

Charles singleton essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Charles Laverne Singleton was a convicted murderer who was put on death row for killing store owner Mary Lou York in Hamburg. She died from loss of blood as a result of two stabs to her neck. After his conviction record states he had schizophrenia. He was legally sane when on his medication, but there were also times he refused to take his medication which results in paranoia. The argument is, should the state force mental ill prisoners to take antipsychotic drugs to make them sane enough for execution? Washington vs. Harper's law allows prison authorities to medicate mentally ill inmates against their will if they become danger to self or others, in that case, Charles Singleton was. When he's on his medication, he was completely aware of his situations and Consequences but when he wasn't he believed that someone's trying to get him or he's trying to get them. Being off the medication made him become a threat to other people and himself, and was forced to take his antipsychotic medication. Singleton's execution had been scheduled five times but in his final appeal, the U. S. Supreme Court decided that he was taking his medication voluntarily.

The medication does not cure the patient it only relieves symptoms- the opposing Judges Heany and Wollam argue over whether this is sanity (Liptak 2003) In the end, Singleton asked his attorney not to do anything that would block his execution. It took the Court five trials over 24 years, longer than any other state inmates before he was executed by lethal injection. The death sentence for Singleton drew global attention because he suffered from schizophrenia a mental illness that rendered him legally insane without medication, and was considered legally sane only when treated with medication.

His attorney argued that the State could not alter Singleton's mental state with medication in order to make him sane enough to be executed. The medication may depress the symptoms at that moment but doesn't take away his sickness; therefore is he sane because he is medicated? If he should stop taking those medications would his symptoms come back? One may object to medicating the mentally ill prisoners to take antipsychotic drugs in order to make them sane enough for execution but, what about other crimes that leads to execution they both weighs the same (cruel) . I would respond by saying, I too believe with his awyer that it's an artificial sanity, the prior seems bizarre, I don't believe one should be medicated, just to be executed. What I do believe, once you commit the crime you should do the time (not execution.) He was competent and knew exactly what he was doing when he walked into York grocery store and stabbed the woman to death. He ended her life so quickly and yet he lived for another 24 years, getting visitors and seeing his family. The evidence in his case was overwhelming as they had witnesses and the victims that pointed him out. There has to be some type of punishment for people who take other people's lives.