

Yixuan Huang

Professor Alex Wolf-Root

Philo 3410

21 April 2023

Whether we should abolish the death penalty or not?

In this short paper, I would like to discuss the death penalty and the arguments on whether we should keep it or abolish it. The issue of abolishing the death penalty is controversial and complicated, involving many aspects such as ethics, morality, society, politics, and law. Views and positions on the death penalty vary across different countries and regions.

Proponents of the death penalty argue that abolishing the death penalty could substantially increase the social cost of maintaining law and order. Criminals feel that it is less costly for them to commit crimes because they do not have to face the threat of the death penalty even if they are sentenced, which can lead to an increase in crime rates. This increases the burden on police departments and the cost of investigating crimes, as well as the cost of prisons and related facilities. At the same time, the large number of inmates who have completed their sentences increases the likelihood of unemployment and need for public assistance (Carmen 25). Large numbers of unemployed people may also damage housing security (Carmen 25). In general, the abolition of the death penalty will lead to a series of social problems.

Those who support the abolition of the death penalty argue that executions may involve cruel and inhuman punishment. For them, punishment should not be the primary goal of criminal law. However, while they do not believe that punishment should be the primary goal of criminal law, proponents of abolition do not entirely deny that punishment cannot be an outcome. In fact, other punishments can be substituted for the death penalty. These alternative sentences should discipline the prisoner in various

aspects such as rehabilitation, rehabilitation, and restitution. Most of us view prisons as natural, obvious, or how things should be, even if we view some conditions in need of reform (Carmen 3). I think abolition has some parallels with Davits' abolitionist views, where Davis proposed that abolition is not just about ending prisons, but about changing society to reduce the "need" for prisons (Carmen 2).

In conclusion, I think both the supporters and the opponents have valid points of view, but the two sides expound their views and reasons from different angles, so it is difficult for me to determine which side is more convincing. But I think both of them are very good at connecting with what we discussed in class and reinterpreting it according to their own topics, and their views are also very clear and specific.

The issue itself is a complex issue that requires consideration of multiple factors, including moral, ethical, social, political, and legal aspects. But whether or not the death penalty is abolished, we need to ensure the fairness and transparency of the legal process to prevent miscarriage of justice and excessive punishment.

Reference

Carmen, The Social Costs of Policing.

Carmen, Are Prisons Obsolete?

Davis, Angela Y. *Are prisons obsolete?*. Seven stories press, 2011.

Stagoff-Belfort, Aaron, Daniel Bodah, and Daniela Gilbert. "The Social Costs of Policing." (2022).