

NEW RIGHTS IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

What new rights does the American legal system offer at the start of the 21st century? This article takes a snapshot of some of the most controversial topics in American society today and the juridical response to these topics by individual states, the United States Congress, and the United States Supreme Court. Although there are numerous legal topics that deserve mention and analysis, this article is limited to the discussion of 7 new rights created by state and federal laws. The new legal rights in the United States legal system discussed in this article include the following: 1) The right to the protection of the environment; 2) The right to privacy in relation to unsolicited telemarketing telephone calls; 3) The right to sexual offender residential information; 4) The right to the protection of victims of human trafficking; 5) The right to marry or to civil unions between same-sex couples; 6) The right to euthanasia or death with dignity; and 7) The right to determine what medical treatment to receive and the right to organ donation. The article also discusses the most far-reaching decisions handed down by the United States Supreme Court in 2008.