

Why america should enforce the death penalty

[Law](#), [Death Penalty](#)



An unemotional man is being escorted into a room with the warden and several other men; his face was blank and his soul emptier than a black hole. He has been given his last meal and his clothes are clean. A row of chairs and a small chamber in the room with a reinforced glass window is visible. As he is being escorted into the smaller chamber, a man and a woman come into the room and sat on the chair with a look of sadness with a side of satisfaction. The doors of the small chamber lock, leaving the warden, two men, and the prisoner. Strapped down to a bed, the prisoner remains silent. The two men insert IV tubes into him, while the warden watches. The warden asks him, " Any last words?" The prisoner turns to the one-way window. He cannot see them, but he knows that they are watching. Turning his head to the warden, he says in a whisper, " Tell them I am sorry." Later, one of the men injects a deadly concoction of drugs and the prisoner was pronounced dead roughly twenty minutes later. This is the average process of an execution by lethal injection, which is legal in the majority of the states in the United States. There are states, however, that do not enforce capital punishment. Those who are given the death sentence have committed a very severe crime, such as treason, espionage, and first degree murder. Despite others disagreeing, the United States should enforce the death penalty because it is just, it saves cities money, and it is a warning to those who are looking to commit a crime worthy of the death penalty.

A reason the death penalty should be enforced is that it is just and righteous. The family of the victims in the case of a murder has experienced a traumatic event and will want justice for what they have been through. Ernest van den Haag, a sociologist and a jurisprudence professor, writes, "

The paramount moral purpose of punishment is retributive justice” (Haag). Haag is explaining that the goal of punishment is that justice will be done. Haag also writes that, “ Their punishment acknowledges rather than denies their responsibility and, thereby, their humanity” (Haag). The quote explains that the offenders have ignored human responsibility, and therefore, should be punished as a result of doing so. In addition to this, Louis Pojman, a philosopher and professor, writes, “ As a person of dignity, the victim deserves (as a kind of compensatory justice) to have the offender harmed in proportion to the gravity of the crime, and as a person of high worth and responsibility, the offender is deserving of the death penalty” (Pojman). Again, the victim and those who were affected by an offender requires justice, and that is the punishment of the offender is the same level as the crime they have committed. However, some may argue that innocent people can be sentenced to death. This may be true as humans are fallible, but much evidence is required to give someone the death sentence and that as humans, we are bound to make mistakes. For example, Haag writes, “ To avoid convicting innocents we require so much evidence for conviction that many guilty persons escape punishment—which is no less unjust than convicting the innocent” (Haag). He is explaining that the fact that many guilty people can escape punishment makes up for the innocent that are convicted. Additionally, this just punishment saves cities money.

Cities in the United States spend a considerable amount of money each year keeping a prisoner incarcerated. Some cities may spend upwards of \$168,000, which is New York City’s cost to keep, feed, and guard each prisoner each year. Also, New York City spends more money on inmates than any

other state or city. Many prisons are also overcrowded, increasing the cost (Santora). Having less prisoners as a result of the death penalty even though very few are executed, would save cities like New York City a large amount of money. The money saved can be spent on other topics, such as education. In total, the price of maintaining all the inmates in the U. S (2. 4 million) is about \$63. 4 billion a year. The average price of maintaining an inmate is about \$60, 000 a year, the same amount as a teacher's salary. This shows that the cost is very high (The Cost of a Nation of Incarceration). There are those who argue that the price of the drugs in lethal injections are also expensive. While this is true, the cost of keeping an inmate in prison for a year is far greater than the cost of the drugs (Hennessy-Fiske). Also, another benefit of enforcing the death penalty is that it deters present or future criminals from committing crimes.

By deterring criminals or would-be criminals, the fear based on the death penalty. As a result, lives may be saved. Pojman writes, " The utilitarian argument for capital punishment is that it deters would-be offenders from committing first degree murder" (Pojman). If the risk of death was not relevant for a criminal, Pojman explains that there would be more first degree murders. Also, the death penalty has been shown to be the most deterrent punishment (Haag). Haag writes about if a prisoner were to escape, there would be nothing to deter the prisoner if the death penalty was not in action (Haag). People who are against the death penalty say that it deters just as much as life in prison. However, there is anecdotal evidence to support the death penalty deters more.

In conclusion, the United States should enforce the death penalty for various reasons. It allows justice to be served and give right to the victims and the affected. Also, it saves cities money on expensive inmate maintenance costs. Lastly, it deters criminals, thus saving innocent lives. The benefits of the penalty outweigh the disadvantages. Enforcing the death penalty should be done. For the life of one, many innocent lives can be saved.