

Are Child-Porn Cartoons Good for Society?

By [Nicholas Phillips](#) Thu., Oct. 18 2012 at 6:52 AM



[Image via](#)

Dr. Fred Berlin of Johns Hopkins says some in his field believe child porn cartoons are a valid coping strategy for pedophiles

On Monday, a 36-year-old from southwestern Missouri named **Christjan Bee** pleaded guilty to having some filthy porn inside his computer.

His wife had discovered it, then tipped off the local police department in their hometown of Monett. According to [news reports](#), police seized Bee's computer and found:

multiple images of minors engaging in graphic sexual intercourse with adults and with other minors.

But the images weren't real. They were cartoons. (Bee himself had labeled them "incest comics").

The charge to which Bee pleaded guilty was not possession of child porn. Rather, it was an "obscenity" charge, which prosecutors admitted was "rare."



The U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., has made child porn a big priority ever since March 2006, when it launched [Project Safe Childhood](#). The stated goal of that initiative is to "locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children," and to "identify and rescue victims."

But where are the child victims in *cartoons*?

In fact, Daily *RFT* got to pondering: If pedophiles are simply "born that way," then wouldn't child-porn cartoons provide a victimless outlet for their unavoidable urges, and thus, be a good thing for society?

"There's certainly been some behavioralists who've suggested it," said expert [Dr. Fred Berlin](#) in a quick phone chat with Daily *RFT*.

Berlin, who founded the [Sexual Behaviors Consultation Unit](#) at Johns Hopkins University, has been studying pedophilia for some 40 years, and he's part of a growing

community that sees it less as a thought-crime and more a public-health problem to be treated *before* bad things happen.

Berlin told us that some folks in his field believe that with child-porn cartoons, "perhaps you can channel your sexual energies in this direction, and that way, you're able to reduce sexual tensions without harming anyone."

He continued (and we'll quote him at length):

I don't want to go as far as saying there's a consensus in the treatment community that this is the way to go. I've heard the counter-argument too, that maybe it whets appetite and doesn't serve a useful purpose. So I don't think the science is absolutely clear on this. But if the purpose of [anti-child-porn] laws is to protect innocent children from being exploited, it isn't obvious -- on the surface of it -- how someone looking at [cartoons] is actually endangering a child. I think when the arrest is made based on obscenity, that's getting more toward standards of decency. When we get into questions of what constitutes decency, it gets much more subjective.

If you're interested in reading more on this subject, we suggest two lengthy (and fascinating) articles have appeared in [Gawker](#) and [Slate](#) in recent weeks. The gist: While child abuse is *never* OK, many adults who are attracted to children say they wish they didn't have such feelings, and society should help them deal with their urges in a safe way.

http://blogs.riverfronttimes.com/dailyrft/2012/10/cartoon_child_porn_treatment_pedophilia_fred_berlin.php