



Evicting the Perpetrator: A Male Survivor's Guide for Recovery from Childhood Sexual Abuse

By Ken Singer, MSW
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Reviewed by David S. Prescott, LICSW

There are few resources for male survivors of sexual abuse and still fewer by an author with expertise treating both survivors and abusers. This balance of knowledge and practice makes Singer's contribution vital. Neither a workbook nor a manual, this book is a new standard for the fields of treating abusers and survivors alike.

Many ATSA members will be familiar with Ken Singer. At this writing, he is ATSA's incoming Eastern Regional Representative, and a Past President of MaleSurvivor. He currently serves on the Advisory Board of the latter organization, and a frequent participant at National Adolescent Perpetration Network conferences. Singer is also a devotee of the late Fay Honey Knopp, a true pioneer in the field who brought professionals together and reminded us all that the best ways to prevent further abuse include understanding the abuser.

The central mission of *Evicting the Perpetrator* is assisting male survivors not just in coming to terms with abuse, but in moving beyond the ways that abusers and abuse can control a person's life, often for years after the abuse. The book itself is clear, concise, helpful, and written for both personal and professional use. Singer's knowledge and experience are apparent in the simplicity of the text and the metaphors he uses to make complicated ideas accessible. His use of minor self-disclosure (e.g., an unfortunate instance of minor law breaking by his son) contributes to this accessibility without becoming an autobiography or sermon.

The first chapters set the foundation, including topics such as different kinds of abusers and questions that survivors frequently ask. Those who keep current with the literature might be concerned that the book will remain elementary and not offer any new knowledge, but this is far from the case. Singer also

offers a helpful and accurate overview of what is known about the effects of abuse on the brain. This chapter will be particularly helpful to survivors and professionals alike.

The most obvious strengths of the book include its organization and wealth of clinical examples. It would be very difficult for a survivor to feel alone or isolated after reading it. Singer addresses such global issues as what prevents survivors from telling, and why “demonizing” abusers helps keep them powerful in the life of the abused. He also addresses important topics spanning the effects of abuse on one’s sex life and self-defeating and self-destructive behaviors. Singer then walks the reader through comprehensive chapters on general disclosure of abuse and confrontation of the abuser, followed by case examples of successful disclosure, confrontation, and reconciliation. The book concludes with practical information on how male survivors can manage challenging medical situations and find an appropriate therapist. There is a special appendix for friends and families of survivors.

Beyond the organization and clinical examples, a less obvious but nonetheless crucial strength of the book is Singer’s voice. His approach is both practical and humanitarian. Where many texts are slanted against the perpetrator, Singer’s text displays a clear understanding of the complicated nature of the abuse. He is neither judgmental nor naïve. Singer’s grasp on healthy masculinity will be a welcome addition to the literature.

For too long, resources for male survivors of sexual abuse have fallen short on their understanding of all the people involved in the abuse. *Evicting the Perpetrator* changes that.