Updated: March 21, 2015

NUMBER OF EXECUTIONS SINCE 1976: 1,404

RACE OF DEFENDANTS EXECUTED

- White: 781
- Black: 486
- Hispanic: 113
- Other: 24

RACE OF VICTIMS IN DEATH PENALTY CASES

- White: 76%
- Black: 15%
- Hispanic: 7%
- Other: 2%

Over 75% of the murder victims in cases resulting in an execution were white, even though nationally only 50% of murder victims generally are white.

DEATH PENALTY STATES (32)
- Alabama
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Idaho
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Texas
- Utah
- Virginia
- Washington
- Wyoming
- U.S. Gov’t
- U.S. Military

NON-DEATH PENALTY STATES (18)
- Alaska
- Connecticut*
- Hawaii
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Maine
- Maryland*
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- New Jersey
- New Mexico*
- New York
- North Dakota
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- District of Columbia

*Inmates remain on death row.
Persons Executed for Interracial Murders

- Since 1973, over 140 people have been released from death row with evidence of their innocence. (Staff Report, House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil & Constitutional Rights, 1993, with updates from DPIC).
- From 1973-1999, there was an average of 3 exonerations per year. From 2000-2011, there was an average of 5 exonerations per year.

Recent Studies on Race

- Jurors in Washington state are three times more likely to recommend a death sentence for a black defendant than for a white defendant in a similar case. (Prof. K. Beckett, Univ. of Washington, 2014).
- In Louisiana, the odds of a death sentence were 97% higher for those whose victim was white than for those whose victim was black. (Pierce & Radelet, Louisiana Law Review, 2011).
- A study in California found that those who killed whites where over 3 times more likely to be sentenced to death than those who killed blacks and over 4 times more likely than those who killed Latinos. (Pierce & Radelet, Santa Clara Law Review, 2005).
- A comprehensive study of the death penalty in North Carolina found that the odds of receiving a death sentence rose by 3.5 times among those defendants whose victims where white. (Prof. Jack Boger and Dr. Isaac Unah, University of North Carolina, 2001).
- In 96% of states where there have been reviews of race and the death penalty, there was a pattern of either race-of-victim or race-of-defendant discrimination, or both. (Prof. Baldus report to the ABA, 1998).

Death Row Exonerations

- Since 1973, over 140 people have been released from death row with evidence of their innocence. (Staff Report, House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil & Constitutional Rights, 1993, with updates from DPIC).
- From 1973-1999, there was an average of 3 exonerations per year. From 2000-2011, there was an average of 5 exonerations per year.

Death Row Inmates by Race

- White: 43%
- Black: 42%
- Hispanic: 13%
- Other: 2%

Death Row Inmates by State: October 1, 2014

- California: 745
- Florida: 404
- Texas: 276
- Alabama: 198
- Pennsylvania: 188
- N. Carolina: 160
- Ohio: 144
- Arizona: 123
- Georgia: 90
- Louisiana: 85
- Nevada: 78
- Tennessee: 75
- U.S. Gov’t: 63

- Oklahoma: 49
- Mississippi: 49
- S. Carolina: 47
- Missouri: 39
- Oregon: 36
- Kentucky: 35
- Arkansas: 33
- Delaware: 18
- Indiana: 14
- Connecticut: 12
- Idaho: 11
- Nebraska: 11

- Kansas: 10
- Utah: 9
- Washington: 9
- Virginia: 8
- S. Dakota: 3
- Colorado: 3
- Montana: 2
- New Mexico: 2
- Wyoming: 1
- N. Hampshire: 1

TOTAL: 3,035

Race of Death Row Inmates and Death Row Inmates by State: Source: NAACP Legal Defense Fund, “Death Row USA” (October 1, 2014). When added, the total number of death row inmates by state is slightly higher than the given total because some prisoners are sentenced to death in more than one state.
EXEUCIONS BY STATE SINCE 1976

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DEATH SENTENCING

The number of death sentences per year has dropped dramatically since 1999.

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MENTAL DISABILITIES

- Intellectual Disabilities: In 2002, the Supreme Court held in Atkins v. Virginia that it is unconstitutional to execute defendants with ‘mental retardation.’
- Mental Illness: The American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and the American Bar Association have endorsed resolutions calling for an exemption of the severely mentally ill.

DETERRENCE

- A report by the National Research Council, titled Deterrence and the Death Penalty, stated that studies claiming that the death penalty has a deterrent effect on murder rates are “fundamentally flawed” and should not be used when making policy decisions (2012).
- Consistent with previous years, the 2013 FBI Uniform Crime Report showed that the South had the highest murder rate. The South accounts for over 80% of executions. The Northeast, which has less than 1% of all executions, had lowest murder rate.
- According to a survey of the former and present presidents of the country’s top academic criminological societies, 88% of these experts rejected the notion that the death penalty acts as a deterrent to murder. (Radelet & Lacock, 2009)

EXECUTIONS SINCE 1976 BY METHOD USED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lethal Injection</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrocution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gas Chamber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hanging</td>
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<td>Firing Squad</td>
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35 states plus the US government use lethal injection as their primary method. Some states utilizing lethal injection have other methods available as backups. Though New Mexico, Connecticut, and Maryland have abolished the death penalty, their laws were not retroactive, leaving prisoners on the states’ death rows and their lethal injection protocols intact.

EXECUTIONS BY REGION*

**South**: 1142
**Midwest**: 173
**West**: 85
**Northeast**: 4

*Federal executions are listed in the region in which the crime was committed.

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JUVENILES

- In 2005, the Supreme Court in Roper v. Simmons struck down the death penalty for juveniles. 22 defendants had been executed for crimes committed as juveniles since 1976.

WOMEN

- There were 57 women on death row as of Oct. 1, 2014. This constitutes less than 2% of the total death row population. (NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Oct. 1, 2014). 15 women have been executed since 1976.
A 2009 poll commissioned by DPIC found police chiefs ranked the death penalty last among ways to reduce violent crime. The police chiefs also considered the death penalty the least efficient use of taxpayers' money.

Lack of law enforcement resources
Drug/Alcohol abuse
Family problems/child abuse
Lack of programs for mentally ill
Crowded courts
Ineffective prosecution
Too many guns
Gangs
Insufficient use of the death penalty

The Death Penalty Information Center has available more extensive reports on a variety of issues, including:

- "The Death Penalty in 2014: Year-End Report" (December 2014)
- "The 2% Death Penalty: How a Minority of Counties Produce Most Death Cases at Enormous Costs to All" (October 2013)
- "The Death Penalty in 2013: Year-End Report" (December 2013)
- "Struck By Lightning: The Continuing Arbitrariness of the Death Penalty 35 Years After Its Reinstatement in 1976" (June 2011)
- "Smart on Crime: Reconsidering the Death Penalty in a Time of Economic Crisis" (October 2009)
- "A Crisis of Confidence: Americans’ Doubts About the Death Penalty" (2007)
- "Blind Justice: Juries Deciding Life and Death with Only Half the Truth" (2005)
- "Innocence and the Crisis in the American Death Penalty" (2004)
- "Innocence and the Death Penalty: The Increasing Danger of Executing the Innocent" (1997)