

# Capital Punishment

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The ultimate penalty is death (capital punishment). It is carried out by hanging (Kenya, for example); electrocution, gassing or lethal injection (U.S.); beheading or stoning (Saudi Arabia); or shooting (China).







In other words, almost half the countries of the world have ceased to use the death penalty. The UN has declared itself in favour of abolition, Amnesty International actively campaigns for abolition, and the issue is now the focus of great debate.

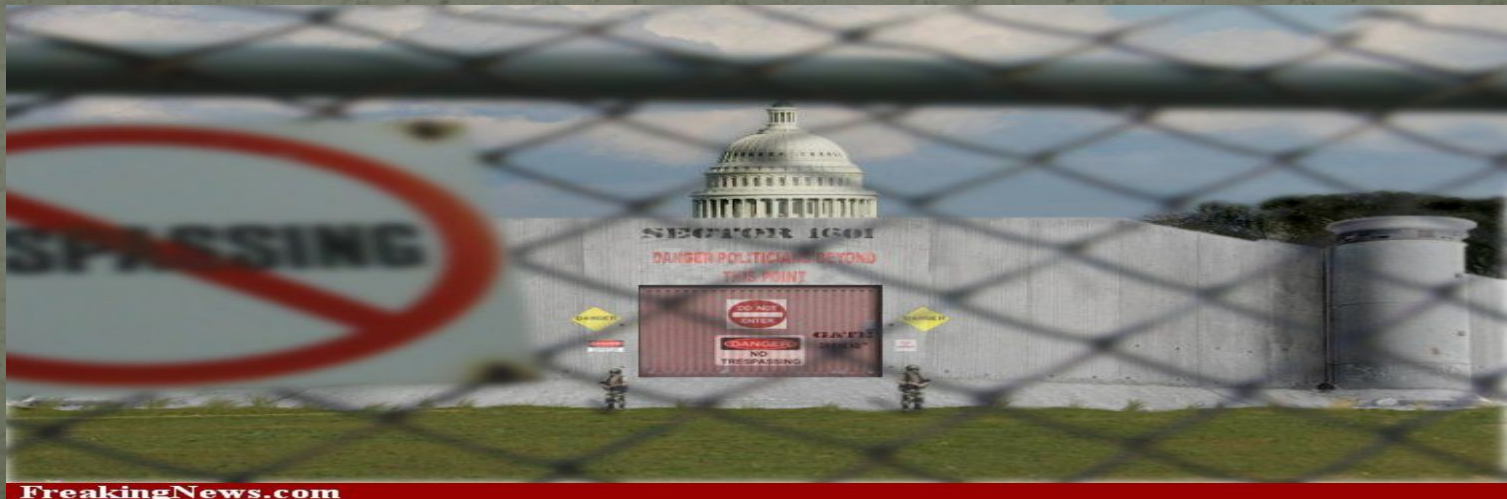
Today's world can be divided into many parts – it depends on which criteria we use to make this division: economics, population, political systems and so on. In terms of attitudes towards capital punishment, there are usually two sides: pro and con



Just like birth, death is the supreme mystery of our lives,  
and no violence must interfere with this natural  
process: we come into this world and leave it according  
to rules that were created before man.



Secondly, the point concerning the understanding of what the real punishment is. Do you really think that to deprive a criminal of the right to continue to live is what we need? When he is dead, nothing bothers him anymore; so what does the punishment consist of? On the other hand, to condemn a criminal to life imprisonment is the best way to punish him, especially in our country, where conditions of existence in prisons are far from normal.





Just imagine for a minute a tiny cell where people, as ants in an ant hill, have to live near each other every day, every minute, every second. Where tomorrow nothing will change and you can be sure that in 10 years everything there will be the same. Boredom and predictability are two things capable of driving everybody mad. There are two feelings we always try to escape from, hence, we have lots of invented tricks to amuse ourselves to make life a bit more interesting.



Even dogs can't live in a cage, because iron bars contradict their nature. Animals usually get sick and finally die. Man is, of course, stronger than animals, but dozens of years spent in a closed space will destroy the most healthy person, and this slow destruction will be a thousand times more terrible than a quick death with a gun shot or an electric chair.





Supporters of capital punishment believe that death is a just punishment for certain serious crimes. Many also believe that it deters others from committing such crimes.

There are many atheists, but , at the same time, we still have lots of believers, and one of the major principles of all religions is the prohibition killing people. Whatever a criminal did, normal and civilized people must never resemble him/her and play the same game as he/she does. If we do, there will be no difference between us and the man on the dock; and the need for courts would be eliminated.



Opponents argue that execution is cruel and uncivilized. Capital punishment involves not only the pain of dying (James Autry took ten minutes to die of lethal injection in Texas, 1984) but also the mental anguish of waiting, sometimes for years, to know if and when the sentence will be carried out. Opponents also argue that there is no evidence that it deters people from committing murder any more than imprisonment does.





A further argument is that, should a mistake be made, it is too late to rectify it once the execution has taken place. Two academics published a study showing that 28 innocent people had been executed in the United States. Research has shown that capital punishment is used inconsistently.

During a crime wave in China in the 1980s , cities were given a quota of executions to meet; in a city where there weren't very many murders, people convicted of lesser crimes were more likely to be executed. In addition, while in some countries young people are not sent to prison but to special juvenile detention centers, in Nigeria, Iran, Iraq, Bangladesh, Barbados and the United States children under 18 have been legally put to death.

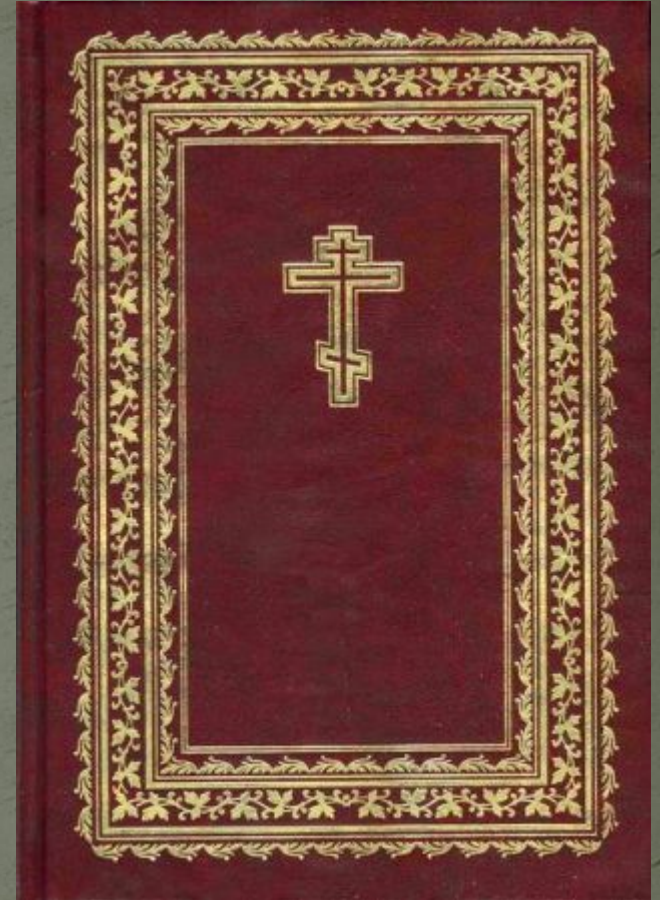


According to Voltaire, “When there is no other way to rescue the lives of many people, the criminal should be destroyed physically”

The death penalty is not revenge practiced on the criminal, but punishment for a serious evil.



When the Bible describes the Fall of Man, it describes in fact the beginning of death penalty. Because man, created for eternal life, for immortality, broke the will of God.

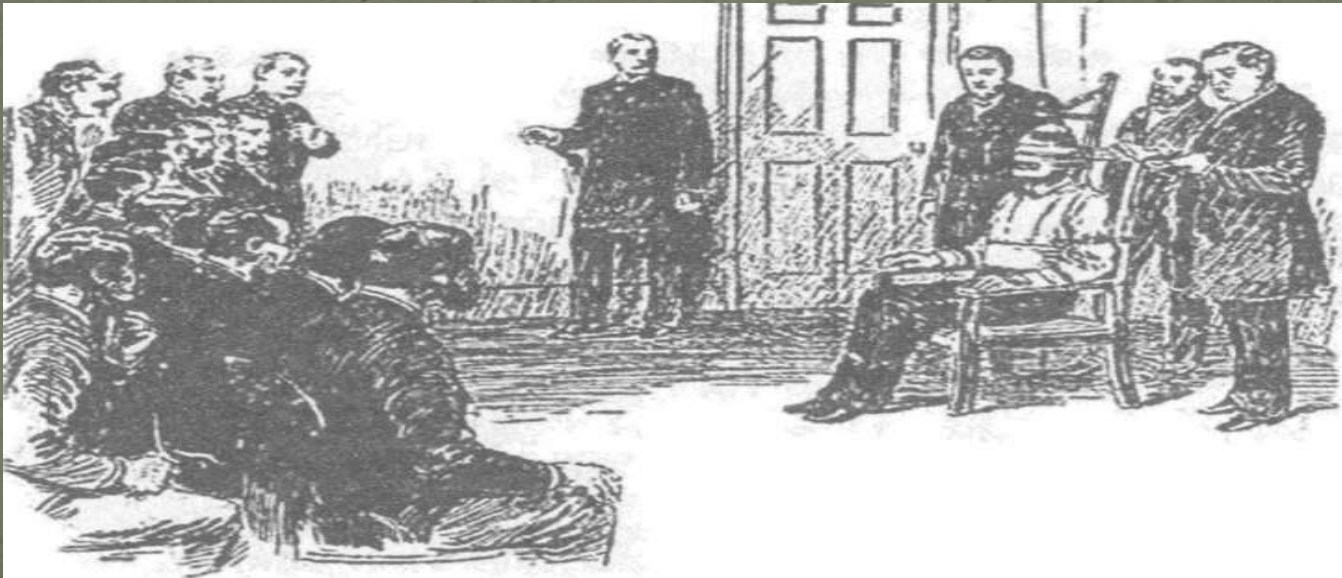




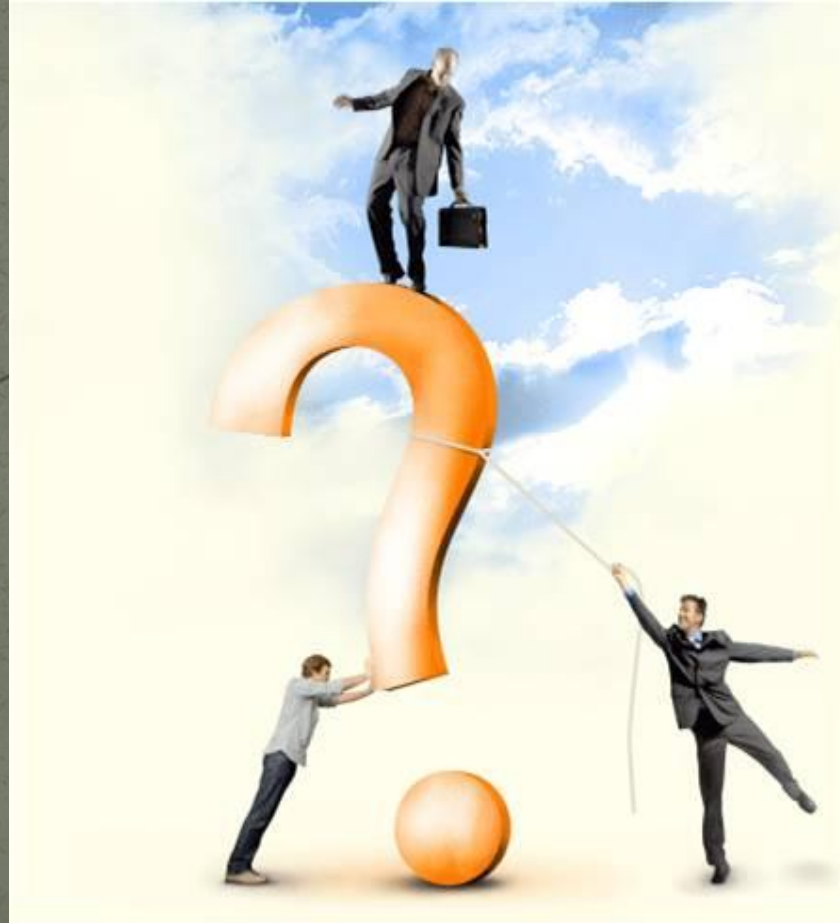
If the death penalty is cancelled, there will be no difference to the gangster how many people he may kill. He can kill until he is caught. He can also kill those who catch and judge him. And such criminals have established their “law” in Russia.



As the debate about capital punishment countries, the phenomenon of death row (people sentenced but still alive) increases. The debate also involves the question of what punishment is for. Is the main aim to deter? This was certainly the case in the 18<sup>th</sup> century England when the penalty for theft was supposed to frighten people from stealing and compensate for inabilities to detect and catch thieves.



Is death penalty revenge or retribution? Is it to keep criminals out of society? Or is it to reform and rehabilitate them?



# 1. Answer the questions

1. What is capital punishment?
2. In what way can capital punishment be carried out?
3. Do all countries in the world use the death penalty?
4. Death is a just punishment, isn't?
5. Is it true that capital punishment deters people from committing serious crimes?
6. Who considers the death penalty to be cruel and uncivilized?
7. Is there any evidence that ultimate penalty deters people from committing murder more than imprisonment does?
8. Do you think death penalty is revenge practiced on criminal or punishment for serious evil?
9. What are the major principles of all religions?

## 2. Complete the sentences with the phrases from the text

1. The UN has declared itself in favour of ...
2. Amnesty International actively campaigns for ...
3. Supporters of capital punishment believe that death is...
4. Many people believe that death penalty deters others from...
5. Capital punishment involves not only the pain of dying but also...
6. Opponents argue that there is no evidence that ultimate penalty deters people from...
7. A further argument is that, a mistake should be made, it is too late to ...
8. As the debate about capital punishment countries, the phenomenon of...

### 3. Find the beginning of the sentences in the text

1. .... of the world have ceased to use the death penalty.
2. ... believe that death is a just punishment for certain serious crimes.
3. ... argue that execution is cruel and uncivilized
4. ... it is too late to rectify it once the execution has taken place.
5. ...also argue that there is no evidence that it deters people from committing murder any more than imprisonment does
6. ... continues, the phenomenon of death row increases.
7. ...is not revenge practiced on the criminal, but punishment for a serious evil.

## 4. Match the left and the right

1. The death penalty
2. capital punishment
3. hanging
4. beheading
5. stoning
6. shooting

- a) повешение
- b) высшая мера наказания
- c) смертная казнь
- d) закидывание камнями
- e) расстрел
- f) отсечение головы

# 5. Match the word and explanation

- |                       |    |   |
|-----------------------|----|---|
| 1. capital punishment | a) | is someone who disagrees with something and tries to change or stop it.                 |
| 2. opponent           | b) | the official end to a law.  |
| 3. supporter          | c) | killing of someone with electricity   |
| 4. abolition          | d) | the act of killing a person as a punishment for a crime.                                |
| 5. execution          | e) | someone who supports a particular idea  |
| 6. electrocution      | f) | the death penalty, killing a person by judicial process as a punishment for an offense. |



## 6. Fill in the gaps in the sentences with one of the appropriate words.

1. The president's former adviser is now one of his outspoken \_\_\_\_\_
2. His \_\_\_ claim that the charges against him are politically motivated
3. There have been no \_\_\_ in this state for almost 15 years
4. Sometimes capital punishment is carried out in U.S. by \_\_\_\_\_
5. Amnesty International actively campaigns for \_\_\_ of the death penalty
6. There is no evidence that \_\_\_ deters people from committing murder any more.

(abolition, capital punishment, electrocution, execution, opponents, supporters)

# 7. Using the information from the text choose the right answer

1. The ultimate penalty is...
  - a) community service
  - b) imprisonment
  - c) death
2. Almost half the countries of the world have ceased to use the...
  - a) death penalty
  - b) suspended prison sentences
  - c) lifetime imprisonment
3. Supporters of capital punishment believe that death is a just punishment for...
  - a) certain serious crime
  - b) bank robbery
  - c) stealing

## 8. Using the information from the text choose the right answer

4. Opponents argue that execution is...
  - a) the best way to punish guilty
  - b) a just punishment for serious crimes
  - c) cruel and uncivilized
5. There is no evidence that death penalty deters people from ...
  - a) committing murder
  - b) drug trafficking
  - c) money laundering

# underlined information will provide answers

1. The ultimate penalty is death.
2. Capital punishment involves the pain of dying.
3. The UN has declared itself in favour of abolition.
4. Research has shown that capital punishment is used inconsistently.
5. Opponents believe that execution is cruel and uncivilized.
6. Even dogs can't live in the cage, because iron bars contradict their nature.

# Essential vocabulary:

- 1. capital punishment      высшая мера наказания
- 2. electrocution      электрический стул
- 3. gassing      газовая камера
- 4. lethal injection      летальная инъекция
- 5. beheading      отсечение головы
- 6. stoning      забрасывание камнями
- 7. shooting      расстрел
- 8. to abolish      отменять
- 9. money laundering      отмывание денег

# Essential vocabulary:

- 10. execution                    исполнение наказания
- 11. death sentence            смертный приговор
- 12. to cease                    прекращать
- 13. a supporter                сторонник
- 14. an opponent                противник
- 15. to deter                    удерживать
- 16. to rectify                  исправлять
- 17. detention                  заключение
- 18. revenge                    месть
- 19. retribution                возмездие, кара
- 20. to condemn                приговаривать, осуждать