

6 QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DEATH PENALTY

1 DOES THE DEATH PENALTY DETER CRIME? NO EVIDENCE.

A review of deterrence studies over several decades by the National Academy of Sciences found no credible evidence that the death penalty impacts murder rates one way or the other.

MURDER RATES ARE 25% LOWER IN NON-DEATH PENALTY STATES



FBI data from the past decade show that states without the death penalty have lower overall murder rates than those with it. As of 2015, the gap was 25%.

—Death Penalty Information Center

2 DOES THE DEATH PENALTY SAVE MONEY? NO, IT COSTS MORE.

Death penalty cases have higher trial costs, higher appeals costs and potential for retrial costs.

4X THE COST IN KANSAS

Average BIDS defense costs for trial cases filed FY2004-11



—2014 Death Penalty Advisory Committee Report to the Kansas Judicial Council

3 DOES OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM CONVICT INNOCENT PEOPLE? YES. MISTAKES HAPPEN.

It has taken on average over 11 years for those wrongfully sentenced to death in the U.S. to prove their innocence – and in some cases over 30 years. A review of exonerations based on DNA evidence (in both death and non-death penalty cases) shows that the most common causes of wrongful convictions are:

73% EYE WITNESS MISIDENTIFICATION

23% FALSE CONFESSIONS

52% UNVALIDATED/IMPROPER FORENSICS

16% INFORMANTS/"SNITCHES"

—Data from *The Innocence Project*. Total is more than 100% because wrongful convictions may have more than one contributing factor.

**OVER
155**

EXONERATED:

Since 1973, more than 155 people have been released from death row due to evidence of wrongful convictions.

—Death Penalty Information Center



CSI DISORDER: A DNA DEFICIT

DNA is available in only 5-10 percent of cases.

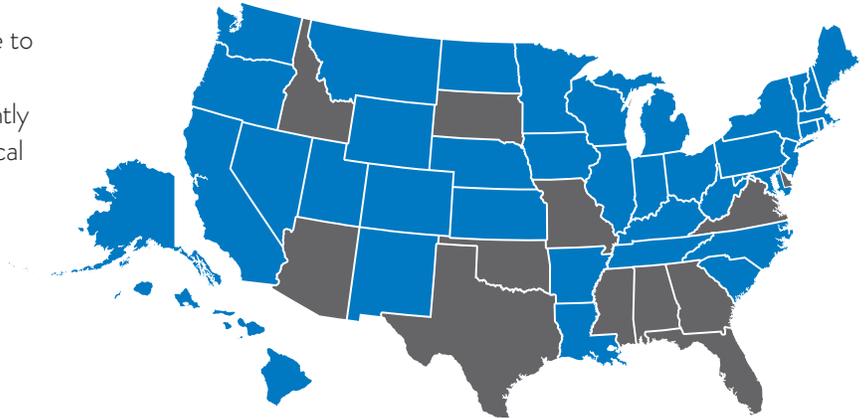
—The Innocence Project

4 IS THE DEATH PENALTY SYSTEM FAIR? NO, IT'S ARBITRARY.

Similar crimes are prosecuted very differently due to arbitrary factors:

- geography; similar crimes are prosecuted differently depending upon the people, resources and political climate of the district
- economic factors; whether defendants can afford their own attorneys
- experience level of defense counsel
- race of victim

STATES WITH NO EXECUTIONS IN THE LAST 5 YEARS ●



—Death Penalty Information Center

5 DOES THE DEATH PENALTY PROVIDE CLOSURE TO VICTIMS' FAMILIES? LISTEN TO THE FAMILIES.

"In 1986 my mother was raped and murdered in her rural home [...] you can never have closure because that person will never come back to you. [...] The death penalty holds out a false promise to people of a release from their pain and suffering that only time and grieving can bring."

—Celeste Dixon, Larned, KS

"What I've discovered is a legal process that no murder victim's family should have to endure."

—Neely Goen, daughter of Kansas State Trooper Conroy O'Brien killed in 1978

Read more from family members of murder victims at www.ksabolition.org. Click to "Death Penalty Info" and choose "Victim Voices."

6 IS THE DEATH PENALTY HUMANE? NO.

Despite efforts to make the death penalty humane with lethal injections, botched executions have been a persistent problem with this method of execution. In recent years, executions have involved inmates gasping, choking, and struggling before finally dying, long after the lethal dose was intended to take effect. The secrecy of drug sources, as well as prison staff without advanced medical training administering the drugs, results in a process prone to error.

"Arizona inmate takes nearly two hours to die in botched execution"
"Botched execution renews death penalty debate"
"Executions should not be run by trial and error"

BE HEARD

Your voice counts. You can help:

- Join our 4,000+ members and 31 endorsing organizations!
- Ask a friend to join.
- Contact your legislators to let them know you support repeal.
- Come hear our speakers. Check out our website for upcoming events.
- Write a letter to the editor of your community paper.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE RESEARCH, INFORMATION AND UP-TO-DATE NEWS.



PO Box 2065
Topeka KS 66601



785.235.2237



info@ksabolition.org



www.ksabolition.org



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