



Watch Red-Haired Sitter; She May Vamp Infant Son

By RAY CROMLEY
WASHINGTON (NEA) — Does a baby boy who has a red-headed baby sitter when he's three months old have a secret longing for red heads all his life?

"We're not sure, but that's the way it might well be," one experimental psychologist who's done a lot of work with dogs told NEA Service.

Scientists haven't proved yet whether this "imprinting," as they call it, applies to human babies or not. But psychologists experimenting with animals say they are quite certain it does. The "imprinting" occurs in all animals they've worked with so far.

Some time ago a young scientist was out in the woods. He came across a baby male wild fowl a few hours old. The fowl followed him. Now that it's grown, it pays no attention to lady fowls put in the same pen. But it goes into a love dance every time it sees the scientist. It only wants to make love to humans.

A baby duck 15 hours old will follow the first thing it sees. And it what it sees is a wooden decoy, then forever after it will think of that piece of wood as its mother. It will even prefer the decoy to a real mother duck it meets later in a duck pond.

Children they've used simple tests on seem to react the same way. As one scientist told NEA Service: "We've tried holding cardboard faces before four-month-old children. They smile at the cardboard faces just as they would at an adult. That changes, though, after they're six months old."

These scientists, of course, are not particularly worried about ducks and fowls. But they are worried about what happens to a human baby when he's three to six months old—the same age relatively as a 15-hour-old duck.

They ask: had humans better watch out who or what their baby sees when it's three to six months old? What has the scientists concerned is one simple discovery. Apparently it takes only a few minutes—10 to 20, or 30 at the most—to build up a lifetime attraction between a baby bird, a baby fowl, a baby dog or lamb

or cat and a human being, a wooden decoy, another animal, or almost anything else.

The scientists emphasize that this lifetime attraction could be for anything—a human, an animal, an object.

Apparently this quickly-built-up attraction, this flash lifetime devotion, or "imprinting," takes place only during a short time in infancy. In ducks it's at the age of 13 to 28 hours. In puppies it's from three to seven weeks. In humans, scientists aren't sure but think it's somewhere between three and six months.

Before the critical period, baby birds, animals and presumably humans don't form attachments. After the critical period, presumably attachments are formed slowly and not so blindly. Bigger birds, puppies and children seemingly "decide" whom they're going to like and who not.

Back to the critical age. There's no telling who or what a baby sees from the time he's three months old until the time he's six months old... maybe the repair man in to fix the TV, maybe the Boy Scout next door, maybe the neighbor girl in to baby-sit, or maybe the black sheep uncle from Paris.

If what holds true for animals also holds true for humans, a baby might very well build up a lifetime attraction for any person he's seen at this impressionable age. Or he might be attracted by someone with the same appearance, habits or mannerisms.

Apparently if a baby is frightened, the bond is strengthened. One scientist told NEA Service: "Think of what might happen to a six-month-old baby boy frightened by a bolt of lightning if he was then picked up and comforted by that same red-headed baby sitter."

AF Plans To Decrease Size Of Organization

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Air Force probably will shrink its organizational size to fewer than 90 wings during the next five or six years—smallest since the wholesale demobilization following World War II.

These wings will include missile outfits as well as manned aircraft. Part of the cutback will be in B47 medium bomber wings as more efficient means of delivering destruction replace these planes.

Economy seems to play only a small part in the trend, which began about two years ago. Improvement of both aircraft and missiles accounts primarily for the change.

The nuclear firepower which can be delivered by even 90 wings will be thousands of times that of the huge bomber fleets of World War II.

The military budget now being debated in Congress says that there will be a "modest reduction in the number of wings in the Air Force, from 105 at the end of the current fiscal year (next June 30) to 102 at the end of 1960."

The slow reduction in wing strength started after a peak post-war strength of 137 was reached in mid-1957.

The size of an Air Force wing varies from 45 big bombers to 75 fighters. Normally, a wing consists of three squadrons of planes.

In missiles, the squadron designation is generally used. A ballistic missile squadron will range from 10 weapons for an intercontinental ballistic missile—ICBM—outfit to 15 for an intermediate range ballistic missile—IRBM—squadron. Formation of such squadrons is just beginning.

During the coming year, as the Air Force nears the 102-wing level, a wing of Atlas ballistic missiles will be included in the over all count, along with the present wing of Matador guided missiles and probably a wing of Bomarc long range antiaircraft missiles.

Secretary of Defense Neil H. McElroy said last month that the Strategic Air Command will include 14 wings of B52 heavy jet bombers—two more than had been shown under previously announced plans.

The B52 manned bomber is retained, under present plans, to remain an important part of the nuclear weapon delivery system at least to 1965 and perhaps longer, depending on the speed with which missiles and other unmanned weapons are perfected.

The cutback in wing strength toward an eventual level of fewer than 90 will be brought about, in part, by the gradual elimination of the B47 medium jet from SAC's fleet of strategic bombers.



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Defense Department officials say that one wing of the new, improved B52G series can replace two wings of B47s. The B52G has longer range, without using aerial refueling, than the first B52 series. But more important, the B52G will be armed with the Hound Dog missile—a device for sending the nuclear explosive into a heavily defended enemy area while the bomber itself remains outside, several hundred miles away.

CAN'T TRUST ANYONE THOMSON, Ga. (AP) — Sheriff Lynn Norris arrested Willie Hampton on a charge of stealing a radio from an ice house in October.

Hampton admitted the theft and took the sheriff to a vacant house where he had hidden the radio. It was gone, Norris said someone had stolen it from Hampton.

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