Capital Punishment 15 Essay, Research Paper

Capital Punishment

Whosoever sheds man s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, (Gen. 9:6). This excerpt from the Bible is often quoted when a person is justifying the use of the death penalty. The definition for capital punishment is the legal infliction of the death penalty; in modern law, corporal punishment in its most severe form. This issue is highly debated and often discussed. Every person seems to have an opinion on the matter. I personally was on the fence for a long while concerning this issue.

I would often say, of course, if a person bludgeoned my family and friends to death I would defiantly want him to die. That, however, is to cut and dry. A person has no idea what would provoke one to kill another. There are usually various reasons why one would do such a thing; a bad home life, use of drugs or the person has a mental illness. These impairments hinder one s judgment and provoke him to commit such a crime.

One of the things that had the greatest impact on me, associated with the death penalty, occurred last year. A man came to my class and spoke about his encounters with the people on death row. He was a counselor for many men who committed serious crimes and saw some of them put to death. He presented all the statistics about how the death penalty does not reduce the crime rate and how people who commit crimes do not think that they will be put to death. As a felon a person never expects to get caught because then, he would not be good at his job. The motives of these people is to get what they set out for. Sometimes a person will kill another just to rob them or because they are doped up. Also he also spoke about how many policemen and sheriffs are against capital punishment because they see no results. These men on death row have been there for years and have had a chance to renew their lives. Many have found God and repented for their sins. I am not saying that they should go unpunished. However, the way in which these people are killed is not proper.

Contrary to popular belief the way that most of the prisoners are executed is not painless or peaceful. After this man talked to my class my eyes were opened to this fact. He informed us that the entire process of lethal injection is horribly painful. He explained of how the person goes through violent shakes and the fluids basically eat the person s insides. Occasionally internal organs explode and overall this is a very painful way to die. This shows me that capital punishment is wrong because, in this country we do not condone torture of any sort. Also this type of murder is causing no relief to the families. Even if the murder committed was very bloody this action taken does not bring any justice. It has only reduced everyone involved to the level of the murderer.

The next instrument which contributed to my belief that capital punishment is wrong is my up bringing. This contains the beliefs of my family. Since my mother and father were both strong believers in the Catholic Church I was always taught that killing was wrong. That concerned any type of killing. The death could be abortion, murder out right, or capital punishment. The circumstances do not matter the fact is that it is judging another human being and putting him to death.

Another tool which helped with my decision to be anti-death penalty was the movie Dead Man Walking. This movie gave me a first hand encounter with a death row inmate. It showed the feelings and the hidden vulnerabilities of the criminal. It showed me that the people on death row are actually human beings not just a numbers attached to a death machine. These people actually have someone who cares about them. It is very petty and immature to try and hurt the murder s family and friends how the victim s family was hurt. This will never work for many reasons. The first reason is that hurting others never makes a person feel better. To have true harmony with one s self he must fight the battle with in himself, not impose his anger and aggression on to another human being. The next rational that stabbing another is wrong is that it can not bring anyone back to life. The person who was killed will not automatically reappear after the death of his murderer.

Furthermore, I have passionate views against capital punishment I must say that I do not have the ability nor the right to judge another for his feelings pertaining to this highly controversial subject. Although I have experienced sorrow in my short life I could not fathom the immense personal anger and aggression I would have toward a person who violently and mercilessly took the life of a loved one. It would take a lot of soul searching and personal growth to carry out what my beliefs are dictating.

Despite many people saying that they will feel so much better after the criminal is caught and put to death there is no way to console one person with the death of another. This only proves that two wrongs never make a right, no matter how many time a person tries to add them up. Once another person is killed the whole circle begins again. This vicious circle never seems to help anyone get over the death of their loved ones. On occasion this process seems to cause more emotional trauma for all parties involved, since they feel responsible for the death of the criminal. As a person can tell this is not a solution to the crime problem it is a mere band-aide that will soon tare off and have to be corrected again.