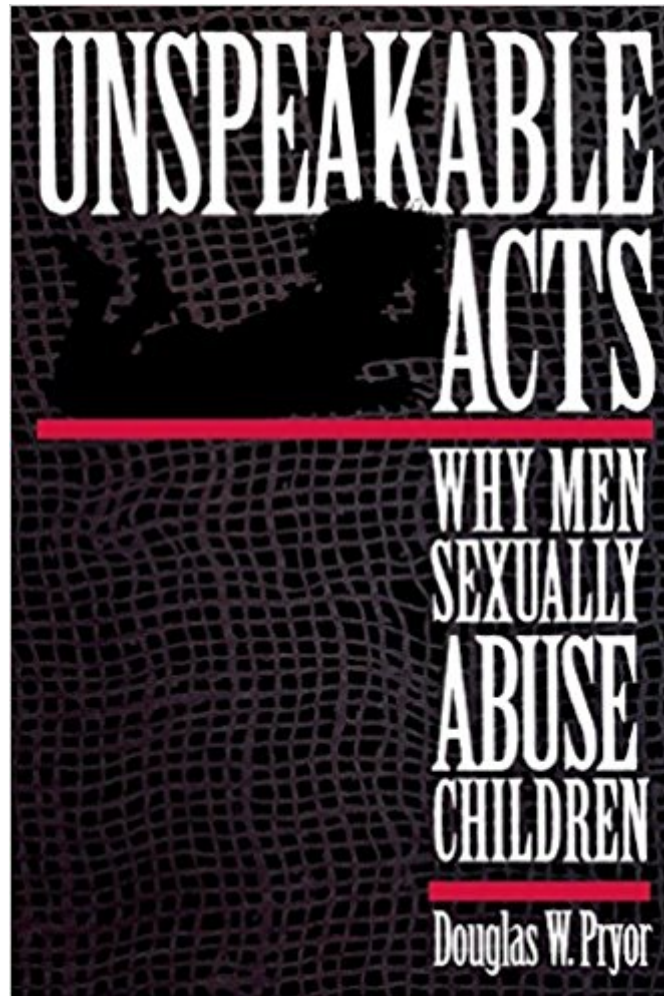




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Unspeakable Acts: Why Men Sexually Abuse Children



Synopsis

The sexual abuse of children is one of the most morally unsettling and emotionally inflammatory issues in American society today. It has been estimated that roughly one out of every four girls and one in ten boys experience some form of unwanted sexual attention either inside or outside the family before they reach adulthood. How should society deal with the sexual victimization of children? Should known offenders be released back into our communities? If so, where, and with what rights, should they be allowed to live? In *Unspeakable Acts*, Douglas W. Pryor argues that much of this debate, designed to deal with abusers after they have offended, ignores the important issue of why men cross these forbidden sexual boundaries to molest children in the first place and how the behavior can possibly be prevented before it starts. Incorporating in-depth interviews with more than thirty convicted child molesters, Pryor explores how men become involved with breaking sexual boundaries with children. He looks at how their lives prior to offending contributed to and led up to what they did, the ways that initial interest in sex with children began, the tactics offenders employed to molest their victims over time, how they felt about and reacted to their behavior between offending episodes, and how they were ultimately able to stop. The author expands our understanding of this often reviled, little understood group, leaving us with the uneasy conclusion that the moral wall separating us from what is defined as extreme, sick behavior is not as opaque as we would like to believe.

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Customer Reviews

As a social worker, I have to deal with men who sexually abuse children - and try to help them. This book helped me to understand such men WITHOUT excusing their acts. I am now able to talk to these men and work with them much better. There is little in the literature about sexual perps and the stuff is usually about the effects on the victims. This book accepts the victims, however, focuses on the men.

I received this book only yesterday and I am half way through reading it the writer does challenge conventional wisdom of lock them up and throw the key away he questions the approach to the flog and hang them brigade. If you read it objectively there is information on how to identify abuse, listening to your children dealing with your own disgust facing the issues of child abuse. He does not excuse what they have done but he reasons why they have done it, he challenges the lying deception of paedophiles who deluded themselves of the child initiating sexual contact with an adult, he shows the child as a person in their own right not to be abused. This book should be standard text for all who work with offenders and children.

Although the explicit nature of Unspeakable Acts was oftentimes difficult to read, I made myself finish. I'm glad I did. I read the book just after my husband went to jail for fondling our daughter. Getting a glimpse of the mentality and motives of other sexual abusers helped me to finally understand --- and ultimately forgive --- my husband. Standing beside him through the legal process and in dealing with mental health professionals for both him and our daughter has been a difficult task for me, but one I've chosen to take on. I appreciate the candid content of Unspeakable Acts as it helped me to better understand the atrocity we call sexual abuse. I highly recommend the book, and encourage future readers not to put it down when the reading gets tough!

I was a student of Pryor's his first year at TU (and for several years thereafter) and this was a required read for us. This book is unique in the sense that Pryor studied offenders and not the victims (and he does it without being sympathetic to the offenders too). I believe he was one of the first social researchers to do this. The book is relatively detailed, but it's not boring. That surprised me considering how most sociological research reads. If you're interested in sexual deviance, specifically pedophilia, read this book because it looks at a completely different perspective than most research on the topic does.

Right after I was caught for molesting one of my young children, I bought this book to learn who the

hell I am and a little bit about how I got into that narrow-minded hell-hole of child sexual interest and action. This book REALLY opened my eyes, and gave hugely rewarding insights into myself (not ones I expected to find!). The author writes clinically and compassionately, and offers superb suggestions at the end on how our criminal justice system could do an awful lot better with family offenders. I've since plead guilty and was sentenced to jail time, treatment, and many years of probation. This book helped me understand myself as an offender, the impact on the child, and the range of conventional and possible public responses to punish and treat this terrible offense. I highly recommend it for troubled offenders who WANT insight into this mindset, as well as for loving spouses and close relatives that want to better understand and support the offender. The writing is good.

I read this book for a paper in my psychology class and this book is like no other on child sexual abuse. This is a real candid look into the abusers' mind, told by the abusers themselves. The stories go into enough detail to understand what the abuser was thinking at the time, while not going into too much detail making the book extremely disturbing to read. If you are into psychology, sociology, or just want to know what makes these men do these Unspeakable Acts, this is a great book to read.

Courageous enough to even ask the offenders - what is without doubt a great advance in research - I missed (more) informations about which influences in childhood have had not allowed to set the appropriate boundaries or lowered them to the state which allowed the mans to overlook or even not to recognize the boundary crossing. There is a lot more to do in this field, but I fear there are too less people able and willing to do this work (and duty to society).

I was one of Douglas Pryor's students, and I had to read the book for a class assignment. The best book I've read so far, it's easy to read, and full of interesting case studies. I highly recomend this book for everyone interested in sexual abuse.

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