

The ethos is because
while the victim's

[Education](#), [Teaching](#)



The college students of Appalachian State University were using their writing capabilities to document their findings and experiences to provide information about death row through means of a first-year composition class. The students utilizing the opportunity knew " they were culpable, that the state was committing executions in our names" (32) Kimberly Gunter uses her writing to influence and motivate individuals to take action. Dr.

Gunter uses modes of persuasion to hook a sense of fear, disgust, and anguish. The goal of the composition was to provide information about the prison system and the importance of death penalty. Dr. Kimberly Gunter brought her first-year composition class to the state prison to show where death penalties were held. As the article begins, the reader is hit immediately with an analogy " the stench of death is strong" to convey the gruesome brutality that is humanity when it comes down to the death penalty. Before any of the students or Dr Kimberly could say anything about the stench, Lt. Bowden says, " We've tried to do something about the smell. We've cleaned. We've painted. But nothing works." (Gunter, 2011). As the tour goes on, she continues to use pathos imagery to portray how gruesome it is. She adds side notes of how cyanide was used with sulfuric acid to kill the inmate via gas chamber. This act was later ruled out due to witnesses accidentally being harmed by the gas, thus introducing them to lethal injections.

Dr. Gunter describes the ironic, poetic justice using ethos in the following statement: " Therein, the victim's family and the prisoner's family sit shoulder to shoulder" watching the inmate get ready for their last breath.

The reason for the statement to be described as using ethos is because while the victim's family is there to watch justice be served to the inmate, the inmates' family is also there to say their last farewell to their loved one. This sentence is a typical example of situational irony, which is portrayed even more so through the use of an executioner, whose profession is to execute murderers, rapists, etc. However, they are not prosecuted for similar actions.

Kimberly Gunter also tries to civilize the inmates by describing the auditorium full of prisoners listening to a "visiting Christian evangelist singing promises of a spiritual life that supersedes prison walls." (34) This sentence adds a sense of pathos imagery towards the prisoners. Although the details create emotion with the reader, a nurse working at the prison contradicts Dr. Gunter's statement with the following outlook, "There ain't nobody innocent here" (34). After the statement, the reality of the situation returns. Why are these people here? Gunter wants to show the humane side of the death penalty but fails to do so as she quotes Lt. Bowden. "While the guards ruled the prison during the day, the prisoners ruled at night, and that prisoner rape was widespread and unchecked while the cell blocks were on nightly lockdown.

" (35). This example of injustice within the prison only confirms to the reader that there is an inability to rehabilitate prisoners. Dr. Gunter reports that her students became "attorneys on both sides of the capital punishment debate." This statement embodies how the students experience opened mindness about the gruesome reality of capital punishment.

Finally, she provides an excellent analysis from the perspective of civilians, lawyers, and prisoners. Her form of writing is very persuasive but captivates the reader to think about what the real issue is critical. Is society wrong in the way they execute and manage the death penalty? Would our society be an advocate for changing the laws and making better conditions for the prisoners? Although she never broadcasted her opinion on the topic, Dr. Gunter imprinted on the students by "taking the streets and inviting it into their classroom." Through this experience, the students were able to freely express themselves on the death penalty thus teaching them how to become academic writers.