based on a news item broadcast on Telediario at 2:30p.m. on June 3, 1998 on the Spanish TV network "Tele 5." .
- E62. We encounter this same phenomenon in Central America. Thus for example, in a conference on abuse and prostitution, a presenter who was a member of a Central American child protection organization (PRONICE) explained how when we talk about sexual abuse we have to include not only rape, which would be the most violent and coarse manifestation of abuse, but also, for example, exhibitionism. There can also be many kinds of rape, using an object or a finger, with the common denominator being the sexual gratification of the adult. It is true, it would be said, that there would need to be some sort of sexual gratification; though this would not be limited to touching the genitals or achieving orgasm, there would have to be sexual gratification. Nevertheless, be careful about play that gets out of hand. I do not want to "demonize," he says literally, but be wary, be wary of parents and caregivers who play around too much with the children's genitalia because they could unduly accelerate their sexual development and set their sexual education off on the wrong track. Later on, in the question-and-answer period, a nurse asked him what he thought about taking children's temperature anally at the hospital. He was asked that because of his commentaries concerning children. She said that she feared she was committing some sort of abuse. But he told her that, no, one would have to have the intention, a desire on the perpetrator's part, for it to be abuse.
- E63. See, e.g., Cantón & Cortés (1999) or EcheburGa & Guerricaechevarría (2000).
- E64. Santamartin, J. (Ed.) (1999). *Violence Against Children*. Ariel. Barcelona. Part of the "Studies of Violence" series of the Queen Sophia Center for the Study of Violence.
- E65. In the work by Frey (2003), published in our own country, and which is in line with the recovery movement, one can find a theory based on the notion of treachery, that one should always assume the presence of sexual abuse.
- E66. Javier Urra now holds the position of "Defender of the Minor of the Madrid Community" and is past president of the European Network of Defenders of the Minor.
- E67. According to Johnson (2001), in 1990 Bill Bratton, the Chief of the New York Transit Police, introduced a "zero tolerance" policy, following which they would make arrests and initiate proceedings even in minor cases. In 1993 Rudolph Giuliani -- who would later become internationally famous as the mayor of that city during the attack on the Twin Towers

of September 11, 2001 -- who was then the New York Police Commissioner, gave Bratton the opportunity to apply said policy citywide.

- E68. In Spain accusations were being made against priests, in the wake of the American campaigns against the Catholic church and its attitude towards these acts. We already have an association called "Church Without Abuse" (El País 3/9/04), whose goal appears to be to put an end to the church's intolerable silence and force it to publicly pursue, report, and condemn such acts and those responsible for them, and moreover to do so in an exemplary way.
- E69. See, along these lines, some ideas in the journalistic work of Santiago (2004), in relation to the theme of pornography on the Internet and the self-serving use of falsehoods on the part of law enforcement.
- E70. In the same way, according to a Berliner & Conte study cited by Pellegrin & Wagner (1990 p. 57), minor victims of abuse receive support and protection from the non-abusing parent -- normally the mother -- in 60% of intra-familial sexual abuse cases and 85% of extra-familial ones.
- E71. For their part, Garbarino and Stoff (1993 p. 126) comment on some studies that evaluated professionals' tendency to report cases of sexual abuse that they had become aware of. In general, a large percentage of the professionals interviewed, which hovered around 40% in the various studies cited, noted their reluctance to officially report cases, though other variables would of course intervene, such as the victim retracting his or her statements, the opinions of those involved as well as family members, or their own means of dealing with the matter.
- E72. To assume that one can extract useful data as to how an individual would behave in a hypothetical cases is, in my opinion, a fundamental mistake; moreover, this would have to be based on a hypothesis where the three pieces of data provided are pitifully simplistic And the alleged victim's age isn't provided either! Unfortunately, there are no other types of studies to refer to.
- E73. Finkelhor, 1984 p. 80.
- E74. In fact, Finkelhor (1984) asserts, what is worrying is that parents do not evince particular concern for the status of their child in general, and perhaps the latter's "apparent" resilience would persuade them that they had a serious problem. From there he insists on the need to inform the population regarding the harmful consequences that these sorts of acts have for minors, and the need -- thanks to it being reported -- to seek out some kind of therapy. That is to say, what is not viewed as grave or dangerous must be shown to be so in order to obtain that cooperation in the public reporting of these acts. Paralleling this argumentation would be that of protecting the common welfare from a potential danger, arresting those responsible for the abuse, and facilitating their re-integration into normality. In that way, it will be said, one avoids the creation of new victims.
- E75. Abuse, whether merely suspected or already proven, is a weapon not only against persons, but also against factions, groups, or institutions. The theme of sects accused of committing abuses against minors has been a media staple for decades now -- recall high-profile cases such as the Edelweis sect (concerning this see Delgado, 1992-93) or the Waco massacre where the FBI stormed the Branch Davidian compound -- apparently provoking a mass suicide among its members -- under the pretext, proven to groundless, that all kinds of sexual abuse was being committed there. In that case it was Attorney General Janet Reno, famous fighter against the sexual abuse of minors and prominent defender of the reality of ritual and

Satanic abuse, who had ordered the agents to enter the compound. Under the rationale of saving the children and protecting them from abuse, all of them ended up dead. (Concerning this see Nathan & Snedeker, 2001p. 177.) Now the Catholic church has replaced sects as the object of attack, in an appeal to combat abuse.

- E76. "Underlying these commentaries (referring to the entire subject of dangerousness and child protection) are, of course, some deeper themes having to do with the social construction of the minor's protection. This goes beyond official investigations, research reports and works concerning professional practices, and on to its construction in the media and popular discourse, arenas in which the subject of sexual abuse has recently become a central focus. Professionals as well as feminists have tried to bring the theme to light in recent years, and have attempted to change the common assumption that the majority of victims, especially girls, are active and voluntary participants. As a partial result of this, children have been presented as innocent and defenseless. Not only do children not lie, but childhood is presented as a period of play, of asexual and pacific existence within the protective bosom of the family. These romantic notions are not only based on idealistic visions of the normal nuclear family, but are in marked contrast to the experiences of children raised in families that are dangerous or mistreat them. This innocence by definition means that children are incapable of taking care of themselves, and that they don't really know what their interests are. Given that they are weak -- both physically and in terms of what they know -- they need protection. This paternalism does not locate the problem within the structural inequalities of power between adults -- especially men -- and children. The notion of protecting the minor confirms the stereotypes of the innocent and defenseless child, defends the nuclear family, avoids identifying male power, and denies the child access to both knowledge and power." (Parton & Parton, 1989 p, 78)
- E77. There are proposals designed to facilitate alternative mechanisms to the justice system -- to promote "self-disclosure" on the part of those responsible for abuse and establish methods for their treatment -- which might be more effective than prison. Nevertheless, concerning this see, for example, Nathan & Snedeker (2001) and their description of the Silicon Valley program known as "The Godfather Offer," and the problems that ended up being generated upon eliminating, via a therapeutic process, the constitutional guarantees that the penal process indeed does offer. It is the interesting dilemma of the social vs. the penal in intervening into many social problems.
- E78. Also see Picontó (1996) and his comments on the law's difficulty in comprehending the experiences of minors and their families in all of their complexity.
- E79. We should remember that this article was originally redacted for his lecture at the 10th World Congress on Sexology, Amsterdam, June 1991.
- E80. Thus, for example, in the juridical field these professionals of the 'invisible' have been offered a new arena of work with great possibilities. Some years ago Spain's Official College of Psychologists published an issue of its professional journal which was dedicated to "Psychological Experts and Reports" (73, 1999). Its ten main articles were devoted to expert work in the legal arena; two of them had to do exclusively with sexual aggression, and some of the others dealt with the subject implicitly. One of them, entitled "Evaluating the Credibility of Statements from Minor Victims of Offenses Against Sexual Liberty" (Alonso, 1999), emphasized the need to very carefully ensure the specialized training of psychologists who are devoted to this sort of work.

E81. laFontaine, 1991 p. 217

E82. This report emerged as the result of an investigation carried out by various experts, which analyzed the controversy that arose following professional intervention into a large number of sexual abuse cases in the U.K. In a short space of time and in a fairly small area, dozens of cases were "detected" in which the existence of sexual abuse was suspected. In the majority of these the suspicion apparently did not end up being confirmed; the affected parents confronted the social system and the professionals who had carried out said intervention. What were especially criticized were the actions of those professionals who had not respected the fundamental rights of individuals as well as families. (laFontaine, 1991) Between February and July of 1987, 125 children from 57 Cleveland Street area families were diagnosed as being victims of sexual abuse. An intense social response ensued -- apparently spurred on by efforts of the media -- that was due not so much to the existence of the problem of sexual abuse per se -- which had already entered the public spotlight several years earlier -- but rather to the extent of the problem and other questions, such as the efforts of the social services in these cases. Public opinion very quickly started to split into two overall groups: those who believed in the veracity of the acts and the seriousness of the problem and those who did not who, moreover, were critical of the work of the social services and law enforcement. An example of those responses was the formation of groups of parents who had already organized around the theme of child maltreatment: "Parents Against Injustice" (PAIN). Apparently the majority of public opinion did not believe in the truth of the reported acts, with many beginning to believe that the matter had been exaggerated. The media apparently painted a picture of the problem more in line with the former than that of the social services. The latter were accused of engaging in unjustifiable interference into families' privacy, and of having acted precipitously without solid evidence.

E83. This book was published in our own country by the Ministry of Social Affairs, as part of a series that was evidently geared toward the training of professionals who work or are going to work in the child protection and similar fields. This fact is indicative enough of the pertinence of this sort of work. The emphases added in the bibliographical cite are my own.

E84. Noting that Jon Conte was the president of APSAC -- the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children -- an organization that was established by some of the principal promoters of the pursuit of ritual abuse. Moreover he is an avowed member of the group "Believe the Children," which refused to acknowledge that the outlandish stories related by some of the children might have been provoked by the adults themselves (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001 p. 135).

E85. Something similar happens in prevention programs designed to train children in how to protect themselves from sexual abuse and how to report such acts, which would not occur in other types of maltreatment, which may not be emphasized as much. Although this would require detailed verification, my sense is that prevention programs of an educational nature, designed to "teach" children what sexual abuse is and how to defend themselves from it, have not been suggested with the same intensity in terms of preventing other kinds of maltreatment. The difference may very well lie, in the fact that all children "know" what maltreatment is and that they do not like it; it could be that it is not so easy to know what is abuse -- or what is sexual -- which, moreover, does not always involve violence. Another difference would be that whereas physical mistreatment -- at least the most serious kind -- may more frequently leave traces, sexual abuse is far more difficult to detect.

- E86. Along these lines, I highly recommend reading Arcadi Espada's (2000) journalistic investigation into the Raval neighborhood case in Barcelona.
- E87. This phrase comes from his well-known work "The Child Sexual Abuse Accommodation Syndrome." It is a work frequently cited in studies into and publications on the topic (Cited in Nathan & Snedeker, 2001 p. 144)
- E88. In the development of a campaign against child maltreatment in Central America, one of whose meetings I was able to attend, as I have already noted in an earlier chapter, there were two approaches or creative strategies elaborated by its publicists in collaboration with those responsible for the project. In one of these, all of the spots -- on television as well as radio -- ended with a voice in the background that delivered the institutional message, which varied based on the type of maltreatment being addressed. In the case of physical and emotional maltreatment the message was the same: "Alternatives exist for bringing up boys and girls. Emotional abuse is not one of them." "Alternatives exist for bringing up boys and girls. Physical abuse is not one of them." "Sexual abuse could be closer than you think." "Listen to boys and girls, and believe them."
- E89. Money's account of what happened in this case concurs with what I have been able to read in other works, such as that of Nathan & Snedeker (2001) or Ofshe & Watters (1996). One might refer to these works in order to acquire a better understanding of the case.
- E90. Concerning this also see la Fontaine (1991 p. 217), where she criticizes law enforcement and lawyers' complaints concerning the suspicious way the children's statements were solicited. According to this author, the problem is that therapists are not concerned with how they obtain declarations, so long as they continue to establish that the child has been abused; the police and the lawyers, on the other hand, are looking to arrest the perpetrator.
- E91. It is customary for professionals to insist upon clear protocols for evaluation which clearly and objectively establish either the diagnosis of abuse or its absence, in such a way that its assessment is not vulnerable to being criticized for lacking a stable and common criterion.
- E92. As Nathan & Snedeker (2001) explain in their analysis of the ritual abuse panic in the United States in the 1980s, there came a time when any datum ended up being a source of uneasiness over the possible presence of sexual abuse: children's sexual games, childhood fears, or physical signs such as genital rashes. Anything ended up being converted into a possible object of fear. It was no longer necessary to be momentarily insane in order to contact the authorities. They cite a case where a three-year-old boy commented that his nanny -- who was from Honduras -- would kiss the bodies of all of the children when bathing them. In another example, it was the children's interest in or knowledge of sex-related subjects that aroused suspicion. In one of the ritual abuse cases that they investigated, suspicion arose because a principal found that a five-year-old boy had too much knowledge about sexuality for his age. The principal questioned the child because he discovered him touching (fondling) a girl in the school's courtyard. In said interview he came to the conclusion that the child had an overly-sophisticated knowledge about sexuality for his age. The stepmother, who was notified about this, was, at the time, embroiled in a legal dispute with the children's biological mother over their custody. The stepmother had gotten -- apparently clearly under pressure -- the three children to declare that their mother and her companion had been inappropriate with them. The case ended up being converted into an alleged problem of ritual abuse involving

various suspects. In other cases the children's conduct -- like saying the word "penis" -- was what had supposedly aroused suspicion.

- E93. Also see some of the commentaries with respect to this by the professionals involved in carrying out many of the interviews in Geraci (1993).
- E94. Concerning this, see the work of Sandfort (1983, 1984).
- E95. Spanish legislation has, undoubtedly, advanced in that sense, prioritizing that value of sexual liberty; but in 1998, on the heels of the legal proposal to reform the penal code, there was a heated debate over some of the points affecting the section on sex crimes. The Popular Party's proposal, for example, floated an increase in the age of consent from 12 to 15, punishment with prison terms for those adults over age 18 who have sexual relations with minors between 13 and 15 years of age, or the reintroduction of the former offense of corrupting minors. At that time, some of the opposition parties accused the government of wanting to introduce a particular sexual morality into the law. The government's rationale was to follow certain European directives for the protection of childhood and the fight against sexual abuse and exploitation. In the end, in the legislation in force since 1999, the age of consent was fixed at 13.
- E96. This same idea is expressed in one of these authors' other works, put out by the same publisher and within the same institutional framework of the "Queen Sophia Center for the Study of Violence." I transcribe it also because, although it says the same thing, it does so in, perhaps, a different tone: "Last (but not least), it is a good idea to point out that there is not always a direct correspondence between the psychological and juridical concepts of this problem. From a legal perspective, one commits sexual abuse when, without violence or intimidation, one violates another's sexual liberty, whether he or she is an adult or a minor. Although the penal code has broadened punishable conduct to include abuse of authority and deceit, it stopped short of recognizing other, more subtle forms of pressure via which one can obtain the victim's consent and which, nevertheless, can produce psychological consequences as negative as when there is explicit compulsion." (Echeburúa & Guerricaechevarría, 2000 pp. 24-25). See the phrase in which it is lamented that the Penal Code still does not take "these other abuses" into account.
- E97. See counter-arguments in Tamarit (2000 pp. 60 and 62).
- E98. Because of that, in 1998 there was the notorious case of the 7-year prison sentence given to Mary LeTorneau, an American teacher accused of raping one of her 13-year-old students. The teacher had maintained a mutually acceptable, affectionate relationship with the minor. The case reflected the extremes to which things had gone in that country. In Spain, such well-known cases as that of the Duke of the Fátima, the Army bar, the alleged pedophilic ring of Raval, or the accusations against sects such as Edelweis bear mentioning. There were also accusations of sexual abuse in the United States, among the more prominent was the scandal over the FBI assault at Waco and subsequent massacre under the pretext, never proven, that all types of sexual abuse was being committed there. The person responsible for this decision was Attorney General Janet Reno -- a high ranking Clinton appointee -- who, when she was a prosecutor in Miami, actively participated in the prosecution of some high-profile cases of alleged -- or unfounded -- ritual abuse, the results of which were lamentable enough. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001; p.177)

- E99. In our own country, the law proposal presented by the PP was far stricter than the one that was eventually approved, following protests by practically all of the opposition groups, who accused the government of seeking to introduce its own sexual morality into the Penal Code. See, for example, the news items in *El País* of February 12 and 13, 1998.
- E100. Also in the Penal Code of 1999 was reintroduced -- though only partially and not as had been proposed in the government's plan -- the concept of "corrupting minors," which was also criticized for its strong moral overtones. (Tamarit, 2000)
- E101 Certainly, in the Penal Code, sexual abuse is not an infraction which is limited to minors as victims, given that adults -- incapacitated or in a state of helplessness -- can also suffer it. Nevertheless, in practice as well as public perception, it is a crime that is typically applicable to the sexual abuse of minors.
- E102. Along these lines, see his proposals related to the act of "enveloping another person in a sexual context."
- E103. This definition would affect, for example, the act of photographing a minor in the nude and regarding said act as abuse. See, for example, the scandal generated in London by some photos exhibited in an art gallery in which the artist had taken nude photographs of her children. She was reported and the police confiscated the photos. See *El País* , March 12, 2001.
- E104. Experts introduced theories whereby they took as evidence of abuse facts which might initially seem to be quite the opposite. Thus for example Summit, and along with him all of the participants in the anti-abuse movement, established that it was normal for the child to initially deny the abuse, and then denounce it much later on. This is even an indication that the abuse did happen. Summit's theory and accommodation syndrome were used in many abuse trials to explain victims' conduct and testimony; but, as this same author would acknowledge, this was based more on personal impressions than on serious research or their own clinical experience, which was rather limited. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001 pp. 212-213) Although this theory has, little by little, been abandoned, its internal logic still continues to hold sway, and it is worrying that Spanish authors such as Tamarit (2000) refer us to it in order to justify certain changes in criminal proceedings for violating the sexual liberty of minors.
- E105. This is ironic because, according to Nathan & Snedeker, the use of recorded interviews of children in order to find evidence of abuse, sometimes using dolls and similar strategies, which were initially used to convict the accused, would later lead courts to invalidate these probative methods. In these recordings, one could see the bias of these professionals as well as the subtle manipulation both of the interview and the minors' words.
- E106. The so-called "hearsay" method arose out of rape cases where the victims waited quite some time to report it, with the statements of those who were told about the rape then becoming admissible. Fathers, mothers, doctors, psychologists, or social workers related -- sometimes showing all of their emotions to the jury -- what the children had told them, and their statements were used to convict the accused.
- E107. See, e.g., *El País*, Sep. 28, 2001 or Sep. 12, 2002, where reference is made to Supreme Court decisions regarding this.

- E108. For this classification, also see the explanations of Wolf, 1994, applied to the work of professionals.
- E109. Cited by Boas, 1966 p. 58.
- E110. Also see some ideas concerning this in Horton (1980).
- E111. According to Boas, in spite of the fact that in the 16th and 17th centuries the idea that the sin of Adam was inherited by all men was quite widespread, and that that would, in some way, have infused the devil into the soul of the child, a soul which had to be straightened out -- as would be defended by Calvinist-influenced Puritanical proposals -- added to the fact that the Pelagian heresy was already being severely punished going back to the Council of Cartago in 418, it appears that the cult of childhood flourished even more in Protestant than in Catholic culture.
- E112. In his book, Boas goes into an analysis of what he calls the "Law of Recapitulation," whose ultimate exponent may be Ellen Key and her work *The Century of the Child* at the turn of the 19th into the 20th century. This way of thinking would take two forms: a biological one, which defended the similarities between ontological and phylogenetic development; and another, psychological or sociological one, which established a parallel between primitive man's way of thinking and the child's way of thinking. Despite the fact that many anthropologists have argued that it is obvious that "primitive man," natural and without society, does not exist, this notion of primitivism continues to be widely defended.
- E113. John Earle (1628) *Microcosmographie*, cited in Boas, 1966 p. 42.
- E114. Concerning this, see also Boas (1966 p. 46) It was in the 15th century that this construct first began to be used.
- E115. These and other authors have, in turn, proposed hypotheses complementary to those expounded here, relating to the rise of the bourgeoisie, capitalism, the productive body, the training of the instincts, self-control, etc. that were so prized by that new social and economic order. Although it is necessary to take all of these points into account given their interest and undoubted role in all of this, I shall not refer to them in the present work because I am interested in exploring a different facet of the problem.
- E116. I hasten to add that this does not mean this has been the only process at work here, that there are not and have not been other ways of understanding or thinking about childhood -- for example, as dangerous; by the same token, neither does it mean imagining that it is a question of a radical transformation at the level of practice which, though coming to be seen as being greatly influenced by these ideas and the discourses generated by them, obviously follows a quite distinct logic and rhythm of change.
- E117. "The man with the candy has taken the position previously occupied by the man with the burlap bag." (Delgado, 1992; 180)
- E118. He cites some high-profile Spanish cases such as that of the "Edelweis" sect, and the use that was made of the homosexual and pedophilic tendencies of its leader, which were then extended to the entire group, who were thus characterized as sexual offenders: "Children and adolescents fell into the sordid net of a group of pederasts who initiated them into homosexual practices." (El País, Sep. 25, 1991, cited in Delgado, 1992-93 p. 181.) Other examples are the "Children of God" case, or the Waco massacre in the United States, justified by Bill Clinton by the alleged sexual abuse of minors. According to Delgado it was, rather, a question of

cases that were invented by the false absurdities concocted by the media, the police, and psychologists, which substituted for the actual facts. One good example, documented in detail by Espada (2000), is the case of the supposed Raval pedophile ring, which in the end was nothing of the sort.

E119. I am referring once again to Chapters I and II of this thesis, where these themes were dealt with in greater detail.

E120. Nathan & Snedeker (2001) describe the elements that constituted the children's stories of alleged ritual abuse, explaining how these were part and parcel of the fears common to those communities. They had a little of everything -- including one accusation against the actor Chuck Norris -- and frequently in the children's accounts -- induced by the adults who promoted the accusations -- were integrated the fears of the very communities in which they resided. Likewise, legends that were common to certain areas were incorporated into the narrations. Thus for example, in one of the most famous cases of supposed ritual abuse, the children would make reference to an earlier legend promoted in the 1970s by religious activists against sex education. According to this story there was a male teacher -- always in a far-off city -- who wanted to promote sex education, and would put them in dark rooms in order to experiment on them; in the accusations of ritual abuse the suspect, a woman, was accused of the same thing. By the same token, the children would say -- in areas that were typically fearful of persons of that nationality -- that the abuser had a strange German accent; the usual anxieties over anomalous sexual conduct, such as homosexuality, were also included. All of this was, moreover, pointed out in the manuals distributed to the investigators looking into the abuse. (Nathan & Snedeker, 2001 p. 115)

E121. As inferred from Nathan & Snedeker's (2001) descriptions, as much in the McMartin case as that of Mary Ann Barbour, both owing to supposed grotesque ritual abuse, began with the accusers' obsession with children's anuses and genitals.

E122. Something similar, I suspect, occurs with the already cited problem of the ablation of girls' clitorises in some African countries. This problem, used symbolically, has served to convert the women and children of that continent into the eternal victims of men, according to public opinion in developed countries. Something similar was recently suggested in our own country by Aminata Traoré, Mali's former Minister of Culture and Tourism. Under the caption, "Africans are more worried about malaria than circumcision," the interviewee noted that, in her opinion, the question of clitoral circumcision "has been overblown. If things should change, which I do not deny, it will be from the inside, not by being imposed from the outside, nor by that Western view which converts us Africans into sacrificial beings to whom pleasure is denied. Do they really think that mothers have so little love for their daughters' that they carry them to the slaughterhouse? The Western view has an air of voyeurism. It is easy to call for the abolition of circumcision; why don't they fight for the cancellation of the foreign debt? The exploitation of Africa by the West -now that really is a crime." *El País*, 2/17/03.

E123. Recently in our own country, the press learned about the trial of a priest accused of sexually abusing a girl. "One of this trial's innovations was the admission of video recordings of the two regressive hypnosis sessions to which the victim was subjected in order to record what happened during her childhood. When the minor decided -- some nine years later -- to report the acts, she indicated that she had many gaps in her memory. It was because of that that she was subjected to the hypnosis sessions. In them the victim spoke very lucidly of the details of what the curate had done to her, beginning when she was five years old." *El País*,

5/10/03. Although the judge ruled that the videotapes were admissible, the Madrid Court of Appeals would subsequently overturn this decision.

E124. International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

E125. American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. Their publication is the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.

E126. It should be pointed out that the text of these authors is saturated with the logic as well as the language of Bass & Davis's work *The Courage to Heal*, a fundamental referent of the recovery movement. Moreover they explain how, following the theory of these authors, there was also established in Paraguay an "assisted self-help" group devoted to the surviving victims of past sexual abuse.

E127. I am not interested in inquiring as to how changes in modern sexuality have been able to influence a hypothetical increase in the sexual abuse of minors. Although this is an interesting topic, it is difficult to verify whether there has actually been an increase -- or a decrease -- in such experiences. In fact the data with respect to this is mixed; whereas some studies speak of an increase of abuse in all of its forms (Finkelhor, 1984), others talk of a diminution, questioning the scandal generated by the media over its supposed increase (Tamarit, 2000 p. 22).

E128. We should also include in this group the problem of "intellectual minors," in relation to persons with deficits in managing their erotic lives.

E129. By way of example see, in the bibliography, the work of Spanish authors such as L'Opez, Echeburía, or Cantón and Cortés.

E130. Another example: According to Nathan & Snedeker (2001; 250), in the United States something similar occurred with the situation of adolescent mothers who had relations with older men (the majority of whom were Hispanic). In the face of right-wing attacks denouncing their moral dissolution, some feminist and progressive groups began to characterize them as victims of sexual abuse. Given the non-existence of appropriate language with which to explain their experiences and relations with those men, these young women, who rejected characterizing themselves as victims of anyone, were, nevertheless, characterized either as wayward girls or as victims, categories into which it may not have been right to place them.

E131. Another example of this may be one made familiar by the media. (El País, 10/24/01). "Trial of 21 Residents of a Town in Toledo for the Abuse of a Minor. EFE - Toledo. Twenty-one residents of Santa Cruz de la Zarza (Toledo, 4,400 inhabitants) sit in the dock, of the Toledo Provincial Court of Justice, accused of having sexual relations with a 12-year-old girl of limited intelligence. The acts occurred between 1995 and 1998. Among the accused are several old men, one of them 84 years of age, who entered the courtroom leaning on a cane. Moreover, the minor's mother was accused of having acceded to her daughter's relations. The district attorney indicted the mother as well as three of the men, who paid between 1,000 and 2,000 pesetas to sleep with the minor. The prosecutor called for two-year prison terms and daily fines of 2,000 pesetas for a period of 18 months, and for the mother six months of fines in the same amount. The attorney for the young woman has announced that it is foreseeable that she might withdraw the accusation against the mother, taking into account the request of the victim -- now older -- who, according to her lawyer, had never wanted to implicate her progenitor, with six children and an alcoholic husband. The Themis Association of Women

Jurists absolved the mother of blame and accused the 21 men, for whom they sought penalties ranging between six and eight years for the crimes of prostitution and sexual abuse, depending upon the given case." According to some media reports, the men and the residents of the town affirmed that the girl knew exactly what she was doing, and that it was a matter of an open secret. The accusation, this story goes, was originally of sexual abuse, since the question at issue was whether the girl had consciously consented or whether it was a matter of abuse. In the end, everything appeared to point to the fact that free consent had been present, and that there was no abuse. The majority of the defendants ended up being acquitted, with a few of them being able to be convicted of child prostitution for having paid money for the girl. One of the accused's attorneys asserted, in front of the cameras, that justice was to be administered by the law, not morality. In his opinion, it was obvious that in this case there had been free consent. Amidst the polemics there seemed to be a supposed deficiency that the psychological experts had detected in the young woman, which might have diminished her ability to make a free choice. It appears that, in the end, it was accepted that it was a matter of a very slight deficiency, which could not be detected in daily life, but only through appropriate intelligence tests.

E132. Only recently have there been allusions to a defense of the existence of a child sexuality, or a pleasure with sexual connotations which is beginning to be seen as positive. It has been said as well as shown that boys and girls masturbate, that they enjoy it, that they have sweethearts and orgasms, and that they seek out said pleasures and encounters. That is, for many, progress, which in some way recognizes the eroticized status of the boy and the girl. Nevertheless, if we examine these ideas closely, we observe that that defended child sexuality is repeatedly and insistently apart from that other' sexuality, that of infamous, base, and now adult sexuality, and therefore is not exempt from its evil potential. I am ever more dubious that any acknowledgment of child eroticism necessarily presupposes a de-dramatization of sexual relations between adults and children. But returning to our own reflections, I would say that although there have been advances in recognizing that potentiality in children, their sexual rank is clearly seen as being of a different order. In fact, we should not deceive ourselves, it is seen as pure, innocent, and above all, wholesome, for that is the new virtue of things. The notion of child sexuality that is being bandied about does nothing but reinforce the sacred status of childhood and, by extension, emphasize the non-sacred' nature of adults, especially in matters relating to sexuality. Child sexuality is thus seen as non-genital, in contrast to that of the adult, which certainly is; as more diffuse, more affectionate", more feminine even. It is, in a certain way, ignorant of its own perversity, of its ever-latent darkness. It is that innocent ignorance which makes it sacred.

E133. Okami analyzes, as an illustrative example, the works of T .C Johnson and articles like (1988) *Child Perpetrators ~- Children Who Molest Other Children: Preliminary Findings, Child Abuse and Neglect 12*, 219-229. In fact Johnson is a former coordinator of the so-called SPARK center, geared to young people over age 13 who have committed some sort of sexual offense against other children. The center was founded by Kee MacFarlane, a prominent activist in the ritual abuse movement who participated in the McMartin case as an investigator. (Okami, 1992 p.109)

E134. According to Okami, another example of the moral changes that occurred beginning in 1980 or the late 1970s is what happened with a book entitled *Show Me!*, which showed erotic images geared towards children. What for some was an advance in sex education would, in

turn, be characterized as child pornography. Not only were erotic expressions between children pathologized; what ended up being altered was the affectional order, and its expression between children and adults. Another good example might be Nathan & Snedeker's (2001 p. 133) comments on teachers' fears over increasing accusations of ritual abuse in the schools, and some recommendations that they not show any physical affection towards children, and thereby avoid any possible suspicion.

E135. Case in point. Some years ago, a huge worldwide scandal erupted upon the revelation that hundreds of rapes of nuns on the part of priests had been reported throughout the globe, particularly in Africa. *El País*, Wednesday, March 21, 2001. "The Vatican Admits that Hundreds of Nuns Have Been Raped by Missionaries. The Vatican acknowledges the problem, verified to exist in 23 countries, and announces that it is being dealt with. Lola Galán - Rome. Hundreds of nuns in some 23 countries, the majority in Africa, report having suffered sexual abuse, sometimes systematic, at the hands of priests and missionaries. ... Sexual abuse within religious congregations first began to be denounced in the 1970s. (...) But this new investigation painted an even more troubling picture. The list of abuses is varied and disheartening: The report includes cases of novitiates raped by priests, from whom they must ask for birth certificates; it speaks of Catholic hospitals which find themselves besieged by priests bringing in 'nuns and other young women for abortions. 0 Donohue cites one extreme case, that of a priest who coerces a nun into having an abortion, which kills her, and he then officiates at the funeral mass for the dead young woman.

Cultural Weight.

Though the report, picked up yesterday by the Italian daily <i> La Repubblica </i>, collects reports of abuse in 23 countries, from Burundi to the Philippines, India to Colombia, Ireland to Italy and the United States, what is certain is that the bulk of cases are from Africa. The Church's inroads in that continent -- where the increase in vocations as well as the rise in the numbers of the faithful are incessant -- may be so great, that this data simply reflects the enormous weight of the indigenous cultures themselves, even on those men and women who opt for the religious life.

Without specifying the names of the countries, the report acknowledges that certain cultures constitute a serious obstacle to maintaining the principles of the religious life. In the continent of Africa, the text explains, it is 'impossible for a woman to fend off a man, above all if he is old, and especially if he is a priest,' and the culture is far from fostering celibacy. .

The situation is made worse by the extent of AIDS, as was demonstrated by another report put out by that same religion and distributed to ecclesiastical officials in 1994. 0 Donohue verified that the phenomenon of AIDS had converted religious women into a 'safe' group from a sanitary viewpoint, thereby enhancing priests' interest in them. Cited in this

regard is the case of a mother superior of a convent who was contacted by some priests who were interested in maintaining safe sexual relations with religious females.

The O'Donohue report talks about religious men who solicit nuns to resort to the pill and, more concretely, alludes to a female religious community in which the mother superior asked the bishop to intervene after verifying that a series of diocesan priests had gotten 29 nuns pregnant. The bishop's response was thunderous: The mother superior 'was suspended' and replaced." Many were the voices, both from within and outside the church, that recognized that the problem was, in large measure, of a cultural order given that in large part, in the African cultures to which the nuns and priests belonged, values such as celibacy are practically nonexistent, while others, like having children, are of central importance. It was the so-called "weight of the culture." Despite this, one spoke only of abuse and rape.

It was asserted that to many of these women it was very difficult, not to say impossible, to deny a priest carnal access, all the more so if he was an older man. To them they are figures of great authority who are difficult to rebuff. It was pointed out that some of them were "seduced," harassed, and raped; but it should not surprise us that in no case was it ever noted that they more or less voluntarily acceded to these relationships. Much less that they were seduced by the man. This is similar to how the young women in Guatemala, as was evident in the records reviewed in my investigation, asserted that they let themselves be abused by the young man, or that he convinced them to let themselves be abused.

It is interesting to observe how those revelations concerning priests raised anew the polemics surrounding the erotic lives and needs of the members of the Catholic church, and their right -- or not -- to satisfy them. In fact in the end the rapes were a marginal issue in the media, which was more devoted to reporting on the celibacy problem in the church and the possibility -- or not -- of relaxing the standards. It is highly significant that that debate over sexual abstinence began, evolved, and ended in the world of the masculine; that is, of the priests and the missionaries; the nuns continue being nuns, with no one asking them anything about their wishes along these lines. It is not complicated to look to this phenomenon for a historical explanation of the meanings associated with men and women, curates and nuns, in our society. The image of the curate who regularly unleashes his passions through various conduits is not so foreign to us in our own culture; the jokes continue to accumulate on all sides, with all of us hearing stories of some priest or another who is suspected of said dissolution. In every way, we tell ourselves, he is a man before he is a priest and, as the Bishop of Mondonedo would say and the press published, "Where there is a man, that's what he has to -- and can -- be." Virginal purity has never been such a central attribute of the religious, who are more defined by other values, like authority or moderation, a value which presupposes a recognition that desire is present. Nevertheless, things are different for the nuns. A nun is, before she is a nun, a woman, and we know that women's eroticism has traditionally responded to a moral order different from that of men. The white, transparent, and virginal purity of nuns has been and is their stamp of identity, and it is not necessary to belabor the powerful habit that sex has of profaning the sacred. '

E136. An example: As Levine explains in an epilogue to her book, once it was published, her work even received death threats, and was pointed to by prominent defenders of childhood as a defense of pedophilia, abusive curates, of abuse, and in short, promoting the sexual exploitation of children. In reality, her work touched on these themes tangentially, as important factors in the modern problematization of child and adolescent sexuality. In fact her work delves more into the area of sex education and its value than that of abuse. Nevertheless, as she herself explains, others situated her work in that terrain of danger, not in that of education. In accusing her of being a defender of abuse, of hinting at evidence to the effect that sometimes these relationships are not so harmful, or simply that the anecdotal -- abuse -- cannot take precedence over the educational, they impeded the public from reading this timely contribution which, as I said, was more oriented towards promoting quality sex education than anything else. In this case sexual danger hovers in the background, paralyzing the debate over sex education.

REFERENCES

- Amezúa, E. (1991). Sexología: cuestiones de fondo y forma. [Sexology: Questions of depth and form] *Revista Española de Sexología* Vol. 49-50 combined, Monograph.
- Amezúa, E. (1991). Teoría de los sexos. [Theory of the sexes]. *Revista Española de Sexología* Vol. 95-96 combined, Monograph.
- Amezua, E. (2000). El ars amandi de los sexos. [The arts of love of the sexes] *Revista Española de Sexología* Vol. 99-100 combined, Monograph.
- Aries, P. (1987) *El niño y la vida familiar en el antiguo regimen*. [The Child and Family Life in Antiquity] Madrid, Spain: Taurus.
- Aries, P., Bejin, A., Foucault, M. (needs full list of authors up through six) (1987). *Sexualidades occidentales*. [Western Sexualities]. Barcelona, Spain: Paidos Studio
- Aron, R. (1997). *Prologue to M. Weber: El politico y el cientifico*. [The Politician and the Scientist] (Needs city of publication) :Alianza.
- Avery-Clark, C., O'Neill, A., Laws, D.R (1981). A comparison of intrafamilial sexual and physical child abuse. In M. Cook & K. Howells (eds.) *Adult sexual interest in children*; London: Academic Press.
- Bardaju, C. (1993). *Facto res de vulnerabilidad en los profesionales que prestan sus servicios en el ambito de la proteccion infantil* [Vulnerability factors among professionals who offer their services in the child protection arena]. II Congreso Estatal sobre bifancia Maltratada. Vitoria: Gobierno Vasco. Dpto. de Trabajo y Seguridad Social.,
- Bass, E.; Davis, L. (1995). *The courage to heal. A handbook for women survivors of sexual abuse in childhood*. New York: Collins Living.
- Beauvoir, S. (2000a; orig. 1949). *El segundo sexo. Vol. I. Los hechos y los mitos*. [The second sex. Vol. I. Facts and myths]. Madrid, Spain: Catedra.
- Beauvoir, S. (2000b; orig. 1949). *El segundo sexo. Vol. II. La experiencia vivida*. [The second sex. Vol. II. The experiences of life]. Madrid, Spain: Catedra.
- Beltran, M. (1989). *Cinco vías de acceso a la realidad social* [Five ways of accessing social reality]. In G. Ferrando, J Ibañez, & F. Alvira (Eds.) *El análisis de la realidad social*. Madrid, Spain: Alianza Universidad Textos..
- Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1994). *La construcción social de la realidad* [The social construction of reality]. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Amorrortu.
- Berliner, L. & Conte, J. (1993). Sexual Abuse Evaluations: Conceptual and Empirical Obstacles. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 7, 111 - 125.
- Berliner, L. & Conte, J. (1995). The effects of disclosure and intervention on sexually abused children. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 19, 371 - 384.
- Bestard, J. (1996). Prologo a Douglas, M. (1996; orig. 1985) *La aceptabilidad del riesgo según las ciencias sociales* [The acceptability of risk according to the social sciences]. Barcelona, Spain: Paidos Studio.
- Bestard, J. (1998). *Parentesco y modernidad* [Parenting and Modernity]. Barcelona, Spain: Paidos Studio.
- Besten, B. (1997). *Abusos sexuales en los niños*. [Sexual abuse in children]. Barcelona, Spain: Herder. (Original work published in 1991)
- Birchall, E. (1989). *Frecuencia de los malos tratos a menores: ¿que sabemos realmente?* [Frequency of the maltreatment of minors: What do we really know?] In O. Stevenson: *La atención al niño maltratado*. Barcelona, Spain: Paidos Studio.

- Blumer, H. (1982). *El interaccionismo simbólico: perspectiva y método* [Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method]. Barcelona, Spain: Hora.
- Boas, G. (1966). *The cult of childhood*. The Warburg Institute, London: Univ. of London
- Broussard, S.D., & Wagner, W.G. (1988). Child sexual abuse: Who is to blame? *Child Sexual Abuse and Neglect* 12, 563-569.
- Browne, J. (1996). "Unasked questions or unheard answers? Policy development in child sexual abuse. *British Journal of Social Work* 26, (1) 37-52.
- Bruckner, P. (1996). *La tentación de la inocencia* [The Temptation of Innocence]. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama.
- Cantón, J., & Cortes, M. (1997). *Malos tratos y abuso sexual infantil* [Child Maltreatment and Sexual Abuse]. Madrid, Spain: Siglo XXI.
- Cañeque, C. (1988). *Dios en América. Una aproximación al conservadurismo político-religioso en los Estados Unidos* [God in America. An Approach to politico-religious conservatism in the United States]. Barcelona, Spain: Peninsula.
- Casas, J. (1983). Los delitos contra la libertad e indemnidad sexuales, PNACP [Crimes against sexual liberty and indemnity, PNACP]. *Revista de la Facultad de derecho de la Universidad Complutense*, 6. Monográfico.
- Christopherson, J. (1989). "Sistemas europeos de tratamiento de los malos tratos a menores [European systems for treating abused minors]." In Stevenson, O. (Ed.) *La intención al niño maltratado* [Attention to Child Maltreatment]. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós.
- Cohen, S. (1988). *Visiones de control social. Delitos, castigos y clasificaciones* [Visions of social control. Crimes, punishments, and classifications]. Barcelona, Spain: PPU.
- Cohn, N. (1987). *Los demonios familiares de Europa* [Familiar Demons of Europe]. Madrid, Spain: Alianza.
- Conde, F. (1994). Procesos e instancias de reducción / formalización de la multidimensionalidad de lo real: procesos de institucionalización/ reificación social en la praxis de la investigación social [Processes and instances of the reduction/formalization of the multidimensionality of reality: Processes of social institutionalization/reification in the practice of Social Research]. In Delgado, J.M. and Gutierrez, J. (Eds.) *Metodos y técnicas cualitativas de investigación en ciencias sociales*. Madrid, Spain: Síntesis.
- Cook, M., & Howells, K. (Eds.) (1981). *Adult sexual interest in children*. London: Academic Press.
- Cook, T.D., & Reichardt, (1986). *Métodos cualitativos y cuantitativos en investigación evaluativa* [Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Evaluative Research]. Madrid, Spain: Morata.
- Crawford, D.A. (1981). Treatment approaches with pedophiles. In Cook, M.; Howells, K (Eds.) *Adult sexual interest in children*. London: Academic Press.
- Crivillé, A. (1993). Reflexiones sobre la intervención en el problema del incesto [Reflections on intervention into the problem of incest]. *II Congreso Estatal sobre Infancia Maltratada. Vitoria*. Spain: Gobierno Vasco. Dpto. de Trabajo y Seguridad Social .
- Cruz, C. (1999). Abusos sexuales, pensamiento único [Sexual Abuse, Only Thought]. *Boletín de Información Sexológica*. AEPS.
- Curruchiche Gómez, M.A. (1994). *Discriminación del pueblo maya en el ordenamiento jurídico de Guatemala* [Discrimination Against the Maya in the Guatemalan Justice System].

- Dalgleish, L.I. & Drew, E.C. (1989). The relationship of child abuse indicators to the assessment of perceived risk and to the court's decision to separate. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 13, 491-506.
- Davey, R. & Hill, J. (1995). A study of the variability of training and beliefs among professionals who interview children to investigate suspected sexual abuse. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 19, 8, 933 - 942.
- Davila, A. (1994). *Perspectivas metodológicas cualitativa y cuantitativa en las Ciencias Sociales* [Qualitative and quantitative methodological perspectives in the social sciences] In Delgado, J.M & Gutierrez, J. (Eds.) *Métodos y técnicas cualitativas de investigación en ciencias sociales*. Madrid, Spain: Síntesis.
- Delgado, M. (1991). La reconquista del cuerpo. Ideologías sexuales [The reconquest of the body. Sexual Ideologies] In Delgado, M. & Nieto, J.A. (Eds.) *La sexualidad en la sociedad contemporánea. Lecturas antropológicas*. Madrid, Spain: Fundación Universidad Empresa.
- Delgado, M. (1992-93). La carn dels infants. La usurpació de menors en la imaginació persecutòria [The flesh of children. The usurpation of minors in the persecutory imagination]. *Arxiu d' etnografia de catalunya* 9, 171-186
- Delgado, J.M & Gutierrez, J. (Eds.) (1994). *Métodos y técnicas cualitativas de investigación en ciencias sociales* [Qualitative methods and techniques of research in the social sciences]. Madrid, Spain: Síntesis.
- Delgado, M. & Nieto, J.A. (Eds.) (1991) *La sexualidad en la sociedad contemporánea. Lecturas antropológicas*. UNED. Madrid, Spain: Fundación Universidad Empresa.
- Delumeau, J. (2002). *El miedo en occidente* [Fear in the West]. Madrid, Spain: Taurus. (Original work published 1978)
- deMause, L. (1982). *La historia de la infancia* [The history of childhood]. Madrid, Spain: Alianza Editorial.
- Díez Ripollés, J.L. (1981). *El derecho penal ante el sexo* [The penal law about sex]. Barcelona, Spain: Bosch.
- Díez Ripollés, J.L. (1985). *La protección de la libertad sexual* [The protection of sexual liberty]. Barcelona, Spain: Bosch.
- Dingwall, R. (1989). Algunos problemas en la predicción del abandono y los malos tratos a menores [Some problems in predicting the neglect and maltreatment of minors]. In Stevenson, O. (Ed.) *La atención al niño maltratado*. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós.
- Donzelot, J. (1990). *La policía de las familias* [The Family Police]. Valencia, Spain: Pre-textos.
- Douglas, M. (1975). *Sobre la naturaleza de las cosas* [On the Nature of Things]. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama, (Original work published 1973)
- Douglas, M. (1991). *Pureza y peligro. Un análisis de los conceptos de contaminación y tabú* [Purity and Danger. An analysis of the concepts of contamination and taboo]. Madrid, Spain: Siglo XXI. (Original work published 1966)
- Douglas, M. (1996). *La aceptabilidad del riesgo según las ciencias sociales* [The acceptability of risk according to the social sciences]. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós Studio. (Original work published 1985)
- Douglas, M. & Wildavsky, A. (1983). *Risk and culture*. University of California Press.
- Doyle, C. (1996). Current issues in child protection. An overview of the debates in contemporary journals. *British Journal of Social Work*, 26 (4), 565 - 576.

- Echeburúa, E. & Guerricaechevarría, C. (1999). Abuso sexual. Concepto, factores de riesgo y efectos psicopatológicos [Sexual Abuse. Concept, risk factors, and psychological effects]. In Sanmartin, J. (Ed.) *Violencia contra niños*. Barcelona, Spain: Ariel.
- Echeburúa, E. & Guerricaechevarría, C. (2000). *Abuso sexual en la infancia: víctimas y agresores. Un enfoque clínico* [Sexual abuse in childhood: Victims and perpetrators. A clinical approach. Barcelona, Spain: Ariel.
- Einsenberg, N., Owens, R.G., & Dewey, M.E. (1987). Attitudes of professional groups to child sexual abuse. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 11, 109-116
- Elschenbroich, D. (1979). *El juego de los niños. Estudios sobre la génesis de la infancia* [Child's play. Studies of the genesis of childhood]. Madrid, Spain: Zero zyx.
- Espada, A. (2000) *Raval. Del amor a los niños* [Raval. The love of children]. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama
- Finkelhor, D (1979). What's wrong with sex between adults and children? Ethics and the problem of sexual abuse. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 49 (4): 692-697.
- Finkelhor, D. (1984). *Child sexual abuse. New theory and research*. New York: Free Press
- Finkelhor, D. (1993). Abuso sexual: análisis de los conocimientos actuales [Sexual Abuse: Analysis of Current Knowledge]. In *II Congreso Estatal sobre Infancia Maltratada*. Vitoria, Spain: Gobierno Vasco. Dpto. de Trabajo y Seguridad Social.
- Finkelhor, D. (1999). *Victimología infantil* [Child victimology]. en Sanmartin, J. (Ed.) *Violencia contra niños*. Barcelona, Spain: Ariel
- Finkelhor, D. (2000). Abuso sexual de niños y niñas [The sexual abuse of boys and girls]. In Ullmann, E. & Hilweg, W. (Eds.) *Infancia y trauma. Separación, abusos, guerra*. Barcelona, Spain: Brand Editorial SL.
- Finkelhor, D. & Berliner, L. (1995). Research on the treatment of sexually abused children. A review and recommendations" *Journal of The Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 34 (11), 1408 - 1423.
- Finkelhor, D. & Browne, A. (1985). The traumatic impact of child sexual abuse: A conceptualization. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 55 (4): 530-541.
- Finkelhor, D. & Korbin, J (1988). Child abuse as an international issue. *Child Abuse and Neglect: The International Journal* 12 (1): 3-23.
- Flandrin, J.L. (1984). *La moral sexual en occidente* [Sexual morality in the west]. Barcelona, Spain: Juan Granica Ediciones. (Original work published in 1981)
- Foester, H. von (1988). Construyendo una realidad [Constructing a reality]. In Watzlawick, P. (Ed.) *La realidad inventada*. Barcelona, Spain: Ed. Gedisa
- Follette, V., Polusny, M. & Milbeck, K (1994). Mental-Health and Law-Enforcement Professionals - Trauma History, Psychological Symptoms, and Impact of Providing Services to Child Sexual Abuse Survivors. *Professional Psychology - Research and Practice* 25, (3), 275 - 282.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *El nacimiento de la clínica* [The Birth of the Clinic]. Mexico D.F: Siglo XXI. (Original work published in 1963)
- Foucault, M. (1987). *Historia de la sexualidad III. La inquietud de sí* [History of sexuality III. The uneasiness of yes]. Mexico D.F: Siglo XXI. (Original work published in 1984)
- Foucault, M. (1993). *Historia de la sexualidad II. El uso de los placeres* [History of sexuality II. The use of pleasure]. Mexico D.F: Siglo XXI. (Original work published in 1976)
- Foucault, M. (1995). *Historia de la sexualidad I. La voluntad de saber* [History of sexuality I. The will to know]. Mexico D.F: Siglo XXI. (Original work published in 1976)

- Foucault, M. (2001). No al sexo rey [No to the King's Sex]. In Foucault, M. *Un diálogo sobre el poder*. Madrid, Spain: Alianza Editorial (Original work published in 1981)
- Freud, S. (1994). *Tótem y tabú* [Totem and Taboo]. Mexico D.F.: Alianza Editorial (Original work published in 1912)
- Frey, J. J. (2003). *Abusos sexuales en la infancia. La lógica del olvido* [Sexual abuse in childhood. The logic of forgetting]. Madrid, Spain: Ed. Morata. (Original work published in 1996)
- Garbarino, J. & Stoff, F.M. (Eds.) (1993). *Lo que nos pueden decir los niños* [What the Children Can Tell Us]. Madrid, Spain: Ministerio de Asuntos Sociales (Original work published in 1989)
- Geraci, J. (1993). Interview: Hollida Wakefield and Ralph Underwager. *Paidika: The Journal of Paedophilia* 3 (1) 2-12.
- Glaserfeld, E. von (1988). Introducción al constructivismo radical [Introduction to Radical Constructivism]. In Watzlawick, P. (Ed.) *La realidad inventada*. Barcelona, Spain: Ed. Gedisa.
- Goetz, J.P. & LeCompte, M.D. (1988). *Etnografía y diseño cualitativo en investigación educativa* [Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research]. Madrid, Spain: Morata.
- Goffman, E. (1994). *Internados. Ensayos sobre la situación social de los enfermos mentales* [Shut-Ins. Essays on the Social Situation of the Mentally Ill]. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores. (Original work published in 1961)
- Goffman, E. (1997). *La presentación de la persona en la vida cotidiana* [The presentation of the persona in daily life]. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores. (Original work published in 1959)
- Gómez, J. (1993). *La prevención del abuso sexual infantil en relación a criterios amplios de salud sexual* [Child sexual abuse prevention in relation to broad criteria of sexual health]. II Congreso Estatal sobre Infancia Maltratada. Vitoria, Spain: Gobierno Vasco. Dpto. de Trabajo y Seguridad Social.
- Grassl, W. (2000). *Joven miseria* [Young Misery]. In Ullmann, E. & Hilweg, W. Infancia y trauma. Separación, abusos, guerra. Barcelona, Spain: Brand Editorial SL.
- Hare, E.H. (1962). Masturbatory insanity: the history of an idea. *Journal of Mental Science* 108, 1-25.
- Henry J. (1997). System Intervention Trauma to Child Sexual Abuse Victims Following Disclosure. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 12 (40), 499 - 512.
- Hughes, R. (1994). *La cultura de la queja* [The culture of complaint]. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama.
- Hunter, J.A, Goodwin, D.W. & Wilson, R.J. (1992). Attributions of blame in child sexual abuse victims: an analysis of age and gender influences. *Child Sex Abuse* 1, 75-89. .
- Ibañez, J. (1983). Más allá de la sociología. El grupo de discusión: técnica y crítica [Beyond sociology. Discussion group: Technique and criticism]. Esc. Univ. de Estudios Sociales. Madrid, Spain: Ed. Siglo XXI.
- II Congreso Estatal sobre Infancia Maltratada. (1993). Vitoria, Spain: Gobierno Vasco. Dpto. de Trabajo y Seguridad Social.
- Intebi, I. (1998). *Abuso sexual infantil En las mejores familias* [Child sexual abuse. In the best families]. Buenos Aires: Granica.

- Jackson, H. & Nuttall, R. (1994). Effects of gender, age, and history of abuse on social workers' judgements of sexual abuse allegations. *Social Work Research* 18 (2) .105-113.
- Jenkins, P. (2001) *Pedophiles and priests. Anatomy of a contemporary crisis*. New York: Oxford University Press.(Original work published in 1996)
- Jimenez, J., Oliva, A. & Saldaña, O. (1996). *Maltrato y protección a la infancia en España* [The mistreatment and protection of children in Spain]. Esc. Univ. Estudios Sociales de Zaragoza. Madrid, Spain: Ministerio de Asuntos Sociales.
- Johnson, P. (2001). *Estados Unidos. La historia* [The United States. A history]. Buenos Aires: Ed. B. Argentina. (Original work published in 1997)
- Johnson, P.A., Owens, R.G., Dewey M.B. & Eisenberg, N.E. (1990). Professionals' attributions of censure in father-daughter incest. *Child Sexual Abuse and Neglect* 14 (3) 419 - 428.
- Kaminer, W. (2001). *Durmiendo con extraterrestres. El auge del irracionalismo y los peligros de fa devoción* [Sleeping with extraterrestrials. The boom in irrationalism and the dangers of devotion]. Barcelona, Spain: Ed. Alba. (Original work published in 1999)
- Kempe, R.S. & Kempe, C.H. (1985). *Niños maltratados* [Mistreated Children]. Madrid, Spain: Ed. Morata.
- Kendall-Tackett, K.A., Williams L.M. & Finkelhor. D. (1993). Impact of sexual abuse on children: a review and synthesis of recent empirical studies. *Psychological Bulletin* 113, 164-180.
- Kinsey, A., Pomeroy, W., & Martin. C. (1967) *Conducta sexual de la mujer* [Sexual behavior in the human female]. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Siglo XX.
- Kitzinger, J. (1988). Defending innocence: Ideologies of childhood. *Feminist Review* 28, 77-87.
- Krauthammer, C. (1994). La déviance redéfinie á la hausse [Raising a redefining of deviance]. *Le debat*. 81.
- La Fontaine, J. (1991). *Child sexual abuse*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Lamb. S. & Coakley, M. (1993) 'Normal' childhood sexual play and games: Differentiating play from abuse. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 17. 515-526.
- Leites, B. (1990). *La invención de fa mujer casta. La conciencia puritana y la sexualidad moderna* [The invention of the chaste woman. The Puritan conscience and modern society. Madrid, Spain: Siglo XXI. (Original work published in 1986).
- Levine. J. (2002) *Harmful to minors. The perils of protecting children from sex*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press
- Levine, M. & Troiden, R. (1988) The myth of sexual compulsivity. *Journal of Sex Research* 25 (3) 347-363.
- Lima Soto, R. (1994). *Estudio de la realidad de Guatemala: aspecto cultural* [A study of the reality of Guatemala: Cultural aspects]. San Salvador, El Salvador: Universidad Centroamericana.
- Lipovetsky, G. (2000a). *La era del vacío* [The era of emptiness]. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama. (Original work published in 1983)
- Lipovetsky, G. (2000c) *La tercera mujer* [The third woman]. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama. (Original work published in 1997)
- López, F. (1995). *Prevención de los abusos sexuales y educacion sexual* [Sexual abuse prevention and sex education] Salamanca, Spain: Amani Ed.
- Lopez, F. & del Campo, A (1997). *Prevención de abusos sexuales a menores. Guía para los educadores* [Preventing the sexual abuse of minors. A guide for educators]. Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales. Salamanca, Spain: Amani Ed.

- López, F., Hernandez, A. & Carpintero, E. (1995). Los abusos sexuales de menores: Concepto, prevalencia y efectos [The sexual abuse of minors: Concept, prevalence, and effect]. *Infancia y Aprendizaje* 71, 77-98.
- López, F., Hernandez, A & Carpintero, E., et al. (1994). *Los abusos sexuales de menores: Lo que recuerdan los adultos* [The sexual abuse of minors: What adults remember]. Madrid, Spain: Ministerio de Asuntos Sociales.
- López, F. & Arnaez, M. (1989). *Los abusos sexuales a menores* [The sexual abuse of minors]. *Cuadernos de medicina psicosomática* 10, 7-15.
- López, F., Carpintero, E., Hernandez, A, Marcin, M.J. & Fuertes, A. (1995). Prevalencia y consecuencias del abuso sexual al menor en España [Prevalence and consequences of the sexual abuse of minors in Spain]. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 19, 1039-1050.
- Luc de Heusch (1975). *El estructuralismo heterodoxo de Mary Douglas* [The heterodox structuralism of Mary Douglas]. Prólogo a Douglas, M.(1975) Sobre la naturaleza de las cosas. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama.
- Lyon, D. (2000). *Postmodernidad* [Postmodernity]. Madrid, Spain: Alianza Editorial. (Original work published in 1994)
- Malinowski, B. (1975). *La vida sexual de los salvajes del noroeste de Melanesia* [The sexual life of the savages of northeastern Melanesia]. Madrid, Spain: Ed. Morata. (Original work published in 1929)
- Malinowski, B. (1991). *Crimen y costumbre en la sociedad salvaje* [Crime and custom in a savage society. Barcelona, Spain: Ariel. (Original work published in 1966)
- Malón, A. (2001). Onanismo y abusos sexuales: historia de dos obsesiones [Onanism and sexual abuse: A history of two obsessions. *Anuario de Sexología* 7. AEPS.
- Manseau, H. (1993). Abusos sexuales de menores. Análisis socio-histórico del problema [The sexual abuse of minors. Socio-historical analysis of the problem]. In Crépeault, C. & Trempe, J.P. (Eds.) 'Nuevas líneas en sexología clínica. *Revista de Sexología* 57 & 58.
- Martinez, A. (1993). Detección pediátrica del niño que ha sufrido un abuso sexual [Pediatric detection of children who have suffered sexual abuse]. In *II Congreso Estatal sobre bifancia Maltratada*. Vitoria, Spain: Gobierno Vasco. Dpto. de Trabajo y Seguridad Social.
- Martínez, J., Martínez, M.A. & Arribas, P. (1991). Peritajes psicológicos en los casos de abusos sexuales en menores [Psychological expertise in cases involving the sexual abuse of minors]. *Papeles del psicólogo* 48, 67 - 69.
- Masson, J. (1985). El asalto a la verdad [The assault on truth]. Barcelona, Spain: Ed. Seix Barral. (Original work published in 1984)
- Meirieu, P. (2001). *Frankenstein educador*. Barcelona, Spain: Laertes. (Original work published in 1996)
- Mitzel, (1982). Recipe for a witchhunt. In Tsang, D. (Ed.) *The age taboo: Gay male sexuality, power and consent*. Boston: Alyson Publications.
- Money, J. (1985). *The conceptual neutering of gender and the criminalization of sex*. *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 14, (3), 279 - 290.
- Money, J. (1999) Antisexualismo epidémico: Del onanismo al satanismo [Epidemic Anti-Sexualism: From Onanism to Satanism]. *Anuario de Sexología*. AEPS, (5) 23-30.
- Nathan, D. & Snedeker, M. (2001). *Satan's silence. Ritual abuse and the making of a modern American witch hunt*. Lincoln, NE: Authors Choice Press. (Original work published in 1995)

- Neuman, R.P. (1975). *Masturbation, madness and the modern concepts of childhood and adolescence*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Nieto, J.A. & Delgado, M. (Eds.) (1991). *La sexualidad en la sociedad contemporánea. Lecturas antropológicas*. UNED.[Sexuality in contemporary society. Anthropological readings]. Madrid, Spain: Fundación Universidad Empresa.
- Oficina de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado (ODHAG) (2000). *Informe 1999. Situación de la niñez en Guatemala* [1999 report. Status of childhood in Guatemala]. Guatemala: Magna Terra Editores..
- Ofshe, R. & Watters, E. (1996). *Making monsters. False memory, psychotherapy and sexual hysteria*. Los Angeles: University Of California Press..
- Okami, P. (1992). Child perpetrators of sexual abuse: The emergence of a problematic deviant category. *Journal of Sex Research* 29 (1), 109-130.
- Ortí, A. (1994). La confrontación de modelos y niveles epistemológico en la génesis e historia de la investigación social [Coming to Grips with Epistemological Models and Levels in the Genesis and History of Social Research]. In Delgado, J.M. & Gutierrez, J. (Eds.) *Métodos y técnicas cualitativas de investigación en ciencias sociales*. Madrid, Spain: Síntesis.
- Osborne, R. (1989). *Las mujeres en la encrucijada de la sexualidad* [Women at the crossroads of sexuality]. Madrid, Spain: Ed. La Sal.
- Osborne, R. (1993). *La construcción sexual de la realidad* [The sexual construction of reality]. Madrid, Spain: Ed. Catedra.
- Parton, C. & Parton, N. (1989). Protección al menor, ley y peligrosidad [Protecting the minor, law and dangerousness]. IN Stevenson, O. (Ed.) *La atención al niño maltratado*. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós.
- Pellegrin, A. & Wagner, W. (1990). Child sexual abuse: Factors affecting victims' removal from home. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 14 (1) ,53 - 60.
- Pérez, P, Aldrian, A. & Stender, A. (2000). Prostitución infantil y abuso sexual en América Latina, con atención especial a Paraguay [Child Protection and Sexual Abuse in Latin America, with Special Attention to Paraguay]. In Ullmann, E. & Hilweg, W. (Eds.) *Infancia y trauma. Separación, abusos, guerra*. Barcelona, Spain: Brand Editorial SL.
- Pérez Serrano, G. (1994). *Investigación cualitativa. Retos e interrogantes (I. Metodos. II. Técnicas y análisis de datos)* [Qualitative research. Challenges and questions. (I. Methods. II. Techniques and Data Analysis)]. Madrid, Spain: Ed. La Muralla.
- Pfohl, S.J. (1977). The discovery of child abuse. *Social Problems* 24, 310-323.
- Picontó, T. (1996). *La protección de la infancia. Aspectos jurídicos y sociales* [Protecting Childhood. Legal and Social Aspects]. Zaragoza, Spain: Egido Editorial.
- Plummer, K. (1981). Pedophilia: constructing a sociological baseline. In Cook, M. & Howells, K. (Eds.) *Adult sexual interest in children*. London: Academic Press.
- Plummer, K. (1991). La diversidad sexual: una perspectiva sociológica [Sexual Diversity: A Sociological Perspective]. In Delgado, M. & Nieto, J.A (Eds.) *La sexualidad en la sociedad contemporánea. Lecturas antropológicas*. Madrid, Spain: UNED. Fundación Universidad Empresa.
- Putnam, F.W. (1991). The satanic ritual abuse controversy. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 15, 175-179.
- Ramey, J. W. (1979). Dealing with the last taboo. *SIECUS Report* 7 (5).

- Reina, R. (1959). *Continuidad de la cultura indígena en una comunidad guatemalteca* [Continuity of the Indigenous Culture in a Guatemalan Community]. Universidad Del Valle de Guatemala.
- Robbins, S. (1995). Wading through the muddy waters of recovered memory. *Families in Society* 76 (8) 478 - 489.
- Roldan, H. (1999). Concepto y alcance de la delincuencia oficial [Concept and scope of a delinquency officer]. *Revista Internacional de Sociología* 23, 31-60.
- Rose, V.M. (1977). Rape as a social problem: A byproduct of the feminist movement. *Social Problems* 25, 75-89.
- Rossmann, P. (1979). *Sexual experiences between men and boys*. London: Temple Smith.
- Rubin, G. (1982) Sexual politics, the new right, and the sexual fringe", In Tsang, D. (Ed.) *The age taboo: gay male sexuality, power and consent*. Boston: Alyson Publications.
- Salas, L. (1989) *La justicia penal en Guatemala* [Criminal justice in Guatemala]. San Jose, Costa Rica: Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana.
- Saldaña, D., Jimenez, J. & Oliva, A. (1995). El maltrato infantil en España: Un estudio a través de los expedientes de menores [Child maltreatment in Spain: A study using minors' case records]. *Infancia y Aprendizaje* 71, 59-68.
- Sanchez, C. & Noguero, V. (1995). Dossier sobre abuso sexual infantil [Dossier on child sexual abuse]. *Materiales de trabajo*, #32. Madrid, Spain: Ministerio de Asuntos Sociales.
- Sandfort, T. (1983). Pedophile relationships in the Netherlands: Alternative lifestyles for children. *Alternative Lifestyles* 5, 164-183.
- Sandfort, T.G. (1984) Sex in pedophilic relationships: An empirical investigation among a nonrepresentative group of boys. *Journal of Sex Research* 20, 123-142.
- Sanmartin, J. (Ed.) (1999). *Violencia contra niños* [Violence against children]. Barcelona, Spain: Ariel.
- Santiago, P. (2004). *Alicia en el lado oscuro. La pedofilia desde la antigua Grecia hasta la era Internet* [Alice on the dark side. Pedophilia from ancient Greece to the Internet]. Madrid, Spain: Imagine Ediciones.
- Saunders, E.J. (1988). A comparative study of attitudes toward child sexual abuse among social work and judicial systems professionals. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 12, 83-90.
- Schutz, A. & Luckmann, T. (1977). *Las estructuras del mundo de la vida* [The Structures of the Life-World]. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu editores. Original published in 1973)
- Schwartz, H. & Jacobs, H. (1984). *Sociología cualitativa* [Qualitative Sociology]. México D.F.: Trillas.
- Stainton, W. (1997). *Beliefs, attitudes and action*. In VI European Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect, Barcelona, Spain.
- Stainton, W., Stainton, R. & Musitu, G. (1994). Abuso sexual infantil: ¿Que deberíamos hacer? [Child sexual abuse. What should we do?]. *Intervención Psicosocial* 9, 53 - 66.
- Stevenson, O. (1989). Multidisciplinaria en la protección al menor [Multidisciplinarity in the Protection of Minors]. In Stevenson, O. (Ed.) *La atención al niño maltratado*. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós.
- Stevenson, O. (1992). *La atención al niño maltratado. Política pública y práctica profesional* [Attention to Child Maltreatment. Public Policy and Professional Practice}. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós.
- Stevenson, O. (Ed.) (1989). *La atención al niño maltratado* [Attention to Child Maltreatment]. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós.

- Subcomisión regional de PRODEN (Comisión Pro-Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño) (1996). *Entre el olvido y la esperanza. La niñez en Guatemala* [Between forgetting and hope. Children in Guatemala]. Guatemala: Ed. Higma Gala.
- Tamarit, J. (2000). *La protección penal del menor frente al abuso y explotación sexual* [The penal protection of the minor From abuse and sexual exploitation]. Elcano, Spain: Aranzadi Editorial.
- Taylor, I., Walton, P. & Young, J. (1997) *La nueva criminología* [The new criminology]. Buenos Aires. Amorrortu.
- Taylor, S.J. & Bogdan, R. (1992). *Introducción a los métodos cualitativos de investigación. La búsqueda de significados* [Introduction to qualitative research methods. Search for significance. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós.
- Thomas, H. & Jamieson, E. (1995). Childhood sexuality transmitted diseases and child sexual abuse: Results of a Canadian survey of three professional groups. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 19 (9), 1019-1029. .
- Todorov, T. (1998) *El hombre desplazado* [The displaced man]. Madrid, Spain: Taurus. (Original work published in 1996)
- Tomás y Valiente, F. et al. (1990). *Sexo barroco y otras transgresiones premodernas* [Baroque sex and other premodern transgressions]. Madrid, Spain: Alianza Editorial.
- Trute, B., Adkins, E. & MacDonald, G. (1992). Professional attitudes regarding the sexual abuse of children: Comparing police, child welfare and community mental health. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 16 (3), 359-368.
- Ullerstam, L. (1999) *Las minorías eróticas* [The erotic minorities]. Revista Española de Sexología 93-94. Madrid, Spain: Incisex. (Original work published in 1964)
- Ullmann, E. & Hilweg, W. (2000). *Infancia y trauma. Separación, abusos, guerra* [Childhood and Trauma. Divorce, Abuse, War. Barcelona, Spain: Brand Editorial SL.
- Urra, J. (2000). Ojos de lluvia. Epílogo a la obra de Echeburúa, E. & Guerricaechevarría, C. (Eds.) *Abuso sexual en la infancia: víctimas y agresores. Un enfoque clínico* [Sexual abuse in childhood: Victims and perpetrators. A clinical approach. Barcelona, Spain: Ariel.
- Vance, C. (Ed.) (1989). *Placer y peligro. Explorando la sexualidad femenina* [Pleasure and Danger. Exploring Female Sexuality]. Havana, Cuba: Ed. Revolución, SAL. (Original work published in 1984)
- Varela, J. (1989). *Sujetos frágiles: ensayos de sociología de la desviación* [Touchy subjects: Essays on the sociology of deviance. México DF: Editorial Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Varela, J. (1998). De las reglas de urbanidad a la ritualización y domesticación de las pulsiones [From the Rules of Etiquette to the Ritualization and Domestication of Instinct]. In Savater, F. (Ed.) *Filosofía y sexualidad* [Philosophy and sexuality]. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama.
- Vazquez, B. (1995). *Agresión sexual. Evaluación y tratamiento en menores* [Sexual aggression. Evaluation and treatment in minors]. Madrid, Spain: Siglo XXI.
- Vazquez, F. & Moreno, A. (1997). *Sexo y razón. Una genealogía de la moral sexual en España* [Sex and reason. A genealogy of sexual morality in Spain (Siglos XVI - XX). Madrid, Spain: Akal.
- Verdú, V. (1996). *El planeta americano* [The American planet]. Barcelona, Spain: Anagrama.
- Victor, J.S. (1996). *Satanic Panic. The creation of a contemporary legend*. Chicago: Open Court. (Original work published in 1993)

- Waterman, C. K & Foss-Goodman, D. (1984). Child molesting: Variables relating to attribution of fault to victims, offenders and non-participating parents. *Journal of Sex Research* 20, 329-349.
- Watzlawick, P. (Ed.) (1988). *La realidad inventada* [Invented reality]. Barcelona, Spain: Ed. Gedisa.
- Weber, M. (1984). *La acción social: ensayos metodológicos* [Social action. Methodological essays]. Barcelona, Spain: Península. (Original work published in 1922)
- Weber, M. (1997). *El político y el científico* [The politician and the scientist]. Madrid, Spain: Alianza.
- Weeks, J. (1993). *El malestar de la sexualidad* [The discomfort of sexuality]. Madrid, Spain: Talasa, (Original work published in 1985)
- West, D.J. (1981). Adult sexual interest in children: Implications for social control. In Cook, M. & Howells, K. (Eds.) (1981). *Adult sexual interest in children*. London: Academic Press.
- Wilk, R J. & McCarthy, C.R (1986). Intervention in child sexual abuse: A survey of attitudes. *Social Casework, The Journal of Contemporary Social Work* 67 (1), 20-26.
- Wolf, M. (1994). *Sociologías de la vida cotidiana* [Sociologies of Daily Life]. Paris: Cátedra. (Original work published in 1979)
- Wood, J.M. & Wright, L. (1995) Evaluation of children's sexual behaviors and incorporation of base rates in judgments of sexual abuse. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 19 (10), 1263-1273.
- Wright Mills, C. (1993) *La imaginación sociológica* [The sociological imagination]. Mexico D.F.: FCE.

