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978-0-521-88582-9 - Child Pornography and Sexual Grooming: Legal and Societal Responses

Suzanne Ost

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CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL GROOMING

Child pornography and sexual grooming provide case study exemplars of problems that society and law have sought to tackle to avoid both actual and potential harm to children. Yet despite the considerable legal, political and societal concern that these critical phenomena attract, they have not, thus far, been subjected to detailed socio-legal and theoretical scrutiny. How do society and law construct the harms of child pornography and grooming? What impact do constructions of the child have upon legal and societal responses to these phenomena? What has been the impetus behind the expanding criminalization of behaviour in these areas? Suzanne Ost addresses these and other important questions, exploring the critical tensions within legal and social discourses which must be tackled to discourage moral panic reactions towards child pornography and grooming, and advocating a new, more rational approach toward combating these forms of exploitation.

SUZANNE OST is a Senior Lecturer in Law at Lancaster University. She is also assistant editor for the *Medical Law Review* journal and a member of both the Society of Legal Scholars and the Socio-Legal Studies Association.

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Below, in the first shadows, drooped hosts of little white flowers,
so silent and sad; it seemed like a holy communion of pure wild things,
numberless, frail, and folded meekly in the evening light ...
We have lost their meaning. They do not belong to us,
who ravish them.

From *The White Peacock*, D. H. Lawrence (1911)