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Breaking Their Will: Shedding Light on Religious Child Maltreatment

By Janet Heimlich



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Breaking Their Will: Shedding Light on Religious Child Maltreatment By Janet Heimlich

This revealing, disturbing, and thoroughly researched book exposes a dark side of faith that most Americans do not know exists or have ignored for a long time—religious child maltreatment. After speaking with dozens of victims, perpetrators, and experts, and reviewing a myriad of court cases and studies, the author explains how religious child maltreatment happens. She then takes an in-depth look at the many forms of child maltreatment found in religious contexts, including biblically-prescribed corporal punishment and beliefs about the necessity of "breaking the wills" of children; scaring kids into faith and other types of emotional maltreatment such as spurning, isolating, and withholding love; pedophilic abuse by religious authorities and the failure of religious organizations to support the victims and punish the perpetrators; and religiously-motivated medical neglect in cases of serious health problems.

In a concluding chapter, Heimlich raises questions about children's rights and proposes changes in societal attitudes and improved legislation to protect children from harm.

While fully acknowledging that religion can be a source of great comfort, strength, and inspiration to many young people, Heimlich makes a compelling case that, regardless of one's religious or secular orientation, maltreatment of children under the cloak of religion can never be justified and should not be tolerated.

From the Trade Paperback edition.



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Editorial Review

Review

"*Breaking Their Will* is a **powerful and deeply disturbing book**, wide ranging in its exploration of religiously based physical and mental abuse of children past and present, and richly informed by both personal and scholarly reflections and insights. This book will have a profound impact upon the consciences and actions of readers from a wide range of religious perspectives who surely will be convinced, after finishing this book, that children deserve to be free from all forms of physical violence in the guise of discipline and the other forms of physical and mental abuse explored in Heimlich's book." --**Philip Greven**, author of *Spare the Child: The Religious Roots of Punishment and the Psychological Impact of Physical Abuse*

"**Insightful, provocative**, exposing, and well written, Janet Heimlich casts a bright light on the presence of child abuse in institutional religion, forcing it out of the dark corners of denial and into the arena of honesty and reality. I hope it is widely read." --**Bishop John Shelby Spong**, author, *The Sins of Scripture: Exposing the Bible's Texts of Hate to Reveal the God of Love*

"Child mistreatment, backed by religious tenets, is one of the most disturbing realities, especially when religions also have a unique capacity to cherish and protect children. With courage, compassion, and adept use of interviews and research on a wide range of violations, Janet Heimlich **grapples with causes and constructive solutions**. This is a book that all of us, but especially religious believers among us, should read as a first step to providing children the love and security they deserve. In my own teaching and research, I've looked for a book that focuses explicitly on how religion becomes entangled in harming children and am glad to have a book to recommend." --**Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore**, author of *Let the Children Come: Reimagining Childhood from a Christian Perspective*

"*Breaking Their Will* is both **heartbreaking and motivating**. After rightly noting that religion is most often not harmful to children, Janet Heimlich details the unique ability of religion in its worst manifestations to inflict lasting pain, humiliation, and terror on the most vulnerable members of our society. Perhaps the crowning achievement of the book is its call to action—a chapter devoted to specific ways in which officials, lawmakers, parents, and even faith communities can root out religious child abuse and remove its claims of immunity from challenge." --**Dale McGowan**, author/editor, *Parenting Beyond Belief* and *Raising Freethinkers*

About the Author

Janet Heimlich, formerly a freelance reporter for National Public Radio and other national radio networks for ten years, is now an independent journalist. In addition to her radio work, she has published investigative journalistic articles, human-interest stories, and book reviews in the *Austin American-Statesman*, *Texas Monthly*, the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Texas Observer*, and other publications.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Benjamin Ward:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yep, you

can choose the suitable activity regarding spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the actual Mall. How about open as well as read a book allowed Breaking Their Will: Shedding Light on Religious Child Maltreatment? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You know beside you can spend your time using your favorite's book, you can smarter than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have additional opinion?

James Lightle:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in every single way. By being competitive today, people have do something to make these survives, being in the middle of the actual crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that oftentimes many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a book your ability to survive raise then having chance to remain than other is high. For yourself who want to start reading some sort of book, we give you this kind of Breaking Their Will: Shedding Light on Religious Child Maltreatment book as beginning and daily reading book. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

Martha McKee:

The book untitled Breaking Their Will: Shedding Light on Religious Child Maltreatment contain a lot of information on it. The writer explains the girl idea with easy way. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read that. The book was authored by famous author. The author brings you in the new time of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book throughout anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can open up their official web-site along with order it. Have a nice learn.

Clifford Roselli:

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