

The Ineffectiveness of the Death Penalty in Detering Crime

The death penalty has been in existence for millennia, and is still used in many countries today as a form of retribution for severe crimes. Despite this long history, there remains significant debate on whether it is an effective deterrent to crime. This essay will examine the evidence that suggests the death penalty does not deter criminals from committing heinous acts, and thus it should be abolished.

First, in examining the evidence of deterrence, it is necessary to consider the factors that might lead someone to commit a crime in the first place. While there are many possible reasons for committing a crime – ranging from mental health issues to poverty and desperation – one factor does not stand out above all others: fear of being executed. In fact, quite the opposite may be true: in countries where the death penalty is no longer in place, crime rates have often decreased, suggesting that criminals are more likely to commit an act when they know their life will not be taken away from them.

Second, even if we assume that fear of execution does play a role in deterring crime, there is no evidence to suggest that the death penalty has a greater deterrent effect than other forms of punishment. In fact, some studies have found that life imprisonment may actually be more effective at preventing crime than the death penalty. This is because those who are subject to life imprisonment or lengthy jail sentences are

often held for longer periods of time, meaning they have more years to consider and reflect upon their actions.

Finally, there is also the moral argument for why the death penalty should be abolished. In an increasingly secular society, it is no longer considered to be a fitting punishment for any crime – regardless of severity. Even if it could be argued that the death penalty is an effective deterrent, this does not counteract the arguments against it from a moral standpoint.

In conclusion, there is very little evidence to suggest that the death penalty is an effective deterrent of crime, and thus it should be abolished. It may be true that some criminals are deterred by fear of execution – but this effect can have just as much impact with other forms of punishment. Furthermore, there are moral arguments that suggest the death penalty should no longer be used. For these reasons, it is clear that the death penalty should be abolished in favor of more humane forms of retribution.

References:

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