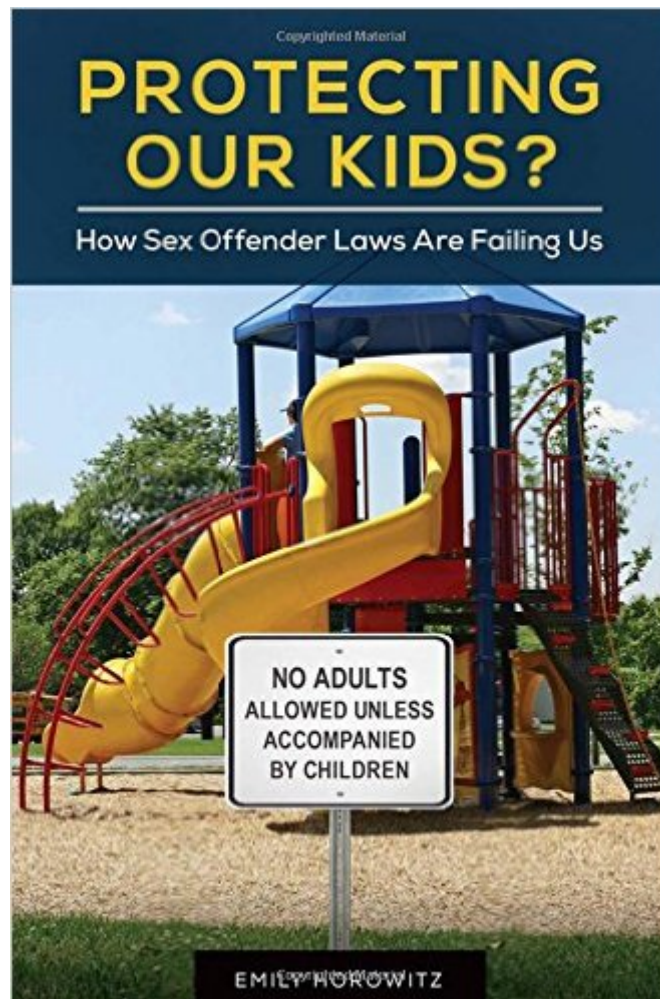


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# Protecting Our Kids?: How Sex Offender Laws Are Failing Us



## Synopsis

This thought-provoking work raises important questions about sex offender laws, drawing from personal stories, research, and data to prove the policies promote fear, destroy lives, and fail to protect children.â

- â Provides research-based evidence that the mean-spirited and panic-driven sex offender laws, aimed at branding a group of offenders as inhuman and unworthy of civil liberties and human rights, increases fear, destroys the lives of offenders and their families, and fails to protect children
- â Shows that emphasizing sex offenders and stranger-danger as the primary threat to child well-being and safety prevents focus on and attention to policies that prevent far more pervasive forms of child abuse, such as physical abuse, neglect, and maltreatment
- â Analyzes the sociohistorical context surrounding the emergence of current draconian sex offender policies
- â Challenges the idea that sex offenders must be continually monitored and publicly identified
- â Tells the stories of convicted sex offenders and their families and how they survive in a society that views them as the "worst of the worst"

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

5 Stars! I am a volunteer advocate working to Restore Integrity to the Virginia Sex Offender Registry and laws. I have read 35+ books on this issue over the last 7 years and many are duplicates of one another, are extremely technical making them difficult to follow or they reference very, very old data or none at all. This book is the best one I have EVER read. Emily Horowitz takes a look at issues all based on facts that no other author has dared to consider. If I had the \$5,400 to buy 145 copies for every Virginia Legislator and the Administration I would! Every policymaker in America needs to read

this book. Thank you Emily Horowitz for writing this book!

Great book. Every single time I hear a politician say the phrase, "we must protect our children," I cringe. We know our lawmakers to be less than truthful and surely not worthy of blind trust. So, why do we keep getting duped by supporting these people when they use this platform? I guess I could understand if theirs was a heinous, heinous crime that happened to their little one, but it almost always seems to be a platform pandering to the lowest common denominator. They say the first person through a brick wall is the bloodiest. But, once the hole has been made, it gets easier for other to go through. I'm honestly very impressed with the author, as well as the professors and doctors that are brave enough to say the most common sense thing that we all seem to think. Good for them! One caveat. I do think the most heinous of perpetrators need to have the most heinous of punishments. Completely. By and large, though, I bet I've known of at least 20 people on the registry and they are all as normal as you could imagine and not guilty of the most heinous crimes. An isolated instance that they were actually accepting of a very real consequence... but for the rest of their lives? Give me a break. Give a real punishment and let everyone get on with their lives. At this rate we'll be able to throw a rock in any direction and hit a registered offender.

"Protecting Our Kids?" is an excellent study of public hysteria that shows how sex-offender laws are meant to make people feel good rather than deal with a problem. When someone can be thrown into jail for six months for having sex with a consenting 16-3/4-year-old, and then be blacklisted for eight years after serving his sentence, things need fixing. The author backs up her thesis with research and sensible arguments that in no way whitewash those guilty of heinous crimes. Since, as Horowitz shows, the vast majority of abuse is committed by those in the nearest circle of friends and relatives, the obsession with "stranger danger" is counterproductive. We see how resources poured into post-incarceration registries and questionable therapies could be far better employed to protect our kids from far more prevalent forms of abuse and want.

Had to get the book as my brother was the one that received the 100 year sentence for allegedly possessing child pornography. Although there was substantial evidence for his innocence (one fact was according to the download times, my brother wasn't even in his apartment, he wasn't even in the city..his ex-girlfriend was. Part of the time that the child pornography was download, my brother was in a tent in a remote part of West South Dakota during the Sturgis Rally....and has receipts to prove it). Evidence that would have shown innocence (and there was a lot) was not allowed to be

presented. A majority of the jurors that day gave a guilty verdict based on the "just in case" mindset that appears in the book. I hold no bad feelings for these jurors as they did not know that my brother would receive 100 years. In the state of South Dakota most people that commit this crime get three months or less. This author does an excellent job of showing the fear mongering that surrounds these cases and often results in an unjust trial. No one wants to be the person that appears to stand up for any form of child sex crimes. With this it means many Innocent and even those that are guilty can not get a fair trial as the steamroller of justice ignores facts and evidence and convicts on the premise of "just in case." Corey Bruce USMC/Disabled Vet/Registered Nurse.

I spent an hour writing an honest report on this book and lagged it as inappropriate. I'm not sure why but perhaps it is another example of our hysteria any time we place the letters S, E, and X side by side. Despite the "revolution" of the 1960s and our growing openness in some respects to our desire to engage in intimate activity, we are in many ways prudish to the point that typing a three-letter word can get you flagged on this site. In fact, you can't type S, E, and X together on many forums online. With that in mind, it is no small wonder that we lack an honest discussion of those we call "s\*x offenders." The taboo nature of that three letter word seemingly prevents people from having rational dialogue, and in turn, those we call offenders are spoken of irrationally. We pass laws based upon myths and stereotypes of these "offenders" without a thought to the consequences. This book does what few people have dared to do -- discuss these consequences from the viewpoint of those forced to live under these laws. Horowitz does a great job of discussing the factors that created the current era of Predator Panic and our irrational approach to addressing CSA. But, it is the stories of the registered citizens and their families told against the backdrop of the creation of this "Containment model" era that makes this book unique. This book is the evidence for the need of massive reforms to a broken system propagated by special interests, feminists, and Conservatives. If a word with only three letters invoke such a taboo response, it is no wonder we have failed to address the root causes for s\*xual abuse in America. I believe every lawmaker, especially those propagating more "tough on crime" legislation, should be required to read this book.

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