

**Occasional Series on Reentry Research  
Prisoner Reentry Institute at John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

**No Easy Answers: Sex Offender Laws in the U.S.  
Panelist Biographies  
February 1, 2008**

**Sarah Tofte** is a Researcher for the U.S. Program at Human Rights Watch, and the author of the Human Rights Watch report *No Easy Answers: Sex Offender Laws in the U.S.* Ms. Tofte graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School. Prior to joining Human Rights Watch, she served as a policy analyst for the Innocence Project in New York.

**Sharon Doane**, LCSW, has worked in the field of sex offender treatment for 11 years. In her current position as Director of Forensic Services at Family Services, Inc. in Dutchess County, NY, she oversees programs for people convicted of sex offenses and battery as well as services for victims of crime. In this capacity, Ms. Doane serves as Project Coordinator of the Dutchess County Sex Offender Management Project and as Project Director of the Women with Disabilities Empowerment Project.

Ms. Doane is a clinical member of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers and serves on the Board of Directors of its New York State chapter. She also serves on the Board of the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault. Previously, she served as the director of a battered women's shelter and is the author of *New Beginnings: A Creative Writing Guide for Women Who Have Left Abusive Partners* (Seal Press, 1996). Ms. Doane is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Social Welfare at SUNY-Albany.

**Al O'Connor** has been a criminal defense lawyer for 23 years. He is a 14-year veteran of the New York State Defenders Association's Public Defense Backup Center, where he coordinates the Association's legislative work, amicus activity and litigation. In 2004, Mr. O'Connor received the Denison Ray Award from the New York State Bar Association for outstanding provision of indigent criminal defense services. He is a frequent lecturer for defender groups on such topics as the right to counsel, search and seizure, criminal justice legislation, New York sentencing law, the Sex Offender Registration Act, and the Sex Offender Management and Treatment Act. He is a member of the Chief Administrative Judge's Advisory Committee on Criminal Law and Procedure. Mr. O'Connor was formerly a trial attorney and Deputy Bureau Chief of the Appeals Bureau at the Nassau County Legal Aid Society.

**Margaret Smith** is a criminologist at the Institute for Criminal Justice Ethics at John Jay College. Her ongoing major projects include the analysis of the causes and context of the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests and the expansion of information about resources for re-entry in Newark and throughout New Jersey. She recently worked with the National Police and Attorney General's office in the Dominican Republic on the classification of crimes and a national crime data reporting system. Ms. Smith currently teaches correctional ethics and quantitative courses at John Jay College.