

Democracy and Deliberation

The Law and Politics of Sex Offender Legislation

Sex offender laws include residency restrictions, registration and notification requirements, and post-conviction civil commitment. These laws and regulations impose serious restrictions on the movements of convicted sex offenders. This is controversial because these laws and regulations occur after the sex offender has completed his time in prison. These laws and regulations are intended to have both a deterrent and therapeutic effect. Residency restrictions seek to prevent sex offenders from re-committing their crimes and civil commitment provides psychological services while incarcerated in a forensic facility. Most works on this subject are deeply critical of these laws.

Cary Federman takes a more sympathetic approach to sex offender legislation. He focuses on the deliberative intentions of legislators, exploring the limits of judicial review and the rights of interested parties to influence lawmaking. Leaders of these interested parties are usually the parents of children who have been sexually violated and murdered. Critics of sex offender legislation tend to focus on the convicted parties, arguing that their rights have been violated. *The Law and Politics of Sex Offender Legislation* asserts that these laws are expressions of the deliberative intentions of lawmakers concerned about public safety—they are thus constitutional, if not always wise.

Cary Federman is Associate Professor in the Department of Justice Studies at Montclair State University.

“. . . an audacious, thought-provoking contribution to the very fraught literature on sex offender legislation.”

—Richard Weisman, York University



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The Law and Politics of Sex Offender Legislation
CARY FEDERMAN

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