

Sin No More: From Abortion to Stem Cells, Understanding Crime, Law, and Morality in America

John Dombrink, Daniel Hillyard



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Read the Authors' Op-Ed on the Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Sin No More offers a vivid examination of some of the most morally and politically disputed issues of our time: abortion, gay rights, assisted suicide, stem cell research, and legalized gambling. These are moral values issues, all of which are hotly, sometimes violently, contested in America. The authors cover these issues in depth, looking at the nature of efforts to initiate reforms, to define constituencies, to mobilize resources, to frame debates, and to shape public opinion—all in an effort to achieve social change, create, or re-write legislation. Of the issues under scrutiny only legalized gambling has managed to achieve widespread acceptance despite moral qualms from some.

Sin No More seeks to show what these laws and attitudes tell us about Americans' approach to law and morality, and about our changing conceptions of sin, crime and illegality. Running through each chapter is a central tension: that American attitudes and laws toward these victimless crimes are going through a process of normalization. Despite conservative rhetoric the authors argue that the tide is turning on each of these issues, with all moving toward acceptance, or decriminalization, in society. Each issue is at a different point in terms of this acceptance, and each has traveled different roads to achieve their current status.

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