Check for updates

Research Article

Psychological Science
2017, Vol. 28(1) 115–123
© The Author(s) 2016
Reprints and permissions:
sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/0956797616677082
journals.sagepub.com/home/pss

Autopedophilia: Erotic-Target Identity Inversions in Men Sexually Attracted to Children

Kevin J. Hsu and J. Michael Bailey
Department of Psychology, Northwestern University

Abstract

The most salient dimension of men's sexual orientation is gender: attraction to males versus females. A second dimension is sexual maturity: attraction to children versus adults. A less appreciated dimension is location: attraction to other individuals versus the sexual fantasy of being one of those individuals. Men sexually aroused by the idea or fantasy of being the kinds of individuals to whom they are sexually attracted have an *erotic-target identity inversion* (ETII). We conducted an online survey to investigate the prevalence and phenomenology of ETIIs among 475 men sexually attracted to children. *Autopedophilia*, or sexual arousal by the idea of being a child, was common. Furthermore, autopedophilic men tended to be sexually aroused by imagining themselves as the kinds of children (with respect to gender and age) to whom they are sexually attracted. Results support the concept of ETIIs and exemplify the simultaneous importance of three dimensions of male sexual orientation.

Keywords

autopedophilia, pedohebephilia, erotic-target identity inversion, autogynephilia, paraphilia, sexual orientation

Received 4/29/16; Revision accepted 10/11/16

Sexual orientation is typically understood as relative attraction to men versus women. At least two other dimensions that vary among men in particular might also characterize sexual orientation. One dimension distinguishes the degree of sexual maturity of individuals to whom men are sexually attracted (Seto, 2012, 2016). Most men are sexually attracted to adults, but a minority are attracted to prepubescent children (*pedophilia*) or to pubescent children (*hebephilia*; the latter two preferences may be considered together as *pedohebephilia*). The other dimension is both less familiar and more puzzling: the degree to which a man is sexually attracted to other individuals or instead sexually aroused by the idea or fantasy of himself as one of those individuals (Blanchard, 1991; Freund & Blanchard, 1993; Lawrence, 2009). This dimension may be thought of as an erotic target's location: external or internal. Other researchers (Blanchard, 2015; Seto, 2016) have also argued that sexual orientation encompasses multiple dimensions, including gender, sexual maturity, and location.

Most men are sexually attracted to other individuals and thus have external erotic targets (e.g., women). Sometimes, however, a man's erotic target is located within his own body. In the latter case, he is sexually aroused by the idea or fantasy of being the erotic target, and his sexuality is characterized by an *erotic-target identity inversion* (ETII; Freund & Blanchard, 1993). Men with ETIIs are often also capable of sexual attraction to other individuals (Blanchard, 1989b, 1992). In these cases, the external and internal erotic targets are similar. ETIIs may motivate men to change their bodies and behavior to become more like their internalized erotic target.

Autogynephilia and Apotemnophilia as ETIIs

Autogynephilia is a natal male's propensity to be sexually aroused by the thought or image of being a woman

Corresponding Author:
Kevin J. Hsu, Department of Psychology, Northwestern University, 2029 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, IL 60208
E-mail: khsu@northwestern.edu

(Blanchard, 1989a), and it is the best studied ETII (Blanchard, 2005; Lawrence, 2013). In the conceptualization of autogynephilia as an ETII, natal males who are otherwise sexually attracted to women are sexually aroused by resembling or impersonating them (Blanchard, 1991). Thus, autogynephilic men often find cross-dressing to be erotic (Blanchard, 1991; Hsu, Rosenthal, & Bailey, 2015; Lawrence, 2013). Some also find it erotic to fantasize about having female-typical anatomy, and these men are more likely to report gender dysphoria and the desire for sex reassignment (Blanchard, 1993a, 1993c). Because women are the preferred erotic targets of most men, autogynephilia is likely to be the most common form of ETII (Blanchard, 1993b).

Autogynephilia may be considered a *paraphilia*. Indeed, Freund and Blanchard (1993) suggested that all ETIIs are paraphilias. Paraphilias encompass an ill-defined set of unusual sexual interests, including pedohebephilia, exhibitionism, masochism, and sadism. Some writers have criticized the concept of paraphilias as representing nothing more than the value judgment that certain sexual interests and behaviors are undesirable (e.g., Moser & Kleinplatz, 2006). An alternative view—which we hold—is that the concept of paraphilias has some limited empirical support and remains scientifically promising, if open (see Meehl, 1986, for a discussion of "open concepts"). Two main observations support the latter view. First, paraphilias occur almost exclusively in men rather than in women (Abel & Osborn, 1992; Dawson, Bannerman, & Lalumière, 2016). Second, there is a tendency for at least some paraphilias to co-occur within a given individual. At least two unusual sexual interests that might be classified as paraphilias tend to co-occur with autogynephilia: masochism (Lawrence, 2006) and gynandromorphophilia (sexual interest in transgender women who retain their penis; Hsu, Rosenthal, Miller, & Bailey, 2016). These two general findings together suggest that classifying an unusual sexual interest as a paraphilia may reflect a fact of nature rather than (or in addition to) a mere value judgment.

The tendency for autogynephilic men to be sexually attracted to women is consistent with the concept of ETIIs. However, this tendency might also be predicted by base rates alone, because most men are attracted to women. A second, less common, behavioral syndrome provides more persuasive evidence for the concept of ETIIs. In turn, the concept of ETIIs has helped illuminate this otherwise perplexing phenomenon: men who desire limb amputation. Lawrence (2006) argued that such men are motivated by *apotemnophilia*, an ETII in which men find it sexually arousing to be an amputee. The tendency for men who desire limb amputation to report both sexual attraction to amputees and sexual arousal by the thought or image of themselves as an amputee is consistent with an ETII conceptualization. This tendency cannot be explained by high base rates.

Autopedophilia as an ETII Candidate

Besides autogynephilia and apotemnophilia, no other putative ETII has received much empirical study. There is little indication that anyone has looked for them, although Freund and Blanchard (1993) provided at least one good lead by presenting several cases of pedophilic men who were sexually aroused by dressing in children's clothing or fantasizing about having a child's body. These pedophilic men might be conceptualized as having an ETII involving sexual arousal by the thought or image of being a child, which Lawrence (2006, 2009) has called *autopedophilia*.[1] Despite strong scientific and cultural interest in pedohebephilia (Seto, 2008), autopedophilia has remained unexplored since Freund and Blanchard's (1993) case reports, with the exception of two other cases (Dickey, 2007; Howitt, 1995). In part, this likely reflects a lack of clinical concern about fantasies directed internally as opposed to externally (toward children) among pedohebephilic men. But it also likely reflects a lack of appreciation for the potential of the ETII concept to account for known phenomena that have been difficult to explain and to make novel predictions about them.

Autopedophilia provides a promising opportunity to further test the concept of ETIIs empirically, for several reasons. First, Freund and Blanchard's (1993) case reports established autopedophilia as a plausible, if not likely, ETII. Second, a large number of pedohebephilic men (a population especially likely to have autopedophilia) can be recruited for research from the Internet, because they can be guaranteed anonymity and have a high level of interest. Third, and most important, the concept of ETIIs generates novel and potentially revealing predictions about autopedophilia, an otherwise puzzling phenomenon: Because they are preferentially attracted to children rather than to women, pedohebephilic men should show higher rates of autopedophilia than of autogynephilia, despite the fact that autogynephilia is almost certainly more common in general. More compellingly, the concept of ETIIs predicts correspondence between the kinds of children that autopedophilic men find sexually attractive on the outside and the kinds of children they find it sexually arousing to be on the inside. For example, men sexually attracted to prepubescent girls should, if they are autopedophilic, fantasize about being a prepubescent girl. The current study represents an attempt to examine autopedophilia as an ETII using a large Internet sample of pedohebephilic men.

Method

Participants

Pedohebephilic men were recruited for an anonymous online questionnaire via advertisements initially placed on the Web site B4U-ACT (www.b4uact.org) and on the LISTSERV for members of Virtuous Pedophiles (www.virped.org). Both organizations caution people not to have sex with children and are in this way different from some other organizations or Web sites frequented by men sexually attracted to children. Pedohebephilic participants were reassured that their responses would be completely anonymous and that they would not be asked about illegal acts not already known to authorities, which thereby presented them with no greater concern than that associated with their anonymous participation in B4U-ACT and Virtuous Pedophiles. They were also encouraged to send the questionnaire to other pedohebephilic men and to post it on other Web sites that pedohebephilic men might frequent. Those who did not report that they were male (n = 22) and sexually attracted to children (n = 2) were excluded.

The resulting sample comprised 475 pedohebephilic men (mean age = 28.6 years, SD = 10.6), which was more than sufficiently large and statistically powerful for detecting effects of at least medium size (Cohen, 1992). Of these participants, 233 (49.1%) reported that they were recruited via an Internet forum for individuals sexually attracted to children, 85 (17.9%) reported that they were recruited via Virtuous Pedophiles, and 58 (12.2%) reported that they were recruited via B4U-ACT. The remaining 99 participants (20.8%) reported some other recruitment source, such as blogs dedicated to discussing pedohebephilia. Participants did not receive compensation for completing the questionnaire.

Measures

Participants completed an anonymous questionnaire online, which took about half an hour. Among other material, the questionnaire included two relevant categories of self-report items. Measures of specific aspects of autopedophilia, autogynephilia, and their potential correlates were also assessed but are omitted here for the purposes of concision. We will report on these other measures in a future article.

Sexual interests. For autopedophilia to be characterized as an ETII, autopedophilic participants should be both sexually attracted to children and sexually aroused by the idea of being a child, just as autogynephilic men tend to be sexually attracted to women and are sexually aroused by the idea of being a woman (e.g., Blanchard, 1992; Hsu et al., 2015). To assess sexual interests related to both autopedophilia and autogynephilia, we asked participants to rate the degree to which they are sexually attracted to males and females of different age ranges: girls 3 years old or less, boys 3 years old or less, 4- to 10-year-old girls, 4- to 10-year-old boys, 11- to 14-year-old girls, 11- to 14-year-old boys, 15- and 16-year-old girls, 15- and 16-year-old boys, women 17 years old or more, and men 17 years old or more. Ratings were made on an 11-point scale (0, *not at all sexually attracted*, to 10, *most sexually attracted*). Participants also rated the degree to which they are sexually aroused by the thought, idea, or fantasy of being members of each of these gender-age categories on an analogous 11-point scale.

To reduce bias due to carryover effects, we asked participants to rate their sexual attraction to the various erotic targets (i.e., individuals of different gender-age categories) near the beginning of the questionnaire, and they rated their sexual arousal by the idea of being those targets near the end.

Expression of autopedophilia. Participants reported whether they have ever imagined being a child or having a child's body, and if so, the degree to which they were sexually aroused by doing so (*not at all, mildly*, or *strongly*). Those who reported sexual arousal also reported whether they find it sexually arousing to imagine themselves as a girl (14 years old or less), a boy (14 years old or less), or either a girl or a boy (14 years old or less).

Participants rated their frequencies of dressing in children's clothing (0, *never*, to 6, *daily*) during the past year and during the year that they dressed in children's clothing most as an adult. In addition, they reported whether they had ever considered the possibility that they would be better off as a child and whether they had ever considered hormones or surgery to make themselves look more like a child. Finally, we asked potentially autopedophilic participants to provide detailed answers to open-ended questions about the precise nature of their fantasies and experiences: Those who reported at least mild arousal while imagining themselves as a child or having a child's body described their relevant fantasies and actual experiences more specifically.

Results

Pedohebephilic men are sexually attracted to children of different genders and ages (Bailey, Hsu, & Bernhard, 2016; Blanchard et al., 2012; Blanchard et al., 2009). To facilitate a broad assessment of participants' overall degree of pedohebephilia and autopedophilia, we constructed general variables for sexual attraction to children and sexual arousal by the idea of being a child that were not specific to any gender-age category. The general variable for sexual attraction to children was the maximum

single-item rating of sexual attraction to any of the different kinds of children 14 years old or less (e.g., girls 3 years old or less, 11- to 14-year-old boys). For instance, participants who rated sexual attraction to 11- to 14-year-old boys as 7 but no sexual attraction to any other kinds of children scored 7 on this new variable. Participants scored an average of 9.09 (SD = 1.69).

The general variable for sexual arousal by the idea of being a child was the maximum single-item rating of sexual arousal by the thought, idea, or fantasy of being any of the different kinds of children 14 years old or less. For instance, participants who rated sexual arousal by the idea of being 11- to 14-year-old boys as 7 but no sexual arousal by the idea of being any other kinds of children scored 7 on this new variable. We used this variable as a continuous measure of general autopedophilia that was not specific to any gender-age category.

Prevalence of autopedophilia

Autopedophilia was common among pedohebephilic participants: 233 (49.1%) reported feeling at least mildly sexually aroused when they have imagined being a child or having a child's body. The average degree of general autopedophilia among the participants was 4.40 (SD = 4.05). The distribution of general autopedophilia was bimodal, with over half the participants scoring either 0 (33.6%) or 10 (21.0%). Thus, a substantial minority of our sample was intensely autopedophilic.

Is the rate of autopedophilia among the pedohebephilic sample unusually high, as might be predicted by the fact that both autopedophilia and pedohebephilia are paraphilias, and paraphilias tend to co-occur? To examine this question, we compared the rate of autopedophilia in the present sample of pedohebephilic men, 49.1% (233/475), with the combined rate of autogynephilia from two prior samples of heterosexual men recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk, 15.5% (50/323; Hsu et al., 2015; Rosenthal, Hsu, & Bailey, 2016). Rates of autogynephilia in those samples (14.3% and 16.1%, respectively) were based on any endorsement of sexual arousal by the idea of being a woman or having various parts of the female body. Autopedophilia among the pedohebephilic men was much more common than autogynephilia was among the heterosexual men, $\chi^2(1, N = 798) = 94.69$, $p < .0001$.

Participants recruited via the three most common sources did not differ in either the prevalence or the degree of autopedophilia, both ps > .10. They did, however, significantly differ in their sexual attraction to children of different gender-age categories, because different Web sites and forums tend to cater to men interested in children of different gender-age categories. Furthermore, these differences predicted significant differences in the specificity of autopedophilia endorsed by participants (e.g., the idea of being a prepubescent girl vs. a pubescent boy), which is the focus of the next section.

Specificity of autopedophilia

Men with ETIIs locate external erotic targets within their own body (Blanchard, 1991; Freund & Blanchard, 1993; Lawrence, 2009). Thus, there should be strong similarity between the external erotic targets that these men prefer and the kinds of individuals they fantasize being.

We have noted that the most common ETII is likely to be autogynephilia (Blanchard, 1993b). Although less prevalent than autopedophilia, autogynephilia was also not uncommon among participants: 151 (31.8%) rated their sexual arousal by the thought, idea, or fantasy of being women 17 years old or more as greater than 0. Using this same rating, however, we found that the average degree of autogynephilia among the participants was 1.61 (SD = 2.89), which was significantly and substantially lower than their average degree of general autopedophilia, $t(417) = 15.37$, $p < .0001$, $d = 1.50$. Unlike that of autopedophilia, the distribution of autogynephilia was highly and positively skewed. Thus, consistent with the idea that autopedophilia reflects an ETII, results showed that pedohebephilic participants, who are preferentially attracted to children rather than to women, reported more autopedophilia (i.e., sexual arousal by the idea of themselves as children) than they did autogynephilia (i.e., sexual arousal by the idea of themselves as women). Interestingly, autopedophilia was significantly correlated with autogynephilia, $r(416) = .48$, $p < .0001$.

For more stringent, specific tests of autopedophilia as an ETII, we took advantage of the fact that pedohebephilic men prefer children of different genders and ages (Bailey et al., 2016; Blanchard et al., 2012; Blanchard et al., 2009). First, we examined the correspondence of pedohebephilic and autopedophilic preferences with respect to gender. Of the pedohebephilic participants who were also autopedophilic, 106 (45.5%) reported sexual attraction to girls, 56 (24.0%) reported sexual attraction to boys, and the remaining 71 (30.5%) reported sexual attraction to both girls and boys. We examined whether these autopedophilic participants' sexual attraction to children of one gender tended to correspond with their sexual arousal by imagining themselves as a child of that same gender. This also allowed us to exclude an alternative to conceptualizing autopedophilia as an ETII: A pedohebephilic man may fantasize about being a boy because it facilitates fantasies about sexual interactions with other children (e.g., by reducing guilt about having a sexual interaction with a child as an adult or by increasing the plausibility of the fantasies). Although possible, this alternative does not predict that such men sexually

Table 1. Numbers and Percentages of Autopedophilic Men Sexually Attracted to Girls, to Boys, or to Both Who Were Sexually Aroused by Imagining Themselves as a Girl, a Boy, or Either a Girl or a Boy

	External erotic target		
Internal erotic target	Girls (n = 106[a])	Boys (n = 56)	Both (n = 71)
Girl	**60 (58.3%)**	0 (0.0%)	20 (28.2%)
Boy	16 (15.5%)	**54 (96.4%)**	19 (26.8%)
Either	27 (26.2%)	2 (3.6%)	**32 (45.1%)**

Note: Boldface indicates numbers and percentages for which autopedophilic men's sexual attraction to girls, to boys, or to both corresponded with their sexual arousal by imagining themselves as a girl, a boy, or either a girl or a boy.
[a]The numbers in this column do not add up to 106 because 3 participants did not provide an answer to this item.

fantasize that they are a girl. In contrast, the ETII concept predicts that autopedophilic men sexually attracted to girls are likely to find it sexually arousing to imagine themselves as a girl.

Table 1 presents the numbers and percentages of autopedophilic participants who were sexually attracted to girls, to boys, and to both and who were sexually aroused by imagining themselves as a girl, a boy, and either a girl or a boy. There was a marked tendency for the preferred gender of external erotic targets to match the preferred gender of the child that participants have imagined themselves being, $\chi^2(4, N = 230) = 122.15$, $p < .0001$. More specifically, autopedophilic participants exclusively attracted to girls were more likely to find it sexually arousing to imagine themselves as a girl than as a boy, and those exclusively attracted to boys showed the completely opposite pattern, $\chi^2(1, N = 130) = 79.17$, $p < .0001$. We excluded participants from the previous analysis who were sexually attracted to both girls and boys, as well as those who were sexually aroused by imagining themselves as either a girl or a boy. Because they are not exclusively attracted or aroused by one gender, the predictions from the ETII concept are less clear for those men.

Next, we examined the correspondence of pedohebephilic and autopedophilic preferences with respect to both gender and age. Specifically, we correlated ratings of participants' sexual attraction to the different gender-age categories of children, in addition to those of late adolescents and adults, with their ratings of sexual arousal by the thought, idea, or fantasy of being members of those same gender-age categories. Table 2 presents these correlations for autopedophilic participants. The results were consistent with conceptualizing autopedophilia as an ETII: Sexual attraction to members of each gender-age category was significantly and positively correlated with sexual arousal by the idea of being members of the same gender-age category (see the diagonal of Table 2). Such correlations were particularly high for categories of children 14 years old or less. Sexual attraction to a particular gender-age category of children tended to be significantly and positively correlated, if less strongly, with sexual arousal by the idea of being members of adjacent gender-age categories. For example, sexual attraction to 11- to 14-year-old girls was most strongly correlated with sexual arousal by the idea of being 11- to 14-year-old girls, but the next highest correlations were with sexual arousal by the idea of being 4- to 10-year-old girls and 15- and 16-year-old girls. This pattern is consistent with the "stimulus generalization gradient" (p. 13) proposed by Blanchard et al. (2012). Their model predicted that men's second-most attractive category of person was usually of the same gender and of the next most similar level of sexual maturity, compared with their most attractive category.

Expression of autopedophilia

We examined how pedohebephilic participants' autopedophilia was expressed in their lives. Autopedophilia was significantly correlated with the frequencies of dressing in children's clothing during the past year, $r(415) = .19$, $p < .0001$, and during the year that participants dressed in children's clothing most as an adult, $r(413) = .18$, $p < .0005$. It was also significantly associated with participants' having considered the possibility that they would be better off as a child, odds ratio (OR) = 1.18, $p < .0001$, and considered hormones or surgery to look more like a child, OR = 1.29, $p < .0001$. Among autopedophilic participants, 13.2% had dressed in children's clothing as an adult, 58.0% had considered that they would be better off as a child, and 11.2% had considered hormones or surgery. (The percentage of them who had dressed in children's clothing was based on the number of participants who reported a frequency other than "never" on either of the relevant measures.) Among nonautopedophilic participants, these values were 2.2%, 31.4%, and 2.2%, respectively. Each of the differences in percentage between the two groups was significant, all ps $< .0001$. Participants from the three most

Table 2. Correlations for Autopedophilic Men Between Ratings of Sexual Attraction to Members of Different Gender-Age Categories and Ratings of Sexual Arousal by the Idea of Being Members of Those Same Gender-Age Categories

	External erotic target									
Internal erotic target	Women ages ≥ 17	Girls ages 15–16	Girls ages 11–14	Girls ages 4–10	Girls ages ≤ 3	Boys ages ≤ 3	Boys ages 4–10	Boys ages 11–14	Boys ages 15–16	Men ages ≥ 17
Women ages ≥ 17	**.46*****	.44***	.32***	.20**	.14*	.08	−.11	−.19*	−.06	.14
Girls ages 15–16	.46***	**.60*****	.53***	.32***	.09	−.03	−.25**	−.35***	−.12	.02
Girls ages 11–14	.30***	.52***	**.64*****	.54***	.18*	−.01	−.25**	−.45***	−.26**	−.14*
Girls ages 4–10	.09	.23**	.45***	**.70*****	.32***	.09	−.17*	−.49***	−.32***	−.22*
Girls ages ≤ 3	−.03	.04	.13	.35***	**.60*****	.32***	.07	−.19*	−.16*	−.09
Boys ages ≤ 3	−.06	−.08	−.08	.11	.30***	**.63*****	.30***	−.00	−.04	−.04
Boys ages 4–10	−.17*	−.25**	−.25**	.01	.05	.37***	**.59*****	.26**	.09	.05
Boys ages 11–14	−.17*	−.22**	−.34***	−.31***	−.16*	.14*	.41***	**.56*****	.37***	.18*
Boys ages 15–16	.04	.02	−.11	−.16*	−.10	.05	.10	.30***	**.48*****	.42***
Men ages ≥ 17	.13	.12	.01	−.01	.08	.08	−.01	.02	.19*	**.31*****

Note: Boldface indicates correlations for which autopedophilic men's sexual attraction to members of a particular gender-age category corresponded with their sexual arousal by the idea of being members of that same gender-age category.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .005$. ***$p < .0001$.

common recruitment sources did not differ on any measures related to the expression of autopedophilia, *p*s > .09.

Narratives of autopedophilia

We present three brief narratives that emphasize aspects of autopedophilia relevant to its conceptualization as an ETII. They also provide case examples of this paraphilic phenomenon, which has not been well studied. Each narrative is a selection from the responses that an autopedophilic participant provided for the open-ended questions. We edited the narratives for grammar, style, and concision, while preserving content.

Two participants described their autopedophilic fantasies in ways that implicate an ETII conceptualization:

> Sometimes I fantasize about being with a child myself, but then I end up thinking about it from the child's perspective, being sexually active with an adult. Sometimes I fantasize about spanking a child, and then I would think about being the child getting spanked. Other times, I fantasize about being a little girl being sexually active with another little girl.

> I am attracted to young boys, so I wished to be younger. I fantasize about being a young boy who befriends another young boy who wears cartoon underwear. Eventually, we fall in love and have sex. I also wear cartoon underwear and superhero clothing every day.

The following participant described extensive engagement in autopedophilic behaviors, some of which could have been motivated by sexual masochism rather than by an ETII:

> I used to dress in dresses appropriate for young girls and play with dolls while watching Disney cartoons about princesses. I found this extremely sexually arousing. I also visited a woman who I would pay to be my "mother" for the day. I would dress as a little girl, and she would make me dance for her and do chores. At the end of the day, I would masturbate in front of her. She started to invite men, and I would have oral and anal sex with them while dressed as a little girl. I had similar feelings to when I dressed on my own, but with the added sexual excitement of being humiliated.

Discussion

Autopedophilia was common among pedohebephilic men, characterizing almost half of our sample. The higher prevalence of autopedophilia compared with autogynephilia is consistent with the concept of ETIIs: Pedohebephilic men are sexually attracted to children, and thus children are the external erotic targets most likely to be located within their own body. Also consistent with the concept of ETIIs, results showed a tendency among autopedophilic men for the kinds of children they found sexually attractive to correspond with the kinds of children they found it sexually arousing to be. This tendency was found independently for gender and also for combined gender-age categories.

Expected correlates of autopedophilia, such as dressing in children's clothing, consideration of hormones or surgery to look more like a child, and another ETII such as autogynephilia, were indeed correlated with autopedophilia. They were also more common among pedohebephilic men who were autopedophilic than among those who were not. Dressing in children's clothing, considering that one would be better off as a child, and considering hormones or surgery to look more like a child in autopedophilic men appear analogous to cross-dressing, gender dysphoria, and considering sex-reassignment surgery in autogynephilic men.

Given its apparently high prevalence, why has autopedophilia not been appreciated until now? First, pedohebephilia is itself rare (Seto, 2008), and autopedophilia is still rarer, even if common among pedohebephilic men. Second, investigating phenomena associated with pedohebephilia has understandably received lower priority than predicting sex offenses against children. Indeed, autopedophilia is not defined by attraction toward actual children, and as such, can be innocuous. It is conceivable, however, that both goals may further each other. Finally, the notion of ETIIs has been seemingly difficult for clinicians to embrace, despite their increasing empirical support. Autogynephilia, apotemnophilia, and now autopedophilia are a small but growing set of phenomena that are difficult to understand without the concept of ETIIs.

Limitations of the study

It is unclear how representative our sample of pedohebephilic men was, given the variety of sources through which we recruited such participants. Our pedohebephilic participants may have been especially likely to be autopedophilic, although the prevalence and degree of autopedophilia did not differ among those from the three most common recruitment sources. We note that there is presently no way to ensure that any sample of pedohebephilic men is representative.

There are at least two plausible alternatives to conceptualizing autopedophilia as an ETII. The first is referenced in the last narrative, in which a participant was aroused by the humiliation of dressing as a little girl and having

sex with men. Freund and Blanchard (1993) argued that some autopedophilic fantasies are motivated by masochism. Such fantasies exaggerate the difference between men and their preferred erotic targets (e.g., women), increasing their feelings of submissiveness. In contrast, autopedophilic fantasies motivated by an ETII increase the similarity between men and the children to whom they are attracted. A second alternative is that autopedophilia is motivated by a desire to become emotionally or physically closer to children. For instance, pedohebephilic men might find it easier to fantasize about having sex with children if they themselves are a child, perhaps because they feel shame or guilt about the idea of having sex with children as an adult, or because such a scenario is more realistic to them. Our findings that autopedophilic men sexually attracted to girls tend to find it sexually arousing to imagine themselves as a girl, however, present evidence in favor of an ETII rather than either alternative, at least for those men.

Conclusions

Blanchard (1991) started with the idea that some cases of male-to-female gender dysphoria and transsexualism are fundamentally motivated by an ETII, in which natal males who are otherwise sexually attracted to women eroticize the idea of being women to such an extent that they want to become a woman themselves. Freund and Blanchard (1993) later extended this idea to an analogous ETII that might motivate some pedophilic men to impersonate or fantasize about being children. These specific phenomena are autogynephilia and autopedophilia, respectively. Autogynephilia has since received much empirical support in favor of its conceptualization as an ETII (e.g., Blanchard, 1992; Hsu et al., 2015). In contrast, with the exception of a few case studies (Dickey, 2007; Freund & Blanchard, 1993; Howitt, 1995), autopedophilia had not been researched until our study.

It is fitting that the most compelling finding of our study—that autopedophilic men sexually attracted to girls tend to find it sexually arousing to imagine themselves as a girl—reflects the likely confluence of the two ETIIs that had been proposed many years ago: one that involves locating an individual of a different gender within one's own body, and the other that involves locating an individual of a different age within one's own body. At a broader level, this finding exemplifies the simultaneous importance of three dimensions of male sexual orientation: gender (attraction to females), sexual maturity (attraction to children), and location (attraction to the idea of being another individual).

Two related approaches may guide future research on ETIIs. The first, exemplified by Lawrence's (2006) work on apotemnophilia, is to identify unusual conditions in which men (especially) desire to transform their bodies or identities, and to examine the extent to which these phenomena can be explained by the concept of paraphilic ETIIs. The second, which we employed here, is to recruit men with paraphilias and examine whether a subset of them report sexual arousal by the idea or fantasy of being their paraphilic target, consistent with ETIIs. Our current results in pedohebephilic men suggest that ETIIs may be common among paraphilic men.

Action Editor

Steven Gangestad served as action editor for this article.

Author Contributions

J. M. Bailey conceived of the study with significant input from K. J. Hsu. K. J. Hsu and J. M. Bailey designed the study. Data were collected and analyzed by K. J. Hsu under the supervision of J. M. Bailey. K. J. Hsu and J. M. Bailey wrote and revised the manuscript.

Acknowledgments

We thank Ethan Edwards, Nick Devin, and Richard Kramer for their feedback and support.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared that they had no conflicts of interest with respect to their authorship or the publication of this article.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Note

1. Although the term *autopedohebephilia* is more accurate, it is both unwieldy and inconsistent with the most common terminology. Thus, we use the term *autopedophilia* but mean it to encompass sexual arousal by the idea of being either a prepubescent or a pubescent child.

References

Abel, G. G., & Osborn, C. (1992). The paraphilias: The extent and nature of sexually deviant and criminal behavior. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, *15*, 675–687.

Bailey, J. M., Hsu, K. J., & Bernhard, P. A. (2016). An Internet study of men sexually attracted to children: Sexual attraction patterns. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *125*, 976–988. doi:10.1037/abn0000212

Blanchard, R. (1989a). The classification and labeling of nonhomosexual gender dysphorias. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *18*, 315–334. doi:10.1007/BF01541951

Blanchard, R. (1989b). The concept of autogynephilia and the typology of male gender dysphoria. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, *177*, 616–623. doi:10.1097/00005053-198910000-00004

Blanchard, R. (1991). Clinical observations and systematic studies of autogynephilia. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, *17*, 235–251. doi:10.1080/00926239108404348

Blanchard, R. (1992). Nonmonotonic relation of autogynephilia and heterosexual attraction. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *101*, 271–276. doi:10.1037/0021-843X.101.2.271

Blanchard, R. (1993a). Partial versus complete autogynephilia and gender dysphoria. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, *19*, 301–307. doi:10.1080/00926239308404373

Blanchard, R. (1993b). The she-male phenomenon and the concept of partial autogynephilia. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, *19*, 69–76. doi:10.1080/00926239308404889

Blanchard, R. (1993c). Varieties of autogynephilia and their relationship to gender dysphoria. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *22*, 241–251. doi:10.1007/BF01541769

Blanchard, R. (2005). Early history of the concept of autogynephilia. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *34*, 439–446. doi:10.1007/s10508-005-4343-8

Blanchard, R. (2015, August). Departures from alloerotic heterosexual teleiophilia: Research on the less examined types. In J. M. Bailey (Chair), *Erotic target identity inversions*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the International Academy of Sex Research, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Blanchard, R., Kuban, M. E., Blak, T., Klassen, P. E., Dickey, R., & Cantor, J. M. (2012). Sexual attraction to others: A comparison of two models of alloerotic responding in men. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *41*, 13–29. doi:10.1007/s10508-010-9675-3

Blanchard, R., Lykins, A. D., Wherrett, D., Kuban, M. E., Cantor, J. M., Blak, T., . . . Klassen, P. E. (2009). Pedophilia, hebephilia, and the *DSM-V*. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *38*, 335–350. doi:10.1007/s10508-008-9399-9

Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, *112*, 155–159. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.112.1.155

Dawson, S. J., Bannerman, B. A., & Lalumière, M. L. (2016). Paraphilic interests: An examination of sex differences in a nonclinical sample. *Sexual Abuse*, *28*, 20–45. doi:10.1177/1079063214525645

Dickey, R. (2007). Commentary on "adult baby syndrome" by Evcimen and Gratz (2006). *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *36*, 131–132. doi:10.1007/s10508-006-9148-x

Freund, K., & Blanchard, R. (1993). Erotic target location errors in male gender dysphorics, paedophiles, and fetishists. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, *162*, 558–563. doi:10.1192/bjp.162.4.558

Howitt, D. (1995). *Paedophiles and sexual offences against children*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Hsu, K. J., Rosenthal, A. M., & Bailey, J. M. (2015). The psychometric structure of items assessing autogynephilia. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *44*, 1301–1312. doi:10.1007/s10508-014-0397-9

Hsu, K. J., Rosenthal, A. M., Miller, D. I., & Bailey, J. M. (2016). Who are gynandromorphophilic men? Characterizing men with sexual interest in transgender women. *Psychological Medicine*, *46*, 819–827. doi:10.1017/S0033291715002317

Lawrence, A. A. (2006). Clinical and theoretical parallels between desire for limb amputation and gender identity disorder. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *35*, 263–278. doi:10.1007/s10508-006-9026-6

Lawrence, A. A. (2009). Erotic target location errors: An underappreciated paraphilic dimension. *Journal of Sex Research*, *46*, 194–215. doi:10.1080/00224490902747727

Lawrence, A. A. (2013). *Men trapped in men's bodies: Narratives of autogynephilic transsexualism*. New York, NY: Springer.

Meehl, P. E. (1986). Diagnostic taxa as open concepts: Metatheoretical and statistical questions about reliability and construct validity in the grand strategy of nosological revision. In T. Millon & G. L. Klerman (Eds.), *Contemporary directions in psychopathology: Toward the DSM-IV* (pp. 215–231). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Moser, C., & Kleinplatz, P. J. (2006). *DSM-IV-TR* and the paraphilias: An argument for removal. *Journal of Psychology & Human Sexuality*, *17*, 91–109. doi:10.1300/J056v17n03_05

Rosenthal, A. M., Hsu, K. J., & Bailey, J. M. (2016). Who are gynandromorphophilic men? An Internet survey of men with sexual interest in transgender women. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1007/s10508-016-0872-6

Seto, M. C. (2008). *Pedophilia and sexual offending against children: Theory, assessment, and intervention*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Seto, M. C. (2012). Is pedophilia a sexual orientation? *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *41*, 231–236. doi:10.1007/s10508-011-9882-6

Seto, M. C. (2016). The puzzle of male chronophilias. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1007/s10508-016-0799-y