

"The practice of violence, like all action, changes the world, but the most probable change is a more violent world."

- Hannah Arendt, quoted in The Take

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ASSASSINATION!

STOP!! —No, Not the Presses, All THIS!!:

Legislator Assassination, Terrorists Plot Violent Attack Against Advocacy Organization's Annual Meeting, and a Man Who Will Try to Become King in the Land of the Free

Editor's Prefatory Note:

Politically, this year has already become an extremely turbulent year; that's nothing new. But assassination of elected public officials and plotting violent terrorist attack on disliked advocacy groups — let alone a man who clearly wants to convert his status from temporary president of our country to its permanent, dynastic king, are all far beyond the limits of intolerance.

These developments are outside of the usual coverage of this newsletter. But their character as anarchic revolutionary acts and a potential attempted coup to replace our longstanding representative democracy with the tyranny of a dictatorship accountable to no one, including the prospect of a civil war and widespread murder of potential millions simply for being disliked by those with guns, are all unthinkable near-futures and must be called out plainly, forcefully, and everywhere — including this newsletter. Here-with the news — of unparalleled relevance and importance to all who may read this edition:

1. Two MN Legislators & Their Spouses Shot, One Couple Dies — Political Murder by Extremist Assassin with a Long List of Democrats to Kill.

[Ed.], "Minnesota Democrat Killed in Political Attack," The Week (June 27, 2025), p. 5
"What happened

Authorities this week arrested the man suspected in a shooting rampage targeting Minnesota state Democrats that killed two people and gravely wounding two more, the most severe attack in a growing wave of political violence. Vance Luther Boelter, 57, was captured after a daylong manhunt and faces federal charges of first-degree murder and attempted murder.

In the indictment, prosecutors say he dressed as a police officer and went to the home of state Sen. John Hoffman, shooting Hoffman nine times and his wife, Yvette, who was shielding the couple's disabled daughter, eight times. Both survived.

He then briefly stopped at two other Democratic lawmakers' houses before reaching the home of state Rep. Melissa Hortman, a former state house speaker, where he shot and killed her and

her husband, Mark.

Boelter's associates described him as a married father of five [adult children], an abortion foe, and a devout Christian who had voted for Donald Trump in 2024.

In the hours after the shootings, Elon Musk, Donald Trump, Jr., and other right-wing figures falsely identified Boelter as a leftist. [Editor: Flyers urging "No Kings" were found in the car Boelter allegedly used for the shootings, apparently as a 'false flag' appearance as a Trump opponent. This was the only evidence seeming at first glance to support such a farcical claim. Could it be that these figures — including Trump—knew of the attack in advance and thus knew what to say as counterfactual propaganda? However, also found in that car was a list of Minnesota politicians — all Democrats, including Hortman and Hoffman, apparently all targeted for projected assassination by Boelter. This was projected political mass murder!]

U.S. Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) made posts on X joking about the killings.... Does it strike you yet that some archconservatives have secretly resigned their obligation to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States?

2. Terrorist Proud Boys Plot Violent Attack on Large Annual Meeting of NARSOL for Advocating End or Reform of Sex Offender Registry.

Editor's Explanatory Note:

The first excerpt below simply shows the topics that the National Association for Rational Sex Offender Laws (NARSOL) considers for advocacy regarding the national and state sex-offender registries. NARSOL is the very paradigm of a political advocacy organization engaged in rational consideration and discourse about publicly meaningful issues upon which to sensibly advocate.

There is nothing whatsoever extremist about it — unless, of course, you happen to be an extremist driven by hysteria and hatred of sex offenders, such that any rational discourse on the topic of sensible regulations on the subject has become "extremist" simply for being calm and rational, rather than irrational and violent.

The second article exposes the violent intentions of the "Proud Boys" extremist/ clandestine organization with secret agendas (like storming the U.S. Capitol with intent to overthrow the national Congress and to install Donald Trump as de facto dictator, rather than merely President).

In this case, they aimed to commit limitless violence against members of NARSOL, with the larger intent to make discussion and advocacy of rational public decisions regarding the sex-offender registry effectively impossible, apparently to clear the way toward murderous vigilantism against all sex offenders or at least any such self-appointed vigilantes choose to kill.

Wayne Bowers, Executive Director, CURE-SORT, "Major Conference Nears, Including Speakers with CURE-SORT Connection." 34(2) CURE=SOR News (2nd Quarter 2025), p. 1.

Text: "The 17th annual conference of the National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws will occur at the end of June in Grand Rapids, MI. For the first time in several years, rather than watch on a digital feed, I am attending in person as it gives me a chance to stop by my previous home in the greater Lansing, MI area after the conference. CURE-SORT will be well represented on the conference program with one former board member and one present board member making a presentation.

Dr. Chrysanthi Leon, professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice, Women and Gender Studies, and Legal Studies at the University of Delaware was on the board some years ago and has always been a supporter of our work. Her main presentation at the conference is titled, 'We want a house with a crowded table.' She also will direct a breakout titled 'Navigating community involvement.'

Recently becoming a board member is Dr. Stephanie Jerstad, Professor of Criminology at Millersville University, Millersville, PA. It was her research focusing on corrections, reentry barriers, and housing instability, with an emphasis on sexual offending policies, that drew attention for her participation with us, as the plight of aging registrants to locate housing is a very difficult task. Her main presentation at the conference is titled, 'End of life housing obstacles for those forced to register.' She also will direct a breakout titled 'Navigating complex care ...for aging individuals with a sexual offense.'

Another long-time member and supporter of CURE-SORT is also making a presentation. Kathie Gourlay of Chelsea, MI, coordinator of a group of NARSOL, Michigan Citizens for Justice, will lead a breakout titled 'Experience a Fearless

support group meeting.' This is a program developed and coordinated by NARSOL for registrants.

Amber Vlangas, whom we have gotten to know in her efforts to build the strategy to remove the registry through directing the National Coalition Against Conviction Registries, and also with the Restorative Action Alliance in Katonah, NY is directing a breakout. She is directing a session called 'Amplifying your voice: Story telling for advocates.'

There are other main speakers and breakouts in the conference, along with good networking and social time. It was my pleasure to attend the first conference of NARSOL in Boston in 2009 where some good supporters and even eventual board members were met. I also attended the St. Louis meeting the next year and have not made all of the meetings, but we always have some of our members participating and attending.

Another of our board members who will be in attendance is Shawn Barrera-Leaf, who is the executive director of United Voices for Sex Offense Reform (UV4SOR) in Traverse City, MI. They advocate as a meeting of the minds of those who have been impacted by the criminal justice system."

**Editor's Note:** At this point, it should be mentioned that NARSOL comprises tens of thousands of members. This annual conference was expected to draw at least several hundred attendees, most expected to stay in rooms in the same Hilton hotel hosting the conference in its large meeting hall and adjacent rooms for "breakout" meetings during the conference. Any large-scale violent attack would likely have caused at least scores of deaths and countless additional casualties. Any use of delivered or planted explosives or other mass casualty devices would have multiplied these estimates beyond calculation.

*Brenda Jones, Executive Director, NARSOL email to R.L. Brewer, "Urgent! NARSOL Conference Rescheduled!!!," reprinted in Titus House Newsletter (July 2025), p. 2.*

**Text:** "We are writing to inform you of a critical development regarding our upcoming annual conference, which was scheduled for June 26-29, 2025, in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Earlier this week, the Proud Boys – a group recognized as an extremist hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center – initiated an online campaign against NARSOL by enlisting their supporters to bombard our conference venue, the Hilton Double Tree Grand Rapids, with threats, up to and including a campaign targeting Hilton's corporate headquarters in Tennessee.

As a result of these actions, the Double Tree has closed access to our conference venue, effective immediately. While this is deeply disappointing, the safety and well-being of our attendees, speakers, and staff remain our highest priority.

We want to assure you that NARSOL is not deterred by this situation. Our mission and commitment to advocacy remain steadfast. We understand how disheartening

this is, but we are standing strong and moving forward!

The combined boards of NARSOL and NARSOL's Foundation have elected to reschedule the conference to a future date and alternative location as quickly as possible. We are actively working to secure a new venue and will communicate details as soon as they are available.

Here are steps we advise you take immediately to mitigate any losses surrounding this change of plans:

1. Call the hotel directly and cancel any overnight guest booking you made. Even if you booked at 'non-cancellable' rates, the hotel must cancel without penalty and refund any payments. You may need to have the credit card used in booking. The hotel number is (616) 957-0100. Please call before June 24 to avoid any possible problems. Despite their decision, we urge you to remain respectful and professional if you choose to express disappointment, and to do so only after your room has been officially cancelled.

2. Call your airline and inform them that your event was cancelled due to 'civil unrest' in Grand Rapids and ask them for a refund. If a refund is not available, ask for a travel voucher so you can attend our soon-to-be rescheduled event.

(For further information see NARSOL website: <https://narsol.org/>.)

NARSOL is organizing a virtual gathering of our community on Saturday, June 28, 2025. Please consider setting aside time from 1 to 5 p.m. Eastern Time that day. We will send out information as soon as possible.

Thank you for your understanding, for your resilience, and for your continued support during these troubling times. With supporters like you behind us, NARSOL will not be defeated (or deflated!)"

**[LP Editor's supplement: Reddit dialog excerpt:]**

**[Moderator:]** "The facebook post was by someone named Pat Bates Smith and I'm sure it's a coincidence but Kathy Bates has a sister involved in Tampa politics named Patricia Bates Smith... I just thought it was funny when I found that I couldn't tie the two together and she would be pretty old."

Still hopefully we can keep everyone safe and also defend our rights.

**[Identity undisclosed:]** It was a repost. The threatening words she used were 'it's execution time' which is either a call to action for people to show up or an 'execution' as in calling for violence.

**[Exotic...]** "I do believe the FB post was finally removed. But ACSOL is calling for action from Registrants and their families to email Hilton and let them know how wrong they were to back down from the Proud Boys. ACSOL [Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws] was also requesting everyone to 'report' the Facebook page. When I tried, it was gone."

The hate and threatening nature of claims of responsibility for bringing about this postponement (which the following internet posts call it) could not be more blatant. These people engage in incendiary lying to

gain support for their actions. Illustrative is a post by someone calling himself only "Bri J Canceled". He claims that NARSOL "openly defends and works on behalf of pedophiles and sex offenders. ...Well now they have been shut down, and I'm going to personally run them underground where they belong. At the very least. Whatever it takes."

A facebook page lists one "Anthony Sargent" with photo of a short-haired white man with a beard-without-mustache staring without expression at the camera. An "Intro below states "J6er released by Trump from federal prison. He states that he lives in Saint Augustine, Florida, but this page was apparently posted from Ogdensburg, NY. His post dated June 24, 2025 at 11:20 AM states: "We did what no one has been able to do to these pedo enablers in 16 yrs. More info to come. More action is yet to come. We will shame this organization out of public existence. We do have ppl registered for the event, so we will know if NARSOL is lying and we will still be in Grand Rapids this weekend. Congratulations to Hilton Hotels for making the right choice."

Another anonymous post states that NARSOL "planned a pedo convention at the Double Tree Hilton in Grand Rapids. America's favorite Black and Yellow's [sic] showed up and shut it down quickly." Apparently, black and yellow is a color scheme chosen by the Proud Boys/MAGA Party as a subtle identification to other members.

"Mickey Finn" responded to this by saying, "hope there was a lot of beat downs".

Someone calling himself "Albert Lewis Wilson" suggested that "This is the way the LGBTQ disguises the deception, of the promotion of their dysphoric lifestyle, as comedy. Sycophants claiming victimhood that heterosexuals are homophobic. They made one big mistake, while, during a LGBTQ parade on June 23, 2023, ... [suggesting that the parade engaged in vocalizations and/or some action that somehow provoked violence or hostile behavior by some hate-filled spectators]. Someone named "John Rederick" responded, "Yeah, I remember that one."

Some dialog in this thread ensued between a "Lisa Rauch" about a supposed (nonexistent) "Manifesto" supposedly by NARSOL in the 1980s cited "in Congress" as NARSOL's purported "agenda", and a "Jane Rowsey," who said that the "goal" of this Manifesto was "unbelievable" (implying) revolting in an unspecified way.

The website proclaiming itself as 'The MAGA Party' threatens unspecified opponents or those whom members of that party dislike, saying "Fu&k around and find out". This website declares this "party" is a political organization, but that "GC Global Ventures LLC is responsible for this Page", listing the same phone number for that business and the party. An address on Staten Island, NY is listed.

A photo of t-shirted white men with a Double Tree-Hilton sign visible over their heads bears the caption: "Pedo Event Exposed and shutdown in Grand Rapids, Michigan."

Derek W. Logue, longtime advocate for the rights of people on the registry and others subjected to mistreatment for past sex offenses, described the dialogs quoted here as "Proud Boys do victory lap after shutting down NARSOL conference." He adds in this email, "I've tried warning the powers that be in this movement for years about this for years now, and NARSOL had a close encounter with these far-right terrorists, but NARSOL would rather ignore this and bury their heads in the sand. Now we have to take these fu\_ers into consideration at every event we do, because that's how terrorism works."

### 3. 'The Future Fuhrer' – Are You Out Of Your Insane-Squirrel Mind?? Wake Up!! - The Turning Point for the Resistance Is Now.

[Eds.], "No Kings: A Turning Point for the Resistance?," *The Week*, (June 27, 2025), p. 17.

**Text Excerpts:** "The anti-Trump resistance finally has reawakened," said Michelle Goldberg in *The New York Times*. Millions of disgusted Americans poured into the streets last week across 2,100 cities and towns under the 'No Kings' banner to protest President Donald Trump's authoritarian administration. Even reliably conservative locales like Coeur d'Alene, Idaho and the Villages retirement community in Florida saw thousands of demonstrators. With sending in soldiers and marines to occupy Los Angeles and staging a military parade in Washington, D.C. to honor himself, the weary resignation that followed his reelection is giving way to outrage.' In fact, it 'may have been the biggest day of demonstrations in American history,' said Will Neal in *The Daily Beast*. Data journalist G. Elliott Morris estimates 4 to 6 million people came out to show their opposition to Trump's toxic, 'far-right' policies. Overall, the number of protests and rallies against the Trump administration – 15,000 in total – has increased threefold since this same period in 2017. A 'mounting backlash' against Trump is gathering momentum.

...The backlash against Trump is real, said Steve Benen in *MSNBC.com*, and special election results prove it. Several days before 'No Kings' day, Democrat Amanda Clinton won an Oklahoma House seat in a 69-point landslide.' The seat was in a Democratic district that Kamala Harris carried by 19 points, and the 50-point swing surpassed all expectations. Overall, Democrats have overperformed in 29 special elections this year, running 16.4 points ahead of the 2024 election results. Republicans are alarmed, which is why Steven Cheung called the massive 'No Kings'

protests 'a complete and utter failure with minuscule attendance.' When the Trump administration tells 'Americans not to believe their own eyes,' you know that 'the prevailing political winds' are changing."

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## An Example of NARSOL's Good Work — Article: SO Residency Restrictions - Very Bad Public Policy — Why Proud Boys Seek to Destroy NARSOL by Violence

[Sandy Rozek, "Sex Offender Residency Restrictions: Bad, Bad Public Policy," 18(2) *the NARSOL Digest* 2 (Apr./May 2025).

**Text Excerpts:** [p. 2:] "Residency restrictions for persons required to register as sexual offenders are often enacted for no reason other than neighboring towns have implemented them. They spread like wildfire, and like that destructive force, they wreak their own form of havoc, making it more and more difficult for registrants to find decent housing for themselves and their families. This, in turn, makes it more and more difficult for them to create the stability they need to become productive citizens, which, in reality, is what drives down recidivism.

<https://tinyurl.com/3vtpy8mc>

...Residency restrictions ...are based on three assumptions that are contradicted by evidence:

In reality, 94% or higher of sexual offense cases against children involve someone known to the child; residency restrictions assume most child sexual abuse is committed by strangers. The percentage of situations in which a prior relationship exists between an abuser and a child victim varies dependent on the age of the victim. A study done by the Office of Juvenile Justice found that for very young children, family members and close acquaintances comprise close to 100% of their offenders while for teens, those categories make up 94.3%....

<https://tinyurl.com/2s3h2rv2>

Clearly victims are chosen based on *relationships*, but the policies presume offenders choose victims based on residential proximity, which is not supported by research. Residency restrictions create zones around schools, daycare facilities, and often parks. A two-state study, Michigan and Missouri, did not support the mistaken theory that living close to one of these was a factor in repeat sexual offenses against children. Another study ...found that, in Florida, 'There was no significant relationship between reoffending and proximity to schools or daycares.'

<https://tinyurl.com/3hsswr9e>

<https://tinyurl.com/45cd93fs>

The vast majority of sexual crime is committed by first-time ...sex offenders, not, as

residency restrictions assume, by repeat offenders. A study in New York found that '...over 95% of all sexual offense arrests were committed by first-time sex offenders, casting doubt on the ability of laws that target repeat offenders to meaningfully reduce sexual offending,' and a study from the University of Tennessee had very similar findings. They report, 'Another factor constraining [sex offender registries] effectiveness is that past studies have shown that ...'94.1% of those arrested for child molestation were first-time sex offenders.'

<https://tinyurl.com/2svvw3wt>

<https://tinyurl.com/3ewcajb2>

Restrictions often force offenders away from support systems, treatment, stable housing, and employment opportunities, which are crucial for successful reintegration. These are the elements associated with remaining offense-free. Some areas are so encompassed by residence restrictions that homelessness has escalated, especially in states where residency restrictions are aggressively implemented, such as Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi.

On the opposite end of the spectrum is the state of Kansas, which actually has a page on its DOC website about why residency restrictions do not work and which has passed legislation in 2006 prohibiting its jurisdictions from implementing them..

<https://tinyurl.com/3h9fpzsw>

<https://tinyurl.com/ycsvjdzz>

...The choice should be easy."

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## Attitudes toward Sex Offenders – the Role of Conservatism vs. Knowledge

*Michelle K. Rosselli & Elizabeth L. Jeglic, "Factors Impacting upon Attitudes Toward Sex Offenders: The Role of Conservatism and Knowledge," 24(4) *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 496-515 (2017)*

**Abstract:**

Sex offender legislation is influenced by public pressure. However, there is evidence suggesting that the public's beliefs about sex offenders may be based upon myths and misperceptions. This study examined the relationship between knowledge of sex offenders in areas concerning their recidivism rates, treatment outcomes, and victim types, as well as current supervision and correctional management directed toward sex offenders and how this knowledge relates to overall attitudes towards sex offenders, sex offender treatment, and community notification laws. Further, we sought to examine how conservative belief systems affect this relationship. Using a sample of 559 undergraduate students we found that knowledge about sex offenders and conservative beliefs were significantly related to attitudes toward sex offenders such that those who had more conservative beliefs and less knowledge were more likely to have negative views toward sex offenders. Additionally, conservative belief systems moderated the

relationship between knowledge about sex offenders and general attitudes toward sex offenders. These findings will be discussed as they pertain to the development of evidence-based sex offender policies.

**Text excerpts:**

pp. 496-97: "Introduction

...Sex offenders are often perceived as the most despised offenders within the criminal justice system, frequently eliciting extreme negative emotional public reactions including fear, disgust, and moral outrage (Olver & Barlow, 2010). However, this public outcry may be based upon myths and misperceptions about sex offenders, such as the notion that sex offenders have very high recidivism rates and that strangers commit most sex crimes; while in actuality, the contrary is true. Sex offenders have some of the lowest recidivism rates of all offender types (Calleja, 2015; Cortoni, Hanson, & Coache, 2010; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998; Hanson & Harris, 2001; Hanson, Morton, & Harris, 2003; Vess & Skelton, 2010), and the majority of sex crimes are perpetrated by someone known to the victim (Meloy, Miller, & Curtis, 2008; Sample & Bray, 2003; Zevitz, 2006). Consequently, many sex offender laws have been heavily influenced by emotional responses to heinous crimes, potentially disregarding factors that are empirically related to community recidivism reduction (Cohen & Jeglic, 2007; Levenson & Cotter, 2005).

p. 501: Knowledge and Attitudes

The relationship between knowledge and attitudes has been investigated across a number of fields, and it has been unequivocally demonstrated that obtaining factual information can change attitudes (Ambati, Ambati, and Rao, 1997; Singer & Cooper, 2009). To date, only one study has assessed the effects of knowledge on attitudes toward sex offenders and sex offender treatment. Kleban and Jeglic (2012) conducted a study whereby they assessed attitudes toward sex offenders and sex offender treatment following a psychoeducational intervention, and found that a psychoeducational intervention dispelling myths could significantly positively influence individuals' attitudes toward sex offender treatment.... McCartan, Kemshall, and Tabachnick (2015) suggest that individuals who obtain research-based knowledge of sexual violence as compared to individuals who obtain knowledge through societal perceptions or the media tend to become more understanding of sexual violence, allowing them to think more critically when forming perceptions. These findings suggest that targeting people's factual knowledge about sexual offenders may increase the likelihood that their decisions would be based upon logic rather than emotion.

pp. 501-02: Conservatism and Attitudes

...[T]he tenets of conservatism include a resistance to change, a disposition to maintain the existing order, and an acceptance of inequality (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003). In addition, other studies have described conservatives as individuals who show greater neurocognitive sensitivity to changes in customary patterns of response (Cacioppo, Petty, & Kao, 1984) and

are easily able to express their preferences or opinions, even with small matters (Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004). Studies have found a positive relationship between conservative attitudes and harsher sentencing (Bowers & Waltman, 1993; Huang, Finn, Ruback, & Friedmann, 1996), and negative attitudes toward the punishment and rehabilitation of criminal offenders (Dozier, 2009). These types of attitudes may be particularly salient when it comes to beliefs about the criminal justice system and how offenders should be treated.

p. 503: Current Study

Measures

[Six] self-report measures were administered to assess demographic characteristics, knowledge, attitudes, and specific belief systems.

Student demographic questionnaire. This questionnaire consisted of basic demographic questions, regarding gender, age, class standing, ethnicity, and marital status. Additionally, students were asked whether he/she was a victim of a sexual assault, and whether he/she had a friend or relative who has been convicted of a sexual offense.

Sex offender knowledge quiz (KQ). This 26-item true/false quiz was developed by these authors in order to assess the public's general knowledge of sex offenders. The statements in this quiz relate to juvenile and adult sex offenders, sex offender recidivism, sex offender treatment, sex offender community reintegration, sex offender victimization and reporting, and the current protocols for monitoring sex offenders. Examples of items include: 'Most sex offenders go on to commit additional sex crimes,' and 'Most sex offenders are in prison.' Refer to Table 1 [next page] to view all items on this measure. This test sums up all the correct responses, giving an overall total score. The information provided in this quiz was obtained from the Center for Sex Offender Management

Table 2. Mean score and standard deviation among the measures. (Below.)

Measure	Mean	Std. Dev.
KQ	16.64	2.43
CATSO	55.03	8.94
ATTSO	99.88	12.64
CNS	19.74	18.45
ACT	53.22	10.75

(CSOM) website (Center for Sex Offender Management, 2002) The CSOM aims to provide the public with current knowledge and accessible information about the management of sex offenders. The overall scale yielded an alpha of .51.

Attitudes toward the treatment of sex offenders (ATTSO; Wnuk, Chapman, & Jeglic, 2006). The ATTSO lists 35 statements that describe different attitudes toward the treatment of sex offender in the United States. Participants were asked to rate their opinions on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly

(Continued on page 4)

Table 1: Sex Offender Knowledge Quiz (below) <sup>a</sup>: True statements <sup>b</sup>: False statements

1.	Most sex offenders go on to commit additional sex crimes. <sup>b</sup>
2.	It is not typically a single issue that makes a sex offender more likely to reoffend, but a combination of factors. <sup>a</sup>
3.	Once released, all sex offenders pose the same amount of risk to their communities. <sup>b</sup>
4.	Medication and treatment can cure sex offenders. <sup>b</sup>
5.	Specialized behavioral treatment, and a sex offender's motivation for change will reduce their chances of reoffending. <sup>a</sup>
6.	Most sex offenders are in prison. <sup>b</sup>
7.	Most sex offenders are released back into the communities once they served their full prison term. <sup>a</sup>
8.	There may be restrictions on where a sex offender can live and work once they are released back into their communities. <sup>a</sup>
9.	Sex offenders who have served their time and completed their community supervision have no restrictions on where or whom they can live with. <sup>a</sup>
10.	All sex offenders remain on the registry for life. <sup>b</sup>
11.	Approximately 20% of sex offenders are juveniles. <sup>a</sup>
12.	Most juvenile sex offenders are male. <sup>a</sup>
13.	Juvenile sex offenders appear to have higher re-offense rates than adult sex offenders. <sup>b</sup>
14.	Sex crimes can involve no physical contact. <sup>a</sup>
15.	Sex crimes represent less than 1% of all arrests. <sup>a</sup>
16.	Most victims report sexual abuse to authorities. <sup>b</sup>
17.	More than half of all victims of reported sexual assaults are under the age of 18. <sup>a</sup>
18.	Strangers commit most sexual offenses. <sup>b</sup>
19.	Most people who have been sexually abused go on to sexually abuse others. <sup>b</sup>
20.	Adult sex offenders appear to respond better to treatment than juvenile sex offenders. <sup>b</sup>
21.	The sex offender registration and notification laws have proven to be successful in reducing the reoffense rates of sex offenders. <sup>b</sup>
22.	The conditions of probation or parole supervision depend on an offender's risk level and risk factors. <sup>a</sup>
23.	Sex offender registration is designed to help law enforcement investigate new sex crimes. <sup>a</sup>
24.	Community notification providers are able to share information about convicted sex offenders to the public by going door to door, and posting flyers in neighborhoods. <sup>a</sup>
25.	Many juvenile sex offenders can be safely managed in the community with specialized supervision and treatment. <sup>a</sup>
26.	Electronic technologies such as GPS devices are often used for monitoring the highest risk of sex offenders. <sup>a</sup>

agree). All responses were summed, generating a total score – higher scores indicating more punitive attitudes toward the rehabilitation and treatment of sex offenders. Internal consistency among the items was calculated using Cronbach's coefficient alpha retained in the final factor solution. The alpha for this sample was .84, indicating strong internal consistency.

Community attitudes toward sex offenders (CATSO; Church, Wakeman, Miller, Clements, & Sun, 2010). This 18-item survey was designed to examine attitudes, perceptions, and stereotypes concerning sex offenders. Participants were asked to rate their opinions and beliefs on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = partially disagree, 4 = partially agree, 5 = agree, and 6 = strongly agree). The CATSO sums up all items including the reverse-scored items, calculating a total score. Higher scores on the individual factors represent beliefs in which sex offenders are considered to be persons who are loners, are unlikely to change, are especially dangerous, commit serious crimes, and are particularly preoccupied with sex. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal consistency for the full-scale CATSO. The alpha level for this sample was .72, which indicates adequate internal consistency.

pp. 503-04: Authoritarianism-conservatism-traditionalism model (ACT model; Duckitt et al., 2010). This instrument measures attitudinal expressions of basic social values or motivated goals on three separate scales. These three construct-dimensions of ideological attitudes were named, respectively, authoritarianism, conservatism, and traditionalism. While there are three dimensions to this scale, this study focused on the conservatism dimension, which can be described as attitudes favoring uncritical, respectful, obedient support for existing societal authorities and institutions versus

critical, questioning, rebellious, oppositional attitudes to them. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with 12 statements on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). pp. 504-05: While the participants completed the full ACT scale, only the conservative dimension was scored and used in analyses. All items on this conservative dimension were summed up to calculate a total score, with higher scores indicative of more conservative attitudes. This measure has been sampled in three different countries showing that these three dimensions are reliably measured and are factually distinct (Duckitt et al., 2010). On the conservatism scale, this sample presented an alpha level of .78, demonstrating adequate to strong internal consistency among the items.

p. 505: Community notification survey (CNS; Levenson & Cotter, 2005). This survey asks a variety of questions concerning community notification strategies used in sex offenders' neighborhoods, the effect of Megan's Law (both positive and negative views), and opinions about notification and fairness of public disclosure of particular information presented in sex offender registries. For the purpose of this study, these authors used two subscales within this survey. Participants were first provided with three statements measuring their opinions regarding the impact of community notification procedures on sex offenders themselves on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = I don't know, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). The following scale consisted of three statements, which asked the participant to rate their level of agreement concerning community notification procedures on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = I don't know, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). In this sample, these combined scales provided an alpha level of .77, demonstrating moderate to adequate internal consistency among the items.

**Results**

p. 508: ...Overall, decreased knowledge of sex offenders was significantly related to increased negative attitudes toward sex offenders, sex offender treatment, and community notification laws. Additionally, conservative beliefs (ACT) were found to correlate positively with attitudes toward sex offenders, ...and attitudes toward sex offender treatment... No conservative relationship was found between conservative beliefs and attitudes toward community notification laws.

pp. 509-10: **General Discussion**

...Overall, findings show that knowledge and conservative beliefs significantly predicted negative attitudes toward sex offenders, sex offender treatment, and community notification. Specifically, the decrease or lack of general knowledge about sex offenders predicted negative attitudes toward sex offenders, sex offender treatment, and community notification. However, conservative belief systems were only found to moderate the relationship between knowledge and general attitudes toward

#	Table 3 CATSO item percents	Item	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	N
1.		With support and therapy, someone who committed a sexual offense can learn to change their behavior. <sup>a</sup>	74.7	25.3	559
2.		People who commit sex offenses should lose their civil rights (e.g., voting and privacy)	58.6	41.4	559
3.		People who commit sex offenses want to have sex more often than the average person.	49.8	50.2	559
4.		Male sex offenders should be punished more severely than female sex offenders.	84.6	15.4	559
5.		Sexual fondling (inappropriate unwanted touch) is not as bad as rape.	80.2	19.8	559
6.		Sex offenders prefer to stay home rather than be around lots of people.	63.7	36.3	559
7.		Most sex offenders do not have close friends.	72.3	27.7	559
8.		Sex offenders have difficulty making friends even if they try real hard.	70.0	30.0	559
9.		The prison sentences that sex offenders receive are much too long when compared to the sentence lengths for other crimes. <sup>a</sup>	81.3	18.7	559
10.		Sex offenders have high rates of sexual activity.	48.1	51.9	559
11.		Trying to rehabilitate a sex offender is a waste of time.	80.2	19.8	559
12.		Sex offenders should wear tracking devices so their location can be pinpointed at any time.	34.6	65.4	559
13.		Only a few sex offenders are dangerous. <sup>a</sup>	80.9	19.1	559
14.		Most sex offenders are unmarried men.	76.7	23.3	559
15.		Someone who uses emotional control when committing a sex offense is not as bad as someone who uses physical control when committing a sex offense.	88.4	11.6	559
16.		Most sex offenders keep to themselves.	59.2	40.8	559
17.		A sex offense committed against someone the perpetrator knows is less serious than a sex offense committed against a stranger.	91.8	8.2	559
18.		Convicted sex offenders should never be released from prison.	63.9	36.1	559

sex offenders. These beliefs did not moderate the relationship between knowledge and attitudes toward sex offender treatment and community notification.

p. 510: These results are consistent with previous literature that found that individuals who expressed more knowledge of sexual offending also held positive views toward sex offenders (Sanghara & Wilson, 2006). Further, in a study examining the effects of a psycho-educational intervention on attitudes toward sex offenders and sex offender treatment, those who received more knowledge about sex offenders reported more positive attitudes toward sex offenders and sex offender treatment than those in a control group (Kleban & Jeglic, 2012). This is the first study examining the relationship between knowledge about sex offenders and community notification. However, it should be noted that the mean score on the knowledge quiz was relatively high, indicating that many of these participants were responding correctly to greater than 60% of the items on the knowledge quiz. This suggests that most of the participants were generally aware of the risks that sex offenders pose in society, as well as the policies that they must follow when reintegrating back into the community.

As was hypothesized, conservative beliefs were also found to be a significant predictor of general attitudes toward sex offenders such that those who held more conservative beliefs were more likely to have negative opinions about sex offenders and their treatment prospects. This is similar to existing literature on the role of conservative beliefs and general attitudes toward sex offenders. Previous literature has found that those who hold conservative beliefs are more likely to want to impose longer sentence lengths than those who do not hold conservative beliefs (Bowers & Waltman, 1993; Huang et al., 1996). However, contrary to expectation, conservative beliefs did not predict attitudes toward community notification. This is in contrast to other studies that have found that individuals who have described their political leanings as conservative were more likely to favor inclusive notification policies and to have more agreement with current laws (Levenson, Fortney, & Baker, 2010). This may be due to the relatively small number of participants endorsing high levels of conservative beliefs, consequently making it difficult for this prediction of attitudes toward community notification to exist.

Finally, as expected, we found that conservative beliefs were found to moderate the relationships between knowledge and attitudes toward sex offenders. This suggests that those who have less knowledge and more conservative beliefs are more likely to have negative attitudes toward sex offenders. Nevertheless, conservative beliefs moderated the relationship between knowledge and attitudes toward sex offender treatment and community notification. This suggests that while attitudes toward sex offenders may be influenced by knowledge and conservative beliefs, these factors hold less influence when it comes to supporting sex offender treatment and

community notification. It is plausible that sex crimes provoke such a great deal of anxiety to our communities that most people would prefer to have these sex offender laws in place even though they understand that many of these policies destabilize sex offenders, facilitating them to reoffend."

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## Vigilantism against Sex Offenders Everywhere—by Thugs Like Proud Boys

Michelle A. Cubellis et al., "Sex Offender Stigma: An Exploration of Vigilantism against Sex Offenders," 40(2) *Deviant*

*Behavior* 225-239 (Feb. 2019)

Editor's Note: Tables appear at end of this article.

#### Text excerpts:

p. 227: "...One study suggests that between 5 and 16% of SOs have experienced physical assault (Levenson & Cotter 2005). For those offenders that are able to find a job, they are more likely than non-SOs to be denied promotions at work. They also face rude treatment in public spaces, being asked to leave businesses, loss of friends who find out about their SO status, harassing and threatening phone calls and mail,..." (Tewksbury 2005; Tewksbury and Lees 2007).

p. 228: There are common consequences to vigilantism. In addition to the direct effects, which could include physical harm and property damage, vigilantism increases SO fear of victimization. Vigilantism in combination with other social manifestations of stigmatization may amplify deviance because the stress of their identification as a SO interferes with their social functioning. These factors decrease an individual's chances of building a productive and law-abiding life (Schiavone and Jeglic 2009).

#### p. 230: RESULTS

##### Incident-level characteristics

As previously noted, open source searching resulted in the identification of 279 separate incidents of vigilantism against convicted SOs or those accused of sex crimes. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on incident-level characteristics of cases in the Sex Offender-Vigilante database. Slightly more than half of all vigilante acts (52%) involved solo attackers, or vigilantes who committed their acts alone. The remaining 49% of vigilante acts involved two or more attackers. The vast majority of all incidents (95%) involved a single victim, and the remaining incidents (5%) each involved multiple victims.

p. 231: The type of weapon used in each vigilante attack was recorded and compiled. More than one-fourth of all incidents (28%) involved vigilantes who beat, punched, and kicked their victims with their fists and feet, without using an actual weapon. Nine percent of incidents involved the use of intimidation, which occurred through verbal threats or the dissemination of unsanctioned flyers. When vigilantes used an actual weapon, the most common weapon, used in 13% of the incidents, was a bludgeoning instrument (e.g., baseball bat, stick). In about 12% of vigilante attacks, the vigilante used a stabbing weapon (e.g., knife, box cutter). Ten percent of incidents were shootings that involved the use of a gun. Another 10% of incidents involved the use of fire or some concoction used to start a fire (i.e., Molotov cocktail). The remaining weapons used in vigilante attacks were tools used to commit acts of vandalism (3%), medical or bodily fluid, including urine, feces, and spit that were thrown at victim SOs (2%), whipping instruments (1%), and other unspecified weapons (12%).

##### Victim-level characteristics

(Continued on page 6)

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics on the victims of the vigilante attack in which a vigilante targeted an SO. Overall, the 279 vigilantism incidents featured 302 separate victims. The victims of vigilante attacks were overwhelmingly male (95%). Victims of vigilante attacks ranged in age from 18 to 78 years old. The average age of victims of vigilante attacks was 43 years old. Information on the race of victims of the vigilante attacks was not included in nearly half of the sources (46%), but of the sources that listed the victim's race, the majority of victims were white (77%), and the remainder were black (10%), Hispanic (11%), or another race or ethnicity (2%). Although SO registries were consulted in an attempt to collect additional information about victims, in cases where the individuals were not listed on the registry, information, such as race, was left missing. Sixty of the victims of vigilante attacks (20%) were killed as a result of the vigilante's action (see Table 2).

The majority of the victims on the Sex Offender-Vigilante database had been previously convicted of a sexual offense. Nearly 60% of victims were convicted SOs while an additional 21% had not yet been convicted, but had been credibly accused of committing a sex offense. A credible accusation was one in which more than one piece of evidence (confession of the vigilante's victim, testimony from the SO's victim or witnesses, physical evidence) indicated the victim of the vigilante attack did commit a sex offense. When it was not possible to corroborate the credibility of the sex offense accusation based on the information in the stories, the victim of the vigilante attack was listed as an accused SO, with credibility being uncertain. Four percent of the victims of vigilante attacks were listed as accused SOs with uncertain credibility. Seven percent of victims of vigilante attacks in the Sex Offender-Vigilante database were mistaken for SOs and had not committed a sex offense. These victims were targeted either because they lived at an address that was in correctly listed on the SO registry, they matched the description of a convicted or accused SO, or they were mistakenly targeted by the vigilante for unknown reasons. Three victims of vigilante attacks (1% of the victims in the Sex Offender-Vigilante database) were mistakenly accused of committing an actual sex offense; they had had ambiguous physical contact with another individual (e.g., tapping another's rear-end) that the vigilante interpreted as a sexual violation or a vigilante believed they had committed a sexual offense, but investigation later proved this to be untrue. Nearly 5% of the victims in the Sex Offender-Vigilante database were maliciously accused of being an SO. In these cases, the vigilante used the well-known social antipathy toward SOs to make a false public accusation that the person was a convicted SO when there was no evidence in the news story or on the SO registry substantiating such a claim. The final 3% of victims of vigilante attacks were collateral victims, meaning that they were killed because of their association or proximity to the SO targeted by the vigilante.

p. 232: The prior sex offense perpetrated by the victim of vigilante attacks was known for the majority of cases based on information included in the source materials and searches for SO registry pages. Two-thirds of victims of vigilante attacks in the Sex Offender-Vigilante database (68%) had previously committed a sexual offense against a child; 11% previously committed a rape or sodomy offense; 11% committed prior sexual abuse; 5% had previously possessed or disseminated child pornography; and 5% of victims of vigilante attacks committed either statutory rape, voyeurism, exhibitionism, sexual solicitation, or fondling.

The living situation of the victims of vigilante attacks indicates that the majority of the incidents involved accused or convicted SOs who lived in a house, apartment, mobile home, or group home. More than 80% of the victims of vigilante attacks were living in the community at the time the vigilante incident occurred. The remaining 20% were attacked while they were incarcerated. Although these incidents occurred within correctional facilities, coverage of the incident often extended to outside media sources. Through these media stories, the authors were able to include incidents of vigilantism that occurred while a victim was incarcerated.

#### Vigilante-level characteristics

p. 233: Table 3 presents descriptive statistics on vigilantes who had victimized SOs or individuals accused of sex crimes. 279 incidents of vigilantism featured 427 separate vigilantes. The majority of vigilantes (87%) were male. The race of the vigilante was missing from roughly 63% of cases. Of those 157 cases where race information was present, the majority of vigilantes were white (63%). Hispanic vigilantes were the next most common, comprising 18% of the sample, and Black vigilantes represented the third largest category (15%). Information about vigilante age was present for slightly more than half of cases. The average age of vigilantes was 30 years old with ages ranging from 12 to 69 years of age. Of those cases featuring information about the parental status of the vigilante (29% of cases), 60% of vigilantes had children at the time of the attack (see Table 3).

pp. 233-34: Details about the consequences that vigilantes experienced following their acts, including whether they were apprehended, charged, convicted, and punished was collected when this information was included in the stories. In 90% of cases in the Sex Offender-Vigilante database information about whether the vigilante was apprehended was included. Of these law enforcement apprehended a majority (75%) of vigilantes following their act of vigilantism. Information on the resulting legal charges was only present for roughly 63% of cases, but of these, the majority of individuals (84%) were formally charged. Information on whether vigilantes were convicted or punished was not as readily available, with only 33% of cases providing this information. Of these, the majority of vigilantes were both convicted (83%) and issued a legal punishment (84%). The majority of

those who were punished for which we have data were sentenced to prison (38%). The next highest outcome was no legal punishment (23%), followed by punishment pending (punishment was not issued at the time the source was published) (14%). Finally, administrative punishments (7%) included firing or suspensions of individuals involved, either actively or passively, in the vigilante acts.

We also coded for information on the relationship between vigilantes and their SO victims. The most common relationship between vigilantes and their SO victims was that they were both inmates in the same facility (26%). The next most common relationship was that the vigilante was a resident in the same community as the SO victim (22%). Many vigilantes were a family member or friend of the SO's victim (22%), and several vigilantes had no prior relationship to their SO victim (18%).

#### Discussion

...This study indicates that the stigmatization of SOs, an individuals suspected or accused of sexually offending, potentially results in harm to them in the form of vigilantism. The risk of vigilante victimization may be a consequence of having been labeled (accurately or inaccurately) as a SO. The SO label is so powerful that it becomes an individual's 'master status' (Edwards & Hensley 2001). The stigmatization associated with the SO label is revealed in the derisive sentiments that citizens feel about SOs and discrimination and actions expressed toward this stigmatized group.

...[F]or the purposes of this study, measurements of vigilantism against SOs are limited to incidents that are reported to law enforcement and/or discussed in the media. The Sex Offender-Vigilante database included 279 cases of vigilantism against SOs in the U.S. While this is likely only a small fraction of the total amount of offenses vigilantes have perpetrated against suspected or convicted SOs, it provides a foundation for exploring the nature of vigilantism, the networks of those who are associated with or mistaken for a SO, and tangentially affected by vigilantism, and gradually, the extent of vigilantism perpetrated against SOs.

pp. 234-35: The acts of vigilantism in this study ranged from overt violence, such as murder in their own homes, to more passive and covert methods such as the unsanctioned posting of flyers throughout the community. Vigilantes may be motivated to inform residents in their communities about the presence of convicted SOs, but some vigilantes, particularly those who commit violent offenses, act on their emotional reactions to a sex crime, even though many times they have minimal information or details about the offense. Their emotions supersede any possibility for objectivity, which explains why many times vigilante acts are disproportionate to the offenses they are 'punishing.' Retribution appears to be a primary motivation for vigilante acts against SOs, given the extreme nature of some of these attacks. Prior to acting on their motivations, for revenge, vigilantes

give some level of consideration to the severity and injustice of the sex offense as well as the intentions of the SO. The more they blame the SO, the greater the vigilante's anger, resentment, and motivation for retribution (Tripp, Bies, and Aquino, 2007).

The majority of victims of these attacks were registered SOs, leading to concern about the role of the registry in aiding these attackers. The personal information contained on SO registries about an offender's address, physical characteristics, and what they look like enables members of the public to identify these individuals in the community. While this identification is intended to empower community members to protect themselves and their family members from a stranger SO attack, the current study suggests that a few citizens have used this information to proactively locate and harm registered SOs....

pp. 235-36: Registered SOs are generally aware of the possible danger they face as a result of their listing on publicly accessible registries (Evans 2013). Many registered SOs take action to minimize the risks associated with being listed on the registry, either to reduce the shame that they feel or to protect themselves from potential vigilantism. In their community, they may isolate themselves from the public to avoid the possibility of being recognized from the registry. Some find safety and comfort grouping together with other SOs. Whether SOs are living in the community or are incarcerated, they may conceal their SO status from others to avoid threats or victimization (Evans and Cubellis 2014). The stigma that SOs experience increases the likelihood that they will hide their status from others."

Tables on next page

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Tripp, Thomas M., Robert J. Bies, and Karl Aquino (2007). "A Model of Vigilante Justice: Revenge, Reconciliation, Forgiveness and Avoidance." *Social Justice Research* 20(1): 10-34."

**Editor's Closing Comments:**

In other articles in this edition, we have already reported a political assassination that was intended to mushroom into an unspeakable murderous bloodbath, as if some school mass shooting — only of innocent adults, spread over at least an entire metropolitan area, if not over the whole state.

We also announced the news that Proud Boys was conspiring to violently attack an annual conference of NARSOL. Leaders of Proud Boys had obviously never learned anything about NARSOL.

Had they done so, they would have learned that it is widely noted for its constructive and cooperative efforts. Those efforts sought to find and suggest sensible solutions to actual problems and to dispel hysteria and blindly unthinking reaction. This repeated solution process is born of undisputed facts

Variable	N	%
<b>Number of Attackers</b>		
Lone Attacker	120	51%
Multiple Attackers	117	49%
	Mean: 2.5	Min: 1
	Std Dev: 4.7	Max: 50
<b>Number of Victims</b>		
Single Victim	266	95%
Multiple Victims	7	5%
	Mean: 1.1	Min: 1
	Std Dev: 0.6	Max: 7
<b>Types of Weapon Used*</b>		
Fists/Feet	97	28%
Bludgeoning Weapon	45	13%
Other Weapon	41	12%
Knife/Cutting/Stabbing Weapon	40	12%
Gun	36	10%
Fire/Molotov Cocktail	35	10%
Intimidation Weapons	31	9%
Vandalism Weapons	11	3%
Medical/Bodily Fluid	7	2%
Whipping Instrument	5	1%

[continued in rightmost column]

**Tables:**

**Table 1. Incident level variables**

**Table 2. Victim-level variables**

Variable	N	%
<b>Victim Sex</b>		
Male	287	95.0%
Female	9	3.0%
Unknown	6	2.0%
<b>Victim Race</b>		
White	126	41.7%
Black	16	5.3%
Hispanic	18	6.0%
Asian	2	0.7%
Native American	1	0.3%
Multiracial	1	0.3%
Unknown	138	45.7%
<b>Victim Age</b>	Mean = 42.5	Min. = 15
	S.D. = 14.9	Max. = 80
<b>Sex Offender Status</b>		
Convicted Sex Offender	178	59.1%
Credibly Accused Sex Offender	64	21.3%
Mistakenly Accused Sex Offender	3	1.0%
Maliciously Accused Sex Offender	14	4.7%
Mistaken for a Sex Offender	12	7.0%
Accused (Credibility Uncertain)	21	4.0%
Collateral Victim (Not a Sex Offender)	9	3.0%
<b>Sex Crime</b>	<b>246</b>	
Rape/Sodomy	28	11.4%
Voyeurism	4	1.6%
Statutory Rape	4	1.6%
Exhibitionism	3	1.0%
Solicitation	1	0.3%
Child Pornography	11	4.5%
Unspecified Sexual Abuse*	26	10.6%
Child Molestation	168	68.3%
Human Trafficking	0	0%
Fondling	1	0.3%
<b>Victim Killed</b>		
Yes	60	19.9%
No	241	80.1%
<b>Living Situation</b>	<b>284</b>	
Community	228	80.3%
In Custody	55	19.4%
Treatment Facility	1	0.3%

**Table 3. Vigilante-level variables**

Variable	N	%
<b>Vigilante Sex</b>	<b>349</b>	
Male	307	87.0%
Female	46	13.0%
<b>Vigilante Race</b>	<b>157</b>	
White	100	62.9%
Black	23	15.7%
Hispanic	28	17.6%
Native American	1	0.2%
Asian	3	1.9%
Multiracial	2	1.3%
<b>Vigilante Age</b>	<b>226</b>	
	Mean: 30.3	Min: 12
	S.D.: 10.5	Max: 69
<b>Vigilante Has Children</b>	<b>123</b>	
Yes	74	60.2%
No	49	39.8%
<b>Vigilante Relationship to Victim</b>	<b>341</b>	
Fellow inmate	89	26.1%
Community Member	76	22.3%
Family/Friend of Victim of Sex Offender	76	22.3%
No Relationship/Stranger Found Sex Offender on Registry	62	18.2%
Acquaintance of Sex Offender	14	4.1%
Police/Correction Officer	8	2.3%
Family of Sex Offender	6	1.8%
Victim of Sex Offender	6	1.8%
Family of Vigilante	4	1.2%
<b>Vigilante Apprehended</b>	<b>387</b>	
Yes	290	74.9%
No	97	25.1%
<b>Vigilante Charged</b>	<b>271</b>	
Yes	227	83.8%
No	34	12.5%
Pending	10	3.7%
<b>Vigilante Convicted</b>	<b>143</b>	
Yes	118	82.5%
No	25	17.5%
<b>Vigilante Punished</b>	<b>140</b>	
Yes	117	83.6%
No	23	16.4%
<b>Type of Punishment</b>	<b>190</b>	
Prison	73	38.4%
None	43	22.6%
Pending Punishment	27	14.2%
Administrative	13	6.8%
Probation	13	6.8%
Jail	8	4.2%
Suspended Sentence	6	3.2%
Community Service	5	2.6%
Fine	1	0.5%
Death	1	0.5%

and logic, not from fear, hatred, or other high-emotion-blocked rationality. It is the last organization that any sane person would want destroyed.

Then too, we have examined the careful scientific research and findings connecting conservatism, on one hand, and lack of education, on the other, to extreme adverse feelings and incorrect, counterfactual myths about those with any past sex offense(s).

From the viewpoint provided by these preceding revelations, above, this article has addressed — studied, really —, the phenomenon of violent vigilantism.

It is clear from the tables of survey results that vigilantism directed at those even merely suspected of sex crimes as well as those found guilty at some point in the past of such crimes has been mounting, and often extends to murder.

Such crimes cannot be tolerated, no matter what claimed 'justifications' may be advanced for such actions, if society is to continue on. The existence of such roving murderous bands makes any meaningful — let alone thriving — civilization impossible.

Furthermore, *de facto* toleration of this particular phenomenon invites endless spread to whatever other target group is in turn deemed by such vigilantes to be intolerable to them. Any group that has ever been the target of such hatred or emotional revulsion by others can attest not just to what its results were as to them, specifically, but also what it did to the whole societies in which such mistreatment was tolerated for some reason claimed to justify it.

Early human recorded history and even evidence from pre-history humanity points to episodes of such us-versus-them obsessive thinking. In each case, the end was war, slaughter, destruction of entire civilizations, and usually a centuries-long cessation of human progress in thought, in well-being of all individuals, and in ethics, compassion, and brotherly cooperation of humanity.

Such violence was the stuff of cave people wielding clubs. And only those willing to throw away all of modern civilization would implicitly advocate a return to such cave-dwelling ways, much less to practice them.

When we live in societies, there are always rules. No rules equals no society. It's that simple.

It is ironic that self-appointed vigilantes would choose to inflict violence on others for violating one type of rule, disregarding that they themselves thereby violate other rules comparable in gravity in thus abandoning the rule of law.

A country in which anyone can choose which rules to follow and when, and which not, effectively has no law. Such a country rapidly devolves into anarchic, violent chaos wherein no one can be safe.

Such anarchic vigilantism quickly descends from situations rationalized as retribution for wrongdoing to wrongdoing motivated by envy and personal desire. After all, when there is no law, one can take anything from anyone at any time, or inflict upon anyone, or subject anyone to, any form of brutality or inhuman mistreatment

(Continued on page 8)

that one may so wish.

Welcome to Caveland!

Law is made the way it is to curb all such excuse-making for departures from civilized conduct. It is the only way society works. It may seem imperfect at times, but it is all that we as humanity have.

And just never forget: The alternative would horrify you and quite possibly kill you.

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### Signs the End Is Near:

## **Bookends: A Leading State Legislator and a Federal Chief District Judge Spell Out the Need to End MSOP.**

[Submitted by Lawyer Bill Dobbs:]

"Below are MN Sen. Jim Abeler's recent remarks... Also below are words written by U.S. District Court Judge John R. Tunheim, from an opinion handed down in September 2024. The statements by Abeler and Tunheim are bookends, evidence of a wider failure of major governmental institutions in MN – the Governor and Executive Branch agencies, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State House, State Senate, federal courts, state courts – to stop or even curb the ongoing human rights abuses and constitutional violations by MSOP administrators. – Bill Dobbs, *The Dobbs Wire*

**MN Legislature Conference Committee on H.F. 2115 – Human Services Omnibus bill – May 13, 2025**  
**Senator Jim Abeler (Republican – District 35):**

'Regarding a bill to eliminate the Special Review Board, and MSOP: If this is going to go forward, I believe the whole program is unconstitutional – just to give my view on the whole thing. I think that we have got one of the worst programs anywhere and it's like a third rail. It is between Governor Pawlenty and 2005, and when somebody foolishly sent Speaker Zellers a postcard saying he was soft on sex offenders. This whole topic has become stigmatized and no one dares, you know. Remember these individuals are human beings and I am not going to become the champion for them but they do have human rights. I do believe the program is just horrible and I was disappointed when I was told by then-Commissioner Piper that, hey it's constitutional, ha. With a ruling a relatively liberal Supreme Court has doomed many of these men and women to a lifetime or really long time in the wrong place. So that being said I'm friendly to the topic about how we can make it work better but I will tell you, you do not want my advice to the conference committee. I don't think we want this debate on the floor, at least in this floor in this body, to be about sex offenders and not about the other good work that's in the bill and trying to make sure we can get that fleshed out so do as you wish. I'll be voting no when that choice comes up.

Chair: Thank you, Senator Abeler.'

Archived video of the full hearing: The above remarks by Abeler begin at the 12:32:45 mark. [https://www.youtube.com/live/4HKV\\_wvXfnA](https://www.youtube.com/live/4HKV_wvXfnA).

### **US District Court**

**Judge John R. Tunheim:**

'The Court notes that it is dismissing these claims because the Eighth Circuit significantly narrowed the scope of a Fourteenth Amendment claim for confinement conditions at MSOP in the *Karsjens* litigation. However, the Court feels compelled to note that the policymakers who have allowed MSOP to persist in its current state should not take this Order as a sign to rest on their laurels. This court has been inundated with claims over the last decade from MSOP patients who have meticulously documented what it feels like to live in the shadow of hopelessness. Having served their time behind bars, these individuals have now been involuntarily committed to a program that many of them have slowly begun to realize is temporary in name only. They now seek to bring out of the shadows and into the light serious allegations about the state of their treatment services at the Moose Lake facility. Their pleas should no longer be ignored – a policy solution is long past due.'

Source: *Gordon Miles v. Jodi Harpstead et al.* (No. 23-2848 (JRT/JFD), *Memorandum Opinion and Order Adopting Report and Recommendation* (Sept. 30, 2024), p. 12.

**Editor's Note:** The proposal to eliminate the Special Review Board was bipartisan, a fact significant for its indication that there is no longer any 'third-rail-extortion-based support for MSOP. To simply term it the worst program in Minnesota state government is to radically understate not just its unconstitutionality, but more fundamentally, its steamrollering over every human right known to modern humankind. MSOP was patently founded and remains operated upon rage-based punitivity – not against crimes committed long ago, but against human beings, who long ago finished serving their prison terms, but rather than being helped to rehabilitate and reintegrate in society, find that even the last shreds of their humanity have now been stripped away, and who are treated barbarically, with evil motivations, wishes, and intents by their captors, allowed carte blanche by courts to do anything they wish to their victims no matter the harms and destruction to their lives. This is destruction of the person, not the crime.

This is a stain that destroys the image and reputation of our country and states like Minnesota that have fallen down this dark hole. But a ladder exists to climb out to the high moral plain American government used to preside over. That ladder is called "repeal," and it is long past time to use it. It is hoped that these observations and bipartisan approaches signify sounds of climbing rising from that hole. Many just and effective means exist to attack the problem of sexual crimes. This newsletter covers such rational, sound means often, including innovations that can lead to total extinction of such crimes. Only fools tarred in their

own deep hatred would ignore such alternatives and continue to wallow in the tarpit that MSOP constitutes.

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### **Bad Data**

## **How the Feds Distort Sex-Crime Recidivism Data [Part 2 of 2]**

**[Editor's Explanation:** The first part of this article appeared in *tLP* No. 9:5. Unfortunately, exposé coverage effectively filled *tLP* No. 9:6, making it impossible to insert the following last part of this article about fraudulent distortion of sex-crime recidivism data into that edition. That completion starts here:]

*Alissa R. Ackerman & Marshall Burns, "Bad Data: How Government Agencies Distort Statistics on Sex-Crime Recidivism,"* 13(1) *Justice Policy Journal* 1-23 (Spring 2016). [www.cjci.org/tpj](http://www.cjci.org/tpj).

### **[Part 2 starts here:]**

[p. 11:] **"Problems of Definition**

The BJS reports suffer from several definitional problems that exacerbate the misunderstanding of sexual recidivism. These problems are not overtly visible in the data, but are hidden in the data definitions. In the BJS recidivism reports, the only coverage of sex crimes is in the of violent crimes: rape and 'other sexual assault.' Crime definitions are given in the 2002 and 2014 reports, where we find two problems:

First, 'other sexual assault' is defined to include several types of non-forcible sexual acts, including anything with a person below the age of consent. This means that when a teenager has a consensual relationship with an older teenager and the latter is sent to prison for it, the crime is falsely categorized as being violent.

Second, nonviolent sex crimes are included under 'other public order offenses' in three subcategories: nonviolent sex offenses, commercialized vice (which includes pornography charges), and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. No separate data are given in any of the BJS reports on any of these categories of crime....

These two problems are of greatest concern in the 2003 BJS report on sex-crime recidivism. Throughout its 46 pages and 43 data tables, the term 'sex offenders' and 'sex offenses' are used in a generic way, with only a brief caveat states once that 'the terms "sex crimes" and "sex offenders" refer exclusively to violent sex offenders.' Even this statement, while important, ignores the fact that the term 'violent' is often used to define crimes that involve no violence at all. But worse than that, the rest of the report, including its title, makes no mention that all data related to sex crimes defined as nonviolent are specifically excluded.'

[p. 14:] ...California published its first official report on recidivism, 2010 Adult Institutions Outcome Evaluation Report. (It has since published an Outcome Evaluation Report annually.) There are two interesting things about the numbers on sex-crime recidivism in this report. First, the three-

year recidivism rates reported for people imprisoned for sex crimes are quite high, ranging from 46% for lewd act with a child to 73% for 'other sex' (Fig. 10 and Table 10 of the report), with an average of 64.6% (Fig. 11 and Table 11). Second, the vast majority, 86%, of the recidivism included in those rates consists of parole violations, not new crimes (Fig. 12 and Table 12). When the data of Fig. and Table 11 are combined with those of Fig. and Table 12, the recidivism rates for new crimes are seen to be quite small, as shown in Table 4 of this paper [immediately below].

The box on the left contains data from Table 11 (page 24) and 12 (page 25) of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation report (CDCR, 2010). The right-hand column provides data calculated from the data in the report.

[p. 15:] Table 4 shows that the vast majority of what is identified in that report as sex-crime recidivism consists of parole violations. How significant is recidivism by parole violation? A CDCR official who asked to remain nameless wrote to the authors of this paper, 'the information is still somewhat skewed. Recidivism is defined as any arrest, conviction, or re-incarceration for a parole revocation for either a law violation or a technical violation. Therefore, many sex offender parolees have been being returned to custody due to having a low battery on their GPS unit [and] are showing up in the recidivism rates. That being said, sex offenders still show one of the lowest rates of recidivism of any other type of offender.'

The authors asked the CDCR for additional data in order to better understand those provided in the Outcome Reports. The CDCR responded with a cross-tabulation spreadsheet which at first appeared to be helpful, but it turned out to provide data on sex crimes in six categories, of which 'other' accounted for 48% of the total by crime of imprisonment and 79% of the total by crime of recidivism. Such a large 'other' category makes meaningful analysis impossible.

When we asked for the data that would provide the detail inside the 'other' category, we were at first told that our collaboration in helping them analyze their data would be appreciated. But the next day, the researcher who told us that would no longer talk with us and we were told to submit a formal proposal for the data. We did so and the proposal brought a response from the deputy director of research for the CDCR, who told us that, although the proposal was 'well-organized and strong methodologically' and the 'CDCR supports your research objectives,' they did not have time to provide these data ('your research imposes a significant impact on limited staff resources that cannot be justified as "mission critical" at this point in time').

Prior to publication, the authors of this paper sent a copy of this section to senior research and administrative officials of the CDCR and the CA COMB, asking if they had any comment or refutation of our information. No reply was received.

The authors have hesitated to include this  
(Continued on page 9)

dramatic tale of conflict in an academic paper, but have concluded that it is important for others to know about the roadblocks erected to meaningful analysis of government data on recidivism. It is disingenuous for the CDCR to claim they were withholding the data because of limited resources after its staff had told us that our assistance in analyzing the data would be helpful.

The CDCR has partially addressed the issue of the high proportion of parole violations in its recidivism statistics by adding a new table to the Outcome reports after 2010. This table provides the numbers and percentages of released prisoners who are returned to prison for a new sex crime (0.8% in the 2015 report), a new fail-to-register crime (2.0%), a new non-sex crime (5.3%), and a parole violation (91.9%). However, one has to look for that table at the end of the section of the report on sex registrants, which begins with a large graph showing high recidivism rates, leaving until later to point out that this is mostly due to parole violations. The obfuscation of data with a very large 'other sex crimes' category remains.

[p. 18:] **Discussion**

...[T]he general public (Levenson, Brannon, Fortney, & Baker, 2007; Mancini & Meers, 2010) and U.S. policymakers (Meloy & Curtis, 2013; Sample & Kadleck, 2008) 'know' that the vast majority of individuals convicted of sex crimes will inevitably repeat them despite ample evidence to the contrary.

Each report analyzed for this study found recidivism rates for individuals convicted of sex crimes to be quite low, but reported the statistics in ways that conveyed the opposite impression. This is where the analogy to pre-Copernican, heliocentric astronomy can be instructive. It appears that data analysts at the BJS and the California DoJ 'knew' in advance that individuals convicted of sex crimes had high rates of recidivism and therefore found it necessary to adjust their reports to fit that 'knowledge.'

[pp. 18-19:] One may wonder why we have had nothing to say about the new BJS recidivism report issued in 2014 (Durose et al., 2014), and whether things have improved since the earlier reports. Unfortunately, the reason that report is not discussed above is that it has very little data on sex crimes. Sex crimes appear in five tables in each of the 1989 and 2002 reports, but only in two in 2014. (One of the tables that disappeared is the one that gives what we refer to above as the 'BJS recidivism rate.'). In the 1989 and 2002 reports, data on rape and other sexual assaults are presented separately, but in 2014 they are combined into a single category. Without explanation, the first major federal report on recidivism in twelve years is almost silent on sex crimes.

The BJS has never acknowledged that the BJS recidivism rate was flawed, nor offered any explanation of what meaningful information it was intended to convey in contrast to the specialized recidivism rates that it contradicts. The rate simply disappeared without comment from all BJS publications

after 2002. [p. 19:] Untrue or unsubstantiated 'knowledge' can have deleterious effects. For instance, the data contained within the 1988 California DoJ report was utilized by the California Senate Committee in Criminal Procedure to propose that people in custody or on parole or probation should be statutorily ineligible to seek certificates of rehabilitation relieving them from the requirement to register. Similarly, data in the BJS reports have been utilized in legislative proposals and in amicus briefs to the United States Supreme Court. The statement of Senator Hutchison quoted above is one example. In 2002, an amicus brief was submitted by the attorneys general of 43 states in support of the State of Alaska in its appeal to the US Supreme Court to allow registration of people with convictions for sex crimes that occurred before the registry existed. Parroting the misleading BJS recidivism rate, the brief stated, 'Convicted sex offenders are 10.5 times more likely to be arrested for a rape than non-rapist offenders' (Brief for the United States as Amicus Curiae in Support of Petitioners, 2002).

[pp. 19-20:] The misinformation issued by U.S. lawmakers goes beyond what is found in government reports. Sometimes they just make things up out of nowhere. For example, on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1993, Representative David Hobson said, 'According to the National Institute of Mental Health, the typical child sexual offender acquires multiple child abuse convictions. Seventy-four percent of all convicted child abusers are repeat offenders. In addition, the average child sex offender will molest an average of 117 youngsters in his or her lifetime.' An inquiry about this by the authors of this paper to the NIMH brought the reply, 'The NIMH cannot find a record of the statistics accredited to us by rep. David Hobson in 1993.' The stated number of 74% is off by a factor of ten. The BJS report states that 7.3% of child molesters had a previous conviction for a sex crime against a child (Table 6t, page 12). However, this grossly inflated statistic of 74% was echoed in the House on that same day by Reps James Ramstad and Hamilton Fish. For example, Rep. Ramstad said, 'We know that child sex offenders are repeat offenders. ...A study of imprisoned child sex offenders found that 74 percent had a previous conviction for another child sex offense. Child sex offenders repeat their crimes again and again to the point of compulsion.' ...Then in 2005, Representative Mark Foley (who resigned a year later when it was revealed he'd been sending sexually explicit text messages to teenage boys serving as Congressional pages) stated that, 'I'm embarrassed beyond belief that these type of people could be wandering the street. Ninety percent likelihood of recidivism of sexual crimes against children. Ninety percent. That is the standard. That is their record. That is the likelihood. Ninety percent.' Although these Congressional pronouncements are fanciful fabrications with no foundation in anything, they are made

Table 4. Sex-crime recidivism, as reported by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (2010). [Discussion on next page]

CDCR 2010 Outcome Report				
Table 11		Table 12		Table 12 data times 64.6% from Table 11
Sex Registration		Reason for		Reason for
Flag	Recidivism Rate	Recidivism	Percent	Recidivism Rate
Yes	64.6%	New Sex Crime	5.0	New Sex Crime 3.2%
		New Non-Sex		New Non-Sex
No	67.7%	Crime	8.9	Crime 5.7%
Total	67.5%	Parole Violation	86.0	Parole Violation 55.6%
		Total	99.0	Total 64.5%

believable by false and misleading presentations of data in government reports such as those discussed above.

[p. 20:] ...The sentiments of U.S. lawmakers and the general public is that people convicted of sexual crimes are highly recidivistic and not amenable to treatment or change. The vast majority of research, including the government reports analyzed in this paper, provides a strikingly different view of recidivism, but because of definitional problems and misleading representations of data, they allow the opposite impression of what the data actually mean. While our society needs to find ways to effectively reduce any type of victimization, calling out fires where they do not exist not only does not address the problem, but distracts attention from real, potential solutions.

Like ancient astronomers who 'knew' that the sun revolves around the Earth, our scientific analysis can become distorted when we fit our data to the picture we believe they should paint. In the case of sex-crime recidivism, we have created laws and policies based on the 'knowledge' that people convicted of sex crimes belong at the top of our list of most dangerous people, despite substantial evidence to the contrary."

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## The Appeal Decries the Plight of SOCC Confinees.

October Krausch, "They Served Their Time. But They May Still Die in State Custody," *The Appeal* (April 21, 2025).

In half the country, sex offense civil commitment incarcerates people after they

(Continued on page 10)

complete their prison sentences.

**Text:** "Eliseo Padron is a 50-year-old Mexican American man from St. Paul, Minnesota. Padron told *The Appeal* he grew up surrounded by gang culture. He spent his early adulthood in and out of prison.

"Living that lifestyle led to me doing a lot of things that I regret," Padron says. He was convicted of first-degree criminal sexual conduct in 1995. After he violated his parole terms by returning late to the halfway house in 2012, the state sentenced Padron to the Minnesota Sex Offender Program (MSOP), a 'treatment' facility operated by the Department of Human Services. The building shares a campus with the Moose Lake prison, complete with Sally ports and razor wire.

Moose Lake is one of two facilities where Minnesota holds people indefinitely, long after their prison sentences have finished, and often for the rest of their lives. Minnesota, along with 19 other states, the District of Columbia, and the federal government, allows for the civil commitment of people convicted of sex offenses *after* they've completed the terms of their incarceration.

"The environment here consistently produces no hope, you know what I mean? And the hope that they do give, they weaponize," Padron says. This hopeless environment results in harm; Padron was stabbed 11 times in a fight.

MSOP opened in 1995. For the next 20 years, the program did not release a single person. Almost a hundred people, however, have died inside. Ruby Brewer, a therapist who resigned after three years working at MSOP, told *The Appeal* that staff sometimes refer to the deaths of the people confined there as 'graduations.' The releases have since come, albeit slowly, only after a class-action lawsuit and other forms of activism. At the beginning of his time at MSOP, Padron did the programs, but he says, "I quickly began to realize that programming here was futile." That's why, since 2021, he's been organizing with a group called End MSOP to abolish civil commitment in Minnesota and elsewhere.

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Nationally, more than 6,000 people are held in sex offense civil commitment, according to a 2024 report from the Prison Policy initiative. While the states that run such programs say they're focused on rehabilitation, critics have long said the systems seem to be a thinly veiled way to warehouse people instead of treating them. Such programs have long been called untransparent and stacked with draconian release conditions. Furthermore, studies have shown that sex offense civil commitment does not prevent sexual violence.

Eric Janus, Director of the Sexual Offense Litigation and Policy Resource Center at Minnesota's Mitchell Hamline School of Law, told *The Appeal* the current set of civil commitment laws stems from a decades-old moral panic about sexual norms and orientations.

"Back in the late 30s and 40s, a bunch of states adopted so-called psychopathic personality or sex psychopath laws," Janus says. "But unlike the current laws, they

were viewed as an alternative to criminal punishment.'

These laws, mainly aimed at sexually non-conforming people who had not necessarily committed any violence, faded away within a few decades. But in the late 1980s and early 1990s, feminists increasingly called for an end to sexual violence while mass incarceration boomed. Politicians responded by creating the contemporary system of sex offense civil commitment. Janus argues that the system is a way for politicians and elites to respond to the increased visibility of sexual violence in this period, while still refusing to acknowledge any of the feminist analysis that strangers do not perpetrate most sexual violence. The spirits of the mass incarceration and 'gay panic' eras live on: Studies have shown that Black men who have harmed other men are more likely to be sent to civil commitment than other groups.

Some states make more use of the statute than others. Minnesota holds the highest number of people in the system per capita, while California has the most overall. The system's populations also balloon due to their low release rates.

The laws' political nature mean that commitment rates vary wildly from year to year and state to state. In Minnesota, Janus says there has been a 'huge variation in the number of people committed each year. I don't know of any other state that's had that kind of wild variation of implementation.'

In Minnesota, a judge must determine whether to commit someone. However, advocates say many people agree to the program willingly while waiting for trial, often acting on bad advice from lawyers seeking to win a judge's favor. Once a person has stipulated to civil commitment this way, there is typically no easy way out.

Critics note that little 'treatment' actually occurs. Across the United States, therapeutic time is as low as 15 hours a month, with few other programs or activities to fill the remaining time. Multiple people told *The Appeal* that the therapy they received in prison was superior to what states offer in civil commitment.

"There's no kind of direction here," says Mikael Miller, another person confined in the Moose Lake facility. Miller attests to receiving better programming in the prison.

For this, states such as Minnesota spend \$110 million per year – around three times the per-person cost of prison. The state spends only \$2 million annually on all other sexual violence prevention.

A 1997 U.S. Supreme Court case held that civil commitment is legal so long as it constitutes treatment, rather than punishment. To be eligible for even supervised release, 'clients' must complete several programming tiers that rely on staff evaluations to progress. Former employees across the United States, including those who spoke to *The Appeal*, have alleged that institutions put pressure on staff to keep scores low.

People who've experienced the programs say they emphasize minor infractions or rule violations as supposed symptoms of antisocial behavior. As a result, relatively minor offenses can result in major punishments, such as being sent back to Tier 1, which

erases years of work. Janus warned that these programs let states lock people up not for conduct they've committed, but for their potential to create crimes in the future. In addition to being unjust, the tools and logic used to predict who will commit sexual violence are deeply flawed and unreliable.

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Jennifer L.; Williams, whose son is held in the Texas Civil Commitment Office (TCCO), says that at first the facility seemed 'a thousand times better than prison' to her son.

'Oh, I get to wear my own clothes and I get a Playstation,' she recalled him saying. 'Everything seems really good in the beginning.'

But it quickly became clear this was a prison by another name. TCCO can send people to solitary confinement with no communication privileges or books to read. Williams said that to progress from Tier 4 to Tier 5 in Texas, a person must save up \$10,000 purely from working inside the facility – a daunting task given the program's minuscule pay rates.

Conditions are similar to prisons in other ways, including aging populations and a lack of adequate healthcare. Several people who spoke to *The Appeal* pointed out that there's no way to age out or to achieve compassionate release. Men with dementia must instead complete therapeutic coursework, an unreasonable and often impossible barrier to cross.

Guards and employees are allegedly hateful; and racist. Brewer says that she's 'seen firsthand' how 'staff hate every single one of them.' Padron says that white staff have threatened to 'George Floyd' prisoners. And Miller said that he's heard employees say all trans people should be killed.

The institution's opaque nature makes it harder for those inside to communicate with their loved ones and increases the chances for retaliation. Sex offense civil commitment facilities, which in Minnesota, Texas, and many other states are run by the human-services departments instead of prison systems, often lack the basic e-messaging communication afforded to people in prison.

Williams says she hasn't been able to communicate with her son for almost a year. The facility blocked all forms of contact when she refused to complete sex offender therapy for herself to fix what the state says was a 'codependent relationship' with her child.

The same thing happened to Lonnell Hanks, another mother in Texas, who laughed bitterly at the idea that the state tried to force her into an undefined amount of sex offender treatment at her own expense.

'But I'm a troublemaker,' Hanks says, describing how the family is fighting to defend their civil rights against TCCO. 'My son's a big troublemaker.'

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Last summer, Padron organized a memorial service in his facility's yard to commemorate people who've died inside. He says MSOP punished him for doing so. Facility rules prohibit criticizing MSOP and claim such actions 'compromise the therapeutic environment.'

Padron's work with End MSOP includes

fighting at the legislative level to close the program and to raise awareness among those imprisoned about the pitfalls of agreeing to the program before it is too late.

In Texas, Williams and Hanks organize with a group called Families Against Committing Texan Stand Up (FACTS). Both women, who spend enormous amounts of time lobbying their state legislature and testifying before committees governing TCCO, stress that the system needs to change. Williams says that, instead of making people safer, the system just creates 'new victims,' including family members like her. Both End MSOP and FACTS are part of a national network of state-level campaigns.

Padron and Miller say they know they most likely won't be released without major system overhauls. Parents of children committed in Texas and Kansas told *The Appeal* they believe their children will only be released when the programs are abolished.

Despite this bleak outlook, Padron says he finds meaning in his work with End MSOP.

'They're not going to deter me from doing what I'm doing,' Padron said of his state's commitment program. 'And in embracing that, there's a certain type of freedom that comes from it. You can't do anything more to me. I know the end.'

The activism seems to be having a slow impact. In a Minnesota court case last year, a state judge wrote that the pleas of 'MSOP patients who have meticulously documented what it feels like to live in the shadow of hopelessness' should no longer be ignored.

'A policy solution,' the judge added, 'is long past due.'

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### ***the Legal Pad***

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