

Should the american government bring back flogging? essay sample

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



In his article “ Bring Back Flogging,” Jeff Jacoby advocates flogging as an excellent means of corporal punishment. Even though flogging has been “ out of fashion for at least 150 years” he insists that flogging should be brought back to replace the more conventional method of imprisonment (193). In addition, Jacoby is convinced that flogging offenders after their first conviction can deter them from going into a professional criminal career and has more educational value than putting criminals behind bars. Furthermore, he insists that “ sentencing at least some criminals say, thieves and drunk drivers to a public whipping” (194) will encourage offenders to change their behavior after being flogged. Although Jacoby tries to present flogging as a more effective alternative than putting criminals in jail, his faulty assumptions and misconceptions fail to persuade readers that flogging is a better alternative.

One of the key areas where Jacoby’s essay falls short is his over reliance on assumptions to state his claims. He assumes that flogging is a “ quick and cheap” (194) alternative to prison that can prevent young offenders from pursuing a life of crime. Jacoby believes that, “ if young punks were horsewhipped in public after their first conviction, fewer of them would harden into lifelong felons” (194). However, his assumption that publically whipping young delinquents will help them from swaying away from a life as a criminal is seldom the case. The author fails to see that there are gang leaders who look forward to recruiting juveniles that can withstand painful and humiliating experiences. In their eyes, a new recruit who can find ways to deal with pain, remain strong and find the will to keep moving is a worthy recruit into any gang. Jacoby also overlooks the fact that if flogging becomes

legalized, it would only become the stepping-stone for more violence as well as provide humiliation a youth needs to become accepted as a member of an organized crime unit.

Likewise, some readers will voice discontent about Jacoby's belief that flogging is more " educational than ten years worth of prison meals and lockdowns" (194). First time offenders who never held plans to go into a professional criminal career will become angry and aggravated at the floggers for the lack of understanding and compassion. As a result of public humiliation and disgrace, these criminals are likely to become agitated, frustrated and violent towards those who punished them. The author believes that, " prison is a graduate school of criminal studies" (193) but fails to realize that the only educational lesson that flogging can reach is hate and violence, therefore, flogging does not have a more positive educational impact than imprisonment.

Another assumption that Jacoby makes as he tries to convince readers that flogging is an alternative to prison is that " crime is out of control, despite the deluded happy talk by some politicians about how ' safe' cities have become" (193). Jacoby assumes that it is due to our poor judgment of effective punishment that we turn to him for advice. Jacoby therefore tries to write in a clear and formal language in order to try and to persuade the reader that flogging is a viable alternative to prison. Nevertheless, his greatest failures when it comes to his handling of flogging is that he tries to make up facts as well as tries to write as if he is a professional in the field of flogging. That being the case, it is hard for the reader to take his opinions

seriously. For instance, Jacoby tries to convince readers that flogging is better than prison as “ nearly all convicted felons are released early or not locked up at all” causing “ very few of us believe that the criminal justice system is a success” (193). However, Jacoby’s statements are incorrect assumptions; his claims rest on his own personal experiences so we cannot take his words for the truth.

Just as Jacoby’s assumptions detract from his claim, so does his misconceptions. Jacoby proposes that the next reason why flogging is better than imprisonment is that the “ risk of being beaten, raped, or murdered is terrifyingly high” (194). However, some readers will find themselves disagreeing with Jacoby’s statement that imprisonment is more frightening than flogging. He does not realize that flogging is “ degrading” and “ brutal” and that if the American government legalized flogging, they would be allowing brutality (194). The author fails to see that bringing back flogging would imply that the American government has the right to physically assault convicted criminals by giving them “ twenty five lashes” (193). Jacoby overlooks that if flogging is accepted as corporal punishment in society; convicts would not be beaten in prisons but be subjected to being beaten by the government. Therefore, unlike Jacoby’s belief that flogging should be brought back to replace prison, it should not be allowed because it is inhumane and cruel.

Although Jacoby attempts to find the best way to punish lawbreakers, as a result of too many assumptions and misconceptions in his thinking, he fails miserably. In his article “ Bring Back Flogging” the author simply fails to see

the true value of education, imprisonment and the importance of being compassionate. His assumptions are based on his own limited personal experience and beliefs. His misconceptions are also unconvincing. Furthermore, he overlooks the fact that violence will only breed anger and hatred. In order to diminish crime and aggression in the society, it is imperative that the government refrains from brutal and uncompassionate punishments but instead try to remain humane and reasonable.