

You dastardly beast! You forgot to register your car info on the SOR!

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By [Robby Soave](#) . . . The Polk County Sheriff's Department in Florida is touting its successful completion of "Operation Karma," a three-day sting in which cops arrested 26 registered sex offenders for violating various legal obligations imposed on them.

"They are apparently up to no good and we are going to hold them accountable," Sheriff Grady Judd [promises](#) *The Miami Herald*.

But there is no evidence that any of the arrested people were a danger to anyone. They were not re-arrested for approaching children, or committing sex acts. In most cases, they were arrested for failing to register their vehicles with the government. This is understandable: sex offenders in Florida are required to provide the government with up-to-date information regarding their name, age, sex, height, weight,

tattoos, hair color, address, email address, telephone number, social media accounts, employment information, and vehicle information. It's probably fairly easy for a sex offender to forget to constantly re-supply necessary information.

But it's absurd to suggest that these un-registered cars posed some kind of danger to the community. And yet *The Miami Herald* happily entertained this fantasy, allowing Grady and his office to essentially take a victory lap in the pages of the newspaper. The *Herald* also printed the mugshots of all the offenders, listed their names, and provided not only the reason for their re-arrests but information on their initial arrests. In practice, this means that many of these offenders—who range in age from 57 all the way down to 19—are being shamed for crimes they committed years and decades ago.

A bunch of mugshots of middle-aged men convicted of sex offenses against minors makes for a frightening image. But I did the math, and most of these people were in their 20s, or teens themselves, when they were first convicted.

One of the sex offenders, whom I will call J.S., was convicted of molesting a victim who was less than 12-years-old. This was in 2005, and J.S. is currently 25—meaning that at the time of the alleged crime, J.S. would have been about 12 himself. Another perpetrator, C.C., who is currently 39, was convicted in 1998 of lewd conduct toward a person under the age of 16. This man would have been about 18 in 1998. Both were re-arrested for failing to register their cars.

[Read the rest of Robby's piece here at reason.com.](#)