

# SPANKING CAN BE SEXUAL ABUSE

(Herman Thomas verdict notwithstanding)

To learn how a misbegotten form of discipline puts children, teens, and sometimes even young adults at risk, please visit **[www.nospank.net/101.htm](http://www.nospank.net/101.htm)**

*Spanking can be sexual abuse.* This was the premise of the criminal case against Judge Herman Thomas. But the concept of sexually abusive spanking is not something the average person is familiar with. Moreover, an expert witness was prevented from offering testimony at the trial that might have given the jury, and the public, a better understanding of this type of exploitation.

Whether or not you agree with the verdict in the Thomas case, it is important to recognize that sexual abuse can indeed take the form of spanking or paddling. This fact, of course, has serious implications for minors—and anyone else who might be considered fair game for “butt-whoopings.”

There is particular reason for concern in a state such as Alabama, whose legal protections for children are among the weakest in the country. Not only does the Alabama code give schools immunity from lawsuits over paddling injuries, but its child abuse statutes also defer to local school boards in determining teachers’ criminal liability (ref: 16-28A-1 and 16-28A-2).

The subversion of corporal punishment that Thomas was accused of can only be encouraged by society’s lack of awareness. Unfortunately, it appears that most parents are in the dark about sexually abusive spanking. Even many who are not fail to warn their children that some adults may have bad reasons for wanting to spank them.

Those who find this message alarmist might consider that an elementary school teacher in Brewton, AL was part of a child spanking pornography ring broken up in 2002. It was only by luck that he wasn’t designated to paddle students where he taught.

As for Thomas, some have suggested that the “race card” was played on his behalf. A more likely factor in his acquittal, however, is the “discipline card” (which his attorneys skillfully played). After all, considering the degree to which we as a people embrace corporal punishment, many will be reluctant to acknowledge that butt-beating can take on such a sinister aspect—DNA evidence be damned.

Read more at [www.nospank.net/101.htm](http://www.nospank.net/101.htm)

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