

The Topic of Capital Punishment and Animal Cruelty

Capital punishment is one of the oldest and most difficult moral questions in philosophy, law, and public policy. There is no objective consensus regarding whether it is inherently evil or whether it serves as a necessary societal good. The answer often depends upon the ethical foundation, legal philosophy, and values a person adopts.

Capital Punishment as a Necessary Societal Good

Supporters of capital punishment often argue that it serves an important role in society by delivering justice that is proportional to the most heinous crimes. They believe that certain offenses are so severe that the ultimate punishment is an appropriate response.

Supporters commonly argue that capital punishment:

- Delivers justice proportional to the most heinous crimes, such as aggravated murder, terrorism resulting in death, genocide, or certain wartime atrocities.
- Permanently incapacitates offenders who can never harm another innocent person again.
- Honors victims by recognizing the extraordinary gravity of the crime.
- May deter some offenders, although research on deterrence remains heavily debated.
- Reflects society's strongest moral condemnation of particularly egregious acts.

This perspective is often grounded in:

- Retributive justice.
- Social contract theory.
- Certain religious traditions that permit capital punishment under limited circumstances.

Capital Punishment as Evil

Opponents argue that capital punishment is itself morally wrong because it requires the state to intentionally take a human life. They believe justice can be

achieved through life imprisonment without parole while avoiding irreversible mistakes.

Opponents commonly argue that capital punishment:

- Involves the intentional taking of human life by the government.
- Risks executing innocent individuals, a mistake that can never be corrected.
- Has not been conclusively shown to deter violent crime more effectively than life imprisonment.
- May be applied unevenly because of differences in legal representation, geography, race, or socioeconomic status.
- Fails to recognize that every human being possesses inherent dignity, regardless of the crimes committed.

This perspective is often grounded in:

- Human rights philosophy.
- Sanctity of life principles.
- Restorative justice.
- Various religious and humanitarian traditions.

A Middle Position

Some individuals believe that capital punishment is not inherently evil but conclude that modern justice systems are imperfect. Because no legal system is infallible, they argue that the possibility of executing an innocent person makes the death penalty morally unacceptable in practice.

Others believe capital punishment should exist only for an extremely limited category of crimes, including:

- Aggravated murder.
- Terrorism resulting in multiple deaths.
- Genocide.
- Crimes against humanity.

- Certain wartime atrocities.

Under this view, the central concern is ensuring absolute certainty of guilt, rigorous due process, and exceptionally high evidentiary standards before such a punishment could ever be considered.

Capital Punishment Around the World

Capital punishment continues to be used in many countries, while many others have abolished it entirely or no longer carry out executions.

Worldwide:

- More than half of all countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice.
- The remaining countries retain it for certain criminal offenses.
- In the United States, capital punishment generally applies only to aggravated murder under current constitutional law.

Some countries authorize capital punishment for offenses such as:

- Aggravated murder.
- Terrorism.
- Genocide.
- Crimes against humanity.
- Treason.
- Espionage.
- Certain military offenses during wartime.
- Certain large-scale drug trafficking offenses.

The frequency with which capital punishment is used varies dramatically between countries. Some nations conduct hundreds or even thousands of executions each year, while others retain the death penalty but rarely impose or carry out death sentences.

The Philosophical Issue

The debate surrounding capital punishment often centers on competing values:

- Justice versus mercy.
- Protection of society versus protection of every human life.
- Retribution versus rehabilitation.
- Accountability versus forgiveness.
- Certainty of punishment versus the risk of irreversible error.

Neither side has resolved these competing values in a manner that commands universal agreement.

Capital Punishment and Animal Cruelty

One question that occasionally arises in discussions of criminal justice is whether the most extreme acts of animal torture should receive significantly harsher criminal penalties than currently exist.

At present, no jurisdiction in the United States authorizes capital punishment solely for animal cruelty. Instead, animal cruelty laws generally provide for felony imprisonment, fines, restitution, bans on animal ownership, probation, and psychological evaluation or treatment. Penalties vary considerably by state, and aggravated cases involving numerous victims or additional criminal offenses may result in substantially longer prison sentences.

Personal Reflection

Blue Lives Matter Shares This Story

“Chicago kitten torturer and executioner gets 4.5 years - then walks free the same day he reports to prison.

Thomas Martel, 25, bought kittens online and named every single one Shelly.

He drowned them, mutilated them, decapitated them, and microwaved them inside his Wicker Park apartment.

His girlfriend found a Snapchat video of a kitten still alive with the caption "Right before I m*rdered her." He admitted he had been k*lling cats since he was a child.

He pleaded guilty to animal torture and aggravated cruelty.

A Cook County judge sentenced him to 54 months. Illinois then credited him with 1,079 days already spent on electronic monitoring.

Martel reported to the Department of Corrections on June 23 and walked out the same day. He is now serving six months of supervised release and living in his family's Northbrook home.

This is not justice. It is a free pass for a sadist. Animal torture this deliberate is a warning sign the system just ignored.

Make sure everyone in America knows who Thomas Martel is."

#AnimalTorture #IllinoisJustice"

These posts are great for "prompting" intellectual thought as well aiding the current debate of the criminal landscape we are currently facing.

I do not even know where to begin with this one. It is hard to imagine a person being so cruel. It is fair to say that this level of cruelty knows no bounds. This is an area of society we are facing far too often today, and while this particular case involves cats, I feel it applies to all animals.

There have been some truly disturbing cases in recent years that I have previously described as "beyond realms." I say this as someone who has not consumed animals for 22 years. There are spheres within this world that I no

longer cross. However, an act within this realm is beyond any sort of evil that a human should participate in. It is simply demonic.

The individual is missing fundamental components of normal humanity. There are tiers to the suffering humans inflict upon animals, and this is, by far, one of the most evil tiers a person can participate in. Continued in reply.

So what should the penalty really be for an evil this severe? Capital punishment has never applied to animal cruelty. However, it becomes a question in a case as evil as this, yet animals are less valued in our society than humans. At the very least, he could have been kept in prison. I think it is unfortunate that the maximum sentence for animal cruelty is only five years. It would be nice if this were made a thing of the past, and I do feel we need stronger penalties for evil of this level.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cruelty_to_animals

A Continuing Public Policy Discussion

Whether capital punishment should ever apply to extreme animal torture remains a philosophical, legal, and ethical question. As society continues to debate justice, accountability, public safety, and the value placed upon both human and animal life, this discussion will likely remain one of the most challenging questions in criminal law and moral philosophy.

Union of Saint's Opinion

We do support capital punishment and feel it should be legal in all states, especially for crimes of war, genocide, or violent crimes such as murder. We feel trafficking is a crime against humanity and that capital punishment should be considered in cases of human trafficking.

Our stance is stronger than some. However, we feel that if wartime rules were enacted, much of the crisis we are facing today, including the loss of children at the hands of violent criminals, could have been curtailed or averted. Early release often reexposes society to violent criminals who will never be rehabilitated. We see this often in undocumented immigrant cases involving violent criminals who continue to push the boundaries of our borders, are released early, and go on to take an innocent life. We believe this could be avoided by simply enacting wartime powers and placing greater value on the lives of victims.

We do believe that "an eye for an eye" is sometimes the best law to apply and that there are humane methods that trained execution teams can administer. We feel that what is humane to one may not be humane to another in cases involving violent criminals. With most issues involving violent crime, we support the victims and their families above all else. We consider, in some of the most heinous cases, it feels more evil to allow a violent criminal to continue to walk among us.

It is important to consider these issues in depth and to weigh our hearts in each case. Often, victims provide written letters to their lawyers and judges regarding their views on the perpetrator's punishment. I think this is a really important part of the sentencing process.

We do recognize that foreign enemies are actively attempting to deter this process because they seek to use the justice system as a way and means to commit war crimes against the United States citizenry. They do this through the instrumental migration of violent criminals and then seek to exploit anti state movements. This is also an important consideration that should be made.

In summary, we do support the legality of capital punishment and view it as an appropriate means of justice for certain crimes. We support its use as a form of victim and family reparation in the most egregious cases and view it as a healthy part of victim healing and societal good.