

## **Accepting the prevalence of pederasty**

Adam Mars-Jones gets near to realism when reviewing the book *Britten's Children* by John Bridcut (4 June 2006)[, but not near enough for my liking. He says the scream and the use of furniture make what happened to the boy Harry Morris an incident, which it undoubtedly was. This is fair enough, but doesn't go far enough].

I would like reviewers of such material to shift their viewpoint slightly. Instead of the maiden aunt position that sees a man's passion for a pubescent boy as outré as well as reprehensible [(one has heard of such things, but really . . .)] it would be good to find one who accepts that such passions [are, and] always have been, very common[. They are prevalent] in all societies[, and at all periods].

Discussion of the problems they cause for the men, the boys, and the society could then proceed apace, which would be socially useful. [Where literary treatments are concerned, it would add the missing factors of cogency and realism – if not acceptability.

I suggest it is important to treat such features of life as commonplace and to be expected, even though problematic.]

Published in *The Observer* Review 11 June 2006 (passages in square brackets omitted).