

August 2022



Dear friends,

The topic for this newsletter is the sexualization of children. While I do have a few comments to make, I need to apologize for not giving you all the 'meaty' newsletter you might have expected—and needed. I found that short of writing a dissertation, I just could not find the right way to craft a satisfactory article. And so the result is rather disjointed—I do apologize for that. I am well aware that the complexities of this topic are overwhelming and are pressing for many of you.

The problem is not that I am afraid of offending people—topics such as the dangers to children of sexualization are too critical to mind offending people who just don't get it. It's that the shifting nuances and the cultural and political context for this issue right now are so tangled that penetrating them and doing them justice in the space of a newsletter article seems ridiculous.

I could have recorded my thoughts but as you all know who have listened to my talks on our website, I just speak. I don't read from a script I have written. And this subject is too hot to risk my words being either misunderstood or snipped and clipped and sent around in a harmful way—it happens to too many people. When self righteous people act as though the ends justify the means---an evil orientation to life if there ever was one---then taking a persons words out of context to smear and cancel them is seen as a 'good thing.'



There is already a boycott of Christopherus because I refused to put a statement of support of Black Lives Matter on my website. As I said to numerous activists, anyone caring to have a thoughtful discussion about Christopherus and any lacks in terms of it being multicultural is welcome to get in touch. But of course no one ever did. Real police violence and perceived police violence are serious matters---virtue signaling is hardly an adequate response.

Before I go any further, I'd like to thank those of you who responded to my request for contributions to this newsletter---though some of you sent various video and blog links, none of you shared your own experiences. This is of course fine---and certainly understandable, especially in a world where one can, as I said above, find oneself hounded, canceled and persecuted for not thinking the right thoughts or voicing questions which one should not have. Even 'sharing one's lived experience', something much beloved by the thought police, is invalid if you have the wrong experience (thus Kanye West could be called 'not Black' when he publicly supported Donald Trump).

I also have a whole host of articles and videos which I have found useful in my exploration of this subject---and have decided to link to one at the bottom of this article. Here are a few of my thoughts:



* The two most vital things for every parent concerned about the issues of exploitative sexualization of children need, in my opinion, to do is 1) to get super clear about their role as a parent and 2) learn as much as possible about anthroposophical child development.

* To be a parent is not to be a friend or even a guide---it is to be a mother or a father and sometimes, for a single parent, both. It means being clear about boundaries; developing the ability to say 'no'; learning how to pray and meditate to get support on one's path; and never ever going along with 'the crowd' when one's inner Mama-voice or Dad-voice is screaming 'no---don't do it!'

* Learning about anthroposophical child development is a long path (I hardly use the term 'Waldorf' any more as the schools for the most part have strayed so far from their foundations as to be almost

unrecognizable---I say this as someone who went to a Waldorf school from kindergarten through high school; taught in several schools; ran a nursery; and have worked with parents and children for almost 40 years out of what I used to be proud to know as Waldorf). Key concepts such as the need for tiny ones to not be precociously dragged from their At One consciousness by adults must be understood so that the nonsense that passes for caring for children can be seen for its inadequacy or harm. A small child being asked what sweater they want to wear, what they'd like for dinner tonight, whether they want to invite Granma for the weekend, what gender they are today...these are adult concerns, adult choices, adult agendas. A little child who is a kitten one day and a pirate the next does not need adults who seek the child's prematurely self conscious self aware opinions. If a child really needs something in them addressed, any good willed reasonably observant mother or father will know this. To bring a child to self-awareness before she is developmentally ready for this is to steal a part of that child's childhood.

* So get various books about anthroposophical child development---it is likely that older books are more useful. Our curriculum through the years of course has lots of information on child development---our Curriculum Overview can be helpful in this as well as the various audio downloads we sell.

* Sorry to make another plug for resources but our Self Study Course is for parents wishing to understand the depths of what informs Christopherus and to also work on their own personal path of self development. It will be of great help in navigating items 1 and 2 above. To answer the questions that confront you, to navigate your way through our crazy world, you need to feel secure and at peace with your beliefs and your path: I have created this self development path to be a powerful help for each parent's journey.

* Although it might seem to many parents that the problem of the sexualization of children is something new, this is far from the case. Our culture over the last 30 years has steadily commercialized and sexualized children---what is happening now could not have happened if more people had rejected the trend toward, for instance, dressing little girls like prostitutes, selling them dolls which encourage the same and even parading tiny ones around in such nauseating spectacles as Toddlers in Tiaras. Sex is great, sex is an important part of adult life---it has nothing to do with children and a non negotiable boundary must be set by all adults of good will and conscience to protect children.

* At the same time, being a parent---an authority, a boundary-maker, the one responsible for their children---has also been severely challenged in our society. Obviously, there are always terrible parenting situations---but a culture which does not encourage, support and embrace parenting---especially mothering---as a valid, wonderful and worthwhile endeavor is not one which can find a good way to help those people who make a mess of parenting. School teachers are not parents and homelife needs be at the fore of every child's life. More day care, longer day care and so on is not the solution---enabling parents to live on one salary and valuing homelife including grandparents, is, especially for the poor, a much more humane and life enhancing solution. Teacher's unions would not be so out of control if so many parents hadn't just handed most of their children's lives over to teachers. Homeschooling is part of the solution, but those who choose or need to send their children to school need support to ensure that schools enhance family life and do not work against it.



* As your children grow into their teens and beyond, help them feel with every ounce of their being how vital freedom is to the spiritual realization of each human being's destiny. Help them know that freedom means messing up and doing wrong---it would not be free otherwise. The paradox lies in the fact that only when we all work out of our freedom that each of us can find our freedom. Imposing 'right' ideas on another may often seem like a necessity---but in the long run this compromises both the enforcer and the enforced and our spiritual progress as human beings is impaired.

* Lastly, one of the most important ways to protect your child from the craziness of our world: do not get your child a phone and do not let them use computers until....late teens would be ideal and even then the need for sensitive yet firm support remains imperative. There is simply no way to protect your child from the ill effects of computer use and especially from the contagion of so-called social media except by not letting them go there. Think of chain saws---a really important piece of machinery, totally inappropriate for children. And if someone gives your child a phone? Treat it like them giving your child a chain saw--- "thank you, lovely. We will put that away for a while until X is ready for it." Non negotiable.

Here is a video I really hesitated to link to for many, many reasons but....'in for a penny, in for a pound', as they say in Britain. The two people speaking are both trans folks, both very well known in their circles both virtually and in person. There are many things about them that make me uncomfortable, but the freedom-loving part of me wants to hear from all sorts of folks, not just those in my narrow circle. And as trans people, they have a lot of interesting things to say about becoming trans and being trans---and they both utterly condemn any notions that children should have anything to do with this. Blaire White in particular has gotten a lot of abuse because of unequivocally condemning the idea that hormones, breast binders, premature sexuality, surgeries and bringing children into sexual awareness is positive in any way.



All feedback to this newsletter most welcome---and anonymity will of course be preserved!

Do send this newsletter and any others I write to anyone you feel would benefit.

[Here is the link to our newsletter archive.](#)

And now on to something completely different.....!

As of 1 September, we are cutting prices on a number of our publications.

End of Summer Sale!

Starts September 1st

- Joyful Movement was \$33--\$45 **NOW \$25**
- Overview was \$45-\$70 **NOW \$36**
- Nature Stories was \$34-\$54 **NOW \$25**
- Journey Begins at Home was \$45-\$65 **NOW \$35**
- First Steps on the Journey was \$45-\$65 **NOW \$35**
- First Grade Curriculum was \$200--\$280 **NOW \$150**
- Form Drawing was \$23-\$35 **NOW \$17**

Til September!
Blessings on your homeschool journey,
Donna