

The death penalty



The death penalty Contrary to popular belief, the death penalty does not serve as a deterrent to crime. Violent crimes, such as murders and rapes, are still being committed on a daily basis throughout the United States (Bailey & Peterson, 2009). While it is true that some criminals may have thought twice about engaging in criminal behavior due to the existence of the death penalty, there are still so many that have committed these horrid crimes regardless. The crime rates are still so high in the United States because not enough people are fully acknowledging the death penalty; in many cases, criminals simply do not care that the death penalty can be a consequence of their actions. Furthermore, since the wait on death row is a long one, many criminals do not take the death penalty as a serious consequence. There are many other countries that also adhere to the death penalty, though their practices of administering the death penalty differ from the United States, as well as what constitutes a death-worthy crime. Approximately twenty-five nations throughout the world believe in and practice the death penalty. Those that do not uphold any form of the death penalty find the actions to inhumane and lacking in ethic. Most of these nations, as well as the states in the United States that do not practice the death penalty, prefer to imprison their more hardened criminals for a lengthy amount of time with sentences that usually exceed life. I believe that the death penalty is not serving the purpose that it should. People are still committing violent crimes despite its existence. Furthermore, with the amount of exonerated deaths due to inconsistencies in the criminal justice system, the death penalty is proving to be more harmful than beneficial. Not only is the death penalty condoning the actions of those on death row, but it is bringing about the deaths of innocent people, which is yet another flaw in the death penalty. The government

killing innocent people is no different than the criminals taking the lives of the innocent. Finally, I see the death penalty as being an easy way out for hardened criminals. They commit a crime, are sentenced, and die twenty years later. This lessens the chance of them learning from their mistakes. As such, I feel that the death penalty should be abolished to avoid further mistakes in judgment. A more serving punishment would be a life sentence in prison, which would give the criminal all the time they need to understand that their actions were wrong. Youths who have been convicted of violent crimes should not be subjected to the death penalty for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, the younger a criminal is, the better chance there is of rehabilitating that person. That person is young enough to understand that their actions were unacceptable and after a designated amount of years in prison, they stand the opportunity of learning from their actions. As opposed to adults in similar situations, youths are able to be easily rehabilitated due to their young age. Similarly, there are some young criminals that may not properly know the differences between right and wrong, thus being unaware of what they are doing when they commit a crime (Streib, 2000). Indeed, many violent crimes by youths have been accidents, even though they have resulted in the death of another. References Bailey, W., & Peterson, R. (2009). Murder, capital punishment, and deterrence. *Journal of Social Issues*, 53(50), 94-99. Streib, V. (2000). Emerging issues in juvenile death penalty law. *Ohio Northern University Law Review*, 725(6), 37-48.