



**American Friends
Service Committee**

IN THE KILLING FIELDS OF THE STATE: Why Abolition of The Death Penalty Is A Queer Issue

LGBT Program

Community Relations Unit
American Friends Service Committee
1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
www.afsc.org
http://www.afsc.org
www.afsc.org/lgbt/
http://www.afsc.org/lgbt/
Phone: 406/721-7844
Fax: 406/728-2314
email: kwhitlock@afsc.org

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What do we really want when we ask for justice?

What is the vision of justice that informs our work as LGBT activists and organizations? Is it a vision of justice for queers, or a queer-inclusive vision of justice for all? And if our commitment is to “justice for all,” do we really mean to include the people whom we, too, fear and despise? Or do we consider those whom we fear and despise to be expendable?

When we speak of the pain of being excluded, stigmatized, demonized, and abused as queer people, do we understand the relationship of this pain to the hardship and suffering that result from racism, misogyny, poverty and other forms of exclusion? Or do we simply demand an end to injustice directed against LGBT communities, as if this injustice existed apart from these other forms of violence?

When we speak of LGBT anti-violence work, what kinds of violence fall under our gaze, and are considered worthy of our attention? What kinds of violence do we accept without protest, or even sup-

port? When terrible things happen to “us,” how do we deal with the part in ourselves that wants to retaliate, that wants to hurt “them”? Is it ever acceptable to trade off the human rights of one group for another, in the name of safety, security, and justice?

These questions are messy and inconvenient, and there are no easy answers. To engage them at all takes us onto trembling ground, where we must scrutinize our own choices and actions at least as carefully as we scrutinize the actions of others. But these are also necessary questions, because they help us understand the complex interrelationships of hate violence, legal discrimination, and the massive, legally-sanctioned violence of the state. Failure to understand and work in light of these interrelationships increases the likelihood that LGBT organizations

will make shortsighted strategic choices that serve to undermine the human and civil rights of marginalized others and compound, rather than interrupt, cycles of violence.

“The death penalty is a human rights violation in all cases.”
*Surina Khan,
former Executive Director, International Lesbian and
Gay Human Rights Commission, 2000*

This is the first in a series of AFSC LGBT issue briefs that explore these interrelationships, with particular reference to the U.S. criminal justice system. We seek to encourage deeper and broader discussion of these matters within the larger LGBT movement.

We examine the death penalty through a queer lens, always placing the issue in a broader social and economic context, and within a human rights framework. Race and class are central to an understanding of the death penalty and how it is applied in the United States. In a global context, it is necessary to understand that the death penalty is used in many different nations, not only as a response to serious wrongdoing, but to sustain the social, political, and economic status quo. People may be sentenced to death and executed on the basis of many factors, including expression of political ideas, sexual and gender identity, religious expression, and ethnicity.

AFSC speaks to these issues from our own experience of more than 50 years’ engagement with the criminal justice system in the U.S. and more than eight decades of work with those harmed by the violence of war, ethnic cleansing, hatred, and poverty. Although we have a clear point of view and spiritual belief about the death penalty—we consider it unacceptable under any circumstance and work for its abolition—we do not seek to polarize the discussion or demonize those who disagree with us.

(continued on p 2)

WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS

Since the 1970’s, 113 people have been exonerated and released from death row, some within days of their scheduled executions.

According to the Death Penalty Information Center, proving innocence in these cases took an average of 8 years from sentencing to exoneration. If the time for appeals had been shortened, as has been proposed, many of these innocent people would have been executed.

Factors leading to wrongful convictions include:

- Mistaken identification
- Police or prosecutorial misconduct
- Defective or fraudulent science and testing
- Inadequate or incompetent legal counsel
- False witness testimony
- False confessions

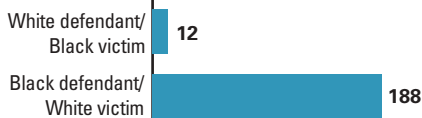
The Death Penalty Information Center notes that the pace of discovering these mistaken convictions has accelerated: over half of the exonerations have occurred in the past decade.

“The death penalty has no place in a civil society. As a community we must take every opportunity to speak out against violence, including capital punishment.”

*Katherine Acey,
Executive Director, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, 1999*

source: www.deathpenaltyinfo.org

PERSONS EXECUTED FOR INTERRACIAL MURDERS

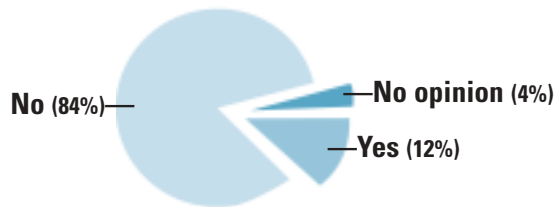


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This issue brief is intended to help spark discussion and reflection, not to provide a comprehensive analysis of the death penalty. As you read this and other materials, and as you engage in conversation with others on the subject of the death penalty, we ask you to consider the questions we introduced in the beginning.

If we want a justice system that does not further compound the violence of racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and poverty, let

PERCENTAGE OF CRIMINOLOGISTS WHO VIEW THE DEATH PENALTY AS A DETERRENT TO VIOLENT CRIME



source: www.deathpenaltyinfo.org

us begin discussing how to take practical steps in that direction. Let us come together across the faultlines of race, ethnicity, culture, class, sexuality, gender, and gender identity to talk about the meaning of safety, the meaning of justice, from our various per-

spectives. Then we can talk about the kinds of strategic approaches that truly would interrupt that cycle of violence, more effectively address the long-term needs of those harmed by violence, and create safer, more just communities without sacrificing anyone's rights.

“Having lost my father and grandmother to gun violence, I will understand the deep hurt and anger felt by the loved ones of those who have been murdered. Yet I can't accept the judgment that their killers deserve to be executed. This merely perpetuates the tragic, unending cycle of violence that destroys our hope for a decent society.”

—Rev. Bernice King,
daughter of civil rights leader Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Death Penalty & Anti-Queer Hate Violence

In the wake of Matthew Shepard's agonizing death on a lonely stretch of Wyoming road, a grimly post-modern crucifixion, LGBT activists and organizations throughout the United States reacted with shock, outrage, tears, and immeasurably strengthened resolve to confront—and at last bring an end to—the plague of hate violence that is now endemic in our society. There was an outpouring of support for Matthew's family.

Hate violence directed against LGBT and queer people, people of color, people with disabilities, Jewish people, Arabs and Muslims, and other marginalized groups was hardly new, but Shepard's murder immediately developed an iconic force. Suddenly, there was a human face to symbolize anti-LGBT bigotry, because, unlike most hate-motivated murders, the killing of Matthew received a great deal of national and international media attention.

When the men who were accused of murder came to trial, emotions were intense and volatile, as they always are when the friends and families of those who have been killed must wrestle in such a public arena with profound rage, horror, and grief. The searing

sense of loss in such a moment is accompanied by a terrible recognition that the safety and security we long for doesn't exist—at least, not for the people designated as unworthy “others” in our society.

In such an atmosphere, it's not at all unusual for many of us to react with bitterness and a desire for vengeance. It's not unusual to want to lash out at those who have hurt us, to make them suffer as much as we have suffered.

It's not unusual to feel so much pain and hatred that we demand, or are willing to accept, the death of another person as the price for our own pain. Even activists committed to nonviolence must face our own feelings of fury and occasional desires for revenge. Many of us longed, viscerally, for the extinction of those who murdered Matthew Shepard.

And some LGBT activists and organizations did so publicly at the time of the trial for those accused of Shepard's murder. One national organization¹ reflecting the view of many, said in a nationwide letter to the editors of gay publications that, “[P]unishing his killers to the fullest extent of the law will send an unmistakable message to every gay basher in America that they had better think twice before trying it, or they will face the hammer of justice. Nothing could speak louder to the purveyors of hate.”

But would the death penalty actually send this “unmistakable message”? Many LGBT organizations did not think so.

On February 9, 1999, eleven major organizations representing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities announced their joint opposition to the death penalty, responding to the filing by the prosecutor of intent to seek the death penalty against those accused of Matthew Shepard's murder. These organizations included:

- Astrea National Lesbian Action Foundation
- Gay Men of African Descent
- International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission

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Excerpt from statement by Dennis Shepard to the Court in the penalty phase of the trial of Aaron McKinney, charged in the death of Matthew Shepard, Dennis Shepard's son, November 4, 1999

I, too, believe in the death penalty. I would like nothing better than to see you die, Mr. McKinney. However, this is the time to begin the healing process. To show mercy to someone who refused to show any mercy. To use this as the first step in my own closure about losing Matt. Mr. McKinney, I am not doing this because of your family. I am definitely not doing this because of the crass and unwarranted pressures put on by the religious community. If anything, that hardens my resolve to see you die. Mr. McKinney, I'm going to grant you life, as hard as that is for me to do, because of Matthew. Every time you celebrate Christmas, a birthday, or the Fourth of July, remember that Matt isn't. Every time that you wake up in that prison cell, remember that you had the opportunity and the ability to stop your actions that night. Every time that you see your cell mate, remember that you had a choice, and now you are living that choice. You robbed me of something very precious, and I will never forgive you for that. Mr. McKinney, I give you life in the memory of one who no longer lives. May you have a long life, and may you thank Matthew every day for it.

Take Action Now!

- Support a moratorium on the death penalty.
<http://www.quixote.org/ej/>
- Learn about the juvenile death penalty and take action to stop it.
<http://justice.policy.net/proactive/newsroom/release.vtml?id=35841>

Toward A New Vision Of Justice

AFSC understands justice to include affirmation of the human dignity and human and civil rights of all people; concern for the well-being of the entire community, not only for oneself or one's own group; and active efforts to live in ways that contribute to the well-being of the whole community, doing no harm to oneself or others.

A justice system built upon a foundation of human rights would:

- Protect victims and targeted communities from immediate danger and provide sustained emotional, physical, and economic support and assistance.

- Hold accountable the individuals, public and private institutions, and appointed and elected officials who may be implicated in violence, whether they directly caused the harm, contributed to a climate of violence, or failed to take appropriate steps to prevent acts of violence.

- Hold those responsible for violence accountable under conditions that are humane, ethical, and offer possibilities for constructive change, even for those persons who are confined for long periods.

- Strengthen the ability of the larger community to address underlying social, economic, and spiritual conditions that foster climates of violence.

Lambda Legal Defense & Education

- Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center of New York

- American Civil Liberties Union/Lesbian & Gay Rights Project

- LLEGO — National Latina/o LGBT Organization

- National Center for Lesbian Rights

- National Gay & Lesbian Task Force

- New York City Gay & Lesbian Anti-Violence Project

- OutFront Minnesota

Since that time, other LGBT organizations, including including the National Youth Advocacy Coalition and the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Projects, have spoken out against the death penalty.

Why would so many organizations and prominent individuals take such a stand? It is best to let others speak for themselves. You'll find out what several well-known LGBT leaders have to say scattered through this publication. Consider their words as you explore this issue more deeply.

Expendable People: How the Death Penalty Reinforces Violence Against People of Color, Queers, Poor People, and People with Mental Disabilities

The "hammer of justice" one gay group speaks of more frequently resembles a sledgehammer that shatters the human rights of people of color, poor people, queers, youth, people with mental disabilities, and women who are caught up in the criminal justice system. In this way, the criminal justice system is a disturbing mirror image reflection of the hate violence that is directed against the same groups.

We do not seek to impugn the motivation or human dignity of those who work in the criminal justice system, but rather to call attention to the systemic evidence of widespread racial, economic, and other forms of bias within institutions that administer criminal justice laws and polices.

Both federal and state inquiries into the application of the death penalty in the United States confirm that those most likely to be sentenced to death are poor and without competent or adequate legal counsel. They must rely on public defenders or attorneys who are

poorly paid, and who often have had little or no experience trying capital cases, which are extremely complex and time-consuming.

A disproportionate number of those sentenced to death are people of color, particularly African Americans. The death penalty is far more likely to be sought when the victim is white than when the victim is a person of color.²

Given identical, or at least equivalent acts of violence, race and class are the single most important determinants of who will be arrested, charged, tried, convicted, and sentenced to death in the United States.

"To want to see the men who killed my daddy die by the state is the same as for me to go out and kill them myself."

— Ross Byrd, son of James Byrd, Jr.

Moreover, many people who end up on death row have some degree of mental illness (including bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, schizophrenia, or post-traumatic stress disorder) or severe learning disabilities, and until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled otherwise in 2002, dozens of people with mental retardation were executed.³ Prior to the U.S. Supreme Court decision, some prosecutors had actually used the fact that a person had mental retardation to advocate for the death penalty. Now, some of the prosecutors who relied on such arguments are taking pains to prove that some people with confirmed or borderline mental retardation are not sufficiently mentally disabled to be exempt from execution.

And while state campaigns to ban these executions gain momentum, at the time this publication goes to press in 2004, 19 states still permit the execution of children and youth who were under 18 at the time the violence was committed. (In another 19 states, and federal civilian and military courts, a minimum age of 18 is required for imposition of the death

"As a life-long pacifist I do not support the death penalty and am actively engaged in the movement to abolish it"

Mandy Carter,

Southerners On New Ground (SONG), Durham, NC., 2004*

**organizational affiliation listed for purposes of identification only*

penalty. 12 additional states and the District of Columbia ban the death penalty entirely.)⁴ The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to consider the legality of the juvenile death penalty, but in the meantime, youth sit on death row now, awaiting execution.

In addition to the death penalty being applied to people of color, poor people, and juveniles, the strategic use of homophobia and rigid gender stereotyping by prosecutors often plays an instrumental role in persuading jurors to sentence particular defendants to death. It is not illegal to use a defendant's actual or perceived sexual or gender identity to try to sway the sentence in a capital case. No watchdog organizations currently monitor the ways homophobia and gender stereotyping are used to demonize defendants and exploit juror bias.⁵

Can't We Just Institute Reforms So That We Only Execute The "Right" People?

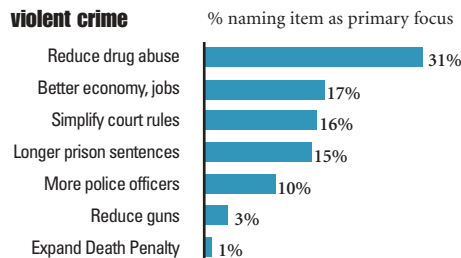
Which people are those?

How will we eradicate the pervasive racism and class bias of the criminal justice system in a time when public funding for legal services to poor people, a disproportionate number of whom are people of color, is being slashed?

How will we address the pervasive nature of the same biases in courtrooms and on juries?

How will we ensure that those wrongly convicted are exonerated before execution? In the past three decades, over 100 people have been found innocent of the capital crimes of which they were convicted, some within days of their scheduled executions. We have no way of

Police chiefs place death penalty last in reducing violent crime



source: www.deathpenaltyinfo.org

knowing how many people who were wrongfully convicted have already been executed, or might be executed in the future. Even DNA testing won't help many of those who are wrongfully convicted; in many cases of homicide, DNA evidence is not available.

Many people suggest that those who commit overt acts of violence "give up" their human rights, and therefore can be executed with impunity. The hands of the state are "clean," in the sense that those sentenced to death are already demonized as inhuman.

The problem with this "conditional" view of human rights is that whoever is in power at any given time gets to determine the conditions. It's similar to the reasoning that says all people should have equal rights, but LGBT people have chosen to be different, and by making this choice have relinquished certain rights and forms of legal recognition.

Such tricky and dangerous reasoning permits the state to ignore or violate the human and civil rights of any unpopular or demonized group whenever it chooses, for whatever reasons it chooses.

U.S. Government Seeks To Expand The Use Of The Death Penalty

Within the past few years, the national political climate has become so saturated with the politics of fear and division that the very words "justice" and "accountability" seem to be synonymous with the massive use of state violence. Few civic and religious leaders call us to work together to create a new vision of justice that affirms the human and civil rights of all, without sacrificing them for any group.

"I have yet to see a death case among the dozens coming to the Supreme Court on eve-of-execution stay applications in which the defendant was well represented at trial... People who are well represented at trial do not get the death penalty."

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Characteristics of Offenders and Victims in Juvenile Death Penalty Cases (as of Dec, 31, 2003)

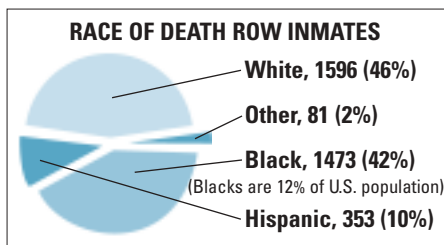
JUVENILE OFFENDERS		
Age*	number	%
16	16	22
17	57	78
Race	number	%
Native Am.	1	1
Asian	2	2
Black	31	42
Latino	15	21
White	24	33

* Age at time of crime

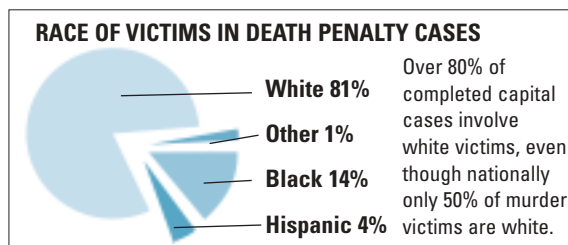
VICTIMS OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS		
Age*	number	%
0-17	18	18
18-49	60	60
50+	19	19
Unknown	3	3
Race	number	%
Native Am.	1	1
Asian	7	7
Black	9	9
Latino	11	11
White	64	64
Unknown	8	8
Gender	number	%
Male	47	47
Female	50	50
Unknown	3	3

from "The Juvenile Death Penalty Today: Death Sentences and Executions for Juvenile Crimes" by Professor Victor L. Strieb, (2003)

Rather than addressing complex social, economic, and political problems that increase violence and crime—including poverty, drug use, crumbling public school systems, school bullying, cuts in services for



source: NAACP LDF Death Row, U.S.A. (1/1/04)



source: www.deathpenaltyinfo.org

people with mental disabilities, and more—the United States increasingly has relied on correction facilities, jails, prisons, and execution chambers as the "solution" to those problems. But no matter how many people we consign to brutal conditions of incarceration or simply dispose of altogether, through state-sanctioned killing, the problems of violence and poverty remain.

While the flaws, contradictions, injustices, harms, and failure of thirty years of "get tough on crime" policies, with their emphasis on longer, harsher sentences, are becoming increasingly apparent, federal officials and lawmakers seem determined to expand the use of the death penalty. Within the past few years, lawmakers and government officials have seriously discussed or proposed measures proposed that would:

- attach a death penalty provision to the proposed federal hate crimes bill, the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act (LLEEA)
- expand use of the death penalty to additional crimes and create additional, ill-defined, federal crimes that in order to prevent and deter "gang violence"
- expand use of the death penalty for "terrorism-related" offenses
- permit the U.S. government to detain "enemy combatants" in secret locations, try them in military tribunals without benefit of due process, and execute those deemed to be especially dangerous

"We participate in a social movement that places faith in the possibility of change. Capital punishment, a final and hopeless solution to the social problem of violence, not only subverts the possibility of individual change but it also fails to solve the problem of violence."

Kerry Lobel, former Executive Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 1999

The current federal administration continues to push for expanded use of the death penalty. Since becoming U.S. Attorney General, John Ashcroft has overridden the decisions of federal prosecutors in at least 33 cases, reversing their decisions not to seek the death penalty in certain cases. He now also requires federal prosecutors to seek his approval before entering into plea agreements that would remove the death penalty as a sentencing possibility.

A Human Rights Framework For Lght Anti-Violence Work

Many different studies conclude that the death penalty does not deter violent crime. And, as Human Rights Watch notes, the death penalty is "a form of punishment that is unique in its barbarity and finality. Moreover, the intrinsic fallibility of all criminal justice systems assures that even when full due process of law is respected, innocent persons may be executed."

How do we begin to think about justice and accountability for violent actions in newer, more hopeful ways? What framework of justice is large enough to respond to the needs of victims of violence, their families, and the communities from which they come, and also hold those

Using Homophobia and Gender Stereotypes To Sway Juries

It's not illegal to use a defendant's actual or perceived sexual or gender identity to try to sway the sentencing portion of a capital case. No watchdog organizations currently monitor the ways in which homophobia is used to demonize defendants and appeal to juror bias. But several clear examples hint at the tip of a much larger iceberg. In virtually all cases, anti-queer bias is compounded by issues of poverty, race, and/or prosecutorial misconduct.

■ Executed, January 11, 2001, Oklahoma, Wanda Jean Allen, for the 1988 shooting death of her girlfriend, Gloria Leathers. The prosecutor resorted to lesbian stereotyping to demonize Allen, suggesting she was "manly," overly aggressive, and dominating. Allen's defense was further compromised by her attorney's failure to introduce into court evidence of significant mental impairment. Handling his first capital case, the defense attorney was paid \$800 for his work by the state. Allen was the first Black woman to be executed in the United States in 54 years.

■ Executed, February 7, 2001, Missouri, Stanley Lingar, for the 1985 killing of 16-year old Thomas Allen. During the penalty phase of the trial, the prosecutor sought the death penalty, telling the jury that Lingar's homosexuality was an important factor to be considered.

■ Re-sentenced to three life sentences instead of the death penalty, Texas inmate Calvin Burdine, who spent more than 18 years on death row, with six scheduled execution dates, for the 1984 fatal stabbing of his gay lover, W.T. Wise. Another man, implicated by considerable evidence (and later acknowledged by jurors) as the one who actually stabbed Wise to death, plea-bargained his way to a seven-year sentence. Burdine's court-appointed attorney openly referred to his client as "queer" and "a fairy," and this attorney frequently dozed for periods up to ten minutes each throughout much of the trial. Moreover, the defense attorney made no arguments on Burdine's behalf during the penalty phase of the trial, in which Burdine's life was at stake. In appealing for a death sentence, the prosecutor argued that "sending a homosexual to the penitentiary isn't a very bad punishment for a homosexual."

■ Pleaded no contest, death-row inmate Kerry Max Cook, in 1999, for murder by stabbing, beating, and sexual assault, of 21-year old Linda Jo Edwards. Kerry, heterosexual, worked in a gay bar at the time. Prosecutors used "homosexual rage" arguments to sway jurors, hid evidence that would have favored Cook from the defense, and presented fingerprint "evidence" attested to by a man who had taken only a six-month mail order course in fingerprinting. On death row for more than 20 years and three trials, Cook once came within eleven days of execution. Following his 1999 plea bargain, DNA testing on Edward's shredded underwear exonerated Cook completely. Prosecutors did not charge the man whose semen was on the victim's underwear, her married ex-boyfriend.

who perpetrate violence accountable for their actions without reinforcing the violence of racism, misogyny, poverty, and other forms of exclusion? That is a discussion that should be taking place in LGBT communities throughout the United States.

One useful way of clarifying our justice commitments is to consider them within an international framework of human rights. These rights are inherent, not conditional; they cannot be relinquished or revoked. Those who violate the human rights of others must be held accountable for their actions, and not be permitted to continue the violations, but in seeking to interrupt cycles of violence, we must not use methods that compound the violence. Our accountability processes should be designed and administered within a framework of human rights principles, and these principles should guide our efforts to reduce and prevent the interrelated harms of hate violence, legal discrimination, and the violence of the state.

"There is no situation or circumstance in a just society in which the Death Penalty can be viewed as an acceptable option. Beyond the intrinsic barbarity of the Death Penalty in any case, the willingness of some Americans to endorse it and thereby clearly accept that 'innocent' people will be put to death, and that the Death Penalty will be 'unfairly' meted out is a shocking reinforcement of how little we've moved as a nation from our own barbarous past."

-Clarence Patton,
National Coalition of Anti-Violence Projects*, 2004

*organizational affiliation listed for purposes of identification only

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) affirms that the foundation of human rights is respect for the inherent dignity of all human beings and the inviolability of the human person. Among the principles that guide this declaration and expansions of its tenets are these:

- Everyone is entitled to the same rights without discrimination of any kind.
- No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel and degrading treatment or punishment.
- Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection under the law.
- Everyone is entitled to basic economic security and safety from violence.

These and other basic principles of human rights should inform all of our work to end violence and to create authentic justice that not only holds individuals and institutions accountable for violent acts against others, but also addresses the social, economic, and spiritual roots of that violence.

FOOTNOTES

1. Excerpt from "LCR Supports Death Penalty for Shepard Killers, A Letter to Editors of National and Local Gay Publications Nationwide," signed by members of the Log Cabin Republicans Board of Directors, January 12, 1999.

2. See *Death Penalty Fact Sheet*, Death Penalty Information Center, March 8, 2004 (<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org>). See also *United States of America—Death by Discrimination: The Continuing Role of Race in Capital Cases*, Amnesty International, USA, April, 2003 (http://www.amnestyusa.org/abolish/reports/dp_discrimination.html). See also Amnesty International, USA, Federal Death Penalty (http://www.amnestyusa.org/abolish/federal_death_penalty.html).

3. See *Beyond Reason: The Death Penalty and Offenders with Mental Retardation*, March, 2001, Human Rights Watch (<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/ustat/>). For more information on mental illness and the death penalty, see *Death Penalty Facts: Mental Illness*, Amnesty International USA (<http://www.amnestyusa.org/abolish/mentalillness.html>). See also: *Ill-Equipped: U.S. Prisons and Offenders with Mental Illness*, Human Rights Watch, 2003 (<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/usa1003/>)

4. See, for example, *Stop Child Executions! Ending the Death Penalty for Child Offenders*, Amnesty International, January, 2004 (<http://www.amnestyusa.org>). See also "I Don't Want Another Kid to Die." *Families of Victims Murdered by Juveniles Oppose Juvenile Executions*, Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation, 2003 (<http://www.mvfr.org>)

5. See, for example, *Sexuality and Capital Punishment: the Execution of Wanda Jean Allen*, by Tonya McClary, OUTfront, the LGBT Program of Amnesty International, Winter, 2002. See also *In Murder Cases, Being Gay Can Seal a Defendant's Fate*, by Richard Goldstein, The Village Voice, March 13, 2001 (<http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/0111/goldstein.php>). See also *Death Penalty for Lesbians*, by Victor L. Streib, National Journal of Sexual Orientation Law, Vol.1, Issue 1 (n.d.).

Human Rights Information & Activism

For more information on human rights, check out these groups:

International Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Commission:
(<http://www.iglhr.org>)

Human Rights Watch
(<http://www.hrw.org>)

Amnesty International USA
(<http://www.amnestyusa.org>)

National Center for Human Rights Education (<http://www.nchre.org>)

International Women's Health Coalition
(<http://www.iwhc.org>)

Educational and Organizing Resources

- Learn More!
- Get Connected!
- Get Involved!

Listed here are selected organizations and websites offering more in-depth information, commentary, and organizing resources on the death penalty and the abolition movement.

The content of websites changes frequently; for this reason, AFSC cannot endorse specific websites.



American Friends Service Committee

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is an internationally recognized Quaker organization whose work for peace, social and economic justice, and humanitarian service is carried forward by women and men of various faiths. The Service Committee, in its historic role of mending lives shattered by World Wars I and II, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947 along with the British Friends Service Council, on behalf of all Quakers for peace building and humanitarian service. AFSC's quick reaction to the internment of Japanese Americans at the beginning of World War II helped aid, educate, and relocate thousands of American citizens who were unjustly targeted, corralled, and warehoused because of race. In 1963, at the request of an aide of Dr. Martin Luther King, AFSC published the first complete edition of Dr. King's historic "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," addressed to a group of white clergy who were critical of his nonviolent civil rights campaign. AFSC has engaged with the criminal justice system regarding the human rights of people caught up in that system for more than 50 years. Today, as part of its commitment to peace, justice, and human dignity, AFSC stands with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

FIGHTING HATE VIOLENCE/FIGHTING STATE VIOLENCE

AFSC PROGRAMS:

American Friends Service Committee National & Regional Criminal Justice Programs

<http://www.afsc.org/community/criminal-justice.htm>

<http://www.afsc.org/issues/index/crimjus.asp>

American Friends Service Committee National & Regional LGBT Programs

<http://www.afsc.org/lgbt/>

AFSC ANTI-DEATH PENALTY RESOURCES

I Dream a World: Student Organizing Against the Death Penalty

Introduction and historical background to the I Dream a World campaign connecting the nonviolence teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to the death penalty. A variety of resources and suggestions on how to take action are provided to help bring this campaign to your community. Ordering information can be found at: http://www.afsc.org/resources/items/i_dream_world_study_pack.htm

Dead Man Walking Study Guide

The use of this packet with the movie, *Dead Man Walking*, is intended to provide religious leaders and lay people with an opportunity to examine the issue of capital punishment from a theological or faith-based perspective. Guidelines for facilitators, discussion questions, facts about the death penalty, and suggestions for further action are all included. Ordering information can be found at: http://www.afsc.org/resources/items/dead_man_study_packet.htm

The Death Penalty: The Religious Community Calls for Abolition

Statements of opposition from over 30 national faith-based organizations and communities. Ordering information can be found at:

http://www.afsc.org/resources/items/call_for_abolition.htm

Sermons, Homilies & Reflections on the Death Penalty

The Religious Organizing Against the Death Penalty Project offers this collection of writings to help galvanize and empower religious and spiritual communities in the United States to work against capital punishment. Ordering information can be found at:

http://www.afsc.org/resources/items/sermons_homilies.htm

VIOLENCE OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM RESOURCES

Justice Visions: working papers, a series of resources for study and action from AFSC

This series addresses the question: What is the meaning of justice in a world based on violence, exclusion, and inequality. Individual papers can be downloaded or are available as printed reports. Printed copies of Justice Visions working papers are available for \$5 per copy, issue briefs for \$1 per copy, with a discount of 10 per-

cent on five or more copies. Add \$3.50 postage & handling. Only prepaid orders may be accepted; foreign orders will be billed for actual postage. Send orders to Literature Resources Unit, AFSC, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. Credit card orders may be phoned in to 1-888-588-2372.

To download copies without charge, please go to: <http://www.afsc.org/JusticeVisions.htm>

TITLES INCLUDE:

The Prison Inside the Prison

By Bonnie Kerness and Rachael Kamel

A new briefing paper from the American Friends Service Committee offers a deeper look at the steady proliferation of various types of isolation units throughout the U.S. prison system. "The Prison Inside the Prison" draws on the experience and insights of AFSC's criminal justice programs in Newark, NJ; Cambridge, MA; and Dayton, OH, each of which has sponsored long-term advocacy and organizing efforts around control units and supermax prisons, in partnership with local grassroots initiatives. This new resource explores the rise of control units from the mid-1980s until the present, as well as sharing stories and reflections about the successes (and shortfalls) of efforts to counter the many types of human rights abuses that isolation units have engendered.

In a Time of Broken Bones: A Call to Dialogue on Hate Violence and the Limitations of Hate Crimes Legislation

By Katherine Whitlock

Is the current push for stronger hate crimes legislation an opportunity to strengthen rights and recognition for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities—or a strategy that will yield many unintended consequences? What is the meaning of justice—and safety—for groups affected by hate violence?

Whose Safety? Women of Color and the Violence of Law Enforcement

By Anannya Bhattacharjee

Published by the American Friends Service Committee and the Committee on Women, Population, and the Environment. Copyright © 2001 Anannya Bhattacharjee.

This comprehensive research report documents how women of color, both immigrant and U.S.-born, face violence and the abuse of authority from law-enforcement agencies—from local police to the prison system to INS raids. Drawing on interviews with nearly 100 anti-violence activists as well as published sources, "Whose Safety?" outlines community interactions with enforcement agencies, the impact of enforcement violence on key areas of women's lives, and current anti-violence movements.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS DOING IMPORTANT ANTI-DEATH PENALTY WORK

You will find useful fact sheets, briefing papers, other resources, and ways to get involved in anti-death penalty work on these sites.

American Bar Association Juvenile Justice Center/Juvenile Death Penalty

<http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/judp.html>

American Civil Liberties Union

<http://www.aclu.org/DeathPenalty/>

Amnesty International, USA

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/abolish/>

Center on Wrongful Convictions

<http://www.law.northwestern.edu/wrongfulconvictions/>

Death Penalty Focus

<http://www.deathpenalty.org>

Death Penalty Information Center

<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org>

Human Rights Watch

<http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/death-penalty/>

Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation

<http://www.mvfr.org>

National Coalition Against the Death Penalty

<http://www.ncadp.org>

Quixote Center Equal Justice Project

<http://www.quixote.org/ej>

Religious Organizing Against the Death Penalty Project

<http://www.deathpenaltyreligious.org>

World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

<http://www.worldcoalition.org>

MURDER VICTIMS' FAMILIES FOR RECONCILIATION RESOURCES

"I Don't Want Another Kid to Die." Families of Victims Murdered by Juveniles Oppose Juvenile Executions

Details the experiences of families murdered by juveniles who oppose the death penalty. The report also details the story of two parents whose son was a juvenile offender executed by the state of Texas in 2002.

<http://www.mvfr.org>

Not in Our Name

This booklet and photo-text exhibit combines photos of victims' family members with summaries of their stories and short statements about their opposition to the death penalty. The photo-text exhibit is suitable for display at conferences and for use by faith communities, educators, and activists.

<http://www.mvfr.org>

Dignity Denied: The Experience of Murder Victims' Family Members Who Oppose the Death Penalty

This report details the ways in which family members who oppose the death penalty are often silenced, marginalized, and abused by prosecutors, victim advocates, and lawmakers.

<http://www.mvfr.org>