

**Unjust and Unethical: The Endless Punishment of U.S. Sex Offenders**

**Chelsea L. Arnold**

**Department of Philosophy, Seattle University**

### **Abstract**

Sex offenders are arguably one of the most stigmatized populations in the United States. Because of this, almost one million sex offenders are subject to extremely punitive laws far past the end of their prison stays. These laws make it nearly impossible for individuals with past sex offenses to reintegrate into society in any meaningful way. The laws in question are sex offender registration and sex offender civil commitment. While the public may gain a false sense of security from these laws, evidence suggests that they do not work, nor are they fairly applied. The most poor and disenfranchised members of U.S. society are disproportionately subjected to registration or civil commitment, while powerful members of society are free to carry on their acts of sexual violence with impunity. If the true goal of sex offender laws is to reduce sex crimes, then more effective, ethical, and justly applied alternatives to sex offender registration and civil commitment should be considered. In this paper, I will examine sex offender registration and civil commitment laws, including the repercussions and unjust application of these laws. Furthermore, I will suggest a few different reasons why these laws exist, despite their lack of efficacy, unjust application, and unethical approach. Lastly, I will suggest what criteria would be for an ethical set of sex offender laws, and some tangible ways this may play out in future policies.

*Keywords:* Civil commitment, SVP laws, sex offender registration, sexually violent predator laws, registered sex offender.

### **Unjust and Unethical: The Endless Punishment of U.S. Sex Offenders**

In 2006, sexual assault survivor and activist, Tarana Burke, founded the #MeToo movement through social media as a way for survivors to join in solidarity against sexual violence (“Me Too Movement,” 2021). Fast-forward to today, and this movement has had a significant impact on exposing the prevalence of sexual violence embedded in U.S. culture. Moreover, this movement has exposed the prevalence of a particular type of sexually violent person: mostly White, powerful, cisgender men. Hundreds of powerful men, including politicians, Hollywood names, and business executives have been exposed as chronically sexually violent, and have damaged countless people’s well-beings in the wake of their behavior. Given that these men hold an immense amount of power in U.S. society, they pose a particular threat because of their ability to reoffend with impunity.

Concerningly, although some of these men have faced social consequences from being exposed as sexually violent, such as losing a job, most have not suffered legal consequences and are free to carry on with their lives. For example, according to one report, the #MeToo movement has only resulted in seven criminal convictions of high-profile public figures out of hundreds of accusations made (Rummler, 2020). Moreover, a few of these men have even continued to be celebrated by some as the epitome of the American dream; perhaps none more obvious than former U.S. president, Donald Trump. According to Relman (2020), “at least 26 women have accused [former] President Donald Trump of sexual misconduct, including assault, since the 1970s” (para. 1). Despite this, Trump’s loyal following continues to revere him as an American hero, systematically overlooking or even overtly accepting his engagement in chronic sexual violence.

However, this presents a very confusing double-standard for the response to sexual violence in the U.S. On one hand, you have a particular group of powerful men whose misconduct is completely overlooked legally, and often socially. On the other hand, those criminally charged as sex offenders are generally considered to be the worst type of criminal. Typically, they are viewed as monstrous, uncontrollable, and deserving of whatever consequence comes their way. Resultantly, this latter view has been used to justify extreme laws to deter the potential of future reoffending that generally pass with minimal opposition (Lowry, 2013). However, the efficacy of these laws is questionable, and their application makes it very difficult for an individual to reengage in society with any sense of normalcy once they have committed a sex offense. Yet most of these people will never recidivate again. Furthermore, these laws only get applied to the poorest, least powerful members of society, while those with enough power are free to carry on their misdeeds mostly unchecked.

The laws in question are sex offender registry and sex offender civil commitment. Both laws have been designed to punish sex offenders far past the end of their prison sentences. And while I do not condone sex offenses in any manner, these extremely punitive laws have *not* proven themselves to be effective at their purpose of deterring sexual violence, *nor* have they been fairly applied. Thus, to find effective, just, and ethical solutions to deter sexual violence in the United States, not only do the laws themselves need to be reconsidered, but the way they are applied must be reconsidered too. Sex offender registry and sex offender civil commitment should be ended because these practices are unjust and unethical. Instead, tangible solutions to reduce sexual offenses in the U.S. must include an acknowledgement of the wider ethical and social issues that pave the way for condoning sexual violence for certain groups in the first place. In this paper, I will examine sex offender registration and civil commitment laws, including the

repercussions and unjust application of these laws. Furthermore, I will suggest a few different reasons why these laws exist, despite their lack of efficacy, unjust application, and unethical approach. Lastly, I will suggest what criteria would be for an ethical set of sex offender laws, and some tangible ways this may play out in future policies.

All 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia maintain public sex offender registries, housing the personal information of almost one million people charged with sex crimes (“Sex Offender Registries,” 2021). The purported purpose of these registries is to prevent sexual violence by notifying the public about a released sex offender’s location. The thought process behind this is that community members can proactively take steps to stay safe if they are aware of a sex offender’s presence in their community. Because of this purported purpose, government officials maintain that registries are for prevention, not punishment. However, mounting evidence suggests that sex offender registries have no impact on decreasing re-offense rates (Jeglic, 2019). While at the same time, the impact of being put on a sex offender registry can ruin a person and their family’s lives. If the goal of sex offender registry was prevention, rather than prolonged punishment, than the practice of sex offender registry would have ended with the realization that it does nothing to actually prevent reoffending. Even so, sex offender registration continues to receive widespread public and political support. For example, according to Lehrer (2016), “no proposed sex-offender registration law has ever failed a free-standing, regular-order floor vote in any state legislature. No state that has passed a sex-offender registration law has ever repealed it, and no law has ever been weakened in a substantial way — even when stories emerge of serious consequences for former offenders” (para. 7).

And the consequences for registered sex offenders can be lifelong and vast. Depending on the jurisdiction and crime, sex offenders are sometime required to register for life

(Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs, n.d.). Registered sex offenders face significant barriers in finding housing, employment, and educational opportunities (Feige, 2017). Furthermore, they are often rejected by friends and families because of their status. Their status frequently results in homelessness; yet many homeless shelters will not accept registered sex offenders either. In places like Florida's Miami-Dade County, a jurisdiction with some of the strictest registry laws that prevent offenders living anywhere near children, there are large encampments of homeless sex offenders who cannot find anywhere else to legally live (Jilani, 2018). Additionally, registered sex offenders are subject to social stigmatization, ostracization, property damage and even physical violence from angry community members. For example, in 2016, an Alaskan man used the state's sex offender registry to track down, rob, and assault three registered sex offenders using a hammer (Baird, 2016). Nevertheless, the stigmatization of sex offenders run so deep that some community members considered this man's acts to be heroic.

While it may be tempting to condone such consequences for people based on the notion that registered sex offenders are all evil, uncontrolled monsters, this is simply *not the case*. There is no doubt a small percentage of the sex offender population that are void of empathy and will continue to reoffend; however, a significant majority will not. Contrary to popular belief, a well-established body of evidence suggests that overall, sex offenses have a much lower recidivism rate than every other general category of crime, including property, drug, public order, and violent crimes (Banachowski-Fuller, 2021; Pryor et al., 2019; Sawyer, 2019). Furthermore, while no sex crime is acceptable, depending on the jurisdiction, a wide variety of sex crimes can land a person on a sex offender registry. Realistically, some of these crimes do not match the life-changing consequences that result from sex offender registry. For example, registerable offenses in some states include public urination, indecent exposure, patronizing a prostitute, consensual

sex between two minors, and a minor who takes and distributes nude photos of themselves (Fuchs, 2013). While none of these offenses may be legally or socially acceptable, they do not come across as offenses that require public notification, with years of restriction and monitoring. Furthermore, the latter two registerable offenses mentioned also bring to light the concerning reality that *children* are being placed on sex offender registries.

An estimated 200,000 registered sex offenders committed that acts that resulted in their registry when they were children, some as young as eight years old (Pittman & Shah, 2017). While it is important to hold children accountable and teach them about their harmful behavior, there is a reason that a child is not typically treated as an adult in the U.S. criminal justice system. From a developmental perspective, a well-established body of evidence suggests that “adolescence is a time when the brain has increased sensitivity to rewards and that with more time for development, adolescent brains are better able to consider the long-term implications of bad decisions” (Stringer, 2017). Thus, with juvenile justice there is typically a level of acknowledgement that youth have more ability to grow and improve their behavior; and therefore, they are deserving of the opportunity to do so. Moreover, in the case of sex offenses committed by juveniles, evidence indicates that treatment can significantly reduce future recidivism rates (Przybylski, 2015). Yet still, hundreds of thousands of people are registered as dangerous sex offenders from acts they committed as kids.

This situation reflects the events that occurred in Jason’s and Brandon’s lives. According to Pittman and Shah (2017), Jason was 14 years old when he met his 13-year-old girlfriend, Tianna. A month into their young romance, Tianna’s mother discovered that the couple had engaged in oral sex. She reported it to the police and Jason became a registered sex offender because any sexual activity with a minor under the age of 13 is considered to be child

molestation under California law. Moreover, under California state law, Jason is required to be registered for the *rest of his life*. Brandon is also registered under Texas state law due to a prank he played at the age of 11. While playing silly party games, Brandon's 13-year-old sister turned off the lights and told everyone to undress and then redress as quickly as possible before turning on the lights. Brandon thought it would be funny to leave his clothes off when the lights came on. But when another child at the party told their mom they had seen Brandon's penis, the cops got involved, and Brandon was charged with indecent exposure. As a result, he is registered as a sex offender for life. Now in their 30's, both Jason and Brandon still cannot find steady work or housing.

Unfortunately, kids are not the only unfair targets of sex offender registration laws. Much like within the rest of the criminal justice system, the Black community is disproportionately affected by sex offender registration laws. According to Ackerman and Sacks (2018), Black men in particular are disproportionately represented on public sex offender registries. For instance, in some states, Black men shows up on a sex offender registry as frequently as *ten times more* than White men. Furthermore, research suggests that 1 in every 100 African American men are registered sex offenders (Nathan, 2018). Furthermore, one study suggests that "African-Americans were two-and-a-half times more likely to be inaccurately designated as high risk" on sex offender registries (Bliss, 2018). This higher risk assessment often subjects an individual to greater restrictions and longer registry times. Thus, not only does this disproportionately impact the livelihoods of African American men who are labeled as sex offenders, but also their families and communities, sometimes for generations. This speaks to the wider issue of mass incarceration and its effects on the Black community. In so many ways, registry is simply an extension of mass incarceration.

While lawmakers claim that sex offender registration is not punitive in nature, it is nevertheless ruining people's lives, with nothing to show in terms of public safety in the wake of its destruction. However, while the ineffectiveness and consequences of sex offender registration are bad enough on their own, concerningly, this is arguably not even the most extreme law resulting in the indefinite punishment and restriction of freedom endured by U.S. sex offenders.

At the same time that sex offender registration laws first came into effect, so did the practice of indefinite civil commitment of sex offenders. Today, in the 20 states where it is legal, thousands of sex offenders have been involuntarily civilly committed to federal and state facilities indefinitely for crimes that they *might* commit in the future (Sreenivasan et al., 2020). This occurs even though these sex offenders have already successfully completed their prison sentences and were nearing release. Disturbingly, juveniles are not exempted from these laws either, with several stories of civilly committed adults still confined decades later for acts they committed as children. The laws that permit this practice are commonly referred to as "sexually violent predator" (SVP) laws ("Sexually Violent Predator," 2021). Advocates of SVP laws argue that they protect communities from violent sexual predators who are more than likely to reoffend. Yet much like registration laws, there is little to no evidence that SVP laws result in decreased recidivism rates. Moreover, critics of these laws point out that they are constitutionally questionable and discriminatory.

Critics of SVP laws argue that civil commitment acts as a second punishment to offenders who have already successfully completed their prison sentences and is therefore a violation of constitutional rights. The U.S. government cannot legally punish an individual twice due to the Double Jeopardy Clause in the Fifth Amendment of the US Constitution. This has been a criticism of SVP civil commitment practices because SVPs are committed to government-run

facilities that look and function *exactly* like prisons (Gillepsie, 2018). The centers are typically surrounded by barbed wire fences, with residents being monitored 24/7, sleeping behind bars, and unable to leave. In some cases, SVP commitment centers are simply special units located inside of maximum-security prisons (Steptoe & Goldet).

Yet U.S. lawmakers have upheld the constitutionality of the civil commitment of sex offenders because they claim it is for treatment, rather than punishment. However, in reality, very few civilly committed sex offenders are successfully treated and released. For example, according to Steptoe and Goldet (2016), only 15% of all SVPs in a New Jersey commitment center have been released since the program began in 1999. Furthermore, once committed, it is very difficult for an SVP to make their case that they will not reoffend again. Not to mention, sex offender civil commitment centers often have minimal treatment options, and unlike typical treatment centers, the “patients” here have no expected release date, with death being one of the most common ways to leave. This is a concerning abuse of the law because facilities that look like and function like prisons were specifically created with the intended purpose of punishment. Thus, the only the distinction between treatment and punishment in this case is the disturbing level of power that the U.S. government holds to be able to call label something contrary to what it is.

Another concerning factor of SVP laws is that much like sex offender registration, SVP laws are discriminatory in nature. Reports indicate that SVP laws discriminate against African American and gay men (Hoppe et al., 2020). Based on the data collected from 13 states for this study, Black men were civilly committed at *twice the rate* compared to White men. Additionally, research also suggests men who had male victims were civilly committed as much as *three times the rate* as men who had strictly female victims (Hoppe et al., 2020). One explanation for this

latter outcome can be found in the common evaluating tool for determining if a person is an SVP, known as the STATIC-99. This survey deliberately considers someone at a higher risk of sexually reoffending if they are a male who has had a male victim (Phenix et al., 2016). Yet studies show the vast majority of rape victims are juvenile girls and adult women (“Victims of Sexual Violence,” 2021). Therefore, this evaluating standard makes no logical sense if the primary goal is to reduce sex offenses.

Yet many aspects of registry and civil commitment laws are lacking in logic, and there is no easy answer for why laws continue to exist that are unjust, ineffective, and discriminatory. Instead, there is a complex web of reasons, ranging from social to psychological to political and many more. However, for the sake of this discussion, I would like to focus on a few different reasons that these laws have continued to be accepted by the public and lawmakers far past the point of their logical function: the false sense of security these laws bring, the thirst for punishment reflected U.S. justice system, and the desire to maintain control and power over weaker populations.

One reason these laws still exist is to give community members a false sense of security over a problem that the U.S. government has yet to figure out how to effectively control. However, while notifying the public about a sex offenders’ whereabouts or civilly committing a sex offender are all meant to provide a sense of security to communities, the most common sex offenders are unaffected by these laws. According to the Deborah Jacobs (n.d.) of the ACLU of New Jersey, the vast majority of sexual violence is committed by trusted, known adults within families and communities. Moreover, most of it goes unreported. Even though these individuals remain untouched by sex offender registration and civil commitment, it may still harbor support because it makes people feeling like they can do *something* about the issue. I also suggest that

this same false sense of security is what drives the common hatred for the general sex offender population, while overlooking the reality that many of the most powerful figures in the U.S. commit sex crimes with impunity. It is much easier to feel a sense of control over the actions of the poorest and most disenfranchised members of society, such as the convicted sex offender population. However, it is much less easy to feel a sense of control over the rich and powerful men who are rarely touched by the laws they uphold for others.

A second reason these laws still exist speaks to the wider issue of the United States' desire for punishment over rehabilitation. According to Benson (2003), until the tough-on-crime turn starting in the mid 1970's, rehabilitation was a key part of the U.S. penal system. Prisoners used to be encouraged to develop the necessary skills to reintegrate into normal society. Since then, rehabilitation has been considered a soft and unrealistic response to criminal behavior and has taken a backseat to increasingly punitive measures. Resultantly, many sex offenders do not have access to regular treatment until after prison, even though treatment has been shown to reduce recidivism rates. Furthermore, registries and civil commitment have shown to reduce an offender's ability to obtain effective, informed treatment. Seemingly then, the purpose of continuing to keep these laws around is for the sake of continued punishment, not for any concerted effort to rehabilitate a person or increase community safety that these laws claim to aim for.

The lack of interest in community safety reflected in these laws becomes more obvious with the realization that these laws have not been applied justly. If they had, then powerful men who have been exposed as engaging in sexual violence would also be equally vulnerable to these laws. But they are not. This leads me to the third I propose as a cause for the continued existence of registry and civil commitment laws. The reason comes down to power and social control over

less-powerful populations, including non-white communities, those of lower socioeconomic classes, and the LGBTQ+ community. Time and time again, these communities, and especially those with intersecting identities within these communities have been the recipients of an unfair application of the law. Much like the rest of the criminal justice system, registry, and civil commitment laws brand people as criminals, often at young ages, which launches them into a perpetual status of second-class citizens. Unable to vote, access public benefits, housing, or jobs, this maintains a significant level of power and control over the criminal population by preventing their full participation in civil society.

Any yet there is one final reason that I feel deserves attention with this issue. This stems from a matter of incivility. In the context of sex offenders, incivility takes the form of the tendency to stereotype and categorize people based on quick assumptions. Sex offenders have all become one homogenized category, a single story of evil boogymen who commit unthinkable crimes against innocents. This stems from a lack of ability to really stop and bear witness to one another's experiences. To really bear witness, sex offenders must be viewed as individuals, all with their own unique stories that are deserving of an ear. This may lead to the realization that thousands of individuals have been placed on the sex offender registry for inadequate purposes. This may also lead to the realization that there is a single story told about powerful men. This single story suggests that these men are somehow less dangerous or capable of repeated sexual violence, even though these men have limitless resources to inflict pain upon others. Moreover, this may lead to a realization that these laws are unethical and need to be reconsidered.

Sex offender registry and civil commitment laws are unethical in nature and application, whether it be from a deontological or utilitarian perspective, and both perspectives matter in the case of assessing laws. Deontological and utilitarian ethical approaches are appropriate here

because they are considered to be widely acknowledged ethical approaches rooted in morality and justice. In other words, these approaches are concerned with promoting and maintaining the well-being of others. However, while both deontological and utilitarian ethics embrace this framework of morality and justice, neither of them are adequate on their own when attempting to assess if sex offender laws are ethical or not. This is because laws have both intentions and consequences, and both deserve acknowledgment. If one was considered, but not the other, this could result in laws with honorable intentions, but disastrous consequences, or laws with evil intentions and some level of positive consequence. Either way, these options on their own would likely make most of us uncomfortable, and do not make sense on their own in real-life application.

Sex offender registry and civil commitment laws are unethical from a deontological perspective because they do not consider the autonomy and dignity of every human being. While committing a sex offense is also not ethical from this perspective, a just response from a deontological perspective would not be to inflict unnecessary suffering on a sex offender for the rest of their lives. This is because deontologists commonly embrace the theory of retributive justice. The characteristics of retributive justice are that it is “not personal, is directed only at wrongdoing, has inherent limits, involves no pleasure at the suffering of others, and employs procedural standards” (“Retributive Justice,” 2021). Therefore, from retributive theory of justice, registry and civil commitment laws are unjust on many levels. Not only do these laws punish sex offenders far past their prison sentences, but they are seemingly personal with the exceptional circumstances surrounding these laws, as well as not applied in a standard, universal way. The lack of standard, universal application of these laws is also another significant reason that these laws are deontologically unethical. In accordance with Kant’s categorical imperative,

an action is only ethically acceptable if it is *universally* applicable to all human beings, without exception. Yet young children are being registered as sex offenders for relatively harmless acts, while public figures who have repeatedly been accused of sexual violence remain unscathed.

While it is important to consider the intention behind these laws and how they are applied, it is also important to weigh their ethics based on utilitarianism too. This is because factoring in consequences allows for an assessment of whether the law is functioning in practice by increasing overall human well-being. Furthermore, factoring in consequences allows room to acknowledge the need to take action to attempt to deter and rehabilitate criminals, past strictly retributive justice. Yet even based on consequences it is arguable that these laws are still unethical and do not deter, nor rehabilitate sex offenders. While the laws intend to increase the happiness of the aggregate by preventing sexual violence, there is little evidence that these laws accomplish that. Moreover, the widespread human suffering as a result of these laws is palpable, which extends past the suffering of the offender themselves to their families and communities.

The most ethical solution to sexual violence in this country will consider three fundamental goals. The first goal will be to hold sex offenders accountable to their actions through retributive justice. However, this justice must be fairly applied on a universal level, power must never supersede justice. Furthermore, there should be no excessive suffering experienced by the offender past the dues of punishment. Moreover, retributive action must remain within the penal system only. It goes beyond a fair punishment when an individual has no way of reentering society in a reasonable way. The second goal will be to rehabilitate sex offenders so that they have the opportunity to function successfully within society, which is of benefit to all. Stemming from rehabilitation is third goal, which will be to prevent sex crimes from happening. However, this must not be limited to strictly after-the-fact responses, such as

registry and civil commitment. Given the majority of offenders to not likely to sexually recidivate to begin with, the most relevant, just measure to take is to try to prevent sexual violence from happening to the first time.

Advocates for reform of U.S. sex offender laws have argued that there are a few different ways that sex crimes can be prevented in the first place. These ways include “comprehensive sex education in schools; free or affordable mental health services, aimed at helping those who are confused about their sexuality, having fantasies about children, etc; safe and affordable housing; and a public education program that explains the nuances of sex offenses” (Condon, 2018, para. 17). Preventing sex offenses from occurring is the most just action because it benefits the victim, community, and potential offender.

However, in the cases where a sex offense has occurred and must be responded to, there are also more just and better approaches to curtail future offending than the current system offers. First, a more just approach starts by delineating between high and low risk sex offenses in a much clearer way. This may mean shrinking the sex offender registry to include a handful of the highest risk offenders. Not only is this just for the offender population, but it is also best for the public too. This is because it will help law enforcement more easily track the most dangerous offenders, while also notifying the public of legitimate threats. I personally do not feel concerned about a person living next to me that exposed their penis as a young child; however, it may be a different story if my neighbor is a serial rapist. Second, a more just approach considers rehabilitation as a primary focus for those who have committed a sex offense. Many offenders have little to no access to treatment during their stays in prison. Given that the prison environment is harsh and can result in an even more hardened criminal, it makes sense to the benefit of everyone to try to treat a sex offender as quickly as possible. Moreover, if they have

already completed a treatment plan in prison, they may be less likely to recidivate upon release than if they only start treatment once released to the community.

Yet there is also something we as citizens can do too. People have the ability to take collective, civil action to fight for reform against unjust practices in this country. And it begins with bearing witness to the least accepted members of our society. Bearing witness requires us to slow down, collect the facts and witness the truth and experiences others. In the context of sex offenders, this requires us to turn off the broken record player that repeats over and over how untreatable and monstrous all sex offenders are. Once we bear witness to the truth, it may make some of us lose sleep at night to know that a man is living under a bridge for playing a prank as a kid, or man is sitting in a prison-like treatment center until he dies for something he *might* do in the future. All the while, powerful men, some of whom have upheld these laws, commit chronic sexual violence right in the public spotlight.

Sex offender registration and civil commitment laws speak to the need for a complete overhaul of the U.S. criminal justice system. Much like the rest of the criminal justice system, these laws are unfairly applied based on socioeconomic status, race, and sexuality. Moreover, these laws target youth and extend punishment far past its expiration date under U.S. constitutional law. Registered and civilly committed sex offenders have an impossible time trying to reintegrate into normal society, which only serves to perpetuate criminal activity and destroy families and communities. Furthermore, with all the costs involved, these practices simply do not work. An ethical approach to applying the law considers both the intentions and consequences of the law, and neither registration nor civil commitment satisfy these criteria. Effective solutions must consider several factors: whether the new set of criteria is ethical, retributive, deterrent, and rehabilitative. Effective measures to reduce sex crimes are measures

that *reduce* sex crimes. Thus far, the measures that have been taken fall short. We should expect tangible actions to be taken and for no amount of money to be able to buy out equal justice.

### References

- Ackerman, A. R., & Sacks, M. (2018). Disproportionate minority presence on the U.S. sex offender registries. *Justice Policy Journal*, 16(2), 1-20.  
[http://www.cjcr.org/uploads/cjcr/documents/disproportionate\\_minority\\_presence\\_on\\_u.s.\\_sex\\_offender\\_registries\\_ackerman\\_sacks.pdf](http://www.cjcr.org/uploads/cjcr/documents/disproportionate_minority_presence_on_u.s._sex_offender_registries_ackerman_sacks.pdf)
- Baird, A. (2016, August 3). *Man charged for attacking sex offenders greeted as a hero by some*. Alaska's News Source. <https://www.alaskanewssource.com/content/news/Man-charged-for-attacking-sex-offenders-greeted-as-a-hero-by-some-389097252.html>
- Banachowski-Fuller, C. (2021). Sex offender post commitment analysis.  
<https://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/81844/Neville-Neil%2C%20Leigh.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Benson, E. (2003). *Rehabilitate or Punish?* American Psychological Association.  
<https://www.apa.org/monitor/julaug03/rehab>
- Bishop, K. (2018, April 15). *A reflection on the history of sexual assaults in the United States*. The Arkansas Journal of Social Change and Public Service.  
<https://ualr.edu/socialchange/2018/04/15/reflection-history-sexual-assault-laws-unitedstates/>
- Bliss, K. (2018, December). *Sex offender registration bias against Blacks*. Criminal Legal News.  
<https://www.criminallegalnews.org/news/2018/dec/5/sex-offender-registration-biased-against-blacks/>
- Condon, T. (2018, May 21). *Sex offender registry: More harm than good?* The Connecticut Mirror. <https://ctmirror.org/2018/05/21/sex-offender-registry-harm-good/>

- Feige, D. (2017, September 17). *Shawna: A life of the sex offender registry*. The Marshall Project. <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2017/09/17/shawna-a-life-on-the-sex-offender-registry>
- Fuchs, E. (2013, October 9). *7 surprising things that could make you a sex offender*. Business Insider. <https://www.businessinsider.com/surprising-things-that-could-make-you-a-sex-offender-2013-10>
- Gillespie, E. (2018, October 3). *On Washington's McNeill Island, the only residents are 214 dangerous sex offenders*. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/oct/03/dangerous-sex-offenders-mcneil-island-commitment-center>
- Hoppe, T., Myer, I. H., De Orio, S., Vogler, S., & Armstrong, M. (2020, October). *Civil commitment of people convicted of sex offenses in the United States*. UCLA School of Law Williams Institute. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/civil-commitment-us/>
- Jacobs, D. (n.d). *Why sex offender laws do more harm than good*. ACLU of New Jersey. <https://www.aclu-nj.org/theissues/criminaljustice/whysexoffenderlawsdomoreha>
- Jeglic, E. L. (2019, August 9). *Sex offender registries*. Psychology Today. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/protecting-children-sexual-abuse/201908/sex-offenderregistries#:~:text=As%20with%20most%20things%2C%20the,to%20nothing%20to%20reduce%20reoffending>.
- Jilani, Z. (2018, May 5). *Homeless sex offenders are getting kicked out of their south Florida encampment. Now what?* The Intercept. <https://theintercept.com/2018/05/05/homeless-sex-offenders-florida-miami-dade/>

Lehrer, E. (2016). *Rethinking sex offender registries*. National Affairs.

<https://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/rethinking-sex-offender-registries>

Naef, R. (2006). Bearing witness: A moral way of engaging in the nurse-person relationship.

*National Library of Medicine*. DOI: [10.1111/j.1466-769X.2006.00271.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1466-769X.2006.00271.x)

Nathan, D. (2018, November 15). *Black men disproportionately represented on sex offender*

*registries*. The Appeal. <https://theappeal.org/black-men-disproportionately-represented-on-sex-offender-registries/#:~:text=They%20found%20that%20Black%20people,double%20that%20of%20white%20men.>

Phenix, A., Fernandez, Y., Harris, A. J. R., Helmus, M., Hanson, R. K., Thornton, D. (2016).

Static-99R coding rules. [http://www.static99.org/pdfdocs/Coding\\_manual\\_2016\\_v2.pdf](http://www.static99.org/pdfdocs/Coding_manual_2016_v2.pdf)

Pittman, N. I., & Shah, R. S. (2017). *Cruel and unusual: The case against registering kids as sex*

*offenders*. Criminal Justice. <https://impactjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/SHAH.authcheckdam.pdf>

Policies and practices contributing to high rates of incarceration. (2014). *The National Academic*

*Press*. <https://www.nap.edu/read/18613/chapter/5>

Pryor, W. H., Barkow, R.E., Bryer, C. R., Reeves, D.C., Cushwa, P.K., Rybicki D. (2019). *Recidivism*

*among federal violent offenders*. United States Sentencing Commission.

[https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/research-publications/2019/20190124\\_Recidivism\\_Violence.pdf](https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/research-publications/2019/20190124_Recidivism_Violence.pdf)

Przybylski, R. (2015, July). *The effectiveness of treatment for juveniles who sexually offend*. Sex

Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative.

<https://smart.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh231/files/media/document/juveniletreatment.pdf>

*Retributive justice*. (2021, August 11). In *Wikipedia*.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retributive\\_justice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retributive_justice)

Sawyer, W. (2019). BJS fuels myth about sex offense recidivism, contradicting its own new data.

*Prison Policy Initiative*. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2019/06/06/sexoffenses/>

*Sexually violent predator*. (2021, February 8). *Wikipedia*.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexually\\_violent\\_predator\\_laws](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexually_violent_predator_laws)

Sreenivasan, S., Hoffman, A., Cahan, J., Azizian, A., & Weinberger, L. E. (2020). Applying collaborative

justice to sexually violent predator civil commitment. *Journal of the American Academy of*

*Psychiatry and the Law*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29158/JAAPL.200023-20>

*Sex offender registries in the United States*. (2021, July 10). In *Wikipedia*.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex\\_offender\\_registries\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender_registries_in_the_United_States)

Stephoe, G., & Goldet, A. (2016, January 27). *Why some young sex offenders are held indefinitely*. The

Marshall Project. [https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/01/27/why-some-young-sex-](https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/01/27/why-some-young-sex-offenders-are-held-indefinitely)

[offenders-are-held-indefinitely](https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/01/27/why-some-young-sex-offenders-are-held-indefinitely)

Stringer, H. (2017, October). *Justice for Teens*. American Psychological Association.

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2017/10/justice-teens>

*Victims of sexual violence*. (2021). RAINN. <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual->

[violence#:~:text=90%25%20of%20adult%20rape%20victims%20are%20female.&text=F](https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence#:~:text=90%25%20of%20adult%20rape%20victims%20are%20female.&text=F)

[emales%20ages%2016%2D19%20are,attempted%20rape%2C%20or%20sexual%20assa](https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence#:~:text=90%25%20of%20adult%20rape%20victims%20are%20female.&text=F)

[ult.&text=Women%20ages%2018%2D24%20who,general%20to%20experience%20sexu](https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence#:~:text=90%25%20of%20adult%20rape%20victims%20are%20female.&text=F)

[al%20violence](https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence#:~:text=90%25%20of%20adult%20rape%20victims%20are%20female.&text=F)

Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs. (n.d). *Sex offender information*. WASPC.

<https://www.waspc.org/sex-offender->

[information#:~:text=Sex%20offenders%20are%20juveniles%20or,44.130.](https://www.waspc.org/sex-offender-information#:~:text=Sex%20offenders%20are%20juveniles%20or,44.130)