

From Dr. Niall Meehan, Faculty Head, Journalism & Media, Griffith College Dublin
10 April 2017

Dear Paul Chadwick, Guardian Reader's Editor,

Rory Foster in the Readers' Editor's office suggested I might refer this to you.

On 5 February 2017 I brought to the attention of the *Guardian* obituary section a significant omission in David Harrison's 22 November 2016 'other lives' online obituary, dedicated to his friend and former academic colleague, Brian Taylor.

In response to my message, the *Guardian* asked Harrison for his view. He admitted that he avoided noting a significant though controversial event in the academic life of the subject, editorship of a book called *Perspectives on Paedophilia* in 1981. Also unmentioned was a journal article by Taylor, 'Motives for guilt free pederasty, some literary considerations', in 1976. His 1980 biography of a Northern Ireland Novelist, Forest Reid, was mentioned, though not the fact that Reid was a paedophile.

Harrison's excuse for not mentioning an academic text that confirmed Taylor's research interest, an allegedly negative public reaction when it was published, was a reason why it should have been noted. Harrison's minimalist reference at one point in the obituary, to Taylor researching 'aspects of deviance and religion', was inadequate. As deviance within sociology can encompass activity (viewed positively or negatively) that deviates from a norm, Harrison's reference would not have alerted readers to the significance of Taylor's sustained academic work in a particular field.

That Taylor researched sexual deviance of a particular type, paedophilia, for a number of years should have been stated.

During the 1970s Taylor was also a prominent leader of the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE) lobby group, while using the pseudonym 'Humphrey Barton'. He was listed in the PIE journal *Magpie* as PIE's Research Director and as editor of its newsletter.

I provide irrefutable evidence below of the Taylor-Barton connection.

It may be that, as he admitted, David Harrison wished to avoid mention of Taylor's editorship of *Perspectives on Paedophilia*, on the possible basis that publishing the fact might have made people aware of an allegedly hostile reception, and that that might have impacted negatively on perceptions of his friend. In retrospect, he would have been better advised not to have contributed the obituary, if he was determined to leave out significant information.

The obituaries editor turned down my request to correct the record (see separate email trail in PDF format). In my view it is not ethical for the *Guardian* to leave its readers with a misleading impression of the life work of a public figure, once the newspaper's attention is drawn to a problem.

My information provides a reason why, by design, Taylor was relatively 'less in the public eye', or 'lived beyond formal recognition' (to quote criteria for inclusion in the 'other lives' obituary page). Taylor may have wished to obscure and separate, or compartmentalise, the two public sides of his life.

I do not ask the *Guardian* to cast aspersions on the life of Brian Taylor. I ask merely that missing factual information be inserted. I made a suggestion for an additional note, reproduced below and slightly amended.

If the addendum is refused on the basis that the online obituary section is a vanity publishing exercise, in which authors may massage the public life of a subject, then a warning to readers may be necessary, informing readers that basic editorial controls may not operate. Readers may then read on, apprised of the fact that they may be reading a fake or incomplete obituary.

The Taylor obituary should be corrected. In addition, in future perhaps authors should be advised that in describing the life of a subject, salient facts should not be omitted or glossed over.

SUGGESTED ADDENDUM to David Harrison Obituary to Brian Taylor:

‘Dr. Niall Meehan, from Dublin, Ireland, has been in touch and adds the following:

‘Brian Taylor researched sexual deviance, particularly as it concerned paedophilia. He edited a book on the subject, Perspectives on Paedophilia, in 1981. The book proved controversial, not least as it included chapters from disgraced child psychiatrist Dr. Morris Fraser (‘The Child’) and from Peter Righton (‘The Adult’). Both were convicted child-sex offenders: Fraser twice before and twice afterwards; Righton, once afterwards. Other chapter authors included the late Dr Maurice Yaffe and also Professor Ken Plummer who subsequently regretted his contribution.

‘Using the pseudonym ‘Humphrey Barton’ during the 1970s, Brian Taylor was also research director of the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE) lobby group, that sought to abolish restrictions on sexual relations between adults and children above the age of four. He contributed regularly to the PIE magazine Magpie during this period. Taylor’s first known literary contribution on the subject, writing as ‘Humphrey Barton, Belfast, Northern Ireland’, was ‘Paedophile Politics’, published in Kalos On Greek Love, Vol.1 No.1, Spring 1976, edited by J.Z. Eglington (AKA Walter H. Breen, a convicted child-sex offender). As Brian Taylor, he published ‘Guilt Free Pederasty, some literary considerations’ in the Sociological Review in 1977. The three publications by Taylor-Barton mentioned here, and other evidence, contain sufficient elements in common to demonstrate that Brian Taylor and Humphrey Barton were the same person.’

End suggested obituary addendum.

NOTE on Humphrey BARTON - Brian TAYLOR being the same person

In my PDF letter to *Guardian* Obituaries Editor Robert White (appended separately), I noted that in 1976 the British Sociology Association journal, *Network*, listed delivery of a paper on Paedophilia by ‘B. Taylor’ at Manchester University. I cross-referenced with the PIE journal *Magpie* in 1976, which noted delivery in Manchester University of a paper on the same subject by PIE Research Director, ‘Humphrey Barton’ (in turn described in *Magpie* editions as a sociology lecturer in a British university).

Barton declared himself resident in Northern Ireland (see below) at a time when Brian Taylor was there also. See for example, *Studies*, Vol.65, No.260, Winter 1976, where

Taylor is described as lecturing in 'the Department of Social Studies in the Queen's University of Belfast'.

In 1976, 'Humphrey Barton, Belfast Northern Ireland', contributed 'Paedophile Politics' to *Kalos On Greek Love* (Editor, J.Z Eglington, aka Walter H. Breen), Vol.1 No.1, Spring 1976.

Page 6 of the above article contained:

'One is the suggestion that the only honest way out of this welter of hair-splitting argument is to abolish the age-of-consent completely, and employ the care and control provisions of the British Children and Young Persons Act up to the age of legal majority. This would still allow prosecution for physical assault, but not for non-violent consensual relations between adult and child. The other is the recognition that the label of sexual assault is little more than a legal convenience when minors are involved.'

Five years later, in 1981, in his editor's introduction to *Perspectives on Paedophilia*, ppxxi-xxii, Sussex University sociologist (formerly of Queen's University Belfast) Brian Taylor observed in a nearly identical manner:

'One extreme conclusion which might emerge from such dialogue could consider that at least an honest way out of the welter of argument over the age of consent is to abolish the legal concept entirely and to employ the care and control provisions of the Children and Young Persons Acts up to the age of legal majority. This would still allow prosecution for physical assault, but would serve to effectively decriminalize non-violent consensual relations between adult and child. Another extreme conclusion might be that the label of sexual assault itself is little more than a legal convenience where minors are concerned.'

It is difficult to construe the above passages as the work of different authors. Please also see,

Humphrey Barton, 'Paedophile Politics', *Kalos On Greek Love* (Editor, J.Z Eglington, aka Walter H. Breen), Vol.1 No.1, Spring 1976, note 1:

'Rossman, Parker, "The Pederasts." Society/ Transactions. March-April 1973. Rutgers University Press. See also his Pederasty Sexual Experiences Between Men and Boys. New York: Association Press. 1976 (forthcoming).'

Contrast with Brian Taylor, 'Motives for Guilt Free Pederasty, some literary considerations', *Sociological Review*, Vol. 24, No.1, February 1976, Note 11:

'G. Parker Rossman: "The Pederasts", Society, March/April 1973a, pp, 29-35. See also Rossman's "Literature on Pederasty", Journal of Sex Research, Vol. 9, No.4, 1973b, pp. 307-312. The empirical material in Rossman's Society article is incorporated into his Pederasty: Sexual Experience Between Men and Boys, Association Press, New York, 1976.'

In addition, in both 1976 publications, Taylor-Barton included and criticised an identical passage from Donald J. West, *Homosexuality*, London, G. Duckworth & Co, 1955. The offending passage stated:

'The paedophiliacs' [sic (HB in Kalos)] sexual outlets are comparatively infrequent, unsatisfying and guilt-ridden, remaining secret episodes known only to themselves. and out of keeping with the general tenor of their lives. Whereas many homosexuals question the assumptions of conventional

morality, homosexual paedophiliacs tend to compartmentalize their thinking, assuming attitudes of impregnable respectability and sexual purity, hardly admitting their real interests and motives even to themselves.'

Taylor's criticism in the 'Guilt Free Pederasty' article asserted:

'Acknowledged sociological work usually provides a picture of pederasty in the context of a sad picture of guilt-ridden frustration, and often disassociates the pederast from the 'true homosexual'. This tendency, however, often leads to a subsumation of pederasty under the generic classification of child molestation, a linkage which hardly helps to clarify the intricate issues involved.'

These and other coincidences all point to Barton being also Taylor.

Brian Taylor's academic career lasted from 1975-95. For an unknown reason, he retired prematurely between 1996-2002. During the earlier period, 1975-81, Brian Taylor researched paedophilia and simultaneously promoted the interests of a paedophile lobby group. An appreciation of his life, which fails to mention that fact, is misleading.

I hope you see the necessity of correcting the record. It may be that you consider a remedy, other than an addendum to the obituary, to be required.

Thank you for considering this matter,

Regards,

Dr. Niall Meehan

From: **Niall Meehan** □
 Date: 1 May 2018 at 16:50
 Subject: Brian Taylor obituary
 To: Paul Chadwick

Dear Paul Chadwick,

Greetings after nearly a year. I do not see a response to my two letters below. I take it that you never told the readers you represent what happened to the Brian Taylor obituary, and that you do not intend to confirm your inactivity to me. It appears that I will have to take on the task of informing the readers.

Yours sincerely,
 Niall Meehan

From: **Niall Meehan**
 Date: 25 May 2017 at 07:39
 Subject: Re: From Niall Meehan (two PDF attachments)
 To: Paul Chadwick

Dear Paul Chadwick,

I ask again, do you intend to explain to Guardian readers your reasons for taking down the Brian Taylor obituary? If not you might, if you have time, explain why.

Yours sincerely,
 Niall Meehan

On Tue 2 May 2017 at 11:41, Niall Meehan wrote:
 Dear Paul Chadwick,

Thank you for your message of yesterday, 1 May. Also, thank you for considering the matter. Will you be outlining your reasoning to Guardian readers at some point?

For my part, I would have preferred an addendum. Dr Brian Taylor was at one time an important academic and also a public figure, albeit he was someone who kept much of his public activity secret from colleagues and friends. He had a significant role in publishing, promoting and lobbying on behalf of paedophiles during the 1970s and 1980s. Unlike others, he does not appear to have publicly regretted that activity. Partly, that may be due to his vacating his academic post at a comparatively young age for reasons that are unclear.

It is a pity, therefore, that Brian Taylor's specific importance is not reflected by the Guardian, even after an initial false start. Instead, Brian Taylor again vanishes, just as perhaps he might have wished.

Yours sincerely,
 Niall Meehan

On 1 May 2017 at 11:28, Paul Chadwick wrote:

Dear Dr Meehan,

As requested, I have looked into this matter.

In all the circumstances, I believe the appropriate course is for the article to be taken down from the Guardian website and I will make arrangements accordingly.

Regards,

Paul Chadwick

Guardian readers' editor Guardian News & Media
guardian.readers@theguardian.com
 Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU

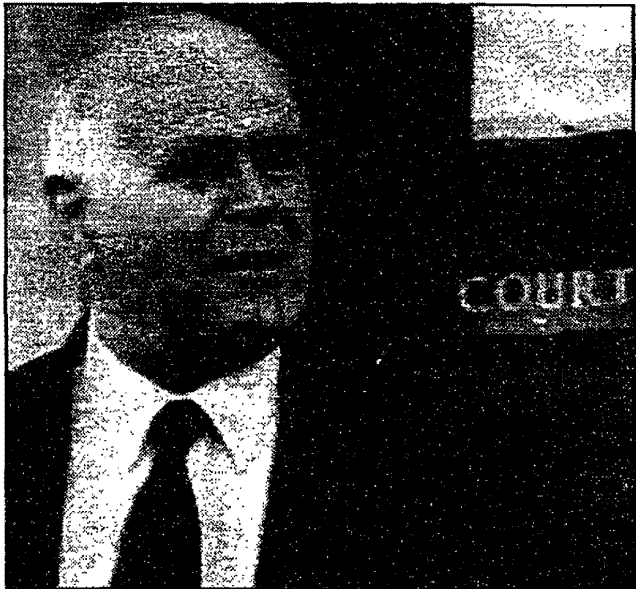
On 10 April 2017 at 00:36, Niall Meehan wrote:

Dear Paul Chadwick, Guardian Reader's Editor,

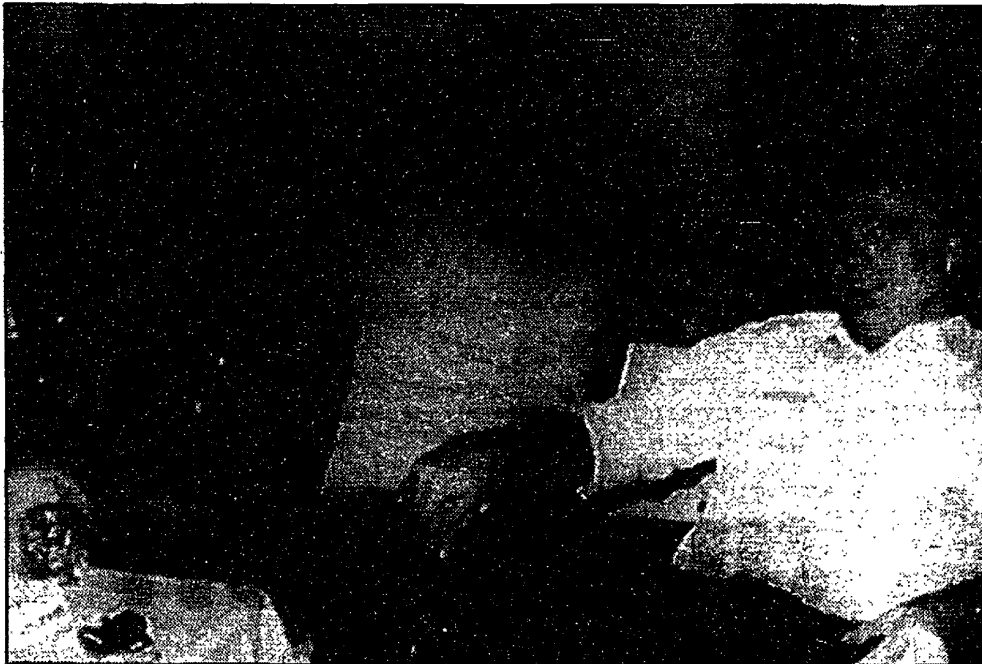
Rory Foster in the Readers' Editor's office suggested I might refer this matter to you, as outlined in the attached PDF letter [pages 1-4 here] and separate email trail, etc. (also in PDF format) [not included here].

I would be obliged if you could acknowledge receipt of the documents.

Yours sincerely,
 Niall Meehan



Guilty secret . . . above, Peter Righton after his conviction for importing and being in possession of child pornography; right, with a friend; and Mark Thewliss, alleged victim of Righton, as a child



To children Peter Righton was a kindly figure. But it is claimed he was an abuser who betrayed his trust. **Edward Pilkington reports**

The Guardian 1 June 1994

Shadow of the attic

PETER Righton could not help slipping into his old schoolmasterly tone when a former pupil contacted him recently for the first time in almost 40 years. "Mark," he said in a silken yet authoritative voice. "I want to ask you a very ordinary, simple question." But then he wavered, betraying anxiety: "Are you very angry with me? Do I need to panic?"

Mark Thewliss put his old school teacher at ease for the purposes of a journalistic investigation. But he did feel angry. Mr Righton did, perhaps, need to panic.

Thewliss has participated in an 18-month investigation by the BBC's David Perrin, whose Inside Story documentary is to be screened tonight. Thewliss alleges that at the age of 12 he was sexually abused by Righton at Red Hill, a school for disturbed boys in Maidstone, Kent. Righton, then aged 31, was his English teacher and mentor.

Thewliss has a simple way of explaining how he came to fall under the influence of the older man. "The cigarettes were kept in a briefcase under his bed. I had to be in his room to get them."

Righton was kind. He was astute, outgoing and very clever with a soft, slightly podgy face that was reassuring. He listened well and would discuss anything sympathetically. "He was almost like a father figure."

There were other goodies on offer besides the cigarettes. The teacher would give the boy jobs to do, such as servicing the boiler or cleaning his car, which elevated his status among the other pupils. Sometimes he

would take the young Mark on trips in the car as a treat. As the days rolled into months the tasks became more onerous, the rewards more generous. Mark was picked out to clean the man's attic room, a special privilege. "He began to offer me more and more. There was always another treat, another trip, more cigarettes. There was always more."

Other teachers at the school recall that Righton had taken a coterie of the most vulnerable pupils under his wing and that his behaviour towards them was somewhat eccentric. He would splash aftershave over the fronts of the boys' trousers.

Then late one evening he took Mark and a select group of other boys for a drive to Camber Sands. They ate ice-cream before swimming nude. Mark remembers feeling happy, care free. There was only one towel and Righton dried them one by one. When it came to his turn to be rubbed down Mark grew sexually excited. That night the teacher invited Mark and another boy back to his room. The three of them joked about how sand had become trapped in various parts of their bodies. As they searched for the sand they took off their shirts, then their trousers, then their underpants. Finally, Thewliss alleges, they masturbated each other.

Such mutual masturbation sessions are alleged to have become a regular feature, occurring up to six times a week. At least six other boys were involved.

After Thewliss made that telephone call to his former teacher he arranged to visit him at a house in a country estate where he now lives. Righton had by now regained his

schoolmasterly confidence: "My dear Mark, I have found, throughout my life, boys attractive. I don't dispute it. It doesn't follow from that I have gone around seducing boys all my life," he said.

But the Inside Story documentary alleges Righton maintained an active interest in the company of children for years. He is alleged to have associated with paedophiles who used the cover of their professional expertise to gain access to children, from teachers to social workers, child psychiatrists and churchmen.

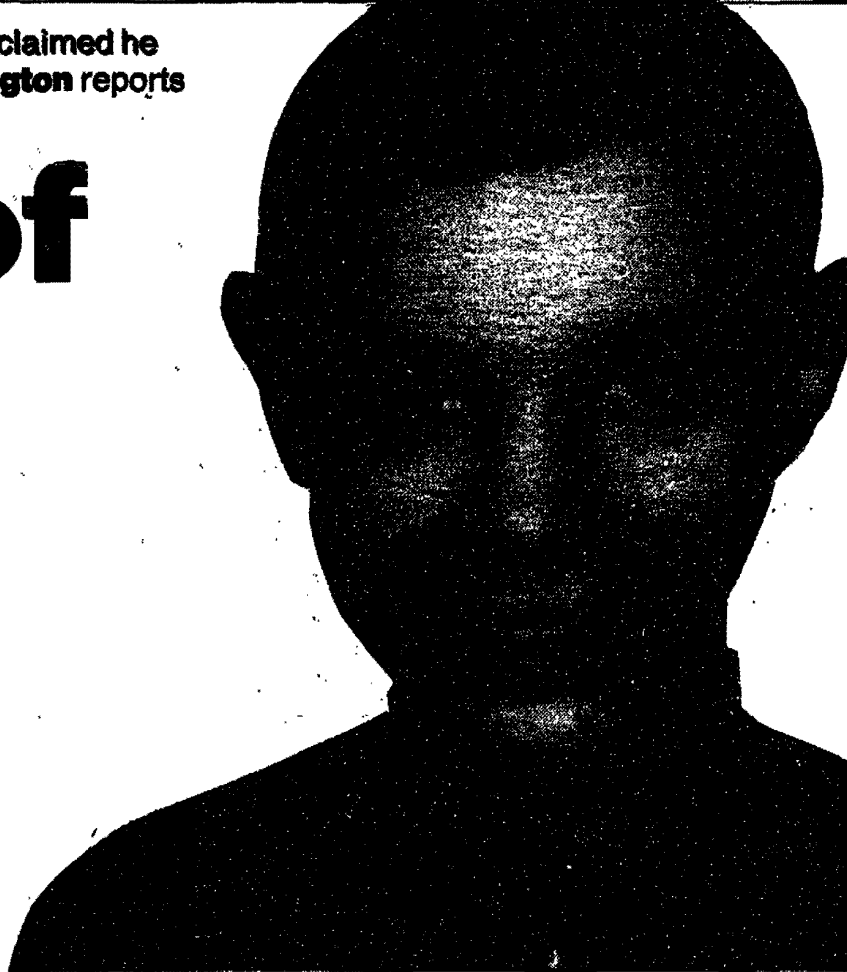
At Red Hill he kept a private diary in which he confessed that "legally I haven't a leg to stand on. It's an official crime for a man of 37 to make love to a boy of 15."

Paul Pelham Righton, or Peter as he prefers to be called, was the product of a public school and Oxford education and the army. He was a powerful personality who made friends easily and commanded natural respect. He went on from Red Hill to enjoy one of the most distinguished careers in social work. He rose to the very heart of the profession, as one of the country's most eminent experts on residential care for vulnerable and unruly children. He held positions at Keele and the Open University, he devised courses on the rights of children, he sat on official working parties, he drew up a Children's Charter for the National Institute for Social Work. He even gave the prestigious Barnardo's

annual lecture in 1973. "He was well respected and popular," says the institute's director, Daphne Statham.

His work brought him into regular positions of authority over children. Which begs the question: why did the allegations now raised by Thewliss and others not surface earlier?

In fact, they were raised but nobody did anything about them. In 1964, police conducted an investigation after another pupil at Red Hill complained of sexual abuse. The inquiry was dropped through lack of evidence. Two teachers separately reported concerns about Righton, which he denied, to the headmaster. A "gentlemen's agreement" was finally struck in which he was asked to leave at the end of term but with



no bluish on his record. The gentlemen's agreement set a precedent that ran through his career.

By the 1970s and early 1980s he was already established as an expert in his field, which gave him a professional coat of armour. He also benefited from a progressive strain of thinking that by then had grown quite prominent in social work and child psychiatry. It held that children possessed an innate sexuality just as any adult, which had to be nurtured rather than repressed to avoid trauma in later life. The trend towards child-centred approaches in education and psychology also encouraged the view that children had the right to be sexual animals and to initiate relationships.

That view was pushed hard within the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE), a semi-clandestine organisation that acted as a secret network for paedophiles but also publicly campaigned in the 1970s for legalisation of sex with children over four. Righton, the BBC alleges, was a secret member of the group, number 51. Through PIE he made contacts with the campaign's treasurer, Charles Napier, a teacher who had been banned from working in all English schools after he was convicted of indecent assault on five infants. In 1978 Napier wrote to Righton from Sweden, where he had been taken on as a junior school teacher with children as young as 11.

"Nicholas visited me by himself and allowed me to caress him quite comprehensively for a few minutes," Napier wrote, referring to an unknown boy. Righton visited him in Sweden and two years later, when Napier applied to have his ban from English schools lifted, he supported the application on the headed paper of the National Institute for Social Work. He said Napier "no longer constitutes a sexual risk to children in his charge".

By that time Righton was so confident in the growing acceptability of his beliefs that he openly professed them. Under his own name, he wrote a chapter of a book called *Perspectives On Paedophilia*, a collection of essays by child care experts. Another contribution in the book is an article by Dr Morris Fraser, a consultant child psychiatrist in London later convicted of offences against children. Claiming to have "counselled" paedophiles for 15 years, Righton decried in his chapter the "moral panic" over sex with children and said that with the "child's willing compliance the sex is unlikely to do much harm".

Those guilty of forcing themselves on children through violence should be liable to long prison sentences, but "I contest the assumption that children need protection from any kind of sex with an adult, however loving, gentle or even educative."

The argument that a distinction could be drawn between abusive and consensual sex with children struck a chord within progressive social work circles. It was fashionable to see children as autonomous beings who should have the right to liberate themselves sexually. As Ann Goldie, a social worker associate of Righton's, puts it: "I don't think I totally accepted that way of thinking but there was a part of me that was persuaded by it."

In the mid-1970s Goldie sat next to Righton at a dinner party. At the end of the meal he confided to her that he had engaged in sexual relations with eight or nine boys in residential care homes. He stressed the boys had reached puberty and were under no pressure to have sex. Goldie was a lesbian and by then Righton had also come out as a homosexual. "He assumed group loyalty," she says. "He assumed he could trust me with this information. And that assumption was an accurate one."

Other prominent figures have also admitted that they failed to act on warning signals. Daphne Statham first met him in 1966 and their paths have crossed regularly ever since. "I

had only one hunch. It was something he said when he was talking about his motorbike club. It was the emotional tone, not the content. But I never went on to ask the second question. I was a complete and utter fool. If it ever happens to me again I will never fail to ask that second question."

Similar "second questions" about other cases are now being asked in local authorities around the country. Completed investigations in other parts of the country reveal an awesome truth: that the system set up to care for and protect vulnerable children has been infiltrated by men dedicated to achieving the opposite.

Evidence suggests that over the past 20 years paedophiles have targeted residential care homes, in a conscious deceit. Dr Eileen Vizard, who has counselled several convicted paedophiles and now runs a project for young abusers at the London Tavistock clinic, says they can devote years to manoeuvring themselves into positions of power and responsibility. "Is it a coincidence when a man finds himself in a remote country cottage with a book on paedophilia in one hand and a boy's genitals in the other? No, of course it's not. It is scrupulously planned."

In Leicestershire, Frank Beck abused 200 children in council care homes. Thirty complaints were raised about him over 13 years before he was brought to book. Last year Stephen Norris was jailed for seven years for sexually assaulting a string of boys aged 10 to 14 when he was a senior house master at Bryn Estyn children's home in north Wales.

2 The adult

Peter Righton

Who are the paedophiles?

One of the most intractable difficulties that faces paedophilia is how to decide, with any precision, what is the definition of 'paedophile'. The term itself encompasses a double whammy to confuse the definition of 'paedophile' experience an erotic attraction only for child pornography, or should we include those who are not?

Righton's contribution to Perspectives On Paedophilia

Other care homes in the region are now under investigation in one of the largest inquiries into child abuse ever undertaken.

Ralph Morris was sentenced three years ago to 12 years in prison for physical assault, indecent assault and buggery. He had set up his own independent school for vulnerable youngsters, Castle Hill, in a mansion house on the outskirts of Ludlow in Shropshire. It was a lucrative business, with local councils paying up to £19,000 a year for each of up to 60 pupils. But money was not the only incentive.

He spent years building up an inner corps of favoured boys who he rewarded with an elaborate system of treats and sinecures. They were taken on excursions to buy expensive clothes and allowed to stay up late and watch television in the staff bedroom. He named this elite taskforce the Republican Guard and gave it almost free rein to intimidate and bully those outside the circle. Even within the guard there was a steep hierarchy. The leading boy was called Top Dog and was answerable only to Morris himself.

Once the regime was established Morris began converting the physical control he exerted over the boys into sexual acts. In the police investigation boys described vividly how he gently upped the stakes. He would lie on the bed and ask a boy to tickle his feet. Then he would tell the boy to go "higher and higher". If the boy demurred he would stop, but at the next meeting the seduction would go one stage further. The final stage ranged from group masturbation with five boys dubbed "six-handers" to oral and full penetrative sex. The youngest of his victims was 10.

Dr Vizard has studied this process

of "grooming" whereby paedophiles work on their subjects, massaging away their resistance to sex. "It is a surprisingly complex behavioural training programme where you push a child further and further and reward each stage."

It can take anything from days to years. The paedophile unit at Scotland Yard recently investigated a man who kept elaborate records in his diary. He engaged in several seductions at the same time, writing meticulous references in code to the varying stages each had reached.

With perpetrators as organised and ruthless as this, the authorities are up against a formidable opponent. And they are hampered by inadequate systems for monitoring the threat.

The inquiry into Morris's regime at Castle Hill highlighted the disastrous absence of a nationwide attack on child abuse. Boys would complain to the individual local authority that had referred them to the school but no pattern of abuse was detected because the information was unco-ordinated between regions. Worse, the stigmatisation of the boys as "maladjusted" meant they were often disbelieved, sometimes by their own parents who sent them back only to suffer further abuse.

Child care groups are now campaigning for a national body that would tap into police intelligence, co-ordinate investigations between local authority areas and take seriously those children who allege they have been abused. At the same time, those who acknowledge they have been duped say the image of the paedophile has to be reappraised.

"There is a danger in pathologising these people as nasty, horrid people you can spot," says Daphne Statham. "They are not. In many parts of their life they are intelligent and pleasant and successful."

Meanwhile, the Government's care in the community policy has encouraged the proliferation of small, private residential homes that are only partially regulated, which could provide paedophile rings with a whole new honeypot.

"There is so much we don't know," a Scotland Yard detective says. From what we already do know, it looks alarmingly as though the war against those who abuse the trust of children in their care is being lost.

Charles Napier was working until recently as deputy director of studies for the British council in Cairo. He is alleged to have described the city in a letter to a friend as "full of boys, 99 per cent of them available." PIE, the organisation of which he was once treasurer, is believed to have gone underground. But police suspect it has split up into smaller, interlacing networks which still exist.

Righton, who is retired, aged 68, continued to enjoy an unblemished reputation until 1992, when by chance a letter addressed to him from Amsterdam containing photographs of nude boys was intercepted. A raid on his house in Evesham unearthed more material, such as a copy of *Stud Boy* and paedophile magazines. He was fined £900 for importing and possessing child pornography, his only conviction.

Mark Thewliss, now aged 49, has found it impossible to shrug off the memories of what happened in Righton's attic room. "I am a moody person. I cannot easily form relationships with men or people in authority. I'm not particularly good at expressing my feelings, I just retreat into a shell."

He still feels guilty for having accepted the cigarettes in the briefcase under the bed. "There is always a dark cloud in the background and I have never been able to get rid of it. It is with me today. I am sure he has blighted an otherwise outgoing, happy life."

Children At Risk, an Inside Story documentary, will be broadcast at 9.35pm on BBC1 tonight.

