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## CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS SIMILARITIES, DIFFERENCES BETWEEN “QUEERS” AND SEX OFFENDERS

Albuquerque, NM / August 13, 2013—Advocates for sex offenders, registrants, and family members will convene in Los Angeles for the 5th Annual National Reform Sex Offender Laws conference, “Justice for All,” from August 30 through September 1. The focus of the conference is the reform of existing sex offender laws throughout the nation that deny civil rights to more than 750,000 sex offenders as well as to members of their families. The conference will include national experts, workshops, and panels on topics such as the similarities and differences between “queers” and sex offenders.

“All queer people are invested in the plight of sex offenders, whether they like it or not,” stated Andrew Extein, a social worker who has provided psychotherapy to sex offenders in L.A. “I am a gay man who is not a sex offender, yet I can see that the discrimination, misunderstanding, and punishment that we queers have experienced and endured is now being shifted onto a new group to vilify – sex offenders.”

Epstein will elaborate upon these views which were recently [published at Huffington Post](#).

An additional topic to be discussed at the conference is “designer laws” which currently apply to sex offenders and have previously been applied in the “war on drugs.” Prominent criminal defense attorney Alex Landon, the keynote speaker at the conference, has noted that “about 1 in every 37 adults” in America has had prison experience. Men of color are over-represented in prison; while only 5 percent of white men and 7.7 percent of Hispanics males have been incarcerated, 17 percent of all African American men have been. More than 750,000 individuals are labeled as “sex offenders.” Landon provides further insight on these topics in the book he co-authored, *A Parallel Universe*, which analyzes sex offender issues from both legal and human perspectives.

The conference will include a variety of workshops and panels, including a panel of sex offenders who will discuss their recent successes and current challenges with sex offender laws. One member of that panel is Chance Oberstein, a former sex offender who was reinstated as an attorney in 2008. In that capacity, Oberstein provides legal advice to registrants.

“This conference is an excellent opportunity for registrants and family members of registrants to learn about the laws and policies that affect their daily lives,” stated Brenda Jones, Executive Director of Reform Sex Offender Laws, Inc. Past national conferences have been held in Boston, Washington, D.C., St. Louis, and Albuquerque.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RATIONAL SEXUAL OFFENSE LAWS**  
**Fighting to restore dignity & constitutional rights to millions.**

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Additional conference speakers include:

Doctor Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, Founding Program Director of Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) at the Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies at Fresno Pacific University; Catherine Carpenter, criminal defense attorney and professor of law at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles; and Doctor Suzonne Kline, former administrator of Florida's Sexually Violent Predator Program, now in private practice specializing in several areas of effective sexual offender management.

Reform Sex Offense Laws, Inc. is a national civil rights organization with contacts and affiliated groups in forty states, D.C., and the Philippines. Organized officially in 2007, RSOL has had a national conference each of the past four years. Early bird activities begin on the 29th with the official opening on Friday morning, August 30. Online registration for the conference is available at [www.rsolconference.org](http://www.rsolconference.org). The registration fee is \$100. Additional information about the conference can be found on the website of national Reform Sex Offender Laws at [www.nationalrsol.org](http://www.nationalrsol.org) and California Reform Sex Offender Laws at [www.californiarsol.org](http://www.californiarsol.org).

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