

Does Matt Sandusky really accuse Jerry
or is he introducing new language?

Let's start with a question: does Matt Sandusky really intend in his recent public interview to make an accusation against his adoptive father, or actually are Matt and Dottie Sandusky, and others like Aaron Fisher, trying to explain to an insensitive public what language in a close relationship is actually like?

This article must acknowledge John Ziegler's recent analysis of Allan Meyers' statements, and later Shubin's statements, for the source of such an interesting idea. Ziegler recalled that Meyers had reported to Joe Amedola that he knew he was the boy whom Mike McQueary had seen, and later Shubin informed Amendola that Meyers was 'one of the worst victims.' Yet, Meyers himself never made any accusation. Perhaps, one might wonder, Shubin meant to say that Meyers was a victim of Eshbach's presentment¹, written under Governor Corbett when the mantle of AG was passed down.

And, in Aaron Fisher's book, there is no accusation, only a description of accusations being formulated in conversations with Gillum.

Can it be that the point of this story is that when people like Aaron, Matt, and Allan say that they are victims, they are trying to explain that they are political victims? That a close and loving relationship had been destroyed by innuendo and accusation?

We know that things like the Freeh report, the Moulton report, and prosecutor McGettigan's summing up, are sensitive to such a possibility, or in fact describe it. But what is the truth?

Can we learn, from what Matt and Dottie actually say, a mother and son, whether the two together are trying to explain something to the wider world, and not actually trying to accuse each other?

¹I was completely wrong to blame Jonelle Esbach, the next article shows correspondence with John Zieger sorting out my terrible mistake

It occurs to me that in speaking to Ziegler, Dottie never accused Matt of stealing jewelry and selling it on eBay. Dottie had only said that she had seen team jewelry for sale on eBay. Was her point to say, now, is the public cruel enough to deduce from *these* words, that I might accuse my son of stealing?

The recent interview (Matt with Oprah Winfrey) was transcribed onto the Kos website by R. Behrens, a survivor of child abuse and co-founder of an organization to prevent abuse, who is sympathetic to the notion that Matt needs to be protected from abuse. But if Ms. Behrens has transcribed carefully, the words also leave open a possibility that Matt is not describing abuse at all.

In answer to the question ‘when did the manipulation start,’ Matt says,

The first thing I noticed that he did when he picked me up - his hand would be on my knee while he was driving. Coming from where I came from, we didn’t touch, didn’t hug, didn’t kiss, didn’t tell each other we loved each other. It was awkward and weird, but I thought maybe that’s the way he was with his family.

I believe this next part was in answer to the interviewer's attempt to suggest that the hand had then moved further,

It was a gradual thing, it happened in summer camps and anytime he had time with me - he would move further up my leg with his hand. At 9 years old I felt awkward. It felt so different from anything that I had experienced in my life - I could not truly understand the feelings I was having or what it was for. You don't know what you're feeling - it's not something you feel on a daily basis. It progressed - going up my leg, being in your shorts, throwing you, grabbing on your genitals as he throws you. 12 years old - he's progressed to full-on being in the locker room after racquetball had to take a shower.

Another typical quote is

...as I now know and have the words for - it's oral sex. He's doing that to you and it's very confusing. It's very confusing for you because you have a reaction. It's something that at that time you definitely don't know what's happening, but that's just what it is I guess. I don't want to say that it's pleasurable, but it's not the most painful thing I guess. Your body betrays you. For him to have done those things to me for him to have performed oral sex on me, forced me to do the same to him, for him to kiss me on the mouth.

An interpretation of such a statement is that Matt has been given the words 'oral sex' to describe kissing a parent on the mouth.

Likewise, in the statement

He digitally penetrated me and he did try to anally penetrate me, but I was never anally penetrated.

could it be true that someone like Matt is intelligent enough to make a statement that could not literally describe abuse? What could it mean to be 'digitally penetrated' but 'never anally penetrated?' It could, after all, describe holding hands, then.

Could Matt and Dottie, and also Aaron and Allan, be trying to explain to us that the condemnation of Jerry Sandusky was never based on any specific accusation? That descriptions of simple parental love, or, more specifically in these cases, love of children who are not biological children, can be, and have been, legally classified as criminal?

The innocent meanings seem a first reading like grasping at straws ... but they are there logically, always, in these interviews.

Is mathematical truth not only the preserve of those privileged and trained in mathematics? Is it something possessed of every human being who has an emotional message to convey?

Anyone understands that Matt has agreed to use words which criminal investigators have asked him to use. This was then a careful exercise, with the result the same witness statements which had been used to construct a criminal conviction for child abuse also describe what is in his case clearly just an innocent and caring relationship.

Is it true generally that, those times when one might say 'you must listen to my exact words, you must understand my exact meanings,' are the times when there is public emotional stress between two very near meanings only?

That, mathematics is not something that needs to be trained into a person, with rules and examinations and rote, but it is something that emerges in a person at times of clarity, at times when pulic emotions of appear and resolve themselves, and things need to be explained?

And then, as repeating a poem by memory, mathematicians and students of mathematics learn the utterances which had been stated at early times of great stress, if they are made with sufficient clarity.

That, in analagous situations beyond sports and beyond universities, those straws which one might wish to grasp for, in avoiding a situation of pain and conflict, involve careful distinctions of meaning only because they are subtle, new, and unfamiliar in an emotional way.

Postscript

...you know....I hadn't noticed something about the Oprah Winfrey link until the Kuwait poet Nada Faris posted, although I would guess a lot of other people noticed it.

Matt saying that he was happy all day until bedtime, and then the ritual began.

That would sound very insidious to those who fear child abuse (especially what they call ritual abuse).

But there is something so familiar to me about it now, about the notion of having such a happy day with my parents, that the only darkness was the literal darkness at the end of day, and being told that soon it will be bedtime.

That, the gentlest parents have a bedtime ritual, which is tinged with a little bit of sadness for the little child, because for a little child, the end of the day is almost like a feeling of the end of life. That tomorrow morning is so far away, it does not help.

And the parents' bedtime ritual is almost like a little funeral for the child, if he is sensitive.

The things which Matt says are so perfectly ambiguous. For a child like myself who had a loving and protected childhood, I recognize the notion of the little ritual at the end of the day as something beautiful while sad.

Yet also, those who fear 'ritual abuse' and 'ritual satanic abuse,' or even who fear being controlled, dominated, and fear the notion of a child being sexually exploited, hear those same words in a totally different way.

I wonder if, in other cultures, especially in times when there had not been electric lights, not electricity generators, if there is almost a tradition –maybe even transcending culture – of how parents and children have intimate little rituals together. Which for a sensitive child who has been so happy all day in the sunlight, is something that in later life also resembles other rituals.